



# Cordata Beacon

A Publication of Cordata Presbyterian Church

May, 2025

## Message from Pastor Greg: *What's Next?*

Isaiah 43:19 says this: "*Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth. Do you not perceive it?*" As the joyful worship of Easter Sunday reminds us, Jesus' Resurrection is the first fruits of the "new thing" God is doing. The Resurrection is at the deep core of our faith, grounding our expectation that God is at work both in the world, in our congregation and in our individual lives. The Resurrection means that we can expect the same kinds of things Jesus' early Disciples experienced. As I preached the Sunday after Easter (from Acts 5), this is a natural season to ask "What's next?". As CPC moves forward in faith, we can expect at least these things:

1. **Change.** Did you notice how different the Disciples were after Jesus rose from the dead and ascended to heaven? Disciples became Apostles. Peter, especially, transformed from a rough-talking fisherman who always seems to have his foot in his mouth into an eloquent chief spokesman. *How are we changing as we follow Jesus, filled by His Spirit?*
2. **Proclamation.** Even a brief read of Acts 5 shows that the Disciples/Apostles transformation caused them to be more vocal about Jesus. They were so changed by his Resurrection that they could not stop talking about Him. Even when the authorities instructed them to stop (and flogged them!), they kept on. *Are we willing to take some baby steps to put words to what we notice the Lord doing in our lives?*
3. **Opposition/Resistance.** Even a brief read of Acts 5 shows that the Disciples/Apostles enthusiastic embrace of Jesus' mission and His Way had at least two results: (a) people are healed, redeemed, and saved by the Apostles' ministry and (b) the "powers that be" oppose Jesus' mission and Way. *Are we prepared for our mission and ministry to be opposed? Have we worked through our own internal resistance to the Lord's changing work in us?*
4. **Joy.** When the disciples were released by the authorities, after being flogged, they rejoiced. Why? Not because they were relieved to be out of the hands of their tormentors, but because "*they had been deemed worthy to suffer for the name of Jesus.*" *Are we willing to put our own personal comfort and interests below God's mission and purposes in the world?*

And here's my own personal pastoral "What's Next?" Through some exciting conversations I have been having with CPC's Resilient Church Leadership Team, the Lord is doing a new thing in me: for the next 6 weeks or so (i.e. from now until our June 15th Congregational Meeting), I'm going to try an Easter season experiment. Each Wednesday, I will email the congregation a "Wednesday Word" focusing on (1) our Resilient Church Project and (2) an invitation to Prayer. This seems to me/us as a good way to invite all of CPC into greater awareness and participation in what CPC is learning as we continue further into the Discern phase of the Resilient Church Initiative and prepare for our Congregational Meeting in June. Please watch your email inbox for my first Wednesday Word May 15th.

Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Greg

## War and Peace

Carol Lawrence



Last summer I was fortunate to take a tour of the Battleship Iowa, now retired and berthed in the Port of Los Angeles. The Iowa was commissioned in 1943 as the first 45,000-ton class battleship. Each of her engines can generate 53,000 horsepower, the same that could be produced by 154 Corvettes. To provide power, she carried 2,582,000 gallons of fuel, enough to fill 129,100 Corvettes. The original cost of the ship was \$100 million, estimated to be more than \$2.5 billion in today's dollars. Battleships have now been replaced by ever more sophisticated, and costly, military equipment. This year, the U.S. military budget is capped at \$895 billion.

Of course, the cost of the military is not measured only in dollars. According to the Department of Veterans Affairs, since 1775 the U.S. military has recorded 651,031 combat deaths and 539,054 noncombat deaths. This month we celebrate Memorial Day in honor of those brave individuals who have lost their lives in service to our country. Each one is a hero.

War is nothing new. The Old Testament gives us lots of war stories. Lately I've been reading 1 Samuel, in a modern translation. It reads like an action movie, with the repeated battles between the Israelites and the Philistines (1 Samuel 13:15-14:23; 17:1-52; 18:25-27; 21:10-15; 27:1-28:6; 29:1-11; 31:1-13). Seems the Philistines didn't learn their lesson after the shepherd boy David killed their giant Goliath. What about us, in today's world? Have we learned that wars never end?

