



Spring Transformation

This time of year often brings a sense of new life and hope for people. We see brown fields turning green with new life, trees putting out new growth, and the first bulbs pushing their way through the ground, bursting with potential, and we can often feel a renewed sense of energy and hope. As we witness new life springing forth in nature, we can imagine new life springing out of us as well.

Scripture often taps into those images. We read of God's provision in soil and seeds, in rain and sun, the gift of new growth on the vine leading to fruitfulness and harvest. We also read of healing, of rebirth and restoration, of fallen seeds bringing new life, and old stumps bringing forth new shoots, and deserts bringing forth gardens. And scripture talks of our part in those processes. We read of tilling, cultivating, planting, pruning and harvesting.

Our discipleship journey relies both on

God's provision of new life AND of our willing participation in bringing it into being. It is both the promise of the Lord, "Behold, I am making all things new," and the willingness of people to let the newness flow into and through our own actions and decisions. The new life promised in our faith is both a gift from God, and a choice we make to pick up our spiritual shovels and till the soil of our own lives, to create the space for that life to grow.

This season, we are hoping that in simple meals with others, in slowing down to be with God, and in turning our attention to our Lord's presence, that we can welcome transformation and feel new growth in our own lives. "I have come that they may have life and have it abundantly!" John 10:10

Pastor Chris

WINTER FOCUS

New Life

EQUIP

Growing to be more like Jesus

CONNECT

Ways to Engage with Others

MOBILIZE

Partnering With God to Change Our World

CELEBRATE

God's Work In & Through Us

YOUR SPRING CHALLENGE

SUMMER

Save the Dates

EQUIP



Godspeed – Slowing Down to Catch Up With God

Pastor Lori

“I’ve been running for most of my life. Running through life to get somewhere else. But the thing about running is that you miss things. Many things. And if I kept running, I was going to miss everything.”

These insightful words mark the beginning of the documentary “Godspeed” and introduce us to our topic for Lent this spring. Lent is the six-plus weeks leading up to Easter. For hundreds of years, it has been a time when Christians reflect on their relationship with God as we prepare our hearts to remember Christ’s death on the cross. We acknowledge where we have grown away from Jesus and where the Holy Spirit may need to do some pruning in our lives. The season begins with Ash Wednesday on March 5 and a solemn Service of Worship in our Sanctuary. A Tenebrae (Service of Gradual Darkness) is held on Thursday, April 17 to remember Christ’s death. The Lenten Season ends joyfully with the celebration of Jesus’ resurrection on Easter Sunday, April 20.

On Wednesday evenings during Lent, we will gather as a church family for a simple meal of soup and bread, a denying of ourselves to remember all that Jesus gave up for us. Our “Soup Suppers”, as we call them, are also a time to

get to know each other better. To put names and faces together. To hear people’s stories and discover common experiences. This year we want to make it a time for intentionally connecting across generations. Discussion questions will be provided to “break the ice” and get the conversation flowing. *Please see Rosa’s article on page 5.*

Our first Soup Supper is on Ash Wednesday, March 5, and will be followed by our Ash Wednesday Service. On Wednesday, March 12, we’ll watch the 37-minute documentary “Godspeed” and begin considering its application in our own lives. On Wednesdays, March 19 and March 26, and April 2 & 9, we will watch a short video excerpt from “Godspeed” and discuss it in small groups. Look in your weekly WestLife update and our Sunday video announcements for more information as the time draws near.

A final thought: Jesus walked everywhere in his three years of ministry. He lived and traveled at *three miles per hour*. This is how Jesus changed the world and is still changing it. Imagine what God might do in and through us if we slow down to catch up with Him.

rightnow
MEDIA

Want to use the “Godspeed” material with your Bible Study or Life Group? You can watch the documentary and teaching videos on your own computer at Right Now Media starting today! Contact Lisa Forst in the church office 541-773-8274 or lisa@wpcmedford.com to learn how to get connected.

