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Presbytery of the Cascades

Showing up for the Storms of Others

by Mike Ferguson | Presbyterian News Service

(Editor’s note: Each year APCE invites church educators to a conference focused on the work they are called to do. In the first month of 2023, our country has experienced over 70 mass murders, and a brutal police-lead beating of an unarmed victim. As an answer to this, I am offering the summary of a powerful speech where keynoter John Pavlovitz walks the crowd through how to endure turbulence and how to stir it up, stating “showing up for the storms of others is ‘the single most pressing lesson plan.’”)



John Pavlovitz

LOUISVILLE — Brought on stage by a powerful version of [“I Want My Life to Make a Difference”](#) by [G. Phillip Shoultz, III](#), who provided music for the [Association of Partners in Christian Education](#)’s annual event this week, keynoter [John Pavlovich](#) continued his theme Friday of dealing with the turbulence in our lives. Along with more than 500 people attending in person in Birmingham, Alabama, and another 150 or so online, Pavlovitz is exploring [Mark 4:35-41](#), an account of Jesus’ stilling a storm for terrified disciples accompanying him on a boat.

“The question for today is, can comfort only truly come through the turbulence?” Pavlovitz asked. “Is the shaking the path through which we become the peacemakers? Can we give thanks for terrible things?” The injuries we suffer “define the kind of people we become, the work we do and the mark we leave,” Pavlovitz said. Two days after his father died nine years ago, Pavlovitz was sitting in a coffee shop with a friend. “I know this is almost unbearable for you,” his friend said, “but you will be able to minister to people suffering loss at a much deeper level.”

That thought “irritated me a little, but she was right,” Pavlovitz said. “I began to write about it the next day. Even though I was a grief zombie, I was able to connect with thousands of people through the experience of losing. It allows you to transform your pain into purpose.”

During the conference, Pavlovitz has been discussing “the systemic ills we’re carrying,” and he fleshed that out on Friday. “We live and teach and minister in the tension between the peacemakers and the fear-givers, whom we see everywhere,” he said. “Racism and bigotry are not only individual afflictions; they’re collective ones.”

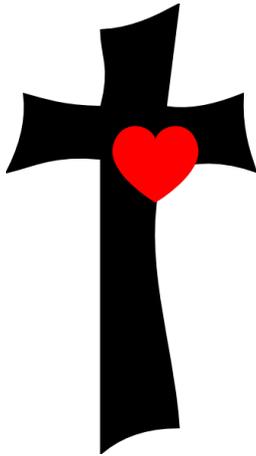
“This is about your ability [as pastors and Christian educators] to show up in the storms of other human beings as the educators of faith. That is the single most pressing lesson plan,” he said.

“A truth I want us to acknowledge today is that privilege of any kind is a fear insulator,” Pavlovitz said. As a white cisgender straight man, “I will never experience ... the severity of the fears my LGBTQ friends have experienced. Empathy is the voice that says, ‘We are not free until we are all free.’”

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*And now faith,
hope, and love
abide, these three;
and the greatest
of these is love.*

1 Corinthians

13:13

Omnibus

Omnibus is published twelve times a year by the Presbytery of the Cascades for distribution to churches and individuals.

Omnibus welcomes news and views of all the churches of Presbytery and all its readers. Send all communications to Kathleen Waugh, *Omnibus* editor, Presbytery of the Cascades, 245 S. Bancroft St., Suite D, Portland, Oregon. Email: kwaugh8@outlook.com

Omnibus retains permission to modify submissions for clarity and space limitations. The Presbytery “Communications and Technology Team” (CATT) is the editorial board.



Ask the Clerk

By Paul Belz-Templeman, Stated Clerk

Q: Our moderator began the meeting before a quorum was present. She said that the meeting should start on time with the opening prayer and devotion and then wait for a quorum to consider motions. I thought we needed a quorum to conduct business. Who is right?

A: The moderator is CORRECT that meetings should start on time even without a quorum. The moderator is MOSTLY CORRECT that there must be a quorum to consider motions. Actually, there are 4 procedural motions that are in order without a quorum. In the absence of a quorum, any business transacted, *except to fix the time to which to adjourn, adjourn, recess or take measures to obtain a quorum*, is null and void. In other words, when a time has been set for a meeting, it needs to happen whether or not there is a quorum, but it also need not mean that those present must sit or stand idly by waiting for a quorum to develop.

