



# Cordata Beacon

A Publication of **Cordata** Presbyterian Church

March, 2023



## Message from Pastor Greg - “Seeing Beyond the Horizon”

I was fascinated to see in a recent news article that the “flat earth” theory persists in modern times, in spite of millennia of human thought and experience to the contrary. (Yes, the article was “click bait,” but it still caused me to look up the interesting and informative Wikipedia article on “Flat Earth.”) From my perspective, the idea that the earth is flat is, of course, an inaccurate and outdated notion from very ancient times, but maybe it does make us think about the difficulty we all have seeing beyond the horizon.

At this time of year, when Spring has not yet sprung and our PNW skies largely persist being gray, I too have trouble at times seeing over the horizon. In church calendar terms, it is hard to see all the way from Ash Wednesday to Easter. Is this true for you, too? Are there seasons in our lives of faith when our vision is clouded? Do we see only the ash heap of our brokenness and not the flourishing life of Jesus’ empty tomb?

Into that experience, God speaks (Hebrews 11:1-3): *“Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. This is what the ancients were commended for. By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God’s command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.”* In other words, following Jesus in faith always means moving forward to explore what we do not yet see. We do this in the confident hope of what has been seen by believers who have gone before us.

As we sail through the often dark clouds of Lent, can we do it with the fresh wind of Easter in our sails? As we Cordatans move into the future God has for us, with its inherent uncertainties and possibilities, can we do it with the confident hope of faith in Christ? Our risen Lord has promised to meet us wherever we go. Let’s go look for Him together.

Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Greg



## Uncloudy Day

By Carol Lawrence

Here in western Washington, we have lots of experience with clouds, especially this time of year. Recently, in reviewing my images, I found this one. Here, the sky (clouds included) is not just background for a picture of majestic mountains or towering evergreens. Instead, the sky has interest of its own.

Why do you suppose God sends clouds? Could He send them just for our entertainment? Maybe. They certainly are fun to watch, and I'm pretty sure God likes to see us enjoy His creation. Could it be that the purpose of clouds is to remind us to appreciate the sunny days? Can they just be part of His scheme for the natural world? Washington State's economy depends heavily on agriculture - blueberries, strawberries, raspberries, apples, cherries - so we can all be thankful He sends rain for those luscious fruits. Not all clouds bring rain, however.

Of course, scripture has plenty of cloud references. One of my favorites is found in the next-to-last book of the Bible. Speaking of false teachers, Jude says:

*[False teachers] are spots in your love feasts, while they feast with you without fear, serving only themselves. They are clouds without water, carried about by the winds; late autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, pulled up by the roots; raging waves of the sea, foaming up their own shame; wandering stars, for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever (Jude 12-14, NKJV).*

Vivid imagery, powerful words. Avoiding false teachers remains a challenge for Christians in today's world. We know there is one place we can go to find words that are unfailingly true, however. God's word, whether we find it in the Bible or in prayer, will not fail us. We know that today's quandaries will be resolved, in time, as long as we keep our eyes on the eternal. As Christians, we expect to find our eternal home in a place with no clouds of any sort. Naturally, I have a song reference for this. I first heard it from Willie Nelson, but it's actually an old gospel hymn:

*Oh, they tell me of a home far beyond the skies  
Oh, they tell me of a home far away  
Oh, they tell me of a home where no storm clouds rise  
Oh, they tell me of an uncloudy day.*

Amen.



## Clubhouse Catch-Up

**CPC Kids Clubhouse** - CPC kids begin the Spring Volume called "From Captivity to Restoration" this March. Exciting and familiar stories about Daniel, Queen Esther, rebuilding the temple will keep Clubhouse kids engaged. We will pause the Bible study timeline for Easter and passion week lessons and crafts.

**March Study "In Exile" Unit 16 Description:** The people were far away from the land God had given them, but they were not far from the God who had given it. Even in exile, God was with His

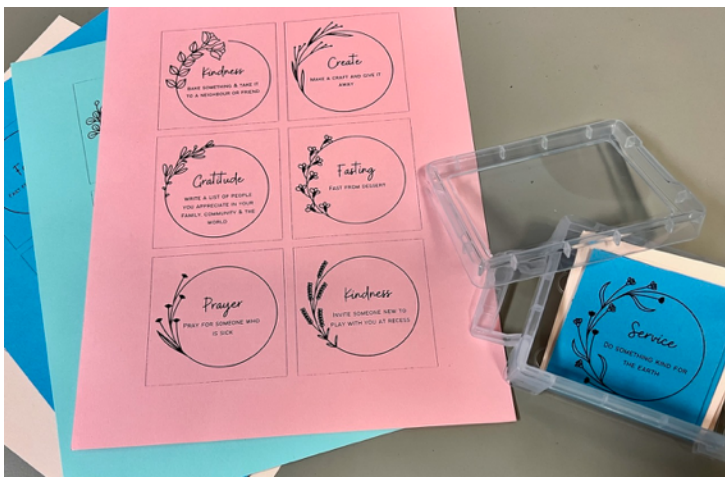
people watching over them and promising them that one day, they would return to the land, and when they did, they would return to Him as well.