Growing to Be More Like Jesus



The Power of Forgiveness

It was not my finest hour. I said something really hurtful to a friend in a text. I didn't mean to be cruel, but I did not think through the impact of my words ahead of time. My friend texted back, saying how my words had wounded her deeply. I was so saddened that I had added to her pain and appalled that I had been so insensitive. *What was I thinking?* I apologized and asked to meet with her so I could ask her forgiveness in person. She texted back three amazing words: "You are forgiven."

What a gift it was to read her text! It was deeply humbling to receive her forgiveness. I was grateful and felt deeply honored that she would be willing to forgive me. In that moment, I experienced through another human being the forgiveness of Jesus Christ.

In Matthew's Gospel, Jesus teaches his disciples how to pray, saying "And forgive us our debts, as *we also have* forgiven our debtors." (Mt 6:12). Then, he expounds on the forgiveness theme. "For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins." (vs.13-14) We forgive others, not to make ourselves feel better or to find freedom from past hurts – although that can certainly happen. Jesus says we are to forgive in order to receive God's forgiveness of *our* sins and to more closely align our hearts with God's heart.

Unforgiveness blocks the Spirit's transforming work in our life and hinders our witness for Christ. If you are carrying hurts from the past, prayerfully consider asking a Stephen Minister to walk with you on a journey to forgiveness. (Talk to Pastor Lori or Pastor Chris to learn more.) Bring all of your hurts to Jesus and release them into His careful, loving hands.

What is Stephen Ministry?

Have you seen the blue and white banner hanging in our sanctuary and been curious about the Stephen Ministry?

Stephen Ministers are the after people; we come to those who have lost a loved one after the funeral and after family members have left. We visit and listen to those who are going through a divorce after friends may have grown weary of listening. We walk with those who are facing a long-term illness or distressing medical situation.

Stephen Ministers already have the spiritual gifts of care and compassion. In addition, we go through fifty-two weeks of training where we learn how to listen well to our care receiver. We are not fixers. We are there to validate their feelings and let them know they are not alone in their journey.

If you have compassion for your loved ones and friends, then you already have the skill to become a Stephen Minister. We are looking for several people who would like to be trained to become a Stephen Minister later this year. If you are interested, please email Pam Wooton at pwoot@charter.net. I would be happy to meet or talk with you and to answer any of your questions.



CONNECT



Caring for the Caregiver to Keep our Connections Healthy

Pastor Chris

“You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

Matthew 22:39

Jesus’ central command to love others isn’t always an easy task, especially when we are in a long-term relationship of caring or service. We can find ourselves becoming tired, overwhelmed, or emotionally drained, which can then be compounded by feelings of guilt or shame. We may even find ourselves pulling back from others, or hesitant to even engage, because we think we won’t have “enough love” within us.

But often, the problem is rooted in a neglect of the first two pieces of Jesus’ command. There are actually three “loves” in Jesus’ Great Commandment, and each is important. Our capacity to love others grows from our foundational relationship with God, but also from our own personal health as we care for our own souls.

So, for those of you who are caring for an aging parent, or walking a difficult path with a fading spouse, or just trying to graciously get your kids through another week, and for those who may feel called to serve others, or reach out to neighbors, but aren’t sure you’ll have the strength to “go the distance,” here are a few habits that Jesus modeled that can help fuel, or refuel, our connections with others.

Spend Time With God. Like Jesus, make a regular habit of withdrawing from life’s pressures to lean upon God. We aren’t enough, in ourselves; we must connect with and draw upon the Source of life and love. Remember,

prayer isn’t just talking, it’s also hearing our loving God speak. Note how often He says “I am with you!”

Take care of your body. Eat healthy. Stay hydrated. Get enough rest. This seems simple and straightforward, but we’re not always that good at it. But Jesus fed people in the wilderness, let his disciples snack on grain in the fields, and grabbed quick naps for himself (even on storm-driven boats). He attended to basic physical needs, so that he could better attend to spiritual needs. In Jesus you never see love being sabotaged because he’s “hangry” or tired.

