



March/April, 2024

Volume L, No. 2

Presbytery of the Cascades



*PC(USA) Co-Moderator  
Rev. Shavon Starling-Louis*

## Save the Date Presbytery to Meet April 19-20

Join us at **Westminster, Portland** on Friday, April 19 through Saturday, April 20. Times TBD.

**PCUSA Co-Moderator** Rev. Shavon Starling-Louis will join us. The Rev. Shavon Starling-Louis is the Pastor of Memorial Presbyterian Church in Charlotte, North Carolina. Shavon (she/her/hers) is from St. Petersburg, FL, where she was raised by her grandmother, Delores. She is a justice-minded public theologian, conference preacher/speaker, and church leadership consultant. Shavon is passionate about the intersection of intercultural evangelism, creative worship, and anti-oppressive, inclusive church practices.

This will be an in-person meeting only. In an effort to move more intentionally toward collaborative leadership, there will be no Zoom option for this meeting. **Please share this information with your commissioners to the meeting.**



### Inside This Issue

<a href="#">Ask the Clerk</a>	2
<a href="#">Candid Conversations</a>	3
<a href="#">Viewpoints</a>	4
<a href="#">News Briefs</a>	5
<a href="#">Westminster Salem</a>	6
<a href="#">Trout Lake</a>	8
<a href="#">South Reflections</a>	9
<a href="#">Waldensians - 850 Yrs of Ministries</a>	10
<a href="#">BIRDS Ministries</a>	11
<a href="#">Resource Page</a>	13
<a href="#">Prayer Calendar</a>	14

### Second Tuesday Prayer with Rev. Susan Graham

Please join in a time of prayer for our presbytery as we head into the season of Lent. Join us Tuesday, March 12 at 8 a.m. via Zoom.

Rev. Susan Graham, the Cascades Commission on Ministry Pastoral Support Team Lead, is hosting these prayer times the second Tuesday of every month.

To learn more, [email](#) Susan Graham.





## Ask the Clerk

*By Paul Belz-Templeman, Stated Clerk*

I am often asked by church leaders for help finding their Articles of Incorporation and 501(c)(3) status. Underneath these questions is a larger question on how congregations relate to the denomination. While we are a connectional church, each Presbyterian Church is its own corporation and these non-profit corporations are also covered under section 501(c)(3) in the Internal Revenue Code which means that contributions by donors are tax deductible, the church ordinarily doesn't need to pay income tax and so on. There are a few intricacies that are often lost in the mix which I aim to lift up and illuminate in this "Ask the Clerk" article.

As the Book of Order states: "each congregation shall cause a corporation to be formed and maintained." So your church is (or should be) incorporated. Churches often ask the presbytery for a copy of their Articles of Incorporation ("Articles"). This is usually because the county requests them or they are required for a grant or non-profit discount on a software subscription. The Presbytery does not have copies of your congregation's Articles. If you don't have a copy, the easiest place to find the most recent Articles for your congregation is to go to the Secretary of State website (Oregon, Washington). If you have recently updated your Articles (or for some reason, the state uploaded your Articles from, say, 1901) you can download a digital copy directly from the Secretary of State website. If your Articles were last updated more than 20 years ago, you will probably need to order a copy from the Secretary of State of Oregon or Washington. Furthermore, both states require an annual report to maintain the church's corporate status. Is your church current? I encourage sessions to ensure that they are currently a corporation and have filed the report (use the first links above). Otherwise, each member of the session may be held personally liable for the actions and debts of the congregation (doesn't sound fun to me).

Churches also ask the presbytery for proof of 501(c)(3) status and we can help with this! Our situation as churches in a denomination is somewhat unique among non-profits. Presbyterian churches are covered by what is known as a "group ruling" where the IRS unburdens itself of the need to process multiple form 990s every year, instead granting non-profit status to all subordinate churches under the PC(USA) which is the "parent body". In other words, congregations don't file annual reports to the IRS (like the 990), instead, the PC(USA) files and does so on our behalf (thank you, PC(USA)!). Often, a congregation requires proof of 501(c)(3) status, usually to get free software or a discount on other services offered to non-profits at a discount. There are two ways to get this proof. One way is to email me (your friendly stated clerk) and ask for a letter that attests that you are covered by the "group ruling." Usually this works. An even more official letter can be acquired from the denomination by calling the PCUSA Office of Legal Services at 888-728-7228 and requesting one.

## 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.

[Return to Index](#)



# Candid Conversations

*By Rev. Dr. Brian Craker, Transitional Executive*

Walking out of my Business Administration college class, a fellow classmate asked if I could help her with her car. She explained how her manual transmission car, that her uncle recently gave her, would stall after coming to a complete stop. She also explained that the car had no reverse, which made it difficult to park. After looking the car over, she begged me to come with her so she could show me the problem. After a short time of struggling and explaining the issue, she pulled over and invited me to try it out. We switched places and as I pulled out, I was able to run through all 5 gears without any issue, and the car never stalled once for me. Then we pulled into a parking lot and confirmed that the car had a Reverse gear. As I explained to her where the placement of all the gears were, she looked at me absolutely amazed, and then she pointed to the stick shift knob...the “1” and the “R” had rubbed off, leaving only gears 2-5 showing.

