

ANNUAL MEETING

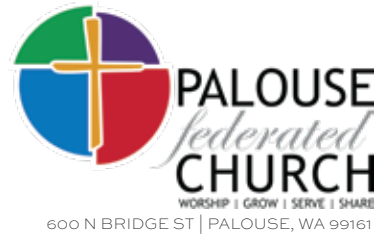
JOIN US FOR OUR ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING
SUNDAY | JANUARY 24 | 5 PM

Pastor Corey & the Church Leadership Team will host our annual business meeting, which will include ministry and financial updates. **The Zoom link and call-in information will be sent by mail in mid-January, and by e-mail the week before.**

QUESTIONS?

Contact the church office:
(509) 878-1509

Or...e-mail Pastor Corey:
corey@palousechurch.org



JOHN READING PLAN

Join us on a journey through the Gospel of John. We're recommending a simple plan that covers one chapter a day. Simply pick a day to start and read one chapter every day and you'll be done in 21 days. If you want to join a You Version Bible App reading plan, let us know and we'll help you get started. New groups are starting all the time.

Day 1 - John 1	Day 12 - John 12
Day 2 - John 2	Day 13 - John 13
Day 3 - John 3	Day 14 - John 14
Day 4 - John 4	Day 15 - John 15
Day 5 - John 5	Day 16 - John 16
Day 6 - John 6	Day 17 - John 17
Day 7 - John 7	Day 18 - John 18
Day 8 - John 8	Day 19 - John 19
Day 9 - John 9	Day 20 - John 20
Day 10 - John 10	Day 21 - John 21
Day 11 - John 11	



Connections

January 2021



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Family Traditions

Jim Fielder, Board Chair

Family memories of Christmas are something we look back on every year and cherish. Sometimes memories turn into traditions that we carry over from year to year. I remember back when we saved our wrapping paper every year and used it over and over as the years went by. We would carefully unwrap each present, being sure not to tear it and preserve it for one more Christmas the following year. There was the joy of remembering that you received a sweater wrapped in that same paper years before.

It's important to take a trip back to the origins of a tradition and look at the reasons we started it. Back to the wrapping paper, the reason was simple, we didn't have money to waste on wrapping paper, so we recycled and used it again.

One family tradition that came from my generation was started by our son when he was 3 years old. It was his energy and love of Christmas Eve that made it a tradition that we worked to make sure happened every year.

Back on Christmas Eve 1982, we attended the early service that was designed more for kids. As with most Christmas Eve services, they ended with the singing of Silent Night and the passing of the "light" from the Christ candle that had been lit as the service started. Everyone in attendance lit their candle as the light was passed on down each row in the church. As the singing of the song went on, the room lights were dimmed and we raised our candles high into the air to let the light bathe the sanctuary in the candle's warm glow. At the end of the singing, the lights would come back up, and everyone extinguished their candles - everyone but that one 3-year-old, Tim. Tim was being assisted with his candle; however, he didn't want it to be blown out, he wanted to take it home. Carol and I didn't see it as a big deal

"We now had the light from the Christ candle burning in our home. Both Tim and Amy had created a tradition out of a challenge."

and we quietly exited the sanctuary through a side door and went to the car, with the candle still lit. It was raining that night and candles and rain don't mix. There were a few tears shed and that was the end of that. Till, next year, when as the candles once again were lit, it was time to try it again. Tim, now 4, and having discussed the situation with his older sister, Amy, had a plan. This time, a paper coffee cup was held over the candle on the way to the car and we made it all the way home with a lit candle. By the time we reached home, that candle was very short, and it was time to decide what to do. The two co-conspirators already had a plan. They had placed a candle on our dinner table and

they immediately transferred the flame. We now had the light from the Christ candle burning in our home. Both Tim and Amy had created a tradition out of a challenge.

Some of you will remember from my writing that we were a sailing family. That year for Valentines Day, Carol and the kids gave me a very nice brass anchor lamp. Not the electric variety, but one that burned lamp oil. As Christmas Eve approached that next year, I hatched an idea on how to carry the light home in a different way. I filled the lamp with oil and had it primed and ready to go. I carried it into the church and we passed the light that night from candle to candle and candle to lamp. We now had a lighted lamp that would burn for a couple of days, the light of the Christ candle. Every year after, and to this day, my tradition on Christmas Eve is to grab that lamp and get it ready. I polish the brass, clean the glass, trim the wick, fill it with lamp oil and set it by the door to be ready to take as we head to the Church.

