



EXALT

EQUIP

ENGAGE

Sunday Worship
Adult Sunday School: 9 a.m.
Worship: 10 a.m. (in person or
www.woodlandpresbyterian.org/worship)
756 Park Street
Woodland, WA 98674
360-225-8941



WOODLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH NEWSLETTER

MAY 2023 Happenings



† From the Pastor's Desk †

AI AND U

Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law. Psalm 119:18 (ESV)

It seems that AI (artificial intelligence) has become all the rage. We are told that this technology will revolutionize our lives, especially in the areas of education, the workplace, and in the realm of communications. Imagine just typing a few key words on the computer keyboard, clicking the mouse, and out pops a college paper or a presentation ready to be delivered to the board of directors. As a 62-year-old pastor, I am very skeptical and guarded when it comes the use of AI for ministry applications. Personally speaking, you might put my hesitancy in the column marked “Can’t Teach an Old Dog New Tricks,” and you may be partially correct to do so. However, there is another reason I am very troubled by this technology being used for ministry applications, especially when it comes to sermon preparation.

You see, AI not only refers to “artificial intelligence;” but first, I would argue, AI would stand for

“artificial illumination.”

I can run through a very long list of preachers that are far superior to me. You can watch them on TV or listen to their radio programs or podcasts. If preaching the Word of God was only about delivering a well-groomed message, then why not just preach one of these superior messages from these gifted orators? While many may believe that the pastor is hired to produce a rousing message that will make us laugh and cry and always leave with good feelings inside, this is not the case. It is my belief that the most important and essential component in the preparation, delivery, and receiving of a biblical message is the illumination of the Holy Spirit. Pastors must rely upon the Holy Spirit to prepare their hearts and minds so that they might bring the message of the Lord to His people. The congregation also must rely upon the Holy Spirit to prepare their hearts to receive the message.

There are many, many times when I get stuck and feel devoid of any worthwhile, fresh, exciting message to deliver to you. What must I do each week in order to deliver God’s word? Number one is to ask God the Holy Spirit to illumine His Word so that I might understand and deliver His message. In an article written by Aaron Earls that appeared on the Lifeway Research website, we read:

“A recent Associated Press story asked pastors their thoughts on using AI chatbots like ChatGPT to craft sermons. Hershael York, a Kentucky pastor and professor of Christian preaching at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, summed up the thoughts of most of the religious leaders: ‘It lacks a soul – I don’t know how else to say it.’” (Q&AI: How Artificial Intelligence Says It Can Help Pastors, Feb 20, 2023-
<https://research.lifeway.com/2023/02/20/qai-how-artificial-intelligence-says-it-can-help-pastors/>).

Continue next page...



MAY 2023 Sermons

- 7 – *Why Should I Suffer for Adam’s Sin*
Romans 5:12-14
- 14 – *Christ the Coming King*
Jack Meadows, Chosen People Ministries
- 21 – *A Matter of Life and Death*, Romans 5:15-21
- 28 – *United Heir Lines* Romans 6:1-14

...continued from the ‘Pastor’s Desk’ on page 1

‘Secondly, AI may also be used to denote an “artificial intimacy.” It also is essential that I seek the Holy Spirit’s guidance as to what I will speak to a specific group of people that gathers at 10 a.m. every Sunday at 756 Park Street, Woodland, WA - a group that represents a local church family that has unique needs, unique personalities, as well as a unique ministry. A message that is developed through artificial intelligence might be a well-crafted speech, which strikes just the right balance between charming humor and inspiring, thought-provoking application, but what a computer cannot fully grasp is the local context of a church family. Again, it lacks a soul; and therefore, lacks the ability to connect with human beings. In that same article mentioned above, it makes this point: *One of the potential drawbacks of using AI to prepare sermons is the risk of creating a homogenous and impersonal message. While AI can be useful in generating ideas and insights based on a large database of information, it may not have the same capacity as a human pastor to tailor the message to the specific needs and concerns of the congregation. Sermons that are generated solely by AI may lack the emotional and personal touch that comes from a pastor who has spent time listening to and understanding the unique experiences of their congregation.*

I close with the warning to every Christian believer that we must be careful when it comes to the way we approach the Word of God.

Continue next column ...

...continued from bottom left column

The reality is that none of us can understand and apply God’s word to our lives without the illumination of the Holy Spirit. At the same time, we are called to proclaim His word to those around us who dwell in a very specific social context. This is an impossible task apart from God’s Spirit working in and through us. When proclaiming and receiving God’s Word, we must not rely upon artificial intelligence, artificial illumination, or artificial intimacy. Our reliance is always in the Lord.

