



Cordata Beacon

A Publication of **Cordata** Presbyterian Church

November, 2025



Message from Pastor Greg: *Thanksgiving “Top 10”*

How about some Scripture ripe for this season: “Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.” 1 Thess. 5:16-18 (NIV). Taking this encouragement from the Apostle Paul seriously, I polled my family to come up with our Thanksgiving “Top 10” list. We thank the Lord...

1. That we get to sing at church, school, and home—reminding us that we can worship the Lord anywhere, anytime. Praise God from whom all blessings flow!
2. That the Holy Spirit who guides us can be heard & followed (if we listen).
3. That we are connected to the people of our Church!
4. That we regularly have multi-generational moments between kids, teens, and adults of all ages.
5. That we have a Big Library with books, puzzles, and games we can borrow; and a Little Library with books our neighbors can have.
6. That we live in a place where the beauty of God’s Creation is so obvious year-round.
7. That Fall reminds us change is good, and there is more health and growth to come.
8. For Small Groups, where we can go deeper together following Jesus.
9. For people in our lives who are playful & generous, intentionally practicing kindness, hospitality, and generosity in Jesus’ name.
10. For the Lord, who includes us in His life and faith.

That’s our list. What’s yours?

Gratefully in Christ,
Pastor Greg



Riderless Horse **By Carol Lawrence**

As November arrives, we are reminded of the many things for which we are thankful: family, friends, memories. One of my favorite memories from when I lived in Washington D.C. is walking in Arlington Cemetery. It's a quiet place of lovely, well-manicured lawns. And yet, it's also bittersweet, filled with row after row of neat white headstones each marking a life lost in service to our country. This is one of my favorite photos of the Riderless Horse, an element of the honor afforded some funerals. It's a little hard to see here, but not only is the horse without a rider, the boots in the stirrups are turned backwards, signifying that the officer will never ride again.

Before we jump into the festivities of Thanksgiving, let's pause to recognize Veterans Day, and give thanks for those who have served valiantly in service to our country. We must remember to

*Enter into His gates with thanksgiving,
And into His courts with praise.
Be thankful to Him, and bless His name. (Psalm 100:4)*

As we gather and give thanks for our families, let's also pray for those mourning missing family members. Amen.



Growing Generosity Campaign 2025

This week we begin our annual Generosity campaign with an emphasis on "growing generosity". This spotlight on generosity will continue through the first four Sundays of November. Initially, the Generosity team will be highlighting the ministries of the church and reflecting on how your donations are spent. The next week's focus will shift to the spiritual aspects of giving back to the Lord with a short video message from Sandra Moon from the Presbyterian Foundation. Finally, we will share video clips highlighting money-saving tips from members of the congregation.

Everyone will receive written materials from the church explaining our effort and providing a pledge card. On Sunday, November 23rd, we will have an ingathering of pledges and thanksgivings that will be offered to the Lord during the service. If you miss anything, we will post the videos and materials on our website where you can access them.

Our hope is that you will join us in taking this time to think and pray about how we might share the unique time, talent, and treasure that God has given each of us. In that way, we can continue to nurture and grow the wonderful generosity that is so much a part of our congregation.

Peace and Joy to all. *The Generosity Team*



CPC Kids Clubhouse Catch Up

CPC Kids Clubhouse - We are starting Volume 4 of our Gospel Project 4 Kids curriculum - FOOLISHNESS AND WISDOM.

This November we will learn how Israel got King Saul. Foolishly, God's people begged for a king like the nations around them. Though Israel rejected God as their king, God mercifully warned them and gave them the king they desired—King Saul. However, despite Saul's regal appearance, his foolish disobedience led to God's rejection of him as king. Instead, God replaced him with a man after His own heart

to rule His people.

Big Picture Question: Who is our King? **Answer:** Jesus is our King forever, and He rules over the world.

Key Passage: Psalm 103:19

November Lessons: The Israelites Wanted a King (1 Samuel 8–10), Saul Rescued Israel (1 Samuel 11–13), Saul Disobeyed God (1 Samuel 14–15), Samuel Anointed David (1 Samuel 16), David Played for Saul (1 Samuel 16)

We will pause our chronological Bible study for the month of December for Advent-centered lessons and resume with a unit on King David in early January.

