



Cordata Beacon

A Publication of Cordata Presbyterian Church

April, 2023

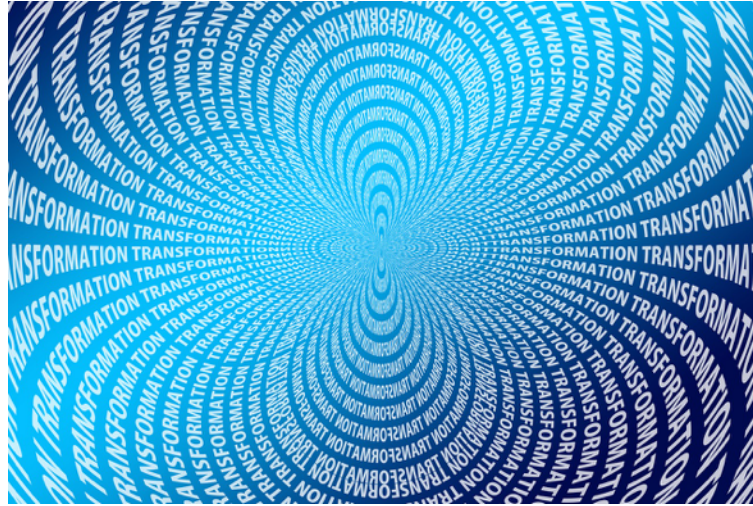


Image by gerald

Message from Pastor Greg: “Transformation”

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect. Romans 12:2 (NIV)

As we approach Holy Week, I am newly fascinated by how God transforms. It's not just the transformation happening around us in nature, when our dark and cloudy PNW skies and leafless trees burst forth into blue skies and new Spring life. It's the transformation of people that's even more compelling; we probably know people who experience a “before” and “after” transformation in their lives. As Christians, we see this most clearly happening as people come to faith in Jesus: “*once I was blind, but now I see*”...“*once you were not a people; now you are God's people.*” Transformation (a.k.a. change) is an expected part of following Jesus. Indeed, as the Apostle Paul proclaims, “*if anyone is in Christ, he/she is a new creation!*”

Holy Week is itself a showcase of transformation, as Jesus transforms everything from our understanding of what it means to be a king, to how we understand the relationship between God and humanity. Even the nature of life and death is transformed by Jesus' death and resurrection. A familiar quip comes to mind: “What do you call someone who is not changing?...Dead!” That's a bit grim, but also true. To live means to transform. So, you and I are invited to lean into transformation! We trust that God knows exactly how and when we need to be transformed both as individuals and a community of faith.

I am so eager to explore the many aspects of transformation we find in the Bible (mind, heart, money, and much more) during my preaching in the Easter season. I am even more eager to embrace the transformation happening in our congregation (newly expanded and energized choir; Liam's rededication of his life to Christ; an upcoming infant baptism; newly forming small groups; renewed and expanded collaborations with Mosaic Church and our fellow Presby churches in Bellingham). Even the recent letter of response we received from our General Assembly co-moderators to our letter of protest [to be shared with CPC through all-congregation email]--which I thought was both reassuring and encouraging--may mark a transformation in our relationships within the broader church.

So much healthy transformation is at hand. Will you come and take part?

Yours in His transformation,
Pastor Greg

Last Supper

By Carol Lawrence

When I first saw this sculpture, I was awestruck by the spectral beauty of the graceful figures, in the mellow light of early evening. When I reviewed my images later, however, I was disappointed. I was there at the wrong time of day, and just couldn't get the exposure I wanted. Naturally, that's because I was working with the wrong attitude. I was seeking technical perfection, to show off my skill. Once my attitude improved, and I paid attention to the subject of the work, I wondered why someone would put a sculpture of the Last Supper way out in the desert ghost town of Rhyolite, Nevada.



The sculpture portrays a moment of deep disappointment. Jesus had told the apostles He would leave them, and also that one of their number would betray Him. The apostles had all willingly devoted their lives to serving Christ. Most likely, however, none fully understood that they would be called, not just to live for Jesus, but to die for Him, in horrible ways, and relatively soon, not at the end of a long and peaceful life.

