

East Woods News

NOVEMBER 2009

Hello, everyone. My name is Laurel Neal. The Session of East Woods Presbyterian Church has invited me to serve here as your Interim Pastor. Since October 7 I've been busy getting into the swing of things – and I'm enjoying you and your wonderful church. I can already see why Scott and Melanie loved their time here so much.

I thought you might like to know a little bit about me as we get started together.

My husband Fitz and I moved to Vancouver 2 ½ years ago. Fitz is also a pastor and serves at Columbia Presbyterian Church in Vancouver as pastor/head of staff. So far we've been enjoying the Pacific Northwest very much.

I'm originally from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and was raised in the Presbyterian Church. I became a professing Christian during high school, and following Christ has been important to me ever since. Early on, I was nurtured in my church youth group and Young Life. I attended college at Trinity University in San Antonio, worked for several years in Utah, and returned to Texas to study linguistics at the University of Texas. It was in Austin that I met and married Fitz, who already had a call to the ministry. Off we went to Princeton Seminary, where Fitz kept asking if I wanted to go to seminary, too. I didn't. At least I didn't think so.

A sense of call to pastoral ministry slowly emerged in my own life after we'd gotten settled back in San Antonio. Eventually I began commuting to the Presbyterian seminary in Austin. Since then Fitz and I have served churches in Colorado, Oklahoma, and Indiana, sometimes working together and sometimes not. Now we're thrilled to be living in Vancouver and hope to be here for a long time. Since moving here I've done some pulpit supply and teaching in the area, and spent a few months last winter with Westminster Church in Eugene. Their interim pastor had taken a new call, so I bridged the gap between him and their in

Continued from page 1 . . .

coming permanent pastor.

Fitz and I are both avid readers and movie-watchers. We like to ski, fly-fish, and dance, and I love to cook. We were unable to have children of our own, but we love kids – so I look forward to knowing yours.

These first few weeks have been hectic and full, but I'll be settling into more of a routine in coming weeks. I'll let you know what that is. For now, you might like to know that Fitz and I try to practice a Sabbath on Fridays. Unless there's an emergency – or a presbytery meeting! – we try to lay aside our work for 24 hours. This nurtures our trust in God's work and allows us to experience God's refreshment.

I realize that the time between permanent pastors is an awkward period for a congregation. But it also holds a lot of potential. I believe that. Overall it's my intention to support your life together during this interim time – and to join you in anticipating, and praying for, your next permanent pastor. Please know that I'm eager to get to know all of you and be available to you.

You may reach me by email at laurel@eastwoodspres.org and by phone at 360-944-5841 (church); 360-597-4298 (home); or 360-608-4264 (cell).

*Blessings,
Laurel*

Interim Update

It seems like a good idea to have a monthly column devoted to what's going on at East Woods related to interim ministry. I'll post the same information – and maybe additional information as well – on the church website (www.eastwoodspres.org).

I realize many of you have never been through an interim experience before. Others of you aren't familiar with how Presbyterians do interim ministry. Either way, you might be quite mystified about why I'm here! My goal is to help you get “the lay of the land” as we wade into this experience together. Any questions you have are important to me, and it's my desire to answer every single one of them. Here are a few to get us started.

Why do we have interim pastors?

In Presbyterian churches – and many other kinds of churches, too – intentional interim ministry is now a “rule of thumb.” Why? Because it's become pretty clear that the time between permanent pastors presents unique needs and opportunities. The truth is, most churches – left to themselves – would hurry to find another pastor as quickly as possible. Meanwhile they keep things going in a general way – filling the pulpit on Sundays, maintaining existing ministries, caring for one another, and so on. But here's what frequently happens when churches go this route: instead of the long-term, settled relationship they hope for with their new pastor, the new pastor's tenure turns out to be unsettled and short-term, often lasting only a couple of years. It's not hard to imagine how demoralizing an experience this can be for a congregation. *Continued ...*

In other words, we've learned the hard way that after a pastor departs, a more productive and successful use of the transition time is intentional interim ministry with an intentional interim pastor. More often than not, churches that participate in planned interim ministry make helpful discoveries and do important work during the interim time. This helps them make better decisions about their next pastoral relationship.

I believe in the concept and process of intentional interim ministry. Of course, there's nothing automatic about it. The process works only if congregations and interim pastors work the process together, cooperating with it as it unfolds. This will be as true at East Woods as anywhere.

