



Cordata Beacon

A Publication of **Cordata** Presbyterian Church

August, 2025

Message from Pastor Greg: *Summertime*

But everything exposed by the light becomes visible—and everything that is illuminated becomes a light. This is why it is said: “Wake up, sleeper. Rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.” Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days [without God] are evil. Ephesians 5:13-16

How did it get to be August already? Seems to me like Summer just barely started, and here it will soon be done. Are we “making the most of every opportunity,” as Paul counsels in his letter to the Church in Ephesus? Of course, the Apostle Paul’s counsel to wake up, rise from the dead, and turn towards the light of Christ is more spiritual than recreational. But maybe those two aspects of our lives can complement one another. Summer in the PNW is when we are most likely to remember that we live in a beautiful place and to see the Creator’s hand in the beauty of the Creation that surrounds us every day. What are we doing to live wisely in light of Christ’s light in our lives? Here are a few ideas:

Berry picking. Did you know Whatcom Country produces up to 85% of the red raspberries harvested in our entire country? No wonder we have an annual Raspberry Festival. Strawberries, blackberries, and blueberries round out the tasty offerings available near you. Though strawberry and raspberry picking season may have wrapped up for the year, blueberry (and blackberry?) season will be going strong for several more weeks. Why not head out to the berry farms? While you are there, you can reflect on God’s abundant provision for our lives. It’s also a fun activity that can be enjoyed by family and friends of almost any age.



Summer reading. Nothing says Summer quite like a good read. Speaking of which, have you ever read anything by Wendell Berry? I highly recommend it. His novel *Jayber Crow* is a good place to start. He’s an incredible writer. His “life message” that comes through in all he writes is this: God has made us stewards of the land we think we own...we don’t own it, we hold it in trust. What’s on your Summer reading list?

Prayer. I’m going to keep harping on this one, because the Spirit of God has finally driven home in my thinking, and more and more in my habits, what a privilege we have in being able to talk with God any time we want. Listening prayer...prayer that orients our thoughts and feelings towards our Creator and Redeemer... prayer that squarely asks for God’s help in carrying burdens we can’t carry. Any or all of these are “making the most of every opportunity.”

May your summer days be filled with these and many other wise and wonderful ways to “make the most of every opportunity” God gives. Embrace His light!

Pastor Greg

Patience

By Carol Lawrence

Here's another of my photos that is more interesting than lovely. Instead of taking this one while I was out on a lovely nature walk, I took it in a parking lot. When I was teaching in Prague, my university had trouble getting me a work visa and asked me, somewhat sheepishly, if I could live with being illegal. There seemed to be no alternative, so I agreed. At the time, the Czech Republic was not a member of the newly created European Union. Accordingly, once a month I needed a new entry date on my passport, so would take the train to Dresden, have a nice lunch, and then return.



The location and date of the photo are important. This is Dresden, Germany, in the 1990s. History buffs know that in 1945, bombing devastated Dresden, including the beautiful Lutheran Frauenkirche. The church, built between 1726 and 1743, was a prime example of Baroque architecture, until World War II bombing reduced it to rubble. This photo shows thousands of stones neatly sorted and stacked on metal racks in the parking lot, awaiting the reconstruction of the church, which was not completed until 2005. How startling that the damage took so long to repair, and what a stark reminder how long it can take to undo the damage done by the evils we humans can wreak.

In today's tumultuous world, it's easy to feel beset by evil from all sides. Christians often wonder why God allows evil to persist. Sorry, I don't have an answer to that age-old question. But, as usual, we can go to Scripture for insight and comfort. Most Old Testament prophets considered their role to be conveying God's word to the people. In contrast, Habakkuk questions God about an issue many Christians do today: why does God permit evil to (seemingly) thrive? Habakkuk writes:

*Oh Lord, how long shall I cry,
And You will not hear? (Habakkuk 1:2)*

God does answer, as He will answer us. As usual, however, His answer doesn't always come immediately:

*For the vision is for an appointed time;
But at the end it will speak, and it will not lie.
Though it tarries, wait for it;
Because it will surely come
It will not tarry. (Habakkuk 2:3)*

Just now our world is full of turmoil, and evil seems distressingly widespread. As Christians we have faith that God will act, but we know He will act only when He feels the time is right. All I know to do is pray for His mercy to those whose lives have been damaged by the evils of today's world, for evildoers to hear His voice, and for patience for us to stay strong in the faith.

