

Olympia First Baptist Church

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The Thin Place:

Where the Sacred and the Ordinary Collide

Let love be genuine; hate what is evil; hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Do not lag in zeal; be ardent in spirit; serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope; be patient in affliction; persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; pursue hospitality to strangers.

Romans 12:9—13

New Revised Standard Version

In my bible, the verses above are under the heading – “Marks of the True Christian” Headings like that can be helpful, but they can also be a bit misleading. If what Paul has written is the best way of identifying who is a “true” Christian and who is not, then doesn’t that miss the mark? Instead of being words of challenge, sacrifice, encouragement, in other words, the life we strive to live out faithfully and consistently, instead, we are tempted to turn them into a litmus test. Putting a checkmark by the ones we think we have mastered and/or do very well. Those we don’t, we can try to achieve them, to work harder and be better at, but usually, we just shrug our shoulders and think, well, 9 out of 13 is pretty good.

Our faith is never going to be perfect or complete. Never. Our challenge, among many, as followers of Jesus, is to set our face on the Risen One and reflect onto others, the life transforming love and grace we have been on the receiving end of.

That’s why we strive to be as faithful as we can to the words of challenge and encouragement writers like Paul have for us within God’s grand story. By incorporating them into our daily living practices, they become part of our life rhythms and eventually become, hopefully, second-nature. Things we do naturally, lovingly, without a second thought.

The good news, is that it starts with us, meaning, us as a congregation. Within our shared life together, as a Christ-following congregation on the corner of 9th and Washington, putting into practice those words from Paul, starts with us, Olympia First! We are ground zero. If we can’t live out those gospel values amongst ourselves, what chance do we have to share them and live them for our family and friends who are not yet connected to faith in Christ? What is the likelihood of sharing them with the neighborhood if we fail to live them amongst ourselves? We recognize the challenge. We recognize our own individual and collective shortcomings/broken bits/sin, but we also acknowledge the wondrous things that God has done within each of us. Those changes, our transformations, blessings, newness, is because of what God in Christ has done for us and to us. That reality means that our words from Paul to the church in Rome, are possible. Not as a checklist to make sure we are accumulating enough Jesus points to be legit, but as an outflowing of God’s goodness and transformative love for all people.

Blessings and Joy!
Humble over Hype!

Pastor Mark

We are Prisoners of Hope...

It feels like the last few Sundays, our times of worship has reflected on our need for Hope! I think we all need and want some hope in our lives and in our world. The struggle with finding or experiencing some hope is that we often miss it because of our busyness, our anxiety, and/or fear.

Or, as Brene Brown says:

Hope is a function of struggle—we develop hope not during the easy or comfortable times, but through adversity and discomfort. Hope is forged when our goals, pathways, and agency are tested and when change is actually possible.

The last part of her reflection, really resonated with me:

...when change is actually possible.

Our world, it seems, is in a constant state of change. Change is a struggle. No matter how much we want to change, to experience change; to be a part of a change process, it is never easy, immediate or comfortable. Yes, we want change, but...!

During worship on June 15th, as we focused on the Works of the Spirit, those in worship were asked: *Where do you find and/or see Hope?*

The following are the responses we received that day. We provide them for you as a reminder where others have found and/or seen signs of hope. Take note, that many of the responses reflect the No Kings protests that took place the day before, around the country including here in Olympia, at the State Capital building. May the responses be a reminder and an encouragement that HOPE can be found in the simple things that we often take for granted.

Remember, as Christ followers, we are Prisoners of Hope!

Where do you see and/or find Hope?

...in peaceful protests that include people of multiple ages, ethnic backgrounds and experiences.

...in millions of people standing together to say no to violence and cruel immigration policies on Flag Day.

...that someday people may come together to respectfully listen to one another with humility to care enough to learn...

...in peaceful protests that lead to change... I believe God's got it in hand.

...in the people around me; I see hope in the future. See hope in the Oly church and family.

...in this church and what it does in our community...

...in this church which perseveres when things are difficult & hard... how the community comes together.

continued...

...in the connection that is growing between LaDarian and the OPOP team members... I find hope as flowers bloom and baby rabbits frolic and fawns leap through the woodlands. Spring reminds us of God's promise of rebirth in his love.

...in children.

...in the spirit of this church...its openness and welcoming. Corresponding with LaDarian has opened new hopes...

