



January/February, 2024

Volume L, No. 1

Presbytery of the Cascades

## Rev. Dr. Brian Craker, Begins Service as Transitional Executive Presbyter

The Transitional Executive Presbyter (TEP) Search Team conducted a six-month, national search, and considered a well-qualified and diverse applicant pool. Acting on the recommendation of the TEP Search Team, the Presbytery Leadership Commission is pleased to announce that the Rev. Dr. Brian Craker has been invited to serve as our presbytery's TEP for an initial two year term. During December, while working for the presbytery part-time, Brian will have completed his interim position at Hillsboro Presbyterian Church. He begins his full-time work as our TEP on January 1, 2024.

The Search Team concluded that Brian, with his extensive interim pastoral experience and proven track record as an effective transitional leader, is the right leader for this time of transition for the presbytery. The PLC wishes to thank the Search Team for their hard work in finding our new TEP. Welcome Brian!

About Brian: The Rev. Dr. Craker (pronounced Crā-kěřě) has called Oregon home for over 25 years, serving multiple churches in our presbytery, first in youth ministry and then as an Interim/Transitional Pastor. In 2021, he completed his D.Min in Semiotics and Future Studies of the Church, and wrote his doctoral dissertation on the modernization of Transitional Ministry in the PC(USA), furthering his passion and vision for the greater church. His deep faith in Christ and love for the Church comes from continually watching the transformational work of the Holy Spirit. In addition to ministry, Brian has utilized his experience as a business owner and real estate investor to help local churches analyze their finances, optimize their assets, and take strategic steps to help achieve their mission and future vision.

His wife, Alison, is a Mental Health Counselor, and they have two giants for sons, Tyler and Casey. Their family has been part of Lake Grove Presbyterian Church for five generations, and remains involved in teaching, music, local & global missions, and diaconal ministries. When not working, you'll either find Brian on a sports field with his boys, traveling with his family, working with the latest technology, or smoking all kinds of delicious meats and veggies on his Traeger.



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# PC(USA) Webinar Touches on Multiple Aspects of Israel-Palestine Crisis

Christian and Jewish Voices Describe the Current Situation in Gaza

*(Editor's note: Omnibus has been asked to speak to PC(USA)'s response to the situation in Gaza. The following article and the resource page attached to the article were suggested as good sources showing how folks close to the situation experience the conflict. The article summarizes the first of a webinar series. Watch the webinar [here](#). The series, sponsored by the [Presbyterian World Mission's](#) Office for the Middle East and Europe, in conjunction with the [Office of Public Witness](#) (Washington, D.C.) and the [Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations](#) (New York), will continue in 2024. Future dates and participants were not confirmed at press time.)*



by Scott O'Neill | *Presbyterian News Servicem*

LOUISVILLE — More than 250 participants logged in to watch the first in a scheduled series of webinars devoted to the ongoing crisis in Israel, Gaza, and the West Bank. Rabbi Alissa Wise, the lead organizer of Rabbis for Ceasefire, and the Rev. Fursan Zu'mot from the Arabic-speaking Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan & the Holy Land (ELCJHL), led participants through an hour-long discussion that touched on humanitarian issues, differences between Christian Zionism and antisemitism, and the school of hatred seemingly being perpetuated from the ongoing conflict.

Wise kicked things off, apologizing for a crackling voice borne from “screaming in the streets for a ceasefire for too many days.” Wise acknowledged the [Israel Palestine Mission Network](#), whom she called “beloved friends” cultivated from working with Presbyterians a decade ago on the divestment issue and years of witness and advocacy for Palestinian rights.

She started with an up-to-date assessment of life in Gaza. “Eighty percent of Palestinians are displaced. That’s over 2 million people. The entire infrastructure is destroyed — medical services, roads, clean water — all the basic infrastructure to life is being systematically destroyed as we speak,” said Wise. “Eighteen thousand lives have been lost in Gaza in addition to the 1,200 lost in Israel on Oct. 7<sup>th</sup>. That includes 7,000 children. It’s hard to say that number.”

Supported by a [recent CNN report](#), Wise also noted infectious diseases are starting to spread among the population. An outbreak of jaundice suggests Hepatitis A is on the rise, as well as upper respiratory infections.

