



# Cordata Beacon

A Publication of **Cordata** Presbyterian Church

May, 2026

## Message from Pastor Greg: *Baptized!*

Sunday, May 3rd, was a banner day for God's people at Cordata Pres — we saw a record number of baptisms for a single Sunday. God has blessed us with double digit new members, both adults AND youth; both those professing their faith in Jesus Christ publicly for the first time AND those reaffirming their faith. Our hearts and our membership rolls are filling up, as we rejoice and give thanks for God's abundant additions to our family of faith. Let's all find out the names of our newest members and offer them a warm Cordata welcome; they are our brothers and sisters in Christ for the coming chapter of our shared journey of faith.

Speaking of baptism, have you thought recently of your own baptism? Or of the rich meaning of baptism generally? Baptism has so many layers of significance that it is hard to keep track of them all. Here are a few to spur our memory: Baptism is: (1) the "rite of initiation," a fancy way of saying that the church recognizes someone's baptism as the beginning of a new life of following Jesus as part of His church (*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! 2 Cor. 5:17 (NIV)*); (2) a matter of life and death...we understand ourselves to be spiritually buried with Christ in the waters of baptism and then raised to new life, thus linking us to our Savior for eternity; (3) a once-for-all-time cleansing, as our sins are washed clean by Jesus' blood and righteousness (*In Jesus*

*Christ, we are forgiven!*); (4) a release from captivity, recalling God's delivery of the Israelites from bondage in Egypt, through parting of the Red Sea; (5) a letting go...of idols, of bad habits, of unhealthy relationships, of any and all baggage that interferes with our closeness with God; (6) a series of covenant promises...God's "Yes!" to us; our "Yes!" to God and each other; (7) a call to live differently...when any of us is permanently changed (saved, cleansed, renewed, released) through baptism, we expect to see change in that person, sometimes immediately and more often over a lifetime through the presence of the Holy Spirit; and (8) the moment we become "Children of God." What other ways do you understand baptism? Regardless, let's celebrate the baptism that unites us all in Christ. (More photos on page 9.)



Together in His baptism, Pastor Greg



## Master Creator

By Carol Lawrence

I've always been fascinated by designs that use lots of lines, so naturally this fence caught my eye. Lots of lines – straight, bent, wide, thin, spaces between them narrow or wide. This particular fence is on the Moulton Homestead in Grand Tetons National Park. The homestead was built by the Moulton brothers in the early twentieth century. They spent thirty years developing it, and it's quite extensive – a large main house, several outbuildings, a large barn and a smaller one, several pastures with different types of fences. No doubt the brothers were proud of their accomplishment, the resourcefulness and persistence, not to mention the material wealth, that allowed them to achieve the elaborate homestead.

Today, however, the scene looks quite different. The long view shows a dilapidated row of fence posts, maybe 100 feet long, against the magnificent backdrop of the 13,000-foot peaks of the 40-mile-long Teton Range. The fence, once used to guard a large herd of dairy cows, is now nothing more than an interesting decorative detail for landscape photographers. How humbling.

We humans can be so proud of our creations – a house, a garden, a piece of artwork. Instead of patting ourselves on the back, we really should be praising the Master Creator. The Bible reminds us: *He who forms the mountains, who creates the wind, and who reveals his thoughts to mankind, who turns dawn to darkness, and treads on the heights of the earth - the Lord God Almighty is his name (Amos 4:13). Amen.*



### Booklovers to Meet May 22nd at 1p

Booklovers will meet at Carol Lawrence's house on May 22nd to discuss the book *To Love and Be Loved, a Personal Portrait of Mother Teresa*, by Jim Towey. The book recounts the author's experiences travelling with Mother Teresa for more than ten years and describes how her love of God and dedication to helping the poor changed his entire being. At the May gathering the club will be planning books to read for the coming months, and participants are asked to bring suggestions of books they think the group might enjoy. Everybody is welcome. For more information, contact Carol at [cmlawren@gmail.com](mailto:cmlawren@gmail.com).

### Thank You!

Thank you for the kind cards, phone calls, texts, emails and most importantly prayers of encouraging words through Larry's stroke recovery for the past four months. Also thank you for the inspirational messages from many of you included in *Go Outside, God is Waiting* written by Carol Lawrence. Those messages hit close to my heart and something I will read many times. With your continued thoughts and prayers we will navigate this slow road to recovery.

