



# Cordata Beacon

A Publication of **Cordata** Presbyterian Church

February, 2023

## Message from Pastor Greg

Usually as we approach the start of a new month, I get a particular idea of what the Lord wants me to write about in our monthly Beacon newsletter. This month is different somehow—more like an invitation to soak in God’s presence instead of shaping the words of a certain topic. So my invitation to you, as you read the pages ahead, is simply to dwell in the presence of Jesus who is inspiring and sustaining the congregational life we share. From the inspiring words of Carol’s reflective meditation, to the thoughtful prayer Joel has written, to the many opportunities to gather together to study, serve, and build community; all of this is a reflection of the Lord of life. As Jesus said, “I am the vine; you are the branches. Abide in me.” May we have eyes to see, ears to hear, and hearts to respond to the life-giving things Christ is doing among us.

Together in Christ,  
Pastor Greg

**Special note:** Wednesday, February 22, is Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent. We will join together in worship with the Bellingham Presbyterian churches at Saint James Presbyterian Church in Fairhaven for our Ash Wednesday worship service on February 22 at 7:30p.



## Delightful By Carol Lawrence

One of the first Europeans to see this lake wanted to name it “*Deep Blue Lake*”\*. The name was certainly apt, but it didn’t stick. Now known as Crater Lake, in Crater Lake National Park, Oregon, this is the deepest lake in the United States, with an average depth of more than 1,900 feet. We have several clichés about deep water being problematic - ‘in too deep’, ‘in over my head’. All suggest a degree of danger. When we’re facing danger, or just feeling overwhelmed, we know we can turn to scripture for support. In 2 Samuel we read:

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Delightful, Continued from Page 1

*He reached down from on high and took hold of me;  
He drew me out of deep waters (2 Samuel 22:17 NIV).*

This verse speaks of being rescued, personally, directly, by God. I'm guessing I'm not the only one who has at some point felt in need of rescue, buried in problems, 'in too deep'. At a time like that, it's only human to feel grumpy. Reading a little further in 2 Samuel, we find these words that not only echo the theme of God's rescue, but also suggest why he does so:

*He brought me into a spacious place;  
He rescued me because he delighted in me (2 Samuel 22:20 NIV).*

What nice imagery - God 'delights' in us!

Remembering how God has rescued us in the past can help us trust that He will do so again when we need Him. I'm reminded of a favorite hymn, actually the only one I ever learned to play on the piano:

*Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus,  
Just to take Him at His word...  
Jesus, Jesus, how I trust him!  
How I've proved him o'er and o'er!*

That trust, if we can stay focused on it, can help us be a little less grumpy, a little more grateful, and, yes, maybe even delightful.

\* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John\\_Wesley\\_Hillman](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Wesley_Hillman)

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## Key in on Mission Partners Through Fireside Chats

Thursday evening Fireside Zoom conversations with Cordata Church's mission partners is on-going, and it is not too late to join in. Already, we have heard stories of African and Middle Eastern teaching assignments from Stephanie and Mike Kuhn. They also gave us a picture of Mike's recent consultant visits with new village pastors in Sierra Leone.

Our second visitor for the Chat was Hans Erchinger Davis who shared the ambitious project of the Lighthouse Mission to dramatically increase capacity to house the homeless at the Mission in Bellingham. Hans also shared his personal journey of faith to lead the Mission and how the Lord helps him to cope with the emotional toll of helping addicts to become transformed.

Coming up in the February sessions are the following:

- Feb. 2 ~ Lem Usita: The Firs Ministries
- Feb. 9 ~ Ray Deck: Skookum Kids
- Feb. 16 ~ Cheryl Ryan: Work in China
- Feb. 23 ~ Mindy Smith: Whitworth University Campus Life & Christian Growth Opportunities

These conversations are open to anyone and are just one hour in length, 7-8p. To get your link send a quick email to the church office, [admin@cordatachurch.org](mailto:admin@cordatachurch.org).

### *Thank You!*

I would like to thank the Deacons and all our church family for their prayers, care, and cards during Pete's long illness and passing. Their soups, salads, and casseroles along with calls as I returned each night were so helpful.

I'm so grateful to be a part of such a loving and caring church.