Wise then shifted focus to discuss the idea, or narrative, that anti-Zionism is equal to antisemitism. It’s a claim she called “dangerous” and something she’s been organizing against for over a decade, harkening back to work with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) [on divestment](#).

“One of the main things I was doing then was combatting this idea that for Presbyterians to align your values with your investments was antisemitism, as some Jewish communal leaders claimed. What you’re seeing now in Gaza are that people are protecting Israel from accountability by likening the critique of Israel with antisemitism,” said Wise. “There is nothing inherently antisemitic in critiquing Israel. Israel is not a Jew; it is a government that must be held accountable for its actions and human rights abuses.”

She referenced the Hebrew biblical concept of [Tochacha](#), which she translated as “sacred rebuke” while noting that the rebuke is actually an act of friendship. She cited examples as to what it means for Presbyterians to practice Tochacha.

“What I said to Presbyterians back in 2012-2014 was about divestment but right now it calls for a ceasefire or a call for restricting military funding for the Israeli government as a form of sacred rebuke.

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What I've seen inside the Presbyterian Church in my years of working with you is a sense of ongoing commitment to ensuring that Jews, Christians, Muslims and people of all faiths continue to stay interdependent and build solidarity between each other."

Zu'mot, who lives in and was speaking from Jerusalem, declined to speak about the politics of the situation, preferring to speak about what he sees daily in Israel. He noted the fear is being experienced by Arabs brought on by a growing "school of hate."

"The problem that Arabs living in Jerusalem are experiencing is the speech of hate being shared by Jewish leaders and rabbis, in addition to the government and political parties. Religion is being used as a tool to justify what is happening and that is frightening because it's not about religion," said Zu'mot.

Instead, Zu'mot thinks religion can be a solution to the problem — if we can live into the morality that is given to us through religion.

"I think that would help us really to see each other as human, not less than human. Today some people see themselves as superior and why we are seeing hatred growing in the community. The speech of hate is growing to a point that makes me as a person, as a pastor, as a religious leader in my community, feel afraid.



*The Rev. Fursan Zu'mot*

My wife is a pharmacist, and she works in the Jewish community giving medication to patients. One of the patients recently yelled at her in a very strong and harsh tone saying, 'You Arabs should all die.'"

The situation has devolved to the point where Zu'mot is thinking of following some of his congregation members to the United States, Canada or Australia.

"But why should I go to Australia when I was born here? I have ancestors that go back 1,800 years to this land, and now I'm thinking of leaving? From a humanitarian aspect, it's a fearful situation. I'm afraid in the old city because when I walk in, it is full of soldiers."

### **What's needed to bring about peace**

Zu'mot's final message was a plea for hope. "People today don't have reasons to live in Gaza. Israel controls their water, electricity, air and movement. They can't go to Egypt, and they can't get into Israel. There are 2.1 million people living in a highly populated, condensed area. What do you expect them to do? The highest income for a good working person will be 100 U.S. dollars a month for the whole family. They are in poverty, and they are in need. So give them reasons to live and to find a way of living and then you can expect a different result. They are dying slowly.

Wise says it is going to take risk and sacrifice to get to the other side of this conflict, but even now people are losing family, relationships and friendships. Nevertheless, there are direct actions that can be taken now. "Our primary concern right now is ceasefire, stopping the bombs falling and ensuring that not another child is buried under the rubble, or another Palestinian starves to death or dies from lack of medical attention. That is our most urgent concern right now," said Wise.

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## **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, OR 97239-8526. Email: [kwaugh8@outlook.com](mailto: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.

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“But we need to hold that in tandem with what we’re fighting for. What do we want to see on the other side? For me, I feel like I want to challenge us in this moment to push past our grief and despair and put in more energy. I think there’s room for more direct action, like I’ve been part of mobilizing hundreds of Jews for civil disobedience. I think interfaith actions, Christians coming together to challenge Christian Zionism and going along with the idea that Christians as a whole support counteracting Islamophobia and antisemitism.

Write op eds in your papers, organize actions and protests that can be joining in other [Jewish Voice for Peace](#) protests. But get into the street and figure out your lane. I just think we need to be throwing everything at the wall right now because it’s that level of emergency.”



