



“Go outside! Call a friend!”

As kids, how many times did we grumble about being pried away from computer and TV screens to endure a healthy dose of fresh air and socialization? Yet these “forced” times of fun really mattered. They not only freed us from our electronic hypnosis, but also became times of connection with other human beings, and entry points into meaningful conversations about life. Who would imagine that hours spent catching frogs could turn into kids talking about life, death and eternity? Or how that evening campfire at the beach could open us to sharing our deepest dreams, or become the safe place where we could process difficult news?

As childish pursuits gave way to adult life, I found that many deep conversations still took place over the flames of my grill (intentionally moved to the front yard to connect with neighbors) or over a late-night scoop of “Espresso Madness” ice cream. Ordinary hours spent sitting with

a buddy, dangling lines in the water for uninterested fish, or staying up late with friends while our kids gazed up at the 4th of July display, became holy “kairos” moments; walls came down, masks came off and genuine connection happened. Relationships grow in these simple shared moments, as genuine reflection and connection leads to deeper conversations about hopes, fears, failures, and experiences of grace.

I don’t know what you have going on this summer, but I bet there could be opportunities for “God moments” that can bless both you and your neighbor, if you are willing. This summer, choose to intentionally bless others. Share meals. Reflect on life together, and talk about how Jesus makes yours different. Go outside! And don’t forget to have fun.

Pastor Chris

Summer Focus

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YOUR SUMMER CHALLENGE



Feeding God's Hungry People

Roger Gilbert

(This is a brief excerpt of Roger's story. Be sure to ask him to fill in the details!)

It was 2006 when I stepped into retirement. I'd lost my wife to cancer, my children were on their own, and after 30 years of living in the hot Sacramento valley, I was ready for a change. God led me to Brookings.

I walked everywhere, and got to know quite a few 'street' people, many of them veterans like me. They were living on the street and eating from dumpsters, and I was deeply disturbed by their situation. I asked God what could be done. In a dream, which recurred several times, God told me that he wanted me to "feed the hungry people". I took these messages from God very seriously.

I was a chef, so I had the skills, but how was I going to do this without means or help? Well, God sent me help. I met Ernie, a recovering alcoholic and vet, living in his pickup truck. He introduced me to his pastor who had been talking about opening a Soup Kitchen. God led the way, and soon we opened our doors to serve lunch on Mondays- soup, salad, entrée and dessert.

In addition to the homeless, our "Community Kitchen" also attracted seniors, who enjoyed a clean, safe environment where they could get

quality meals for free. We even had entertainment as many of our guests played an instrument, sang, or recited poetry.

Just when funds were running out, the city gave us a grant, and we kept going. God continued to provide. Fishermen donated parts of their catch, others donated time or money. Soon other churches were joining in. The Episcopal church took Tuesdays, and the following year the Catholic, Presbyterian and Lutheran churches filled out the rest of the week. The school district connected with us about hungry kids, many who were coming to school on Mondays not having eaten a hot meal over the weekend, and were having trouble concentrating until they had eaten. Soon, in addition to teaching cooking classes for students and providing a "snack closet," we were also able to provide lunch on Saturdays for hungry children and others. I had a mantra, "Our God is a God of abundance. If He wants our kitchen to stay open, He will provide!" He did!

During the 13 years that I was involved with the Community Kitchen project, we served 250,000 free meals. We received recognition for outstanding service to the community. Friends, it started by listening to God. If the Lord can do this for me, imagine what he can do for you!

Growing to Be More Like Jesus



Disciples Who Make Disciples

“Come, follow me,” Jesus said. “and I will make you fishers of men.” (Mark 1:17)

“Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations...” (Matthew 18:19a)

“...you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” (Acts 1:8b)

From His first words to His first disciples to His final words before His return to the Father, Jesus makes it clear: the call of Jesus’ followers is to make *more* followers of Jesus.