Just breathe. Slow down. Take five minutes to breathe, to take perspective, to feel your feelings and recognize your thoughts in the moment. We exist in the now, so be here now. Notice how present Jesus always was. Not rushed. Not pushed. Just present.

Get Help. Sometimes we just need to lean on others. Jesus called twelve followers to help him in his mission, and also relied on the support of other friends and disciples (Mary and the other women especially, but many others too.) If Jesus asked for help, so can you! Lean on your community!

None of these things are overly complicated or take a great deal of extra time or energy. In fact, they actually tend to give back energy. They bring peace. They restore health. Of course sometimes deeper intervention is needed, and deep wounds can take time to heal. But these regular rhythms strengthen the heartbeat of Christian love... for the Lord, yourself and others!

Ways to Engage with Others



YG Winter Retreat

Sat. Feb 15 – Mon. Feb 17

Youth Group Winter Retreat looks something like this. Waking up in a cabin of friends and mentors. Family meals. Homemade food by Robert, the (awesome) Camp Chef. Campfires. A day at the Snow Park (fingers crossed for snow). A hike. Lessons and worship. Board games. Group activities. And free time.

Camp Latgawa is nestled into the peaceful evergreens of the (slightly) remote Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest of Eagle Point. The grounds make for the perfect retreat, where students can expect to unplug from the fast-paced life of school to hear God's voice. The rustic yet cozy (heated) cabins create an atmosphere of team building, comradery, and shared experience.

Friends and newcomers are welcome. Further details, preparations, safety, forms, cost, and registration are on this link. Please register as soon as possible! https://bit.ly/wpc_winter_retreat_2025



It's Time for Soup!

Nothing brings me more comfort on a cold day than a bowl of hot soup. I can eat soup morning, noon and night. The choices are insurmountable! Tomato bisque, butternut squash, Italian wedding soup, egg drop soup, and who doesn't feel better after a bowl of chicken noodle soup. Yes, soup is good for the soul!

What also brings comfort is sharing a meal with others. Gathering at the table we share our life stories. We laugh, learn and dream. We come together in fellowship, and we experience the nearness of God. Please join us on Wednesday nights March 5 through April 9 and again on Maundy Thursday, April 17, for the comfort of soup and the fellowship of God's people. We welcome you to sign up to help prepare soup and bread, set up the worship hall, serve, and assist in cleaning up. More details will be provided in WestLife. You may also contact Rosa Romano or Karen Hartley at serve@westminsterpres.com.



Eat, Drink and Celebrate!

On Sunday, February 23, we will hold a single service at 10:00am in our Sanctuary to celebrate all that God has done in and through this family of faith over the last year. Our children and youth will assist in leading worship as we study John 21:1-14 together – a miraculous catch of fish and breakfast cooked by the risen Jesus. During worship, we will praise God as we elect new church officers. Following the service, we'll eat and drink together to celebrate our shared life as a community of believers. Childcare will be available for Nursery and Sprouts from 10:00-11:15am.

Please join us for this special service of celebration and praise!

MOBILIZE



Your Own Transforming Self

Pastor Chris

I think it was in high school youth group that I first heard the somewhat simplistic explanation of sharing our faith as being “one beggar telling another beggar where to find bread.” Simple it may be, but there is also definitely some truth to the statement. We never outgrow our need for grace, which means that what we share is what we ourselves need.

It’s also a pretty good description of leadership within the church. Christian leaders are supposed to be servants who are helping others to discover the same transformation that we have experienced, and are still experiencing, in our own lives. Unfortunately, sometimes we get so focused on

what we are producing for others, that we forget that we also still need the bread of life.