Norma Acalin and Family



## CPC Kids Clubhouse Catch Up

**Kids Clubhouse** - We've been having a great time in the Kids Clubhouse. It sometimes feels like an "old fashioned school-house" with our group of regularly attending Pre-K through 4th grade kids. But everyone gets along and is learning the benefits of belonging to a wonderful and caring "church family".

This month we continue our Old Testament journey with the "Into Captivity" unit. Some seasons are total head scratchers... Although God had continued to warn His people, they continued to rebel. By contrast, when God warned Israel's enemies, they responded in repentance. Through these lessons, we will see God's heart for all people and also His justice in what He would do next: discipline His people by sending them into captivity in a foreign land.

**Key Passage:** Psalm 139:13-14

**Big Picture Question:** What makes people special?

**Answer:** People are special because we are made in God's image, as male and female, to know Him.

**February Lessons:** Jonah Warned of God's Judgment (Jonah), Nahum Warned of God's Judgment (Nahum), People Were Taken Captive (2 Chronicles), Every Person Matters (Psalm 139)

**Caring Bags** - It's that special time of year when we let others know how important they are to us. Let's shower our CPC kids with affirmations, prayers, and of course, treats! The "Caring Bags" will be on the red cart near the Welcome Desk for you to drop off your Valentine greetings. A list of names will be available if you wish to personalize your notes. The kids will receive them on Sunday, Feb. 19th.

## Birchwood Christian School

“And Mom and Dad can hardly wait for school to start again.” (hahahaha) BCS parents AND kids were happy to return after a very snowy Christmas break.

School resumed on January 3rd with kiddos eager to learn and get back into the school day routine. The Kinders learned important lessons about Martin Luther King Jr., Ruby Bridges, Rosa Parks, equality, and discrimination... Plus, a unit on Truth... “The LORD detests lying lips but He delights in men who are truthful.” Proverbs 12:22. The kids are so fascinated with this unit.

Preschool lessons focused on Winter weather; Snow/Ice and Winter Animals/Hibernation. These interesting topics were made super fun by a den building (blanket fort), pajama day, and Penguin Day with everyone dressed in Black & White for a Penguin Tea Party with their favorite Arctic Animal.

February will be filled with lessons of love and friendship plus fun Valentine Parties. It will also be a shorter than usual month for students due to Parent Teacher conferences that happen during the short, 4-day week after President's Day.

Important BCS Dates:

- Feb. 14: Valentine's Day
- Feb. 20: No School - President's Day
- Feb. 22-24: No School- Parent/Teacher Conference week
- Feb. 27: Kindergarten 100th Day of School
- Feb. 28: Kindergarten Field Trip to Jungle Playland



Creation Story Made By  
BCS Students

## Overview of the Gospels - Adult Lenten Series Set

Get set for an exciting study of the four gospels of the Bible for Lent starting on Sunday, February 26th. These sessions, planned for the Adult Education hour for the six weeks before Easter, will be taught by retired pastor Gordon Terpstra.

Somewhat similar to the style of Gordon's previous class on the Psalms, this course is designed to show how each of the gospels is unique in both literary structure and the way each of the authors painted a markedly different portrait of Jesus. As Gordon puts it, "Though the Synoptics of Matthew, Mark, and Luke and the Gospel of John appear similar, they differ markedly. We will explore not just one Gospel, but get a perspective on all four as a whole to acquire a four-dimensional picture of Jesus."

Gordon highly recommends that folks begin reading the gospels, front to back, during the earlier weeks of February as a sound way to prepare for this study.

Mark your calendars and join us Sunday, February 26, 9a, in the Chapel!

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## Two Sunday Fellowship Lunches Are Planned!

### Sunday February 19, LUNCH BUNCHES!

On Sunday, February 19, we are sending small lunch groups to **Applebees (on Sunset)**, **Lilia's Mexican Restaurant (on Bakerview)**, or **Mykonos Greek Restaurant (at Bakerview and I5)** for lunch out! We'll send four to six people to dine together--easier to get served and easier to talk together over lunch. Sign up at the table in the foyer so we can call ahead to the restaurant for you.

