



Association of
the Churches
of God
in Oregon and
Southwest
Washington



Meet Bob:
A Word from our
Interim District Pastor
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CONTACT

February 2017

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E-Contact

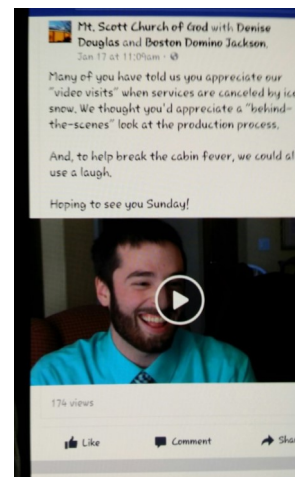
Snow and Ice Impact Area Churches

An unusual amount of snowfall and freezing rain resulted in cancellation of Sunday worship services throughout the Portland area in January. Pastors turned to online sermons presentations, Facebook postings, and electronic communication with parishioners as inclement weather and dangerous roadways posed safety risks.

After multiple cancellations, Pastor Denise Douglas and interim youth director Boston Jackson, along with their team at Mt. Scott Church of God in Portland, provided a bit of comic relief with a Facebook post of out-takes.

While inconvenient, and reaping havoc with schedules, the excessive-for-the-area snowfall reminded many of the importance of safety and of our gratefulness for "in person" fellowship and corporate worship.

Winter is far from over, and flood watches follow ice storms. Take opportunity to encourage one another, to practice safety measures, and to keep an attitude of gratitude, faithfully supporting your local church and worshiping individually and corporately as able.



How-To Features Foltz on Faithfulness

By Pastor Julie Jackson, Associate Pastor of Children's Ministries, Holladay Park COG

"Oh may all who come behind us find us faithful. May the fire of our devotion light their way. May the footprints that we leave lead them to believe, and the lives we live inspire them to obey. Oh may all who come behind us find us faithful."

-Steve Green

Our theme for the January 28, 2017 How-To Convention was *Great is Your Faithfulness*. It is the testimony of Jesus-Following Christians that God has been our Faithful God since Day One (see Genesis 1). There is so much to say and so little space to share. I must brag that the volunteers of Holladay Park Church of God did a remarkable job helping, preparing, setting and cleaning up, and so on. Pastor Martin Shrout was most helpful and supporting. The music was incredible—especially with the fitting song "Find Us Faithful."

Dr. Lou (Foltz) was the best, as usual. He was our cheerleader for the day especially

for me. He spoke on "Faith Works" i.e., is successful; is not idle; is a place where we gather to give from our calling.

Thank you to all our presenters who spent time preparing and adjusting their schedules so that they could share the day with all of us who attended. One phenomenal part of our day was Jay Tepper. He did an extraordinary job of preparing and serving our food, the lovely décor, and assuring that everything was yummy. Jay spent hours and hours preparing with the assistance of Doug and Danette Beisley (Oak Park ChoG). Thank you, Serena Cline, for representing WPC and your part of WPC supporting us with the lunch costs. Thank you Warner Pacific College (Dr. Andrea Cook).

I have been serving on the How-To Convention for many years. I was serving when Lorin and Lois Myers were our

(Continued on page 2)

How-To Features Foltz on Faith and Faithfulness

(Continued from page 1)

Directors of the How-To (which makes this at least ten years for me on the Commission, now Task Force). I want to express my appreciation to Tanya Pedrick, Brochure Preparer; Valerie Borst and Sally Ranton, District Office; and team members: Nancy Brown, Judi Howland, as well as Sandra Salisbury. I love these ladies and am so grateful for them. This is my final How-To Convention to direct and coordinate. I've grown immensely. I pray that someone will step up to the plates to pursue this important education avenue for the church. I am available to mentor someone to plan and lead.

Like the words of the above song, I've been faithful, and my prayer is that someone will see the importance of this well-needed annual event that the How-To provides for continued education within the Church of God. Praise God. May those who come behind us, "Find Us Faithful."