When it is time to start a meeting, the chair or moderator should call the meeting to order. After the opening prayer, the members present have some options. Someone can move to *take measures to obtain a quorum*. For instance, “moderator, I move that the clerk telephone the absent members”, the members who are present can vote on whether or not to take that action. Or, someone can move to *recess*. For instance, “moderator, I move that we recess for 15 minutes to allow for those delayed by traffic to arrive.” Again, someone could move to *adjourn*. For Instance, “moderator, I move to adjourn.” This comes in handy because at some point, if there is no quorum and no chance of a quorum materializing, we need a way to end the meeting. Finally, someone can move to *fix the time to which to adjourn*. This final motion is very useful if there is business that can’t wait until the next scheduled meeting. For example, “moderator, I move to fix the time for the adjourned meeting as tomorrow night at 7 p.m.”

In summary, a meeting that is stated or has been called needs to happen whether or not there is a quorum. So the meeting should start on time with an opportunity to seek or wait for a quorum as well as to end the meeting and even “reschedule” the meeting by fixing the time for an adjourned meeting.

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NOTES FROM THE ROAD TO EMMAUS

*By Rev. Brian Heron,
Presbyter for Vision and Mission*

I am currently reading through the 300 poems of *Love Poems from God: Twelve Sacred Voices from the East and West*. It is the third time I have used this for my daily morning meditation taking me nearly through a full year each time I commit to it.

Today's poem was by St. Francis of Assisi in a short meditation titled, "In All Things." Here it is:

"It was easy to love God in all that was beautiful.
The lessons of deeper knowledge, though,
instructed me to embrace God in all things."

As each year passes this little mystical poem describes the spiritual movement I can feel happening in my heart and soul even as it prods me to live into it even more deeply.

This past week we held a specially-called presbytery meeting to handle four pieces of business. Two of those pieces of business were centered on the closing of two beloved churches - **Colonial Heights/Common Ground, Portland** and **Cherry Park, Troutdale**.

We have closed churches before, but something felt different this time. In the past, I had the feeling that we knew how to "love God in all that was beautiful," but we struggled with how to find the hand of God in something as painful as a closing. I could feel the unwelcome presence of failure seeping out of our common psyche. "Something must have gone wrong," we cried out silently without actually saying the words.

Not so this time. In the case of both churches as we shared stories it was articulated clearly about both congregations, "They did all the right things" and we believed it. Closing didn't mean that something had gone wrong. Closing was just a representation that, in life, one can do all the right things and still die.

This has not been an easy journey for our presbytery. I have served in this presbytery for almost twenty years and for most of that time it seems that closures were experienced as failure either by the congregation or the presbytery or both. I can remember when a closing was to be avoided at all costs even if it cost individual members their own health.

This has not been easy to get to the point where we acknowledge that faithfulness doesn't necessarily guarantee permanence. But God never promised permanence, only eternal life.

"In life and in death, we belong to God," are the opening words to our Brief Statement of Faith. Recently it has felt that we have learned that this is more than just an "affirmation of faith;" it is a way of life.

At this last meeting, I saw it in the grieving and grateful faces of the commissioners. I heard it in the soulful expression of words. It was captured in memories and stories. It was echoed in prayers.

St. Francis reminds us that deeper knowledge is found in our ability to "embrace God in all things."

Yes, it is hard, but it is also beautiful and good.

Brian



Grief and Gratitude

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Pavlovitz recounted some of his own story in the role he labeled “Super Christian Mega Pastor Man” and the pain of being fired from one ministry position after serving only a few months. “Authenticity and specificity were not things they really wanted at that church,” he said.

While he found himself in tears that first Sunday without responsibilities leading worship, “I then felt a lightness and a joy. For the first time in 17 years, I didn’t have a church community. I could stay home! I was free of the expectations of a community of people. I like to say I was given the gift to be able to ask everything and say anything.”

He started to write “clearly and specifically what I felt,” and soon was a guest on CNN. Below his face was this identifier: “John Pavlovitz, Pastor.”

