



Cordata Beacon

A Publication of **Cordata** Presbyterian Church

November, 2024

Message from Pastor Greg: “The Third Way”



Our two party U.S. political system might lead us to conclude that there are only two defining choices available to us--Republican or Democrat, conservative or progressive, or some other binary pair. But the Bible and the history of the Church reveal that there is another way. In his book, *Resilient Faith*, Gerald L. Sittser, professor of theology at Whitworth University, describes the “Third Way” that emerged in the early days of the Christian movement. While the “Third Way” was, of course, not a political party, it was an entirely new way of living that touched on every aspect of human life. In the 2nd Century, a Roman official, describing the peculiar nature of Christianity to a member of the Roman elite, said that Christians represented a new and distinct people, defined by a particular way of living (which Sittser names the “Third Way”). At the time, the “first way” was Roman, organized around civil religion (civic life and religious life were virtually inseparable in the Roman world). The Roman way was largely transactional; honor paid to the gods was expected to bring benefits in return, especially to the Empire. Sittser says, “In the end, Rome’s religion was Rome itself.” The “second way” was Judaism, an ancient religion quite distinct from the Roman; Jews observed a way of life that set them apart. And then emerged the Christians, who appeared to live like everyone else (same language, food, clothing, customs, etc.) but nevertheless embodied not just a different religion (three in one God), but also a different way of life, a “Third Way.”

What made Christians different? According to Sittser, Christians “believed in the reality of another and greater kingdom over which God ruled. It was a spiritual kingdom—not *of* this world, but certainly *over* this world as superior and supreme, *for* this world’s redemption, and *in* this world as a force for ultimate and eternal good. . . . The Third Way was like a resistance movement, both subversive and peaceful, bearing witness to God’s coming kingdom. But rather than following a strategy of violent revolution, . . . Christians immersed themselves in the culture as agents of the Kingdom. Christians aspired to follow another way, Jesus’ way. They prayed for the Emperor but refused to worship him.”

This Fall at CPC, we are exploring the implications of our call to live this “Third Way.” We have explored what fruitfulness looks like in our lives, so we can better embrace God’s version (rather than the world’s version) of such things as *wisdom*, *freedom*, *grace*, and *good deeds* (always in response to God’s grace in Jesus Christ). In November, we will look at what Kingdom *unity* looks like, as a Third Way antidote to political divisiveness. And we will explore *generosity* through the lens of our 2025 Generosity campaign, called “Joining Jesus’ Journey” (see article on page 2). This means we hold a different view of money. Because, in Christ, we are new creations, we follow Jesus’ way, in which the Spirit’s gift of generosity becomes our attitude towards our giving and finances. We no longer see money in worldly ways (e.g. as our ultimate security, source of happiness, a means to power and control), but instead as God’s blessing and an opportunity to join in God’s Kingdom activity in the world. I’m so grateful that God has called us all together to join Jesus on this “Third Way” journey at CPC.

Together in Christ,
Pastor Greg



Generosity 2025

As we begin November, the annual Generosity focus is launching on Sunday, November 3, 2024. The first three Sundays in November we will take a look at the exciting things that have been going on this year in and around our church. We will also think ahead to what we might want to pursue in the coming months. The journey that Jesus is on in the Cordata community is real, and we can all join in. So many wonderful opportunities for learning, caring, serving, and connecting are right before us. In this beautiful time of year the abundance of God's creation and his gifts to us are so clear. We are hoping you will walk with us as we explore God's bountiful gifts and prayerfully contemplate our response.

On Sunday November 24, we will have an in-gathering of pledges and joyfully give thanks as a congregation. You will be receiving materials in the mail this month to help in considering your part in supporting the journey we are on with Jesus.

Resilient Church Task Force Update

The Resilient Church Task Force continued its work in October. We hosted a "thank you" dinner for the congregation's "journal writers" for their time and effort to record their observations of numerous church events. Special thanks to Stephany Kuhn and Barbara Sanford for their wonderful chili! We anticipate receiving the analysis of the journal entries from our Whitworth University consultant in about two weeks.

