

The Messenger

Orchard Covenant Church
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THE PASTOR'S PAGE

“Step back and take a long view of the Kingdom”

With our study of Old Testament prophets this fall we can also look at today's world and discern the same destructive sins in our own time as in the 6th - 8th centuries BC. The Bible is clear that God wants God's people to be part of the promised healing and restoration, doing all we can to put God first, eliminate evil and practice good, in the name of Jesus. But the number of troubling issues in our global society can be overwhelming, and while we must continue to grow and deepen our courage and competence in responding biblically, I want to encourage us - the OCC family - that we already do several things that address justice and equality in Jesus' name. I believe God is pleased with our progress, even as there is always more to learn.

The OT prophets' beautiful and hopeful passages of healing and restoration look years into the future. Deep problems do not go away quickly, and the best thing we can do to go the distance is to be authentic and imperfect growing disciples of Christ in our life together of service to Christ.

I appreciate the following writing by the new Catholic saint, the late Archbishop of El Salvador Oscar Romero, who was assassinated in 1980, one day after he spoke critically of his country and church, over massive injustices towards the poor. Romero suggests that humility, perspective, and a “sacred pace” is needed, as we serve God's great purposes in the world:

"It helps, now and then, to step back and take a long view.

The kingdom is not only beyond our efforts, it is even beyond our vision.

We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work.

Nothing we do is complete, which is a way of saying that the Kingdom always lies beyond us.

No statement says all that could be said.

No prayer fully expresses our faith.

No confession brings perfection.

No pastoral visit brings wholeness.

No program accomplishes the Church's mission.

No set of goals and objectives includes everything.

This is what we are about.

We plant the seeds that one day will grow.

We water seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise.

We lay foundations that will need further development.

We provide yeast that produces far beyond our capabilities.

We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that.

This enables us to do something, and to do it very well.

It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way,

an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest.

We may never see the end results, but that is the difference between the master builder and the worker.

We are workers, not master builders; ministers, not messiahs.

We are prophets of a future not our own." (By St. Oscar Romero).

See you in church! Pastor Nancy Ebner

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

November 1 - Sandra Brennan
November 3 - Rae Peterson
November 3 - David Wapner
November 10 - Patty Forbes
November 22 - Bob Garelli
November 22 - Rich Forbes
November 25 - Joshua Pringle
November 29 - Don Olson

ANNIVERSARIES

November 13 - Lee and Mary Lou Deshais

[If your date is wrong or your name has been omitted, please contact the editor.]

DATES TO REMEMBER

November 3 Council Mini-Retreat
November 4 Daylight Saving Time Ends
November 4 After church, volunteers needed to help re-finish Community Hall floor
November 5 Council Prayer and Meeting
November 10 Saturday, Evangelism and Outreach team meeting, 9:30 a.m.
November 17 Men's Breakfast
November 21 Thanksgiving Service, at ECC-Springfield 7:00 p.m.
November 22 Thanksgiving

Immerse Book Study Groups

Sunday evenings, 6:30
Tuesday evenings, 6:30
Wednesday afternoons, 1:00
until week of November 11



GIVE THANKS TO GOD!

Join with our sister church, ECC-Springfield, on Tuesday, **November 20** at 7:00 p.m. for our annual Thanksgiving Service. It will be at ECC this year. Let's enjoy fellowship, pie and thank God for our many, many blessings!

The Men's Connection

Saturday, November 17
Time: 8:30 to 9:30 am
at the Orchard Covenant Church
Breakfast will be served.

Help Wanted!

Our after-church **Munch and Mingle Ministry** could use a few more regular food providers. Can you help? Please contact our kitchen coordinator, Dale Jennings, 413 885 2044



DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME ENDS ON NOVEMBER 4

Remember to turn your clocks **BACK** one hour before bed Saturday, November 3!

