



GROWING DEEPER IN FAITH
REACHING WIDER IN LOVE
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF SNOHOMISH

The Light | January | 2025

Pastor's Corner

Forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, we press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

(Phil 3:13-14)

The image of the Christian life as a life-long journey is an old but good one. In the Old Testament, we find the forty-year journey of wandering through the wilderness that proves necessary for fashioning a people who were to be a blessing to the rest of the world. The earliest Christians were called, "People of the Way,"

an image that echoes the wilderness journey, and one that Paul may have in mind when he says "we press on to the goal," I think of this image of life as a journey as I reflect on the gift I have experienced (along with Ann) serving with you for over 25 years. I'm now coming to the end of that journey with you. The gratitude has grown for you over the years as has the feeling of gratification.

When arriving in August of 1999, Ann and I looked out on a sea of faces of people we did not know. Now...we look out and see the faces of people whose lives we know in some depth, whose joys we've been able to experience, whose struggles we've been allowed to share, whose grief we've tried to help bear, and whose growth in faith we've been blessed to witness. We have loved being part of this church family and appreciated its authenticity, compassion and dedication to Christ as we've sought to live out our mission statement: growing deeper in faith and reaching wider on love.

Looking back on this past quarter of a century with you, Ann and I recognize that we are standing on the shoulders of those who've gone before us dating back to 1876. We have, with you, been thankful to be building on the good work God has done through our predecessors... and the good work God promises to continue doing through you as you look ahead to the interim time before a newly installed pastor is called. We look, with you, back in gratitude and ahead in eager expectation.

As I close my final pastor's corner, I want to extend my deep thanks for this 25 year journey with you. God has richly blessed Ann and me with your partnership in ministry and your friendship in our life together. While it's the end of our formal ministry at FPCS, it's not the end of the significant relationships we've made with you. Ann and I thank you for your love, your prayers, your encouragement, and your faithful commitment to living out Christ's way of love and justice. May the best years be ahead as you, dear friends, press on toward that goal of our upward call in Christ Jesus, keeping your eyes on the prize.

Pastor Charlie



LESSONS FROM THE "BEE"-ATTITUDES

Bee Wise
PROVERBS 8:33

Bee STRONG
EPHESIANS 6:10



Bee GLAD
PSALM 32:11

Bee MERCIFUL
LUKE 6:36

Be CONTENT
HEBREWS 13:5



Bee COURTEOUS
1 PETER 3:8

Bee FAITHFUL
REVELATION 2:10



Bee KIND
EPHESIANS 4:32

Bee THANKFUL
PSALM 100:4



Somehow Thank You seems incredibly inadequate.

Our bee-loved assistant pastor, Elizabeth Klein, will be leaving us this month. She came as a support to pastor Charlie and has been a true blessing to us all.

From art lessons to energizing sermons and thought-provoking adult ed classes, she has walked with us. Furthermore, she has led us in preparation for celebrating Charlie's many years of loving and serving this community of faith, his retirement, and looking forward to the challenges of a new way forward.

She has encouraged us to embrace change, remember that "God has this" and continue to love and grow as His people .

Thank you, thank you Elizabeth, for reminding us that we are bee-loved, and being bee-loved in our midst.

Blessings,
Paula Erickson,
Elder and Member of Spiritual Formation
Ministry Team



Upcoming Memorials

Bill LaBarge

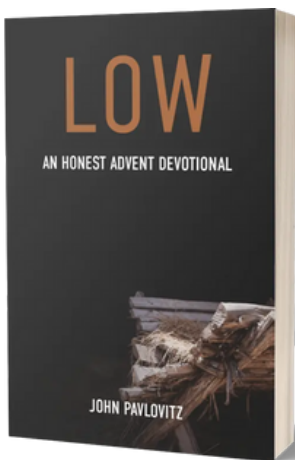
Saturday, January 4th @ 2pm

Bethia and Jerry Blomquist

Sunday, January 5th @ 2pm

Scott Miller

Sunday, January 19th @ 3 pm
at Snohomish High School



The spiritual formation ministry team has chosen **Low: An Honest Advent Devotional** by John Pavlovitz for this year's Advent study. Copies are available to be picked up in the Narthex. Please join us in welcoming God's "reaching down to us" as we seek to respond to His invitation.

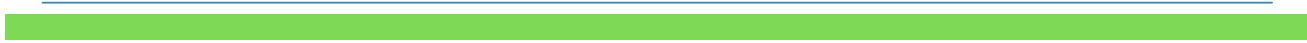
his book will also form form the basis of our January Adult Ed classes at 9:00 am Sunday mornings when we continue to focus on hospitality.

Need a Huddle?

Well, maybe not , but in these days of winter it can be a warm place to be with a group of friends who travel along with you on your walk of faith, sharing, learning, praying.