*Rabbi Alissa Wise*

*Editor’s note: Just at publishing time, this sermon by Palestinian pastor, Munther Isaace, serving a church in Bethlehem, was brought to my attention by Dennis Smith, one of our new reporters. It is both powerful and difficult to hear, but I believe we need to take the time to do so. [MuntherIsaac- Cristo bajo los escombros. \(youtube.com\)](#).*

*To view a comprehensive list of multi-media resources, advocacy opportunities, and partner voices in the region, [visit the PC\(USA\) Israel-Palestine resource page](#). See below for more resources on the subject:*

- For more information about PCUSA’s work on these issues, PCUSA policies and with partners on the ground, please check out this landing page: <https://www.pcusa.org/israelpalestine/>
- If you want to sign the PCUSA call for a Ceasefire here’s the link:
- <https://www.votervoice.net/mobile/PCUSA/Campaigns/109207/Respond>
- We invite you to check Rev. Mitri Raheb’s webpage for further resources <https://www.mitriRaheb.org/en/pdf-list/publications> as well as the website of Jewish Voice for Peace <https://www.jewishvoiceforpeace.org/>
- Other resources shared by Rabbi Alissa Wise:
- Rabbis for Ceasefire: [www.rabbis4ceasefire.com](http://www.rabbis4ceasefire.com)
- Haymarket Free Palestine Reading List: <https://www.haymarketbooks.org/blogs/71-free-palestine-a-reading-list>
- Ceasefire action tracker: <https://www.ceasefiretrack.com/>
- Middle East Children Alliance Teach Palestine curriculums: <https://teachpalestine.org/curriculum/>
- Challenging antisemitism through the lens of collective liberation: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NEvHOasen9>
- For a good history of the situation, a good read is this book: <https://www.amazon.it/Hundred-Years-War-Palestine-Resistance/dp/1627798552>
- For further inquiries, you can write to [MEST@pcusa.org](mailto:MEST@pcusa.org). Our offices are closed for the Christmas holiday, so there may be a delayed response to any email. Questions and comments are important to us so we will respond at your earliest opportunity available in the new year.
- In January we will inform you about dates for our next webinars.

Yours faithfully,  
PC(USA)’s Middle East Office, Office of Public Witness,  
Presbyterian Ministry at the UN and Peacemaking Office  
Maggie Collins  
Young Adult Volunteer  
Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations  
Presbyterian Church (USA)  
777 U.N. Plaza, 7th Floor  
New York, NY 10017



# ViewPoints

*By Carole Eckerd, Vice Moderator for the South*

## Grateful in the South

During November, **Tri City United, Myrtle Creek** and **First, Roseburg** combined efforts to have a wonderful women's retreat. It was a rainy day, so we enjoyed being together in a warm space with two special leaders, pastors Victoria Bethel and Vicky Brown. It was an ecumenical gathering with women from four different churches in attendance.

The theme of the retreat was "grateful living." We watched a wonderful talk by Brother David Steindl-Rast who is a 97-year-old, author, scholar, and Benedictine monk, and has been known as the "grandfather of gratitude." His message is that joyful living is to be grateful always.

He teaches that we all feel gratitude for gifts or good things when our lives are going well, but what happens when life brings events that we would not choose? Brother Steindl-Rast wants us to realize that living gratefully can bring us joy not only when our lives are going well, but also when life has been turned upside down. He says that every moment is a gift and an opportunity for gratitude.

Brother Steindl-Rast teaches a three-step process through which we can re-focus our thoughts from hopelessness to gratefulness. To learn more about "living gratefully" visit their website at [grateful.org](http://grateful.org).

The morning ended with a contemplative collage and/or practice and a lovely lunch where we shared conversations and laughter. This was a wonderful morning spent making new friends and learning new skills to bring joy into our lives that we can use not only at Thanksgiving or Christmas but into the New Year and beyond.