THE GOSPEL OF MARK

Mike Foster

Adults: Sunday mornings at 9:45, we are studying the Gospel of Mark together, working from both English and Swahili translations. We take our time, asking each other questions and offering our understandings. Insights from our various cultural backgrounds enrich our study in ways that could not happen in an English-only study. We hope you can join us to see Jesus again: moving towards the cross, healing the sick in mind and body, teaching his sometimes thick-headed disciples, dealing with his enemies, blessing children...



PRAYER TIME

Each Sunday morning at **9:15 am**, Pastor Nancy meets any and all people in our church family who would like to pray for the day, for the church school, for the worship service, or for any other concern. Even world peace! Come and be part of the team.



FOOD

DON'T FORGET OUR HUNGRY NEIGHBORS! THE COMMUNITY SURVIVAL CENTER NEEDS NON-PERISHABLE FOOD ITEMS, AND/OR CASH DONATIONS. Food and monetary donations are **DOWN** over all this year, so that the CSC Food Pantry is not able, for the first time, to offer holiday meals to Food Clients. There will be no turkey dinners for Thanksgiving or for Christmas. Please think of our neighbors when you shop, and give generously. **We will have a food shower for the Survival Center on Nov. 11.**

WORSHIP AND MUSIC

Dave Cioch

The Worship and Music Committee met to discuss one focus we have which is to encourage and guide youth towards involvement and leadership in worship. Some ways we're trying are through scripture readers, occasional worship leading, ushering, and music participation.

Another focus is to emphasize the importance of a reflective time prior to our Sunday service. One way is to have the choir seated and quietly preparing our hearts for a few minutes before worship. As an added bonus, we'll get to enjoy Ben's delightful prelude playing.

Finally we talked about continuing efforts to keep our glorious organ maintained and functioning. It seems to like winter about as much as many of us do. Any comments or suggestions are always welcome.

The season of THANKS – and GIVING is here!

Pastor Nancy

Let us “count our blessings” with grateful hearts. As you consider your financial commitment, I have four questions for you:

1. What do you love about our church?
2. Who do you love at our church that made a difference in your life?
3. What is your greatest dream for our church?
4. In light of your responses, what is your financial commitment to OCC for 2019?

Summer Musical!!

Our church has submitted a proposal to the Mass Arts Council, for funding to support a summer musical in 2019. The musical is entitled “Everyday Heroes”. Children in grades K-8 are invited to participate—including children from the community around the church. Participants will prepare two nights a week during the month of July, with a performance the first week of August. Both Ben Tibbetts and June Foster have committed to be a part of this exciting adventure, but they cannot pull this off alone! We will need helpers of all kinds, particularly a director, set designer(s)/builder (s), and dialogue coaches. Please pray about whether you can be involved, whether you are an adult or a teen. We expect to use young church musicians as well—guitar and drums specifically. If you are interested, or want more information, you can talk to Ben, to June, to Mike Foster or to Pastor Nancy. As many of you know, we have done this sort of thing before, and it has always had great value to us and to the community.



OCC Fine Arts Night

Mark **March 30** on your calendar!! It is to be a night of visual art and performance. We will enjoy performance of instrumental and vocal music, dance and visual art. Ben and Javier will participate, of course, but we hope others of you will want to participate. If you want to share your vocal, instrumental or dancing talents with us on that occasion, please inform June Foster in detail of your plans. We want to finalize performance participants by January 20, 2019. If you have drawings or paintings that you would like to display, please let Dave Cioch know that, so we have adequate space for their display. We hope many of you will join us in this celebration of God's good gifts of art to His people!

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Pray for the children in our church school, especially those in the Confirmation class.

Praise that the church's financial needs are being met with generosity and abundance.

Pray for all our church families that are experiencing suffering and loss, especially the families whose loved ones are experiencing ill health.

Pray for an end to racism in our land and in our neighborhood.

PRAYER FOR THANKSGIVING

Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands.

Serve the LORD with gladness:

come before his presence with singing.

Know ye that the LORD he is God:

it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves;

we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

Enter into his gates with thanksgiving,

and into his courts with praise:

be thankful unto him, and bless his name.

For the LORD is good;

his mercy is everlasting;

and his truth endureth to all generations.

– *Psalm 100*