A tradition was born, and we carry it on here in Palouse to this day. We take a picture and send it to each of our kids on Christmas Day. We retell the story and laugh about the night when we had tears, and the night we covered it with a coffee cup. We even were able to have Yui, our granddaughter from Tokyo, join us in the tradition on Christmas Eve 2017.

I love that lantern and the tradition. As the lantern runs out of oil and the light dies away, I reflect upon the idea that it's important to keep the light of Christ shining every day of the year. That's our job, God's light needs to shine from us.



Adult Bible Study Schedule Zoom Only

Tues. | 5:30 AM | Men Hybrid
Tues. | 10 AM | Mixed In-Person
Wed. | 9 AM | Ladies Hybrid
Wed. | 6:30 PM | Mixed Hybrid
Thurs. | 9 AM | Ladies Zoom

“As the lantern runs out of oil and the light dies away, I reflect upon the idea that it’s important to keep the light of Christ shining every day of the year.”

It’s a New Year

Pastor Corey Laughary

Happy New Year!

2020 was a year that we will likely not forget. But, we should begin this New Year by being thankful for God’s faithfulness and blessings in 2020. Though there were challenges, to be sure, the pandemic chief among them, the whole year was a gift from God.

Let us begin 2021 with clear-headed thankfulness. May we seek the deep happiness of true contentment in the Lord.

Bible Plan for the Year

If you have a goal to read more of the Bible in 2021, we have resources to help you.

- New ESV Study Bible
- Printed Bible reading plans
- Bible App reading plans
- Suggested: Nicky Gumbel’s “Bible in One Year” plan
- Suggested: The Bible Project Reading Plans

Spiritual Growth Plan Revised and Updated for 2021

In 2019, we produced the PFC Spiritual Growth Plan Binder. We now have a revised and updated Spiritual Growth Plan for 2021. We’ve geared the guide to be accessible and practical, while giving you options to go as deep as you want to into learning about our faith and growing spiritually.

If you are interested in a Spiritual Growth Plan please e-mail next@palousechurch.org and let us know, or call the church (509) 878-1509.

We will be rolling out podcasts, videos and upcoming newsletter articles that will help you put the guide into practice. If you end up liking the guide and want to give one to someone you know, inside or outside of our church family, please let us know. New content includes:

- A new introduction and “how to use this guide” section
- Book reviews and recommended resources
- A new section on our mission statement
- A new section on our church values
- A new section on Mourning & Rejoicing
- A new section on Self-Care
- A new section on Spiritual Disciplines

Youth Group Activities Zoom Only

**Middle School Youth Group
(Grades 6-8)
Wednesdays | 6:30 - 7:30 PM**

**Please contact Vanessa Moore
with any questions:**

**(509) 595-1910
vanessa@palousechurch.org**

First 40 of 2021

Tina Laughary

It seems I spend a lot of time talking about intentionality. It just keeps coming up in Bible Studies I lead or conversations I have. The truth is, it takes a lot of effort to live this life with intention, with a purpose that is greater than just making it through the day. We acknowledge that Jesus saved us so that we might live righteous lives that honor Him and bring Him glory, sharing His light with others. Most of us really want to do this. Most of us want our lives to be meaningful and actually heading somewhere as opposed to random and wandering. But how to we do this? How can we “check” ourselves to make sure we are heading in the direction we want to go?



This summer, while our family spent our Sabbatical in Kalispell, MT, we worshipped with Fresh Life Church. While we were there, Pastor Levi Lusko released a devotional book called, *Take Back Your Life: A 40-Day Interactive Journey to Thinking Right So You Can Live Right*. Corey went through it first and found it so helpful he recommended it to me. Friends, this book is such a wonderful tool to “check” your life trajectory. What I love most about it though, is that it is not just an evaluation tool, it is extremely practical, giving specific “next steps” for growth in life. The goal of the book is to help you bridge the gap between who you are and who God created you to be.

The Lusko book is an excellent resource, but it certainly isn’t the only one. The church has put together a binder FULL of excellent resources and direction for you if you are just beginning your spiritual journey or if you are trying to make a

course correction. The Spiritual Growth Plan is a FREE resource for you. For more information, or to receive your free binder, you can call the church office at (509) 878-1509, e-mail next@palousechurch.org or e-mail me: tclaughary@yahoo.com. The truth is, if you decide to live life more intentionally and you find yourself in need of a course correction there is help available and useful tools at the ready!