So, imagine with me for a moment, what would have happened if that early group of believers met regularly together for worship and fellowship, cared for each other really well, and eagerly soaked up all that the apostles taught them about Jesus, but...that was it. What if...they didn’t look outward to the many, many people who did not know Jesus? Or they weren’t concerned in the least about people who needed physical, emotional, and spiritual healing in their community? What if it didn’t even matter to them if their children or grandchildren believed the gospel of Jesus Christ? Sadly, in this imaginary scenario, Jesus followers would have been extinct in a mere generation or two.

Obviously, God had a greater plan. Empowered by Holy Spirit, the early believers continued the mission of Jesus Christ. The apostles proclaimed the gospel and performed miracles while everyday Christians “dedicated themselves to the apostles’ teaching and

to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.” (Acts 2:42) Jesus’ followers were so in love with Him and so changed by His love, that “the Lord added to their numbers daily those who were being saved.” (Acts 2:47) We now know that in 200+ years, this small, persecuted movement grew to be the most significant religious force in the Roman Empire. (The Forgotten Ways by Alan Hirsch, p. 4)

What would our church, our community, and our world look like today if Christians followed Jesus’ commands and humbly strived to be “Disciples Who Make Disciples.”? We invite you to explore this topic with us this season. As part of the series, we’ll hear personal testimonies of how some in our church family came to know Jesus for the first time and how others were used by God to lead people to Him. Join us on Sunday mornings in our church sanctuary at 9:00 or 10:45am. (Note: Beginning June 1, our 10:45 Service will be held in our outdoor amphitheater.) If you are out of town over the weekend, you can always catch the sermon at wpcmedford.com.

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.



Axis.org equips parents for gospel-centered conversations with their teen about faith and culture.

- Go online and at axis.org and sign-up for free access to all their content.

They have: The Culture Translator, 7 Minutes Videos, Parent Guides, Podcasts, Conversation Kits, and courses.

“It is our belief that equipping parents and teens with relevant resources shared through the One Conversation Journey will help align them around the Gospel, cultivating lifelong believers and disciples.”

CONNECT



Hospitality – Living Our Faith Through Action

Thomas and Wendy Smiley

“Thomas, welcome! Welcome, welcome to our home! Come in, come in...”

Recently, Thomas was back in the middle eastern city where we lived and ministered for over a decade. When he visited our neighbors’ home, these were the first words he heard. He was kissed on both cheeks. A lemony scented perfume was poured on his hands and he was given a pair of nice slippers to wear. He was escorted to the best seat in the living room where hot tea and a glass of water were quickly brought to him. After exchanging news about the welfare of everyone’s families, the visit continued.

When we first moved to the Middle East, we were in our late 20’s. We knew very little of the language and only a bit about the culture. We soon learned that hospitality was at the core of all relationships. **Our new friends and neighbors, who did not know the God of Hospitality in Jesus, taught us much about Him in their actions.**

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind...You shall love others as well as you love yourself. Matthew 22:37,39

Hospitality is at the core of WHO God is.

Hospitality is at the core of HOW we, His daughters and sons, are to reveal His character to the world.

When our kids were young, we created special occasions around events such as end-of-school term for them and their friends. We invited neighbors and friends over. We hung up all the kids’ art work and they

recited poems or played music pieces they had learned during the year. After doing this a few times, we invited their parents to come prepared to share something, too. It was astounding how many contributed. Such laughter, clapping, smiling and sharing of hearts! Artistic expression brought out the creative in each of us, young and old, local and foreigner, and opened us up to one another in a new and deeper way.

We’ve worked hard to bring this welcoming heart into our regular, daily lives here in the USA, although not always successfully. For example, one of the first times we invited local friends to our home, Wendy prepared some of the Middle Eastern dishes we had come to love. The food was delicious to us; however, one of the guests, with a quizzical look on her face, commented, “Hmmm...interesting.” Another time, Wendy made a special Easter meal and it was pronounced that the ingredients absolutely did *not* go together. Both experiences were discouraging for Wendy, but now these disappointing moments are a source of shared laughter. Last November we hosted a ‘Friendsgiving’ and invited our neighbors to join us for dinner. Everyone brought a dish to share, and we had a meaningful evening hearing stories from each person’s life. Now, when we see our neighbors, our conversations are more engaging and significant.