Having never owned a manual transmission car before, she was led to believe gears 2-5 were all she had to work with, even though her gut told her something wasn't right. She then explained to me how nobody would take the time to come with her and let her show them what was wrong. They simply wanted to offer advice and then move on. As she got back into the driver's seat, she told me how much she appreciated me taking the time to listen to her and share the experience together. That experience was a huge life lesson for me of the greater importance of making time to listen, even when there is a problem to be solved.



For the last 16 years working as an Interim Pastor, many churches would greet me with “Welcome, here's what needs to be fixed before we can look for our next pastor.” On the surface was a mentality of “let's fix what's broken,” while in reality, the greater need was to make time and just listen to their experiences; the joys and struggles, hopes and reflections, and just needing someone to validate that God was still at work in their midst. The truth is that God created us to be relational beings, and we can only work together on solutions if we take the time to build relationships through shared time and active listening.

As your new Transitional Executive Presbyter, this is my first priority...making time to listen and build relationships. I know we have a lot of things we want to tackle and problems we want to solve, but the best solutions will come when we are working collaboratively, with genuine appreciation of each other's experiences and values. For now, I am focusing on making time with our staff, our presbytery leaders, teams, and commissions. From there, I will begin reaching out to make time to listen to others throughout Presbytery. I know it will be impossible to talk with everyone, but each conversation will help me better understand the various challenges we are facing. Only then will we be able to prayerfully work together on solutions that benefit us all.

Blessings! Brian

[Return to Index](#)



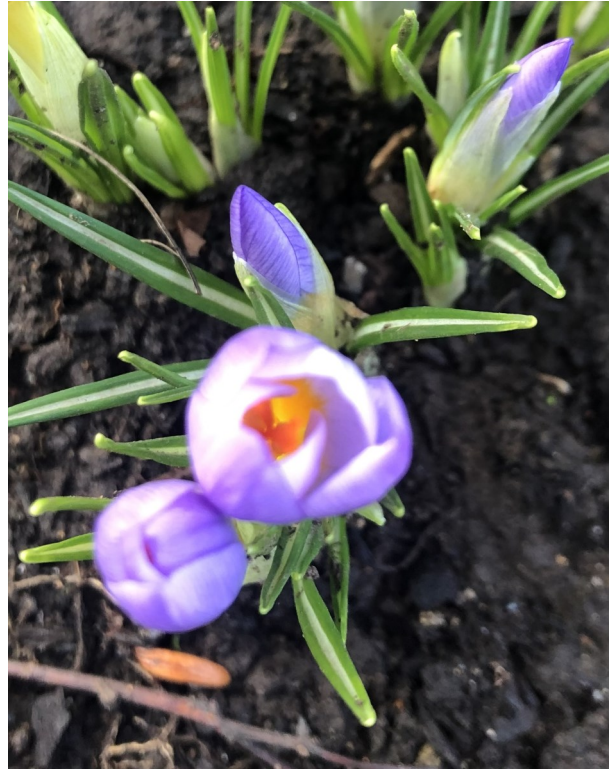
# ViewPoints

*By Jennifer Martin, Presbytery Moderator*

*Cultivating Spirit-led collaborative ministries  
that embody God's love in Jesus Christ.*

- Presbytery of the Cascades Mission Statement

In his book, *The Eternal Now*, theologian Paul Tillich points out that the English language “. . .has created the word ‘loneliness’ to express the pain of being alone. And it has created the word ‘solitude’ to express the glory of being alone.” I’ve been thinking about the difference between the two experiences of loneliness and solitude as we leave behind the pandemic phase of Covid-19 and figure out what it is to live in the endemic phase. Like many congregations, the past few years have included a steep learning curve in living out our faith long distance and online, followed by navigating ‘re-entry’ - a word which always calls to my mind the image of astronauts returning home in a flaming space capsule that lands in the ocean. A safe way to get back to some semblance of normal, but maybe not the most comforting ride. Navigating our current world feels about as unpredictable as having a seat in that capsule, hurling through space, bobbing around in the ocean, and getting used to gravity once more. We all know normal isn’t normal anymore, if it ever even really was a thing.



We may not know what normal is anymore, but do know most people are at least very weary, and many are grieving or hurting deeply in some form or fashion. I’m sure you have seen the same articles I have about this world after a pandemic. News stories calling for kindness, while describing how we as a society have been slow to connect and gather together, how many people are suffering from burnout and compassion fatigue, how the rates of isolation, depression, and general anxiety are on the rise for people of all ages. Loneliness became the norm for far too many, and for far too long. And that state of loneliness prepared the soil in which grew not only sadness and fear, but distrust. A distrust of ‘the other’ which we see lived out in our social and political landscape, and all too often in our church, too.

In the past, I have always appreciated the solitude the season of Lent offers. The way it invites us into more time of quiet, of meditation and prayer. But this year, following so much widespread loneliness, I find myself grateful not only for the solitude, but also for the ways new and renewed connections are multiplying. The Holy Spirit is at work all around. Our church groups are re-emerging and new ones forming giving opportunities to pray, play, and serve together. I see opportunities multiplying across our presbytery as well. There are online prayer groups, movie and book discussions, speakers and art shows at our congregations in which we can all participate. Some gatherings are online, some in person. Some are social, some educational, many worshipful and all connectational. It feels as though, with God’s help, we are mirroring the spring bulbs coming forth after a long, cold season. We just have to be willing to participate, to join together with folks we don’t know or haven’t seen for awhile.