Discipleship News — No August Sunday Morning Adult Education Class But New Small Group Discussion Offered

To give our faithful teachers a break, during August CPC's Adult Education Class will not be offered but will begin again in September with a new study. However, if you are looking for another study opportunity, we have a new idea to suggest.

Have you read CPC's summer reading suggestion, *The Possibility of Prayer*? Are you interested in joining a "book club" to discuss it? We have people who would enjoy hosting a gathering in their home in August for anyone who has read the book and would enjoy discussing it further. Please contact Julie Farrow at jmfucceed@gmail.com for more information.



CPC Kids Clubhouse Catch Up

CPC Kids Clubhouse - We are finally done wandering the desert! Time to munch on some huge grapes! This August we begin a new three-month study called *LAND AND LOSS*. We will learn how by God's power, grace, and provision Israel finally entered the land of Canaan. However, despite His people's victory in battle, their disobedience proved their hearts were not victorious over sin.

August begins with Unit 7: *God Is Powerful*, which is all about the book of Joshua. Moses commissioned Joshua to be the Israelites'

new leader. Joshua courageously brought the Israelites into the Promised Land, trusting that God would be with them.

Big Picture Question: Why can we trust God? **Answer:** We can trust God, because He is faithful and does everything for His glory and our good.

Key Passage: Psalm 24:8

August Lessons: Crossing the Jordan River (Joshua 1; 3–4), Conquering Jericho (Joshua 2–4; 6), Achan's Sin and the Defeat of Ai (Joshua 7–8), Taking the Land (Joshua 10–11), Farewell (Joshua 23–24)

Fun in the Sun 2025 (FITS) - Everyone is having a blast! Attendance at this unique ministry has been the highest ever. We've also had many new families start to come regularly. With 4 more weeks to go, the kids have already memorized our summer theme verse: Galatians 5:22-23 – The Fruits of the Spirit. Of course, having a silly verse song to sing while doing the macarena dance helps the memorization process. We may look silly, but the kids are digging it. This summer-long study of each of the fruits is definitely producing some real fruit. "Huge thank you" to everyone who has been volunteering their time! We've had many awesome CPC folks join the fun and help build relationships with our neighbors. There is still time to help make a difference. We have 6 more days of FITS. The final day is Thursday, August 21st, which leads into our next event...



Blessing of the Backpacks - Annually near the beginning of the school year, we invite students, teachers, and other academic leaders to come for a special prayer and blessing. Be sure to mark your calendars and invite the students in your life to attend our Sunday service on August 24th. *If anyone knows of a child in need of a backpack, they should contact Bonnie Hollingsworth at BonnieH@cordatachurch.org.



More photos on page 7.

CPC Block Party - Sunday, September 7th, from 12-2p - Summer seems to be flying by! Only one more month until we host another amazing Cordata Neighborhood Block Party! Invite your family, friends, and coworkers for this time of free food, lawn games, music, and more! PLUS come learn about many community resources including a very cool classroom on wheels for the English Language Classes CPC will be facilitating this fall.

Many hands make light work... Be sure to sign up to help host this wonderful time of outreach and fellowship. Rain or Shine - we'll have a great time!

Clubs 4 Kids - Our after-school program — Clubs 4 Kids — resumes Tuesday, September 9th. Please keep this special program in your prayers.