We might be tempted to say, with the benefit of 2,000 years of hindsight, that they should have known what was coming. The king at that time was Herod Agrippa, whose uncle Herod Antipas had murdered John the Baptist, and whose grandfather, Herod the Great, had ordered the murder of the children of Bethlehem. Presumably, this family history was widely known. And yet, it seems to be human nature to deny things we don't want to know.

But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" They said to Him, "We are able" (Mark 10:38,39,NKJV).

An old hymn puts Jesus' question more clearly:

*Are ye able said the Master,
To be crucified with me
Yea, the sturdy dreamers answered,
To the death we follow Thee.
Lord, we are able.
Our spirits are Thine.
Remold them, make us,
Like Thee, divine.*

Perhaps we need to pray about how we will respond when we are called. One thing I feel sure of: Whatever He calls us to do, He knows what we are able to do. I do sometimes feel that He overestimates what I am capable of, but then I remember: He made us. He knows better than we do what we are capable of. Amen.

A Transformational Gift

We have received a wonderful gift from an anonymous donor who donated \$72,000 to reduce our mortgage principal. Thanks to this donation, CPC's remaining mortgage debt is now under \$600,000 (from a high of over \$2 million 15 years ago).

We are thankful for this special gift and designated gifts others have made that help to transform CPC's financial picture and open new opportunities for ministry. We are also grateful for special gifts of time and talent we see each week. All of these gifts inspire us to look for ways to become involved in the transformational work our Lord has for each of us.



Clubhouse Catch-Up

Palm and Easter Sunday - We pause our weekly chronological Bible study for these two special Sundays.

***Easter Sunday** – Families will stay together during the entire service. There will be activity stations set up in the Chapel if children get “the wiggles”. A live zoom feed of the service will be projected in the Chapel so parents of younger children can continue to watch the service while the littles keep busy.

The rest of April into early May the Kids Clubhouse has a new study unit: **“The People Return”**

God’s time of disciplining His people had been completed, and true to His word, He returned them to the land of promise. Once there, they began to rebuild the temple—the important reminder that God was with them, that He is faithful, and that He can always be trusted.

April Lessons: God Delivered His People (Ezra 1), Zechariah Gave Hope (Zechariah 13–14), The People Rebuilt the Temple (Ezra 2–6), God Can Always Be Trusted (Jeremiah 31)

Key Passage: Jeremiah 17:7

Big Picture Question: Can God be trusted?

Answer: Yes, God cannot lie or ever be wrong, so we can trust whatever He has said.

Annual Easter Egg Hunt - Our church kids as well as many kids from the neighborhood are super egg-cited for our annual egg hunt! Donations of plastic eggs, candies/treats are welcome now – though Easter morning.

***Egg hiding volunteers are needed directly after Easter service.**

You won’t want to miss this fun (and fast) yearly activity! Please contact Bonnie Hollingsworth for details - bonnieh@cordatachurch.org

Birchwood Christian School

Lots of fun and interesting lessons, a few field trips, and Mother’s Day Teas will be the highlights of April and May. The last couple of months of the school year always feel like they happen at double speed. The BCS teaching staff is hoping to slow everything down as much as possible and savor each day/week of this final year.

A “25 years of Birchwood Christian School” celebration is in the works for early summer. If you or your family/friends have been a part of BCS over the past 25 years, we would love to hear your special stories and memories!

Please send your stories and copies of any BCS photos, projects, etc. to BCSKids@cordatachurch.org

BCS Important dates:

April 3-7: NO SCHOOL – Spring Break

April 10: School Resumes

Adult Education Class - Rule of Life Starts April 16th

For those of you who attended Together Tuesday in March and heard Pastor Greg present the Rule of Life, you will be happy to know that the Discipleship Committee has heard your requests for more and will present this full curriculum as our next class which will start on April 16th at 9a in the Chapel.

This class invites you to create a guide for your spiritual life by designing your own unique Rule of Life articulating five practices: prayer, study, recreation, work, and hospitality. Each practice will be led by a different presenter. Over the weeks, we will consider how to organize our spiritual lives around these practices. Join us and let's all get inspired to ignite a spirituality, charged with "living the ordinary life extraordinarily well".

