

John Knox Presbyterian Church

March 15, 2026

Fourth Sunday in Lent

*The good news is...
protection and care
for the vulnerable*



Welcome! Please be seated and prepare your hearts *and minds* for worship.

GATHERING INTO GOD'S PRESENCE

Prelude

Poem

“Unwritten Agreement”

Rev. Sarah Speed

Words of Welcome

The Peace of Christ be with you ... and also with you.

* Call to Worship

God loves the field mouse.

God loves the crows that take flight when church bells ring.

God loves the baby, cooing in the back pew.

God loves the child who rocks and claps.

God loves the one with wrinkled hands and soft eyes.

God loves the bumblebees and the tabby cats.

God loves those who walk, crawl, and roll.

God loves the giant oaks and the evergreens, standing strong over all of us.

God loves the young, the impressionable, and the earnest.

There is no bit of creation that God does not love.

So let us worship this good-news God!

Amen.

* Hymn

“O God of Every Nation”

#756

* Call to Confession

* Responsive Prayer of Confession and Words of Forgiveness

God said, “When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them.”

Holy God, we confess, we have mistreated the immigrants in our land.

Jesus said, “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.”

We confess, we have clung to guns and war more than we have pursued peace.

God said, “When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, do not glean what is left; it shall be for the alien, the orphan, and the widow.”

We confess, we have hoarded our resources and failed to care for our neighbors.

Jesus said, “Let the children come to me, and do not stop them.”

We confess, we have gatekept the good news in unfair ways.

Fortunately for all of us, God also said,

“Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;

I have called you by name; you are mine.”

**By God's grace, despite our sin and shortcomings,
we are redeemed, claimed, forgiven, and loved.**

May this good news change our lives!

***Sung Response** "Holy, Most Holy Lord" twice #597
(Sanna, sannanina)

LISTENING FOR GOD'S WORD

Prayer for Illumination

First Reading Matthew 19: 13-15 Common English Bible

Some people brought children to Jesus so that he would place his hands on them and pray. But the disciples scolded them. "Allow the children to come to me," Jesus said. "Don't forbid them, because the kingdom of heaven belongs to people like these children." Then he blessed the children and went away from there.

This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Time with our Young and Growing

Second Reading Deuteronomy 24: 17-22 Common English Bible

Don't obstruct the legal rights of an immigrant or orphan. Don't take a widow's coat as pledge for a loan. Remember how you were a slave in Egypt but how the LORD your God saved you from that. That's why I'm commanding you to do this thing.

Whenever you are reaping the harvest of your field and you leave some grain in the field, don't go back and get it. Let it go to the immigrants, the orphans, and the widows so that the LORD your God blesses you in all that you do. Similarly, when you beat the olives off your olive trees, don't go back over them twice. Let the leftovers go to the immigrants, the orphans, and the widows. Again, when you pick the grapes of your vineyard, don't pick them over twice. Let the leftovers go to the immigrants, the orphans, and the widows. Remember how you were a slave in Egypt. That's why I am commanding you to do this thing.

This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Rev. Maggie Lewis

*** Affirmation of Faith**

I believe in the good news of Jesus Christ.

**It sounds like welcome
and feels like home.**

**It sounds like laughter
and feels like mercy.**

**It sounds like love
and feels like a seat at the table,
so I believe in the good news of Jesus Christ.**

I have seen it alive in the world.

**And even when my heart aches,
even when wars rage,**

Church and Community Life

THIS LENT, we return to the roots of Jesus' life and teaching—good news that is radical, joyful, and grounding—calling us to love our neighbors, seek justice, care for the vulnerable, and trust God's expansive grace. Even when it challenges or unsettles us, the good news is alive among us, inviting us not just to believe it, but to embody it in a world hungry for hope.

PRAYERS for Shirley's continued recovery are appreciated, and she also appreciates cards and visitors. She will be in Room 202, Salem Transitional Care of Cascadia, located at 3445 Boone Rd SE, Salem, OR 97317, for a couple of weeks to regain her strength. Their phone number is 503-576-3000. This facility is a separate building from Bonaventure South, but located in the same complex.

