



Whole-life Discipleship: Why Mental Health Matters

Pastor Chris

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength...” (Mark 12:30)

Discipleship is whole-life work. We are fearfully and wonderfully made in the image of God—embodied creatures of flesh and blood who also live in thought and mind. We are spiritual creatures, and relational beings, and when any one aspect of our lives suffers, the whole person feels it. Illness clouds our thinking. Loneliness weighs on our bodies. Anxiety shapes our relationships. We cannot divide what God has woven together.

This Lent, we will intentionally focus on the health of our minds, as an act of faithful discipleship. Loving God with our minds means paying attention to our mental health and what shapes it. It means facing anxiety and anger, depression and shame, exhaustion and the thought patterns that quietly direct our lives. It also means embracing the beautiful ways God has shaped us to thrive, as individuals and in community.

The church has not always handled this topic well. “Pray more” can be good advice, but sometimes it’s just incomplete. Just as our bodies may be led to greater health by a better diet or a bit of exercise, but other times need intervention from doctors, nutritionists or physical therapy, so our minds may be helped by healthier habits, or may need deeper counseling, coaching, or even medication. Seeking help is not a lack of faith; it is wise stewardship of what God has entrusted to us. And the church does have a role to play in encouraging this whole-life health.

There are habits we can practice. There is support we can seek. Both are faithful.

Your mind matters. Mental health is not separate from spiritual growth. It is a significant part of loving God with your whole self. I pray that this Lent will be an encouraging and renewing time, as we “set our minds” on the things of Christ: health, life and deeper faith. You’ll find opportunities and resources in this edition of Pathways.

Lenten Focus

Renewal

EQUIP

Growing To Be
More Like Jesus

CONNECT

Ways to Engage
with Others

MOBILIZE

Partnering With
God to Change
Our World

Other Events & Holy Week Guide

Renewing Your Mind

4 Spiritual Disciplines that Also Strengthen Mental Health

*God cares about your whole person-- heart, soul, mind and strength.
Many historic Christian practices not only form our souls, but also strengthen our emotional, mental and physical health. Here are a few suggested habits:*



Silence and Solitude

"Very early in the morning... he went to a desolate place, and there he prayed."
Mark 1:35

**Shown to lower stress hormones, reduce emotional reactivity, strengthen attention and enhance creativity. A regular habit of silence and prayer changes our brain structure.*

- ✚ Set a timer for 5-10 minutes daily.
- ✚ Sit quietly (no phone, no music). Breathe slowly.
- ✚ Turn your attention to God. If distracted, return yourself gently.
- ✚ "Speak, Lord. Your servant is listening." End with gratitude.

Lament and Honest Prayer

"Why are you cast down, O my soul?
...Hope in God."

Psalm 42:11

**Naming our pain reduces its power over us, fosters emotional honesty, decreases anxiety, and builds resilient hope.*

- ✚ Write a paragraph completing this sentence: "Lord, I am (discouraged, troubled, grieving, etc.) about..."
- ✚ Tell God exactly how you feel.
- ✚ End with, "Yet I will put my hope in you."



Gratitude

"Give thanks in all circumstances..."
1 Thessalonians 5:18

**Regularly practicing gratitude rewires our attention towards grace and goodness instead of threat, calms the nervous system, and reduces stress in both mind and body. Fosters many physical and mental health benefits.*

- ✚ Each morning/evening write or name 3 specific things you are thankful for.
- ✚ Be concrete (a conversation, a person, a sunrise, a small kindness, etc.)
- ✚ Offer a short prayer of thanks for each one. "God, thank you for..."

Confession and Repentance

"Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed."
James 5:16

**Confession and repentance reduce shame, restore integrity and free up mental energy. Show to reduce anxiety, improve self-awareness and self-control, and foster resilience.*

- ✚ Ask, "Where am I out of alignment with Jesus?"
- ✚ Be concrete. Confess plainly to God or to a trusted friend.
- ✚ Receive forgiveness. DO NOT rehearse the shame.
- ✚ Trust God and let it go.



A Renewed Mind is a Resilient Mind!

