

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF OLYMPIA

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Non-Profit
Organization
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Return Service Requested

September 2022 • Sermons and Scriptures • Olympia First Baptist Church

Sunday, September 4th

Luke 14:25—33
“Travel Restriction Alert”
Rev. Mark Rambo

Sunday, September 11th

Luke 15:1—10
“Lost and Found”
Rev. Mark Rambo

Sunday, September 18th

Luke 24:13—32
“That Wasn’t on the Itinerary”
Rev. Mark Rambo

Sunday, September 25th

Mission Days Kickoff Sunday
Guest Preacher



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SEPTEMBER

WINDOWS

2022

First Baptist Church Olympia

Inside this issue:

Front Page:
Pastor Mark:
THE THIN PLACE

WE ARE ON A
JOURNEY: SOME
NEXT STEPS,
CHRISTIAN ED
NOTICE 2 & 3

LUIS MATOS
ENDORSED BY
INTERNATIONAL
MINISTRIES 4

INSERT:
SEPTEMBER
BIRTHDAYS,
SAVE THE DATES:
CHURCH PICNIC
ETC. 5

EVERGREEN 2022
ANNUAL MEETING 6

2nd Insert: MATOS'
SUMMER UPDATE

DEACON'S ARTICLE 7
MEGGIN TURK

WOMEN'S
MINISTRY
& MODERATOR
REPORT 8
Jean Heidal

MEMORIAL SERVICE 9
FOR KEN LEWIS,
THANK YOU'S, &
THE WILSON'S 58TH
ANNIVERSARY

The Thin Place: Where the Ordinary and Sacred Collide

I lift my eyes to the mountains – from where will my help come?

My help comes from YHWH, who made heaven and earth!

YHWH won't let our footsteps slip; our Guardian never sleeps. The Guardian of Israel will never slumber, never sleep! YHWH is our Guardian; YHWH is our shade; with God by our side, the sun cannot overpower us by day, nor the moon at night. YHWH guards us from harm, guards our lives. HYWH guards our coming back, now and forever.

Psalm 121 – The Inclusive Bible

During times of uncertainty, turmoil and chaos, there is comfort and hope knowing that we are not alone. We have others for these times but more importantly, we have a God who is present, able, and willing to stand in the gaps of our lives and provide love, guidance, forgiveness, and yes, help! Knowing that; experiencing that mystery in small and large ways are why we go forward, I think. As people of faith, even when that faith seems so small and tenuous, our God experiences carry us, hold us, comfort us and offer us, if not assurance, the hope for better days. Hope for tomorrow. Hope for a future.

In this Edition of the Windows, you will find opportunities, gatherings, community life, that should give you hope. A hope that says we are on our way toward what God has in store for us. Today, it may be an unknown future, but it's a future grounded/rooted in prayer, listening and discernment. Most importantly, I hope, it is full of surprises. I want to be surprised by what God is doing and asking us to do with God. When was the last time God surprised you? I don't know about you, but I'm looking forward to those type of moments, for all of us.

Where does our help come from?

It comes from YHWY God, the Maker of heaven and earth!

Now and forever!

Blessings and Joy!

Pastor Mark

We Are on a Journey: Some Next Steps

As the first of September rolls out, I wanted to share part of the process we are using to help us discern what are important values for us as a congregation; what we perceive we do well as the church of Jesus Christ on 9th & Washington, and how the stories, dreams and wants we have for our church community, can give us direction and vision for the mission and ministry God has for us.

During the summer, we had three separate Fireside Chat's that focused on listening to one another as we shared our responses to a series of questions that were asked. Below are questions that were covered, with the ones in ***bold italics*** that were emphasized:

What faith tradition, if any, were you raised in?

What brought you to Oly First?

What do you want people to experience when they come here? (List 3)

What do you think we do well here, as a congregation? (List 3)

What about the church's future are you excited about?

My first take away was that we needed more time. The conversations were good, but I'm sure we could have gone a bit deeper if we had had more time. There is always a balance that you want to strike between honoring people's time, and giving adequate time for people to share what is important to them. It's an imperfect system/attempt, but we do our best.

On Wednesday, August 24th, I went to Kent to meet with Rev. Doug Avilesbernal, our Evergreen Executive Minister and Evergreen's new Executive Associate Minister, Rev. Sam Kim. Sam's ministry emphasis is to help churches explore the work of innovation and renewal. We had, in my estimation, a really productive and positive meeting. I came away feeling affirmed, heard, and encouraged that we are heading in the right direction. I asked Sam (Rev. Kim) to email his summary of what we discussed so I could more accurately relay it to you. Below is what he sent me so that all of us have an idea of what some of the next steps will look like this fall.:

Hi Mark!