These are just a few examples of how we all can share the open love and generosity of heart that lives in us through the Holy Spirit. How will you connect with non-Christian friends and neighbors in the coming season?

Ways to Engage with Others

Pickle Ball and Picnic in the Park

The sun has finally awoken from its winter hibernation. And with that comes a host of seasonal sports and outdoor activities. Our culture prizes sporting events on all levels. We can tap into this in a missional way, just like how the apostles in Acts connected to their cultures. Sports and outdoor activities are a great way to do that!

Consider your own way to intentionally connect with others around sports, or help start any groups with your friends that soak up the outdoors. Spend some time in prayer. As an entire congregation, we have a church-wide opportunity to connect with our community. **Pickleball and Picnic at the Park!** This is a laid-back time of (as advertised) pickleball, and

picnicking at Holmes Park. You don't even have to play pickleball! Join us for a time to enjoy the outdoors that God has created and **connecting in an unhurried time together across all life phases.**

This is a great opportunity to invite that co-worker, neighbor, friend, family member, or kiddo who loves pickleball. While we have reserved the pickleball court and the pavilion, we have openly communicated that we welcome the public to join us – both in pickleball and in picnicking.

Save the date for Sunday, May 4th at 12:30-3:00pm. Check out the details here, and **please sign up to bring a food item** to the park: https://bit.ly/pickleball_picnic_park



Milestone Celebration

Sunday June 1, 12:30pm—2pm

One way to connect as a community is **to show up for each other** to celebrate them. This can be parties over the summer. Graduations. Retirement parties. And more. Specifically for students, showing up to see and celebrate their skills, and perseverance in the face of challenges is a major way to connect.

This summer kicks off with just that opportunity. **We are calling on the entire Church family to show up for our Middle School and High School students.** To show them that God sees their struggles over the last year. But this celebration is more than just a celebration. It is a milestone marker. A recognition of all that God has accomplished through

them this last year. And the recognition of the “coming of age”. While we celebrate each student’s completion of another year, we are particularly marking the passage of 5th graders entering into the teenage years. And the capstone celebration is recognizing seniors who step into adulthood.

We also want to show them that we will support them in this next season of life. Be it the new phase of the teenage years. Or the new season of adulthood. And all the excitement, new relationships, blossoming purpose, and changes they may bring. We will be available to walk with them – to rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. As they take up the baton to take ownership of their next phase of



life with God, we also take up ownership to be their teammates, coach, support team, and loudest fans in their corner. So, yes, Milestone Celebration will include things like a free taco truck, a short ceremony, and some festivities.

But the real magic, is seeing the body of Christ show up for these students in life's big moments.



Save the date for **Sunday, June 1st at 12:30-2pm.** Check out this link for details and tangible **ways you can bless these students:** https://bit.ly/milestone_2025

MOBILIZE



Building Relationships, Building a Home

Chris George

Our session has decided to partner with our local branch of Habitat for Humanity to build a house for a family in need here in our valley. We believe that we are in the unique position to both fully fund AND provide the workforce needed to build the home. A significant commitment? Yes, but one we make with the confidence that we are more than capable of fulfilling. Financially, we will be supporting this project with a portion of our savings, i.e. “reserves above policy minimum.” We want to put God’s gifts to work and make a significant difference for the kingdom here in our community. In addition, we move forward with this project in conjunction with our mission - **to help people find purpose in Jesus through genuine relationships.**

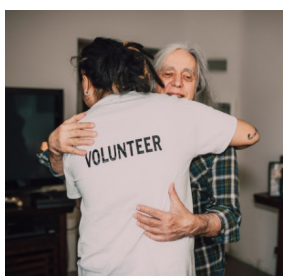
When our session was presented with the opportunity to come alongside those in need and make a significant impact on multiple generations, we felt called to respond. As we get involved as a church family (physically, not just financially) we will take advantage of the opportunity to invite others (friends, neighbors, family members – Christian and non-Christian) to join us in making a huge difference in our valley. We will work with one another and alongside the family that will live in the house. In those moments, we will prayerfully look for opportunities to foster genuine relationships, share our stories and listen to others share theirs, and, by

God’s grace, help someone recognize their purpose in Christ. Maybe we’ll even redefine our own purpose in the process.