Starting in January, new ConneXtion groups will be forming.

Raise your hand by contacting Kate at office@snopres.org or Paula Erickson or Jon Bishop of your new year's desire.



STAY TUNED!

The work is well underway to replace the electrical panel. We are anticipating that the power for the building will be off **STARTING MONDAY (1/13)** for several days - including the potential for Sunday, January 19th. If that is the case, Sunday services will be held in Lake View Hall and will not be streamed. We will keep you posted as we know more.



Women's Ministry Book Club:

Our January book club selection is "The Librarian Spy" by Madeline Martin. **1943. France and Portugal. Two women, working with the Resistance, connecting through coded messages.** We will share a potluck salad at the home of Judy Richardson-Fox at 12:00 noon on Wednesday, January 8th. Connie Ford will be our reviewer. Questions? Call Carol at 206-595-9462 or email Carol at cjohnson98290@gmail.com.

JOIN THE BUNCO FUN!!!

Women's Ministries is planning a **Bunco Party** at the home of **Linda Mueller** on **Saturday, January 11th from 11:00 to 3:00.**

This is our holiday celebration after all the rush of Christmas is over. Wear your Christmas sweaters and tops and relax with us!! Please bring a snack to share and a White Elephant gift to play a game with. We have prizes for you to win as well. **Please RSVP on the sign up sheet in the Narthex** or leave Linda a message at 425-299-3633 that you will be attending. Marge, Melissa, Marcia, Rita and Linda are really looking forward to seeing you! Donations are accepted.





Once again Christ's love was shared at the Everett Gospel Family Shelter hosted by our church for nearly 30 years. It was made possible thanks to these volunteers: Kris Jordan, Gem Glover, Talea Blaska and her friend Madi, Cathy Haddenham and Mary Kellerman. Pauly Fox and Barbara Rubalcalva's donated cookies were a delicious joy the children enjoyed decorating! Also, a big thankyou to the secret Santa's who donated gift bags and toys that were delivered to the children at the shelter.

The next party at the shelter will be held in May for Mother's Day, with the date to be determined. All women and children are invited to participate!

Thankyou everyone,
Jill Sahlstrom





STRATEGIC PLANNING UPDATE: COMMUNICATION TEAM LISTENING GROUPS

As part of the Session's ongoing efforts to chart a course for our church's future, we've formed strategic planning teams to address key areas identified earlier in the year. The first of these teams is the **Communication Team**, and we're excited to share what they've been working on over the last couple of months.

The Communication Team, led by Carol Mastrofina, Carlene Crossman and Carole Van Loo, has begun gathering small listening groups to hear directly from the congregation. These groups are designed to provide a space for you to share your thoughts on our internal and external communication, with discussions centered around three key questions:

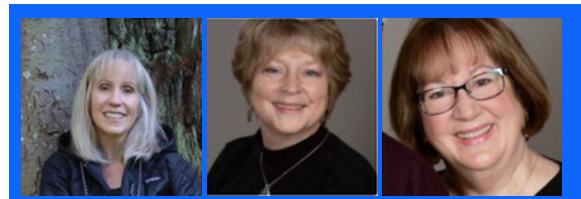
- What aspects of our communication should we preserve?
- What areas could be improved?
- Are there opportunities for innovation we should consider?

Groups of 2-4 participants have begun to meet after worship services on selected Sundays for 1-2 hours. You will only be asked to participate once, but your input will be invaluable in helping the team shape a communication strategy that reflects the needs and hopes of our congregation.

If you're contacted to join a group, we encourage you to say yes! If you'd like to volunteer to participate, please reach out to Carol, Carlene, or Carole.

This is an exciting step forward, and we thank you for being part of this important process. Together, we can strengthen our connections within the church and to the wider community.

Blessings,
Communications Strategic Planning Team



ATTENTION FPCS Group Leaders - Annual Reports due by January 17th

Just a friendly reminder...all Ministry Teams, Committees and Task Forces need to have your 2024 Reports in by January 15th so that the complete Annual Report can be assembled and available prior to the Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, February 23rd following Worship. If your group isn't on here - CONGRATULATIONS! That means your report has been received!

Reports needed:

- Stephen's Ministry
- Women's Ministry
- Congregational Care
- Playground Task Force
- Community Life
- Youth & Family
- CROP Walk
- Nominating
- Personnel
- Endowment
- Mission
- AGM
- Worship
- Deacons
- Stewardship
- Finance

Grateful for Your Gifts to FPCS

Our thanks to all who have made a pledge for 2025 and for all those making plans to do so. We can only carry out our ministry and support our local, regional, and global missions with your gifts! We are grateful for your faithfulness and generosity. Online giving has played an important role in providing consistent support through recurring or individual gifts. To give, follow this link: <https://snopres.org/give> or visit our website and click on the "Give" link in the menu. For questions or help please email Kate in the office at office@snopres.org.