**Key Passage:** Zephaniah 3:17

**Big Picture Question:** Where is God? **Answer:** God is in all places at all times and is always with His people.

**March Lessons:** Jeremiah Encouraged God's People (Jeremiah 29–30), Daniel Was Faithful (Daniel 1), Daniel Served God (Daniel 5), God Is Present with Us (Isaiah 7)

**Lenten Devotionals for kids/families** - Two unique ways for our CPC Clubhouse Kids and their families to go deeper in their faith this Lenten season were given out the Sunday before Ash Wednesday.



One is a set of daily cards reminding them to pray, fast, give, and create and the other is a scripture reading journey craft that the entire family can participate in while creating 40+ beautiful paper

ornaments to keep for years to come. If you would like these supplies, contact Children's Ministry Dir. Bonnie Hollingsworth at [BonnieH@cordatachurch.org](mailto:BonnieH@cordatachurch.org).

## Birchwood Christian School

March will be especially busy for BCS. Many wonderful lesson plans, from Dr Suess' birthday and St Patrick to the much-awaited arrival of Spring, are planned. But the most important lessons, songs, and activities will be those in preparation of BCS's annual spring program:

**A Journey with Jesus**  
**Thursday, March 30th**  
**6:30p in the Family Life Center**



## BCS Continued from Page 3

ALL are welcome to join the school for this special presentation on the life and ministry of Jesus told through scriptures and songs. An Ice Cream Social will follow the show.

The school year seems to be flying by - which is hard considering it's the final school year. Many BCS families have expressed gratitude for having been a part of this wonderful place. They also have expressed deep concern for next steps for our teaching staff. The teachers have reassured concerned folks that they have peace, because they know in their hearts that God is faithful! Though they don't know what God has in store next, they need not worry.

**Important BCS Dates:**

March 30: BCS Spring Program 6:30p in the Family Life Center

April 3-7: No School – Spring Break

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**Sunday Morning Adult Bible Study Underway**

It's not too late to join the Sunday morning adult education class at 9a in the Chapel. This Lenten series, titled "Grasping the Gospels," continues through Palm Sunday, April 2. In this class, retired Pastor Gordon Terpstra leads participants into a deeper understanding of the four wonderful Gospels that begin the New Testament.

Gordon describes the class as follows: "We have likely heard many parts of the four Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John numerous times. We can easily think we know all about them. But do we? Do we understand why there are four accounts of the Gospel of Jesus instead of just one? Do we know why God wrote the story of Jesus from four different angles instead of a simpler single angle? Do we grasp how each Gospel differs markedly from the other three, and why these differences are crucial? Do we appreciate how each one of the four is literarily constructed in such a unique way that they paint Jesus in four unique colors instead of one color? In short, when we read the Gospels do we come away with a full, four-dimensional portrait of Who our Lord and Savior really is or just a truncated one dimensional portrait?"

Last Fall Gordon led a class on the Psalms. It was not a class on any individual Psalm but rather an overview of how to read and understand all 150 Psalms as a whole. This new class is similar in that it is not a detailed study of one Gospel but an overview on how to read and understand the fullness of all four Gospels as they are compared and contrasted with one another.

You are warmly invited to attend, to learn, and to grow in grasping the wonder of how God orchestrated such a marvelous four-dimensional picture of His Son!

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**Join Us for Together Tuesday on March 14**

There are some **REGULAR** things about the month of March, like St. Patrick's day, wearing green, and Irish potatoes, but here are a couple of other **not so REGULAR** things about it!

**March 14 is Together Tuesday, and Pastor Greg will be our speaker** as he helps us try out some ways to make faith a **REGULAR** part of our lives. How does one develop a healthy spiritual practice? How do we discover and grow a **REGULAR** exercise of our faith?

Come, join us as we share learning how to better make faith a regular part of our daily lives over a baked potato supper with Pastor Greg! Tuesday, March 14 at 5:30p. Donation of \$5, please. Reserve your place by using the sign up sheet in the foyer or sending a message to the church office (Admin@cordatachurch.org).

*Thank You!*

*We would like to thank everyone for their cards and support. They were very comforting. The Lord has been kind and gracious to us, and we are feeling His love.*

*Jeannine Olivier and Family*

## Fifth Friday of March!

30 days hath September, April, June and November...BUT WAIT!! MARCH HAS 5 FRIDAYS!! That is really important because on this first month of 2023 to have five Fridays, we have something special planned at CPC. We are going to have potluck dinners together!

