

**Olympia
First
Baptist
Church**

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The Thin Place:

Where the Sacred and the Ordinary Collide

Blessed be the name of the Lord, Creator of the heavens and the earth!

Blessed be God's name!

Within our Christian tradition, the phrase Blessed be "His" name/Blessed be God's name expresses reverence, praise, and gratitude toward God.

It's easy to say. It falls off our tongues/slips out of our mouths, without much thought.

But think about it: Reverence – Praise – Gratitude! How we think about God; how we relate to God; how we communicate with God are expressed in those three words.

Not limited to those three words, but recognizing that they are a foundation of the various ways that God pours out blessings upon us and others and how we respond once we recognize and acknowledge those blessings.

People will ask me how I am feeling and/or doing after my little journey with Cornelius.

My response is and will be: **BLESSED!**

I am blessed because though the type of cancer I had was rare, it was not aggressive and it was slow growing. **Blessed**. The location of Cornelius within my lung was easily accessible on the lower edge of my left lung, so they only had to take small wedge out. If Cornelius had been in the center or upper part, I'd be missing a pretty significant part of that left lung, and my recovery and outlook would be quite different than it is: **Blessed**.

Amazingly, I do not have to endure any kind of Chemo and/or radiation treatments: **Blessed**. For the six weeks that I have been recovering and recuperating, the Rev. Joan Friesen has filled in as Acting Pastor. She has guided our faith community collaboratively, faithfully, with her leadership that is Spirit-driven, organizationally first rate, and relationally, grace-filled: **Blessed**. And then there's you all, the congregation; this collection of ragamuffins here on the corner of 9th and Washington. You have worked with Rev. Joan to continue your mission and ministry of hospitality, relational connection and spiritual nurturing. You have come together to bear witness to the strength of a Christ-led community within a world that is deeply divided. You have prayed for one another, encouraged one another, ministered to one another, and served one another, and others. I know, because you have done all of those things for Kathleen and I while I've been away: **Blessed!!!**

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When I say, “blessed be God’s name,” I want to make sure I remember that the foundation behind those words are reverence, praise, and gratitude. It’s the way of our prayers; our understanding that God works and moves in ways that are much more different than our own... and being okay with that. It’s about trust. First and foremost in this relational God, whose image we bear, and with whom we discover the various ways we are blessed because of our relationship with God through the Resurrected Son, Jesus Christ. You see. Despite the barriers we might find before us...whatever the current circumstances of our lives may be, there are still blessings, small though they may seem, that are yet to be discovered and recognized.

When that happens, then it’s much easier to say:

Blessed be God’s name!

And to do so with reverence, praise, and gratitude!

Blessings and Joy!

Humble over Hype!

Pastor Mark

It’s good to be back. I hope you are planning to join us for worship on October 5th!

We will gather around the Lord’s Table for Communion and I will be back in the pulpit.

We look forward to having you all together, both in person or on the livestream.

Don’t forget that we are hosting the Evergreen Annual Gathering from Thursday, October 9th through Saturday, October 11th. There will be worship both Friday and Saturday nights at 7:00 p.m. If you would like to participate but not as part of the volunteer staff, please talk to Pastor Mark about registering on the Region’s website. If you want to be a part of that event’s volunteer group, there are slots available. See Rev. Joan, Jan Downen, and/ or Meggin Turk ASAP!

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DEACON’S CORNER
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MEGGIN TURK
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From your Deacon, Meggin with Love!

This reading really spoke to me!

I hope that it has the same value for you!

“Get up off of your knees. Come out of your churches, your mosques, your temples. God can hear your prayers for peace, justice, and hope in this broken world just fine while you're out creating peace, working for justice, and giving hope to this broken world. When are we finally going to realize that humanity is the solution to inhumanity? When will we finally understand that we are all drops of the same ocean, hurting together, healing together, hoping together? Don't just pray for hands to heal the hurting. Pray with hands that are healing the hurting. Don't just pray for arms to help the helpless. Pray with arms that are helping the helpless. Don't just pray for feet to respond to need. Pray on feet that are responding to need. Don't just pray for someone to do something. Be someone who does something. Don't just pray for answers. Be the answer.”

L.R. Knost

From Rev. Joan Friesen

God is good! We rejoice in the fact that Pastor Mark is back amongst us and that Lela is making encouraging process.

It's been an interesting experience filling as Acting Pastor over these past six weeks, made additionally complicated due to Lela's surgery as well. But it also has reminded me how wonderful it is when God's people use their gifts and come together to make things happen.

I'm especially grateful for those who have stepped into new things—
Worship leaders Davis Hylkema, Wendy Wilson, and Jay Nordgaard
Office volunteers Denise Alborn and Jeri Stone

We have wonderful leaders in our Moderator Sandi Swarthout and those on Executive Leadership Team who gave insight and guidance along the way. Our deacons have each taken a turn being "Deacon of the Week" and that went so well they are continuing that practice at least through the end of the year. And so many have pitched in as we prepare the building for hosting the Evergreen Annual Meeting.

Have we missed some things? I'm sure we have. But I know we've done our best to serve God and encourage one another as we minister here on the corner of 9th and Washington. So we keep striving to walk humbly, love completely, and live differently. May it be so!

Regarding the Annual Gathering ...

We're just days away from hosting our Evergreen Association family! There's still opportunity for you to participate as all kinds of volunteers are needed. Please talk with Jan Downen, Meg Turk, or Joan Friesen.

The event begins with dinner on Thursday evening the 9th and goes all day Friday and Saturday. If you can even give a few hours it will help spread the work load.

There have been so many people who have helped prepare the building for this big event. Look for the volunteer list in next month's Windows.



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Rev. Caroline Lehman, Visitation Pastor
Jonathan Spatola-Knoll, Director of Music Ministries
Lela DePaolo, Secretary
John Fesenbek, Campus Maintenance

October 2025 • Sermons and Scriptures • Olympia First Baptist Church

October 5th – Ordinary Time
Sermon Text – Luke 17:5–10
Sermon: How much Faith is Enough?
Written Word – Lamentations 3:19–26
Written Word – Psalm 37:1–9

October 12th – Ordinary Time
Guest Preacher – Rev. Doug Avilesbernal
Sermon Text – ?
Sermon: ?
Written Word – Psalm 66:1–12
Written Word – Psalm 111

October 19th – Ordinary Time
Sermon Text – Luke 18:1–8
Sermon: Persistence Pays Off?
Written Word – Jeremiah 31:27–34
Written Word – Psalm 121

October 26th – Ordinary Time
Sermon Text – Luke 18:9–14
Sermon: Prayer: A Matter of the Heart
Written Word – Joel 2: 23–32
Written Word – Psalm 65