Save the Date: **EXPLORE CORDATA** – October 5th, 12th, and 19th

Attention all newcomers, visitors, and folks seeking to become more connected with CPC! Are you interested in learning more about the goings-on at CPC or do you have questions about what it means to be Presbyterian? *Explore Cordata* is your opportunity to dig deeper into our life and rhythms here. These meetings will occur three Sundays in October after worship with lunch and childcare included. The first two sessions will center on our programs, leaders, services, and general information including a tour of the building. The third session will be for anyone who is interested in joining the church as a member.

Get answers to questions such as:

- how do we organize leadership for areas of ministry?
- what are some of the opportunities for folks to become connected?
- what are the fundamentals of our faith in practice?
- why might I consider formal church membership?

Mark your calendars: October 5th, 12th, AND 19th after worship

Upcoming Fellowship Opportunities

Save the date - August 24th - for Lunch Bunch after worship - Get to know someone that you've always wanted to talk to. Come be part of a Lunch Bunch and enjoy conversation over lunch at a nearby restaurant. Sign up in the foyer at the information table with your name and phone number. This time you will be able to select the restaurant of your choice from among three restaurants. Just look for the sign-up sheet and be the first to make your selection.

Save the date - Together Tuesday - September 16th - 5:30p - Our first program of the 2025-2026 year will feature our very own Pastor Greg Ellis revealing his experiences in the Middle East. You won't want to miss this one, and there's time to invite a friend.

Everyone come for a good supper and an awesome program.

Welcome Desk - Can you serve?

Serving at the Welcome Desk and answering the phone frees CPC staff to work on other important tasks. Training takes only a few minutes but the relief from constant interruptions for the staff is extremely important.

1. We are in need of a volunteer to take over the shift on Wednesdays from 10a-noon.
2. We are in need of a substitute for about 8 weeks on Mondays from noon-2p beginning September 8.

Please contact Kristin at admin@cordatachurch.org if you can help.

Do you love to read?



As August arrives, can fall be far behind? As we shift from summer outings to indoor activities, I have a suggestion to offer. For some time now I've dreamed of a book club. What fun it could be to gather once a month with others who love reading, and chat about faith-related books. Are you interested? I'm just starting to plan and would like your input. What time frame would work for you – Monday or Wednesday afternoons? Thursday or Friday evenings? Saturday mornings? Do you have a book to suggest – one you have read and enjoyed, or maybe one that's sitting on your bookshelf waiting for you to get around to actually reading it? If you'd like to pursue this, let me know by email at cmlawren@gmail.com. Let's get started!

Do You Want to Go on the 2026 Guatemala Mission Trip?

Still thinking about joining the Guatemala Mission Team for March 2026? **The dates for the trip will be March 7-18, 2026.** Applications can be submitted now with **the final deadline on September 5th** along with a deposit (details below). This will hold your spot in the group (6-15 people).

Applications can be filled out online at the www.hopeofpokomchi.org website and then printed out (the "Medical Condition" section doesn't work correctly so that needs to be filled out by hand after printing the application). Also, the section on COVID vaccinations is no longer required. On the website, click on: Help Change Lives, Team Trips, Download, Application Forms. Print off your application, attach a deposit of \$100 (individual) or \$200 (family) made out to "CPC Mission Fund" and drop off your application and deposit at the church or give to Nina or Gary Buma. The deadline again is September 5. If you have any questions, contact Team Leaders: Gary Buma (360-734-8733) or Nina Buma (360-319-1706) gnbuma@hotmail.com.

We already have a great group rate for round trip airfare (\$500) for the first 12 people who sign up. In order to get this rate, we need a minimum of 10 people to commit to this trip.