Spiritual formation and mental health are not competitors, but companions. Like healthy eating, regular exercise or getting enough sleep help your body, these regular rhythms are ways to foster general health in your mind. Practice them regularly, but also know when to seek help for deeper issues. Community support is also an essential part of our whole life discipleship.

Renewing Your Mind

Digital Detox: A Simple Guide Toward Healthy Tech Habits

Do not be conformed to this world,

but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.” Romans 12:2

Our devices are powerful tools, but without intention, they quietly shape our attention, emotions and identity. A digital detox is not anti-technology; it’s pro-discipleship.

Here are a few ideas to help you reclaim your mind for Christ!

Start With Awareness

“Search me, O God, and know my heart...”

Psalm 139:23-24

***Action:** Check your weekly screen-time report. Notice patterns without shame.

***How it helps:** Awareness reduces reactivity. You can’t change what you don’t see.

Create Tech-Free Space

“Be still, and know that I am God.”

Psalm 46:10

***Action:** Keep phones and other devices out of the bedroom and off the table during meals.

***How it helps:** Protects sleep, relationships and presence. Helps you focus on deeper connections.

Practice Digital Sabbath

“Six days you shall labor... but the seventh is a Sabbath”

Exodus 20:9-10

***Action:** Choose a 30-60 minute block each day with no screens. Try to have a half or entire day every week.

***How it helps:** Trains the nervous system to rest. Reduces anxiety and comparison.

Curate Your Inputs

“Whatever is true... noble... admirable- think about such things.”

Philippians 4:8

***Action:** Unfollow and avoid accounts and sites that trigger comparison, anger or fear. Seek things of Christ.

***How it helps:** Your mind is shaped by what you consume, good and bad.

Replace, Not Just Remove

“Put off your old self... put on the new self”

Ephesians 4:22-24

***Action:** When limiting “the scroll,” substitute prayer, scripture, a walk, or a real conversation. Limit the ways tech has access to you.

***How it helps:** We can’t replace a habit with a void. Choose something life-giving to replace the craving.

Bookend Your Day With God

“In the morning... I lay my requests before you.”

Psalm 5:3

***Action:** Resist all screens for the first 15 minutes of every day, and for the last 1 hour before bed.

***How it helps:** Sets our emotional baseline before the world speaks, and lets our brain settle for better sleep.

Technology WILL form us. But we can limit to what extent. As disciples of Jesus, we intentionally guard our hearts and minds so that our identity, affection and attention stay rooted in Him!

EQUIP



"Renewing Your Mind" Mental Health Workshops

Pastor Dereck

In 2022, the National Institute of Mental Health found that approximately 1 in 4 adults in the U.S. live with mental illness. We as a church family must ask ourselves, how does the good news of Jesus apply to this great need of our time? Both for our own family, and for our community.

Believe it or not, Lent may be the perfect season for such a thing. Lent is a season, amongst other things, where we focus on Jesus' message to "Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand." We often take "repent" to mean "feel bad". Instead, the word literally means "to evaluate our thinking". Or, put another way, to repent is to re-center our entire life upon the good news of Jesus, and the reality of the Kingdom of God. Which Jesus brings.

This pairs really well with the idea of "renewing our mind." We take a devoted season as a church to sift through our mind, will, emotions, desires, bodies, and actions, and re-align them with the good news of Jesus. This sifting process is not comfortable or quick,

but it is something that brings new life. It brings freedom. This Lent journey with Jesus to and through the cross can be a fruitful season of honest inner inventory for what hidden things are driving hard places in our lives.

We are excited about the team of qualified mental health experts that God has brought along to guide us. We ask that you join in, and invite a family or friend! These workshops will be a mix of food, connection, lecture, and pauses for reflection and discussion at one's table. We want this to be a place where we acknowledge we are a "hospital for the sick", and so we can be vulnerable. We can open up to one another in the assurance of humble understanding that the gospel brings. Check out this link: https://bit.ly/renewing_your_mind_2026 or use the QR code below to RSVP and see the topics, dates, and childcare.

Invite a Friend!

If you want lunch and/or childcare, your RSVP is required. Scan the QR Code, or email dereck@wpcmedford.com with dates & childcare info.