...People coming together to support each other and make our country a one of all people... being accepted here.

...birds... I wonder... will unity & love win over ill-willed power?

...the large crowd gathered at the capital Saturday...

...currently – finding and applying for at least 3 job applications per week...receiving replies... scheduling time... having quality time to discern... seeing my bonus kids succeed through hard times...

...every time I wake up! It's a new Day!

...in our youth... our schools... creation!

...in children through their eyes of joy, newness and love...

...all the new medical professionals who have the desire to help despite the chaos and uncertainty. In the lives of my grandkids...

...in the women of our church... thank you...

...refugee families at Emmaus House... peanut butter & jelly sandwiches ... the new baptisms we recently had...

...when I remember God's mercies and miracles in my life, I am hopeful for my future...

...in the people that are finding God and doing away from addictions and healing from trauma in their lives...

...in the blessing of good health and that this church will grow to over-flowing...

...new faces in church... in this church reaching out in new ways to our neighbors and neighborhood...

Continued on page 4...

...I see hope through children, their light, openness and curiosity. The unconditional love is inspiring...

...the renewal of good thoughts in the life of my daughter after the death of her husband...

...in the lives of those refugee families as they resettle into their new lives here in Olympia and Thurston County...

...in the ministry team of One Parish – One Prisoner (OPOP) and their spiritual & relational connection with LaDarian... LaDarian's story of redemption and reconciliation...

...when I hear stories of faith and hope from people different than me...

...when I see and experience multi-generations coming together to share God's story of love, grace, and acceptance... salvation that is real...

...the ministry of Camp Bethel...



Deacon's Corner

Pat De Neui

Thank goodness our Lord has good intentions for us! They may be different from what we hoped or expected, but they are nonetheless good.

He is our light when times seem to be dark and know he is always present in each and every moment. We need to remember and truly believe that the Lord's way is perfect, no matter how hard it seems to be... so let's build our lives on this rock-solid reality.

The world we live in is constantly changing and when we feel afflicted or afraid, we need to take refuge in Jesus. Thus, we must remain aware of our Lord as we go about our day and constantly keep his presence in our hearts and minds.

The more we have Jesus in our lives, the more joyful we will be and the more Jesus can bless others through us. So make every effort to live the life Jesus assigned to you... be joyful and your soul will be richly blessed.

Shalom, Pat

Olympia First Baptist:

Welcoming – Accessible – Connecting

We have had many conversations over the past couple of years about who we want to be, what types of ministries and missions we want to be involved in and/or develop as well as what we want people to experience when they step into our fellowship.

Recently, it seems as if these three words keep coming up:

Welcoming – Accessible – Connecting

These three words seem aligned with our stated church values of hospitality, relational connection and spiritual nurturing. They are intertwined with one another as we continue to seek God's direction and make this sacred space on the corner of 9th and Washington – Welcoming to all who come – Accessible to whatever challenges they may be dealing with – Connecting them to God's love, grace and beauty.

Two ways we are making those words real and tangible is with the Take-a-Prayer structure by the Front Porch and the Lending Library, right next to it. But those two structures of accessible welcome and connection need your help and participation.

We need people to write prayers of encouragement, hope, support, etc., on the tags we have available each Sunday. We need people to bring used books for adults and for children. The books do not need to be religious and/or Christian in nature. Who doesn't love a good old-fashion mystery, or romance novel? Who doesn't love Dr. Seuss or a Hardy Boys/Nancy Drew story? If you do donate a book, just make sure it's age appropriate and/or adult sensitive. Save the more, um, spicy, innuendo-laden literature for another venue.

We need you to connect with our neighbors and those who walk by our church each and every day. You'd be surprised how many people slow down to read those prayers and even to take them now and again. And now they are also peeking to see what types of books they might discover. But it's all for naught, if we don't have you all helping us make those connections of welcome.

If you have questions, just let us know here at the church office.

Blessings and Joy!

Oly First – For your Consideration, Prayers, & Response

Below, in italics, is an excerpt of an article written by Rev. Sam Kim, who is our Executive Associate Minister of Innovation & Design, within our Evergreen Region, from the May issue of “Evergreen Notes.”

The Executive Leadership Team here at Oly First are in the beginning process of pondering, praying and answering the questions that Sam has posed to our churches within our Evergreen Regional Association.