Each person who commits to going will have a personal cost of approximately \$1500, but it will be less depending on the amount of fundraising that we do. The CPC Mission Committee will help with such things as the cost of the project materials we will use in Guatemala (approximately 1/3 of the cost), and the mission trip members will be doing some fundraising which helps with their individual costs. We've already had one fundraiser last April (sold Butter Braids) and raised about \$400. Our next fundraiser will be in early December selling Christmas swags, wreaths, and greenery centerpieces. Those who have committed to going on the mission are expected to help out with these fundraisers. We also welcome anyone else to join in the fun even if you can't go to Guatemala! If you have any great fundraising ideas, let us know!

A couple of anonymous donors have graciously offered to sponsor 2-3 people who would like to go on this mission trip but can't afford it (partially or fully). If you'd like to inquire about this, attach a note on your application when you submit it.

We are thankful that another team will be sent to Guatemala and would appreciate your prayers for the core group of people who are committed and eager to continue with their planning and fundraising, as well as, the entire team that God calls to Guatemala.

Check Out Our Upcoming Missions Activities

Summer is not a "dead" time for Missions & Outreach. Besides Fun in the Sun and the upcoming Block Party in early September, we have some other news.

1. **Sunday, August 17th**, CPC will host a conversation time with Zac and Jessica Gozda as they prepare to leave for international ministry. Jessica is the daughter of Tim and Karen Lann. Tim served as pastor of our church for many years. The Gozdas have been training for ministry in France and will be heading out to their serving location soon. Everyone is welcome to visit in the Chapel around 11:45a. CPC has already given financially to the Gozdas' ministry.

2. As noted above, **September is the decision time for any additional folks who would like to join our Missions trip to Guatemala early next year. If you feel the nudge to join this group, contact Nina or Gary Buma.**

3. A team of folks headed up by Jackie Schoonover is diligently **making plans to start up an ESL conversation class in early October.** If you thought you might enjoy assisting our instructor, Sharon Chang, please let Jackie know.

4. Campus Christian Fellowship international student ministry leader, **Jeff Jenkins, is gearing up for Talk Time to be held at CPC's Family Life Center once the school quarter begins.** If you could be a drop-in conversationalist for Whatcom Community College international students, put yourself on the Talk Time email list. Talk Time typically occurs on Fridays at dinner time, and Jeff welcomes those from our church who would like to attend, meet the students, and build relationships in the name of Christ. For help to get on the list, contact Dan Sanford at DanS@cordatachurch.org.



Remembering Frank Monroe Phillips

Frank Monroe Phillips, 88 of Bellingham, WA, passed away peacefully on May 24th, 2025, surrounded by his family, after years of battling cancer, diabetes, and kidney failure.

Frank was born on March 19th, 1937, to Henry and Margaret Phillips in Seattle, WA. He was the oldest of 8 children. He stopped attending school in the 9th grade so he could bring income into the family home. He then went on to enlist in the Marines in 1955 and acquired his GED. He was in the Air Wing as a Staff Sergeant Radar Operator, which led to his lifelong profession as an Air Traffic Controller. He retired from the Bellingham Airport at 76 years old after 46 years of service as an Air Traffic Controller.

Frank and his first wife had 4 children together - Tahni, Troy, Travis, and Todd. He met his wife Vicki in early January, 1981, and they were happily married on July 7th, 1981. Frank helped raise her 2 daughters — Rikka and Darcy. He has 17 grandchildren and 10 great grandchildren. He loved his family deeply and would attend their sporting events and school programs as often as he could.

Frank had several hobbies which included any and all airplanes; he built model airplanes and made airplane bicycles from scratch. He loved his John Wayne collection. He also built detailed, tiny, miniature homes. He loved taking his kids and grandkids hunting and fishing. He loved going bowling and LOVED THE SEAHAWKS and any team that played the Broncos! He was a strong patriot and loved the military and his country.

He meant the world to our family and will be deeply missed! He is legendary to all of us!

He is preceded in death by his parents Henry and Margaret Phillips, sibling Norma Ozimek, son Todd Phillips, grandchildren Dustin Wilson, Adam Lavine, and Destiny Phillips.

