



Cordata Beacon

A Publication of **Cordata** Presbyterian Church

April, 2025



Message from Pastor Greg: *“Love One Another” Thursday*

Holy Week is right around the corner. Starting on April 13th, we will kick off the eight day celebration of Jesus’ completing his earthly mission—from his entry into Jerusalem to the growing unrest of that Passover week, to his sacrificial death on a cross as he became the lamb who was slain for our sake, to his resurrection to new life on Easter Sunday morning. This is the special week of the year when Christ’s church gathers to tell that old, old story. So, grab your calendar and save the dates:

Sunday, April 13th – Palm Sunday (@ CPC, regular Sunday morning time and place)

Thursday, April 17th – Maundy Thursday (6:00p @ CPC, simple soup and bread dinner provided)

Friday, April 18th – Good Friday (7:30p @ First Presbyterian Church)

Sunday, April 20th – Easter Sunday (9:30a Easter breakfast, 10:30a Worship, 11:30a Egg Hunt)

Let me fill you in about our Maundy Thursday service, since we’ll be doing something fun and new for that gathering this year. As usual, we’re including all 4 Bellingham Presby’ congregations: Cordata Pres., First Pres., St. James Pres., and Spring Church. But instead of meeting in the Worship Center and sitting in the church pews, we’ll gather around round tables in the Foyer. We’ll enjoy fellowship with sisters and brothers in Christ from other congregations over a simple but tasty dinner (soup and bread...with also a PB&J option for variety). In this way, we’ll hear and recreate that last supper Jesus had with his disciples, telling them to “love one another as I have loved you.”

Yes, we’ll do some usual worship stuff, like praying & singing together, hearing Scripture and a message, communion, choir...but this “Love One Another” feast will feel different this year—still holy but more relaxed. I’m confident it will be time well spent together.

I look forward to seeing many of us CPCers there, along with new people to meet from the other congregations.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Greg

All Stirred Up

By Carol Lawrence

This life-size sculpture of a group of men is nestled beside the Santa Cruz River in Tucson, Arizona. The white plaster figures were created by Felix Lucero, in fulfillment of a promise he made to God. Critically wounded and left for dead on a World War I battlefield, Lucero promised God to devote his life to sculpting religious figures. Few details about his postwar life are known, but apparently during his work on this project he was destitute and living in a tent beside the river. He shaped the figures from debris salvaged from the river, then covered them in plaster and painted them white. The large tabletop was made from a mattress that floated down the river. The little park is called the Garden of Gethsemane, and a sculpture of Christ on the cross stands nearby. The city maintains the park, which includes a single outlet that provides electricity for the homeless.



For Lucero, the sculptures were all he could do to thank God for what God had done for Him. This time of year, as Easter approaches, we are reminded of the great love of our God who gave His only son for us. What can we do in return? As always, Scripture gives us the answer: *And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works* (Hebrews 10:24).

My study Bible notes that the phrase *stir up* is translated from the Greek word *paroxysm*, which means uncontrollable outburst. I can't think of a better thing to get stirred up about than love for each other and good works.

Resilient Church Initiative

Approximately 50 congregation members gathered after worship on March 9 for “round-table” discussions on the Resilient Church Initiative. We addressed these questions:

- What are some ways – in the past – where God worked in your life through CPC (or another church)? Can you be specific?
- How do you see God at work in your life now through CPC and its ministries?
- What do you hope God will do at CPC in the future?
- If you could say anything to the leadership of CPC, what would you say?

We thank all who participated for their valuable insights. The Resilient Church Task Force is now in the process of reviewing and assessing all of the information gathered. We expect to have a summary available for all by the end of April.

In mid-March three members of our task force, Dan Sanford, Rich Emerson, and Greg Ellis, attended a Resilient Church retreat near Spokane with representatives of seven other churches present. This was an opportunity to learn what ideas are emerging in the other participating churches and to get suggestions regarding what is developing at CPC. A central part of the meeting was a workshop led by Boris Borislav, a specialist in urban planning and church planting. After studying a satellite map of Cordata's neighborhood, we began exploring the multiple avenues to building relationships and extending outreach to our nearby community. Aside from knowing where and how to connect, we began discussion around the question, “How can we be best equipped to respond to God's call to be relational missionaries in our neighborhood?”