Clubs 4 Kids - Club has been going great! Lots of fall-themed crafts have been the main focus of our time along with learning a few new board games. We are going to focus on Gratitude this month. Taking time each week to share things we can be thankful for.

Sadly, we had to cancel C4K a couple of times this fall due to shortness of available leaders. Please pray and consider volunteering an afternoon (or two) to share with some great kids these next couple of months before Christmas Break. (More photos on page 10.)



NO CLUB on Thursday Nov. 27th – due to Thanksgiving.

Calling all you Crafty McCraftersons! CPC Christmas Eve Keepsake Ornament 2025 - We are still in need of a design for our annual Christmas Eve Keepsake Ornament. The ornament needs to be heart-shaped OR have a heart somewhere in the design. Once a design is established, we can arrange for a time where those interested in helping make them, can gather for a crafting time and fellowship (+snacks!)

Please contact Bonnie Hollingsworth (BonnieH@cordatachurch.org) for more details.

FALL FESTIVAL 2025 RECAP - WOW! WHAT A PARTY! What a Blessing it is to open our doors and be a beacon of light to the community around us.

This year's festival was very well attended! A good guesstimation is around 350-400 people. We saw many of our usual neighborhood families and friends plus many newcomers. Some families were blown away, stating they've lived in the area for a few years and never realized how awesome this event is! Preparations for this huge outreach event went like clockwork this year.

The entire building was full of themed game stations and fun activities, and the amazing cardboard box maze!



Clubhouse Catch Up continues on page 4.

Clubhouse Catch Up continued from page 3.

Dave Ruble's Box Maze was totally EPIC this year! Here is a quote from Dave's recent Facebook post: "Many thanks to the large crew that helped out this year - especially John Risser for building the "overpass" and introducing an air ventilation system. As always, much appreciation to my family and extended family for their work as well as Mario Whyte and Nature's Path and UHaul for all the boxes!!!"

New additions this year were: The Minecraft themed room and the Shuksan Middle School Candy Dispensing Machines.

As a way to include more community involvement, local Middle School Math & Science (STEM) classes were invited to participate in this year's festival by



creating "Rube Goldberg" style candy machines. The Shuksan Middle School 8th grade students from Mr. Nelsen's and Mr. Pennington's classes took up the challenge! They delivered 10 unique and creative machines for festival goers to try. Some of the students also came and stayed to show how to work their contraptions. We will definitely put out the request again next year.

With Minecraft continuing to be a popular and creative video game, we themed an entire room and a couple of games to match. Families entered through a portal into a life sized version of the pixelated game world. It was so popular that we may need to find a way to save the items and do it again next year.

HUGE THANKS go out to the many CPC folks who gave their time (and energy!) working this very busy and often physical event! Thank you for shining the light of Christ though the many interactions with kids, teens, and families.

AND MORE THANKS go to the small but mighty Maze take-down crew! These dedicated few came early Saturday morning to demolish the epic maze and get the Chapel ready for Sunday School the following day!

SPECIAL Thanks to everyone who donated supplies! Those big bags of candy are rather pricey, and we are extremely thankful for the amazing show of generosity. We ended up having the perfect amount of candy this year! (More photos on page 9.)

**Upcoming Events:**

Ornament Crafting Day - Time and Date TBD

Sunday, November 30th - Caroling at Cordata. *Still looking for a way to create a large light tree in the roundabout. Any ideas (and help) are very much welcomed.

Sunday, December 14th - Christmas Cookie Baking – for the Christmas Eve service

Thursday, December 18th – Christmas Cookie Decorating – during Clubs 4 Kids time... all are welcome to participate.

Small Groups

Do you desire to grow in faith and fellowship with others at Cordata? Small Groups are a wonderful way of gathering together with other like-minded people to get to know each other better as you study the Bible together.

If you are interested in learning more about joining a small group, please contact Julie Farrow at JulieF@cordatachurch.org.