RENEWING YOUR MIND

Mental Health Workshops

**FEB
15**

From Anxiety to Courage (Part 1)
by Karolyn Mengershausen, LPC, LMFT

**MAR
1**

Understanding Depression
by Heidi Dirkse-Graw, MS, LPC

**MAR
8**

From Anxiety to Courage (Part 2)
by Karolyn Mengershausen, LPC, LMFT

**MAR
15**

How to Endure Emotionally
by Kacy Mullen, PhD, LCP

**MAR
22**

Toolkit for Parenting & Developing Others
by Kacy Mullen, PhD, LCP

**MAR
29**

Truth and Grace Boundaries
by Heather Siewell, QMHP

ALL WORKSHOPS ARE 12:15-2PM
at Westminster Presbyterian Church
2000 Oakwood Drive, Medford
wpcmedford.com



Lunch & childcare (for children up to 10 years)
available with required RSVP. Walk-ins welcome..

Growing to be more like Jesus



Family Resources for Lent

Hannah Wookcock

Lent is above all a season to draw near to Jesus and grow in His love. It is a time to not only learn about His sacrificial love for us, but to respond to His love and be renewed by it. Jesus says, “Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends” (John 15:13) Jesus gave up everything out of love for us, and we are marked by a love that knows no limits.

Just like Advent is a season the church observes to prepare for Christmas, Lent is a season when the church prepares for Easter. Traditionally, it involves giving up something (“fasting”), giving something to others (“almsgiving”), or taking up a new spiritual habit (“prayer”). The purpose of this isn’t just to grit our teeth and do something hard, and it definitely isn’t to earn God’s approval or a better “status” as a Christian. **The purpose is to prepare space for Jesus to invade our hearts and lives.**

Whether you have been observing Lent your whole life, or have never heard about it, I pray that this Lent is a time when your whole family can grow deeper in Jesus’ love — both receiving it, and sharing it. I pray Lent won’t just be seen as something to add to your busy plate, but rather as a chance to step back from the busyness that keeps us from resting in Jesus’ love.

Here are just a few options for your family as you seek to draw nearer to each other and Jesus. No matter what you choose to give up or take up, no matter how perfect or imperfect that effort is, Jesus values it and can use it to transform you.

Daily Devotional Resources

“The Lent Project:” A 53-day aesthetically guided meditation on Christ’s life, death, and resurrection created by Biola University’s Center for Christianity, Culture, and the Arts. <https://ccca.biola.edu/lent/2026>

“Lectio for Families:” This is a free app that features daily Bible readings, a weekly memory verse, questions to talk about, and prompts for reflection and prayer. Families can either listen to the audio content or they can read it together. It’s designed for families with children aged between 7-11 years old, but is likely suitable for those who are younger and slightly older too: [24/7 Prayer Resource for Families](#)

Music to Listen to:

1. Playlists on Spotify: Lent with Sacred Ordinary Days, Traditional Lent,
2. Brother by The Brilliance
<https://open.spotify.com/album/3jhsPWOZCdFVRtf61sASx2>
3. Some Hymns: “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross,” “What Wondrous Love Is This,” “Abide With Me,” “My Hope Is Built On Nothing Less,” “Holy, Holy, Holy,” “Man of Sorrows (What a Name),” “Were You There?” “Nothing But the Blood”



CONNECT - with God and Others



Walk Through The Lenten Season with Our Church Family

Pastor Lori

The Christian season of Lent marks the 46 days leading up to Easter. It's a time when we are encouraged to honestly examine our walk with God, humbly consider where our hearts are not aligned with the heart of Christ, and courageously offer up the areas of our lives that need the Holy Spirit's renewing power. It's a season of *metanoia*, the Greek word that means "to think about one's thinking." We invite God to re-orient our thinking, actions, and behaviors so that more and more we think, act, and behave as Jesus did. Lent prepares our hearts and minds for a deeper appreciation of Jesus's death on the cross and a richer celebration of His victory over the grave.