“It could have said, ‘John Pavlovitz, Unemployed and Currently Despondent,’” he said. “Friends, I’m not advocating for you to jeopardize your career or your livelihood. But you may need to become the turbulence in order to bring peace to others,” he said. “This is the way of Jesus.”

“We are called to speak these days with a clarity and specificity that we maybe haven’t always had,” he said. “But we are known as the nice church,” a woman once told him. “I said, ‘Are there other kinds of churches I’m not aware of? Hi, we’re the distant and cold community.’ I said, ‘Nice is nice, but maybe you could try being Christlike. The Jesus you name and love, he was always loving but he wasn’t always nice.’ The reason he spoke with ferocity is he loved humanity enough to suffer on behalf of it.”

“People doing this work never say, ‘Could you be nicer?’ They usually say, ‘Why are people of faith so silent right now?’”

“In these days of great shaking, we may need to become turbulence to others, to those who exclude others based on an unchangeable part of who they are,” Pavlovitz said. “With our hands and voices and resources and platforms, we have to risk becoming the turbulence to the powerful and the privileged.”

“In the face of so much fear, we are called ... to say something that is going to disturb somebody we want to have peace with,” he said. “I’m not praying for you to be fired. I’m praying for you to be fired up. May we be the kind of courageous people who will bring peace to those being shaken. Amen?”

(Roberta Schlechter is our Northwest Region Connector for the Association of Partners in Christian Education (APCE), and encourages us to go to their [website](#) to explore the other events of the conference and the many resources APCE offers educators. If anyone is interested to know more about APCE, Roberta is happy to help in any way she can. Contact her at rrschlechter@gmail.com.)



Bisbee Grant funds are available for pre-and-post-emergency or disaster-related projects.

Is your church prepared to be transformed into an Emergency Shelter? Are you considering how to be prepared to shelter your members and fellow community members after a major natural disaster? Do you need a disaster preparedness plan? What is emergency/disaster planning?

The basic structure for disaster planning includes phases of comprehensive emergency management: preparedness, response, and recovery. Well-conceived emergency preparedness and response plans not only save lives, they often also contribute to resilience and post-disaster recovery by lessening the impact of a disaster.

Start now thinking about how your church building and members will respond during a natural disaster or other emergency. Give consideration to the supplies necessary to accommodate those that will take shelter in your building and how you will care for the people once they are there.

Deadline to submit your grant application is August 15, 2023. See the Presbytery website for more information <https://cascadespresbytery.org/grants/>.

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~ *Transitions* ~

These transitions cover November, 2022 through January 2023.

New Pastors

- Ken Henry has transferred his membership back to POTC from James Presbytery.
- Conley Zomermaand transferred in from Trinity Presbytery on December 13 and was Honorably Retired on January 1, 2023.
- Lindsey Groves has transferred her membership from Middle Tennessee Presbytery on December 13.
- The Rev. Laura Marie Nile Tuell has transferred her membership from Seattle to POTC.
- The Rev. Kirk Seyfert has transferred his membership from PCA and is serving in a validated ministry, Executive Director of the Northwest Hub, in Salem.
- Wesley Yoon is now the Supply Pastor at Hope Korean, Portland.
- Warren Williams is now the Supply Pastor at First, Trout Lake.
- Janice Reynolds has transferred to Cascades from Redwoods Presbytery.
- Maggie Lewis has accepted the Campus Minister position at the Koinonia Center on the University of Oregon Campus.
- The Rev. Heidi Bolt has transferred her membership from Twin Cities Area Presbytery to Cascades.

Installations:

- The Rev. Victoria Bethel was installed at Tri City, Myrtle Creek on Saturday, January 28.
- Greg Bolt was installed at First, Salem on November 20, 2022.
- The Rev. James Vickery was installed at First, Bandon on October 16, 2022.
- The Rev. Sungmin Song was installed at Korean, Vancouver on October 16, 2022.
- Chris Dela Cruz was installed at Westminster, Portland on October 30, 2022.

