

# October

## Oregon City United Methodist Church Newsletter



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### Worship Opportunities

**In-person & Live Stream  
Sundays at 10:00 a.m.**

Register at [www.oregoncityumc.com](http://www.oregoncityumc.com). If you are having trouble accessing the online registration please call the church office or Pastor Tom.







October 7, 2021

Brothers, Sisters, and Siblings in Christ,

Do you ever feel like Jōb?

Seriously, let that question sit with you for a minute or so. Think of your life and how it has been lived. Think of your losses and the pain you've felt in those moments. Think of the prayers you've lifted while travelling the valleys of faith.

Do you ever feel like Jōb? Do you feel like God has allowed something to happen in your life that is unfair and unrelenting? Do you feel at times like God is not listening?

I come to you today with this question, because at times, this is exactly how I feel. Not that anything particularly bad has happened to me of late. I'm actually quite happy being here and present with the family of Christ here in Oregon City. I am well fed, well sheltered, and well received. You all even fixed our deck! (Thank you to all those who made that happen!)

But I'm exhausted... of having to be in constant vigil due to COVID. I'm just coming out and saying it. I am COVID exhausted... and I know so are many of you.

So when I ask, "Do you ever feel like Jōb?" it's not because I feel like I've lost everything, or that my friends are blaming me, the victim, for my sins. It's because I've reached a point where these words from Jōb 23:2-7 resonate with me.

*Today also my complaint is bitter; his hand is heavy despite my groaning. Oh, that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his dwelling! I would lay my case before him and fill my mouth with arguments. I would learn what he would answer me and understand what he would say to me. Would he contend with me in the greatness of his power? No; but he would give heed to me. There an upright person could reason with him, and I should be acquitted forever by my judge.*

I want to go to where God lives, knock on God's door, and like Moses in the desert, be able to ask God straight to God's divine face, "Why? What are you doing? Can this not be over yet? Will you not listen to the prayers and tired groanings of those who have done all they can to care for neighbor?"

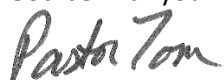
Much like Jōb though, God's response will likely be God putting me in my place. God would likely remind me who I am and whom God has always been. I would likely come to the end of that conversation in a penitent God-fearing respect (not to be confused with being afraid of God), head bowed and knees knocking.

God would likely also, remind me how the divine often works miracles... through people. Think Joseph, who had to endure being sold into slavery by his brothers in order to become the second most powerful in all of Egypt, so his father Jacob and all his descendants would survive famine. Think Ruth, daughter-in-law to the widow Naomi, who also lost her sons. With the men and all means of support gone, Ruth stayed with Naomi out of familial love and together they made a way to survive, becoming ancestors to King David.

Think each other, and how we can and do uplift one another, giving each other strength in this time. How do we feed each other with love? How do we provide a place for lament? How do we create a space for nourishment? How do we build and retain resilience in this time? How do we teach each other patience while holding each other in grace?

As we continue with our COVID reality, remember each other in grace. And remember our God is the God of the "long-haul." In the discomfort of this holy long-haul, remember we gain strength, resilience, and wisdom for the future.

God be with you in the long-haul,



Pastor Tom



# Parsonage Fence and Deck Project Complete!

On September 21, the Trustees embarked on an ambitious project to replace both the back yard fence and deck at the parsonage. Both were well overdue for replacement and in an unsafe condition. Together they created a funding challenge. With money left over from the parsonage roof replacement project, Endowment Fund interest, donations, and Trustee's reserve we were able to fund it.

The crew, made up of Trustees and other volunteers, dove in and completed the fence on one Saturday. The deck took longer working an average of four hours each day for about a week. Because of the dedicated and hard-working volunteers, the church saved a considerable amount of money by not hiring it out.

The Trustees want to acknowledge those individuals who contributed their hard work and time on this project.

Dwayne Duvall, Marty Engel, Marv Fourier, John and Denise Beasley, Pastor Tom, Zach Rice, Gerry Buttolph, Jim Shumaker and John Ronfeld.







|                             |       |
|-----------------------------|-------|
| BENSON, PETER               | 10/04 |
| SCHLOSSER, NANCY            | 10/05 |
| CRUIKSHANK, THOMAS          | 10/12 |
| WENINGER, GAIL              | 10/14 |
| CRUIKSHANK, RUBY            | 10/15 |
| ORQUIZA-RENARDO, PASTOR TOM | 10/15 |
| HEMPHILL, KARLA             | 10/16 |
| BUTTOLPH, VERN              | 10/19 |
| CRUIKSHANK, MICHELLE        | 10/19 |
| BENSON, JEREMY              | 10/22 |
| BENSON, NATHAN              | 10/22 |
| QUEVEDO, SONIA              | 10/23 |
| BEASLEY, DENISE             | 10/26 |



## Coffee on the Porch with Pastor Tom

With COVID restrictions and limitations on visiting it's difficult for me to visit with folks in-person or in their homes. So, I'm inviting folks to sit down visits outside on the church porch for as long as weather permits. They can stop by with their choice of coffee or tea, or we can have some water available. If folks are interested, they can call, text, or email me to set up a time.

Pastor Tom | Cell: 503-888-5224 | [ocumcpastor@gmail.com](mailto:ocumcpastor@gmail.com)



## Tell Me the Stories of Jesus

Led by Pastor Tom on Thursday evenings at 6:30pm throughout October. The study is designed to re-learn some of the stories of Jesus. It takes a more in-depth look at why Jesus told these stories and parables, what truth they would've held for the people who heard them first, and how we relate to those truths today. There is no fee for this study. All you need is your Bible and an appetite for new insights.

## All Saints Day

November 7<sup>th</sup>

Celebrated on the first Sunday in November, All Saints Day is when United Methodists publicly remember and honor those who have passed away.

If you would like your loved one's name announced during worship by Pastor Tom please email the church office with their name. Please remember our worship service is in-person & live streamed.

## Charge Conference

Sunday, November 14<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm

We are planning for an in-person gathering with all COVID guidelines in place. If circumstances warrant, this will be changed to a virtual format.



## Our Weekly Giving Moments

Reading is always an important part of Freedom Schools. In the summer of 2020, West Ohio's virtual Freedom School invited parents to be guest readers, often surprising their children. "Some showed pride when seeing their mother or father reading in their group," said Clara Petty of the Monroe Street Neighborhood Center.

Not limited to local volunteers, the virtual experience made it possible to have readers outside of Ohio. One guest reader caught the attention of her Facebook friend who happened to be an author of a book on the reading list. Zetta Elliot, author of *Dragons in the Bag*, saw her Facebook friend participating in Freedom Schools in an online video. That led Elliot to donate 27 of her books to the school.

On the annual Children's Sabbath, United Methodists join with people of many faiths to support the Children's Defense Fund. Freedom Schools is just one CDF program empowering children to excel and believe in their ability to make a difference.