Of course, we still have much work to do, individually and corporately, as we seek healing from the loneliness, fear and distrust that surrounds us. But through the prayerful solitude God offers during Lent and beyond, and the new ways our presbytery is living out our mission statement, I believe whatever God has in store for us, is more than we could ask for or imagine.

With relentless hope,

Jennifer

[Return to Index](#)



# News Briefs



**March Collaborative Conversation: March 20, Noon on Zoom - Becoming a Matthew 25 Congregation**  
Join our very own Revs Robin Garvin (Valley Community, Portland) and Tom Berry (Bethany, Grants Pass) as they are back from the Matthew 25 Summit recently held in Atlanta. This historic event was the first in-person gathering for people committed to and interested in learning more about Matthew 25. Is your church discerning a call to this movement? If you are and would like to learn more, we invite you to join us Wednesday, March 20 at noon on Zoom. Is your church already a Matthew 25 Congregation with wisdom and stories to share--join us! Register [here](#).

**Protect Against Scams:** Matt Gough, Cascades Presbytery's Media Technician gives useful tips on how you and your congregation can better protect yourself against digital scams and phishing attacks. Click [here](#) to read the whole article.

**March 10, 2024 is SDOP Sunday:** The Self-Development of People Sunday Resource and Yearbook is designed to help Presbyterians, congregations, and mid councils prepare for SDOP Sunday on March 10, and to learn more about SDOP all year. A sample sermon, hymns, liturgical materials, and stories about SDOP-funded community partners are available. Click [here](#) to learn more.

**Feb 14 – March 31, 2024 - One Great Hour of Sharing:** In a world of disaster, hunger, and oppression, millions of people lack access to sustainable food sources, clean water, sanitation, education, and opportunity. 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. Click [here](#) for more information.

**Assistance for ministers affected by severe winter weather:** We know that many of our communities, members and church facilities have sustained damage from the severe winter storm. Ministers of the PC(USA) may be eligible for financial assistance for expenses related to the recent severe winter weather we experienced in Oregon and Washington. If you have **any connection** to the **Board of Pensions** (you get a pension, you pay dues, you are enrolled in a benefit through your employer, etc.) you are eligible for up to \$5,000 in **Emergency Assistance** through a partnership of the presbytery with the Board of Pensions. The [grant form](#) can be submitted to [office@potc.life](mailto:office@potc.life). If you know of retired ministers or spouses of retired ministers who have severe weather-related needs, please let them know about this assistance. We don't always have contact information for ministers from other presbyteries who live within our bounds so any help you can provide to them, and us, is greatly appreciated.

## ~Transitions~

The Rev. Jennifer Ackerman is serving at **Multnomah, Portland**

The Rev. Chris Dela Cruz has transitioned from **Westminster, Portland**, to a local nonprofit

The Rev. Kelly Dickson started serving at **Hillsboro PC** on January 1, 2024

The Rev. Peter Blank started serving at **Plymouth, St. Helens** on January 1, 2024

[Return to Index](#)



*Westminster, Salem*

## Westminster, Salem: Discerning the Signs of the Times

*By Dennis Smith, Central Region Reporter*  
Sunday morning, February 4, 2024. Communion Sunday at **Westminster, Salem**. I wandered into the fellowship hall about 45 minutes before worship and was warmly greeted by the kitchen crew. They didn't know I was coming, but that seemed to make no difference.

"Why are you here?" I asked them.

The bell choir is playing in the service, they said, and they were preparing coffee and snacks for after practice. They invited me to dig in, and not to miss the home-made blueberry cobbler.

"But in the big picture," I clarified. "Why are you here at this church?"

It didn't take much to get them started.

"This is a place where people can have strong opinions, can disagree passionately – and so what? We love each other here. We're here because we need each other."

"I've been to other churches where the pastor badgers people to get them involved. But here people figure out their niche and are welcome. Everything from immigrant ministry to music to art. I'm involved in other community groups and that's OK too. It's not a competition."

"I'm relatively new to this community. I'm a musician and I've worked in and around churches all my life. When I moved here, I visited several churches. I came here once and stayed. It's the first church I've ever joined in my life."

Kelly Wadsworth, the pastor, gives us a heads up that not all the technology will be cooperating this morning. The live stream will be bare bones, but live. No words on screens. Some last-minute music substitutions required quick-thinking and cool heads by the worship team. They pulled it off without a hitch.

Kelly begins worship declaring that this community, this space, this table are open to all, and especially to all persons who have experienced any kind of exclusion. This is God's table, she insists. God welcomes us with extravagant grace and no human-devised barriers apply here.

Her sermon is on Mark 5:1-20. She begins by noting that power is our Presbyterian superpower. It does my Latin American heart good to hear a US pastor engage scripture thoughtfully on how power works in our world and then reminds us how Jesus proposes that it be used.

I had talked to Kelly earlier in the week. In a wide-ranging conversation, she described how she began her pastorate here in 2021, when Covid was still raging. On the one hand, she recalled, that was a tough time to begin a new call. On the other hand, it was a perfect time to accompany a community as they emerged from a time of crisis.