In the foyer, there is a place to sign up to open your home to 4-6 of your fellow congregants to come and have a potluck supper. So, step one is sign up at the table in the foyer (or by calling the church office at 360-733-8860) to share your home. As host, you'll provide the main dish. Step two is sign up to bring something (salad or dessert) to contribute to the potluck supper. Be sure to give us your phone number and perhaps email, so that our Fellowship Team can help bring it all together.

**Date? Friday, March 31, supper time!**

## Landscape Clean-Up March 25

Spring will be here soon and with that comes Spring cleaning. An outdoor cleaning of the landscape has been scheduled for Saturday, March 25 from 9a to 12 noon. There is a lot of cleanup after the fall and winter winds, so your help is encouraged. There also will be a small amount of bark to be spread.

We encourage volunteers to bring rakes, buckets, tarps, and pruning tools. If anyone has a trailer that could be used to haul debris to the compost area, it would be helpful. If you are unable to attend March 25, but want to help in another way, there will be a pre-work party earlier in the work party week to get the grounds ready for volunteer cleanup. If you are interested, please notify Margaret Rudy (margru3410@aol.com) so we can coordinate date and time.

**Remember:** "many hands make light work".

## Commissioning and Sending Mission Team to Guatemala



**The Team:** Eric Weisenborn, John Risser, Wayne Youngquist, Jayme Fergoda, Gary and Nina Buma, Jacqueline Durbin, and Ella and Kaela Ruble.

**Not pictured:** Brenda Risser and Sebastian Durbin.



**They will be taking school supplies for the children of the Pokomchi village they will be serving. Thank you for your donations.**

## Cordata Presbyterian Church - A Place of Goodness

How have the last few years been for you?

- Pandemics
- Spy balloons
- Earthquakes and chemical spills
- Wars
- Crime
- Racial conflict
- Immigration
- Campus shootings
- Floods of information we're left to decipher for ourselves
- Failing institutions from government to education to medicine
- Threats of economic recession and the loss of Social Security benefits
- Divided church denominations, even our own

Need I go on? Candidly, I've begun turning it off. I've been "over-informed" about things that are meant to get my attention and frighten me.

Yes, I know there's a risk of not being fully prepared for all the bad things that could happen. That's OK. In the place of all these emergencies meant to paralyze me, I've found an alternative. There is still "goodness" in our world...and it's very close. In fact, you have found it. You are there.

IT'S HERE...your church. Cordata Presbyterian Church. It's YOUR church and my church. It's the only place lately where I can honestly say I find genuine "goodness" every single time. It's a beautiful place, but more, it's a place where there are good, honest, genuine people who care for and about others – inside and outside the church...and endless opportunities for involvement.....and a sense of comfort.

I hope you realize, as I do, what a special place this is. It's not just a place for a Sunday service or to see old friends. I've come to know it as a place where I can get and stay together in a world that I often don't understand. And to make contributions that matter.

I can't do much about the chaos I'm exposed to day-in and day-out. We can't change what we experience, but we can choose how those experiences affect us... change us. What I can do is make sure I am spiritually healthy enough to deal with an upside-down world. I can do that.

Here! This is a "place of goodness". Your church. Your people. Your Savior. He is found here.

Goodness is found here...every single time. Recognize it. Embrace it. Serve it. Support it.

Above all, share it.

Rich Emerson

Dear Lord and Shepherd,

Thank you for leading us to this green pasture of rest at Cordata and the fertile field for your work. Thank you for the refreshment of community and fellowship as we seek to serve you.

As we walk through, what we see as, dark valleys that surround us, we know that you are with us - providing us with light and whatever we need for the task you have given us to do. Your goodness and love have brought us to this special place and time, and surely it will follow us into the future.

So, guide us, bring us your peace and comfort, let us see your vision of what our church should be, and give us the focus and strength to live into that vision.

For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever.

Amen

Suzanne Rautiola

## Save the Date

**Sunday, March 5th, After Worship, Curious About Cordata?**

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

**Tuesday, March 14th, 5:30p, Family Life Center, Tuesday Together -** See page 4.

**Saturday, March 25th, 9:00a, Landscape Clean-Up Party -** See page 5.

**Sunday, March 26th, 1p, Open Gym**

**Thursday, March 30th, 6:30p, Family Life Center, BCS Easter Program -** See page 4.

**Friday, March 31st, 6:30p, Fifth Friday Potluck Dinners -** See page 5.

### Regularly Occurring Events

**Sundays, 9a, Chapel, Adult Bible Study, Grasping the Gospels  
10:15a, Worship Center, Worship**

**Mondays - 10a, Foyer, Monday Morning Muffins & Coffee  
2p, Family Life Center, Tai Chi Exercise Class**

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

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

**Thursdays - 9:30a, Play Group for Children Ages 0-4 and  
their Caregivers  
4:30p, Foyer, Clubs 4 Kids**

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

### Open Gym Returns

**Help us welcome our neighbors  
with fun games for all ages.**

**Join us after worship at 1p  
on March 26th.**