*Preparing the Table*



*Lunch is served*



*Gathering materials for a contemplative collage...*



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# Mt. Tabor offers Unique Visions of What Church Can Be

*By Pat Berger, Northeast Region Reporter*

Pastor Amanda Golbek has pastored churches in North Ireland, North Carolina, and Illinois since she was ordained here in Portland – and now she is back! Since September, Pastor Golbek has been serving at **Mt. Tabor, Portland**. She is very much enjoying all that Tabor Space means to the congregation. As they work hard at coming back from the pandemic, it is fun to see the different groups that flow through their building.



*Taborspace offers a warm,  
welcoming space*

The coffee house part of Tabor Space is undergoing some changes. Originally, the space was planned to be a training site for people wanting to get into that business. That changed, and the couple who have been managing the coffee house are moving to Brazil (the home country of the husband), and they are going to adopt a child! Last weekend, there was a party celebrating the time they have spent together, and the future that lies ahead for them. New managers will begin there in January. The congregation very much enjoys seeing people from the community coming in to enjoy the space and the coffee shop.

Another part of what happens at Mt. Tabor is Tabor Space Rentals. Those who rent space for events are all from the community around the church. Events range from a birthday party for a 5-year-old to Multnomah County Human Resources. They were open for drop-ins during the teacher's strike in Portland, and continue to serve schools as meeting space for PTA groups, drama clubs, and others.

And then there are Tabor Space Partners: groups and people who have offices in the building. All of them are focusing on wholeness. There is an art therapy group, therapists, acupuncturists – all seeking health and wellness for their clients.

Add all of that to the excitement in the congregation about having a new pastor, and working at coming back from the pandemic – there is much joyful anticipation for 2024! They are glad to be worshipping together again at the church. At this time, they worship in the sanctuary on the first and third Sundays of the month, using their traditional worship service. On the second and fourth Sundays, they worship in the Copeland Commons coffee space, sitting around the tables there. Those services are a blend of worship and church school-type discussions. They open with the regular welcome and announcements, sing some hymns, and then Pastor Golbek leads with a question, and they all discuss. They are grateful for the coffee house space right in their building, so that they can alter their worship easily.

Pastor Golbek appreciates the welcoming attitude of those in the congregation. She says that there aren't many young people in attendance, but those who are there (including her children!) are made to feel as if they are a real part of all that happens. She says there is a real "family vibe" about the congregation. One recent community event highlighted this feeling.

Last weekend, they had a community cookie decorating event! It was publicized on social media, as well as through their in-house preschool program and a neighborhood list. One of the members and his grandchildren came to the church on Saturday, and baked all of the cookies to be decorated. On Sunday, doors were opened, and church members and neighborhood folk came to decorate cookies. A fine time was had by all!

Many exciting new things are happening at Mt. Tabor – we wish you all good things in your ministries! [Return to Index](#)



# Embracing the Arts in Medford

By Mike Hubbard, South Region Reporter

Historically, protestant churches haven't exactly embraced the arts. In earlier centuries, this would have constituted a gross understatement. During the early reformation, simple architecture, undorned edifices, and whitewash were the order of the day. When art did find its way into a church, it was of the Bible bookstore variety—a white, well-groomed Jesus with a white, well-groomed child on his knee. If a clear, scripture-based reference wasn't apparent, it had no place on the church wall. Period.

Frank Schaeffer's 1981 *Addicted to Mediocrity: 20th Century Christians and the Arts* challenged that notion. Schaeffer pointed to the Church's rich tradition linking faith, art, and artist; he called on believers in every faith tradition to rediscover the importance of quality art in sacred spaces. Given the evidence of Presbytery of the Cascades churches, Presbyterians had answered the call long before Schaeffer made it. The Central Region, for instance, has two architecturally significant churches - **Westminster, Eugene** and **First, Cottage Grove** within 25 miles of one another. Across the presbytery, in churches large and small, we glorify God in spaces enhanced by stained glass, richly finished wood, and thoughtful design.

Like many churches, **First, Medford** has a mixed record where art is concerned. While the sanctuary is, in its own right, a work of art, there have always been a few of the "blond Jesus on a bland background with a blond wood frame" prints. On the other hand, the church's library has always contained a few interesting pieces. For many years a lovingly selected painting or weaving of the month adorned a particularly well-lighted wall.