In addition, we viewed a webinar featuring theology professor and author Gerald L. Sittser. Some of the major points included:

- The first century Christian church grew, despite the competing pressures of the Roman and Jewish cultures at the time.
- A primary reason for the growth was that early Christianity created a "long on-ramp into the life of the church." This on-ramp was highly relational and was a mentoring program that introduced people to this new way of believing and new way of living.
- We're in a transitional period in American religion. Christianity is losing its place in Western culture.
- Sittser recommend we develop a new "long on-ramp" to foster a culture of discipleship in our churches. Worship should be a way of life, not just showing up on Sunday morning.

If you have questions or recommendations for the Task Force, please contact any member: Dan Sanford (Lead), Rich Emerson, Stephanie Kuhn, Barbara Sanford, Mike Langey, or Pastor Greg Ellis.

Thank You!!!

A huge THANK YOU to the volunteers who helped with outdoor clean up in October. Those helping were: Doug and Carol Cowgill, Dave Kreider, Sue Wright, Dan Moore, Mark Macleod, Bob Gilda, Jim Zander, and Margaret Rudy. We cleaned up and disposed of all the tree limbs from earlier pruning.

Our next (and hopefully last) outdoor cleanup is scheduled for November 9 from 9a to 12 noon. We will need help with leaf raking and disposing. Please sign up in the foyer and plan to attend to help clean up our church site. Remember many hands make light work. Any questions, please contact Roger DeSpain at RogerD@cordatachurch.org or Margaret Rudy at MargaretR@cordatachurch.org.

Taller Than Trees

By Carol Lawrence

Trees! Aren't they gorgeous? The trees along Cordata Parkway have been particularly brilliant this year. I appreciate that the ones in the median have been bright red, a wonderful contrast to the dazzling yellow ones on the sides of the road. Although many of the leaves have fallen by now, here in the Evergreen State we can be thankful for the winter beauty of our 200-foot-tall Western Cedar, Douglas Fir, and Western Hemlocks around town.



You may wonder how I took this photo with its elevated perspective. I'm not much of a tree climber, and I don't have a drone. You would naturally think the bright blue background is a cloudless sky, but it's not. I took this photo when I was hiking above Crater Lake, looking down through the trees at the water. Interesting how a change in perspective can challenge our assumptions, isn't it?

Tree lovers will enjoy a song from the 1950s that I love. Despite its cheery lightheartedness, the message is powerful. It has been recorded by many artists, but my favorite version is by Johnny Cash. Please do yourself a favor and listen to it at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LI5cr-rAzMg>. Perhaps it will bring a chuckle to you and brighten your day.

*On your knees you are taller than trees.
You can look over heartaches and fears.
When my faith is gone,
To my knees I will go,
Growing stronger and taller than trees.*

Of course, in the Pacific Northwest, among our beloved majestic evergreens, it's hard to imagine actually being taller than the trees, but this fall as you are out walking, or sightseeing, or just doing errands, think of the song and remember where we can go when we need to feel big and strong:

*Fear not, for I am with you;
Be not dismayed, for I am your God.
I will strengthen you,
Yes, I will help you,
I will uphold you with My righteous right hand. (Isaiah 41:10)*

But that's not the end of the story. Once we get to our knees, how do we know what to ask for? Strength, of course is always welcome. Comfort also, guidance as well. Sometimes I'm tempted to just say "Dear Heavenly Father, I crave your presence. I don't know exactly what I need, but I know you do". That sounds a bit lazy, though, and I doubt God would find such a prayer very satisfying. Regardless how clumsy our prayers may be, we can rest in the assurance that He hears and cares and answers, in His time, in His way. Scripture admonishes:

*Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad;
Let the sea roar, and all its fullness;
Let the field be joyful, and all that is in it.
Then all the trees of the woods will rejoice before the Lord.
For He is coming, for He is coming to judge the earth.
He shall judge the world with righteousness,
And the peoples with his truth. (Psalm 96:11-13)*

Let us remember this Thanksgiving month to express our gratitude for all the beautiful trees, both deciduous and evergreen, our God has given us.



