

***Olympia
First
Baptist
Church***

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The Thin Place:

Where the Sacred and the Ordinary Collide

My surgery is next week. Actually, by the time you read this, surgery day will have arrived. I am so thankful for you, the people of God, here on the corner of 9th and Washington. Your prayers, encouragement, love, and support for myself and for Kathleen, has made this process and mini-journey with Cornelius manageable and fear-less. Though we will not see one another, face-to-face, during my recovery, I find a great deal of comfort and confidence in knowing that our life together with God is not dependent on me. What we do here at Oly First, for God and others, is truly:

“the work of the people.”

I am thankful for a strong congregation; strong lay leadership; a strong staff; strong region support. Mostly, I am thankful for a God who has gifted each of you; gifted us as a congregation; and a God who works endlessly, behind the scenes, to bring good into our lives and into our world. Even in the midst of tough stuff, like cancer, broken relationships, reconciling and repairing relationships, uncertainty & despair, etc., God is at work, loving, forgiving, healing, repairing, extending grace and acceptance.

I am thankful that the Rev. Joan Friesen is willing, and has the time, to step in as “Acting Pastor” during my medical leave. Joan brings a sharp mind, compassionate heart, and great organizational skills and ministerial experience to us. Joan, along with our Executive Leadership Team, will bring their gifts, experience, and trust in God to the forefront as we continue to be a people, called by God, to engage others with the love and grace of Jesus Christ. Add to that mix, the wonderful staff of Lela DePaolo, John Fesenbek, and Jonathan Spatola-Knoll, and it will seem like we haven’t skipped a beat at all. Ministry will continue. Worship will continue. Serving others with grace, compassion and care will continue. Checking in on one another, providing congregational care, praying, encouraging, visiting, loving one another, will continue. The work of Christ will continue as we walk humbly, love completely, and live differently!

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Last thing. I'm a person who relies upon two things that God has given to all of us:

Hope and Perseverance.

These gifts are not separate but intertwined, I believe. Each of us needs hope. We need to believe that there are better days ahead of us; to believe that we have purpose, a place & people where we belong. But hope by itself is incomplete. We need that inner strength, that inner drive to move us forward when obstacles get in our way and/or, when we fail. Likewise, that perseverance is incomplete if we don't believe in a future, a place of hopefulness for _____ (fill-in-your-own-response).

Below are two scriptures from Paul's Letter to the church in Rome, that speak to this intertwined gift from God, hope and perseverance...

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 15:13

New Revised Standard Version

Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

Romans 5:3—5

Contemporary English Version

Continued pg 3...

During my medical leave/recovery, be mindful of these two pieces of scripture.

Read them from time to time; pray over them and through them.

Fill yourself, led by the surprising work of the Spirit, with hope & perseverance!

I am so proud to be the Pastor of this faith community of ragamuffins!

I am proud of who you are and who we are becoming as God continues to do a good work in you, individually and as a community.

Blessings and Joy!

Humble over Hype!

Pastor Mark (Rev)

The Rev. Joan Friesen will serve as “Acting Pastor” during this interim time frame. There will be a few Sundays that Joan will not be available due to previous commitments, but she will secure pulpit supply for those Sundays. She will also coordinate/facilitate with Lela, in the church office, as well as with the Deacons and Executive Leadership team, when it comes to congregational care and other needs. Joan and Sandi Swarthout, as Church Moderator, have met with Pastor Mark to come up with a comprehensive plan of pastoral care and ministerial presence during his time away. This will not be a full-time position but Joan will be the point person to coordinate and facilitate many of the areas that Pastor Mark is responsible for.

An important note:

With Pastor Mark on medical leave and Rev. Joan Friesen stepping in as Acting Pastor during this time, if you have a question, need, need a visit, etc., please contact Lela in the Church Office, your team of Deacons, and/or Rev. Joan, directly. Please do not call on Pastor Caroline. Pastor Caroline is no longer, officially, on staff. We do plan to throw her an official retirement party, later in the year, once Pastor Mark is back and we have finished up hosting the Evergreen Annual Gathering. Thank you!

Getting Ready for the Big Party!

Joan Friesen

What an honor to be able to host our Evergreen brothers and sisters this October, and thank you to those who are already at work getting our “house” clean and prepared for all our guests. We’ve created opportunities for lots of people to participate in the work that needs to be done.

If you can join us for a Saturday morning workday, please do! We’ll be working inside and out. Each workday will be held from 9-noon on

September 6th

September 27th

If you have some weekday time, please coordinate with one of our room leaders AND list your work on the sign-in sheets outside the office. Deep cleaning and windows are needed throughout!