That all changed in late 2015 when Robin Blomquist and First's pastor, Murray Richmond, hit on the idea of a once-a-month jazz vesper service. Richmond once hosted an Alaska Public Radio jazz program and is a student of the genre. Blomquist, it seems, knows every jazz artist in southern Oregon and beyond. The idea caught on with the local jazz community and the services are well attended.



*Refinished hall wall enhances the painting's beauty*

Blomquist is also a former gallery owner who knows as many painters, photographers, and print makers as he does jazz musicians. Early on, an artist would be invited to hang their work in a readily accessible hallway as the "Artist of the Month." During the vesper service intermission, the month's artist would be introduced and given an opportunity to describe their work, their inspirations, and methods.

While the hallway/gallery is accessible, its aesthetics were not up to Robin's high standards. The rough finish sheetrock walls needed spackling and touchup between hangings and the lighting was woefully inadequate. But, because church members and guests can view the art for a full month, there was support for making the needed improvements. The space is now illuminated by well-placed track lighting, the wall covered with a neutral colored, gallery-grade flat knap carpet finish. Working together with the local art community, First has discovered a concrete way to celebrate God's sacred gift of creativity.

And First's gallery isn't its only spotlight on art and artists. Beginning in 2019, Pastor Richmond began what has become a tradition of seasonal Wednesday evening soup suppers with an interactive lecture on the Art of Advent and the Art of Lent. Despite the Reformation's resistance to artistic adornment, the history of the Church has been illustrated by some of the most gifted painters and sculptors of all time. The theology that guides our lives and informs our cooperate worship has a visual component. Using a slide show of selected works, Richmond, pointer in hand, explains the visual history of Advent and Lent. Observations are made, questions asked, and the resulting discussion is always lively. And we are reminded once again of that spirit of inspiration that God has given to some, to be enjoyed by many. [Return to Index](#)



*Pastor Richmond facilitates an exploration of art in Lent and Advent*

# Charline Gebhardt, A Grace Note at Rise Church Tigard

*By Dianna Weston, Northwest Region Reporter*

Charline Gebhardt's path to multiple stints as choir director at **Rise, Tigard**, actually began on her family's small dairy farm in southern Tillamook County, when she would serenade her cows. She and her dog would climb up on an old hay wagon, and while Charline sang a full voice concert, her dog would wag his tail patiently and wait for her to finish.

Charline sang her first solo at Cloverdale Presbyterian Church when she was three years old. Music was always an important part of her family life and she was involved with every musical activity in school and the community. She received a bachelors and master's degree at Lewis & Clark College, majoring in music education. Although she was involved extensively in musical performance, her preference led her to teaching, coaching, and directing.

She began directing the choir at Rise, when she called Calvin (Rise's previous name) her home in 1967. She was in her junior year college. For the next 20 years she continued to serve as their choir director. She then returned to elementary music teaching where she touched the lives of many young children. In 2003, she returned to Calvin, sang in the choir, and directed the youth choirs and programs. She was an interim choir director on four occasions.

"Music that emanates from God is perfection," Charline states. She feels deeply about the role of music in our lives, stating, "Writings have defined Heavenly Music as a perfect sound that is not only heard, but completely embraces our spirit and soul. Our health, pleasure, and goodness will be enhanced through music as we pursue this perfection. It is God's gift to us. When music touches us, we will feel inspiration and love."

As for why she continues to sing in and direct Rise's choir, she says, "Beautiful choral music is our closest expression to Godliness. The gift of music has brought deep joy and meaning to my life. Music has been my passion, my purpose, and my pathway. Through the gift of music and the joy of sharing that gift, my life has been enriched beyond measure."

In mid-December, Charline directed a beautiful candlelight service at Rise that featured bells, voices, and an orchestra celebrating the light and life of the Christmas message. The highlight of the program was "A New and Glorious Morn," a stunningly beautiful Christmas musical by Lloyd Larson.

The music and narrative showcased the composer's deeply meaningful experiences during his recent visit to the Holy Land. During this timeless journey through the message of Christmas, the audience heard familiar lyrics and ageless melodies performed in a contemporary blending of new styles and arrangements.