**Remember--that's Lunch Bunches at local restaurants after worship on February 19!**

### Early March, CORDATA GAME TIME!

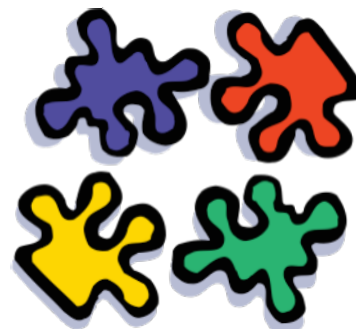
Haven't had a chance to see the new flooring in the Family Life Center? **In early March, Cordata Game Time** will be a great opportunity to do so!! Come for a light lunch (hotdogs and chips etc.) and some pretty no-risk table games in the Family Life Center! Added plus, you will learn how to schedule your own pickleball game on our new court or just watch to see what the pickleball buzz is about!

**Look for Game time—Early March, after worship in the Family Life Center!**

### Pieces that fit together....

How many table puzzles have you put together in the last rainy, snowy, blowy six weeks? Don't forget to go into the library by the north, main church entrance and pick out a puzzle to borrow and put together!! There are some new ones to choose from.

Also, there is a "shared" puzzle on the table inside the Library. The next time you visit the Library add a piece or two. But be careful - you may get hooked on puzzling!





## Curious about Cordata Meeting Starts this Coming Sunday

Once again we are offering a short, 3-part series of gatherings to explore the ministries of Cordata. This is a good chance to get to know new attendees and to get answers to questions such as: How might I serve at Cordata? How do I get involved in a Bible study? How is the Presbyterian form of church unique? How might I become a member? and other topics. Pastor Greg and a few Elders will lead this brief series.

Anyone, whether new or a regular, is invited. The first meeting is 12 Noon after worship on Sunday, February 5, with a lite snack provided. There will be child care and children's activities during the meeting for the convenience of parents. The second meeting will be by Zoom mid-month at a date and time to be determined by the group. The third in the series will be held in person after worship Sunday, February 26.

Those interested in attending can sign up in the foyer or contact the church office at 360-733-8860 or [admin@cordatachurch.org](mailto:admin@cordatachurch.org). You will be notified of the location.

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## You Can Help People in Guatemala Without Leaving Washington

The Guatemala Mission Trip is fast approaching! The team is busy preparing to leave at the end of this month. They will be working with the Pokomchi people in one their remote villages. The team members are: John and Brenda Risser, Kaela and Ella Ruble, Jacqueline and Sebastian Durbin, Wayne Youngquist, Jayme Fergoda, Eric Weisenborn, and Gary and Nina Buma.

The team can use your help! They will be gathering school supplies to be given to the children of the Pokomchi village where they will be serving. They are asking for items such as: pencils, pens, spiral notebooks of paper, crayons, felt-tip markers, colored pencils, pencil sharpeners, coloring books, construction paper, scissors, glue, etc. Every Sunday in February, you will find an open suitcase in the foyer to put your donations in. Help the team fill it to the brim!

The mission team appreciates your help in giving these items so that the Pokomchi children can have the essentials for their school!

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## Lenten Devotional

We will soon be entering the season of Lent - a time to reflect on the death and resurrection of Jesus. Christians over the years have observed Lent by fasting and prayer, going deeper into the scriptures. This year we are offering an online devotional titled "Inward Work for Outward Living" from The Presbyterian Outlook. Each daily reflection will include scripture, meditation, and prayer. The church office will send the link to the online devotion within the first couple of weeks of February. You may read the devotion online or print it out. If you do not have access to a printer, please let the church office know, and we will provide you with a printed copy.

May our Lord Jesus Christ bless you on your Lenten Journey.

Linda Black, Elder for Worship

### Love to bake?

Next time you bake cookies for your family, put two dozen of them in a ziplock bag, label it Fellowship, and drop it off at the front desk. We'll tuck them safely in the freezer and use them for our Sunday fellowship after worship.

Thank you for sharing a treat to go with a cup of coffee after worship!



## Cold Weather Help for the Homeless

In a recent edition of the Presbytery of the Northwest Coast newsletter is an article about the good work being done for the homeless in Skagit County by the Mt. Baker Presbyterian Church (MBPC). Mt. Baker Presbyterian is a church whose outreach work is supported by the Cordata Missions and Outreach Committee.

The article indicates that in November, MBPC partnered with the Public Health Department in Skagit County and used some of its own space to provide an emergency cold weather shelter. With the advent of cold weather, the church has now worked with Skagit County to continue the shelter's operation seven days a week through March 31.