Thanks again and God Bless you all,

*Margaret Rudy*



## CPC Kids Clubhouse Catch Up

**CPC Kids Clubhouse** - The importance of repentance is a topic we've really focused on in the Sunday Morning Clubhouse in recent months. May lessons begin with the final lesson of Study Unit 14 - The Northern Kingdom. Kids will learn how the Northern Kingdom of Israel was destroyed because of the Israelites' sin. Just like people do today, the people of the Old Testament failed to repent and seek the Lord wholeheartedly.

We then begin Unit 15 - The Southern Kingdom the second week in May, learning about the Good Kings of Judah. Kids will learn that the Southern Kingdom of Judah experienced the reign of both good and evil kings. Yet, the people's allegiance was divided between the worship of God and the idols of foreign nations. God sent prophets (Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah) to warn the people to turn back to Him, but they did not listen. God disciplined His people by sending them into captivity in Babylon but promised they would one day return home. We will pause our study on May 24th for the One Spirit, Many Congregations service (see below).

**KEY PASSAGE:** Psalm 145:9

**BIG PICTURE QUESTION:** What is God like? **ANSWER:** God is holy, good, and loving.

### May Lessons:

- \* Final Unit 14 lesson: The Northern Kingdom Was Destroyed (2 Kings 17)
- \* Unit 15 lessons: Judah's Good Kings (2 Kings 18–19; 2 Chronicles 14–24), Prophets to Judah (Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah), God Promised a New Covenant (Jeremiah 17; 31)

### ONE SPIRIT, MANY CONGREGATIONS Service

#### There will NOT be Sunday Kids Clubhouse Time on May 24th

Children will remain in main service for this special annual multi-church service. Kids in attendance will be given "Busy Bags" with items to keep them occupied. The Chapel space will be available with a live feed of the service for parents to supervise their extra wiggly kids as well as for any toddlers who need a place to be their beautifully boisterous selves.

**Clubs 4 Kids (C4K)** - In the 6-week Lenten period leading up to Easter Sunday we took some special time during our Game Day Club time to learn all about Passion Week. We used the Resurrection Eggs to add some fun but then created our own Treasure Boxes of items to tell the story. The kids really enjoyed the egg hunts and then collecting the small items that help tell the Holy Week story. The project was completed in time for the kids to use their box to share the events of Jesus' last week on earth with their families. (See more photos on page 8.)

May is the final full month of C4K. There will be a few Mother's Day projects along with spring and "wacky calendar" themed crafts and games. We will have two final days of C4K the first week in June. We then we will take a two-week break to prepare for Fun in the Sun!



**FUN in the SUN 2026! (F.I.T.S.)** - Our summer "Road Trip – Route 66" theme is going to be a fun and busy time. Along with the usual loosely structured play time, we plan to teach F.I.T.S. attendees the main components of all the 66 books of the Bible in the 9 weeks (18 gathering times) we have. Fun in the Sun is a unique program that welcomes all kids AND their grown-ups to participate in as much or as little of the crafts, games, snacks, and story times as they wish. This relaxed yet dynamic time allows the opportunity for great conversations about a myriad of subjects between our CPC leaders/helpers and the community just outside our doors. It's the perfect way to spend a summer afternoon. We are always looking for more folks to get **Clubhouse Catch Up Continued on page 4.**

### Clubhouse Catch Up Continued from page 3.

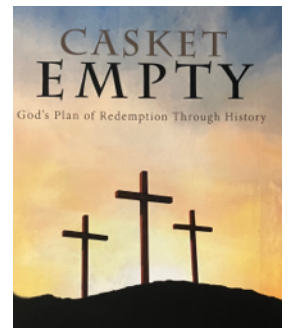
involved. No special skills are needed... just a desire to meet new people and shine the light of Christ. The specific areas in need of helpers are craft tabl, lemonade/ice coffee tent, and storytelling and folks to help initiate playing lawn games or to just engage attendees in “get to know ya better” conversations. Contact Bonnie Hollingsworth (BonnieH@cordatachurch.org) to learn more about this amazing program.