Adult Education

If you have not attended Adult Education recently, you are missing out on some great conversations about *Growing Up* in our faith. Gordon Terpstra will continue to lead this discussion through the month of November. It is not too late to join us in the Chapel on Sunday mornings at 9a.

Help Needed for Youth Group!

Could you help the Youth Group by joining the food committee? The Youth Group, which currently is entirely neighborhood kids from 5th to 9th grade, meets each Wednesday from 5:30-7p, and we provide a meal each week. If several of us commit to making a meal once a month or even once every two months, the youth will have varied meals without too heavy a load for any one person. Doing this will be a witness to the neighborhood youth that they are loved by our congregation and that we are glad they are coming.

Discipleship Elder Julie Farrow has ideas about menus and even some recipes to help make it easier for everyone who volunteers. Please let Julie know if you are interested or have questions – 360-393-1880 or JulieF@cordatachurch.org.

God will bless you as you serve in this way.

Guatemala Mission Team Update and Fundraiser

We now have a group of 12 people who are committed to going to Guatemala in March 2026 to work with the Pokomchi people!!! We are getting excited and starting to plan some fundraisers.

In November we will be taking orders for fresh evergreen Christmas wreaths, swags, and table top centerpieces. Look for our table in the foyer on Sunday, November 9, 16, 23, and 30 where you can see examples of what they will look like. You can place your order at that time so that we will know how many items we should make. Payments can be made when you order them or when you pick the items up from church on Sunday, December 7. The wreaths (14"-18") will sell for \$20-25, the swags for \$15, and the tabletop centerpieces for \$15.

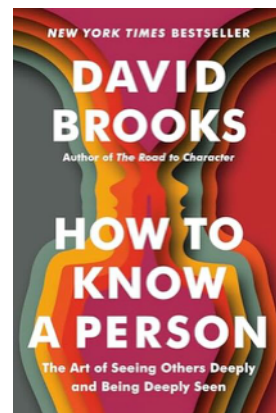
If you have any questions, contact Nina Buma at ninabuma@hotmail.com or 360-319-1706.



Booklovers to Meet November 21st at 1p

CPC's new book group, Booklovers, will meet on November 21 at 1p at Carol Lawrence's house, to talk about the book *How to Know a Person: The Art of Seeing Others Deeply and Being Deeply Seen*, by David Brooks. Our God commands us to love one another, but all too often that seems 'easier said than done'. This book is somewhat of a how-to for that challenge. Brooks describes the process of coming to know others without judging and letting ourselves be open to being known by others. Well researched and full of insightful anecdotes, the book is a joy.

It is available at the Bellingham library in hardcopy and as an ebook and audiobook, and also on Amazon in paperback, audiobook, and Kindle editions.



November is Our Giving Month

This is the month that CPC intensifies its work to share our blessings with neighbors locally and abroad. Many are working hard to share God's abundance with others.

Already the Operation Christmas Child boxes are in the foyer ready for pick up and stocking with gifts for children. The Operation is a world wide effort by the Samaritan's Purse organization to distribute surprise gifts to poor children in the name of Jesus. Here at CPC our challenge is to match last year's church collection of nearly 50 boxes! The deadline for returning the boxes is November 16th. (More information is included below.)



On November 16, a delegation of about a dozen volunteers from Cordata Pres will also head out to the home office of the Interfaith Coalition to help prepare and serve a "Community Meal" to folks who may appreciate this help as winter approaches. Currently over a dozen folks have signed up to serve. Many thanks to those who have volunteered to join in this service to the community.

Following this, on Sunday, November 23rd, our church will be helping to provide meal preparation supplies for Thanksgiving dinners up to 12 families we know will especially appreciate this gift. To help with this event, sign-up sheets are available in the foyer for frozen turkeys and a few other items to include in the boxes. After Worship on the 23rd, we will fill the boxes and take them to the 12 families. All are invited to join in this fun time together as we enjoy the privilege to share with our neighbors.

Our Missions committee member, Rich Emerson, reported that we have completed our winter coat drive, delivering approximately 15 winter coats to be distributed by the Interfaith Coalition. Our thanks to those who took the time to drop off newer winter wraps for others who desperately need them.