So, for all you leaders (and potential leaders) who are feeling a little hungry, we’d like to invite you to join us on **Saturday, March 8, from 9:00am to 1:00pm** for a leadership celebration and workshop. We’ll eat, and pray, and check in with each other. We’ll learn together and practice some important skills, and pay attention to the state of our own transforming selves as we seek health and strength for our journey. We hope to see you there!

You can RSVP your attendance to the church office, to the pastors, or to your team leaders.



Opportunities with our Surge Kids

As the numbers of families and kids in our Surge class (1st-6th grade) grows, so too does the

need for loving adults to be present with our kids. This is a great chance to engage with and pour into the next generation for Christ!

Every Sunday at the 10:45am service the kids are dismissed after worship to go to the “Barn.” Here we always begin our time together by gathering round the table over donuts and snacks to share about our weeks, then move into a time of lessons, games, and prayer. Every week we need at least two,

preferably three, adults to engage with the kids and help ensure we have a safe environment. Whether you’re up for volunteering once a month or once a quarter, for teaching a lesson or simply being a prayerful presence in the room, your service can have a huge impact and will be much appreciated! Contact Hannah Woodcock at 828-406-3509 or hannahw@wpcmedford.com if you’re interested or want to learn more.

Partnering With God to Change Our World



Youth Group Impact Trip to Mexico July 25-Aug 1, 2025

Part of this new life as a follower of Jesus leads us to care for not just our own tribe and people like us. Rather, it leads us to care for all people, of all cultures, all over the world. In addition to our local community service and outreach, our Youth Group is going on an Impact Trip (formerly called Mission Trip) to Mexico.

We will partner with Amor Ministries to build a home for a family in need. A home empowers a family for life in multiple ways. It provides safety for family stability. Security for a job. And a sense of belonging in community. It provides a launching pad out of poverty.

This is a unique opportunity that doesn't come around very often. This is an opportunity to stretch yourself. Grow yourself. To connect with another culture and learn from them about Jesus. To connect with Jesus in a whole new way. And then bring this change back to Medford. Even as you are changed. That's why we call it an "Impact Trip".

To check out the safety, preparation, fundraising, cost, and age range, go to this link below. Start by ordering your Passport (or renewing one that will expire soon), because it can take up to 3 months to receive one. Friends and newcomers are welcome. Feel free to invite your kid, grandkid, neighbor, classmate, or anyone else you think might be interested. Text Derek at 972-213-6932 if you have further questions after reading the information here: Register as soon as possible here: https://bit.ly/impact_trip_sign_up

Volunteer Outreach with Derek at Youth71Five Middle School Club

The cross and the resurrection were paradigm shattering for the disciples. They went from the loss of one way of life and stepped into a new way of life. Life no longer led by white-knuckles and gritting teeth. It is now a life powered by the resurrection and fueled by the Holy Spirit. With this, they don't silo themselves off from the world to wait for Jesus' return. Rather, they step out into a hard world with a powerful hope from this new way of life. We recognize that the Church is not called to circle the wagons. Rather, we are called to go out into the world.

This is one of the main reasons we structure our Youth and Young Adult Ministry with both a discipleship (e.g. youth group, small groups) AND outreach focus. One of our Youth Ministry Outreaches is to partner with Youth 71Five. Specifically, each Friday from 5-7pm I join the **Middle School Club** that Shane leads. Their goal is **to build trusting relationships in any way relevant, to share the hope of Jesus.** This trusting relationship often happens over time, and usually over games. Board games. Shooting hoops. Endless rounds of Four Square. You name it.

I would love to partner with you in this. We would go together, do ministry, share life, and see how God works... together. There's even the opportunity to join in at events, and camps, if you so desire. Take a week or so to prayerfully consider if God is tugging at your heart to minister in this way. **To reach beyond the church doors with hope for the next generation.** You can reach me at 972-213-6932. Or check out on their website the many other ways Youth 71Five reaches out into the community – to build trust that leads to sharing hope in Jesus.