Kids Clubhouse Catch Up

CPC Kids Clubhouse - November Sunday Morning Clubhouse time will be about Paul's Journeys. In Early December, we explore a kid friendly version of the book of Revelation for two Sundays before wrapping up the year and our 3-year Genesis-Revelation study with Advent lessons and the Christmas season.

Unit 35: Paul's Mission to Rome

Key Passage: Isaiah 25:1

Big Picture Question: Why should we praise Jesus? **Answer:** We should praise Jesus for what He has done to provide our salvation and because He will one day make all things right.

November Lessons: Paul Was on Trial (Acts 22–23), Paul Was Sent to Rome (Acts 24–26), Paul Went and Preached in Rome (Acts 27–28), *Unit wrap up: We Are Here to Make Much of Jesus (1 Thessalonians 4–5)

Clubs 4 Kids - C4K is going strong. We have been successful in adding more book and story-focused time this last month. We average 17-23 kids per C4K time. Those in attendance are equal amounts of K-4th AND 5th-9th grade kids. It's great to see that the older kids, who also attend the twice per month Youth Group, feel comfortable and welcome at C4K even though the activities are aimed toward younger kids. November Club times will focus on Gratitude and Thankfulness. (See photos on page 9.)

Open Gym - Open Gym time resumes Sunday, November 17th, 1-3p.

Save the Date - The holidays are coming up fast! Be sure to mark **December 1st** (the first day of Advent) for our annual **Caroling at Cordata "Carols, Cocoa, & Candy Canes"** event. We gather (and stay) at the round-about in front of the church at 4p to usher in the Christmas season with carols, treats, and some added fun activities. This event is rain or shine... we simply move to the covered entrance area in the event of rain.

FALL FESTIVAL 2024 Recap - THANK YOU to EVERYONE who helped make this year's event a super fun success! It's always hard to determine how many guests came, but we used some indicators to gauge that over 350 were in attendance this year. This is awesome since there were several other similar events going on in town the same night. Many in attendance expressed their thanks for our always hosting such a wonderful event. Thanks to wonderful volunteer participation, we were able to have ALL the festival stations operating! Folks really enjoyed all the station details, the free apples and fall gourds, this year's Exceptional Maze, and especially the amazing and fun interactions with all our volunteers! Way to shine the light of Christ and help build community! (See photos on pages 7 and 8.)

Special Thank You to:

Cardboard Box Donors: Nature's Path/Mario Whyte and Meridian U-HAUL

Fall Gourds: Margaret & Larry Rudy

Apples: Cindy & Jim Edwards

Candy & Prizes Donors: Cordata Church Members

Festival Décor Team: Carol Wallace, Julie Farrow, Barb Mills DeSpain, Kristin French, Carol Anderson, Sue Wright, Evangeline Bentley

Maze Building Team: Dave Ruble, Mario Whyte, Isaac Ruble, Andrew Monks, Athena Hodges, Josh Ruble, Brandon Boyles, Victor Gutierrez, Ella Ruble, Margaret Baumgartner, Blake Zimmerman, Sam Risser, Sygie Sygitowicz, Chloe Till, Kaela Ruble

Maze Demo & Clean Team: Dave Ruble, Dan Sygitowicz, Dan Moore, Brandon Boyles, Mike & Christy Cullum, Joel Rautiola, Mike Kuhn, Cindy Edwards, Julie Farrow, Chris Battershill, Pastor Greg

Our "Mini Army" of Festival Station Helpers: Mike Cullum; Mike Langey; Glenna Allbritton; Carol Wallace; Carol Erickson; Tom, Sher & Lydia Ross; Joel & Suzanne Rautiola; Lynn & Jeannie Dayton; Sue Wright; Carol Anderson; Margaret Rudy; Dan & Barbara Sandford; Kelly Hollingsworth, Barb Mills DeSpain, Linda Black, Hiroko Suenaga, Carol White, Carol Lawrence, Gary & Nina Buma, Stan & Julie Humphreys, Mike and Stephanie Kuhn, Doug & Carol Cowgill,

Thanksgiving Baskets Again This Year!

Once again, CPC will be preparing Thanksgiving Baskets to spread love to our family and neighbors and Thanksgiving cheer. Sunday morning before worship, November 24th, is the designated time we will join Mosaic Church, bringing items and assembling baskets.

We are asking folks to help by bringing any of the following items. Please let us know what you plan to bring using the sign-up sheets in the foyer.

- Frozen Turkey 15 LB + Roasting Pan
- 1 Box Stuffing mix + 1 Packet Turkey Gravy
- 2 Cans Green Beans + 1 Can of Cream of Mushroom
- 5 LB bag of Potatoes
- 5 LBs of fresh fruit (apples and/or oranges)
- 1 Large Can Black Olives + 1 jar of vegetable or olive oil
- 1 Large Box of Macaroni and Cheese

We are also looking for teams of folks to help with deliveries later that day as CPC will be responsible to deliver 10 of the baskets to families we have identified. Look for a sign-up sheet in the foyer if you can help with delivery.

Whether you are able to contribute or not, please join us starting around 9:30a in the Family Life Center for the fun of packaging these gifts. Breakfast goodies are being provided for everyone (see another sign-up sheet to bring breakfast items). For questions, contact Dan Sanford, Elder for Missions and Outreach (DanS@cordatachurch.org).

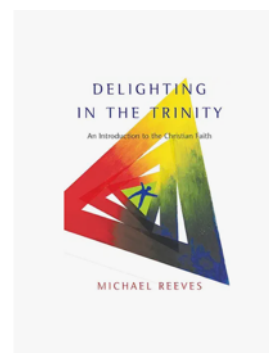
Inspiring Classes Ahead in Adult Education, Sunday, 9a

On November 3rd the Discipleship Committee will start a 3-part series called "The Story of Heaven". Max Lucado and Randy Frazee will give a hope-filled picture of what the kingdom of God will be like, from the book of Revelation.

November 24th, there will be no Adult Education since CPC will be busy creating Thanksgiving baskets alongside Mosaic Church.

In December we will start a new 6-week series on the Trinity taught by Mike Kuhn. Suggested reading for Mike's class is *Delighting in the Trinity* by Michael Reeves (available through Amazon and other stores). Mike will teach the first three weeks of December and then the first three weeks of January. You won't want to miss it!

Join us at 9a on Sunday mornings in the Chapel.



Kids Clubhouse Catch-up, Fall Festival Recap, Continued from Page 4

Our "Mini Army" of Festival Station Helpers Continued

Mark & Phyllis Macleod, Sandy Hiorns, WWU/CCF Students Deah Ransley & Laasya "CC"
Hammerstrom, Kristin French, Chris Battershill, Evangeline Bentley, Pastor Greg

*I hope I didn't miss anyone.

God bless you all, Bonnie Hollingsworth (Your Grateful Festival Director)

Hans Erchinger-Davis to Speak at Together Tuesday on November 12

We are very excited to announce that Hans Erchinger-Davis, President and CEO of the Lighthouse Mission Ministries, will be the speaker at our next Together Tuesday on November 12. This ministry has been supported by our church for many years and Hans' many inspirational stories have always been a blessing to those who hear them.

The mission statement of the Lighthouse Mission Ministries is: "Healing homelessness with Christ's power and love." Their aim is "to be a consistent friend to people in homelessness. This is done through four distinct programs that come alongside people, wherever they are at, to offer hope, give dignity, serve, and support as they undertake the difficult work of leaving homelessness behind."

As usual, we start at 5.30p, and a donation of \$7 towards the meal is greatly appreciated. Please RSVP at the information table in the foyer so that we will know how much food to prepare.

It will be an inspiring evening; we hope you will join us!

How Does the CPC Food Pantry Work?

Our church has now been offering free food for THREE years! The service has a nick name – "Pop up Pantry". Almost every week throughout the year we host some 20 to 30 guests and families for packaged foods, fruits, and vegetables. It usually takes 2 drivers to bring the groceries from the Ferndale warehouse and 3 to 4 hosts to set items out—a total 5 to 6 people helping each Friday.

In sum, this means 300 volunteers over 50 Fridays per year and nearly 1,250 individuals or families taking advantage of these free groceries each year! Anyone - neighbors and congregational members - are welcome to come, and sometimes left over items are useful for our own CPC events. Full usage is encouraged, as otherwise perishables might have to go to the pigs. Open hours Friday are 2:30-4p.

The groceries are collected by the county-wide organization Miracle Food Network based in Ferndale, and set aside for pick up by distributors such as Cordata Pres. Miracle Food Network hauls in the food items from stores, producers, even fast food restaurants who have surpluses that can be used safely by consumers. CPC members Gregg Block and Stan Humphreys are currently CPC coordinators for the Cordata Food Pantry, replacing our long-time, faithful Pantry Organizer, Rich Emerson.

Cordata's Missions and Outreach Committee is hoping to begin sustaining support for the Miracle Food Network's gas and rental costs soon. Also, we would like to see a sharing cart available Sundays for food that folks are happy to share.

Each week different volunteer groups such as our CPC small groups are appointed to help, but any volunteer can find a place. We are grateful that God has given us this opportunity to share with each other and our neighbors.



A Question for Those Who Use the Library

We are considering putting the church library catalog online so that you can search it from home. If this would be something that you would use, please email Sher Ross at sherrossrides@gmail.com.



Maria Castillo-Garcia reads Scripture in Spanish.

World Communion Sunday



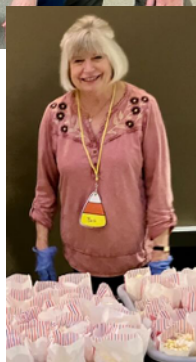
Josh, Elaine and Paxton White read Scripture in Mandarin.



Mike Kuhn reads Scripture in Arabic.

Preparation for the Fall Festival





Save the Date

Saturday, November 2nd, 11a, Celebration of Life Service for Betty Smith, Worship Center

Saturday, November 9th, 9a - 12 noon, Fall Outdoor Work Party - See page 2.

10a - 1p, Cookie Baking Ministry, Kitchen

Sunday, November 10th, After Worship, Table Game Day, Foyer

Tuesday, November 12th, 5:30p, Together Tuesday, Family Life Center (FLC) - See page 6.

Saturday, November 16th, 8a, Men's Breakfast, Cedar Room

Sunday, November 17th, 1-3p, Open Gym, Family Life Center - See below.

Sunday, November 24th, 9:30a, Breakfast & Preparing Thanksgiving Baskets, FLC - See page 5.

Thursday, November 28th, Thanksgiving, Office Closed

Sunday, December 1st, 4p, Caroling at Cordata, in the Round About in Front of CPC - See page 4.

Regularly Occurring Events

- Sundays -** 9a, Adult Education Class, Chapel
 10:30a, Worship, Worship Center
 10:45a, Kids Clubhouse/Sunday School - See page 4.
 After Worship, Coffee Fellowship
- Mondays -** 2p, Tai Chi Exercise Class, Chapel
- Tuesdays -** 4:30p, Clubs 4 Kids, Foyer
- Wednesdays -** 9a, Weekly Prayer Group, Zoom - Contact admin@cordatachurch.org for link.
 2p, Tai Chi Exercise Class, Chapel
 5:30p, Youth Group (5th to 8th Grade), 1st and 3rd Wednesday
 7:00p, Choir, Chapel
- Thursdays -** 4:30p, Clubs 4 Kids, Foyer
- Fridays -** 2:30p, Free Groceries, Miracle Food Network

Clubs 4 Kids



Open Gym Sunday, November 17th 1-3p

Fun for everyone! We have a dynamic group of neighborhood children and teens excited for the fall Open Gym, and we would love to see you there too. Join us for a time of pickleball, hoops, and table games.

This is a fantastic opportunity to engage with each other, make connections, and build relationships with our CPC family, friends, and neighbors! Sign up at the information table to lend a helping hand.

Cordata Beacon - a publication of:
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