We also need some of you with artistic skill to work on some specific decorating and art projects, so please talk with Joan Friesen if you’re interested. We’d like to paint our motto on the entry wall, do a greeting bulletin board downstairs, and upgrade some outdoor signage.

Some of the tasks we have in mind will need to be funded. Stewardship has long been looking at making sure we have better handicap restroom access. The flooring in the Fireside Room needs to be replaced. And there are places that need some fresh paint. If you can give a little extra to help make those projects happen, that will also be appreciated.

In gratitude, Jan Downen, Joan Friesen, Meggin Turk
Annual Gathering Planning Team

It may be August but I am dreaming of the women's Christmas Brunch on December 6th the "My Best Friends" group will bring a program of Christmas music and Kat Stoker is our speaker. Kat is prepared calm, and will be a blessing as we begin our journey to Christmas.



Are you going through closets, cupboards and the drawers this summer? Getting rid of unneeded items? Moving? Remember our Treasure Room at the Brunch! Puzzles, games, housewares, decorations, all kinds of nic-naks are welcome.

We will also have our "Baptist Bakery".. what a hit is was last year. Offering more than cookies was a plus an we will try to add more items this year.

I am working on programming for fall and "britches for boys". We will send the last of made dresses off in September and be project.



a focus on making our pillowcase and fabric ready to start on a new

Enjoy the rest of the summer.

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FBC MUSIC COMMITTEE PRESENTS

TIME FOR A TUNE UP

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.

Camp Bethel's

Fall Family "Fun" draiser

Help Camp Bethel make it through the cold winter

Sunday August 31, 2025 2 pm - 7 pm

Silent Auction / Games / Dinner / Dessert

The winner of our \$35.00, Quilt Raffle being drawn

Bring your wallet & check book for silent auction, art work,

Or just a donation.

Bring dollar bills to play games like BINGO, Left-Right-Center

Dinner: Tickets \$25 Meatloaf, Baked Potato Bar, Salad

Yummy Desserts by the pound donations

Support Camp Bethel

Art by our summer campers will be on sale

347 Kirkpatrick Rd. Hoquiam, Wa 98550

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STARTING AGAIN IN SEPTEMBER:

PASTOR SAM'S SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS

Starting on September 14th

How to Interpret the Bible?

Reading Scripture often presents problems for us so on Sept 14 I will begin teaching a class to help you better read Scripture and answer your Bible questions. The class discussions are intended to enable you to gain more confidence when you open God's Book. Pastor Sam

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

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<div> <div> some groups on break! </div> <div> Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow </div> </div>						
3 Sunday School <u>On Break</u> 10:00 am Worship	4 Chair Yoga <u>On Break</u> until Sept. 8th 7:00-9:30 pm Voices of the Sound Fellowship Hall, Rm 102, Fireside Room	5 11:00am-1pm Lions Club Fireside Room	6 11:15 Staff Meeting	7 Bible Study <u>On Break</u> Choir <u>On Break</u>	8 9:30 am TOPS Rm. 102	9 Widows' Group <u>On Break</u>
10 10:00 am Worship All Church Picnic Pat De Neu's house 12:30 (After Service)	11 7:00-9:30 pm Voices of the Sound Fellowship Hall, Rm 102, Fireside Room	12 11:00am-1pm Lions Club Fireside Room 5:30-8:30 pm Woodturners Fellowship Hall	13 11:15 Staff Meeting NO ABW Meeting In August	14	15 9:30 am TOPS Rm. 102 1:00 pm Ladies Luncheon At Rivers Edge	16
17 10:00 am Worship WINDOWS DEADLINE!	18 7:00-9:30 pm Voices of the Sound Fellowship Hall, Rm 102, Fireside Room	19 11:00am-1pm Lions Club Fireside Room 6:30 pm Stewardship Team Room 102 Pastor Mark Surgery	20 11:15 Staff Meeting	21	22 9:30 am TOPS Rm. 102	23
24 10:00 am Worship	25 7:00-9:30 pm Voices of the Sound Fellowship Hall, Rm 102, Fireside Room	26 11:00am-1pm Lions Club Fireside Room	27 11:15 Staff Meeting 6:30 pm Executive Leadership Team Meeting	28	29 9:30 am TOPS Rm. 102	30 Men's Breakfast <u>On Break</u>
31 10:00 am Worship	<i>"Lift up your eyes and look to the heavens: Who created all these? He who brings out the starry host one by one and calls forth each of them by name." Isaiah 40:26</i>					

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF OLYMPIA

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Church Staff

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