To soften our hearts and minds to the transforming work of the Holy Spirit, some Christians **give up** something during Lent. They might fast from certain foods, from social media, or from watching movies/reading books/playing video games that contain violence. We give up something small or big to remember what Jesus Christ gave up for us. Other believers **add on** to their life during Lent, choosing to spend more time in prayer, Bible reading, or journal writing.

They might participate in more service activities, share more of their time or finances with those who experience food insecurities, or reach out to support those who have no permanent home.

However you choose to remember this Season of Lent, it is always helpful to have the support and love of the faith community around you. If you are not currently in a Bible Study, Life Transformation Group, or other small group, prayerfully consider who you might connect with in a more meaningful way this Lent. See the accompanying article "Going Deeper During Lent" to learn more.

"Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of Him who is the head, that is, Christ."

Ephesians 4:15 NIV

Going Deeper During Lent...and Beyond

Pastor Lori

Do you have people in your life that ask the tough questions? People who love you enough to be fully real with you as you are fully real with them? Who are you walking the Christian journey with?

What does growing through community look like?

If you are a new believer or still checking out this whole “Jesus thing”, consider asking a more spiritually mature Christian friend to be a prayer partner or mentor to you. To guide your studies and discussions, Chris, Dereck, and I recommend using **Safar Discipleship**, a free App developed by Elam Ministries to support the burgeoning church in Iran. Safar is designed to help you walk close with God, live free in Jesus Christ, and stay strong in the faith through the Holy Spirit.

Another way to grow through community is to be part of a **Life Transformation Group (LTGroup)**. An LTGroup is 3 or 4 people, usually of the same gender, who agree to meet regularly in order to encourage each person in his/her unique faith journey. We encourage members of an LTGroup to commit to meeting for an hour to 90 minutes once/week; however, each group can decide how often they want to meet. Before your first meeting, ask each person to consider, “How might God be asking me to grow during this season of life? What area(s) of my life do I need to surrender more fully to Him?” At your first meeting, set clear expectations for all members. (Ex: Each person will have the opportunity to talk each week; We will fiercely protect each person’s confidentiality; If someone misses a meeting, we will let the person join via Zoom, etc.)

But, I’m already in a small group. Do I have to meet with a prayer partner/mentor or join an LTGroup, too? Actually, your small group could be a great beginning for finding a prayer partner/mentor or forming Life Transformation Groups because you’ve already established relationships with other Christians. Meeting with a prayer partner/mentor or participating in an LTGroup will provide the opportunity to go deeper in your faith journey since it’s a more intimate experience and the one(s) you meet with will have the same buy-in as you.



Okay, I’m in. How do I get started? Prayerfully consider two or three people you would like to invite to join you either in a LTGroup or as a prayer partner/mentor. You may be more comfortable inviting people you already know; however, it could also be an opportunity to get to know a new brother or sister in Christ. Start by asking each person one-on-one. If the first person you ask responds with a ‘No thanks’, then move on to the next person on your list. Trust that God will connect you with the person or people who are the best fit for you and your unique faith journey.

I’m new at WPC and I don’t know many people. What should I do? If you would like to be in a LTGroup or would really appreciate having a prayer partner/mentor, please contact Pastor Lori. She’ll meet with you to help you decide the best path for you and your unique faith journey. Pastor Lori can be reached by email at: Lori@wpcmedford.com or by text at: 541-326-1870.

A Last Word about Prayer Partner, Mentors, and Life Transformation Groups. Commit to being as real with each other as you can. Yes, it’s scary to be vulnerable, but the more we share our true self, the more God can work to bring true transformation in each of us. When you are part of a prayer partner/mentoring relationship or LTGroup, you make a commitment to share honestly with each other – the good, the bad, and the ugly – and to honor each other with grace and compassion, protecting the confidentiality of what is shared.

May God bless you as you open yourself to God’s transforming work in you!

Connect with God and Others



Ash Wednesday, Feb. 18.

Lent begins with a focus on repentance. On this day, we receive ashes on our foreheads in the shape of a cross to remind us of Christ's gift of forgiveness for all who will receive it.

7:30-9:00AM A Drive-Thru Opportunity to receive ashes. Enter at the 2000 Oakwood Drive entrance to the church.