What is the interim process? During the interim time, congregations usually address 5 topics or tasks. All of these have as their goal a settled, long-term relationship with a new permanent pastor. Here's what the 5 tasks are:

1. Reviewing and reflecting on our life as a congregation...understanding our history.
2. Discerning God's leading and purpose for East Woods... embracing our identity.
3. Refocusing the way we work together and fulfill our mission...celebrating and developing leaders.
4. Reviewing and renewing relationships beyond our congregation... engaging in partnership and mission.
5. Transitioning into a relationship with our permanent pastor...committing to new directions in ministry.

These aren't completely linear, but it's important to address all of them.

What's the role of the interim pastor? First, I'm here to be your pastor, plain and simple. Second, I'm here to guide and resource you through the interim experience. And third, I'm here as a temporary shepherd and am not eligible to become your permanent pastor down the road.

Because I believe in the value of good interim ministry, I'm thrilled about getting to be part of this very significant, very important time in your life as a congregation. My hope – my goal – as we work together is that you will enjoy a long and fruitful relationship you're your next installed pastor, whoever that may be.

Speaking of the next installed pastor, when and how does a search committee get formed? I can't give you a specific date at this point, but my guess is a Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) will form sometime fairly early in 2010. Timing will be determined not so much by me as by the Session and a Transition Team. Basically a PNC will be elected as soon as it's legitimately possible to do it. The Nominating Committee of the church, which is elected at every Annual Meeting, has the responsibility to nominate people to the PNC (just as it has the responsibility to nominate people to the office of Elder). Members of the PNC must be members of East Woods, represent a cross-section of the congregation, and be elected by the congregation. You will have every opportunity to submit your own name, or the names of others, to the Nominating Committee for consideration.

I'll tell you more about the PNC and its work in future articles.

MISSION NEWS

KISSING. Thank you for your generous support of the Peacemaking Offering. You donated \$805 to support justice and peace in the world. Twenty-five percent of that amount stays with our congregation and will be donated to Evergreen Habitat for Humanity and Faith in Practice.

SAVE THE DATE. Following worship on *December 6* plan to attend a luncheon featuring *Faith in Action*. **John and Judy Hubbard** will share their knowledge and experience with this faith-based medical mission in Guatemala.

BOX IT UP. We need boxes for our Thanksgiving dinner project. We are looking for the type and size of box used to hold reams of paper. If you can intercept boxes like this at your work place or from an office supply store we will put them to good use. Leave them in the narthex by the mission table. We can store them until they are needed. Thanks for you help!

COFFEE THAT IS FAIR. You now have TWO opportunities to purchase Fair Trade Coffee/Tea & Cocoa. **Full Case Sales** continue to happen every other month on the second Sunday. Next Full Case sale date is **Sunday, November 8th**. **Individual packages** of coffee, tea and cocoa will be available for purchase on **Sunday, November 22nd**. You will be able to serve justice along with delicious beverages at your Thanksgiving meal – we can all give thanks for that!

SOLE MATES. *Special giving* to Share House this month joins a region-wide collection of *new socks* for men, women and children.

NEW FACES – SAME NEEDS. Did you know that the residents at Share Orchard Inn can stay for a maximum of sixty days? Most move more quickly than that. So while we are there every month donating our time, food and other goods, there are new recipients every month. This makes it critical that we not lose energy. **The shelter continues to need canned fruits and vegetables, salad dressings, coffee, tea, condiments (ketchup is especially needed) and seasonings (garlic powder, parsley flakes, dried onion, onion powder, salt, onion soup mix).**

COULD SHARE HOUSE USE . . . ? If you have clothes, fresh or frozen foods or other items you think might be useful to Share House contact Hilary Heizenrader at 834-2435 for more information.

WANT TO DO A LITTLE MORE? If giving to Share House children is your passion you might be interested to learn of an ongoing need we recently learned about – Share is chronically short of larger sized pull up training diapers. You can leave these with the other Share House donations and they will be delivered.

FYI FOC. Friends of the Carpenter raised \$44,000 at its recent dinner and auction. Thank you for your support.

Thanksgiving Feasts for People in Need

This year Share House has **tripled** its need for Thanksgiving meals for families who are going through difficult times. For the last 8 years the people of East Woods Presbyterian Church have graciously donated food to alleviate hunger in our community. Share is hoping to fill 350 boxes of food plus supplement food for another 650 families who are currently enrolled in the back pack program.