And finally, of course, our Cordata Food Pantry continues its food distribution on Fridays this month. We anticipate a growing demand by folks who are suddenly not receiving help through some Federal food programs.

Thank you for your support of the Missions and Outreach of Cordata Pres!

Dan Sanford, Elder for Missions and Outreach

Shoebox Collection Underway

We are joining in the Samaritan's Purse effort to send gift boxes to poor children around the world during the Advent season. There are just 3 weeks this month to stock your shoeboxes for delivery to the distribution church in Bellingham. The CPC deadline to receive the boxes is Sunday, November 23. In the foyer you can pick up your box and an information flyer with details regarding what to include. A donation of \$10 is requested to defray shipping costs.

Suggestions for inclusion:

WOW items: dolls, stuffed animals, jump ropes, yo-yos, toy cars, light up toys that make noise, etc.

SUPPLIES: toothbrushes, socks, combs, pens, pencils, crayons, notebooks, coloring books, calculators, flashlights, etc.

PERSONAL CONNECTION: a photo of your family, a small keepsake

Outdoor Work Party Rescheduled

Unfortunately we had to cancel last Saturday's outdoor work party due to rain. Luckily, the forecast for next Saturday, November 8th, looks to be cloudy but no rain! We are hoping that forecast does not change, so we have rescheduled the outdoor work party for November 8th at 9a.

There are still quite a few leaves packed in the shrubbery and other areas that would greatly benefit from a fall clean up. As usual, please bring rakes, buckets, tarps, etc. and join us as we ready our grounds for the holiday season ahead. And remember, many hands make light work.



Together Tuesday on November 11th

Surprisingly, our next Together Tuesday is coming soon - November 11th! As usual, it will be in the Family Life Center starting at 5:30p. And I imagine that you're thinking, "Since it's November they're serving turkey". Sorry, it's not a turkey dinner; it's an Italian dinner. Lasagna, salad served like Olive Garden, garlic bread, and Italian cookies for dessert.

The entertainment for the evening will be professional trumpet player, Don Shire. Not only bringing his trumpet but also he'll share the way he reaches out to support orphanages through his music ministry. By the way, Don's a good friend of our own Gregg Block, who has provided more information below.

On another note: **Thank you all for signing up to serve refreshments after worship. You are so appreciated!**

Carol Anderson, Elder for Fellowship



Trumpeter/Missionary

Don Shire at Together Tuesday – 11/11/25

Don Shire, missionary, internationally known trumpeter and recording artist, will be at Cordata Presbyterian Church for its Together Tuesday November 11, 2025, at 5:30p.

Don Shire offers his unique trumpet styling in concerts and meetings worldwide. His college education was at Moody Bible Institute in Chicago. Don was ordained as a minister of the Gospel by Impact International in 1994. In Ministry, Don has previously served as an Associate Pastor, Youth Pastor, and Minister of Music. As a businessman, Don has been the president of two computer-related businesses. In 1995, he responded to God's leading to leave the business arena, and Don and his wife Kathy formed DSM (Don Shire Ministries) International.

He currently is the featured guest in churches, mission conferences, and evangelistic outreach throughout the United States and internationally. Music from Don's recordings can be heard on radio across the United States and internet radio worldwide. He also coordinates short-term mission trips for church groups and individuals. Don's ministry reaches to orphans, widows, and refugees. His ministry now supports several orphanages and homes for widows in India, Haiti, and Honduras. DSM also supports refugees in Ukraine and Poland.

Don Shire is married to Kathy, his wife since 1974, and they have three adult children, 10 grandchildren, and 2 great-grandchildren.

Wherever Don goes, he shares his music, his love for Jesus Christ, and his passion for world evangelization. He shares stories from his travels, including trips to play his trumpet for primitive tribes living in the bush of Africa and the rain forests of South America. As of today, Don has shared the message of Jesus Christ and his music in 38 countries.