In its first week, the shelter had:

- \* 46 stays in the shelter
- \* 24 showers were given
- \* 88 meals were served
- \* 4 haircuts were given

Recently, the shelter added a laundry facility, and it also has volunteers on-site to not only do outreach into the community, but also to help guests create a plan out of homelessness.

While volunteers do most of the staffing, the shelter needs supplies. It has a need for:

- \* Packs of socks, new or used
- \* Gloves
- \* Stocking caps
- \* Hand and feet warmers
- \* Sleeping bags

If you can help with any of these items, you can ship them or deliver them to the personal address of Pastors Kevin and Danielle Riley:

Mt. Baker Presbyterian Church  
c/o Kevin Riley  
1620 6th Street  
Sedro Woolley, WA 98284



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## Unsung Heroes

A special "thank you" to Chris Battershill, who first braved the heights to change burned out lights in the Worship Center this year. And our thanks to Brian MacKay and John Risser who also helped with this task in the heights. We all appreciated the additional light last Sunday morning!





## Update on Flooring Installation in the Family Life Center and Administrative and Office Areas

Remember that frozen pipe that burst and flooded the FLC a year ago? Well, the last remaining portion of recovery work from that event has now been completed: replacing the damaged, sport-court carpeting in the gym. The flood of water saturated the old gym flooring and destroyed the glue that kept the seams together and bonded the flooring to the concrete. A settlement was reached with our insurance company to repair damages and replace the entire gym flooring.



Due to supply chain constraints, it took over a year to complete the installation, but now it's finally done! We also took the opportunity to add stripes for pickleball – a racquet sport gaining fast popularity that may open up new opportunities for community outreach and/or rental income. So be sure to stop by and check out the new carpet – and yes, it's actually carpet and not wood (reach down and touch it)!



We also used some of the insurance settlement money last fall to replace the badly buckling carpet in the administrative and office areas. The carpet was becoming a tripping hazard, so it was replaced with new, wood-style, vinyl flooring.

Thank you to everyone on the Facilities Team who helps make our building safe, functional, and beautiful.



## Cordata Scene - Hymn Sing



## Save the Date

**Sunday, February 5th, After Worship, Curious About Cordata?** - See page 5.

**Saturday, February 11th, 9a, Palm Room, Men's Breakfast.**

**Sunday, February 19th, After Worship, Lunch Bunch** - See page 4.

**Wednesday, February 22nd, 7:30p, Saint James Pres. Church, Ash Wednesday Worship Service** - See page 1.

**Sunday, February 26th, 9a, Chapel, Adult Sunday Class - Lenten Series Begins** - See page 4.

**After Worship, Curious About Cordata?** - See page 5.

## Regularly Occurring Events

**Mondays - 10a, Monday Morning Muffins and Coffee Kickoff on February 6th, Foyer  
2p, Tai Chi Exercise Class, Family Life Center**

**Tuesdays - 4:30p, Clubs 4 Kids, Foyer**

**Wednesdays - 2p, Tai Chi Exercise Class, Family Life Center  
7p, Choir Rehearsal, Chapel**

**Thursdays - 9:30a - Playgroup  
4:30p, Clubs 4 Kids, Foyer  
7p, Fireside Chats, Zoom** - See page 2.

**Fridays - 2:30p, Free Groceries, Miracle Food Network**

## Prayer Inspired by Psalm 29

By Joel Rautiola

Let us pray:

As seen by the hosts in heaven let the Lord's glory, strength, and splendor be evident in our services to the Lord's kingdom.

When and where chaos, darkness, and threats lurk around us, let us hear God's thunderous speech which banishes evil and brings us confident serenity.

God's voice, at once so powerful that gigantic trees, the mightiest living things on His Earth, can be reduced to splinters, and at once toss mountains into the air, does whisper to us that He loves us and will not let us perish.

Let His Word, hot and reliable as the sun, comfort us with gentle needed warmth as we shiver in our fears.

Where we see vast desolation, with no help or shelter in sight, the Lord will supply our oasis, will quench our thirst, will nourish us to carry on His work of spreading His Love.

Let us praise the Spirit within us, which rules us.

Together let us celebrate the Lord, to honor His control of creation.

And to know His kingdom power to raise the dead is available to us all.

Amen