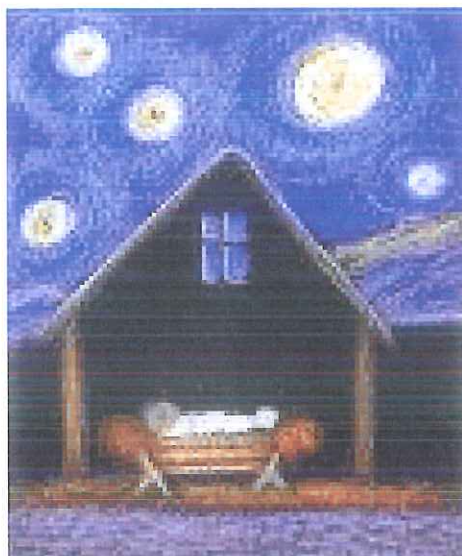


# Harbinger



A publication of Medford First Christian Church, Medford, Oregon  
*A community committed to love, acceptance & spiritual growth.*

## Advent 2017



- Sun., Dec 17**      **3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent, Christmas Special Offering received during worship, Kid's Swim Party, 4:00PM**
- Sun., Dec. 24**      **Christmas Sunday, morning worship at 10:30AM, Candlelight Christmas Eve Service at 7:00PM**
- Mon., Dec. 25**      **Christmas Day!**
- Sun., Dec. 31**      **Service of Carols, 10:30AM**
- Sun., Jan. 7**        **Epiphany Sunday, worship at 10:30AM**

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### **Christmas Special Offering of the Christian Church** *(Disciples of Christ)*

Your gifts received for the Christmas Offering will benefit the work and ministry of the Oregon Region of our denomination. A few of the ministries supported by your Christmas Offering are women's retreats, ministerial placement, support to Ecuador, leadership training, technical support and youth camps. The Christmas Offering will be received on Sunday, December 17.

**Please note Christmas Special Offering on your checks.**



While I love Christmas and Advent, I am also painfully aware of the fact that it is also an incredibly difficult season for some of us to get through. Many of us who have lost loved ones find this season to be difficult because the fact that those loved ones aren't experiencing the season with us is abundantly apparent. I have been missing my dad more and more as we get deeper into this season and am aware that many of you are also experiencing similar emotions. A friend and farmer sent me this article written by Troy Bishopp in the farming magazine On Pasture. Troy has recently lost his brother, Scott. I'd like to share a portion of the article with you in the hopes that it will offer you some relief, or at least the understanding that you are not alone. Blessings on you during this season.

When I hear the phrase "Good Grief", I'm reminded of Charlie Brown's adage that described his daily personal frustrations. Using good with grief seems disingenuous for those of us who are in mourning. As I struggle almost daily with the flashpoint of tears, the sentiment of good has little comfort. But how do we become well again?

I've been on this quest for answers since my only brother died suddenly a few months ago. I shouldn't be so selfish in thinking I'm the only one experiencing such pain. This heartache train is a journey with lots of passengers who have lost loved ones, are barely surviving from catastrophic natural tragedies or are mourning the relentless onslaught of negative news on a global scale. There seems to be plenty of pain to go around. Author Tim Jackson said, "Grief is a journey that sooner or later we all must take. It's how we take the journey that makes all the difference".

Like countless mourners or depressed souls around the world, I keep asking why and why now? I posed this difficult question to a local Amish Bishop. He surmised, "At times like this we often wonder why. The days pass in a blur and then we need to get on with life. I have found that peace lieth not in understanding why but in quiet submission to God's divine will and realizing that we see but in part, and God has a much greater perspective. If we rest in his will, we can be assured that "All things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." ~ Romans 8:28"

"I think we have to admit there are many things we can't comprehend and the only way to find peace is to humbly submit to God's infinite wisdom," he continued. "Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave: the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame. The fiery trials we go through make us for better or worse. The same boiling water that hardens the egg softens the potato." ~ Song of Solomon 8:6"

I'm trying to be the strong one for my family and exude belief, faith and hope but grieving is hard work, and it takes a "village" to help me navigate my emotions into the delicate holiday season. I find, like with farming, diversity helps—even in mourning. My coping mechanisms start with my green and white wristband in memorial to my guardian angel, 7 year old Daniel Barden and continues on with love from my dear wife, children and family. I have turned to close friends, clergy, grief counselors, music and my own brother's awesome passion to relieve the immense pain of loss.

Hospice's Bereavement Counselor, Linda Clark told a group of us mourners that "grief is amplified" during the holidays and that "grief is a necessity and a privilege". "It's a myth that you should feel joyful all the time". She suggested these tips for coping with the hefty bag of feelings during the festive season: ***"Have a plan because you can't hide from the season, adjust your expectations, set realistic goals for yourself, find ways to remember, live in the moment, ask for help, find someone you can talk to any hour of the day and see the holiday through a child's eye."***

Hospice's Chaplain, Jill Farnham, delivered a prayer that contained this poignant passage: "At times our problems and longings cover us with a darkness that seems as if it will never end no matter what the season is. Help us Lord to remember that your love is stronger than any burden we may carry this holiday season. Renew our hope as we remember our loved ones this holiday season. Be ever present with us as we move into the future, not trying to hold onto the past, but open to your healing love and transforming mercies. Sustain us with the promise that love is not defeated...not by illness, not by trouble, not even by death itself. Let us not forget that at this moment we are being renewed and are being sustained this holiday season by your love, grace and hope; Amen".