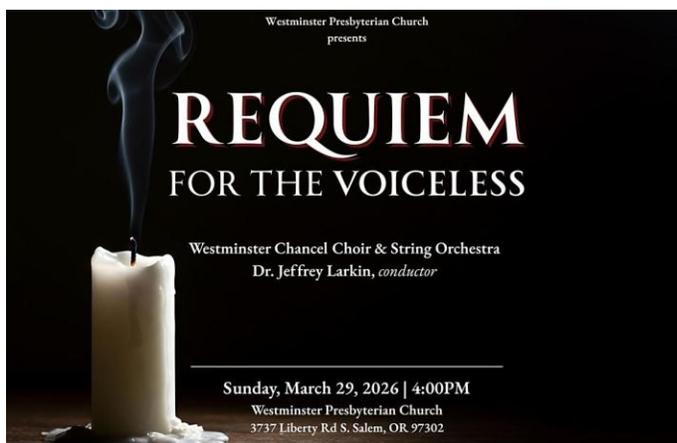
FELLOWSHIP TIME after worship is a wonderful time to talk with friends and make new ones. It's even more pleasant with goodies in hand. Please see Joan to provide goodies, just bring some, or leave a free-will offering in the basket on the table so we can purchase refreshments when home-baked treats aren't available. Thanks!

CHRIST JAR OFFERING received today supports Congregations Helping People. Once a month, on the third Sunday, we gather coins (and we'll take paper money and checks, too!) to support this organization that contributes toward meeting emergency needs of our Salem-Keizer neighbors. If you want to know more about what they do or what you can do to help, please talk with Sheila.

PLEASE JOIN in the March birthday and anniversary celebration in the Social Hall after worship today.

THANK YOU for your generous gifts to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. We received \$452 to join with others' gifts to help those in need in the US and around the world.

Please plan to bring **FLOWERS FOR THE FLOWERED CROSS** on Easter. If you want to help attach the flowers to the cross, see Dixie.



On **Sunday, March 29th, at 4:00 PM**, come to Westminster Presbyterian Church for an evening of music that remembers, bears witness, and looks toward hope. Featuring the Westminster Chancel Choir and String Orchestra, Requiem for the Voiceless offers a powerful choral and orchestral journey honoring stories that must not be forgotten.

When Voices Fell, we mourn the lives and voices lost too soon. Stories Not Lost gathers memory, resilience, and the enduring echoes of truth. And A Shared Tomorrow turns our gaze forward—toward healing, compassion, and the promise of a more just world.

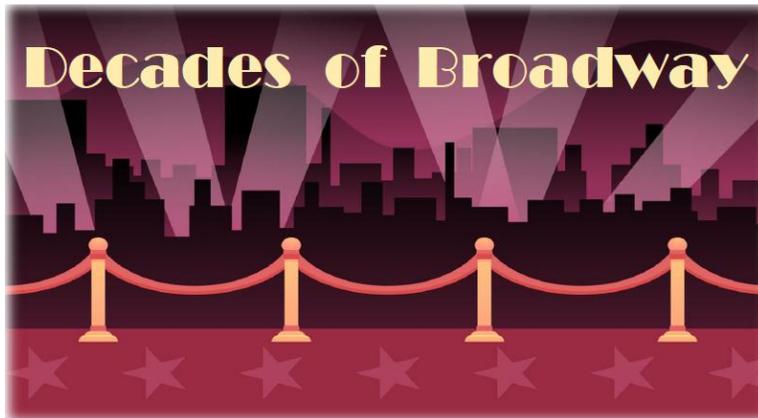
Looking Ahead

- March 17 7:00** Session Meeting – Zoom
- March 22 10:30** Fifth Sunday in Lent
Worship: *The good news is... rooted in justice, mercy, and faithfulness*
- March 29 10:30** Sixth Sunday in Lent – Palm Sunday
Worship: *The good news is... inspiring us to act*
- 4:00** Requiem for the Voiceless
Westminster Chancel Choir & String Orchestra, Westminster Pres, Salem
- April 2 6:00** Maundy Thursday meal @ JKPC and table worship with Communion
- April 3 7:00** Westminster Pres Good Friday service
- April 5 10:30** **RESURRECTION OF THE LORD-Easter**
Flowered cross
Enhanced fellowship time

March Celebrations

Birthdays			
2	Sally H	9	Bronwyn C.
8	Adam R.	31	CJ H.
Anniversary			
6	CJ and Carrie H.		

Salem Community Chorus Invites You to Our Spring Concert Save the Date(s)!



Come hear songs from each decade of the last 100 years, from Gershwin to Sondheim to Lin-Manuel Miranda. Enjoy some of Broadway's rock numbers, romantic ballads, jazzy pieces, and gospel-style arrangements. All concerts are FREE and everyone is welcome.

Monday, May 11 – 6:30 pm @ St. Mark Lutheran Church

Saturday, May 16 – 3:30 pm @ Oak Park Church of God

Monday, May 18 – 6:30 pm @ St. Mark Lutheran Church



Refugee resettlement has been taking place in the state of Oregon since 1975. Initially, the Salem community helped to welcome many refugees, particularly from Vietnam and Cambodia, but for the past 30 years all refugees who were chosen for resettlement in the state of Oregon were resettled in the Portland metro area.