Westminster rose to the challenge and worked to discern how and where to focus their energies in this new moment. As they emerged from Covid-induced isolation, they had to reimagine longstanding



*Rev. Kelly Wadsworth preaches  
about power*

[Continued on page 7](#)

[Return to Index](#)



[Continued from page 6](#)

programs and their presence in the community. Not surprisingly, the energy for some programs just wasn't there. Some church members felt the need to take a lower profile, including a few stalwarts of the community. For stalwarts to move on can cause quite a stir, whether their decision was due to health concerns or changes in how they felt about church. But Westminster tried to address those changes with transparency and celebrate folks' freedom to experience their own faith journeys. Thankfully, other skilled and committed members are stepping up as the community discerns new challenges for ministry.

They learned, Kelly recalls, that they didn't have energy for things that don't matter now, for meetings that no longer have purpose, for things that really aren't speaking to the core of their life together. They learned that the nature of their witness might evolve, and that was OK. They learned that the scope and strategies of their community partners had also changed.

This willingness to discern the signs of the times, they learned, was integral to their walk as faithful witnesses to Christ. Far from intimidating, they find this process to be invigorating!

Being a church in the capital city, Westminster knows that part of their calling is to advocate for certain issues in the public square. A current focus is on gun violence, and how it destroys the lives of young men in Salem, both as victims and as perpetrators. Another is funding for public schools in a time of rising costs and lost revenues. Reduced revenues mean real cuts in services, especially to those sectors of the community that most need those services.

Kelly served as an Army chaplain for 10 years, including deployment to the Middle East. She is a committed peace and justice activist. Her military service taught her that – in today's deeply polarized political environment - if church members are going to bear public and prophetic witness on vital issues facing the community, they need to rehearse and become acclimated to a different register of life. She remembers that the early civil rights protesters spent hours in training before engaging in public protest. You can't just wing it! The times in which we live, she observes, require that level of thoughtful, disciplined engagement.

I gather my things and Kelly kindly but firmly showed me the way out. There are three college students – first-time visitors – sitting all alone at a table in the fellowship hall and she needs to meet them and make sure they feel welcome.



*Westminster, Salem youth do 2-3 mission trips a year*



## **There's a Place for You!**

The presbytery 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.

[Return to Index](#)

# First, Trout Lake “Trail Angels” Reach Out to Hikers

*By Pat Berger, Northeast Region Reporter*

The Pacific Coast Trail – have you ever hiked it? Likely, some of the folk at the **First, Trout Lake** haven’t hiked it, either, and yet: Trout Lake Presbyterian Church is very much a part of the hike for some who do!

Members of the church are known as Trail Angels to the hikers, and small wonder! Elder Doug Anderson started a ministry to hikers some years ago. Some members provide transportation for hikers between the Trail and the town. Between two and fourteen hikers at a time will come to spend a night or a day or two at the church, resting, restocking supplies in town, visiting with the people of the church who come by. Between 1500 and 2000 hikers, from all over the world, will stop by Trout Lake in a season! One summer, a hiker from Japan came through. Pastor Warren Williams’ wife had spent nine years in Japan, spoke Japanese – imagine that hiker’s surprise for the welcome he received! And Pastor Williams added that many people in the church would have similar stories to tell.

The church asks a donation from the hikers, in order to keep up with expenses. They don’t always break even, but it helps. One summer, they needed to redo their septic system, because of the number of campers using church facilities. Now, instead, there are porta-potties and hand-washing stations, a covered sitting area outside. Pastor Williams says that the congregation is a blessing to the hikers – and hikers are a blessing to the church! Some of the hikers attend worship services on Sundays, adding to the blessing.

Pastor Warren Williams has been at First, Trout Lake as Stated Supply pastor since September of 2022. His ordination is in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. He retired from Living Faith Church, in Racine, Wisconsin. When he retired, he and his wife moved to Trout Lake to live with their daughter. He first served at the Trout Lake church during Pastor Scott Crane’s sabbatical. When Pastor Crane moved to **First, Corvallis**, Pastor Williams who lives in town, knew and enjoyed the people at the church. The feeling was mutual and he became their Stated Supply pastor.

The church also hosts an AA group in their social hall. Not unlike many churches these days, they are thinking about other ways in which their church building might be used and be a gift in their community.

Two members of the AA group each gave gifts of \$5,000 for renovation purposes, causing the congregation to ponder possible directions for future ministry.

One area they are investigating is senior ministry. There is a group in Trout Lake called “Trout Lake Cares” (TLC), which has done a senior meal program in the past, and some are eager to see that happen again. Maybe program plans could go in that direction. “Trout Lake,” says Pastor Williams, “is a lovely place to live, but remote and programs for seniors and senior housing is hard to access.” All of these things are being considered as the Trout Lake church people figure out how God is directing them to best use their facility.

Lately, a few members have begun to bring their dogs with them to worship. Pastor Williams isn’t sure that this is a movement of the Spirit, but for now it is definitely a part of the Trout Lake Presbyterian worship experience. All of this sounds like the Spirit is moving in Trout Lake: best wishes for your ministry there!