Pastoral Changes

- The Rev. Seth Wheeler has transferred his membership to Boise Presbytery.
- The Rev. Daniel De Beer has transferred out of the POTC to Charleston-Atlantic Presbytery.
- Kevin Manuel is the new pastor at Community, Redmond.
- The Rev. Peter Blank has finished his ministry at John Knox, Keizer at the end of October.
- The Rev. Bill Van Nostran will retire from First, Astoria, at the end of February.
- The Rev. Ben Dake will retire from Nestucca Valley, Pacific City at the end of this year.
- The Rev. Kathryn Keener is serving at First, Newport.
- The Rev. Scott Crane has ended his ministry at First, Trout Lake and is now Bridge Pastor at First, Corvallis.
- The Rev. Sharon Edwards has concluded her ministry at First, Corvallis and will begin a position in Iona, Scotland in February.

Retirements:

- Ben Dake is Honorably Retired effective December 31, 2022 & has been granted Pastor Emeritus.

Memorium

- The Rev. John E. "Jack" Merner passed away on December 11, 2022.
- The Rev. Edward Alora passed away on November 1, 2022.
- The Rev. Gretchen White Janssen passed away October 30, 2022.

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Calvary, Portland Receives New Ministries Grant

By Pat Berger, Northeast Region Reporter

(Editor's note: Pat notes that much of this article has been lifted from Calvary's grant application.)

Perhaps you have been wondering what is happening at **Calvary, Portland** recently. The Sunday email bulletin always has updates on their project, and the next work days, and hopes that people will show up to further their project. What is the project?

We would like to introduce you to Recovery Café Roseway! Members and friends have been doing construction work for months, and they are now within a couple of months of opening. Their pastor, the Rev. Dr. Joan Miller, has been working right along with them.

Dr. Miller recently saw to it that they applied for a New Ministries grant from the presbytery -- which they received! The \$50,000 that they received will go toward hiring, furnishings for the cafe, a coffee cart that they recently were able to purchase and other necessities for getting the cafe going. They will apply this year for a national "1001 New Worshipping Communities grant."

Recovery Café Roseway is one of 49 such cafes across the United States and Canada in the Recovery Café Network (RCN). Those in the network seek to provide safe places in their communities for people who self-identify as being in recovery to connect, heal, grow and learn. The Recovery Café Network's Operations Manual identifies the Network as, "a group of member organizations committed to transforming our larger communities by creating healing communities that address the needs of people suffering from homelessness, addiction and other mental health challenges." (RCN Operations Manual, page 6)



Grinding the Floors



*Floors and Walls Being upgraded
For Recovery Café Roseway*

Calvary has committed to transforming much of its facility into Recovery Café Roseway and launching the 501(c)(3) that will operate the cafe. Each cafe is exactly that -- a cafe that serves specialty coffee and tea beverages. Most cafes also serve a meal on the days they are open. Each cafe also offers Recovery Circles and a variety of other classes, opportunities and services, all designed to support people who are in their "School of Recovery." The cafe runs on a membership model that encourages loving accountability and differentiates the cafe from a drop-in center.

Calvary decided to join the RCN after several years of discernment and visioning. In their neighborhood, they heard people say that they were looking for a "safe place to connect." The cafe model provides that safe place, especially for those who are vulnerable or on the margins. They understand the cafe model to be "church" by another name. The core commitments made by RCN members align with the presbytery's vision of being reformed by love and loving our neighbors through inclusion and justice. Calvary is currently the fiscal sponsor of Recovery Café Roseway, which is an "Emerging Member" of the Recovery Café Network. They became a dues-paying member of the RCN last May and expect to receive full membership in 2024.

Currently, members of the church have been involved in a series of training events with twelve other emerging members around the country. They have attended several online events with all 49 cafes around the country. They have received a great deal of support from their closest cafe neighbor, Recovery Café of Clark County in Vancouver, Washington. They have also connected with cafes in Medford and in San Jose, California. (The cafe in San Jose is also located in a church.) Additionally, they are beginning to connect with other local groups involved in recovery support, including Alcoholics Anonymous and Alano Club. It is their long-term hope that they will create a community that enables persons in recovery to experience loving accountability in a safe space that supports their way to long-term health and well-being.