## Adult Education

The Discipleship Committee is committed to offering meaningful, faith-growing classes and small groups that help equip and enrich our congregation’s walk with Jesus. To better reflect this purpose, we have renamed our weekly Adult Education Class the **Growing Faith Class**. This class will continue to meet on Sundays at 9a in the Chapel for teaching and discussion.

Our current study—*Casket Empty*, an overview of God’s plan of redemption throughout the Old Testament—will continue through Sunday, May 17. The material for May will cover the remaining section of the Old Testament, including the Israelites’ return from exile, rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem, and God’s new covenant, which will come to fruition with the arrival of Jesus in the New Testament. Next fall the class will continue with the New Testament. We are deeply grateful for Gordon Terpstra and Carol Lawrence, whose faithful teaching has guided us through God’s Word in powerful ways.

There will be no Growing Faith Class on May 24 due to the One Spirit, Many Congregations gathering.



## Fellowship News

**Get excited;** the Showstoppers from Bellingham High School are coming to entertain us for **Together Tuesday, May 12th**. Since Cinco de Mayo was just recently celebrated, we’ve planned Mexican cuisine. If it gets too spicy, we’ll have sour cream to calm things down. You don’t want to miss the Tres Leches cake! YUM!! You get a terrific dinner, a joyful program of music and dance, and warm fellowship for only \$7.00. Join us on May 12th at 5:30p in the Family Life Center.

Have you seen the new faucets in our kitchen? They’re equipped with spray nozzles. Many thanks to Doug Cowgill, Chris Battershill, and the plumbers who did the installation.

**The bi-annual Congregational Meeting is June 14th.** We will be enjoying an indoor picnic in the Family Life Center at CPC to hear how we are progressing as a church and to celebrate all of our wins. Plan to stay after church and join the CPC family for fried chicken and great healthy side dishes. Did someone say watermelon?



## One Spirit

MANY CONGREGATIONS  
10am | Sunday, May 24, 2026

- Speaker: Steven Shetterly
- Offering to support Renew Northwest
- Parent supervised kid space and activity bags for kids.

**Located at Cordata Presbyterian Church**

## English as a Second Language

May 5th will mark the end of the spring session for the ESL classes we have been hosting all year at CPC on Tuesday nights. Following our fall and winter sessions, we are pleased to say we have had 100% retention with 5 dedicated students whom we have met with since October to help them learn to speak, read, and write in English. Our 5 students come from both the immediate neighborhood and our greater community but originally come from China, Japan, Ukraine, and Guatemala. For most, English is their second language. But for two of our students it is their third or fourth language! We admire their commitment to learn and their desire to integrate more fully into their new community. Some of the students who have children in school are also motivated to keep up with their children's proficiency in learning English as well as a desire to interact well with their children's teachers and school.

We have learned hosting an ESL class means networking is key. Networking provides teachers, students, resources, and partners within the community who also want to support immigrants. This year we have had opportunities to network with the Meridian School District, Goodwill, the Lynden Public Library, the Cordata Neighborhood Association, and the Bellingham School District. We are thankful we have had two gifted teachers, Sharon Chang and Leslie Drury, as well as class helper Jackie Schoonover. We hope to offer classes again next fall.

If you would like to learn more about how we can reach out and support immigrants within our community, these 3 books are recommended reading. A national bestseller, ***On the Block, Stories of Immigrant Families*** by Ellen Oh, highlights 12 families and 12 cultures in 1 building. Appropriate for middle readers to adult, it follows the interconnected lives of multi-generational immigrant families with heartwarming stories. This book supports the need for more diverse book drives.

***Welcome the Stranger*** by Matthew Soerens and Jenny Yang, revised and expanded second edition, challenges readers to look at immigration from a Biblical worldview and highlights how justice, compassion, and truth are often missing from the immigration debate in this country. It provides comprehensive information on every aspect of the current problems, its roots, and provides common sense solutions. It includes a very helpful summary of the history of immigration efforts in America. It also includes an appendix of discussion questions and would be a great resource for Adult Education and/or small group study.

***Start With Welcome*** by Bri Stensrud relates her personal growth in expanding her commitment for pro life to understanding the human dignity each person holds as an image bearer of God. The book shares scripture, stories, and statistics to help understand and navigate the humanitarian crisis at our border. It also demonstrates that we don't have to choose between secure borders and a compassionate welcome and includes ways we can help.