This year at East Woods we are making a few changes. Instead of organizing the food into “meal boxes” here at the church, we will be going to the Share House warehouse and organizing the food there for volunteers who will deliver. We will also have a sign up sheet for those who want to be involved with the meal delivery process.

Sign up sheets will be in the narthex on Sunday, November 1st.

We will collect all food donations here at the church on Sunday, November 22nd.

Ways that people of East Woods Church can help:

- Provide a meal for a family
- Purchase Thanksgiving food items
- Donate money
- Donate time for shopping or organizing after church on Sunday the 22nd of November
- Bring Boxes to put food in (in previous years we have used copy paper boxes)
- Sign up to help deliver meals on November 23rd-25th, (on this sheet you sign up for a day and the times you will be available to help. I will give the sheet to Susan Oberst Volunteer Coordinator for Share and she will contact you).

If you have any questions please feel free to call or email me.

Dayleen (360)-891-9795 dayharkin@comcast.net

Thank you and May God bless you for your support

Thanksgiving meal for one family consists of;

- 1 Turkey (10-12 lb) plus disposable roasting bag and pan
- 1 cranberry sauce (16 oz each)
- 2 green beans (16 oz)
- 2 boxes of stuffing mix plus a packet of poultry spices
- 1 box Instant Mashed Potatoes
- 1 small celery bunch
- 1 pumpkin pie
- 1 margarine (1 lb)
- 1 carton of whipped topping
- 1 pkg of rolls (~8 each)
- 1 small jar of jam
- 1 Gallon milk

CHILDREN & FAMILY MINISTRY

Members and friends of East Woods Church:

The fall Sunday school program is in full swing and Advent is just weeks away. Then, *it's on to Christmas!* We are ready to launch into our traditional Christmas pageant. Once again, we turn to playwright Dennis Hartin for a delightful blend of sacred biblical narrative and the imaginative comedy of *real life*. Join us at the 10:30 worship service on Sunday, December 20 as the children share with us the birth of Jesus, "told with humor, mystery, and awe!"

Needless to say it takes *many hands* to bring a pageant to fruition. What gifts can you offer? NO offer of help is too small.

FALL SUNDAY SCHOOL

East Woods' pre-K children are enjoying lessons from our new "Wee Believe" curriculum with its colorful, age-appropriate and user friendly activities. Roberta shares a few minutes of song time with the children and they enjoy learning simple hand signs. In November the children will learn the most important commandments of all: *Love God* and *Love Others*. Peggy Konzeg is our November Pre-K teacher.

For elementary classes, the fall Sunday school theme is "*Worship*." November's lessons are about *prayer* and *building the temple*. Bryan and Marijean Reith teach our first and second graders in November while Lynne Combs teaches Grades 3-5. On Communion Sundays children in Grades 1-5 experience a special group fellowship time. During November and December our focus will be the Christmas pageant. Following the sermon we escort them back to the Sanctuary to share The Lord's Supper with their family.

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

A dedicated group of parents and teachers is at work on a **MIS-SION STATEMENT** for Christian Education at East Woods Church. We want to make sure that families can be confident about our commitment to nurture the children and welcome them into our faith community, our worship and our life of discipleship. Next we will develop a brochure about Christian Education for children, youth and adults.

Roberta Schlechter—roberta@eastwoodspres.org

YOUTH NEWS!

Has another month gone by already? I can't believe it. This month has been an extremely busy one for me as well as the youth group. Things are going well with the kids. We are continuing our work through the Old Testament stories. The kids seem to enjoy the process, and are remembering at least part of their lessons. The candy incentive may have something to do with that.

We had our lock-in on the weekend of the 23rd and 24th. I was a little bit nervous since it was my first lock-in with this group of kids. It turned out great. I was expecting about fifteen to twenty kids and we had about 22. The night was great; we spent it dancing to music, playing rock band, and various other games. We also went to the Bi-Zi Farms Corn Maze. I learned a lot. For instance, if there is mud, my children will fall in it. I also learned it looks bad when the youth director reminds everyone else to bring extra shoes and clothes and forgets to have his own children do the same. All in all, the night went off without a hitch. A tremendous amount of food was eaten, and enough pop (or soda, if you prefer) to hydrate the state of Rhode Island. But the kids had a blast.