As Memorial Day approaches, let us reflect on the true cost of war. Much as we might wish for peace in our world, the complexity of the 21st century makes it hard to see a way to achieve it. We must keep in mind that we serve a God of peace. Scripture reminds us:

*These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. (John 16:33)*

Naturally, we would prefer to see His overcoming sooner rather than later, but we can remember to use the most powerful weapon we have – prayer.

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## CPC Staff Member Joins Short-Term Alaska Mission

CPC Assistant for Youth and Children's Ministries, Evangeline Bentley, will be traveling to Alaska this August to join a group of Campus Christian Fellowship students for a mission to Akiak, a village in Alaska. Evangeline is being supported, in part, by a financial gift from the CPC discretionary budget.

She reports that her group will consist of six students and two leaders connected with CCF at Western Washington University. Akiak is a small rural community that has reported some hardships recently. Evangeline knows there will be challenges, but states, "I'm excited to learn about their culture."

During their one week visit, the group will help with children's activities, a Vacation Bible School program similar to what we do at CPC, and/or a basketball camp. As this exciting adventure approaches, let's pray for Evangeline—smooth travels, good health, and effective evangelism.





## CPC Kids Clubhouse Catch Up

### CPC Kids Clubhouse -

Exit-Us! We have been studying the many interesting stories of the book of Genesis since January. This month we enter Volume 2 of our chronological *Bible* study: “Law and Life: Exodus—Deuteronomy”.

Sunday Clubhouse Kids recently learned how God established the Israelites in Egypt through Joseph. In May, they will see how over the course of a few hundred years, the Israelites had grown to the point where the Egyptians were feeling threatened. God’s people required a rescuer, and God proved to be the perfect Rescuer and Provider again and again. Over these next few months we will be following the life of Moses and seeing how the Israelites learned to be fully God’s people.



Getting Ready to Celebrate Jesus’ Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem

**Big Picture Question:** Why does sin separate us from God?

**Answer:** Because God is holy, sin has broken our relationship with God.

**Key Passage:** Psalm 34:17

### May Lessons — “God Delivers His People”:

Moses Confronted Pharaoh (Exodus 5–12), Moses Parted the Red Sea (Exodus 13–15), God Provided for His People (Exodus 15–17), Moses Led the Israelites (Exodus 17–18)

**NO Sunday Kids Clubhouse Time on May 25th** The annual One Spirit — Many Congregations service will be held here at CPC on May 25th. Children will remain in service with their parents/guardians for this service. To help make things kid friendly, “Busy Bags” will be available in addition to the “Quiet Activity” resources. The Chapel will be open with a live service video feed, the new giant playpen, and some coloring sheets for families with extra busy little ones.

### Nursery and Toddler Space -

Our regular and visiting littles (and their parents) need a space to participate in Sunday worship. While waiting to have enough volunteers for a regular baby and toddler team, we have gotten creative. The Cry Room is not large enough for active little people BUT our Chapel is. During worship service, parents can now bring their babies and toddlers to the Chapel where we have a large playpen space and toys to keep them safe and busy. Parents will be able to watch over their little person AND still join in the service via live stream on the large TV. While having a regular consistent nursery team available to care for little people in an actual classroom is our goal, this Chapel space solution will make attending service a little easier for our young families. **Anyone interested in joining a regular nursery team should contact Children’s Minister Director Bonnie Hollingsworth** (BonnieH@cordatachurch.org).

### Fun in the Sun 2025 (FITS) -

Planning and preparing for FITS 2025 is officially underway! The neighborhood kids are already looking forward to it and have been asking when it will begin. FITS begins Tuesday, June 24th, and continues every Tuesday and Thursday from 1-2:30p until August 21st. These 9 weeks of FUN will be focused around the 9 Fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-24). Kids will learn about a new “Fruit” each week. This unique program has many unique ways for people to help serve.

**CPC Kids Clubhouse Catch Up Continues on Page 4**



### CPC Kids Clubhouse Catch Up Continued from Page 3

**Please consider joining us** on one (or more) weeks of Fun in the Sun. A sign-up list is available in the CPC foyer. **We also would love your fruit-inspired crafts and snacks ideas!**

### Clubs 4 Kids (C4K) -

All has been going great at Clubs 4 Kids! We took a break from Club for spring break. Prior to Easter, the C4K kids enjoyed short Holy Week stories using Resurrection Eggs. The kids respond well to this unique way of explaining how Jesus gave his all for all of us. Easter and Earth Day crafts and activities were super fun and engaging.