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## The Sharing Cart Can Be for You!

Did you know that every Sunday morning there is a sharing cart located near the area where folks line up for coffee? This cart is for everyone to bring and take, although we keep it simply supplied with a few leftover items from the Friday Cordata Pantry. As we approach summer, we hope more folks will find garden produce to share. If the top of the cart is full, place items on the second shelf. The cart can be used to share items that are not food, but we try to stick with new things that are not too big. We are happy if the cart is mostly empty by Sunday noon. If you have questions, you are invited to ask Janet Moritz or Gregg Block.



## A Big Moment in the Life of the Church

The final touches have been put on CPC's \$10,000 grant application to the Lilly Foundation through Whitworth University. If approved, the grant would provide start-up funds for 1) an ambitious CPC communications strategy and 2) stronger "pathways" within the church to develop more disciples for Christ. Members of the Resilient Church Project (RCP) Team that developed the application after a two-year period of information-gathering described it as "a BiG moment in the life of the church."

The grant application, however, is only the first step for the church and its congregants. Now the work begins. In addition to the plans for an aggressive communications strategy and the development of "pathways" for stronger discipleship, RCP members noted other opportunities before the church in the foreseeable future. Among them:

- Partner with Worship Times to implement the church's communications strategy. Worship Times is a non-profit design, social media management, communications support and church website solutions firm that works exclusively with churches.
- Clarify the role of the Discipleship Committee so that it is better understood by those seeking involvement and develop a progression for individual spiritual growth.
- Develop a roster of those currently involved in the work of the church and their areas of involvement and responsibilities.
- Be open to a revised church committee structure, developing teams, structures, responsibilities and goals for each committee to fit contemporary interests and needs.
- Continue the work of the CPC membership "engagement" effort to identify, attract, and involve prospective church attendees/members.
- Hold workshops to get to know our neighbors better, learning about how to better involve and serve those with low incomes and different religions and nationalities.
- Strengthen CPC small groups by identifying "co-leaders" of each existing or new groups so as not to overburden any one participant
- Put together an implementation team to oversee this step forward for Cordata.

Opportunities abound for the church and its people to be a part of CPC's "BIG moment."

The Resilient Church Team

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## What's Going on in the CPC Library?

You may have noticed these days that there is something going on in our church library near the front entrance! There are Post-It notes and masking tape everywhere. Sometimes there are even piles of books on the tables!!

Sandy Hiorns, Barbara Sanford, Cindy Edwards, and Rob Wright, who serves as tech consultant and assistant, are working to put all of the library's materials online and linked to the church's website. Once all the titles have been uploaded, folks will be able to explore the collection from their home computers. Another step in the project is organizing the actual collection so it is easy to find the various subject areas.

The CPC library has a long history from the time the church moved into its present building so it is not unexpected that there is a need for update, and this comes with surprises. Did you know the following about the CPC Library:

- Gift Bibles of various versions are available for distribution...do you know someone who needs one?
- There's a good collection of Bible Commentaries and reference materials (especially helpful to Bible Study Leaders).
- Multiple copies of possible studies for small groups are available.
- There's a growing section of Christian fiction.
- Children's and picture Bibles are available.
- There are puzzles of all sizes and types from 50 pieces for young children to 1000. (There is a separate check-out schedule for these.)

Many thanks for those who are making our Library a living, vital resource for our growing congregation... the project is about half done!!

## Credit versus Debit Cards versus Cash – Does it make a difference?

By Gregg Block

You probably don't think twice about how you pay for your everyday purchases. Most of us use debit or credit cards, but cash can have a role too. Many of us are creatures of habit. Before we dive into the details, let's think about how our buying habits impact us. Dave Ramsey likes to say that winning with money is 80% behavior and 20% head knowledge. Behavior beats math. More on that later.

Let's look at a high-level comparison.