It was great meeting with you today. I'm so encouraged at how God has been working through all your work and in your community.

Some takeaways:

1. The "Fireside Chat" questions have been very helpful to highlight that hospitality and relational connection are very strong values for your church. Also, the secondary thing that stands out is the desire for spiritual nurturing. It sounds like a lot of people are involved in heavy "serving oriented" work throughout the week, so finding a robust Christianity that feeds the soul, gives them purpose, and lifts their spirits seems very key.

Cont. pg 3...



A Thank You note from Carol Lewis:



Thank you to everyone for the thoughts, prayers & cards - and for all the caring love that has been shown to me and to my family.

The Memorial Service for Ken is on the 17th of September in the Sanctuary at 12:30 pm, reception to follow.



Dear Church Family,

I cannot thank you enough for your thoughtfulness and prayers during my latest medical hiccup. I have always appreciated that we are a praying congregation and the past several years I have been carried by those prayers. The cards, emails and texts have been lovely... especially as I have been particularly annoyed by this latest leg situation.

Bless you for carrying me in prayer.

Many thanks,

Kathleen

All Church Picnic

Sunday, September 18th, after Worship • Tumwater Historical Park Shelter
(802 Deschutes Way SE, Tumwater, 98501)

We gather to eat, laugh, play, and enjoy the Fall weather and the community!

There will be Lawn games and plenty of food.

Each person (family unit) brings some kind of cooked chicken to share.

Last Names A—M, bring a Salad to share

Last Names N—Z, bring a Dessert to share

The Church will supply paper plates, plastic ware, coffee, punch and napkins.

There might even be a baked bean sighting.

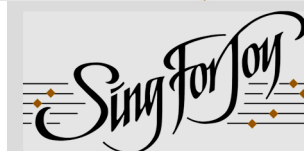


Happy Anniversary, Frank and Karen Wilson!

August 29th, marked 58 years of wedded love!



A notice from Karen Wilson: Choir rehearsals resume on Wednesdays September 7th!



This fall we are going to focus on our American Baptist missions and our Global Servants that worship in our midst. These will be interesting and profound messages that we hear from those with "boots on the ground" in several mission areas.

On **September 14** we will hear from Sarah Matos (maybe Luis too) on their new assignment in Mexico. Where will they be? What is the scope of their ministry there? Come for this informative meeting.

October 13 we will hear from Katrina Williams on their work in Thailand. The Williams are on a short term visit in the USA, but will be returning to Thailand later in the month of October . When **November 9** rolls around we will hear from Rev. Mylinda Baits on her world travels to teach and help heal, through art, those who are dealing with trauma. That's quite a line up of program guests -- Mark your calendars now so you don't miss a single meeting! Bring a sack lunch at noon, beverages and dessert provided. We will have a short business meeting after lunch and then the program.

Don't forget our **Christmas Brunch in December!** More details to follow, but for now, look in your closets and cupboards for items to be sold in the Treasure Room! We have room at the church for storage, contact Jan Downen for more information. The Cookie Room will be back as well so think about what treats you could make and donate.

As this amazing summer comes to an end I look forward to the fellowship of our women once again.

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: **Mission Board: A note from the Chair, Wendy Wilson** :
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We would like to hear from our church family, about what lights you up when it comes to mission work! Is there a special organization that you are passionate about? Please let us know and we would like to show case your commitment by having a Mission-a-Month!

Please fill out the form and drop it off at the church office or put it in the mission mail box upstairs next to the offices.

Please see the insert form here in Windows.

Thank You!!! Wendy

1. We encourage you to continue the great work of the "fireside chats" by turning it into a season of multi-tiered "Listening Sessions" to get honest feedback from your church. The three tiers of listening could be: a) one on one conversations with diverse representatives of your community b) smaller and intimate groups that encourage honest feedback like your "Fireside Chats" and c) congregational level town halls.

2. We were thinking it would be great for us to meet through different stages of your journey so that we can help you along the way and process what the Spirit is revealing along the way. We thought of these stages.

- a. Listen
- b. Empathize
- c. Gather insights
Form an action plan

Once you finish the listening stage, we'll meet again to talk about next steps!

Our ultimate hope is for you to discover what God has already created at Olympia First. God has already called you to something wonderful and we just want to keep in step with the Spirit! We're excited for what's next!