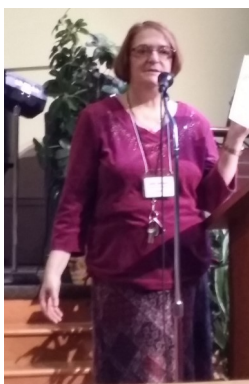


Sandra Salisbury, on How to make your Vision stick.



BJ: "Cheese!"

Below: Serena Cline updates attendees on campus happenings during lunch, provided by Warner Pacific College.



Rev. Julie Jackson

The *Great is Your Faithfulness* day was dedicated to Rev. Peter Howland (7/4/1985-12/25/2016), as those who come behind Peter will know he was faithful and a selfless man of God. Amen.

Editor's Note:

A big "Thank you" to Pastor Julie Jackson and team for the years of leadership in Christian Education, and faithful service to the Oregon and SW Washington Association of the Churches of God.



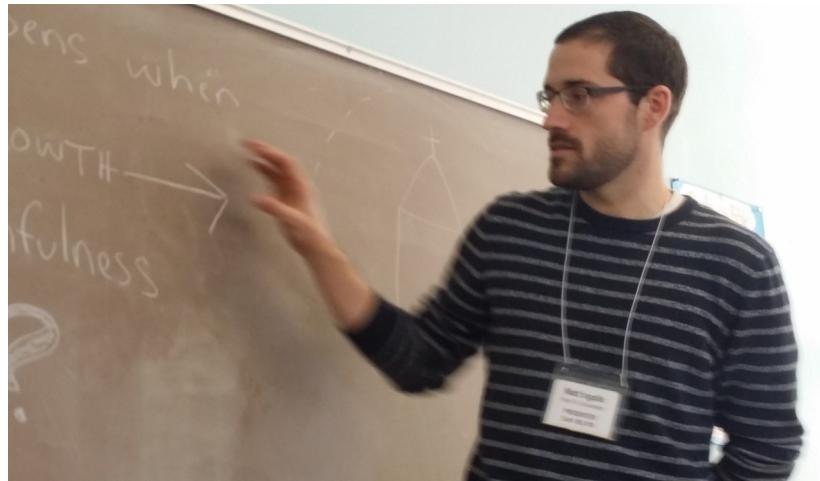
Pastor Jenny Elliot speaks of supporting and affirming women in ministry.

Right: Rev. Charles Hunter addresses the issue of How the church should respond to Black Lives Matter.

How-To Convention Highlights



Dr. David New, author, speaker, interim pastor, and instrumental in beginning the traditional District How-To Convention, presents succession planning and transition tools. A wealth of information is available through Dr. New (Springfield COG).



Newberg Pastor Matt Ingalls shares his heart for faithfulness over numbers (asking "What happens if growth increases and faithfulness decreases?").

His "Grace First" session focused on Christ's great love for us while we were still sinners.



Above: CE Task Force/How-To-Team members Nancy Brown, Judi Howland, Julie Jackson and Sandra Salisbury



Missionaries Bobby and Jenny (Dunbar) Mihsill of Côte d'Ivoire (parents of Superman-son, Moore) share their story.

Below: Jim O'Bold and Ryan Harter of Servant Solutions, Anderson, IN, were available for pastoral financial planning.



Leaders explore the joy of Scripture and the use of Lectionary

How-To Convention Highlights



At the end-of-day wrap-up session, Dr. Lou Foltz (center) encouraged attendees to share highlights in groups of three or four, with spokespersons from each group summarizing the commonalities, giving everyone opportunity for review and information sharing.

Woodburn Congregation Hosts Chili Cook-Off

Hoodview Church of God in Woodburn, in partnership with the French Prairie Kiwanis Club, hosted the second annual "Woodburn Cook-Off & Chili Feed" this past month.



Eight teams from the community showed off their culinary skills in friendly chili making competition, raising over \$1,500 for the A.W.A.R.E. Food Bank and Love INC (Love in the Name of Christ) of North Marion County. Attendees were able to sample each of the entries and vote for their favorite chili. In addition, a judging team of five community leaders, including the mayor, city administrator and police chief, rated the chili in a blind-taste test and awarded winners in different categories, including service clubs, schools, and First Responders. The event also featured an "all-you-can-eat" chili feed.



The day before the Cook-Off, Hoodview Church hosted the Woodburn Area Chamber of Commerce weekly "Greeters" meeting, which featured a presentation by the French Prairie Kiwanis Club President (and Hoodview Associate Pastor) Steve Kufeldt. The week after the Cook-Off, the church provided lunch for the third consecutive year for the teachers and staff of nearby Washington Elementary School during a teacher work-day. The congregation also provided gift bags for the teachers.



In addition to the lunch, the church is also in its third year of providing volunteers for that school's SMART program (Start Making a Reader Today). These events are examples of how Hoodview Church is seeking to build bridges in the community as it lives out its mission to "make disciples."

Courtesy: Pastor Steve Kufeldt

New Book Explores, Unpacks R-Rated Bible Stories

By Carl Stagner, ChoG Ministries

Though both children and adults love the Church of God classic, *Egermeier's Bible Story Book* was clearly written with children in mind. By contrast, a new release from prolific author and Church of God theologian Barry Callen is a Bible story book neither for young eyes, nor for the faint of heart. Did you know the Bible talks about crushing the skulls of men and babies? When was the last time you heard a sermon on the curse of the she-bears? When



Dr. Barry Callen

selecting a romantic line of poetry to recite to your significant other, do you follow the biblical example of saying that your bowels moved for him or her? With attention to detail and a whimsical style all his own, Barry Callen offers both theological insights and practical application for these and more incredibly weird passages of Scripture in *Bible Stories for Strong Stomachs*.

Twenty-eight stories are included in the new, very unique collection, each falling under one of four categories: "People Are Just Pitiful," "God Sure is Different," "How Not to Be God's People," and "Crazy Possibilities for the Future." A sample of Callen's chapter titles reveal the quirkiness of the stories and the wit that characterizes Callen's approach: "Look Out the Window and Be Depressed" (Ecclesiastes 1 and 3), "What About Those Monthly Periods?" (Ezekiel 36, Jeremiah 2, Isaiah 64), "God Has Appeared as UFO" (Ezekiel 1 and 37), and "Two Bags of Dirt Will Get You God" (2 Kings 5). Each chapter describes the Bible story, digs below the surface, and offers a list of discussion questions which connect the story to today's issues. While preparation for this unique book was no small feat, one of the most challenging stories for Callen to unpack was "Agree That the Donkey Did See an Angel" from Numbers 22.

"Such an uncommon sight is seemingly craziness that nonetheless underlies our hope for making progress in being God's people today," Barry reflects. "We must have eyes and hearts that are willing and able to see God present and at work in this present and very troubled world. Our seeing and faith will seem as no more than mere delusion and

silly idealism to many. No matter. As Paul said, we must be prepared to be 'fools' for Christ. By God's grace, the fool will turn out to be the wisest one of all!"

Bible Stories for Strong Stomachs has already captured the attention of ministers within the Church of God, as well as outside of the movement. Pastors like Marty Grubbs of Crossings Community Church in Oklahoma City wrote that he is "eager" to share these stories with his congregation: "A prolific voice in theological circles provides a glimpse into many of the difficult Bible texts and does so in a very practical and understandable way."

This unique book does not shy away from tough texts, and practically speaks to the authenticity this generation craves. "Now comes [a Bible story book] just for adults—or

youth trying to figure out the Bible and become adults (but absolutely no children!)," Barry cautions. "I trust that this book will represent well the Church of God. We are Bible people, and here are many of the Bible chapters that we skip reading, teaching, or preaching because we don't know what to do with them, and are truly embarrassed by them. This is Bible-in-the-raw, but it is the Bible, and can't be ignored any longer. These stories raise dramatically every issue the church is facing today."

The book's subtitle perhaps says it all: "The Bible is full of shocking stories, 'R' ratings, seedy characters, and unsolved mysteries that convey God's Word in the weirdest ways." You can search for the title and order your paperback copy or Kindle edition online at www.amazon.com. An online discounted price is also available at www.wipfandstock.com.



WPC – A Top Christian College

Warner Pacific was recently named as one of the top Christian colleges in the west by Christian Universities Online (CUO). Through this ranking, CUO seeks to highlight intentionally Christian colleges and universities that excel in categories of personal attention to their students, selectivity, readily available financial aid, and overall student satisfaction. www.warnerpacific.edu/one-of-the-top-25-best-christian-colleges-in-the-west/

Want to play soccer in college?

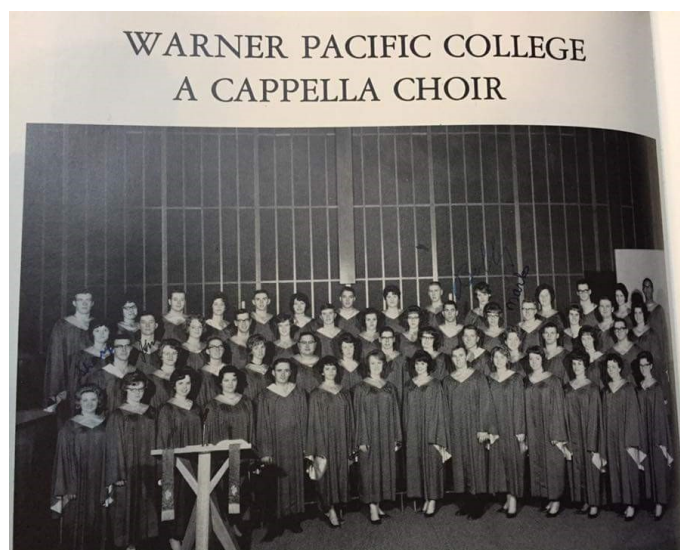
Warner Pacific Knight soccer coaches Chris Thoms and Holly Popenuk have announced a Winter Player ID Camp that will take place at WPC's campus on **February 23-24**. All prospective athletes that have an interest in playing college soccer are invited to participate. High school and junior college players are welcome. www.wpcknights.com/news/2016/1/19/GEN_0119162322.aspx



2017 Homecoming

February 17-18

We've got great activities planned, including a special Chapel, basketball games, Athletic Hall of Honor Reception, celebration of the class of 1967, a service project, and a '60s themed party for everyone: A '60s Celebration! More information and the link to RSVP: www.warnerpacific.edu/about/alumni/homecoming/



Members of the WPC Class of 1967 are active on Facebook looking for classmates planning to attend the Homecoming event. Pictured (left) is the WPC A Capella Choir.

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Submissions and news items for publication consideration are due the 15th of each month.

Look to the Hills: Camp White Branch

The Camp White Branch Board is scheduled to meet on Tuesday, February 7, 2017 at 5:30 p.m. for a meal together before the 6 p.m. meeting. Watch for an update in the March issue of the E-CONTACT.



2017 CAMP SCHEDULE

Intro Camp, entering 2nd or 3rd grade & parent
Friday, July 7, 2017 - Sunday, July 9, 2017

Senior High camp, entering 9th-12th grade
Monday, July 10, 2017 - Friday, July 14, 2017

Junior camp, entering 5th-6th grade
Monday, July 17, 2017 - Friday, July 21, 2017

Middle School camp, entering 7th-8th grade
Monday, July 31, 2017 - Friday, August 4, 2017

Primary camp, entering 3rd-4th grade
Monday, August 7, 2017 - Thursday, August 10, 2017

Camp White Branch
61500 Old McKenzie Hwy, McKenzie Bridge, OR

Ministers' & Spouses' Retreat

The Ministers' and Spouses' Retreat will be held at Best Western Agate Beach Inn in Newport, Oregon, Feb. 20-22, 2017. Guest speaker Dr. Lou Foltz and Worship Leader Pastor Tim Irwin will lead the retreat with the theme of *Mountains, Valleys and Deserts: The Precious Gift of Each Other*.

The annual event is a highlight for pastors and spouses in the District, providing opportunity for rest, refreshment and interaction with colleagues. Encourage your pastor to attend!

Brochures are available through your local church or the District Office.



Rev. Tim Irwin
Worship Leader



Dr. Lou Foltz
Speaker

THE PURPOSE of The Association of the Churches of God in Oregon and SW Washington is to:

- Conduct business as the legally-incorporated body of the Association of the Churches of God in Oregon, Inc.
- Provide assistance to Oregon and Southwest Washington congregations and be a channel through which local congregations shall be mobilized to fulfill our united vision and mission.

THE VISION of The Association is for every believer to fulfill the mandate of the Great Commission, the Great Commandments, and the teachings of Jesus Christ.

THE MISSION of The Association is to:

- Create and maintain ministries that will strengthen, encourage, supplement, and promote local congregations of The Association;
- Inspire commitment to the teachings, mission, and theological perspectives of the Church of God, Anderson, Indiana;
- Provide support for the development of healthy Church of God congregations.

Meet Bob: A Word from Our Interim District Pastor

My name is Robert Christensen. I'm the new guy, but not really that new.

I have been asked to serve as Interim District Pastor while the search process is completed to prepare for the next leader of the Oregon and Southwest Washington district of the Church of God. I feel blessed to be able to help guide the ministries of our district during this transition time.



Pastor Bob and Barbara Christensen

My wife, Barbara, and I have pastored in Washington and Oregon since 1973, and I lived in the northwest as a child. You've heard of Seattle.

We took a couple of years to serve in Brazil in the mid 1980's, but otherwise we have been north westerners most of the time. Through the years we have come to love our church family not only in the cities where we have served, but through our connections with Warner Pacific College, the Western Area Regional Ministerium (WARM), through Oregon and Washington church family camps and youth camps, and through many pastors and spouses retreats.

In just the first week on the job I have participated in the Leadership Council meeting at the office in Salem and I attended the "How To" Convention at the Holladay Park Church of God on Saturday, January 28th.

Sitting with the council I saw immediately a group of dedicated people who love each other, love the church, and want to see healthy ministry continue to happen in our district. Already some creative ideas are being floated regarding new leadership and how the church can engage in some effective summer activities. I hope you are praying for your church family in the district.

When I think of the church as more than its individual congregations, I treasure the words of Psalm 133. David wrote in the opening line, "Behold how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity." Of course, if David were with us today he would say, "Well certainly I meant 'sisters' too. It was just the way we talked in my day." All of us are the church together.

I am a better person, a better husband, and better dad, and pastor because of my connection with all of you. I have learned from you and been prayed for by you. Barbara and I have been blessed by our fellowship with you more times than we can count. We have worshiped together, been inspired by solid preaching together, and traveled to extend ministry to others together.

In a nation, as well as a world, where differences are all too often lifted up for their divisive impact, it is a healing blessing to be with God's church to celebrate that Jesus is our Lord and that our Heavenly Father paid the ultimate price through Christ to put his arms around his one family. You are part of my life. You matter to me. You make me a stronger, more able servant of our Lord Jesus Christ.

One of the exemplary servants to whom I want to give thanks is Pastor David Shrout who so ably and caringly led this district and its ministry over the past many years. God bless you Pastor David and Connie. You just think you retired. Watch and see what God still has planned for you. Love to you all.

Upcoming Events



- Feb. 17-18, Fri.- Sat., Warner Pacific College Homecoming
- Feb. 20-22, Mon.-Wed., Ministers' & Spouses' Retreat
- March 2, Thurs., REGION #2, 10 am - 12 pm
- March 9, Thurs., Pastors' Day
- March 12, Sun., Daylight Savings begins
- April 9, PALM SUNDAY
- April 11, Tues., REGION #1 Mtg., 10:00 am
- April 14, GOOD FRIDAY
- April 16, EASTER SUNDAY
- April 25-27, Tues.-Thurs. W.A.R.M.
- May 4, Thurs., REGION #2, 10 am - 12 pm
- May 13, Sat., Ministers' Gathering
- May 14, Sun. MOTHER'S DAY
- June 18, Sun., FATHER'S DAY