She is also assisting in hiring a new choir director/band director to enhance contemporary music, so she can finally step down from directing (again). Future plans are to sing in the choir, coach young singers, and assist her own granddaughter with her music.

She believes, along with musical phenomenon Jon Batiste, that "music is a sacred activity."



*Charline and Chuck at Rise  
Christmas Concert*

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# News Briefs

**February 14 - Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent.** It is a time many congregations consider promoting the One Great Hour of Sharing. The three programs supported by One Great Hour of Sharing - Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the Presbyterian Hunger Program, and Self-Development of People - all work in different ways to serve individuals and communities in need. From initial disaster response to ongoing community development, their work fits together to provide people with safety, sustenance, and hope. For more information, click [here](#).

**Seeking Applicants for Stated Clerk of the General Assembly** - December 28 is the deadline for applications for Stated Clerk of the General Assembly. With less than three weeks left in the application window, the Rev. Dr. Sallie Watson and other members of the Stated Clerk Nominating Committee (SCNC) are eager to encourage anyone giving thoughtful and prayerful consideration to the position not to miss the deadline.

**January 31, 12-1 p.m. - Collaborative Conversations about Commissioned Ruling Elder Program.** This will be the third opportunity to provide space for our churches to connect, idea[share and brainstorm. Any churches interested in helping Elders become CREs will benefit and any who have engaged in the program are invited to share their wisdom! Date TBD.



## Omnibus Changes Coming in 2024

*(Editor's Note: This is a repeat to remind folks of the changes to the Omnibus starting this month.)*

Effective January, 2024, the *Omnibus* will be published every other month. The decision was made at the Communication and Technology Team meeting on November 29.

As the *Omnibus* approached its fiftieth year of publication, the team reviewed its purpose especially its relationship with the Cascades Connection, a weekly on-line communication to the presbytery. We will continue to contact the churches in the four regions – highlighting, whenever possible this year, members who are offering interesting projects and programs. In other words featuring more of the faces and voices of the presbytery. Presbytery leaders will continue to touch base with us through columns such as “Viewpoints,” and “Ask the Clerk.”

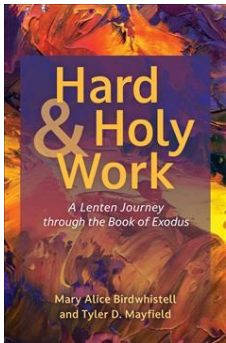
We hope to expand the presbytery coverage by inviting folks to share inspirational writings such as poetry, slice-of-life moments that can touch our journeys of faith. If you feel called to share such inspiration with us, please feel free to send it to me, Kathleen Waugh, editor, [kwaugh8@outlook.com](mailto:kwaugh8@outlook.com).

We now have four regional reporters. Each of them will be eager to receive news of your church or a member of your congregation. Consider WHO in your congregation can be highlighted with a story and picture. Feel free to recommend such folks to our reporters at the following email addresses: Northeast: Pat Berger - [pfbb1202@yahoo.com](mailto:pfbb1202@yahoo.com); Northwest: Dianna Weston – [dianna\\_weston@hotmail.com](mailto:dianna_weston@hotmail.com); Central: Dennis Smith – [densmithfam@gmail.com](mailto:densmithfam@gmail.com); South: Mike Hubbard – [pastormike@firstpresmedford.org](mailto:pastormike@firstpresmedford.org).

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## Resources help Ministry and Mission



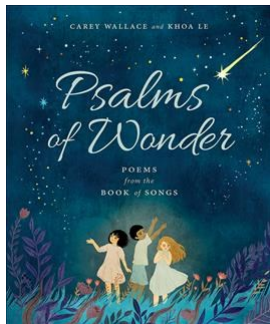
*Hard and Holy Work:  
A Lenten Journey through the  
Book of Exodus*

By Tyler D. Mayfield  
Mary Alice Birdwhistell

Are we paying attention to the holy ground beneath our feet? Where do we see burning bushes in our world today, and what are they calling us to do? Do spiritual encounters in our lives have

holy consequences in the world around us?