The Leadership Team felt it was important to share this with the wider congregation and ask you to join us in reading, pondering, praying and then responding to the questions asked. We will share, at a later date, a process for those interested, to come together and share their insights and feedback.

...Our churches need to ask the hard question(s):

“What kinds of actual ministries/mission(s) are we doing that exemplifies our values?”

How are these ministries and works of the Spirit, that we are doing, something that other people may want to come alongside of?

“How do we allow others to join us in these and other important works of the Spirit and ministries?”

“What type of barriers do we potentially have that makes joining us, harder?”

The shortage of good ideas and good intentions is abundant everywhere, but our contemporary society is looking for more than platitudes and ideals: they are seeking working communities that are humbly working towards change. How can the gospel of Jesus Christ be more than a vision statement? How can the movement of the Holy Spirit be displayed as a concrete and palpable source of change in tumultuous times? In this season of Easter, I encourage our Evergreen family to consider how we can truly have the power of the Gospel of Freedom and not just its form.

Rev. Sam Kim,
Executive Associate Minister of Innovation & Design,
Evergreen Association of American Baptist Churches

A+ Hospitality

Joan Freisen

As our church prepares to host the Evergreen Annual Meeting in October, we have a lot of work ahead. First of all, thanks to everyone who contributed to our “What can make our church spaces more welcoming?” To welcome is our goal, not just for this event, but for everyone who walks through the doors.

In the coming weeks we’ll be looking for volunteers to adopt rooms for deep cleaning including the outdoor spaces that will need sprucing up. If you are willing to help with this summer project, please talk with Jan Downen, Meggin Turk, or Joan Friesen. We will have some scheduled days where we’ll work together and other times when you can come when your schedule is best.

And of course we will need lots and lots of volunteers for the event, October 9-12. Next month’s Windows will list the variety of jobs to be filled and sign ups will include specific shifts when we will need people to be present. There’s something for everyone!

Thanks in advance for working together with the Planning Team (Jan, Meggin, Joan,) the Stewardship Team and the Executive Leadership to provide A+ hospitality to our Region.

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FBC MUSIC COMMITTEE PRESENTS



Thursday, September 4th • Fireside Room
5:30pm Gather • 6:00pm Dinner

This will be a time together for new and continuing choir members to share a meal, fellowship and inspiration.

Also, Darrell Born will join us to share his thoughts on the importance of music ministry.

Senior High Camp

A summer camp for 9th
graders through graduate.

Date: July 13th - 19th
Cost: \$325 (Pre Registrations)
\$350 (For Walk-ins)

Junior High Camp

A summer camp for 6th
to 8th graders.

Date: July 20th - 26th
Cost: \$325 (Pre Registrations)
\$350 (For Walk-ins)

Elementary Camp

A summer camp for 3rd to
5th graders.

Date: July 27th - July 31st
Cost: \$250 (Pre Registrations)
\$275 (For Walk-ins)

Camp Bethel Summer Camps**Senior High Camp – July 13th–19th**
(9th grade to Summer after Graduation)**Theme: Compassion**

“Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct,
in love, in faith, in purity.”

1 Timothy 4:12

\$325/person (Pre-Registrations)
\$350/person (for walk-ins)

Junior High Camp – July 20th–26th
(6th Grade to 8th Grade)**Theme: Compassion**

“Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in
love, in faith, in purity.”

1 Timothy 4:12

\$325/person (Pre-Registrations)
\$350/person (for walk-ins)

Elementary Camp – July 27th–July 31st
(Entering 3rd, 4th, and 5th Grade)**Theme: Compassion**

“Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct,
in love, in faith, in purity.”

1 Timothy 4:12

\$250/person (Pre-Registrations)
\$275/person (for walk-ins)

*Scholarships are available. Check with Pastor Mark if you are interested in scholarship help.

**OUR JUNE MEETING STARTED WITH A DELICIOUS SALAD BUFFET,
WITH "THANK YOU" TO YIM LOCKE, MEGGIN TURK, AND GRANDMA HAGGEN!**

After lunch we had a brief business meeting. We voted to donate \$500 to our church to cover replacement of recently lost items. We also donated \$300 to Kyle and Katrina Williams through the mission project of the recent Women's Conference. Kyle was the mission speaker at the conference and was able to take 40 pillowcase dresses back to Thailand with him!