CELEBRATE



Celebrate the Spirit's Work!

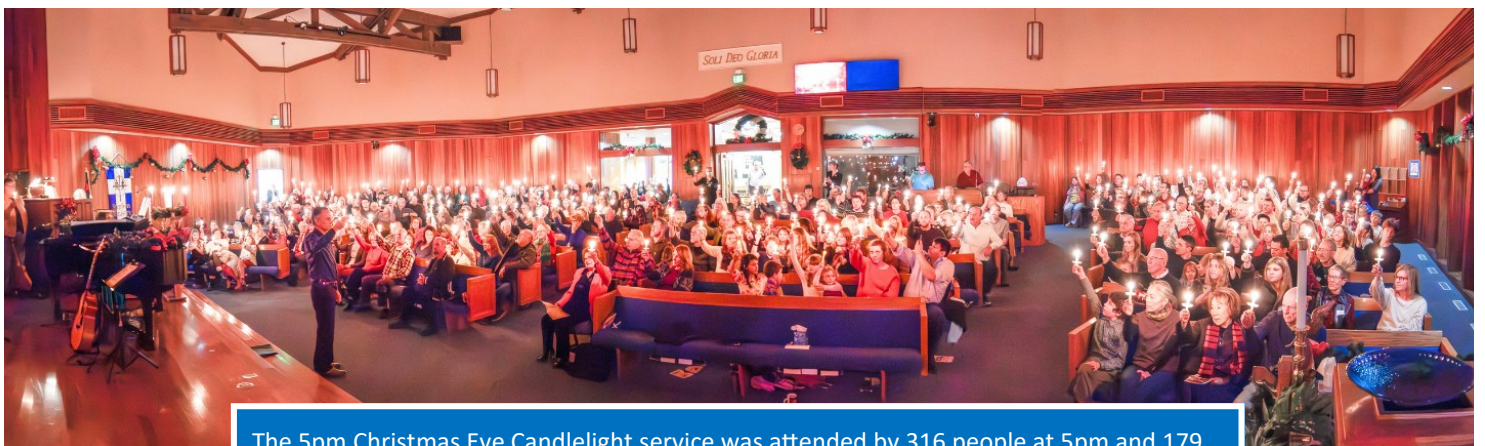
Hannah Woodcock

On December 15, 2024, our church family had the great joy of partaking in the baptism of Arthur Rono (age 8)! The excitement started one morning, when — as soon as he woke up — Arthur told his mom he wanted to get baptized. When we met with Arthur and his family to talk to him more about the meaning of baptism, he expressed that baptism to him meant a “restart” with God and a big step in his walk with Jesus — something he remembered hearing from one of Pastor Chris’ sermons. Arthur was absolutely radiant on the day of his baptism, and at the end of the day told his parents it was “one of the best days of his life.” In addition to the

joy this caused Arthur and his family, it has also piqued more kids’ interest in baptism and started the conversation of what baptism means in multiple other families. Praise God for the great work He is doing in Arthur and for how Jesus is powerfully moving through the next generation!



“This is one of the best days of my life.”
– Arthur Rono



The 5pm Christmas Eve Candlelight service was attended by 316 people at 5pm and 179 at 7:30pm. Together in hope and love, we celebrated the true spirit of Christmas.

Winter 2024 Celebrations

Story in Lights 2025

Visualize Our impact



1566
People
experienced the
message of Peace

518
Families prioritized
our event



1350
warm beverages
were enjoyed

461
kids participated
in the animal
hunt



604
Ornament gifts
handed out

Giving to Outreach Foundation

On Christmas Eve, we partnered with the Outreach Foundation to support vulnerable children in Lebanon through a special offering. The challenges these children face are overwhelming, and their suffering is heartbreaking. Yet, inspired by the words of 2 Timothy 1:7—"For God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-discipline"—the Christian community in Lebanon has risen to meet these trials with courage and compassion.