Credit Card	Debit Card	Cash
1. Spend money from a line of credit	1. Spend money from your bank account	1. Spend only the money in your possession
2. Can help your credit score — or hurt it	2. Doesn't impact your credit score	2. Doesn't impact your credit score
3. Many offer points, miles or cash back rewards	3. Rarely offer rewards	3. No rewards. Sometimes you can get cash discount
4. Typically zero liability fraud protection	4. Limited fraud protection	4. No fraud possible, unless cash stolen
5. May charge annual fees	5. No annual fees	5. No annual fees
6. High interest rates	6. No interest rates	6. No interest rates
7. Charges a cash advance fee	7. Withdraw cash for no fee at your bank's ATM	7. Withdraw cash for no fee at your bank
8. Buy now – Pay later	8. Buy now – Pay now	8. Buy now – Pay now
9. Low resistance to spending	9. Limits spending	9. Limits spending

### Some additional comments:

On fraud protection, debit cards issued by Visa or Mastercard have the same zero liability fraud protection when used properly. Promptly report a missing card or fraudulent transactions. Please check with your financial institution on the coverage of your specific debit card.

Some say - I'll use my credit card to get points and rewards. Please do the math. Fees impact the rewards, and if you do not pay the credit card in full every month, the interest rate of more than 20% is expensive. Ramsey Solutions' research shows that more than 54% of families stress over finances. Carrying credit card balances and the related interest charges greatly increases that stress. If you cannot pay your credit card balance off, please stop using credit cards. CPC offers Ramsey's Financial Peace University and that can help you get debt free.

### Summary:

**Debit card:** Money comes straight out of your checking account and you are less likely to overspend.

**Credit card:** You borrow from a lender and pay it back later, often with expensive interest charges.

**Big difference:** Debit helps you stay out of debt; credit opens the door to debt.

Studies show that people spend 12-18% more when using credit cards instead of debit cards or cash.

*This article is for informational & educational purposes & is not a substitute for professional financial advice.*

**Cordata Scene**



**Clubs 4 Kids**



**Our thanks to the hard working twelve who showed up Saturday, May 2nd, for landscape clean-up. Not pictured are Roger DeSpain, Grace Griffin, Dan Moore, and Joel Rautiola.**



**Judy Paulson, Lynda Fraser, Polly Ek, Amy and Tim Black, and Cheryl Terpstra join CPC on April 26th. Standing next to his wife Cheryl is the Rev. Gordon Terpstra (Ret.), a member of Northwest Coast Presbytery.**

### Cordata Scene (Continued) May 3rd, A Sunday of Celebration



## Save the Date

- Tuesday, May 12th, 5:30p, Together Tuesday, Family Life Center - See page 4.
- Saturday, May 16th, 8a, Men's Breakfast, Palm Room
- Sunday, May 17th, After Coffee Fellowship, Table Game Day, Foyer
- Friday, May 22nd, 1p, Booklovers Book Club, Carol Lawrence's Home - See page 2.
- Sunday, May 24th, During Worship, One Spirit, Many Congregations, Worship Center - See page 4.
- Monday, May 25th, Office Closed for Memorial Day Holiday
- Sunday, June 14th, After Worship, Congregational Meeting & Lunch, Family Life Center - See page 4.

### Regularly Occurring Events

- Sundays -** 9a, Adult Education Class, Chapel - Canceled May 24th; see page 4.  
10:30a, Worship, Worship Center  
10:45a, CPC Kids Clubhouse/Sunday School - Canceled May 24th; see page 3.  
After Worship, Coffee Fellowship, Foyer
- Mondays -** 2p, Tai Chi Exercise Class, Chapel
- Tuesdays -** 4:30p, Clubs 4 Kids, Church Foyer - Ends June 4th; see page 3.  
5p, English as a Second Language - Ends May 5th; see page 5.
- 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 - Ends June 4th; see page 3.  
7p, The Chosen, Chapel - Ends May 14th.
- Fridays -** 2:30p, Free Groceries - Miracle Food Network, Foyer  
5p, CCF Talk Time, Family Life Center - May 1st and May 29th.

**We Welcome New Members  
and Celebrate the Sacrament of  
Baptism on May 3rd**



**New Members Wanda\* and Federico\* Gonzalez and their children Junior\*, Heidi\*, Sandra\*, Angel\*, Frankie\*, Gemma\*, and Joaquin\***

**\*Those Baptized**

**Sophia Tan (who did not join CPC but is supporting her husband David), and new members David Tan, Natalie Hartford, Matthew Hartford\*, Eli Ballis, and Jewel Ballis\***

**\*Those Baptized**

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