[Return to Index](#)



# South Region Reflections

*By Mike Hubbard, South Region Reporter*

As the Omnibus enters a new season of communication ministry to the Presbytery of the Cascades, this writer pauses to reflect on 13-plus years of seeking out and reporting on *Positively Presbyterian* news in the South Region. Much has changed. In those days, a column typically began with a trip to the South Region Office, located upstairs in Phoenix, Oregon's historic **First, Phoenix**. There, a bundle of hard copy church newsletters was waiting. That bundle would be searched and highlighted until a theme emerged. The more churches included in the story the better. Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, and Pentecost were rich in material, Ordinary Time, not so much. Creating a story was a cluttered and messy affair. Yes, much has changed.

In the opening decade of the new millennium, there were 26 Presbyterian Church (USA) congregations in the south. Today, there are 16. A number of those became too small to continue as worshipping communities and closed. A larger number departed to other Presbyterian denominations over doctrinal differences. In the case of **Community, Tulelake** and **Malin Community**, the two congregations united and are now counted as one.

Of the remaining 16, eight have called and installed pastors, two are being served by Commissioned Ruling Elders, one utilizes long term pulpit supply, and five have no regular pastoral care. These figures do not put the South Region in a unique position. In fact, our installed pastor to church ratio is slightly better than that of the presbytery as a whole. Nor do those numbers mean that ministry is lacking in our churches. Across the region, Deacons and Ruling Elders are serving their congregations with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love—with a renewed emphasis on “imagination.”

What hasn't changed is the size of the region. At a bit over 23,000 square miles the South Region is huge. Or to use a cliché comparison, nearly 20 times the size of Rhode Island. The distance from **United, Reedsport** in the far northwest corner, to **Lakeview Presbyterian** in the southeast, is over 200 miles; the way the crow flies. If the crow is driving, it's just under 300. From coastal sand dunes to the edge of the Great Basin, the area includes two mountain ranges, rainforests, snowcapped mountains, sage brush, plains and three major river systems. Our region is home to the Medford metropolitan area with a population of 223,000 and vast rural areas with less than one person per square mile.

Another thing that hasn't changed is the faithfulness of the people. There isn't a church in the region that has more members than they had in 2004. Most have far fewer. Those who remain are now 20 years older, but faithful still. In addition to church leadership, our members can still be counted on to volunteer in food banks, community kitchens, sack lunch programs, meal delivery, and just about any other venture that makes life a little easier for their neighbor. They serve in the councils of the church and various civic boards and commissions. They put hands and feet to the two Great Commandments. As the other regions pray for us, we will be praying for you.

Faithful in the South,  
Mike Hubbard



shutterstock.com • 1940282308

*South Region Images*  
*Table Rock*

[Return to Index](#)

# Waldensians Celebrate 850 Years of Faithful Witness

By Dennis Smith

*(Editor's Note: Our newest reporter is a relatively new member of our presbytery. I learned that he has spent significant time in South America as part of Presbyterian World Mission. Some of that time was with the Waldensian Society – a PCUSA mission partner. Intrigued, I asked him to share information about his time there and a bit more about the Waldensian Society.)*

The hot, dry plains of La Pampa, Argentina are a long way from Oregon. It is summer in the Southern Hemisphere. Drought afflicts the region and an incessant north wind shrivels all but the heartiest crops.

As a member of the Board of the American Waldensian Society, I traveled to La Pampa at the end of January to participate in the Synod of an historic PC(USA) mission partner, the Evangelical Waldensian Church of Río de la Plata (IEVRP).

Remember Waldo? He was a contemporary of St. Francis of Assisi and in 1174 began a lay movement in Lyon, France, dedicated to preaching God's Word, practicing a simple lifestyle, and interpreting the Bible in their own language and without the intermediation of the Roman Catholic hierarchy. They were fiercely persecuted by the authorities and had to seek refuge in the remote mountains between France and Italy.

When Calvin came on the scene, the Waldensians came to identify with the Reformed tradition.

Waldensians emigrated to Uruguay in South America in the second half of the 19th century. Today, the IEVRP is a small but valued mission partner of the PC(USA) that is deeply committed to ecumenical relationships, social justice, and strong lay leadership.

This year, Waldensians throughout the world are celebrating 850 years of their lay-led movement.

As local church members share stories of the early days of this Waldensian community, I am reminded how settlers of European descent came to the Great Plains or Pacific Northwest in the US. The first Waldensians immigrated to Argentina from Uruguay in 1901. As part of the same immigrant wave, a group of Volga Germans and another of Jewish immigrants set up nearby colonies. In each community, it fell to the religious institutions to establish schools and become centers of local culture.

In the 1880s the Argentine military, seeking to expand their national territory and access natural resources, invaded this region then inhabited by the Ranquel, Mapuche, and Tehuelche peoples. This ruthless campaign, known as "The Conquest of the Desert", forced indigenous communities to migrate south and west, with many reduced to forced labor. In less than two decades, the Argentine government had opened the region to European immigrants.

Settlers turned these vast grasslands into a breadbasket to the world. Wheat and cattle from La Pampa helped make Argentina a world economic power early in the new century. The Waldensian community prospered and expanded.

