



Dear East Woods Family and Friends,

With the start of October, there's a story from my childhood that regularly comes to mind. I was a 2nd Grader when the Star Wars movie, "The Empire Strikes Back," was released. To me, the characters with the coolest costumes were known as snow troopers, and I was determined to dress as a snow trooper for Halloween. With the help of my parents, I created a snow trooper costume par excellence, complete with a near-exact replica of the laser rifle each trooper carried in the film. With a laser gun in one hand and a Trick-or-Treat bag in the other, I set out to collect costume complements and candy.

The first part of the night was a dream-come-true. Every kid encounter was met with immediate character recognition and costume envy. Every door that opened to me became a portal for sweet treats. Like a Halloween ghost, I nearly floated with elation from house to house. That is, until we reached the last house of the night. At that house, a kindly-looking host opened the door, gasped with wide-eyed delight, and spoke the words that quickly turned my elation to thoughts of laser-induced execution – "Oh, what an adorable little mushroom!?" Mushroom!?! With a laser rifle?! The way she stole my joy, she might as well have stolen my last Kit Kat. I sulked home in utter defeat.

As I have reflected on the encounter over the years, it's clear to me that I put a lot of emotional stock in the identity I wanted to carry that night. So much so that, when that identity was denied, it felt like a devastating blow. Just like the man in Jesus' parable who'd built his house on sand, the foundation of my identity was shallow and vulnerable. It's not uncommon for people to do this, I find. Too often, we build our identity on a title, a career, a relationship, an achievement, a status, or a standard of living, without much thought toward its vulnerability or the depth of the impact we'd experience if it was taken away. As Jesus teaches, it's better for us to build on something lasting and solid.

What have you built your identity on? Is it Christ-centered and eternal, or is it pride-centered and worldly? A few weeks ago, Laurel Neal preached in my absence, and she talked about how we know when we are living with true righteousness. Laurel said that we know we're on the right road when 1) we find our identity in God's great love for us, 2) our character increasingly reflects our grace-shaped identity, and 3) we willingly and happily live out that identity in grace-filled ways.

Continued on next page

Continued from Page 1

The Apostle Paul understood those ideas well and gave us a great example to follow in his words to the Galatian Christians: *“I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”* Galatians 2:20 Amen!

As Paul did, may you build your identity on the grace, strength and love God has shown to us in Christ. Enjoy October!

~ *Bill*



**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4 AT 5 PM – THE SIXTH ANNUAL
BLESSING OF OUR ANIMAL COMPANIONS.**

At East Woods we again want to acknowledge God’s beloved creatures and celebrate the emotional connection between us and the animals in our lives.

We encourage families and their critters to attend!

Our service includes music, a reading and a brief message. Each family is invited to come forward to introduce their pet(s) and receive a blessing by Pastor Bill Sperry.

Photos of all “family members” may be taken at the end of the service. All socialized and reasonably well-behaved pets are welcome; dogs on short leads, cats and other animal friends in carriers (bowls or cages). If you think your pet would be uncomfortable participating in the service, we suggest you bring a picture of him/her instead.

We will collect donations of money, leashes, dog or cat toys, old towels or blankets etc. for our less fortunate animal buddies through the Humane Society for Southwest Washington on 192nd Ave. in Vancouver.





2015 SESSION RETREAT HIGHLIGHTS

Tom Koecher, Elder-elect of Finance, reported that East Woods was roughly \$3,000 behind budget as of the end of August.

Session approved the hiring of Hailey Vandewiele to serve as East Woods' new Director of Family Ministries. Hailey begins her employment on October 1 and will work 30 hours per week coordinating our volunteer teams who provide ministries to children, youth, and families.

Session identified three major priorities to enhance life, ministry and mission at East Woods over the next 12 months. They are 1) Growth, 2) Congregational Care, and 3) Congregational Engagement/Participation. Each of the Session Elders selected one of the three priorities to engage with apart from the work of their designated commissions or committees. Conversation about those priorities will continue at the October Session meeting, and efforts will begin to take shape for the involvement of the congregation.

Session discussed the possibility of starting the early worship service at 8:00 AM in order to create a Christian Education time on Sunday mornings from 9:30-10:15. Members from both services would be encouraged to attend classes or gatherings during that time so that the two congregations can remain connected throughout the year and grow together in discipleship. The 45-minute time period would be used for Bible study classes, small group gatherings, congregational meetings or special events, monthly Gathering Sunday brunches, and possibly Sunday School time for children or youth. If pilot programs are successful and support exists within the congregation, the new service times of 8:00 AM and 10:30 AM would likely begin in September of 2016.

Session discussed steps to take toward identifying existing discipleship groups within the congregation and establishing new ones for the sake of discipleship growth and congregational connection. A task force is being created to determine milestones, goals and a timeline.

Session discussed pastoral care and worship leadership during Pastor Bill's projected chaplaincy-related absences for the next 12 months. The focus of the conversation was the two extended absences in February-March (4 weeks) and June (3 weeks) of 2016 for Chaplaincy School. Session's hope is to provide consistent worship leadership and pastoral care from week to week during each of those two periods.

With the departure of Mike and Lynne Combs, the Nominating Committee will form again to work on selecting a nominee for the Elder position left vacant by Lynne's move. Lynne will continue as Elder of Congregational Care through the end of the year.

MEET OUR NEW DIRECTOR OF FAMILY MINISTRIES,

HAILEY VANDEWIELE.

Hailey begins her employment at East Woods on October 1 and will be coordinating our volunteer teams who provide ministries to children, youth and families.