What if we all spent the first 40 days of 2021 being more intentional about our lives? What if we took this time to evaluate the trajectory our lives are heading and make some corrections? 2021 is upon us and life has not yet resumed to “normal.” Instead of bemoaning that fact, what if you used this time to work on yourself and your relationship with God and others? Just think what a difference that could make in the year to come! Are there areas of your life that you are unhappy with and you’d like to see change but just don’t know how to go about it? Maybe God is preparing you to tackle those areas now. It can be scary to think about changing areas of your life that you’ve struggled with—maybe for years. But, you don’t have to do this alone. The Holy Spirit is your guide, let Him be your cheerleader. Use the resources you have available and know that your church family is walking right alongside you as we all strive to walk more like our Savior Jesus. Join me friends. Let’s make the first 40 days of 2021 days of intention and growth.

“What if we all spent the first 40 days of 2021 being more intentional about our lives? What if we took this time to evaluate the trajectory our lives are heading and make some corrections?”

Back to John...

Pastor Corey Laughary



I am excited to get back to our journey through the Gospel of John, "That You May Believe." We took a brief hiatus for Advent and Christmas, but we will rejoin John in chapter 3 looking at God's great love for the world.

If you are new to our series, or you want to catch up on our John sermons, you can find all our previous sermons at our Web site, www.palousechurch.org, under "Resources."

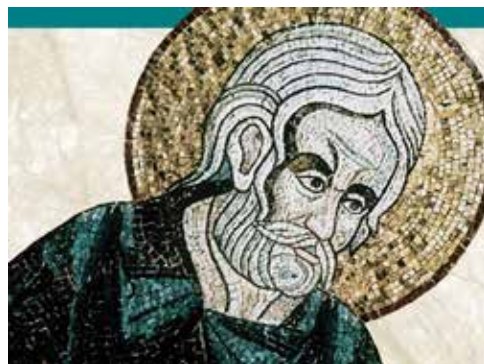
I want to encourage you all to read the Gospel of John – REPEATEDLY - in 2021. The simplest way to do that is to read a chapter a day, every day, until you have read through the Gospel at least five times, but, I encourage you to try for even more. Why? The more you read John, the more you will get an understanding of Jesus Christ and His good news.

As you read John, ask questions. Keep a list of your questions, and notice how your questions change the more you read, and how you answer some of your own questions the next time through John. If there are any questions or themes in John that you would like to learn more about, I encourage you to use an ESV Study Bible or resources from our library. We can get you these tools - just ask.

As you read, allow yourself to connect what you read in John to other books in the Bible. There are cross references in study bibles that can help you read other verses in the Bible on the same topic. If you are interested in "God's love," or "light," or "forgiveness," you can use either those cross references or the concordance (like an index) in the back of your study Bible to lead you to more scriptures.

We study one book at a time, in depth, on purpose. Doing this helps us unify and learn together. But studying one book, like John, doesn't limit us from reading and learning from the rest of the Bible. Each book of the Bible is interconnected with the whole scripture.

As we study John in 2021, we are seeking to learn the Truth from God. I am excited to be on this journey with you.



Wildfire Relief Fund Update



Heidi and her 8-year-old son Jace. Diana and her 11-year-old daughter. John and Carolyn, a senior couple. What do they have in common? Unfortunately, they all lost their homes in Malden, WA to a wildfire that spread rapidly on Labor Day.

Palouse Federated Church is receiving financial donations (please no donations of "stuff" at this time) in order to bless these families and help them on their journey to restore their homes and move through this stressful transition time.

Here are some additional ways you can help these families:

1. Keep them in your prayers - pray for peace, encouragement, strength and wisdom.
2. Donate to our wildfire relief fund. You can designate your check or online donation to wildfire relief. Just make sure checks are still made out to Palouse Federated Church, and clearly note that it is for fire relief.

What your support has already done:

John & Carolyn have a new shed, and a fuel card to help offset the travel costs between the place where they are staying and their home site. Diana has the resources to build a shed of her own. Heidi and Heather received help to replace some of what was lost and to bring back memories (photos) destroyed by the fire.

This photo is of Briaunna, who received a blanket from Hatley and Betty Sawyer.



Christmas in Uganda



Christmas in Palouse



Zoom Lobby

Come hang out with us in the Zoom Lobby every Sunday at 10:30 AM. Contact your online greeter or the church for the link.