Stewardship
a way of life



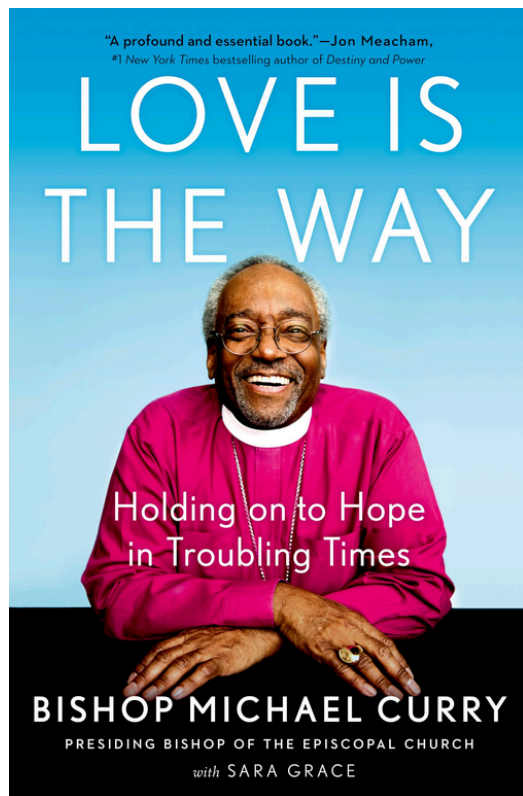
Since last summer, our Interim Pastor Search Team has been meeting to find an Interim Pastor that would be a good match for our church. We have found an excellent candidate that is experienced in being an Interim Pastor, has Interim Pastor training, skills in finance, outstanding reference checks and is highly recommended by our COM's Executive Director, Laura Terasaki.

We are working on our last step which is to negotiate the "Terms of Call" which will need to be approved by Personnel, Finance and Session. Please PRAY that we will be able to find terms that will be a "Win, Win" for our Interim Pastor and for all of us.

Blessings to All
Happy New Year,
Dede Babcock

**Wednesday Bible Study:
January 8, 15 and 22 at 10 AM**

Our 6 week study on John Pavlovitz' "The Kind Human's Survival Guides ends on January 8 and we will start a new study on the 15th and 22nd using the book **"Love is the Way: Holding on to Hope in Troubling Times"** by the beloved Episcopal Bishop, Michael Curry.



The Way of Love addresses the seemingly insurmountable challenges facing the world today: deep ideological divisions, competing claims to speak for God, poverty, racism, and violence. As historian and bestselling author John Meacham says "This is a profound and essential book... in which the priest (Curry) plays the prophet, drawing on his own remarkable life to show us the way we might make our own lives, and the lives of nations, warmer, better and nobler." Curry lives with and calls us to draw upon deep reservoirs of hope and resilience, simple wisdom, nonviolence, and a high regard for human dignity.

You are invited to order a new or used copy of the book for use in the class or personal reading on your own. As the descendant of slaves and the son of a civil rights activist, Bishop Michael Curry's life illustrates massive changes in our times. Much of the world met Bishop Curry when he delivered his sermon on the redemptive power of love at the royal wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle at Windsor Castle. Here, he expands on his message of hope in an inspirational road map for living the way of love, illuminated with moving lessons from his own life. Through the prism of his faith, ancestry, and personal journey, Love Is the Way shows us how America came this far and, more important, how to go a whole lot further.

The way of love is essential for addressing the seemingly insurmountable challenges facing the world today: poverty, racism, selfishness, deep ideological divisions, competing claims to speak for God. This book will lead readers to discover the gifts they need in order to live the way of love: deep reservoirs of hope and resilience, simple wisdom, the discipline of nonviolence, and unshakable regard for human dignity.

And What Has Your Session Been up to Lately??

Monday, December 2nd was a combined dinner meeting with Deacons, whereupon we heard the Deacon's report regarding their ministry of the past year, after which we met separately for business. Pastor Charlie thanked the retiring elders Paula Erickson, Erin Ramirez and Carole Van Loo for their years of service and gifted every elder with a loaf of Snohomish Bakery bread!

Consent Agenda was approved:

- Ann Lewis will be welcome at the Christmas Eve service with her family.
- Approved updates to the FCPS Employee Handbook.
- Approved having a congregational Meeting after worship on 12/15 to elect Mary Polley as the 12th deacon

Treasurer's Report:

- 90% of pledges have been received and is 20% above last year. We are running a deficit with the increasing costs, repairs and ministries needs. Details will be available at the congregational meeting February 23. Session approved the 2025 budget.