After several months of searching, your Personnel Committee and Session have hired Hailey Vandewiele to serve East Woods as our new Director of Family Ministries. Hooray... and welcome, Hailey!

Hailey is a recent graduate of Eastern New Mexico University, having earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Music. During and after college, she worked in a variety of school settings serving as mentor, tutor, teaching assistant, and music teacher for a variety of age levels. She also served as the Pianist at Portales Presbyterian Church in Portales, New Mexico.

But, Hailey is now back on home turf. Hailey's family has lived in Eagle Creek, Oregon, since 1999, where she was an active part of both leadership and discipleship at Eagle Creek Presbyterian Church. Hailey has a passion for working with children and youth, and she feels God has been leading her in the direction of community-building in a church setting. She describes herself as a creative soul with an organizational mind and a spirit that is both passionate and compassionate. What a great fit for East Woods!

Hailey begins on October 1st and will work 30 hours per week. Her job will focus mainly on coordinating and equipping the volunteer leadership teams that provide discipleship ministry to our children, youth, and families. But, if grace shines upon us, I'm betting we'll hear her share her musical gifts every now and then, too. Please look for a chance to welcome Hailey and help her feel at home.

Autumn Blessings

by Arla Olsen

*Touches of gold and amber,
at times crowned with crimson,
catch the cool breeze, and fill the air
as trees stretch their limbs toward heaven,
awaiting a change of season...
As summer fades, they shed the summer green,
and don a bright new wardrobe,
as God dips His Almighty paintbrush
into the colorful pallet of fall colors,
and joyously blesses the waiting leaves
with a heavenly coat of Autumn brilliance...
Soon the colorful radiance will disappear,
leaving lonely bare branches, and land,
awaiting a new transition;
but, He will bless all again, soon,
enfolding them in the soft white blanket of winter...*

MISSION

Peace be to the WHOLE community, and love with faith. Ephesians 6:23

The **PEACE & GLOBAL WITNESS SPECIAL OFFERING**, one of 4 annual denomination-wide offerings, is intended to “celebrate our common life in the global bonds of Christ’s peace-giving body and to support initiatives on peacemaking and peace education throughout the church.” On Oct. 4, East Woods will participate in this offering, sending 50% to support education of children caught up with the Syrian refugee crisis who are sheltering in Lebanese refugee camps. East Woods will apply the remaining 50% locally to programs serving underprivileged student at Mill Plain Elementary. Please give joyfully to support these outstanding needs.

JOIN US IN COMMISSIONING AND PRAYING FOR THE CEDEPCA GUATEMALA INTERCULTURAL ENCOUNTER TEAM, traveling Oct. 29 - Nov. 5 throughout Guatemala. **Ayn Lavagnino, Gwen Wagner** and **Keith Bloss** will represent East Woods in a visit that will explore issues of immigration, social justice and poverty with the people facing them every day. We will be taking a love gift of needed supplies for CEDEPCA. If you would like to participate, please check the narthex for index cards of items needed and return them by Oct. 25 for packing. Thank you!



FRIENDS OF THE CARPENTER FUNDRAISING: Mark your calendars for ‘Dixieland by the Columbia River’ FOC’s Annual Auction & Dinner on Saturday, October 17, 2015 at Hilton Vancouver 5:30 PM -10 PM Single ticket \$75, \$650 for table for 10.

SHARE HOUSE: Share Soups fundraising is on **October 18 at 4:30 PM** at the Hilton. Ticket is \$50 per adult \$20 per child \$600 per table of 12. ***Don’t forget to bring a donation of new bath towels to be entered into door prize drawing!***

CARD MAKING IN OCTOBER

Tuesday evening, October 13th, 6 PM at Brookdale Vancouver Village, 10011 118th Ave. We will help the residents sign birthday cards for residents with November birthdays, sign Happy Veterans Day cards and assemble general cards from card kits for Soldiers’ Angels.

Monday afternoon, October 19th,

1 PM at East Woods, in the Maple Room. We will be signing Happy Veterans Day cards and assembling cards for Soldiers’ Angels.

Monday afternoon, October 26th,

1 PM at Brookdale Fisher’s Landing, 17171 SE 22nd Dr. We will help the residents sign birthday cards for residents with November birthdays, sign Happy Veterans Day cards and assemble general cards from card kits for Soldiers’ Angels.



Questions? Email at cardmaking@eastwoodspress.org

MEN OF EAST WOODS

The **2015 Men's Retreat** is **November 6-8** in
Lincoln City, OR.

Look for the sign-up clipboard on the
Opportunity Table in Evergreen Hall.

Get details or register online at:
the church website: www.eastwoodspres.org
Cost, including meals and lodging, is \$95.



EAST WOODS WOMEN'S BREAKFAST

Third Saturdays
8:30 to 10:00 AM

Join us on Saturday, October 17

SCRIP is back!

We have three months to try to exceed our goal of \$1,000 in Scrip Profits.
Please think *Scrip Gift Cards* for your food shopping and
Christmas gift giving. Thanks!

ART SHOW INVITATION

Katey Sandy is the October featured artist
at the Camas Gallery, 408 NE 4th Ave., downtown Camas.

First Friday Show Opening Reception

October 2, 5-9 PM

The show is open at the Gallery throughout October,
Tues.-Sat. 11AM—6 PM



November Newsletter deadline—Tuesday, October 20

Office hours: Tuesday 1-4 PM, Wednesday & Thursday 9 AM - 3 PM

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Please visit our web site at www.eastwoodspres.org



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Presbyterian Church

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