This Synod focused on several challenges: The IEVRP understands that they are preparing for a future without ordained clergy. Spread over two countries, the denomination now has 25 worshipping communities, only 9 ordained ministers, and fewer than 10,000 members. Last year the Synod celebrated a lay leadership program called "Be Strong in Grace" that is empowering almost 100 lay leaders to assume pastoral responsibilities in local communities. This year the Synod learned that this program has come under the umbrella of the Ecumenical Network for Theological Education (REET), the on-line seminary of which the IEVRP is a founding member.



*Local authorities in Jacinto Arauz, La Pampa join IEVRP moderator Marcelo Nicolau in celebrating 850 years of Waldensian history.*

[Continue on page 12](#)

[Return to Index](#)

# BIRDS Changes Name to Dalit Empowerment – Moves to 501(c)(3) Non-Profit Status

By Barbara Campbell

Dear friends,

First, let me give my deepest apologies for not writing recently to update you on the marvelous happenings at BIRDS, especially when I have been so thankful for your compassion and support all these years. BIRDS has survived and thrived through the years of Covid 19 even though things were as bad at BIRDS as anywhere, on top of the normal monsoon floods, droughts, and other struggles.

The Hindu controlled Indian government went from shutting down NGO microfinance programs in 2010 to seizing the bank accounts of many NGOs who received funds from international Christian organizations beginning in 2019. This has caused us to finally set up a 501(c)(3), non-profit from which we can safely wire funds to BIRDS. The IRS legal restrictions for US non-profits supporting international charities require us to support more than a single organization. Thus, the name of our non-profit had to be broad. "Dalit Empowerment" was our selected name. Mr. Paul will help us find one or two other small charities that work in their area that we can send donations to.

Dalit Empowerment 501(c)(3) has been busy taking non-profit trainings, filling out forms, recruiting a Board of Directors, and is now setting up a new website which will share updated news more efficiently and provide a link to donate more easily.

News on the ground from BIRDS is even more exciting. Our PreK-10th class English medium school has an enrollment in 2023-24 of over 800 students. All of those students receive free lunches. Many of the students receive free tuition and the others pay a more affordable tuition than they would elsewhere. Our teachers are so dedicated to BIRDS that they are willing to work for less than what the expensive school teachers get.

Our boarding homes have expanded, due to increased needs following Covid deaths, to over 200 boys and over 150 girls. Those students are housed in two boarding homes as well as overflow rooms in the hostel. A large covered shelter was built for cooking and feeding those onsite students.

In the past couple of years, thanks to donors like you, BIRDS has been able to start a Junior Technical College offering certificates in Community Health Work, Small Business, Auto and Motorbike Maintenance, and Agriculture.

BIRDS also continues to operate their on-site Health Center and to work with programs for destitute women and trainings for farmers. Natural seed banks have been started in many villages. Sustainable small plot farming for families have been taught and supported.

We have continued to travel to BIRDS to support and encourage their work and see some incredible sites in India but have not been able to do that since the beginning of Covid in 2020-2023. We are planning a trip either in Nov 2024 or Jan 2025. If you are interested in joining us just let me know.

As soon as our new website is set up, you will receive an email announcing the website and giving any necessary information you might need to use the website.

BIRDS has continued to receive very generous grants each year from the Doris and Bill Scharpf Foundation. Due to the declining stock market, for 2024, we will only receive a grant of \$240,000 from that foundation which is about half of what BIRDS needs to run their core programs.

The foundation may wait to disperse our grant funds until our final IRS tax exemption is approved, which could take up to 7 more months. (Our application has been in for 2 months.). We are asking them to send the funds to the **United, Albany** as they have before, but don't have their answer at this time. Even if we can qualify for expediting of our application with the IRS, we wouldn't have official tax exemption for at least a couple more months.



*Dalit Women Turn to Art As a Medium for Healing*

[Continue on page 12](#)

[Return to Index](#)



[Continued from page 11](#)

Funds are already running short at BIRDS. With food prices up they struggle to provide school lunches and meals at Boarding Homes. Salaries are often held back until funds are available. Gas for school buses is hard to cover. BIRDS and other Dalit charities in India need extra support right now. As we have seen in the past, every small donation can make an incredible difference. We have IRS-approved letters of temporary tax exemption that we will send to donors for use with their taxes this year.

Any donation, in the meantime, can be sent to the "United Presbyterian Church of Albany, 330 SW Fifth Ave., Albany, Oregon, 97321." Please note on checks that they are for "Dalit Empowerment." We will let you know when our own PO Box is available and the link for donations is online.

We wanted you to have as much information on our status as possible. If you have ANY questions or comments, please feel free to email me at [bjcam33@gmail.com](mailto:bjcam33@gmail.com) or call me at 503-504-3340.

On behalf of the thousands of Dalit families you are supporting in South Central India, and the Dalit Empowerment Board of Directors, thank you all for your love and generous support through the years.

Grace and Peace, Chair, Barbara Campbell, Portland, Treasurer, Greg Anable, Albany, Secretaries, Kevin and Marta Decoster, Albany, and Webmaster, Steve Parker, Dundee.



[Continued from page 10](#)

commission a mural celebrating 850 years of Waldensian history. The artist worked on a giant canvas in front of the local church while commissioners deliberated within. Filled with images from local culture, the mural was presented to the community the evening of Saturday, Jan 27. Hundreds of residents, including regional and local authorities, enthusiastically received the painting.