Our Changing World

Terry Keller

I like to garden. Some might say it's an obsession. I love flowers, color, green, moisture. My favorite homegrown vegetables are peas, but they only slightly edge out all the other veggies. My favorite flower? There are far too many to mention them all here. I am awed by, and thank God for, the abundance and diversity of this planet we live on. But, I'm dismayed that we're failing as stewards of this magnificent Earth that God created.

The wildfires of 2020, beginning in Australia and then moving with the seasons north to Siberia, Canada, the western U.S., and neighboring Malden and Pine City, are notice that climate change isn't some far-off thing, but is here now. And this

makes me incredibly sad. How is it we haven't taken this seriously enough to do something about it?

97% of climate scientists agree that climate change is real and that it's mostly human-caused. Earth has an atmospheric blanket of carbon dioxide and methane gas that traps the sun's energy and makes it possible for us to live on Earth. Our burning of fossil fuels over the last 200 years (since the Industrial Revolution) has increased the carbon dioxide in the atmosphere by 43% and more

than doubled the amount of methane. The protective blanket Earth's inhabitants have relied on for millennia is getting thicker, trapping more and more heat.

Scientists have looked at other possible causes, things like natural cycles, increased solar output, a change in Earth's orbit, and ruled them out. Solar energy output is actually decreasing (since the 1970s), yet Earth's temperatures are increasing faster than ever. Natural cycles, like El Nino, distribute heat so if one place warms, another cools. We are instead seeing an increase in heat everywhere. Natural cycles in Earth's orbit and axis angle show Earth should be in a cool down right now, but instead the planet is heating up.

Why should we care? We've built our lives, our communities, our society, on a stable climate. I depend on the usual seasonal changes to decide when to plant, but if that gets all

wonky, how will I and other growers of food adapt? We may not be capable of making the quick adaptations needed to grow food successfully. There's potential for a lot more food insecurity.

If Malden and Pine City can burn to the ground, what about Palouse? If hurricane after hurricane (30 named storms this year thus far) batter our coasts, rebuilding there will become an unsure prospect. If mountain glaciers and snowpack continue to diminish, as projected, what are we going to do for water? Climate refugees will increase. Conflicts will increase. (Some suggest that the Syrian civil war of the past 9 years is really a climate change conflict as people move to escape drought.) I don't want our children and grandchildren to have to try to survive in those conditions.

But why should I, as a Christian, care? We are charged with loving our neighbors, caring for the least of these, being God's hands on earth. PFC does that well, always stepping up to help those in need. But the needs are going to outstrip our capacity to help if we don't start working to mitigate climate change. Unfortunately, those most affected by climate change are often the poorest of the world: the Bangladeshi farmer whose rice fields are being swallowed by the sea, the people who suffer and die in heat waves because they can't afford air-conditioning, the people whose homes

and livelihood burn to the ground, the people of coastal Nicaragua and Louisiana hit with one hurricane after another, and no time or money to repair and recover. I believe that what God requires of us is "to do justice, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with our God" (Micah 6:8), so I can no longer just do nothing and hope it all goes away. It's a matter of justice and loving our neighbors near and far.

It's easy to despair. Easier still to say it won't matter what I/we do, because our neighbors aren't doing anything, or China isn't doing anything, or we

should wait till the right technology comes along, or God will save us. But, that's like the guy on his roof during a raging flood, telling every potential rescuer that God will save him, when God was trying to save him all along by sending people to help. We can't sit on the roof waiting anymore. We have much of the technology now. China, for instance, is one of the top countries for wind and solar production. We can do this.

In this new year, as Covid-19 forces a pause in our usual lifestyle, it's a great time to consider what we, individually, and as a church, can do to become better stewards and hands of God. Check out the carbon calculators on the Web (I like <https://coolclimate.berkeley.edu/calculator>), that determine one's carbon footprint and suggest how to reduce that footprint—easy things like LED lightbulbs, turning down your thermostat, less driving. Our church could work on reducing our carbon footprint and that of the community of Palouse, by, for example, advocating for local public transportation (once Covid-19 is under control), installing solar panels on the church roof, providing LED light bulbs for those who can't

afford them, letting our elected officials know this is important. There are many things to consider, for example, how reducing fossil fuel use impacts agriculture. It's going to take all of us, listening and praying and working together to find workable solutions and make a difference. Anyone interested in discussing and working on climate change mitigation efforts, please contact me.