Please remember that "Grasping the Gospels", our special Lenten series, runs through April 2nd. In this class, retired Pastor Gordon Terpstra leads us into a deeper understanding of the four Gospels that begin the New Testament. We are learning how each of the books is literarily constructed in such a way that Jesus is painted in four unique colors instead of one. The class helps us understand the fullness of the Gospels as they are compared and contrasted. Join us in grasping the wonder of how God orchestrated such a marvelous, four-dimensional picture of His Son!

Together Tuesday - April 18th at 5:30p

Save the date for our next Together Tuesday on April 18th at 5:30p in the Family Life Center. Our evening will feature a return visit by the Kings Men of Song, a county-wide group bringing a program of gospel music. A delicious dinner will also be served. Consider inviting friends and newcomers to this special April event.

Reservations help us to plan the meal. Look for the reservation sign-up on the information table in the foyer or call the church office (360-733-8860). The cost is \$5.

Cordata's Little Library Wins Two Free Books from "Good Morning America"

Our Little Library is registered with the Little Free Library (LFL) organization, and one of the advantages of that registration is the ability to enter drawings to win books. The other advantage is that we are listed and charted on a world map for all to see. One of the drawings I enter each month is through "Good Morning America" (GMA), an ABC TV show. They feature a book a month and have discussions with the author.

This month, GMA teamed up with Little Free Library to give out free copies in Times Square and at 150 locations across the US and Canada. Since 2009, more than 300 million books have been shared in Little Free Libraries across the world.

On February 23 I received this email: "I'm reaching out because you entered to win books through LFL's partnership with Good Morning America. Congratulations! You have been selected to win two copies of GMA's March Book Club Pick, Pineapple Street by Jenny Jackson!"



This glamorous escape takes place on Pineapple Street in Brooklyn Heights, one of New York City's most desirable neighborhoods, and home to the well-connected Stockton family. Follow the family as they learn how to navigate love, family, class and money from three different perspectives: the eldest, the youngest and a newcomer marrying-in.

Thank you to our congregation for supporting our Little Library with your donations!

Sandy Hiorns

Serving Our Lord and the Pokomchi Guatemala 2023

We just returned from Guatemala where we built 4 water cisterns for the Pokomchi people in the remote village of Pasimaj. We were supposed to be the first outside group to help them 3 years ago but had to return home (after just arriving) because of the COVID shutdown of the country. Now we were the first to come back, and it was wonderful! The people there had been anticipating our return for so long.

To get to the village we rode in a van from San Cristobal to a dirt road and switched to riding standing up for a couple hours in the back of an open truck. The road was very rough, requiring a 4-wheel drive in many places. Although our ride into the mountains to Pasimaj was wild and bumpy, we were treated to beautiful views!

Our base camp where we slept and ate in the village was on a walking path for the villagers. The Pokomchi put a fence up for us so that we wouldn't fall over the edge of the cliff! After our arrival, there was a dedication and welcoming service at the village church, where they gave us a couple of chickens as a gift and provided snacks. They are such giving people who had nothing extra to give but gave from their hearts.

The Pokomchi people showed us how they plant corn (on steep hillsides), cut and pack wood on their backs with a headstrap, get water from the springs, carry water jugs on their heads, and grind corn and make tortillas. Carrying water looks so easy...it wasn't!

The next day we began our work of helping to build 4 different water cisterns for 4 families in the village. The men of the families worked alongside us each day. The everyday dress for the women of the village are skirts so the women of the team wore them all week as well. This village has not had very many outsiders (and few vaccinations) so





we were asked to wear masks when we were with them. Some of the villagers also wore them around us.

We spent a couple afternoons doing fun activities with the village kids (and parents). Some of the village kids would also come to hang out in our camp during the evenings.

The neighboring village had over 100 kids plus adults.....more than we expected, but they were having a great time joining us.

In Pansimaj's school there was one teacher who taught in two rooms at the same time! There was one class for grades 1-3 and one for grades 4-6. The teacher went back and forth between the rooms while the kids were working on their own...very respectful children.

It was such an amazing experience to be with the Pokomchi - playing with the children and seeing their happy faces in the midst of having so little and working with the adults in making cisterns to help them have cleaner water and more of it. What a blessing and a privilege to be there and we thank God for all He did to make it happen!