Blessings, Calvary and Recovery Café Roseway, for success in this ministry! And we can't wait to hear of your opening, so that we can come visit.

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Four Firsts

By Mike Hubbard, South Region Reporter

Back when the Bear Creek Valley was being settled, the distances between towns and their subsequent Presbyterian churches was measured in mule-riding miles. Thus, the towns of Central Point, Medford, Phoenix, and Ashland all had (and still do have) First Presbyterian churches. Late nineteenth-century distances, and the relative isolation of the four towns, meant there was little confusion when someone said they were a member of First Presbyterian. If they lived in Phoenix, then that would be Phoenix's First Presbyterian—likewise, Medford, Ashland, etc.

These days, the distance between Central Point in the north to Ashland in the south can be covered in a little under a half-hour. Thus, if one asks to have a print shop invoice or grocery order sent to "First Presbyterian," the person behind the counter will invariably ask, "Which one?" No longer isolated, there is a delightful amount of overlap between congregations. Bell ringers from **First, Central Point** and **First, Medford** play in the same bell choir. Volunteers from **First, Ashland** work side-by-side serving meals at **First, Phoenix**. And now, with the recent holiday season, the Four Firsts all have feel-good stories to tell.

In February 2022, when Vladimir Putin invaded Ukraine, the Zhyvotovski family, (Mike, Lena, Kostya and Andrey), became refugees. The notion that seven months later they would be living in a place called Ashland, Oregon would have been beyond their wildest imagination.

Likewise, **First, Ashland's** pastor, Dan Fowler, long-time member, Shirley Patton, and the entire congregation would never, in their wildest dreams, have foreseen the fulfillment of Isaiah's words in their midst: "Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: ...to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter..." Indeed, in opening her home, Patton provided the wanderers with shelter; First, Ashland has chosen God's kind of fast and a Ukrainian family is safe.



*First Phoenix's Clerk of Session,
Carolyna Marshall,*

Over the past three years, Phoenix, Oregon has, like the rest of the world, experienced the trials of a pandemic. During that time, they also suffered the devastation of the deadly Alameda wildfire. Through it all, **First, Phoenix** and the Phoenix Community Center has stood with the community. They've opened their building to others, handed out food and clothing, and offered community grief support. However, memories of hard times were set aside on the evening on December 3, as the community waited in the Phoenix Civic Center Plaza for Santa to light the town's Christmas tree. As they waited, they embraced friends, listened to Christmas carols, and honored the folks who worked to make the occasion a reality. First, Phoenix Clerk of Session, Carolyn Marshall, the evening's emcee and event coordinator, cut a festive figure as she thanked workers, introduced speakers, and invited folks to visit the historic church for holiday refreshments and more carols. Marshall estimated that 60 or 70 people accepted the invitation. The evening, already a success, ended with an AA group that use the church, stepping in and doing the cleanup.

Early last summer, **First, Medford's** Elders, Evonne Hubbard and Jan Grunwald, thought the time might be right for the church to host an old-fashioned Christmas craft fair. They took the proposal to the Mission Committee. The two ladies would do the planning and promotion of the event if the committee would take the idea to session for approval. Vendors would pay twenty

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dollars for a table, the money going toward the purchase of socks, hats, and gloves to be handed out at First's wildly successful "Brown Bag Café" sack lunch program. The vendors would offer their wares and keep the proceeds. Thus, on a gray December morning, a dozen vendors showed up offering greeting cards, blown glass, wreaths, quilts, walnuts and much more. By late afternoon, vendors had sold at least enough to cover their table charge and some much more. When the last shopper walked out the door, close to three hundred dollars was destined to warm the hands, heads and feet of the hundreds of unhoused neighbors.



First, Central Point's Table of Home Baked Goodies

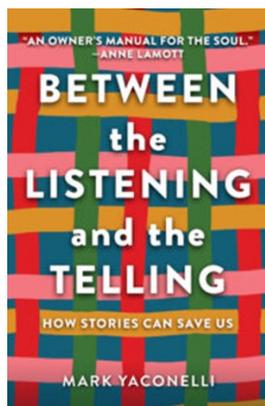
The Fourth "First" story belongs to the **First, Central Point's** Presbyterian Women. Upon learning of Medford's craft fair, they ponied up their twenty dollars and set up shop. One end of their table held a variety of handmade craft items; the other end was stacked with home-baked goodies. And, as it turned out, the Central Point ladies were the only vendor offering food. The tasty, reasonably priced sweets put smiles on many faces and, at the end of the day, C.P.'s Presbyterian Woman took home over three hundred and fifty dollars.