## SILVERWARE WRAPPERS

Dec. 14: Claudette M.  
Dec. 21: Ted & Kay K.  
Dec. 28: Nan & Larry M.  
Jan. 4: Ron B.

Thank You

### Christmas Sunday

#### Fourth Sunday of Advent, December 24

We will celebrate the approaching birth of baby Jesus in our 10:30 a.m. worship service.

### Christmas Eve Candlelight Service Sunday, December 24, 7:00 p.m.

Join in this beautiful service of joy, peace, and hope. Light a candle, pray, sing, and reflect on the coming of our Lord Jesus. Invite your family and friends!



### Merry Christmas Monday, December 25

Celebrate the birth of our Savior and mentor, Jesus Christ!

### Sunday of Carols

#### Sunday, December 31, 10:30 a.m.

Join us for a service filled with carols of the season. Our Chancel Choir will take the Sunday off, and the congregation will enjoy a carol fest.



### In Loving Memory

Arthur "Art" Campbell, was born on June 29, 1932 and passed from life to Life on October 28. Art and Mary Lou were married in 1958 and have two daughters, Kimberly Ann and Karen Joy.

After serving in the Navy during the Korean war, Art studied at Kansas City Art Institute, receiving a BFAE degree. In his teaching career he taught art, career education, and photography, and was a guidance counselor and a high school principal. Art was the author of three books and is best known for his meticulous research of the 1950s-era UFO crash site in Horse Springs, New Mexico. His 25-year research resulted in his publication of *A UFO Crash on the Plains of San Augustin*.

Art was an educator, researcher, author, lecturer, and watercolor artist.

We will miss Art's inquisitive mind, his ambition, his creativity and inventiveness, as well as his strong spirit.

## Epiphany Sunday, January 7, 10:30 a.m.



Epiphany celebrates the manifestation of God to the world and the journey of the magi, as well as the baptism, life and ministry of Jesus.

### Kid's Swim Party

Sunday, December 17, 4:00PM

At the Shelton/Reid house

All children are invited!



### Holiday Closures

- ✧ Our Access Food Pantry will be closed Mondays, December 25 & January 1.
- ✧ Small Steps Preschool will be closed December 25 & 26 and January 1.
- ✧ No chancel or bell choir practice December 27.
- ✧ The church office will be closed December 25-28 and January 1.

### Important Dates

- ✓ 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday, December 31. We will receive donations of non-food items for our Access Pantry.
- ✓ Epiphany Sunday, January 7.
- ✓ Program Council Meeting, Tuesday, January 9, 6:00PM.
- ✓ Board Meeting, Tuesday, January 9, 7:00PM.
- ✓ Ice Skating, Saturday, January 13, time TBA.
- ✓ Men's Lunch, Saturday, January 13, 11:45AM.
- ✓ Elders Retreat, Saturday, January 20, 9:00AM - 3:00PM, at Rebecca's house. For all elders.

## PRAYER CORNER



### CONTINUING PRAYERS

Harrison Meyer  
Dan & Elizabeth Chapman  
Kathy Peel  
Mary Lou Campbell  
Larry Mason

# Pray & Play Days 2018

9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Glenwood

February 17

Medford

March 3

Red Rock Boise

March 10

LaGrande

March 17

Salem First

March 24

**Ladies Save the Date!**

Sponsored by  
Disciples Women



Return the registration form and payment to:

Christian Church in OR and SW ID  
0245 SW Bancroft St. Suite F Portland, OR 97239

*Do the Math!*



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Alternate Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Congregation: \_\_\_\_\_

Eugene/Glenwood \_\_\_\_\_ Medford \_\_\_\_\_ Boise Red Rock \_\_\_\_\_ LaGrande \_\_\_\_\_ Salem \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\* Cost \$15 per person \*\*\*  
(includes Program and gift)

I need childcare for \_\_\_\_\_ (how many children)

Ages \_\_\_\_\_

**Please register at least one week before the event so we will have adequate supplies for all participants**

Medford First Christian Church

*(Disciples of Christ)*

1900 Crater Lake Ave.  
Medford, OR 97504



The next 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday is December 31<sup>st</sup>, at which time we will accept donations of non-food items for our Access Food Pantry

**MEDFORD FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH**

*(Disciples of Christ)*

1900 Crater Lake Avenue • Medford OR 97504  
(541)772-8030

E-MAIL: [mfccor@gmail.com](mailto:mfccor@gmail.com) Website: [mfccor.org](http://mfccor.org)

WORSHIP SERVICE: Sundays at 10:30 a.m.

OFFICE HOURS: Monday - Thursday, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

- Minister**.....All the People
- Pastor**.....Reverend Stacy Shelton
- Minister of Music & Accompanist**.....Janet O'Donovan
- Song Leader**.....Kathy Williams
- Business Administrator**.....Katherine Goin
- Bookkeeper**.....Chris Peters
- Small Steps Director**.....Teresa Fiuren
- ACCESS Pantry Co-Managers**.....Denise Frelin & Buttons Cummings