Due to the rising costs of housing in Portland, the Resettlement Agency Catholic Charities expanded resettlement to the city of Salem at the end of 2015 through the courageous leadership of resettlement expert, Jenny Barischoff. There was an overwhelming response of community support and volunteer efforts throughout the city. The community quickly realized the need for a centralized coordinating entity to develop the long-term infrastructure needed to support refugee resettlement in the city.

In October 2016, Salem Leadership Foundation, in partnership with Catholic Charities and Salem Alliance Church, hosted a series of lunch meetings called “Welcoming Our New Neighbors.” The purpose of these meetings was to bring together the various groups and organizations that were seeking to care for refugees and explore how the efforts could be coordinated.

At this same time, Salem For Refugees’ founders, Doug & Anya Holcomb, returned from Eastern Europe where they witnessed the global refugee crisis first-hand at a refugee camp in Macedonia. As they met refugees in Salem who were forced to flee their homelands due to war, persecution and violence, they, along with Salem Alliance Church, felt compelled to respond. They joined the Salem Alliance Church staff as Pastors of Refugee Ministries. Motivated by the teachings of Jesus to “love your neighbor as yourself,” they began to dream of a community that would welcome our global neighbors with dignity and compassion.

Doug and Anya joined the “Welcoming Our New Neighbors” meetings. At the end of the meetings, they presented the group with an idea to form a network called Salem For Refugees to continue the community collaboration in caring for refugees. The group voted, “Yes!” and Salem For Refugees was born!

Salem Alliance Church caught the vision from the beginning and allocated time in Doug and Anya’s staff roles to lead Salem For Refugees. They also provided significant start-up funding, office space, facility use, vehicles, volunteers, and more. Salem Leadership Foundation stepped up to be the fiscal sponsor of Salem For Refugees, providing bookkeeping, accounting, organizational coaching, and invaluable community connections.

Along with these two founding partners, Salem For Refugees works with a broad network of volunteers, faith communities, businesses, non-profits, government organizations,

resettlement agencies, and civic groups to provide services and resources to make our city a welcoming place for refugees – our new neighbors.

In 2021, Salem For Refugees became an official Refugee Resettlement Agency as an affiliate of an international organization called World Relief. SFR is contracted with World Relief to do direct Reception and Placement of new refugee arrivals that are designated to World Relief through the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement. During this time, Salem For Refugees also became its own independent 501c3 nonprofit organization.

We are so grateful to our founding partners Salem Alliance Church, Salem Leadership Foundation, and Catholic Charities of Oregon for sharing our vision and helping us reach this milestone as an organization. Our founding partners continue to support Salem For Refugees and maintain ongoing representation on the Salem For Refugees Board of Directors.

Salem For Refugees has welcomed hundreds of refugees, asylees, and asylum seekers from a variety of countries including Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Syria, Somalia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Central African Republic, Ivory Coast, Sudan, South Sudan, Ukraine & Venezuela. We have seen these courageous new neighbors positively impact Salem/Keizer in more ways than can be counted. It is an incredible privilege to walk alongside them and learn from them as they establish their lives in the community.



1400 Broadway St. NE Salem, OR 97301

503-714-1339

salemforrefugees.org

email: Info@salemforrefugees.org



**ONE GREAT
HOUR OF SHARING**

Immediately following World War II, U.S. Protestant churches made appeals for relief and reconstruction in areas devastated by the war, primarily Europe and Asia. In 1949, the leaders of several denominations formed a committee to organize an appeal for support of the separate campaigns of their churches.

A program called One Great Hour was broadcast on the evening of Saturday, March 26, 1949, over major networks and many independent stations. The script was written under the direction of playwright Robert Sherwood. The cast included some of the foremost dramatic and musical talents of the time; President Harry Truman brought greetings. The broadcast closed with a

request that listeners attend their local church the following morning and make a sacrificial contribution. It was estimated that more than 75,000 churches participated.

The next year, the offering was repeated, using the name “One Great Hour of Sharing” for the first time. At times, One Great Hour of Sharing was coordinated with the Roman Catholic Bishops’ Fund Appeal for Overseas Aid and the Jewish Passover Appeal.

From the beginning, this has been an ecumenical effort. While each denomination allocates its gifts differently, all use their funds for ministries of disaster relief, refugee assistance, and development aid. Today, projects supported by One Great Hour of Sharing are under way in more than one hundred countries, including the United States and Canada. Through the PC(USA), our gifts bring a beacon of love and hope in our world and put the power of healing into the hands of those who need it most. Join with Presbyterians and other people of faith worldwide in answering the prophet Micah’s call to do justice as you give generously to this special offering.

John Knox Presbyterian Church (USA)

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