Mother's Day crafts will be prominent this month as well as celebrating BEES. May 20th is World Bee Day!



### Palm Sunday Coat Drive Recap -

Thank you so much for your generous donations! A total of 23 coats were donated! The CPC Mission and Outreach Committee worked to find the best place to donate them, and the Interfaith Coalition was chosen. They were very happy to receive them! They will also store the coats until the fall since there isn't a large need for warm clothing this time of year. We know these items will be greatly appreciated. (See more photos of Palm Sunday on page 7.)



### Adult Education ~ 9a in the Chapel and on Zoom

Now through June 1st, we will study the book of Acts using a video series by Randy Frazee called *40 Days Through the Book of Acts - The Revolution of Faith*.

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. This will be a good study to see how the disciples carried on after Christ's ascension.

We hope you will join us in the Chapel or on Zoom (the link is in the weekly worship email) at 9a Sunday morning.



### Outdoor Work Party Reminder

This coming Saturday, May 3rd, at 9a is our second outdoor clean up party. Come and join in the fun as we clean up our grounds for Mother's Day. Please bring 5 gallon buckets, weeding tools, rakes, gloves, etc. Weedeater and /or blower is also helpful. Remember "many hands make light work". We hope to see you on May 3rd, and please sign up to let us know you're coming on the list in the foyer. Any questions? Contact Roger DeSpain (RogerD@cordatachurch.org) or Margaret Rudy (MargaretR@cordatachurch.org).



## Together Tuesday ~ May 13th, 5:30p

Tuesday Together has two delightful parts to it on May 13th at 5:30p. First, we welcome the Bellingham High School Show Stoppers who will again present their spring musical program for us. Secondly, our decor and food takes us on a short trip to the Netherlands/Holland with Carol and Ted VanZanden. Carol and Ted have showered us with beautiful table settings all year long...and for many years, actually...and Ted's gifts from his garden are amazing as well! So, Carol wanted to share from her collection of Dutch items this time and a couple of favorite family recipes as well: Oliebollen and Hutspot.

Hutspot is a vegetable potato/carrot/onion treat laced with sausage (or beef brisket or meatballs) that we all can enjoy. It is a traditional family meal that is favorite Dutch dinner fare. Additionally, we think you'll enjoy the Ollibollen which you may have found as a treat at the Lynden Fair or other speciality places in Lynden. Like a donut hole, Ollibollen is a traditional New Year's treat, but whatever the season, it's a delight!!

See you for the Show Stoppers and our Dutch Treat evening, May 13th at 5:30p. The cost is \$7; sign up so we know how many we will be cooking for!



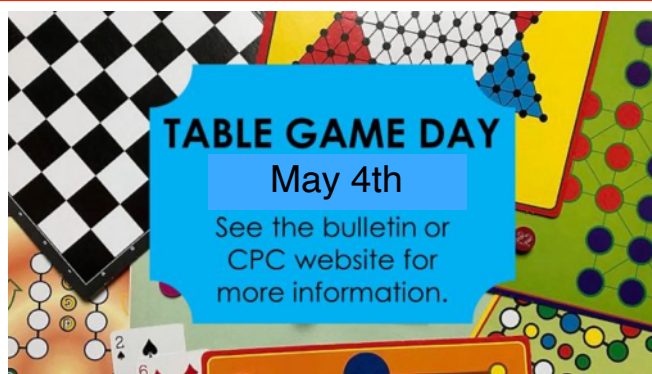
## June 15th ~ Save the Date for FUN!!

**Four for the price of one...**and actually, it's free!

1. **Worship together** in a great space down by the waterfront, Fisherman's Pavilion at Zwanich Park—lots of parking, no stairs, plenty of places to sit, room for the kids to play, music together.
2. Our church bylaws require us to hold two regular **Congregational Meetings** a year...the first in January, and the second in June...ours is scheduled for **June 15th**. It is a meeting when the congregation officially nominates and elects new Elders, Deacons, plus Nominating and Audit Committee members.
3. We will hear more about the **Resilient Church Initiative** which we have been chipping away at for almost a year. Come hear what's next as we enter a new chapter of resiliency!
4. **Lunch together** in the Pavilion...menu is still in the planning stage, but we are excited to have a picnic together, safely indoors, rain or shine, in a beautiful waterfront viewspot!