We look forward to sharing more of this wonderful journey with you in the months ahead.



Our thanks to the staff of ASOSAP Guatemala and Rebekah (in next picture) who took great care of us. They are such special people to all of our team!



Left: Our camp from below.

Right: Our view at sunset.





Meet New Member Carole Wallace

When you come to fellowship events at Cordata, you will often find the smiling, welcoming face of Carole Wallace greeting you. In addition to serving at the Welcome Desk during the week, Carole has pitched in to decorate cookies, make decorations for the Fall Festival, and serve hot chocolate to the Christmas carolers. The desire to connect and communicate is one of the guiding emphases of her life.

Carole was born and grew up in Seattle with two younger brothers and later a half sister. Her fondest memories of her early years were of family time. One of her joys was to share in the summer fun at her grandparents' cabin or going sailing with her family on a friend's boat. During the winters, her dad taught skiing, so the family could often be found skiing together on the slopes.

After high school, Carole wanted to follow her interest in food and go to culinary school to focus on pastry, but when that didn't work out, she combined her love of people with her interest in food and began working in restaurants. Although she completed an Associate Degree in restaurant management, she discovered that restaurants consumed more of her time than she expected, so her interest in food led her to work at Safeway.

Carole's mom grew up on Orcas Island during World War II and wanted to return to the islands, so eventually ended up on nearby Crane Island. Carole moved to Lopez to be closer to her family and worked for Windermere Real Estate as a secretary/administrative assistant. At first island living was difficult since most of her neighbors had a long history on the island, but she loved the water and beauty that surrounded her and eventually established many friendships. Also, after her accident, the slow pace of the island provided her the space and peace to process the changes in her life.

Although Carole had grown up attending the Episcopal church, it had not been a significant part of her adult life. Her half sister began talking to Carole about her faith, and Carole had a friend who had a peace that Carole wanted for herself. Through these two women, Carole began her adult faith journey, reading the Bible and asking questions. When she had her accident, she gave it all to the Lord and knew that she was going to be all right.

Although Carole found peace on the island, unfortunately with the difficulties of taking ferries to the mainland for appointments she decided to move to Sandy Point in 2019 to rent an apartment from her cousin. At Here and Now, a nonprofit support group for those suffering spinal cord injuries, she met Rob and Cindy Gibbs. As she was looking for a church, the Gibbs invited her to CPC, which is interesting because two of her great grandparents were Presbyterian ministers. She began attending services online and when she started coming in person, she found a sense of fellowship, warmth, welcoming, and genuine interest. It just felt right.

Carole quickly became involved in CPC life, volunteering to host and serve at various events mentioned above as well as serving on the Discipleship Committee. Recently she started to volunteer at the Friday afternoon Miracle Food Network pantry. She also remains active in the Bellingham chapter of Here and Now.

In her free time, Carole enjoys gardening, baking, kayaking and caring for her cat, Pickles, who can be very demanding. Pickles used to belong to a neighbor on the island but decided she didn't want to live with her previous owner and came to Carole's house and stayed.

Carole would like you to know that she feels blessed to be a part of a warm, encouraging, fun-loving fellowship. And we're so glad she's a part of CPC!



Ordination of Elders

Julie Farrow, Elder for Discipleship
Margaret Rudy, Elder for Personnel

Cordata Scene



We welcome New Members:

Grace Griffin, Esther Jones, Judy Sherwin & Carole Wallace



Liam Morrison Rededicates His Life



Open Gym

On March 26 over 20 people attended Open Gym.
April 23 Open Gym 1-3
May 21 Open Gym 1-3



Ash Wednesday
February 22nd, 7:30pm
St. James Presbyterian

Maundy Thursday
April 6th, 7:30pm
Cordata Presbyterian

Tenebrae
April 7th, 7:30pm
First Presbyterian

Lenten Pilgrimage 2023



Save the Date

Saturday, April 1st, 9a, Spring Work Party

Saturday, April 15th, 9a, Palm Room, Men's Breakfast

Tuesday, April 18th, 5:30p, Family Life Center, Together Tuesday - See page 4.

Sunday, April 23rd, 1p, Family Life Center, Open Gym

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