10:00AM Ash Wednesday Service - Sanctuary. A simple service of music, reflection, and prayer. Ashes will be dispensed at the end of the service.

5:30 – 6:15PM Soup Supper – Worship Hall Join us for a time of connection and conversation over a simple meal of soup and bread. (Gluten free options will be available.) Check out the "Sign-Up Sheets" in the Gathering Place for ways you can serve others and help make this meal a true family experience.

6:30PM Ash Wednesday Service – Sanctuary A simple service of music, reflection, and prayer. Ashes will be dispensed at the end of the services

Palm Sunday, March 29

9:00PM - 10:45PM Worship Services in Sanctuary

Maundy Thursday, April 2

"As I have loved you, so you must love one another."
John 13:34b

5:30 – 6:15PM Soup Supper – Worship Hall Join us for a time of connection and conversation and over a simple meal of soup and bread. (Gluten free options will be available.) Check out the "Sign-Up Sheets" in the Gathering Place for ways you can serve others and help to make this meal a true family experience.

6:30PM Maundy Thursday Service – Sanctuary A simple service of music, reflection, and prayer including the Lord's Supper.

We invite you to participate in some or all of our Lenten activities. All activities are open to the community, so we urge you to consider inviting a friend to join you.



Soup Supper Helpers Needed

Ash Wednesday, Feb 18,
& Maunday Thursday, Apr 2

We need:

Servers
Bread (homemade or store bought)
Set-Up and Clean-Up Crews

Sign up in the Gathering Place
or email Rosa at
serve@wpcmedford.com

Good Friday, April 3

10:00AM - 2:00PM - Sanctuary open for Self-Directed Meditation and Prayer

A poster for Easter Services featuring a sunset over mountains. The text reads: "Westminster Presbyterian Church invites you to Easter Services Sunday, April 5, 2026 Outdoor Sunrise Service 6:30AM Indoor Easter Service 9AM & 10:45AM Nursery care available for birth to 3 yrs at 9AM & 10:45AM Services wpcmedford.com Westminster Presbyterian Church 2000 Oakwood Drive, Medford".

Westminster Presbyterian Church
invites you to

Easter Services

Sunday, April 5, 2026

Outdoor Sunrise Service
6:30AM

Indoor Easter Service
9AM & 10:45AM

Nursery care available for birth to 3 yrs at
9AM & 10:45AM Services

wpcmedford.com
Westminster Presbyterian Church
2000 Oakwood Drive, Medford

MOBILIZE



Community Connect – Where Relationships Grow Around the Table

Bill Watson

The Medford Gospel Mission serves God and our community in two wonderful ways: First, it runs a ministry for people in need including those who are homeless, facing extreme poverty, and without hope. The dedicated staff at the Mission help people learn how to love God and love themselves. Once men and women have found this kind of healing, they are taught skills that help them find meaningful work and ways to serve others.

Second, the Medford Gospel Mission serves God and our community is by opening their doors in the evening and offers free dinners to those who need a warm meal. These dinners are served restaurant style with the guests seated around small tables. Each diner is greeted warmly, seated, offered choices from a menu, and invited to choose a dessert from the dessert cart all while being waited

on by a staff of volunteers eager to show them the love of Jesus. Our church family supports the Gospel Mission through our mission giving and by volunteering at the Mission. One night a month, members of our church family help serve the evening meal. We greet the guests, wait on and bus the tables, make salads, pour drinks, and serve coffee. We approach each person as another human being made in the image of God. The person we serve may even be a brother or sister in Christ!

If you or your family are looking for ways to serve others and shine the love of Christ, I invite you to consider helping at the Medford Gospel Mission.

Please contact Bill Watson at: wolfandlily@charter.net or via text at 423-833-6176.