In God’s Grace,
Pastor Kevin



Thursday
MAY 4
Horseshoe
Lake Park

Collecting Shoebox Items



- January**-Hats, Gloves, Scarves
- February**-Accessories (sunglasses, watches, hair items, jewelry)
- March**-Quality Crafts (pillow cases, tote bags...)
- April**-Stuffed animals
- May**-Hygiene items (washcloths, soap, toothbrushes, comb, hairbrush, deodorant)
- June**-Toys
- July**-Clothing items (socks, shoes, t-shirts, dresses...)
- August**-School supplies
- September**-Games
- October**-Letter & photo
- November**-\$9 Donation for postage
- December**-Prayer

There is a designated box in the Narthex by the front door for donated items. Thank you!



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						
	1 10:30 a.m. S.A.I.L. Class	2 7:00 p.m. Vision Team	3	4 NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER 12:00 p.m. Prayer Horseshoe Lake Park 5:30 p.m. Bells 7:00 p.m. Choir	5 10:30 a.m. S.A.I.L. Class 4:00 p.m. Stewardship Mtg	6 9:30 a.m. Worshp Mtg 11:00 a.m. Prayer Walk 11:30 a.m. C.E. Mtg
7 9:00 a.m. Sunday Morning Live (Adult S.S.) 10:00 a.m. Worship Service Communion 11:40 a.m. Mission Mtg	8 10:30 a.m. S.A.I.L. Class	9 7:00 p.m. Session & Deacons Mtgs	10	11 10:00 a.m. Bible Study 5:30 p.m. Bells 7:00 p.m. Choir	12 10:30 a.m. S.A.I.L. Class <i>Fri.-Sat.</i> <i>Presbytery</i> <i>Oregon City</i>	13 10:00 a.m. Hearts & Crafts
14 MOTHER'S DAY 9:00 a.m. Sunday Morning Live (Adult S.S.) 10:00 a.m. Worship Service	15 10:30 a.m. S.A.I.L. Class	16 7:00 p.m. OIT Mtg	17	18 10:00 a.m. Bible Study 5:30 p.m. Bells 7:00 p.m. Choir	19 10:00 a.m. Fellowship Committee 10:30 a.m. S.A.I.L. Class	20 11:00 a.m. Annual Ladies' Tea 
21 9:00 a.m. Sunday Morning Live (Adult S.S.) 10:00 a.m. Worship Service	22 10:30 a.m. S.A.I.L. Class	23	24	25 10:00 a.m. Bible Study 5:30 p.m. Bells 7:00 p.m. Choir	26 10:30 a.m. S.A.I.L. Class	27 10:00 a.m. Hearts & Crafts
28 PENTECOST SUNDAY 9:00 a.m. Sunday Morning Live (Adult S.S.) 10:00 a.m. Worship Service <i>(Blue Bag Sunday)</i>	29 MEMORIAL DAY 10:30 a.m. S.A.I.L. Class	30	31			

Financial Report: Operating Budget

<u>MARCH</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>
Beginning Balance	-6,434.89	24,601.20
Receipts	14,081.00	12,411.00
Disbursements	<u>20,134.08</u>	<u>21,182.19</u>
Ending Balance	(12,487.97)	15,830.01
Year to Date		
Beginning Balance	-	-
Receipts	66,250.70	80,058.72
Disbursements	<u>78,738.67</u>	<u>64,228.71</u>
Ending Balance	(12,487.97)	15,830.01

Financial Report: Invested Funds

<u>MARCH</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>
Beginning Balance	261,369.38	204,941.18
Receipts	13,683.91	12,684.35
Disbursements	<u>3,009.44</u>	<u>1,567.36</u>
Ending Balance	272,043.85	216,058.17
Year to Date		
Beginning Balance	234,761.75	237,352.89
Receipts	41,715.60	16,353.56
Disbursements	<u>4,433.50</u>	<u>37,648.28</u>
Ending Balance	272,043.85	216,058.17
NET FUNDS	<u>259,555.88</u>	<u>231,888.18</u>

SAVE THE DATE:

Women's Cannon Beach Conference

October 6-8

Speaker Dr. RoseAnne Coleman

Details to follow.

Contact Martha Swanstrum at 360-546-2948

May Prayer Families

Week of...

- May 7 Darlene Glaus
Carolyn Steele
- May 14 Donna Gosney
Jason Snider
- May 21 Chuck & Patty Graybill
Carolyn Smith
- May 28 Darin & Sally Hager
Joyce Sixberry



Prayer Walk

Come and join us in a prayer walk on **May 6, at 11 a.m.**, in front of the Woodland Presbyterian Church, to walk and pray over the community of Woodland. If you can't walk very far let us know. We can take the van and be out and about town meeting up with our walkers to pray over the lives and work and play of the people in this community.



