



Cordata Beacon

A Publication of Cordata Presbyterian Church

February, 2026

Message from Pastor Greg: *The Trinity*

Here's a major Christian doctrine we rarely talk much about—the Trinity. If we've been around Sunday school much, our teachers have surely mentioned at one time or another the Holy Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. So many of us may have heard the basic teaching that God is one Being in three co-equal Persons (God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit). But from there, we may get a bit fuzzy, maybe because although all three Persons are mentioned in the Bible, the doctrine of the Trinity itself is not clearly laid out in our Holy Book. In fact, it took the early Church several hundred years to fully articulate and finalize this central teaching of our faith. Tertullian mentioned the word *trinitas* as early as 180 A.D., but it took several ecumenical councils to iron out all the wrinkles (see Council of Nicaea in 325 A.D.; Council of Constantinople in 381 A.D.; Council of Chalcedon in 451 A.D.). What practical difference does the Trinitarian nature of God make in our lives? One way to approach the mystery of God is through art, so here is a famous image of The Trinity by Andrei Rublev, a Russian artist of the early 15th C.

This famous painting is a Trinitarian interpretation of the story from Genesis 18:1-16 of “three men” visiting Abraham and Sarah and promising them a son. Do you notice how the 3 figures are quite similar? And how they are also distinct? We could spend an entire series of classes interpreting Rublev's icon as theology and appreciating it as art, so I'll limit myself to just one main observation: to gaze at Rublev's Trinity is to be invited into the inner circle...to be given a seat at the communion table!

What if God's primary character and aim is to be with us in communion? I'm not talking only or even primarily about those few minutes we spend once a month in Sunday worship sharing the bread and wine. I'm talking about God's desire to be *with us* moment by moment, day by day, always and forever. How would we CPC folks walk humbly and proudly in our present and boldly into our future knowing that the One-in-Three/Three-in-One God constantly invites us into Divine loving togetherness? Let's pull up a seat at *that* table in our year ahead. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer!



Together in Christ,
Greg Ellis, Pastor



Light of the World By Carol Lawrence

How do you take a picture of light? It's extremely difficult to get the correct exposure for a candle or light bulb. But here, one rainy night in Venice when all good photography students should have been asleep in their beds resting up for the next day's adventure, my photography friends and I captured images like these by keeping our camera shutters open while zooming the lenses. The photograph above was taken in St. Mark's Square in Venice, at night. Of course, the image doesn't show the lights themselves, but their impact is quite stunning.

Light of the world, enlightenment, light up your life, light at the end of the tunnel, let your light shine. We have so many sayings about light. Of course, the Bible has much to say about light as well. God begins his wonderful creation by speaking light into existence (Genesis 1:3). The prophet Isaiah tells the Israelites that when they turn from wickedness *Then your light shall break forth like morning* (58:8).

Scripture tells us we are the light of the world (Matthew 5:14), and a familiar children's song reminds us *This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine*. And yet, there are many days when I do not feel at all shiny, and I suspect I'm not alone in that. Especially in the dark days of winter in the Pacific Northwest, it's easy to feel gloomy. Hunkering down indoors with a good book can be very appealing, or maybe even with The Good Book.

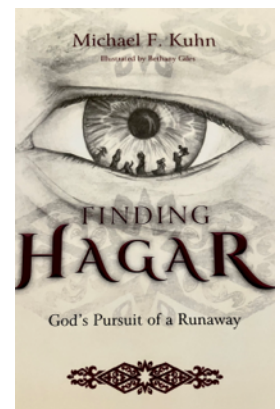
The weather service tells me that Western Washington has, on average, more than twenty days of (dark, dreary) rain in January. This January, it feels like we had at least 35. And yet, on many of those days there is at least a brief period of sun, a chance to get outside and enjoy God's wonderful creation. I know that when I step out into His world, whether literally or metaphorically, He will be *a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path* (Psalm 119:105), if not literally, certainly metaphorically. Like the lights in St. Mark's Square, we can't actually see Him, but we can certainly see His impact in our lives and in the world.

Booklovers Book Club to Meet February 27th

Booklovers will meet on February 27th at 1p at Carol Lawrence's house to discuss the book *Finding Hagar, God's Pursuit of a Runaway*, by Mike Kuhn, a member of our church and missionary to the Middle East.

The book the group will read for their March gathering is *A Burning in My Bones*, by Winn Collier. This book is a biography of Eugene H. Peterson, translator of the modern language Bible *The Message*.

For more information, contact Carol at cmlawren@gmail.com.





CPC Kids Clubhouse Catch Up

CPC Kids Clubhouse - November and January lessons were all about King Saul and King David. The lesson of David and Goliath was extra fun as we headed into the CPC main hallway to slay our 9ft 9in (yard stick & paper) Giant with rubber bands and paper "rocks". The hallway was the only place tall enough!

In February, we head into the book of 1 Kings to learn about Unit 12 - King Solomon and then over to Proverbs to pick up a little Godly wisdom. Sunday Clubhouse kids will learn how God gave Solomon wisdom to lead His people. The biggest take away being that Jesus is wisdom, and He leads those who trust in Him to eternal life. When we follow Jesus, we become wise.

Key Passage: Proverbs 3:7

Big Picture Question: What does God know?

Answer: God knows everything about the past, present, and future.

February Lessons: Solomon Became King (1 Kings 2–3), Solomon Built the Temple (1 Kings 6–8), The Queen of Sheba Visited Solomon (1 Kings 10), Wisdom of God's People (Proverbs 1; 3–4)

Lenten Devotional - The Season of Lent begins Wednesday, February 18th. A Family Friendly Lent Devotional Packet will be available for pick up on Sunday, February 15th (the Sunday before Ash Wednesday). These packets have easy-to-follow ideas and activities to help families prepare their hearts and minds for Easter.

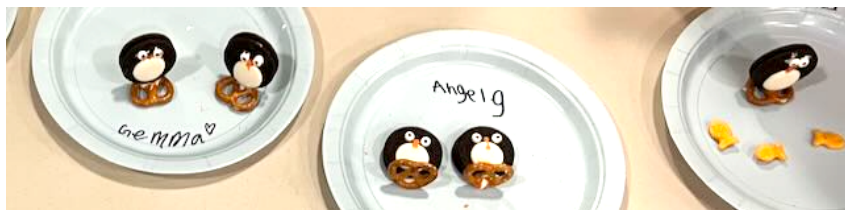
CARING BAGS - February snuck up on us this year! **The Caring Bags are indeed happening BUT will only be available for 2 weeks: Sunday, February 8th & Sunday February 15th!** Please consider blessing our CPC Sunday Morning kids with notes, special verses, cards, and treats. A list of our Sunday kiddos will be next to the bags in the foyer.

Though we have included the kids in Clubs 4 Kids the past couple of years, the ever-growing number of them and the irregularity of some of their attendance makes individual bags a challenge. We've decided to have a Valentine's Party for the Clubs 4 Kids group instead. Any donations of Valentine's related treats toward this event are greatly appreciated.

Clubs 4 Kids (C4K) - In February, we will be doing the usual Valentine's crafts and activities but also adding a special Lenten component. Beginning February 17th (day before Ash Wednesday) C4K times will include short Lenten lessons in the form of a weekly scavenger hunt for Easter story items... items one finds in the book called *Benjamin's Box: The Story of Resurrection Eggs*. It will be a pleasant change from winter themes and be just what we need to prepare for Easter.

Thank You to everyone who has recently donated snacks! Our cupboard had become a little sparse, but we are looking good now (for the time being). If you are wondering how to support this program, please check out the special request list on the donation table in the foyer. This list includes the extra supplies needed to go along with our programing.

A special thank you to Jackie Schoonover for making special treats – not only for the ESL Class members but also for Tuesday C4K kids! SO Yummy!



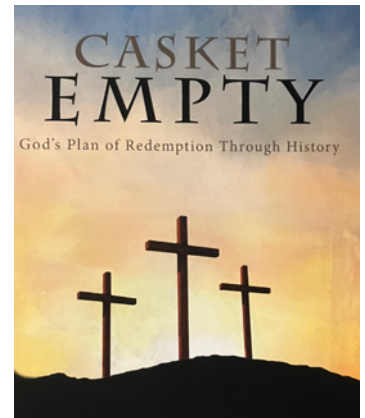
Penguin Edible Crafts



Adult Education Continues the Study of *Casket Empty*

The Adult Education class *Casket Empty* continues its study of God's plan for redemption, from Creation to Revelation. In January the class focus was Genesis, covering Creation, Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, and Noah. In February the emphasis will be on Abraham, Jacob, and Moses.

The class, led by Gordon Terpstra and Carol Lawrence, meets in the Chapel on Sunday mornings at 9a. All are welcome, even if you have not participated in earlier classes. Videos from all classes are available on the church website (www.cordatachurch.org), under the Adult Education page.



Congregational Workshop February 15th on the Resilient Church Initiative

We will have a Congregational Workshop on the Resilient Church Initiative on Sunday, February 15th, after Coffee Fellowship. Come, learn more, and help us fine tune our project ideas for a grant submission. The two areas we're focusing on are "Communications with the Next Generation" and "Pathway for

Discipleship." We'll meet in the foyer from noon until 1p. A light lunch will be available.

Fellowship Opportunities in February and March

The Lunch Bunch will be trying out three restaurants on February 22nd after Worship: Shari's Cafe and Pies on Meridian in the plaza with Ross and Marshall's, COA Mexican Eatery at 1065 E. Sunset, and Brandywine Kitchen at 1317 Commercial. Choose the restaurant that appeals to you, sign up at the Information Table in the foyer, and join us for a tasty lunch together.

Together Tuesday will return March 10th at 5:30p in the Family Life Center. Geoff Mumley of Campus Christian Fellowship will be our speaker for the evening. Be sure to save that date on your calendar.

It appears that we're focused on eating, but it's really all about being together and getting to know one another. And, by all means, bring a friend or two.

For more information, see Carol Anderson, Fellowship Elder.

Outdoor Cleanup — Saturday, March 28th from 9a-Noon

Plan to join us for our first Spring cleanup of the season as we get our outside area ready for Easter. March 28th is the date from 9a to noon. If the weather is adverse, we will reschedule for a week later. If you have the following, please bring rakes, tarps, 5-gallon buckets, weeding tools, gloves, etc. Remember our motto: "many hands make light work."

Sign up in the foyer so we will have an idea of how many will attend. For any questions contact Doug Cowgill, Elder for Facilities, at DougC@cordatachurch.org.

Table Game Day — Cancelled for February

Because of the big game on TV - the Super Bowl - and a very active calendar of church events in February, we have decided to cancel Table Game Day this month.

Join us for our next Table Game Day on March 8th after Coffee Fellowship for snacks, table games, and fellowship.

Interested in Financial Coaching?

- CPC is offering a 9-week class from Feb. 12th – April 16th
- Check out the material at the information table.




Take control of your money with Financial Peace University! This nine-week class uses Biblical wisdom and common sense to help you tackle budgeting, pay off debt, and invest for your future! Together we'll walk through God's ways of handling money so we can experience freedom with our finances.

You can sign up by scanning the qr-code on the left, browsing to the Interested in Financial Coaching icon on the church website (Cordatachurch.org) or from the material at the church information table in the foyer.

This class is being offering 100% virtually. You will watch a video online on your own during the week and then join a Zoom meeting each Thursday night for 9 weeks. The Zoom meeting starts 2/12/26 at 6:30p for 45 to 60 minutes. The last class is 4/16/26. The cost is \$50, but if purchased separately, it is more than \$120. We have a limited number of \$50 reduced-price bundles on a first-come basis.

Since the class is virtual, this could be an opportunity to share this invite with an adult child, grandchild, or friend.

Please contact Gregg Block with any questions.

Budgeting Ideas

By Gregg Block

In the January *Beacon*, I touched on the importance of Budgeting. Hopefully, the quote from Zig Ziglar - "If you aim at nothing, you will hit it every time" - was thought provoking. Many people strongly dislike budgeting. Per the Ramsey Solutions team the common objections are:

1. You're afraid of what you'll find.
2. You think it's too restrictive.
3. My spouse and I aren't on the same page.
4. You don't know how.

Let's dive a little deeper:

A budget is simply a plan for your money. It is a list of your planned income for the month and the expenses for the month. Ramsey recommends a zero-based budget where your planned income minus your planned expenses equals zero.

1. When you sit down and look at your income and expenses, a lot of your fear goes away as there is transparency about actual spending. A budget done on purpose, on paper (in an app also counts) will give you peace of mind.
2. A budget doesn't limit your freedom; a budget gives you freedom. It gives you permission to spend as you have planned and agreed ahead of time about that type of expense. That's quite a paradigm shift.
3. When a budget is done together with your spouse and when you agree to live on it, the budget will literally be your "same page"; it will remove many money fights from your marriage. For those of you who are single, it helps you be accountable to yourself.

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Budgeting Ideas Continued from Page 5

4. There are many tools available to help you budget. Ramsey Solutions has the EveryDollar App. They have many, free how-to-budget articles on their RamseySolutions.com website. There are many other budget tools available such as YNAB, PocketGuard, Quicken Simplifi... They all can link to your bank account and automatically download transactions and make it easy to track the transactions. Ramsey Solutions EveryDollar app is specifically designed to track income and expenses and uses the zero-based budget they teach. If you want to try the EveryDollar app, I have a limited number of 1 year reduced-price subscriptions available. Or browse to <https://www.ramseysolutions.com/money/everydollar> to get a free 3 month trial. CPC also has an FPU class starting 2/12/26 if you want financial coaching. Sign up for that class, and you also get the EveryDollar app. See the table in the foyer for more information.

Luke 14:28 says, For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it?

For those that are not tracking your income and expenses and not budgeting, why not give it a try? It's how you tell your money where to go so you can stop wondering (or worrying) where it went. Ramsey Solutions has found that good budgeting is a key to financial success. Dave Ramsey, a millionaire many times over, still budgets monthly. If you are new to budgeting, give yourself some grace. It usually takes about three months to get comfortable with it. But if you keep working at it and stick to your budget, you will see progress. You can be really in control of your money. For those that are married, you and your spouse will have better communication. The number one way to achieve financial success is to spend less than you make and budgeting and tracking your income and expenses are the ways to make sure you have the proper "aim".

Supplies Needed for the Guatemala Mission Team

The Guatemala Mission Team will have a box in the foyer for those who would like to donate items to help with much-needed supplies for the mission trip.

Some suggestions include:

- Coloring books and crayons.
- Multivitamins for adults, children, or women: Vitamins are given out as needed to patients at the health posts.
- Toothbrushes, toothpaste, and dental floss: We teach dental hygiene, and these donations are useful.
- Packages of sterile or non-sterile gauze pads or rolls of gauze – these items are used frequently at the health posts

Items that the teachers need are:

Pencils, Erasers, Pens, Notebooks, Construction Paper, Glue, Crayons, Felt Pens.

Thank you for supporting the Guatemala Mission Team.

Explore Cordata Begins March 8th

Are you new to Cordata Pres? We're glad to have you here. Do you have questions about what is going on and how you can get connected? If so, you are invited to attend "Explore Cordata," a two-week series on March 8th and 15th, after the worship service when we will go over all things Cordata. We will cover our history, mission, doctrine, ministries, and programs and how you can get more connected with our life here. We'll also give you a tour of the building! It's a great opportunity to meet others that are also new here and to ask any questions you might have. Following these sessions there will be a third meeting on March 22nd for anyone wishing to join in church membership. Heavy snacks/lite lunch will be served at each of the three Explore Cordata meetings. Childcare is available upon request.

Save the Date

- Thursday, February 12th, 6:30p, Zoom Meeting for Financial Peace University - See page 5.**
- Sunday, February 15th, After Worship, Congregational Workshop on Resilient Church Initiative, Foyer - See page 4.**
- Saturday, February 21st, 8a, Men's Breakfast, Palm Room**
- Sunday, February 22nd, After Worship, Lunch Bunch - See page 4.**
- Friday, February 27th, 1p, Book Lovers, Carol Lawrence's Home - See page 2.**
- Sunday, March 8th, After Worship, Explore Cordata Pres - See page 6.**
After Coffee Fellowship, Table Game Day, Foyer - See page 4.
- Tuesday, March 10th, 5:30p, Together Tuesday, Family Life Center - See page 4.**
- Sunday, March 15th, After Worship, Explore Cordata Pres - See page 6.**
- Sunday, March 22nd, After Worship, Explore Cordata Pres - See page 6.**
- Saturday, March 28th, 9a-Noon, Outdoor Work Party - 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 - 4:30p, Clubs 4 Kids, Church Foyer - See page 3.
 5p, English as a Second Language**
- 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
 5p, CCF Talk Time, Family Life Center - February 6th and 20th.**



Clubs 4 Kids



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 Cordata Presbyterian Church
 400 Meadowbrook Court, Bellingham, WA
 98226
 (360) 733-8860 or beacon@cordatachurch.org
 www.cordatachurch.org