Some of the additional topics addressed were related to the future generation: How do we effectively communicate? How do we engage those who are worshipping with us at a distance? What will be the culture and method of financial giving in the future? And many other questions. We hope to report more fully about these topics in the coming months.

If you have questions or information you'd like the Task Force to consider, please contact any team member: Dan Sanford (Lead), Rich Emerson, Sue Wright, Stephanie Kuhn, Barbara Sanford, Mike Langey, or Pastor Greg Ellis.



CPC Kids Clubhouse Catch Up

CPC Kids Clubhouse - We completed our 3-month study in the book of Genesis on March 30th. So many familiar Bible stories are found and loved in that book. A big take away is how the story shifts from people to God's people.

April lessons begin with the story of Job and how God is good even in suffering. This lesson of suffering is a good one to help lead into Holy Week lessons and Easter. After Easter Sunday, we resume our study plan with Volume 2 "Law and Life: Exodus—Deuteronomy". The first unit in Volume 2 is titled "God Delivers His People". The stories about Moses and the Israelites will keep us engaged all month.

April Lessons:

The Suffering of Job (Job)

Palm Sunday/Jesus' Triumphal Entry (Matthew 21, Mark 11, Luke 19, John 12)

Easter Sunday/Jesus' Crucifixion and Resurrection (Matthew 26-28, John 20)

Begin Unit 4/God Called Moses (Exodus 1-4)

Holy Week Family Devotional - In addition to the 40-day Lenten Devotional packets handed out prior to Ash Wednesday, we also have a Holy Week devotional for families. The packets have an easy-to-follow daily study guide plus a couple of crafts to help the entire families focus on the meaningful events of the Passion. Packets are available at the Welcome Desk and at the Miracle Food Network Friday Food Pantry.

Easter is almost here!

Palm Sunday Coat Drive - We are still in need of coats for our special Palm Sunday coat drive. Take a look in your closets, and ask family members and neighbors to do the same. You can bring in your donations anytime between April 1st and Sunday, April 13th. Place them in the large red wagon in the lobby.

Easter Sunday - This is the best day of the year!

We enjoy two extra activities in addition to our lovely and meaningful Easter Sunday service: our pre-service, pancake breakfast and post-service egg hunt. If you haven't yet... **be sure to sign up on the helper sheet or to bring one of the items on the breakfast supplies list in the lobby.** *No food service experience necessary - just a willingness to help serve. Contact Bonnie Hollingsworth (BonnieH@cordatachurch.org) for information and details on both Palm and Easter Sundays.

Clubs 4 Kids - Club time is always a fun jumble of organized chaos. We wondered if the older middle school kids had decided to stop coming since we hadn't seen them in a few weeks. BUT they've returned in droves. We are pleased that they feel welcome and continue to have a willingness to participate in the Roses and Thorns Time. Please continue to pray for our young neighbors, especially for our twice monthly Youth Group.

*Thank you for your very generous snack donations. The kids are visibly moved when we let them know their snack was donated by someone at the church who cares about them! (More photos on p. 6.)



Fun in the Sun (FITS) Preparations - We have a theme for summer 2025! Last year we added Bible stories to our FITS summer program. We broke down Philippians 4:8 into weekly lessons that helped kids focus on "What Really Matters". The kids responded well to the addition of scripture and story time. Many of them remembered learning about the verse when it was recently brought up during Clubs 4 Kids! Summer Break/FITS 2025 will be 9 weeks of learning the Fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23)!

Grab Your Calendars!

Dates to enjoy being together just ahead:

April 8th Together Tuesday features Rob Gibbs, this time as he shares "Here and Now", the organization for those in our community who live and work with paralysis. Some photos, some information, and lots of inspiration. Fish supper...in the Family Life Center at 5:30p. Dinner is \$7 per person. Come and join us.

April 17th, Maundy Thursday Service and Dinner - We will gather for a simple soup dinner with family friendly worship and communion.

20th, Easter Sunday, is the special time we have to invite our family and guests for a pancake breakfast in the Family Life Center prior to worship. Breakfast is served from 9:30-10:10a after which we will move to the Worship Center for 10:30a Easter Worship.

PLEASE NOTE: There are sign-up sheets for both events in the foyer. If you would like to contribute to the pancake breakfast there are sign-ups for that as well, and they are appreciated.

Adult Education - A Study of the Book of Acts

We have been enjoying the Lenten series by Max Lucado, but it will end on Palm Sunday. There will not be a class on Easter Sunday so we can all enjoy breakfast together.