May Birthdays & Anniversaries



- 7 Liz Hover
- 11 Cindy Leach
- 12 Jason Snider
- 15 Donna Gosney
- 20 Sarah Lail
- 20 Janet Oyer
- 22 Lucille Rothfus
- 25 Melinda McTaggart
- 29 Thom Mattison
- 31 Jan Stenberg

The people listed in the Birthday and Anniversary list are members of WPC



Presbytery 2024 Planning

Our church has the opportunity to host Presbytery, February 1-3, 2024.

We will need lots of volunteers to help with this gathering.

Mark your calendars now,
and begin praying on how God would use you to help serve at this meeting.

Thank you.

Renovation Review

All the bills have come in for our renovation, and everything has been paid. We were able to raise \$60,000.00 in four months, and with the matching funds from our investment account, we had \$120,000.00 to work with on this project. The final total came to \$96,859.71. This includes the not completely unforeseen asbestos abatement bill of \$7755.85. This is well under budget, and I know the oversight of the Stewardship Committee and the Renovation Team were very thorough when it came to making the hard decisions. There was much work and worry over different aspects of this project; but on the whole, it was extremely well done. Good job, and thank you for the hard work and the many prayers!

The money for the new furniture in our Narthex is completely separate from that which was raised for the renovation. These were donations and fundraising, approved by your Session specifically for new furniture, to give the new flooring and our reception area a new unified look that is welcoming and comfortable. Even now there are still donations coming in, and we hope that eventually we will have a space everyone can enjoy.

Thank you all for your prayers and contributions to this wonderful project.

Respectfully,

Sally Hager, Treasurer

Elisha & Crystal Stock Missionaries

Elisha and Crystal Stock serving in East Africa. The Stocks use aviation as a means of supporting missionaries and pastors in remote areas of Africa. They have identified three main ways in which this support is essential.

(1) TRANSPORTATION. When you can't walk, drive, or take a boat, you can fly. They fly missionaries, local pastors, refugees, and church leaders into these areas. South Sudan is war-torn, and to drive across much of the country is very dangerous. They are able to provide a safe means of transportation to those advancing the gospel.

(2) SUPPLIES. For anyone wanting to build a home or fix a car in these areas, they need supplies. Stocks can fly these in as well as food, medicines, Bibles, literacy books, and everyday necessities.

(3) MEDICAL EVACUATIONS. The airplane is used at its best when it comes to medical evacuations. Some places can be reached by car, but it is either a 10-15 hour drive to the nearest hospital, or not safe to drive. When ministering in remote areas like these, missionaries can have peace of mind knowing that an airplane is just 1-2 hours away if malaria or snake bites occur. They have medical equipment they can load on board the aircraft in order to give basic medical treatment during the flight. Please remember to pray for Elisha and Crystal as they continue their work with missionaries in East Africa.

A promotional poster for a ladies tea event. The background is a light blue and white pattern. On the right, there are two large, orange flip-flops with a white starburst pattern. The text on the poster reads: "Tickets NOW on sale for the ladies tea... Faith, Fellowship & Flip Flops: A Hawaiian Garden Party Saturday, May 20 11:00 AM- 1:00 PM Tickets: \$7 A wonderful time of fellowship and Hawaiian treats! Presented by WINGS!"

Tickets NOW on sale for
the ladies tea...
**Faith, Fellowship
& Flip Flops:**
A Hawaiian Garden Party

Saturday, May 20
11:00 AM- 1:00 PM
Tickets: \$7

**A wonderful time of
fellowship and Hawaiian treats!**

Presented by WINGS!



MAY 2023 Happenings

Volunteer Drivers Needed

At times, a volunteer driver is needed to give people rides, especially for medical appointments. If you have a few hours available and would like to help out, please leave your name on a list in the church office, or see one of the deacons to discuss.

Blue Bag Sunday

The Deacons will be working with the Woodland Action Center to help stock the food pantry. They collect over 70,000 pounds of food monthly that serves over 1100 families. Please pick up a blue bag, and fill it with non-perishable items, and return on the last Sunday of each month. Our donations will be dropped off the first Saturday of each month.

WOODLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (EPC)

PO BOX 297 / 756 Park Street
Woodland, WA 98674

360-225-8941

office@woodlandpresbyterian.org

www.woodlandpresbyterian.org



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED