



The Circuit Rider

January 2022



Salmon Creek Church
SALMON CREEK CHURCH

Message from Pastor
John—2
J.O.Y Academy News—3
Photos from December's
Events—4-10

De-greening the
church—11
Family Promise—12, 13





a note from Pastor John

From September through December, we took a journey from Creation to Incarnation. Along the way, we discovered the ongoing presence of creation, and the ongoing presence of God through Christ, Creation didn't happen "way back then"; it continues to unfold and surprise every day. Incarnation didn't only happen two thousand years ago in Bethlehem; it continues to unfold through the actions of the Holy Spirit. Perhaps we might think of Creation as the soil, and Incarnation as the tree.

Bracketed by the concepts of Creation and Incarnation was another duality: sin and gratitude. Like a blight that stops water from reaching the leaves of a tree, sin attempts to keep God from reaching our selves: our consciousness, our actions, even our dreams. But there is a treatment for this blight, often expressed as simple gratitude. We are thankful not only for all of the good "things" of this world, but in a deeper way, we can be ever thankful for a God who provides the means of release from sin – a cure for the blight – through the redeeming actions of Christ, which we activate with our repentance and gratitude.

So, now what? How does this beautiful system play out in real life? How do we truly repent? How do we truly show gratitude? In Galatians 5, Paul suggests that there can be visible evidence of the work of the Holy Spirit that he calls the Fruit of The Spirit. In January and February we are going to look at these nine fruits, which are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There are fairly obvious and simple definitions for each of these, but we are going to delve a little deeper and try to unearth what Paul

means when he says, "If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit." In other words, anyone can practice kindness, for example. What does it mean to practice Christian kindness? And, like fruit, how do these Fruits of the Spirit sustain us and others?

Paul is well known for providing fairly straightforward answers to "how do I live as a Christian?" His time was filled with challenges, doubt and opposition, as is ours, and Paul's answer to this question is as powerful and meaningful today as ever. I hope you'll join in during our services, and through our Lifelong Faith Formation website, as we learn how to practice the Fruit of the Spirit.



Blessings, Pastor John

The J.O.Y. Academy

Jesus – Others – You

Inspiring children to follow Christ



January 30 is Bible Presentation Sunday – Every time there are 5 Sundays in a month, the 5th Sunday is set aside for our children and youth to lead us in worship. **On January 30th we will be giving Bibles to our 3rd grade children: Penny, Sophia, and Jameson.** The children are learning about the Bible every week in the J.O.Y. Academy – for example, did you know that the Bible isn't a book – *it's a library containing 66 books!* The children will also lead us in playing the bells, so ***mark you calendars today so you won't miss this special Sunday worship!***

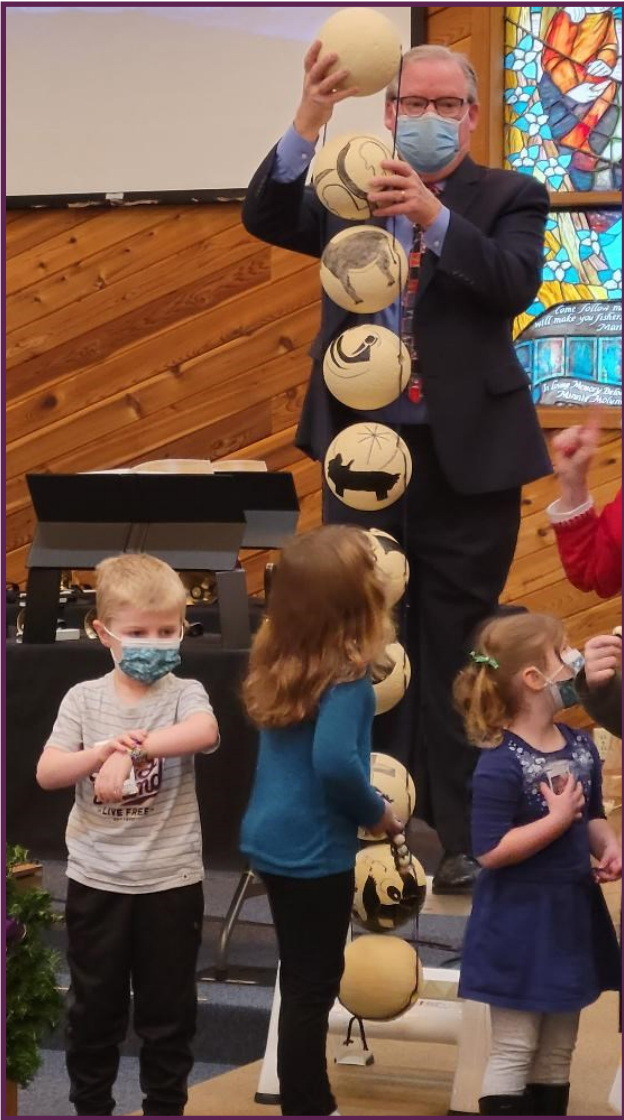
Family Ministry Advisory Team / Vacation Bible School Team Meeting – Last year a number of people, both youth and adults, joined together to help organize and plan our Children and Family ministries. Their input has been a key component of the success of our Family Ministries. They decided to gather again in early 2022 to review and choose a curriculum, begin planning Vacation Bible School for 2022, and discuss ways to continue to build on the success we have enjoyed so far. **They will meet after worship on Sunday, January 30th in the St. Paul Room. Lunch will be provided.** Please contact Pastor Vivian if you would like to serve on this team or have any questions: by email at Vivian.Hiestand@salmoncreek.church or by phone at 360-844-0440.

“Hide the Altar” Food Drive a HUGE Success! Thanks to you, the children learned the importance of showing God’s love by helping others through donating food and supplies to SHARE. The J.O.Y. Academy and Salmon Creek Preschool and Day Care children learned about the need in our community and what we can actually do to help others. They were amazed at the amount of food that was donated – **849 pounds of food and supplies** were donated to SHARE just before Christmas! **THANK YOU EVERYONE FOR SUPPORTING AND TEACHING OUR CHILDREN!**

BLESSING THE FOOD FOR SHARE



Our children share what they learned about Jesus' birth.



The ADORATION Ringers



CHOIR

12-5-21—ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING
Gordon family, Jennifer Gordon and Wes Chapman



Family Worship Christmas Eve – Over 80 people, including some new families who had received a post card, attended the 5:00 Family Worship Service on Christmas Eve and everyone had a lively time. As families entered the church, Pastor Vivian invited them to become one of the characters in the Christmas story by offering shepherd’s head gear, animal ears, and angel wings and halos. Pastor John set a friendly family tone for the service by exchanging his suit coat for a zip up cardigan sweater (just like Mr. Rogers) and then sitting in his large rocking chair near the altar. The children were invited to come forward as their group was described in the story, and the Praise Team provided the carols that told the tale. The animals crowded around the stable, the angels sang and flew all around the Sanctuary, and the shepherds chased them all. Penny Hansen was beautiful as Mary, the mother of Jesus, cradling the newborn baby. The Adoration Ringers, led by Matt Compton, provided such beautiful music that even the smallest child sat in quiet wonder. The Angel of Joy’s bell was no longer silent – it rang out the news! And better yet, Pastor Vivian gave the children wrist bands with large jingle bells so they could all help joyfully proclaim the good news: Christ is born! When it was time to sing “Silent Night” and share the light of the Christ candle, even the smallest child could hold a lit candle because they had tall electric candles of their own to hold. The service was filled with joy and laughter and the love of Christ was shared by everyone.

CHRISTMAS EVE, 2021



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CHRISTMAS EVE, 2021





Many thanks to all who helped decorate our sanctuary for Christmas. Now it is time to take the decorations down. Please join us on January 8th at 10:00 a.m. to put them to rest for another year.

The Worship Committee



**A gentleman purchased two Christmas Trees from the Boy Scout tree lot.
After the purchase, he told them to find families for the trees.
The Scouts reached out to Family Promise. One tree went to a family who spent
Christmas with Family Promise last year, Mo and Misty.
The other tree went to a family who graduated
from the program December 16th!
Mo and Misty would like to thank the gentleman
and shared this picture of their tree.**





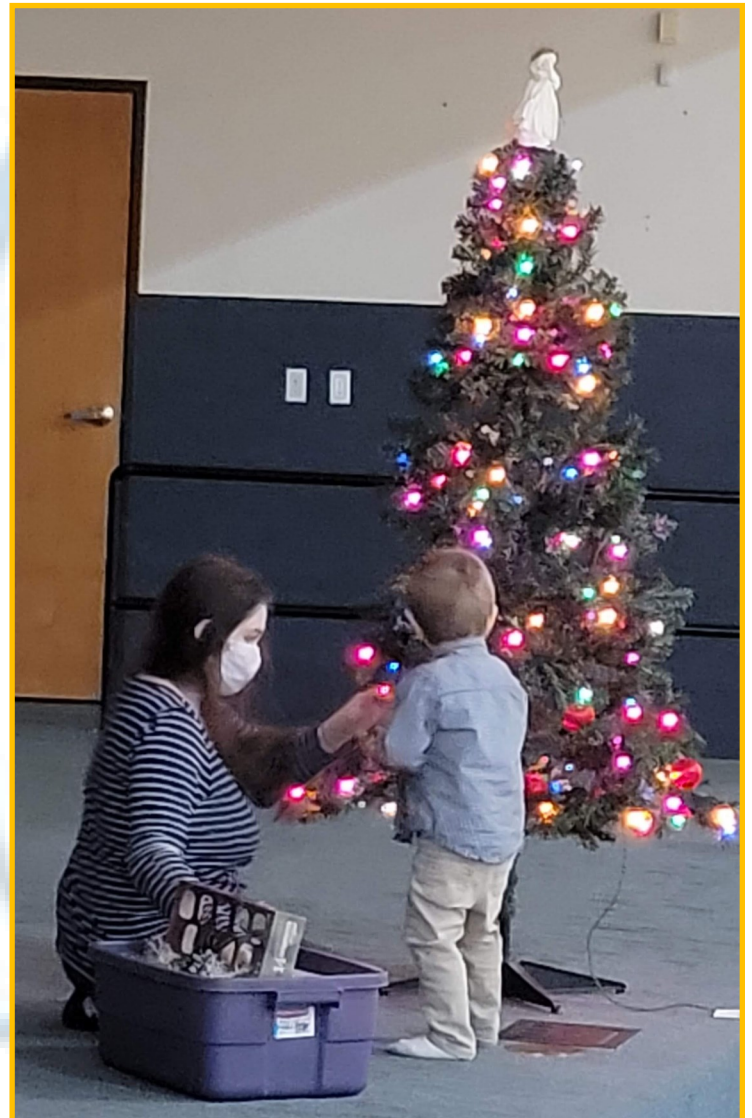
On Sunday evening, December 19th, I watched Crystal help her autistic toddler son decorate the Christmas tree on the stage steps of the FMC. Crystal was one of our Family Promise families whom Salmon Creek hosted the week of Christmas. She is new to Family Promise, new to being a single mom and life has been stressful. It was touching to watch the two of them together. I shared this picture of this time with Larry Siewert as he had suggested we put the Angel Tree out for the families to decorate. Larry responded, “A boy and his mom, that is what Christmas is about.” It hit me then, that in some ways Mary and Joseph were homeless, and Jesus was born into a setting similar to what Crystal is in with her two young children.

This put a new spin on our hosting Family Promise for Christmas. On Wednesday evening, a second single mom, Lilly, joined us with her 5-year-old son. She, too, was anxious and uncertain as this was her first night staying in a shelter. The next morning, I checked in with her to see if she needed another blanket. She told me that they were so exhausted that they fell asleep with the lights on and never noticed anything. She had to have felt safe to be able to sleep that soundly, I thought.

Thanks to 44 generous volunteers, we were able to host two families for Christmas, provide them shelter from the weather, food for their bellies, and then more people donated money to put gifts under that tree. My heart grew even bigger for the Salmon Creek UMC Family.

For those of you wondering what we did with the gift money, there were Christmas stockings hung on a table, toys for each child, and for Crystal, who is legally blind and can't drive, we got her a stroller for two so that she can safely walk to the store and not worry about her autistic son running into the street.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart and from Crystal and Lilly.





HAPPY BIRTHDAY
JANUARY
BABIES

Family Birthdays are unavailable this month. Our apologies; we hope to be able to list them again next month.

Happiest wishes to all of you who are celebrating this month!!



Thank you for reading the Circuit Rider! If you have questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us.

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Submissions for the Circuit Rider can be sent to nancy.volgamore@salmoncreek.church. Deadline for each month for submission varies and is announced at the beginning of the prior month.

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