A new program called "The *Requinto* Team" seeks to increase youth and adolescent participation in local congregations and assure that their unique contributions as young people are celebrated by each community. (A *requinto* is a four-stringed guitar typical of the region, as well as a popular expression meaning roughly "Let's do it!"). The IEVRP recruited a team of five skilled and enthusiastic young people to lead this project. They are charged with producing measurable results in the coming year.

Closing worship on Sunday morning, January 28, included an offering processional of bread, wine, a candle, and a Bible. The altar also bore elements unique to the Río de la Plata: a requinto, a poncho, and a gourd of mate, the ever-present herbal tea of the region.



*Candidate for Ministry  
Alfredo Servetti baptizes the  
newest member of the IEVRP*



*Florencia Árias, Emanuel Hernández,  
and Myriam Sappé form part of  
"The Requinto Team"*

Congregants were invited to add additional symbols to the altar. One offered a plate, carved of local Caldén wood, declaring that this table was open, and that food was to be shared with all. Another offered a pitcher of water in a time of draught. One offered broken eyeglasses, remembering how much Waldensians value education and culture, and that his grandmother had only studied through the second grade. Someone else offered a paint brush, noting that it leaves a mark not only on the canvas but also on the painter, mixing colors and textures with abandon and creating the beauty of diversity.

Finally, closing worship included the baptism of a baby from the local congregation. Waldensians in the Río de la Plata region, it was clear, are here for the long haul.

[Return to Index](#)



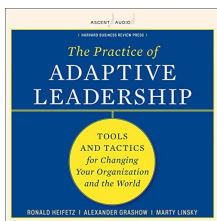
## Resources help Ministry and Mission



DISABILITY INCLUSION TOOLKIT

### ***Disability Inclusion Toolkit: Faith and Disability - A Practical Guide for Church Leaders***

Roberta Schlechter was introduced to this link at an online APCE workshop on inclusion of people with disabilities. She felt it would be a good resource for our congregations. After checking it out, I also agree. Lots of material to help congregational leadership find ways to welcome and include differently-abled folks. Click [here](#) to explore the website.



### ***The Practice of Adaptive Leadership: Tools and Tactics for Changing Your Organization and the World*** by Ronald A. Heifetz, et. al.

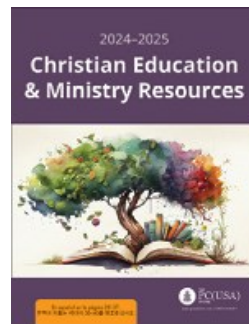
Roberta also sent a recommendation for this resource. She noted that “John Roberto says this is the best resource on adaptive leadership.”

When change requires you to challenge people's familiar reality, it can be difficult, dangerous work. Whatever the context - whether in the private or the public sector - many will feel threatened as you push through major changes. But as a leader, you need to find a way to make it work.

Ron Heifetz first defined this problem with his distinctive theory of adaptive leadership in *Leadership Without Easy Answers*. In a second book, *Leadership on the Line*, Heifetz and coauthor Marty Linsky highlighted the individual and organizational dangers of leading through deep change in business, politics, and community life. Now, Heifetz, Linsky, and co-author Alexander Grashow are taking the next step: *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership* is a hands-on, practical guide containing stories, tools, and cases to help you develop your skills

as an adaptive leader, able to take people outside their comfort zones and assess and address the toughest challenges.

The authors have decades of experience helping people and organizations create cultures of adaptive leadership. In today's rapidly changing world, *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership* can be your handbook to meeting the demands of leadership in the midst of complexity. Click [here](#) for more information.



### ***2024-2025 Christian Educational and Ministry Resources*** through PC (USA) Store.

A digital, interactive version of this catalog is available on PC(USA) Store website. Click [here](#) to explore both this resource and the many other curriculum materials produced by the denomination.



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)

[Return to Index](#)



**Friday, March 1**

[John R. Maynard](#), ordained this day in 1981

[Oak Hills Presbyterian Church - Milwaukie](#) - chartered this day, 1963

**Sunday, March 3**

[Sherry Johnston](#), granted Honorably Retired status this month in 1996

**Monday, March 4**

[Glenn C. Edwards](#), ordained this day in 1990, serving as pastor of [Peace Presbyterian](#), Eugene

**Tuesday, March 5**

[Charles Webster](#), Honorably Retired, ordained this day in 1972

**Wednesday, March 6**

[Brian Marsh](#), installed as pastor of Moreland Presbyterian Church, Portland, this day in 2016

**Thursday, March 7**

[Louis Nieuwenhuizen](#), ordained this month in 1998

**Friday, March 8**

[Susan A. Graham](#), ordained this day in 2015, serving at [Lake Grove PC](#), Lake Oswego

**Saturday, March 9**

[William E. Taylor](#), granted Honorably Retired status this month in 2006

**Sunday, March 10**

[Bobbi Neason](#), Honorably Retired and serving on COM-South Region

**Monday, March 11**

[David C. Hunter](#), Honorably Retired

**Tuesday, March 12**

[Sungmin Song](#), Pastor at [Vancouver Korean PC](#)