As the distance between these First Presbyterian Churches has decreased, and the stories of their ministries begin to overlap, visions of shared work among the Four Firsts will, prayerfully, become a shared reality.



Sacred Stories: A Retreat with Mark Yaconelli

February 27-March 1, 2023



There is a depth to story that we rarely take time to ponder, let alone to tell and hear. Story is how we transform pain. Story is how we make something useful out of the absurd. Sharing stories is how we make a home within ourselves and one another. In this transformational retreat, author, spiritual director, and veteran storyteller Mark Yaconelli will help you uncover, craft, and share the sacred stories of your own life. Based on over two decades of work with story and commu-

nities, this transformational retreat will engage participants in a series of meditative talks, contemplative practices, reflective exercises, and facilitated discussions designed to bring about personal healing and a deeper appreciation for the diversity of human experiences.

Join us in-person at Menucha for this retreat with Mark Yaconelli. You can attend the retreat as an overnight guest who stays in one of our rooms, or as a commuter who sleeps overnight in your own accommodations. Meals are included in the cost for overnight guests (dinner Monday through breakfast Wednesday) and commuters (dinners and lunch only).

For more information... www.menucha.org/programs/sacred-stories.

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Thank You, Bruce Smith!

In grateful thanksgiving for some seventeen years of service as the *Omnibus*' Central Region reporter, I accepted Bruce's request to retire from this position.

He states, "I was asked to be a contributor to the *Omnibus* and cover the 32 churches in the Central Region with my first offering being in October 2006. This participation has continued to January of this year when it came to be that enough is enough and it was time for a new voice. I am a firm believer in the concept of the church being one body and all are related one to another. I believed if I were able to communicate how each church was doing, then they would be able to see that relationship as well as utilize programs that were successful in other churches."

In addition to his work with the *Omnibus*, Bruce has been active as an elder in many of the churches he attended throughout his life. He also served in presbytery activities which included elected terms to the Synod of the Pacific. He remembers in particular his time as chair of the Church and Society Committee during the 1960s which tried to breach the dissension in churches caused by the conflict in Vietnam.

He is married to Nancy and they will celebrate their seventy-year anniversary this year.

Late in 1978, Bruce had an opportunity to manage the data center at the Support Agency at the Interchurch Center in New York City. "Our family moved to NYC and lived on the upper West side in a fifth story apartment. This is another story that borders on culture shock to which we adjusted. We joined the Central Presbyterian Church on Fifth Avenue where I became an Elder and then a Trustee. While in the East Nancy earned two master's degrees from Teachers College at Columbia University."

When they moved back to Oregon in 1990 and settled on their property at Crooked River Ranch, they joined the **Community, Redmond** and again Bruce became an Elder. "I picked up participation in the Presbytery of the Cascades as a member of the Committee of Ministry for two or three terms late in the 1990s."

In a reflective fashion over the past 70 years, Bruce states. "I have experienced membership in our churches from close to hundred percent to currently at the forty percent in our country. We can attribute this to a variety of events and social dynamics if we are looking for excuses. That is beside the point. There is talk by some that the church is searching for the new paradigm to seek God's will. Down through the ages mankind has constantly felt that one is not alone but has felt there was more. However, the new structure turns out to be, it is my assertion that corporate worship can take a significant role. This is a great time to be alive."



Bruce and Nancy Smith



There's a Place for You!

The nominating committee encourages your participation on presbytery committees. Please take this opportunity to suggest yourself or someone you would recommend for service on a committee or taskforce in the presbytery. We will use this information to update our committee and nomination database. Interested? Click [here](#) to nominate yourself or someone you know.

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ViewPoints

By Kathleen Waugh, Omnibus Editor

Hypocrisy. It's a label very often applied to Christians - sometimes with reason and many times as a convenient means of rejecting the institution called the church. How many times have we heard the refrain, "I just don't go to church anymore because there's so much hypocrisy."