Adult Education will begin a new series after Easter. We will look at the book of Acts using a book/video series by Randy Frazee called, *40 Days Through the Book of Acts - The Revolution of Faith*. This series is described as follows: "The book of Acts is a joyful celebration of how God's revolutionary message was unstoppable and contagious. In it we discover that the Church is more dynamic than we dream, grace is the secret sauce of God's revolution, and God's way is not my way! Throughout this study you will hear a consistent invitation to join the revolution of faith and love that Jesus started two millennia ago."

The *40 Days through the Book* series has been designed to help believers more actively engage with God's Word. The Discipleship Committee invites all to join us in the Chapel Sunday mornings starting April 27th from 9a to 10a for this 6-week series.



North Whatcom Student Chosen for CPC Scholarship

Senior student, Matthew Cochran of Blaine, was recently chosen to receive the tuition scholarship from funds given by our church to Whitworth University. Matthew's note to us indicates that he is majoring in elementary education and environmental science. He writes that an outstanding experience for him at Whitworth was a January term class held in the Cascade Mountains. Led by theology professor, Jonathan Moo, this was a study of the Bible and what it says about our stewardship of our land. Matthew said, "We lived a once-in-a-lifetime community and enjoyed cross-country skiing almost every day."

After graduation, Matthew hopes to work in restoration ecology and environmental education, especially in regard to marine ecosystems. Matthew told us, "I cannot express my gratitude enough for this scholarship. This scholarship relieves an unbelievable amount of stress for me, and it honestly makes me feel so supported that I can find a way to afford and finish my degree."

Matthew's full letter to us is posted in Missions Hall. Take time to go and read about this special young man.





Meet the Snyder Family

We're the Snyder family—Rosemary, Lindsey, Emery, Damien, and Kalani—and we're so grateful to be part of the Cordata Pres community! We moved to the area in 2017 and have found it to be a wonderful place to raise our family.

Kalani is a primary care physician with Family Care Network, and Lindsey is a PhD candidate in Museum Education at the University of British Columbia. She's also working to launch a new children's museum in Whatcom County called Heart of Play (playwhatcom.org), which is focused on creating engaging, hands-on play spaces for kids and families.

Our kids—Rosemary (5th grade), Damien (4th grade), and Emery (2nd grade)—attend Central Elementary and each have their own passions: Rosemary loves reading, origami, and building, especially with Legos; Damien enjoys playing chess and LOVES math; and Emery spends hours immersed in small world play with dollhouses and as well as reading.

As a family, we love playing board games and have built quite the collection over the years—we're always up for a game night and would love to play with others from the congregation! We're also involved in Scouting together, which has been a really special way for us to grow and adventure as a family. (Scouting is now co-ed, so we can all participate together!)

We've really enjoyed becoming part of the Cordata Pres community and are especially thankful to the White family for inviting us—during a school field trip to the fire station! Our family also participates in a small group, which has been a meaningful source of friendship and support.

Lindsey grew up in the Chicago area (her parents are Karen and Gregg Block). Kalani is both a military brat and a pastor's kid—his dad served as a chaplain in the Air Force—so he has lived all over. We are thankful for our family being rooted with Cordata and continuing to grow with the church here.

Spring Landscape Cleanup a Success!

On Saturday, April 5th, CPC had a great turnout for the first (of many more) outdoor cleanups. There were 24 from CPC and 3 from Mosaic church - a fantastic group of hard workers on a beautiful April morning!

Those helpers were: Kalani, Rosemary, Damien, & Emery Snyder; Jeff Crnich; Suzanne and Joel Rautiola; Dan Moore; Bob Gilda; Julie Farrow; Doug and Carol Cowgill; Ted Van Zanden; John Risser; Jim Zander; Matt, Joshua, and Paxton White; Sue Wright; Kristin French; Roger DeSpain and Barbara Mills DeSpain; and Margaret Rudy. We got the yard area spruced up for the egg hunt on Easter Sunday, April 20th.

The next outdoor cleanup is scheduled for Saturday, May 3rd, at 9a to spruce up CPC's landscape before Mother's Day. Plan to join us because

"Many hands make light work."

Again a huge thanks to those who helped with the cleanup! (More photos on page 8.)