Using video images and compelling stories along with dynamic trumpet sounds, Don transforms an enjoyable concert into a true experience of worship and spiritual challenge. More information about Don Shire Ministries (DSM International) can be found at <https://www.dsminternational.org/>

Don't miss this event! No tickets necessary. Dinner starts at 5:30p and has a \$7.00 charge. Reservations are needed to enable planning for meal preparation. Signup sheets are in Cordata's foyer or you can call CPC at (360) 733-8860. The public is welcome. Additional information can be found on Cordata Church's website – <https://cordatachurch.org/>

We hope you'll join us for this memorable evening!

Resilient Church Initiative

The Resilient Church Initiative continues to move forward. The purpose of this initiative is to **strengthen CPC for future generations -- by adapting creatively to new circumstances to serve the gospel of Jesus**. This article will summarize what we've learned and discussed over the past few months.

As a reminder, this is a two-year initiative, guided by faculty consultants at Whitworth University. The initiative has three phases: Discover, Discern, and Decide. We're nearing the end of the Discern phase and almost ready to move into the Decide phase.

The Discern Report we received from Whitworth contains a wealth of interesting information about the community around our church building. It uses data from Experian (based on credit card use) to segment households into "unique mosaic types." These classifications offer insight into how people see the world based on how they spend their time and money, and importantly, how they prefer to receive their information. These insights can help guide our decision-making.

In today's culture, many people do not have a church background. As a church, we can show them God's love and help meet their needs. It's necessary first to establish trust with them. Examples of meeting needs and gaining trust we're already doing include the Food Pantry, Clubs 4 Kids, Youth Group, and the Little Library.

Over the past several months, our discussions have led us to focus on three potential new initiatives:

- Equipping Members for our Missional Calling. This includes building partnerships with other organizations in the community and service in our neighborhood.
- Spiritual Formation; a clear pathway for discipleship. Providing a clear and more structured process for people to both deepen their own faith and use their spiritual gifts to build up the church.
- Communications for the Next Generation. Finding ways to reach younger families and singles, many of whom may not have a church background. Identifying and finding ways to meet their needs. This includes enhancing our website and identifying other effective external communication methods.

These are not mutually exclusive, and we believe that all three would be helpful. Our Whitworth University facilitator has advised us to "screen" each of these potential initiatives through these questions:

1. How are the congregation, leadership, and staff responding to this idea?
2. What current obligations does our church have that will impact the implementation of this idea?
3. What is the talent level and passion for this particular endeavor?

The leadership team welcomes your thoughts and additional ideas concerning these potential initiatives. Please share them with members of the leadership team.

Leadership Team: Dan Sanford, Sue Wright, Rich Emerson, Barbara Sanford, Steph Kuhn, Mike Langey, and Greg Ellis



Cordata Scene

Jackie Schoonover and Sharon Chang promote CPC's ESL (English as a Second Language) Class at Meridian School District's Multi-Lingual Family Engagement Night, which offered community services to families in the district.



Sharon Chang (Taiwanese), Jamile Souza Lewis (Portuguese), and Nele Iwansky (German) join Pastor Greg to read Scripture in their own languages on World Communion Sunday.

Cordata Scene Continued
Fall Festival



Save the Date

Tuesday, November 11th, 5:30p, Together Tuesday, Family Life Center - See page 7.

Saturday, November 15th, 8a, Men's Breakfast, Palm Room

10a, Celebration of Life Service for Caroline Yaude

Sunday, November 16th, After Coffee Fellowship, Table Game Day, Foyer

Friday, November 21st, 1:00p, Booklovers Book Club, Carol Lawrence's Home - See page 5.

Sunday, November 23rd, After Worship, Assemble Thanksgiving Baskets, Foyer - See pages 4 and 6.

Sunday, November 30th, 4p, Caroling at Cordata, Outdoors

Sunday, December 14th, Cookie Baking, Kitchen

Thursday, December 18th, 4:30p, Cookie Decorating

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 -** 4:30p, Clubs 4 Kids, Church Foyer - See page 3.
 5p, English as a Second Language
 7p, The Chosen Series
- 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)
 7p, Choir Rehearsal, Chapel
- Thursdays -** 4:30p, Clubs 4 Kids, Church Foyer - See page 3.
- Fridays -** 2:30p, Free Groceries - Miracle Food Network, Foyer



CPC Tai Chi demonstration at a community festival.



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