Then we moved on to the kitchen cleaning. Most of the kitchen cleaning was accomplished that day, but there are still some areas to finish. Thank you to all who helped and continue to work on the kitchen.

We will take a break in July and August, but will be available for any church events during this time.

Looking at summer... If you are downsizing, cleaning out closet, drawers, etc save those items for our Treasure Room in December. We take a wide range of items, including: puzzles games, glassware, collectables, decorations, etc. We have storage room at the church. Contact Jan Downen for more information.

Our Christmas Brunch is scheduled for **December 6th.**

Our speaker will be Kat Stoker,
with a **music program by the**
"My Best Friends" singing group.

Save The Date

It's never too early to do a bit of planning ahead. So, with that in mind, here are some dates that you might want to have and begin thinking about participating in...

2025 ABC/USA Biennial Mission Summit July 3rd—6th, Omaha, Nebraska

Your prayers for this denominational gathering are needed.

Taste of Evergreen – Saturday, July 26th 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. – Panther Lake Community Church

More specific information will be in July's Windows, but this is one of our Evergreen Region's annual events where we get to taste and enjoy a variety of foods from our different ethnic caucuses. There is also a desert auction around 1:30 that serves as an added fundraiser.

Evergreen at the Ballpark – Faith and Family Day Saturday, August 2nd – 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Our hometown 9 will battle the Texas Rangers on Faith and Family day out at T-Mobile park. Ticket information will be forthcoming soon.
We will share that in Thoughts and Things soon.

All-Church Potluck – Sunday, August 10th! 12:30 to 4:00 p.m. @ home of Pat DeNeui


Back by popular demand, we will be offering a potluck community event, hosted by Pat DeNeui, after church on Sunday, August 10th.

Get this on your calendars now!

More details about food, games, etc., to come in July!

It is good to come together as community and enjoy a good meal, share some stories, and laugh and enjoy the weather and one another.

July 2025 SUNDAY SCHEDULE: 8:30 am Sunday School, 10am Worship, Child Care & Nursery, 3:30pm Table Grace

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Some groups on break!						
6 Sunday School On Break 10:00 am Worship	7 Chair Yoga class on break until Sept. 8th	8 11:00am-1pm Lions Club Fellowship Hall 5:30-8:30 pm Woodturners Fellowship Hall	9 No Staff Meeting NO ABW Meeting for July & August	10 Bible Study On Break Choir on Break	11 9:30 am TOPS Rm. 102	12 Widows' Group on Break
10:00 am Worship WIDOWS DEADLINE Senior High Camp July 13 th - 19 th	14	15 11:00am-1pm Lions Club Fireside Room 6:30 pm Stewardship Team Room 102	16 11:15 Staff Meeting	17	18 9:30 am TOPS Rm. 102 1:00 pm Ladies Luncheon At Rivers Edge	19
20 10:00 am Worship Junior High Camp July 20 th - 26 th	21	22 11:00am-1pm Lions Club Fireside Room	23 11:15 Staff Meeting 6:30 pm Executive Leadership Team Meeting	24	25 9:30 am TOPS Rm. 102	26 8:00 am Men's Breakfast Fireside Room
27 10:00 am Worship Elementary Camp July 27 th - 31 st	28	29 11:00am-1pm Lions Club Fireside Room	30 11:15 Staff Meeting	31		

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF OLYMPIA

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Contact Information

360-357-3881
Email: olyfbc@aol.com
Web: fbcolympia.org

Church Staff

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

July 2025 • Sermons and Scriptures • Olympia First Baptist Church

Sunday, July 6th – Rev. Mylinda Baits,
Guest Preacher
Sermon Text: Luke 10:1–11, 16–20

Sunday, July 13th – Rev. Mark Rambo
Sermon Text: Luke 10:25–37
Sermon Title: The Anti-Hero
Written Word: Colossians 1:1–14
Written Word: Psalm 25:1–10

Sunday, July 20th – Rev. Mark Rambo
Sermon Text: Luke 10:38–42
Sermon Title: Choosing the Better Part
Written Word: Colossians 1:15–28
Written Word: Psalm 15

Sunday, July 27th – Rev. Mark Rambo
Sermon Text: Luke 11:1–13
Sermon Title: Intention
Written Word: Genesis 18:20–32
Written Word: Psalm 138



“

**We wait in hope for
the Lord; he is our
help and our shield.**

PSALM 55:20
faithsharer.com