~ June 15th! ~

Yes, June 15th is also Father's Day. We'll have a fun time to worship, eat and meet together, but we will also aim to wrap up by early afternoon so folks can spend the rest of the afternoon and evening celebrating fatherhood!



Join us in the foyer after coffee fellowship.

We have many games or bring your favorite.

Light snacks will be available  
or bring your own sack lunch.



~ Saturday, May 17th, at 8a, Palm Room ~

Please join us for a time of devotion,  
fellowship, and a delicious breakfast .

## Did You Know?

Reflections by long-time member Jackie Schoonover

### How our neighborhood church came to be.

Recently, I was asked how the church decided to minister to this area of North Bellingham. Good question. Our church, previously known as Birchwood Presbyterian Church, outgrew their facilities in the Birchwood neighborhood and at that time was offered a land gift of our current site. The church prayerfully considered this gift, one that would be part of a newly developed neighborhood. Thanking God, we accepted the gift and held two Capital Campaigns selling bonds and accepting pledges to raise funds. We became the first building in this neighborhood!

**God Moments** - When you take on a big challenge it's important to note the God moments that encourage you forward.

- o The gift of land.
- o On the day of groundbreaking when many were gathered in a circle holding hands, a rainbow appeared in the sky also in the shape of a circle right above us!!
- o But then, a decade after our move, we discovered the materials on the exterior of the building were failing and would have to be replaced. It felt a lot like Jacob working 7 years to marry Rachel only to discover he had been married to Leah and would have to work another 7 years to marry Rachel. But with insurance, sacrificial giving earmarked for the mortgage, and legacy gifts that God provided entirely out of the blue, the financial needs continued to be met.

**Footholds** - During this time many ministries existed within the church and outreach efforts with the neighborhood were attempted with some success. The church felt stymied with the financial constraints of the mortgage but found ways to move forward, particularly with a playground Presbytery Grant that we applied for and received. That grant began a series of footholds that began to gain us some momentum and staying power with each addition.

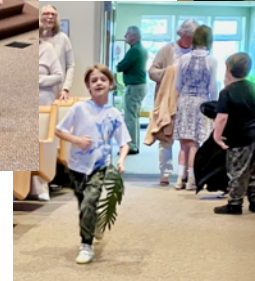
- o A playground for the neighborhood families, our church family, and schools we have hosted.
- o The idea of a block party to draw the neighborhood down to our circle was born.
- o Fall Festival - a family-oriented fun night.
- o The congregation voted to rename the church Cordata Presbyterian Church to better identify with our mission and location.
- o The church staff made a decision to not schedule annual VBS gatherings (which generally brought in already churching children). Instead, smaller more intimate gatherings aimed directly at our neighborhood children began, and Fun in the Sun came into being during the summer months.
- o Fun in the Sun spring-boarded Clubs 4 Kids on Tuesdays and Thursdays.
- o Little Library Book lending nook was created in the circle drive for families to access free books.
- o The Youth Group is beginning to attract neighborhood youth to attend on Wednesday nights.
- o The Miracle Food Network food pantry provides food every Friday afternoon to the community.

**Where God might be leading us next in terms of outreach to our neighbors?** CPC has been prayerfully considering if there are partnership opportunities with the Meridian School District that would mutually serve the neighborhood. Recently, one of the social workers for the Meridian School District called and asked if we could once again host English as a Second Language (ESL) for families as we had done in previous years. The Literacy Council is willing to provide the teachers.

If this is something you might be interested in helping with, please contact Dan Sanford, Missions and Outreach Elder (DanS@cordatachurch.org).



**Cordata Scene**  
**Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday,**  
**and Easter**



**Photos continue**  
**on page 8.**



## Save the Date

Friday, May 2nd, 5p, CCF Talk Time, Family Life Center

Saturday, May 3rd, 9:00a, Outdoor Work Party - See page 4.

Sunday, May 4th, After Coffee Fellowship, Table Game Day, Foyer - See page 5.

Tuesday, May 13th, 5:30p, Together Tuesday, Family Life Center - See page 5.

Friday, May 16th, 5p, CCF Talk Time, Family Life Center

Saturday, May 17th, 8a, Men's Breakfast, Palm Room.

Friday, May 30th, 5p, CCF Talk Time, Family Life Center

Sunday, June 15th, Worship, Congregational Meeting, Resilient Church Initiative Report, and Lunch, Fisherman's Pavilion - See page 5.

## 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

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