Many of us want to understand how to integrate our personal spiritual lives more actively with our engagement in working for justice and the liberation of the oppressed and marginalized. *Hard and Holy Work* provides a space for just that, helping readers participate in Lent in a new way by becoming attuned to God's boundless presence in our world and waking up to and taking action for God's justice through exploring stories from the book of Exodus that have inspired the work of liberation for centuries. For more information, click [here](#).



*Psalms of Wonder  
Poems from the Book of  
Songs*

By Carey Wallace  
Khoa Le

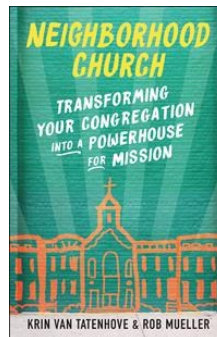
Sometimes the psalmists are joyful, sometimes troubled. Sometimes they're angry, at the world or at God. Sometimes they're overwhelmed by God's love or dazzled by the beauty of

God's world. But however they feel, they bring it all to God—their mess, their pain, and their joy. Through many generations, people have called on the beloved ancient songs to express their deepest emotions to God and one another.

For readers of all ages, these inviting poems and gorgeous illustrations are inspired by the book of Psalms, echoing all its wonder and courage, comfort and joy, protection and love. For children, *Psalms of Wonder* offers an introduction, bridging to the beloved phrases and images of Scripture. For readers who already know and love the Psalms, the poems reveal a refreshing new perspective while holding true to respected biblical translations. Perfect for savoring and sharing, this luminous collection will res-

onate deep in the hearts of God's children.

*Psalms of Wonder* is perfect for preaching, studying, and praying the Psalms, both at home and in church group settings of all ages! To support your educational, devotional, and liturgical uses of this book, we've created free digital resources, which can be downloaded [here](#).



*Neighborhood Church  
Transforming Your Congregation  
into a Powerhouse for Mission*

By Krin Van Tatenhove  
Rob Mueller

How can we embody the values of love, grace, and justice? As faith communities, how can our collective embodiment of these values shine even brighter?

The answers to these questions must always unfold right here, right now, exactly where God has planted us. *Neighborhood Church* acts as a resource to inspire churches to become a vibrant and engaging community partner with the families and neighborhoods living around them. The need for transformation is acute. Congregational decline continues across all mainline denominations. The abandonment of the church by the millennial generation is ubiquitous; no denomination is escaping it. This is, in part, a consequence of disconnection from our communities.

Van Tatenhove and Mueller believe that, parish by parish, we can reverse this trend. They dare to have an audacious hope for local congregations not only as signs of God's kingdom but as life-giving institutions that anchor their neighborhoods.

Click [here](#) for more information.

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 [kwaugh8@outlook.com](mailto:kwaugh8@outlook.com)

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**Monday, January 1, 2024**

Nestucca Valley Presbyterian Church, Pacific City -- chartered this day, 2001  
Susan Carleton, granted Honorably Retired status this month, 2018

**Tuesday, January 2, 2024**

Andrew Caesar, ordained this day, 1994, in private practice as a counselor

**Wednesday, January 3, 2024**

Dean Klarr, granted Honorably Retired status this month, 2001

**Thursday, January 4, 2024**

Donald Frank, granted Honorably Retired status this month, 1997

**Friday, January 5, 2024**

Victoria Bethel, Pastor at Tri-City PC Myrtle Creek

**Saturday, January 6, 2024**

Community Presbyterian Church, Yachats -- chartered this month, 1950

**Sunday, January 7, 2024**

Board of Trustees of the Presbytery of the Cascades -- Marilyn Howe, President, and members

**Monday, January 8, 2024**

Philip King, ordained this day, 1999.

**Tuesday, January 9, 2024**

Tom Young, Honorably Retired in 2019

**Wednesday, January 10, 2024**

Kathleen Waugh, granted Honorably Retired status this month, 2012 - Omnibus Editor

**Thursday, January 11, 2024**

Donald Taylor, granted Honorably Retired status this month, 2016

**Friday, January 12, 2024**

Christopher Grewe, installed as pastor, Savage Memorial Presbyterian Church, Portland, this day, 1992

**Saturday, January 13, 2024**

Graig Flach, installed as Associate Pastor, Lake Grove Presbyterian Church, Lake Oswego, this day, 2002

**Sunday, January 14, 2024**

Steven Hammond, granted Honorably Retired status this day, 2016.