Through your generosity, our Westminster offering raised \$4,957.86 to support this vital mission. Thank you to everyone who contributed! Your gift will bring hope and the promise of a brighter future to these children, all in the name of Jesus Christ.



Washington Elementary School Christmas Gift Bag Assembly Event

A great turnout of 30 of our church family volunteered their time in December to form a packing party to assemble 250 Christmas Gift Bags for the students. The event was filled with teamwork, joyful hearts and fellowship. The bags contained 21 items with many fun things for the kids to do including jump ropes, items to spark creativity and food items. The bags were delivered to the school and teachers distributed them to the students before Christmas Break. The bags truly bless the students, especially the kids that receive very little for Christmas and the staff so appreciates our church and church family. We received a note from one of the teachers, "Thanks to all who helped with gifts for our students at Washington School. Your kindness and thoughtfulness means so much to our students. We are very grateful for all you do for us."

You are cordially invited to a
Service of Celebration of the Ordination
of



Dereck James Woodcock

as a Minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ

Sunday, March 9 at 3:00pm
in the Sanctuary
of Westminster Presbyterian Church



“How beautiful on the mountains
are the feet of those who bring
good news, Who proclaim peace,
Who bring good tiding, Who
proclaim salvation, Who say Zion,
‘Your God reigns!’ Isaiah 52:7

Spring Challenge

Choose at least one activity from either Equip,
Connect or Mobilize, and commit to putting that into
action this season. Make a note of it below, and keep
this somewhere that will be a regular reminder.

Then let us know how it went, what you learned, and
how God was at work. Share your Impact Story with
us so that we can celebrate with you! Send it to
office@wpcmedford.com.

Equip

Connect

Email your story
and pictures to
office@wpcmedford.com

Mobilize

Your Impact Story

Summer Save the Dates

May

June

July



Mother's Day
May 11



Milestone Celebration
Sunday, June 1, 2025
Brunch after service



Sports Camp
June 30– July 2



Mission Fair
May 28



Father's Day
June 15



Clothing Sale
To be determined



Memorial Day
May 26
Office closed



Juneteenth
June 19
Office Closed



Youth Impact Trip
July 25—August 1

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

2000 Oakwood Drive

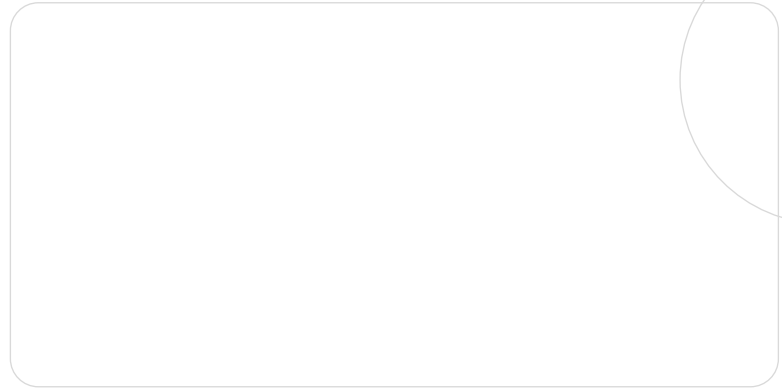
Medford, OR 97504

Non-Profit Organization

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2000 Oakwood Dr.
Medford, OR 97504



541-773-8274



office@wpcmedford.com



OFFICE HOURS

Mon, Tue, Thu

9am - noon
and 1pm - 4pm

Wed

9am - 11:30am
and 1pm - 4pm



In Person
Worship
Services
9am & 10:45am



To view our weekly
announcements
and message go
online to
wpcmedford.com

Westminster Cooperative Preschool

8:30AM – 11:30AM

Tue. & Thu. for 3yr olds

Tue, Wed, Thu. for 4yr olds

541-773-8274



FIND, FOLLOW, AND LIKE US ON THESE PLATFORMS



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