**Wednesday, March 13**

[Joyce Emery](#), Pastor at [East Woods PC](#) began service this day in 2023

**Thursday, March 14**

[Bill Eaton](#), granted Honorably Retired status this day in 2014

**Friday, March 15**

[Phil Brown](#), ordained in 2008 by Greater Atlanta Presbytery

**Saturday, March 16**

[Donald M. Mihaloew](#), granted Honorably Retired status this month in 2005

**Sunday, March 17**

[Sarah Lewis](#), ordained this day in 2002, serving as pastor of [Piedmont United P.C.](#), Portland

**Monday, March 18**

[First Presbyterian Church - Newberg](#) - chartered this day, 1890

[Milwaukie Presbyterian Church](#) - chartered this day, 1951

[Return to Index](#)



**Tuesday, March 19**

[Robert C. Groves](#), granted Honorably Retired status this month in 1990

**Thursday, March 21**

[St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church](#), Portland - chartered this day in 1954

**Friday, March 22**

[Robert O. Ellerby](#), granted Honorably Retired status this day in 2012

**Saturday, March 23**

[Presbyterian Women of the Presbytery of the Cascades](#) - Lynne Martin, Moderator

**Sunday, March 24**

[Michael A. Pyburn](#), granted Honorably Retired status this month, 2017

**Monday, March 25**

[Dan Fowler](#), installed as Pastor of First Presbyterian Church Ashland, this day in 2017

**Tuesday, March 26**

[Steven H. Koski](#), installed as pastor at First Presbyterian Church, Bend, this day in 2006

**Wednesday, March 27**

[Benjamin F. Dake](#), ordained this day in 1977, now Pastor Emeritus, Honorably Retired

**Thursday, March 28**

[First Presbyterian Church, Lebanon](#) - chartered this day in 1881

**Friday, March 29**

[First Presbyterian Church, Medford](#) - chartered this day in 1885

**Sunday, March 31**

[Michael Gillespie](#), granted Honorably Retired status this month in 2018

**Monday, April 1**

[David W. Allison](#), granted Honorably Retired status this day, 2016

**Tuesday, April 2**

[Suzan Ireland](#), granted Honorably Retired status this month, 2012

**Wednesday, April 3**

[James Erixson](#), granted Honorably Retired status this month, 2012

**Thursday, April 4**

[Donald Caughey](#), granted Honorably Retired status this day, 2015

**Friday, April 5**

[Michael Wilson](#), installed at Prineville PC, this day, 2014, now Honorably Retired

**Saturday, April 6**

[Community Presbyterian Church, Waldport](#) -- chartered this month, 1901

**Sunday, April 7**

[Leonard Sponaule](#) serving at Reedville, Aloha as Interim

**Monday, April 8**

[Sung Man Kim](#), ordained this day, 1992 and now retired

**Tuesday, April 9**

[Joyce DeGraaff](#), granted Honorably Retired status this month, 2011

**Wednesday, April 10**

[Todd Martin](#), granted Honorably Retired status this day, 2001

[Return to Index](#)

**Thursday, April 11**

[Clark Scalera](#) -- Advocate for Congregations and Clergy, Presbytery of the Cascades

**Friday, April 12**

[Benjamin Paroulek](#), granted Honorably Retired status this month, 2017

**Saturday, April 13**

Pray for our committee members.

**Sunday, April 14**

[Maggie Lewis](#) serving as Campus Minister at the Koinonia Center in Eugene on the University of Oregon campus

**Monday, April 15**

[Presbyterian Church of the Siuslaw, Florence](#) -- chartered this day, 1984

**Tuesday, April 16**

[James Peterson](#), granted Honorably Retired status this day, 1999

**Wednesday, April 17**

[Linda Pflugfelder](#), granted Honorably Retired status this month, 2012

**Thursday, April 18**

[First Presbyterian Church, Vancouver](#) -- chartered this day, 1882

**Friday, April 19**

[Brian Craker](#), our Transitional Executive Presbyter, ordained this day, 2009

[Ian Doescher](#), ordained this day, 2009

**Saturday, April 20**

[Thomas Nolen](#), ordained this day, 1980, hospice chaplain at Kaiser Permanente Hospital

**Sunday, April 21**

[Hope Korean Presbyterian Church, Portland](#) -- chartered this day, 2002

**Monday, April 22**

[John Rodgers](#), granted Honorably Retired status this day, 2010

**Tuesday, April 23**

[Andrew Lindahl](#), granted HR status this month, 2019

**Wednesday, April 24**

[Nominating Committee](#) , Presbytery of the Cascades -- Jeff Foxx, Chair, and members

**Thursday, April 25**

[Kennan "Ken" Smith](#), granted Honorably Retired status this month, 1999

**Friday, April 26**

[Alan Guffey](#), ordained this day, 1992

**Saturday, April 27**

[Young Han Hyun](#), installed as Pastor, Korean Presbyterian Church, Corvallis, this day, 2014

**Sunday, April 28**

[John Mahon](#), granted Honorably Retired status this month, 2014

**Monday, April 29**

[James McDonald](#), granted Honorably Retired status this day, 1997

**Tuesday, April 30**

[Beverly Hovenkamp](#), ordained this day in 1989

[Return to Index](#)