The definition of "hypocrisy" in the dictionary is: "The pretense of having feelings or characteristics one does not possess; especially the deceitful assumption of praiseworthy qualities; insincerity."

Recently, I faced this allegation one too many times and decided to challenge the offhand remark that was thrown at me. "No offense, Kathy, but I can't stand going to church any more. People that go to church are just so hypocritical."

I turned to this friend, a bit taken aback. "Actually, I **am** offended by that," I answered. "Don't you think that's quite a generalization to make?"

It was my friend's turn to be taken aback. I'm not known to bristle up at things and I was definitely bristling up. "I'm sorry," she said, "I don't mean to hurt YOU in any way. Besides, you know I'm not talking about you."

"Of course, you're talking about me," I said. "I not only go to church, but I go to church with a whole bunch of people I deeply respect and love. Of course, you're talking about me." I paused in my diatribe, took a few deep breaths, looked more closely at my friend who was, by now, obviously feeling terrible - and thus, began feeling terrible myself.

"Okay, let's stop here," I said. "What happened? Something must have."

She told me about several incidents that had hurt her deeply - all perpetrated by allegedly faith-filled folks at various congregations she was visiting while looking for a new church home. When she finished, I could see how she came to the conclusions she had.

I remember feeling so frustrated - feeling so bad about the way my friend had been treated by so-called loving Christians. No doubt about it, the church is definitely filled with fallible folks. What made me feel worse, though, was the thought that if this person, who I knew had loved the church, was pushed away; what about all those folks who show up on an occasional Sunday morning, experience the cold shoulder, and have no other standard to go by. Or they hear a stupid remark by some allegedly popular Christian leader in the media and decide to judge the rest of us by that statement.

I will stand firm in my belief that I do not think most Christians are hypocritical. I believe most Christians are deeply committed to their values - deeply committed to the call by Jesus Christ to love God and love their neighbor, deeply committed to following their Lord and Savior. I also believe, however, there are times when our witness and proclamation to the precepts we follow may be less than stellar.

It behooves us, then, to be very aware of the fact that, like it or not, we are being judged by our actions as followers of Jesus Christ. Never has it been so true the words, "They will know we are Christians by our love."

I would challenge us all, then, to not allow the statement that all Christians are hypocritical to stand on its own when we hear it (or something like it) come our way. With love and compassion, we ask the person to tell us more about why they would make such a statement. We acknowledge their very real pain or experience that colors their view of Christianity. Without putting down their experience, or denying the reality of their experience, we take the time to share our own experience with them. And we invite them to come with us to worship to see what we're talking about! My prayer will be that they will experience a very different reality.

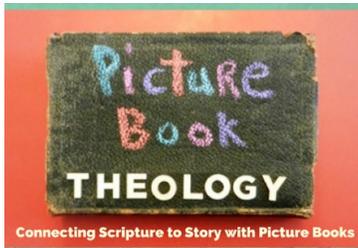
Perhaps, then, they will know we are Christians by our love!



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Resources help Ministry and Mission

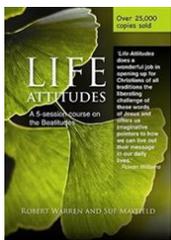


This is a blog about making theological connections to secular picture books. Wandering through this blog was a treat. The January, 2023

entry happened to be a note about taking a leave of absence. However, don't let that stop you. It describes how to explore the 900 entries which show ways to use a picture book theologically to children, teens and adults.

Per the author, Hanna Schock, "Picture books are one of our greatest treasures for living, for loving, and for learning. They link us to memories in which we were safe and encouraged in a world of our imagination. The reading of such books offers quiet comfort and reminders of a time when the written word with a few carefully planned illustrations was enough to keep even the youngest of us attentive. Like time travel machines, picture books can transport us to exotic places or unusual situations, sometimes fearsome, often enriching. These non-threatening tools chisel into us memories and lessons that are influential throughout our lives. Because their power is so potent, I propose that they should be used more in educational ministry and therapy, for children, for teens, and even for adults. My blog will demonstrate how and welcome you back to the transformational treasures of picture books."