“Local Churches: Our Essential Partners in Relational Restoration”

Medford Gospel Mission’s Community Connect churches, like Westminster, model the hospitality of Jesus by being present, listening, and building friendships that remind everyone they are seen and valued. Their consistent presence helps bridge the gap between the Mission and the local church community. Every shared meal opens a door to trust, belonging, and the possibility of deeper discipleship down the road. ***It starts with a meal — and grows into relationship.***

Source: <https://medfordgospelmission.org/>

Additional Activities and Upcoming Events

FEB 20

FRIDAY 5:00 - 8:30PM

FREE PARENTS NIGHT OUT

Let us care for your kids (ages 0-12) so you can have a few hours to yourself. RSVP by 2/17 to Julie at julie@wpcmedford.com

FEB 22

SUNDAY 10AM - 11:30AM

SINGLE SERVICE CELEBRATION SUNDAY & ANNUAL MEETING

Come celebrate all God has done in and through our church family this past year.

FEB 22

SUNDAY 11:30AM - 1PM

CELEBRATION LUNCH & MOMS GROUP

Yummy Italian menu with fellowship following our Celebration Service. The Mom Group provides lunch and support for moms from moms.

FEB 23

MONDAY 1 - 3PM

GRIEFSHARE

A 13-week support group for those who have lost a loved one through death. Visit griefshare.org or contact Patti at 541-890-4985.

MAR 3

TUESDAY 3 - 4:30PM

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Want to study the Book of Luke? Please contact Bill at wolfandlily@charter.net or text at 423-833-6176.

MAR 4

WEDNESDAY 8:00AM

JED RESERVATION DAY

Time to reserve your spot for our annual Jedediah Smith Camping Weekend Sept. 4-6, 2026. Don't wait! Go to reservecalifornia.com.

APR 19

SUNDAY 1 - 3PM

SPRING CELEBRATION

Bring the whole family for an afternoon of free and fun activities at 2000 Oakwood Drive in Medford.



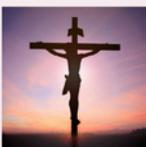
APR 26

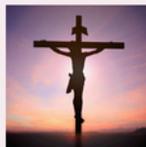
SUNDAY 12:15PM - 2PM

WELCOME LUNCH & MOM GROUP

Welcome lunch for those "newish" to WPC and want to learn more. The Mom Group provides lunch and support for moms from moms.

YOUR GUIDE TO HOLY WEEK

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | <p><i>Palm Sunday</i></p> <p>Sunday before Easter. This is the day we celebrate Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem as He begins His journey to the cross. Palms are displayed in our worship services to remember this event.</p> |
|  | <p><i>Maundy Thursday</i></p> <p>Thursday before Easter. We reflect on the Last Supper, the last meal Jesus shared with his disciples before He was arrested. We observe this day with a soup supper, evening worship service, and communion.</p> |
|  | <p><i>Good Friday</i></p> <p>Friday before Easter. On this most somber day of the Church Year, we remember that Jesus was crucified for our sins and the sins of the world. Our Sanctuary is open from 9AM - 3PM for a self-guided time of prayer and reflection.</p> |
|  | <p><i>Holy Saturday</i></p> <p>Saturday before Easter. This is the day that Jesus was in the tomb. It is a day of somber reflection, as we imagine the sense of loss, confusion, and fear that Jesus' followers must have experienced after His death.</p> |
|  | <p><i>Easter Sunday</i></p> <p>Hallelujah! Christ is risen! Death has been defeated and our Savior is alive! We celebrate this joyous day with celebrating and music!</p> |

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | <p><i>Palm Sunday</i></p> <p>Matthew 21:1-10 Mark 11:1-11 Luke 19:28-34 John 12:12-19</p> |
|  | <p><i>Maundy Thursday</i></p> <p>Matthew 26:17-56 Mark 14:12-50 Luke 22:1-46 John 13-17</p> |
|  | <p><i>Good Friday</i></p> <p>Matthew 27:11-56 Mark 14:53-15:41 Luke 22:47-23:49 John 18-19</p> |
|  | <p><i>Holy Saturday</i></p> <p>Matthew 28:62-69 Mark 15:42-47 Luke 23:50-56 John 19:38-42</p> |
|  | <p><i>Easter Sunday</i></p> <p>Matthew 28:1-15 Mark 16:1-8 Luke 24:1-49 John 20:1-18</p> |

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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 message go online to
wpcmedford.com

Westminster Cooperative Prechool
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

   WPCMedford  wpcyouthgroup_medfordor