I am reminded of the parable of the talents. We have been given such a beautiful Earth and

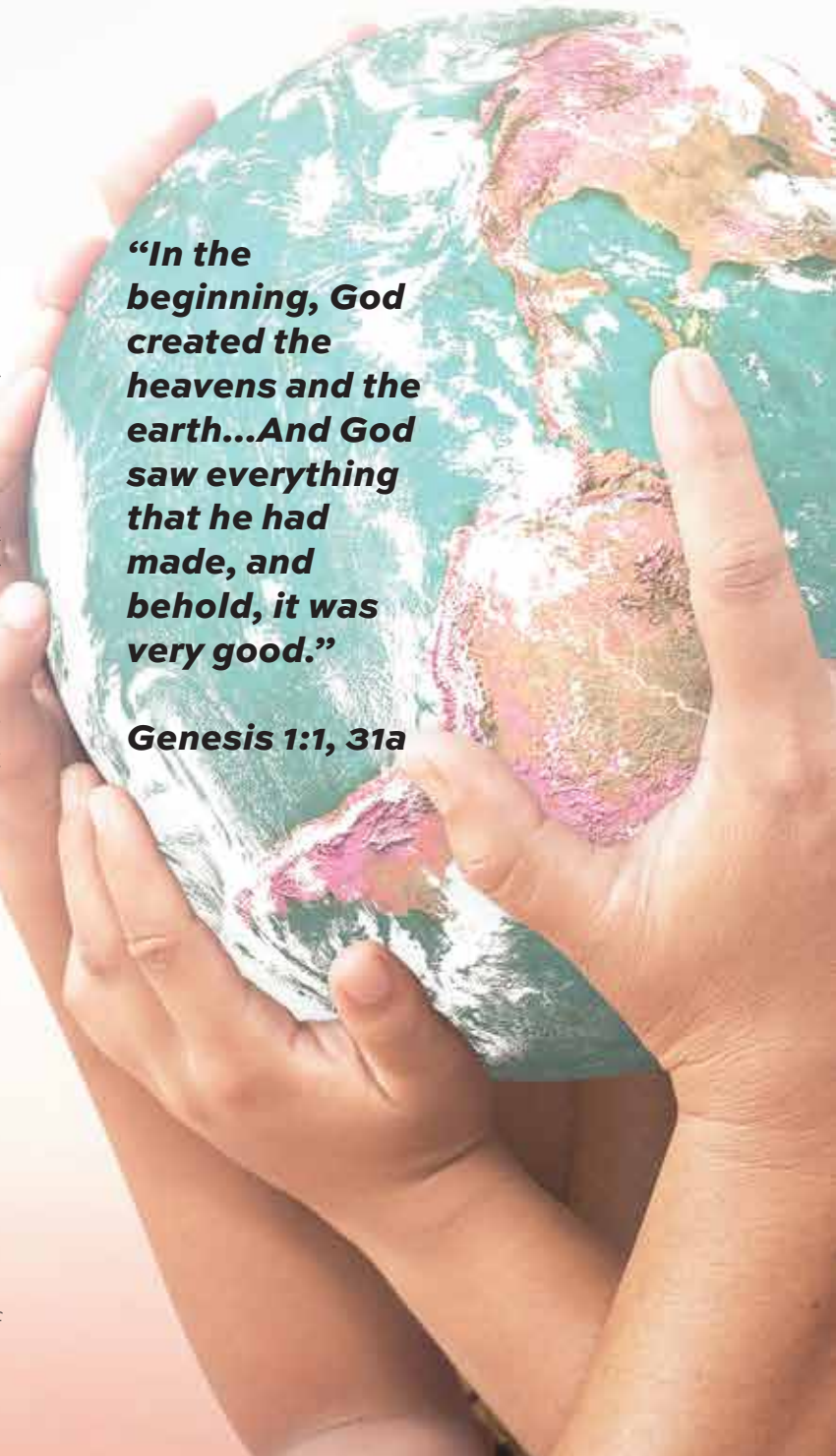
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"[As Christians] We are charged with loving our neighbors, caring for the least of these, being God's hands on earth."

"But, as Christians, we know there is always renewal and hope. We can use the talents God has given us (technology, wisdom, will, prayer, love) to make this a better world."

"I believe that what God requires of us is 'to do justice, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with our God' (Micah 6:8), so I can no longer just do nothing and hope it all goes away. It's a matter of justice and loving our neighbors near and far."



"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth...And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good."

Genesis 1:1, 31a