Funding the house is easy – those resources are already in hand. Building the house is where we will be challenged to put our mission into action! Yes, there will be the swinging of hammers, cutting of boards, painting of walls, and all those house-building things that have to happen.

Thankfully, the Habitat leadership will be there every step of the way to keep us on task and provide guidance where needed, but providing the bodies and work crews to partner with the recipient family and get the house built is on us.

Again, we are doing so much more than building a house. The time spent together will also build relationships and, we pray, change lives. We'll have the opportunity to meet the recipient family and learn our work day schedule soon. Watch the WestLife and weekly video announcements for details and prayerfully consider how you (and those around you) can be involved with this tremendous opportunity.



Partnering With God to Change Our World

MISSION FAIR

May 18
10AM –11AM
Gathering Place

Come learn about the local missions we support and how you can serve

What is your mission field? Is it the place where you live or work? Volunteer or play? Is it at home, at church, or in the community? Hint: It's all the above! As followers of Jesus, our mission field is as close as the people we live with, share meals with, and work with, as well as those we haven't met yet who are of a different age or have a very different life story.

On Sunday, May 18, you will have the opportunity to meet the people who represent the many ministries we support as a church family, both within WPC and in our community. If you are already serving in one of these ministries, the leaders would love to hear about your experiences and how God is shaping you through service. If you are not currently serving in a ministry outside the home, prayerfully explore the various opportunities to find one that fits your gifts and passion.

Something Fun! On Mission Sunday, we encourage the entire church family to wear a name tag or name tags that represent your mission field(s), i.e. the places/people you serve in the name of Jesus Christ. You may make/wear your own or grab a pre-made name tag from the Gathering Place throughout the month of May. On May 18, we also encourage you to wear your work uniform or a T-shirt from the place where you volunteer. Let us know where and how you are serving Jesus!

For more information, contact Bill Boehning at bboehning1@charter.net.

"The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet."
—Frederick Buechner

Pour into Local Kids at our Sports Camp 6/30 – 7/2

The weather is warming, the world is blooming, and summer sports camp is just around the corner! This year's camp will be Monday, June 30 through Wednesday, July 2 (from 9:00 am - 12:00 pm). The good news is you don't have to be into sports or athletically inclined to be a part of this ministry!

There's how you can pour into local kids and share the love of Jesus. Be part of the:

- Registration team
- Hospitality team
- Snack team
- Prayer ministry team
- leading a small group
- donating snacks
- loaning us your portable basketball hoop
- hosting a couple of the young adult coaches from Base Ministry

With Dereck and I being out on family leave this summer to welcome our new little one, the need is all the greater to have some more folks lean into this ministry opportunity, and we hope that you will prayerfully consider using the gifts Jesus has blessed you with in this way.

Thank you in advance! Please email me at hannahw@wpcmedford.com or text/call me at 828-406-3509 if you are interested or have any questions.



CELEBRATE



Celebrating Spiritual Adventure: Discovering God at YG Winter Retreat

Dereck Woodcock

One of the exciting aspects of the Christian life is that we are called to join Jesus on an adventure. There's an exciting mission that takes us out of our comfort zone. By the end of the adventure, we're surprised to see how God showed up and transformed us through missional living.

Winter Retreat fits into this adventure. It's a great challenge – logistically, spiritually, and more. And amidst the challenge of the adventure... we saw God show up in unexpected ways, providing for the mission and revealing Jesus.

We celebrate that God encouraged our high school guys in a unique way. Several of the students

honestly shared that they have a hard time understanding the Bible, and connecting with God. That evening before bed, Thomas, one of the volunteer leaders, ducked into the corner of the crowded cabin full of boys and

matrasses. Thomas then opened up the Lectio 365 app as he did routinely. Only, this time, there were young people around to observe his evening devotions. Such an example of good, natural discipleship! And God showed up. One of the students who said he had a

hard time understanding the Bible, heard the prayer app and asked Thomas what it was and if he could join him. Then another asked. And another joined. Before long, several high school guys were voluntarily joining Thomas in an unscheduled time of prayer. Maybe the Bible words felt foreign and unrelatable, but the Lectio 365 app explains how Jesus of the Bible is very much alive and unfettered. The following evening, the boys gathered again for evening prayer with Thomas.