He is survived by his wife of 44 years Vicki Phillips; siblings James Phillips, Robert Phillips, Mary Silverio, Henry Phillips, Shirley Silverio, and Rose Borinette; children Tahni Phillips (Napoleon), Troy Phillips (Teresa), and Travis and Darcy Long; 14 grandchildren and 10 great grandchildren.

Vicki would like to thank everyone at CPC who has been so loving during this difficult time. She deeply appreciates the cards, hugs, listening ears, and prayers during Frank's illnesses and now at his death.

Our Next Outdoor Clean up August 30th

Many thanks to those who were part of the recent outdoor cleanup project. We were few in number, but we got the area cleaned up. Those participating were: Don Milsop, Jim Zander, Doug Cowgill, Kristin French, Joel and Suzanne Rautiola, Julie Farrow, and Margaret Rudy. Also a huge "thank you" to Dan Moore for mowing the wetlands; it looks awesome!

Our next outdoor clean up is scheduled for August 30th at 9a. Plan to attend as we clean up our landscaping for the upcoming Block Party. Please bring weedeaters, weeding tools, buckets, tarps, etc.

Come and join in the fun.

Invitation to CPC Women to Early Birds August 26th Gathering

The Early Birds are a group of CPC women who meet every Tuesday at 9a via Zoom for Bible study and prayer. Normally toward the end of the summer we meet to discuss the date of our first meeting in September and the material we will begin studying. This year the meeting will be at Tim and Kris Unger's Pavilion at noon on August 26th.

The Early Birds would like to invite women who might be interested in Bible study and prayer partners to join them for this informal gathering. You are asked to bring a sack lunch, and we will provide pie for dessert. For more information and directions to the Ungers' house, contact Julie Farrow (JulieF@cordatachurch.org).

We look forward to being together, and hope you will join us and get acquainted!

Cordata Scene
Fun in the Sun



Save the Date

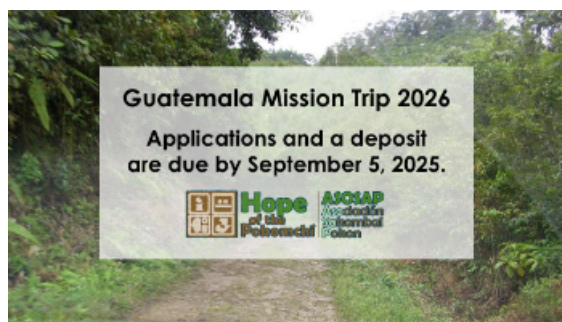
Sunday, August 10th, After Coffee Fellowship, Table Game Day, Foyer
Thursday, August 21st, 1p, Last Day for Fun in the Sun, Church Lawn - See page 3.
Sunday, August 17th, 11:45p, Conversation with Zac and Jessica Gozda, Chapel - See page 5.
Sunday, August 24th, During Worship, Blessing of the Backpacks - See page 3.
After Worship, Lunch Bunch, Local Restaurants - See page 4.
Tuesday, August 26th, noon, Early Birds, Unger's Pavilion - See page 6.
Saturday, August 30th, 9a, Landscape Work Party - See page 6.
Sunday, September 7th, 12 noon-2p, Block Party, Outdoors - See page 3.
Tuesday, September 9th, 4:30p, Clubs 4 Kids Resumes, Foyer - See page 3.
Tuesday, September 16th, 5:30p, Together Tuesday Resumes, Family Life Center - See page 4

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, Foyer
Mondays - 2p, Tai Chi Exercise Class, Chapel
Tuesdays - 1p, Fun in the Sun, Church Lawn - 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), 3rd Wednesday
Thursdays - 1p, Fun in the Sun, Church Lawn - See page 3.
Fridays - 2:30p, Free Groceries - Miracle Food Network, Foyer



**CPC's Booth at
Cordata Ice Cream Social**



See page 5 for more information.

Cordata Beacon - a publication of:
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