Old Business:

- The electrical panel install has begun and may avoid missing a Sunday in the sanctuary. January 17 is projected completion date.
- Interim Pastor Search is getting close to extending the terms of call to a candidate who would begin February 9.
- There are two benevolence teams in the church: Deacons and At Large...inquire with Pastor Charlie

New Business:

- Orientation /Training of new elders will be Jan. 11.
- Talea Blasko is being interviewed to serve in a Youth Leader position! Personnel will handle this. Funds were set aside for this in the 2025 budget.

Approved:

- Laurie Robinson added to the Personnel Committee
- Terms of Call for Rev. Charlie Lewis for January 2025 will be used on the 2024 amounts divided by 12 to cover one month.
- After more chips are added to the playground and the inspector approves, the spring toys will be reinstalled.
- Next Session meeting is January 6, 2025 and will be conducted by Zoom as the power in the building will be turned off.
- The Annual Congregational Meeting will be held on February 23, 2025 after worship.



Remember in your prayers...

Church Family Members

- Debby Ingram - treatment for multiple myeloma
- Patrick Ingram - as he recovers at home
- Heather Miller and daughters Brittany, Molly & Jessica in the loss of husband and father - Scott Miller - a longtime friend and member of FPCS
- Kero Ebeid - recovery from accident
- Sara Seiber - treatment for cancer
- Shelagh Hizzey - cancer treatment
- Caregivers for these and other church family members
- Please keep Myrna Lucas in your prayers - health concerns.
- Lois LaBarge and family as they mourn the passing of Bill
- Mary Beth Kurtenbach as she continues to recover from foot surgery.
- Sue Davis in the loss of her mother.
- Bill & Pam Wanser in the loss of his sisters Bethia and Kathleen
- Elmer Johnson recovering from hospitalization

Homebound

Gary Gloe, Josh Hesseltine, Carolyn Moss, Jerry Williamson, and Bill Barker

Friends of FPCS

- Tamara Montoya, friend of Lise Pettigrew
- Sue Davis' daughter-in-law, Tammy, with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma
- Valerie Christopherson (sister-in-law of Marlie Bilbruck) for cancer metastasized to the liver
- Yvonne Carr (mother-in-law of Marlie Bilbruck) for malignant brain tumor
- Cynthia Sundman, missionary in Peru
- Pastor Moses & Margaret Tanni in Cameroon
- Praise for Tall Timber as the Board has announced Aaron Fishburn as the new Executive Director
- Cindy Duncan - Jan Gavin's niece - cancer

Ongoing Prayer Support

- Prayers for peace where there is war and turmoil: Israel, Palestine/Gaza, Lebanon, Ukraine, Russia, Sudan, Syria, Afghanistan, Yemen, Haiti, and many other places
- All refugees forced to leave their homes due to violence or natural disasters; all those left homeless, and those experiencing hunger such as in Tigray region of Ethiopia and Sudan
- Global leaders--for wisdom and the will to act justly and to uphold human rights



And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests.
With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.
Ephesians 6:18



Deacon's Offering:

First Sunday of Every Month

The first Sunday of each month is Deacon's Offering Sunday, and you can put a donation marked "Deacons" in the offering plate or go to SnoPres Online and designate a donation to the Deacon's Fund. The Deacons thank YOU and those we help also thank you!

Need a Hand, Lend a Hand

What is it? This program is an outreach of the Deacons. It provides a means for members to make requests for assistance, or offer assistance in a variety of ways. This could include things such as changing a light bulb in a hard-to-reach area, helping to move a microwave, or maybe helping with a tree that has fallen during a storm. We are in the process of moving the request online, so if you have a need we may be able to assist with, please call/text Chad Bjerkan at 206-920-2837. In the meantime, if you would like to be placed on the list of potential hand-lenders, please let Chad know as well.

Click or Scan



One QR Code to Save Them ALL!

If you're looking for it, you'll probably find a link to it [HERE](#) or scan the QR code. Not finding what you want? Please let the office know:

office@snopres.org



Deacon's Transportation Ministry:

Do You Need a Ride?

If you can't drive yourself, we can give you a lift. We can take you to a doctor or dentist appointment, to our church on Sunday, or for a church event. When you need a ride and you have run out of options, just call the office and we will see what we can do!
360-568-6498

Church Library

To see a listing of all the books in the library, go to our online catalog:

<https://www.librarything.com/profile/FPCS>

or follow the QR code to our links library.





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We are a Stephen Ministry Congregation, providing care-givers to those who request them.



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NPS:

Counseling Centers of

Hanna Cho

Director of Music Ministry:

Kate West

Bookkeeper:

Office Manager /

Rev. Elizabeth Klein

Pastoral Assistant

Rev. Charles Lewis

Pastor:

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