Cordata Scene

Clubs 4 Kids
& Youth Group



Youth Group



Remembering Becky Walstad

Editor's Note: For those who could not make it to Becky's Celebration of Life on Sunday, March 30th, here is her obituary from www.westfordfuneralhome.com. We will miss her.

Becky Walstad (née Beard), age 72, died of Alzheimer's disease at Highgate Senior Living in Bellingham on Wednesday, March 19, 2025. She was born November 1, 1952, in Bellingham to Bill and Eldora "DoDo" Beard, attended Assumption Catholic School, and was in one of the original graduating classes from Sehome High School in 1971. She received her education and master's degree from WWU and, in 1975, started work at Roosevelt Elementary followed by a 43-year teaching career at Silver Beach Elementary School.

Becky had many friends and interests, but, above all else, she was a teacher. She taught generations of Silver Beach families and cared deeply for every one of her students, attending their graduations, weddings, and in many cases, teaching their children years later. Becky was active in the Bellingham Education Association, serving on the BEA board and health benefits committee. In addition to teaching, Becky was a founding member of the Sr. Catherine Auxiliary at St. Joseph Hospital, a former Elder and active member of Cordata (Birchwood) Presbyterian Church, and a great neighbor and friend to all.

Becky is survived by her sister, Penny Walden (Randy); niece, Kelly Walden (Ambyr Burrell); nephew, Andy Walden-Montoya; stepdaughter, Katie Walstad Morgan; and her second family, Sue and Phil Sharpe and their daughters, Katie (Adam) Kortlever and Claire (Nate) Card.

Becky was preceded in death by her parents, and her nephew Andy's husband, Mauro.

The Walden and Sharpe families would like to thank the many friends, neighbors, and caregivers who loved and supported her over the last five years. A special thank you to Cecelia Ford, a constant giver of care and friend throughout Becky's journey with Alzheimer's and the staff and caregivers at Highgate Senior Living.

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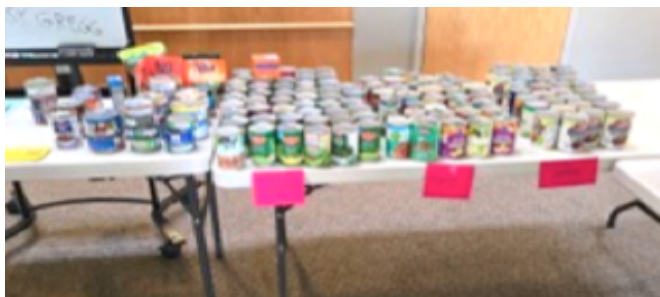
In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to the Bellingham Public Schools Foundation, Cordata Presbyterian Church, or a children's charity of your choice.



One table of the food for the Miracle Food Network Friday Pantry



We welcome new members (left to right) Eva Satori, Michelle McCladdie, Glenna Allbritton, Dick and Marilyn Ellis, and Carol Anderson.



Donations from Bellingham Christian School to the Miracle Food Network Friday Pantry

Save the Date

Saturday, April 5th, 9a, Outdoor Work Party - See page 5.
Tuesday, April 8th, 5:30p, Together Tuesday, Family Life Center - See page 4.
Saturday, April 12th, 8a, Men's Breakfast, Palm Room
Sunday, April 13th, After Coffee Fellowship, Table Game Day, Foyer - See page 5.
Thursday, April 17th, 6p, Maundy Thursday Service, Foyer - See graphic below.
Friday, April 18th, 5p, CCF Talk Time, Family Life Center
 7:30p, Good Friday Service, First Presbyterian Church
Sunday, April 20th, 9:30a, Easter Breakfast, Family Life Center - See page 4.
 10:30a, Easter Worship Service, Worship Center
 After Worship, Egg Hunt, Outdoors - See page 3.

Regularly Occurring Events

Sundays - **9a, Adult Education Class, Chapel**
 10:30a, Worship, Worship Center
 10:45a, CPC Kids Clubhouse/Sunday School - See page 3.
 After Worship, Coffee Fellowship
Mondays - **2p, Tai Chi Exercise Class, Chapel**
Tuesdays - **4:30p, Clubs 4 Kids, Foyer** - See page 3.
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** - See page 3.
 7p, Financial Peace University, Library, Until May 15th
 7p, Sanctuary Mental Health Course, Zoom, Until May 1st
Fridays - **2:30p, Free Groceries - Miracle Food Network, Foyer**

**More photos from the
 April 5th landscape
 work party(see page 5).**



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