For more information or to just explore the site click [Picture Book Theology](#).



"Life Attitudes: A Five-session Course on the Beatitudes for Lent" Robert Warren

The aim of this course is to explore the Beatitudes, which encapsulate the teaching of Jesus. Jesus himself lived out the Beatitudes in his earthly life and called his followers to do the same. This five-session group study course encourages Christians to examine their lifestyle in the light of Je-

sus's radical teaching and to live out these kingdom values now. This course takes a two-pronged approach to studying the Beatitudes, deepening our understanding of Jesus and challenging our deepest personal values; and helping us understand how they should impact on our approach to major global issues, such as environmental pollution and the deep-seated hostilities and injustices that afflict our world. Each session of the course contains enough material for 90 minutes and includes guidelines for group study, with full background notes for leaders, interactive activities, including questions for group discussion and multimedia suggestions, a wide range of suggestions for Lenten prayer and meditation. For more information, click [here](#).



Jon Acuff's book *Soundtracks* focused on overthinking — the ways we allow negative and repetitive thoughts to dominate our brains in counter-productive ways. *Your New Playlist* is his take for teens, co-written with his high school- and college-age daughters. It's an easy read and filled with practical suggestions to retire "broken" soundtracks, replace them with new ones, and repeat our new affirmations until they become automatic. Click [here](#) to read *Outlook Book Review* Editor Amy Pagliarella and her teenage son Rowan discuss *Your New Playlist*.



Do you have a book, a Bible Study, a resource that has helped you in your ministry? Please share. Send to editor, Kathleen Waugh at omnibus@cascadespresbytery.org

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Wednesday, February 1

Nicholas Sorani, ordained this day, 1998

Thursday, February 2

Aurora Presbyterian Church -- chartered this month, 1904

Friday, February 3

Janice Hearn, granted Honorably Retired status this day, 2000

Saturday, February 4

William Stevens, granted Honorably Retired status this month, 2014

Sunday, February 5

Leo Tautfest, granted Honorably Retired status this month, 1996

Monday, February 6

Phillip Essex, granted Honorably Retired status this month, 1993

Tuesday, February 7

First Presbyterian Church, Trout Lake -- chartered this day, 1905

Wednesday, February 8

First Presbyterian Church, Bandon -- chartered this day, 1891

Thursday, February 9

Scott Peterson, ordained this day, 1988, serving at Columbia PC, Vancouver

Friday, February 10

Westminster Presbyterian Church, Salem -- chartered this day, 1957

Saturday, February 11

Jennifer Pratt Hale, ordained this month, 2012, serving as Program Manager, Second Home, Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon

Sunday, February 12

Tracie Bullis, installed as Pastor, Tualatin Plains Presbyterian Church, Hillsboro, this day, 2012

Monday, February 13

Rev. Diana Vezmar-Bailey became a member of the presbytery on this date in 2020

Tuesday, February 14

Piedmont United Presbyterian Church, Portland -- chartered this day, 1905

Wednesday, February 15

Charlotte Mace, Pastor at St. John's PC, Camas

Friday, February 17

Rev. Joanna Dunn serving at Bethany, Portland

Saturday, February 18

Denise Hess, Honorably Retired

Sunday, February 19

Calvary Presbyterian Church, Portland -- chartered this day, 1882

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[Prayer Calendar continued](#)

Monday, February 20

Beverly Hovencamp, serving on the Board of Trustees

Tuesday, February 21

Phyllis Hart, granted Honorably Retired status this month, 1995

Wednesday, February 22

James Freda, granted Honorably Retired status this month, 2013

Thursday, February 23

Soo Shin Kim, granted Honorably Retired status this day, 2005

Friday, February 24

Tualatin Presbyterian Church -- chartered this month, 1985

Saturday, February 25

First Presbyterian Church-Creswell -- chartered, 1909

Sunday, February 26

Southminster Presbyterian Church-Beaverton -- chartered this day, 1959

Monday, February 27

Greg Tatman, granted Honorably Retired status this month, 2018

Tuesday, February 28

The Rev. Peter Blank, Honorably Retired on January 19, 2023

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