It has been my pleasure to work with the youth so far and coming up on Nov 8th, we are going to do the thing which I am most looking forward to—serving a brunch to the church. This is an outreach event for us. It is a chance for both the youth and the church to see that the youth of this church are able and willing to serve to in very easy and concrete ways. Children grow up and do what they are taught through participation and modeling. The modeling of East Woods is one of service, concern for others, and a deep sense of connectedness and responsibility. My hope is to continue to involve them in other ways so that when they are no longer “youth” they will know what it is to be adult disciples of Christ, just as they are now youthful disciples of Christ. Thank you all for your support and prayers. It is blessing us all.

Jim McLaughlin—Jim@eastwoodspres.org

East Woods Session

Lynne Combs	Evangelism/Outreach	360-835-3034
Nancy Dean	Clerk of Session	360-828-1335
Carol Domench	Worship	360-687-6911
Linda Fortney	Treasurer	360-896-1989
Hilary Heizenrader	Mission	360-834-2435
Mary Pierce	Congregational Care	360-574-6410
Paul Puttkammer	Fellowship	360-882-9910
Katey Sandy	Spiritual Develop	360-885-0824
Chris Smith	Children/Youth	360-980-2753
Bill Stewart	Building/Grounds	360-256-2783
Sean Whitney	Finance	360-885-0701

Congregational Meeting—Sunday, November 15th,
immediately following 10:30 worship.

For the purpose of electing to East Woods Session
Nancy Dean (Clerk of Session) and Sean Whitney (Personnel/Finance)

East Woods Treasurer's Report

The **Mortgage Fund** offerings for the month of **September** were \$3,650 and expenditures (mortgage payments) were \$5,182.30 which is a deficit of \$1,532.30 for the month and increases total deficit for the year to \$13,620.70. I know a little will be made up with year end donations (those who give to mortgage fund only annually), but that is a large deficit for this year. This means the additional year-end payment of \$20,000 towards one of our mortgages will not happen. Our total loans were \$800,000 plus the \$200,000 grant, and current balances are \$754,076.05 plus the \$200,000 grant. Annual payments are currently \$62,187.60 (one loan payment changes each year; two remain the same) and income year-to-date in the mortgage fund is \$32,870.00. We attempt to stay one year ahead with our mortgage account balance to assure payment coverage and we do have enough for 2009, but the trend is unsettling

The **General Fund** donations for September were \$14,332.72 and expenses were \$12,473.80 with a monthly positive balance of \$1,859.92. Overall for the year we still have a positive balance in the general fund of \$19,751.27. This includes building fund as well as general fund pledges, contributions and special funds, all income except mortgage fund for the year. Some special fund expenses remain to be paid out. But hooray for our congregation for supporting general fund income in this unsettled economy.

NEXT MEN'S BREAKFAST
Saturday, November 7th—7:30 AM at the church



On Sunday, November 1st, The Rev. Dr. John Hubbard was recognized and appreciated as a living saint of East Woods' congregation. As Laurel acknowledged in her message, at East Woods, we are blessed with many saints, past and present. John is deserving of special recognition for his faithful, abundant and ongoing service to our church community for over thirteen years.

John has graciously filled our pulpit, led adult education and provided member care. He has volunteered for pastoral duties short term to give our pastors much needed vacations. Ten years ago, John ministered to us during a nine month transition in pastors. Recently, he ministered to us again during the months between Scott's leaving and Laurel's arrival. John was our advocate with the Presbytery when we sought to become a chartered congregation and then supported us through the long process of obtaining the loan for our building.

After a career as an executive with *John Deere*, John attended seminary. Since his ordination, he has served as a chaplain at Providence Hospital. In 2005, John received his doctorate in theology from San Francisco Theological Seminary. John and Judy have participated in three medical mission trips to Guatemala, as part of *Faith in Practice*. Their fourth mission trip is planned for this April. John and Judy love participating in the life of East Woods Presbyterian and feel that it has a rich future in terms of mission outreach and spiritual growth. We give thanks to God for John, and Judy, and for the many ways they have served and blessed the East Woods congregation.

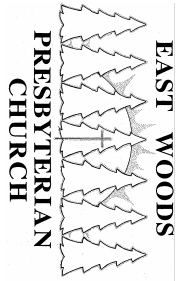
East Woods Presbyterian Church
16210 NE 20th Street
Vancouver WA

Mailing Address:
PO Box 871091
Vancouver, WA 98687-1091

Church Phone:
(360) 944-5841
(503)-802-4255

Newsletter monthly
Deadline is the
21st of each month.

Please submit all information and articles either via email to Jan@eastwoodspres.org, via phone to the church office 944-5841, or leave a hard copy on the office desk. THANKS!!



PO Box 871091
Vancouver, WA 98687-1091