Blessings,

Sam

As you can see, hopefully, we are firmly in Phase/Stage 1 – Listening. We will begin organizing some multi-tiered listening opportunities so we can continue to gather your insights and feedback around a series of questions that are similar to the questions we asked this summer. This phase/stage will take some time to work ourselves through, but it is necessary and important work that we need to do together.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask. I will do my best to answer them. If you would like to talk to Rev. Sam Kim, I am sure we can arrange that as well. Personally, I am so thankful for both Doug and Sam's ministry to me as a Pastor and toward us as a church community. We are in good hands.

I hope you get a sense of where we are in this journey we are taking as a faith community. As you can see, we are on our way, but at the same time, we are not very far down the road, as of yet. This first stage will take longer than we probably want, but it's important to hear and retrieve as much information from one another as possible. As soon as we have some "listening" opportunities in place, we will get that information out to you.

Blessings and Joy!

Pastor Mark

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A Note regarding Christian Education/Spiritual Formation ...

The Board of Christian Ed/Spiritual Formation has been working on discipleship opportunities that are familiar as well as some new and repurposed models of discipleship. We weren't quite ready to go to print for this Edition of the Windows, but you will be receiving a separate mailing that outlines what is in store this coming season. Think of it as a Windows supplement! Thank you.

Our Congratulations to Luis Matos!

NEWS POSTED ON JUNE 29, 2022

International Ministries endorses Luis Matos to serve in Mexico Husband of International Ministries



A Thank You note from the Matos family:

Did you know that the Emmaus House in the parking lot has been a home for International Ministries' Global Servants for the last few years? This is an example of how Oly First supports global mission, by caring for us and providing us a space to call home. For the past two years, yes that's right, TWO YEARS, we (The Matos') have been so grateful for the church in allowing us to live here during the pandemic. When everything was so uncertain our housing was never an uncertainty and for that we thank God and the Oly First family! We will remember this house and parking lot as where our marriage began. We will miss looking out from the laundry room at the parking lot and reminisce over our Covid drive-in wedding. 😊 Not everyone gets to live at their wedding venue! So, where are we going? We are moving to an apartment in Lacey to finish out my US home assignment time. We will be traveling to supporting churches to give reports on how God has been working in our lives, my ministry with the Talita Cumi Girls Club program, our ministry as a couple in Oaxaca, and having a baby girl before Luis gets commissioned and the three of us move to Mexico! That might sound exhausting, but we are so excited for this next chapter in our lives! We look forward to offering hospitality to you when you visit us in Oaxaca! The ministry of hospitality is continuing as we move out and the William family move in for a few months before heading back to Thailand. ¡Muchas gracias!

From, Sarah and Luis Matos

Deacon's Board

Meggin Turk

We are being asked in our deacon meeting and as members of our church to imagine ways in which we can better serve our community.

Our community is this wonderful family of families called Church. We know that if we walk, talk and pray together that we can stay together and we can work, play and stand together in Jesus' name. We need to listen to be truly able to do that... listen to God's voice and listen to each other. We need to be curious about others.

In my readings I have learned that listening cracks open the door to *obedience*... Obedience comes from the Latin, *oboedire*, to give ear, to harken, to listen. The Benedictine writer Esther de Waal says that obedience moves us from our "contemporary obsession with the self," and inclines us toward others. . . . [St. Benedict] moves beyond the common understanding of the word as solely an authoritarian, top-down dynamic. He stresses instead *mutual obedience*, a horizontal relationship where careful listening and consideration is due to each member of the community from each member, as brothers and sisters. *It is by this way of obedience*, he says, *that we go to God*.

Author Esther de Waal describes how in Benedictine spirituality there is an inherent connection between listening and responsive action:

"To listen closely, with every fibre of our being, at every moment of the day, is one of the most difficult things in the world, and yet it is *essential* if we mean to find the God whom we are seeking. If we stop listening to what we find hard to take then, as the Abbot of St. Benoît-sur-Loire puts it in a striking phrase, 'We're likely to pass God by without even noticing Him. And now it is our obedience which proves that we have been paying close attention. . . . So to obey [in the Benedictine tradition] really means to hear and then act upon what we have heard, or, in other words, to see that the listening achieves its aim. We are not being truly attentive unless we are prepared to act on what we hear. If we hear and do nothing more about it, then the sounds have simply fallen on our ears and it is not apparent that we have actually heard them at all. "

So, I am curious how YOU think we can better serve our community! What are your dreams and aspirations? I hope you will seek me out and let me know so that we can work on this together!

I'm listening! 😊