**Monday, January 15, 2024**

Ashton (Skip) Roberts, ordained this day, 2007 and now Honorably Retired

**Tuesday, January 16, 2024**

Heidi Bolt, serving St. Mark Lutheran Church in Salem, Oregon

**Wednesday, January 17, 2024**

Jim Vickery, Pastor at Bandon PC

Warren Williams, ELCA Pastor, serving at First, Trout Lake, WA

**Thursday, January 18, 2024**

Tyler McQuilkin, Youth Pastor at Bend, First

**Friday, January 19, 2024**

Kris Voss-Rothmeier, ordained this day, 1997

Murray Richmond, installed as Pastor, First Presbyterian Church, Medford, this day, 2014

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**Saturday, January 20, 2024**

Jacob Chang Kim, granted Honorably Retired status this month, 2010

**Sunday, January 21, 2024**

Eagle Creek Presbyterian Church -- chartered this day, 1906

**Monday, January 22, 2024**

Bradford Kent, granted Honorably Retired status this month, 2007

**Tuesday, January 23, 2024**

Kelsey Ingalls, Member at Large

**Wednesday, January 24, 2024**

John Goff, granted Honorably Retired status this month, 2010

**Thursday, January 25, 2024**

James Wallace, installed as Pastor, Rise Church, Tigard, this day, 2015

**Friday, January 26, 2024**

Katherine Pate, installed as Pastor, Milwaukie Presbyterian Church, this day, 2009

**Saturday, January 27, 2024**

United Presbyterian Church, Albany -- chartered 1853

**Sunday, January 28, 2024**

Kenneth "Woodley" White, granted Honorably Retired status this month, 2007

**Monday, January 29, 2024**

Joshua Dunham, installed as Pastor, Covenant Presbyterian Church, Gresham, this month, 2020

Kathryn Keener, ordained this day, 1989, now serving at Newport First

**Tuesday, January 30, 2024**

Duane Sich, granted Honorably Retired status this day, 2014

**Wednesday, January 31, 2024**

Chapel by the Sea Presbyterian Church, Lincoln City -- chartered this day, 1937

**Thursday, February 1, 2024**

Nicholas Sorani, ordained this day, 1998

**Friday, February 2, 2024**

Aurora Presbyterian Church -- chartered this month, 1904

**Saturday, February 3, 2024**

Janice Hearn, granted Honorably Retired status this day, 2000

**Sunday, February 4, 2024**

William Stevens, granted Honorably Retired status this month, 2014

**Monday, February 5, 2024**

Leo Tautfest, granted Honorably Retired status this month, 1996

**Tuesday, February 6, 2024**

Phillip Essex, granted Honorably Retired status this month, 1993

**Wednesday, February 7, 2024**

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

**Thursday, February 8, 2024**

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

**Friday, February 9, 2024**

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

**Saturday, February 10, 2024**

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

**Sunday, February 11, 2024**

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

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**Monday, February 12, 2024**

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

**Tuesday, February 13, 2024**

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

**Wednesday, February 14, 2024**

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

**Thursday, February 15, 2024**

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

**Friday, February 16, 2024**

Shereda Benfield, granted Honorably Retired status, this month, 2013

**Saturday, February 17, 2024**

Rev. Joanna Dunn serving at Bethany, Portland

**Sunday, February 18, 2024**

Denise Hess, Honorably Retired

**Monday, February 19, 2024**

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

**Tuesday, February 20, 2024**

Beverly Hovenkamp, Serving on Trustees

**Wednesday, February 21, 2024**

Phyllis Hart, granted Honorably Retired status this month, 1995

**Friday, February 23, 2024**

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

**Saturday, February 24, 2024**

Tualatin Presbyterian Church -- chartered this month, 1985

**Sunday, February 25, 2024**

First Presbyterian Church-Creswell -- chartered, 1909

**Monday, February 26, 2024**

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

**Tuesday, February 27, 2024**

Greg Tatman, granted Honorably Retired status this month, 2018

**Wednesday, February 28, 2024**

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