There were many other stories and things to celebrate. So, here's a summary. We had 27 campers and eight leaders. Leaders served selflessly behind the scenes with meals, cleaning, and more (shout



Winter 2024 Celebrations

Dereck's Ordination Celebration



On Sunday, March 9, we celebrated the ordination of our NextGen Director, Dereck Woodcock, as a Minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We celebrate the gifts God has given Dereck as he empowers our faith family to share the Gospel with the next generations, from middle schoolers through young adults. Congratulations, Dereck, and may our loving God prosper the work of your hands!

out to Robert and Caroline for being an awesome kitchen team). We also celebrate our volunteer leaders who stepped out in faith to try new events, meet new people, and take on new roles. It was challenging... but worth it to see Jesus and bond with each other. As you join this exciting journey of missional living, know you'll be challenged, stretched, and see God in new ways. Godspeed on your adventure this summer... at 3 miles an hour with Jesus.



Servant Spotlight – Kingston Makay

If you haven't had the pleasure of meeting Kingston yet, you will likely encounter him soon. He often has a deck of cards in his hand and an infectious smile on his face. You'll find him around the church doing homework, playing foosball with Dereck, or practicing drums for worship songs. As one of the youngest members of the WPC worship team, he taught himself to play the cajón (box drum), adding a strong rhythm to our worship music. Currently, he's mastering the complexities of the drum kit and is doing an incredible job! After being baptized last summer, he remains eager to learn more about Jesus and attune himself to the Holy Spirit's guidance as he helps lead worship.



Your Impact on Washington Elementary

Washington Elementary students have had a very busy and successful school year. We are filled with gratitude for the many ways our students have grown, both academically and personally. From the very first day of school to the final few months, we've witnessed tremendous progress in our students' reading skills, confidence, and enthusiasm for learning. The classroom has been a place of discovery and growth, and much of that success is thanks to our incredible teaching and support staff as well as the caring community behind it.

One of the standout highlights of this year has been the continued partnership with the SMART Reading Program. Each week, our students looked forward to their special time with volunteers who offered not just reading support, but also encouragement, kindness, and patience. The impact has been remarkable! We have seen improved literacy skills,

stronger vocabulary, and a newfound love of books that will stay with them for years to come.

Special events we've hosted throughout the year, like movie night, STEAM night, and our upcoming talent show has added extra excitement and reminded us of the power of family and community engagement. As we close out the school year, we want to extend our heartfelt thanks to Westminster Presbyterian Church and the SMART volunteers for being an essential part of our students' journey. Your support and contributions have truly made a difference!

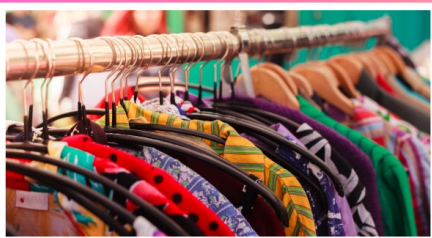
Sincerely,

Kara Esselstrom

Principal, Washington Elementary



Save the Dates



Clothing Sale
July 31 – August 2



Office Closed
September 1



All-Church Picnic
September 7



YG Rafting
August 10



Rogue Valley Youth Group
Night of Worship
September 7



Harvest Party
October 19

Summer 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.



Summer is often a time of activity and fun, backyard barbecues and afternoon ice cream.

- What will you be doing this summer that you can invite others to join you in?
- Choose ONE event for each month or ONE regular activity and intentionally invite!



- Who might God be calling you to connect with in this season?
- Write a list of FIVE people that you will regularly pray for!

- What is ONE way you can serve others with Jesus' love?
- What is ONE way that you can regularly bless others?



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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

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