



From the Pastor

ARE YOU HAPPY?

Would you say you are “not too happy” or “very happy”?

The national trend is that more Americans are reporting being “not too happy” than “very happy.” An annual poll by Marist reported that, in 2021, only 49 percent of Americans were more optimistic than pessimistic about the state of the world. This is the lowest percent since the survey began in 2009.

That’s not just random data. I know plenty of people who are not too happy. Life is hard, health is failing, relationships are fraught, the economy, work, loneliness and daily struggles all put pressure on us. I get gloomy sometimes, even though I have the best churches in the world.

Since I care about you, and would like to be of help to you and yours, this is how I want to spend our summer together. We are going to spend some time considering just what it means to be happy.

Recently I’ve been reading up on happiness – the science and the art of our sense of well-being. I’d like to share what I am learning with you. So, this summer, when I will be here every Sunday (EVERY Sunday!), my sermons will focus on the Art of Happiness. Come and learn more about what makes us truly happy, in whatever circumstances we are in. We will draw wisdom from the Scriptures and also from the wisest social scientists. Bring a friend who could use some Happy.

Do you like to read articles or books? Interested in reading more on the subject? Join one of our discussion groups either in person or online throughout the summer. Find out more this Sunday.

Love,
Cynthia

Summer 2024—The Art of True Happiness

Every Sunday, Cynthia’s sermon will focus on a different aspect of happiness.

Note: This series is sweeter when shared with a friend. Who will you bring along?

Want to learn more? Join us for one or more of the following opportunities.

- **Book discussion: Build the Life You Want; the Art and Science of Getting Happier by Arthur C. Brooks and Oprah Winfrey**
- **Article discussion: Join the email list for articles shared every week at revcynthiaobrien@gmail.com**
- **Mondays at 2 – Zoom discussion of yesterday’s sermon and a preview of next Sunday**
- **Individual counseling: see Cynthia**



JAZZ WORSHIP IS BACK!



Kevin Deitz, Marilyn Keller, Ron Steen, and George Mitchell

Marilyn Keller led a star-studded ensemble for our worship on June 2 with gospel songs like “Just a Closer Walk” and “I’ll Fly Away” mixed with jazz standards and inspirational music. Her players are some of the best in the business: George Mitchell, piano; Kevin Deitz, bass; Ron Steen, drums. We plan to have them back this fall. This program was made possible by a generous gift in memory of beloved church members Ray and Fran Welch, who loved bringing jazz into our church.

THE SCARIEST WATCH PARTY

Did you watch the first Presidential debate? Imagine watching it in a huge college auditorium with 500 people, an even mix of conservatives and liberals from across the nation. That’s how Cynthia and her colleagues kicked off the Braver Angels National Convention last month in Kenosha, Wisconsin. At the two commercial breaks and after the debate, delegates took the mic to share their thoughts about what they were hearing. The tension in the room gave way to a shared disappointment in the performance, and there was even laughter as the delegates renewed their commitment to depolarize the country and build a more perfect union. Learn more at braverangels.org

MISSION PROJECTS

Christmas Lights

We have an ongoing project to help Ray of Hope Community Thrift Store—testing and packaging Christmas lights! Doing this as volunteers is saving Ray of Hope money since they don’t have to pay staff to do it. Share the Christmas cheer and help when you can.

The next Christmas Lights work day will be Sunday, August 25 from 1 to 2 PM.



Project Kindness

On July 10, Marcy delivered personal care products to Family Building Blocks to distribute to their clients. Sulema and staff were extremely happy to receive our donations and thanks everyone.

The next Project Kindness collection will be in the month of September.



POETRY

Wonderful by Harry Baker

Of all the words you'll ever hear, remember these:

Life is too short to eat celery,
Life is too long to feed jealousy,
And life is likely just the right length to need therapy.

May you be seriously silly,
May you be wickedly kind,
May you be brilliantly dumb sometimes
And yet stupidly bright.

May you certainly have doubts,
May your weirdness be the norm,
May the coolest thing about you be your warmth.

May you be powerfully vulnerable
Or at least mightily soft,
May you be a contradiction
And at the same time no

And whether you are any, none, or all of the above,
Above all, may you know that you are loved.



Nancy L. Hankins (with Cynthia)
November 2, 1941 – June 1, 2024

Special Music for August

8/11	Madrigal Singers
8/18	Clarinet Duo
8/25	The Silvertones

Thank you Rev. Dr. Kathleen Erion!

Kathy began a study in April on "learning how to responsibly read the Bible for inspiration and spiritual growth". She followed up the study with a study on the Psalms and even inspired Johanna Samson to write her own story in the style of the Psalms. It is always fun and interesting to be with others in Sunday School. Stay tuned for future classes.



COLLAGE ART WORKSHOP
MONDAY, AUGUST 5, 2024
3:30 - 5:30 pm

Join Cynthia in our air-conditioned Fellowship Hall
for another collage workshop on the theme
"The Art of Happiness".

First Presbyterian Church of
Woodburn
950 N. Boones Ferry Rd.
Woodburn, OR 97071

Happy Hour Beverage,
guidance, and inspiration.
All materials provided.
Free of charge, donations
welcome!

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Garden Notes from Andy and Heather Brophy

Note: We're so thankful that the Brophy's were able to take a vacation in July!

AND SO IT GOES

Time seems to speed up at this point in our season! Seems like just yesterday we were tilling beds and prepping to grow and all of a sudden, things are popping up all over, especially the weeds. Thanks go out to Walt again for helping by mowing in and around the flowers! Next up, we need to get in and around the flower stems to open space for the sting trimmer to work its magic. Still talking about (and will schedule soon, after another trip to California in early June) a general cleanup workday – relocating stored materials into one central location and piling down tree limbs and branches for chipping or burning. Before too long we should have word (hopefully approval) on tree trimming and see a lot of activity on cleanup of dead limbs, thinning of the tree canopies, removal of a few dying trees and CHIPPING of all of the debris they generate.

BIG DAY OF PLANTING

The Marion Polk Food Share (MPFS) folks had the second of four plant give aways Saturday 5.11.24. A Thank You here to Beth Mathews (and her Daughter) at Meals on Wheels for picking up MANY more plants for our program while we were away – the greenhouse was stuffed, beyond normal capacity!

This past Saturday, 5.18.24 saw many of these new arrivals placed in the ground to do their thing – GROW. I'm calling it the BIG DAY OF PLANTING (BDOP) as approximately 7 – 72 cell starter flats of Cabbage, Kohlrabi, Collards, Lettuce, Onions, Broccoli and more were emptied. Additionally, we were able to get more weeding done, feeding and watering of the existing plants and setting of the posts set for the fruit trees to be espaliered. Another shout-out here to our friend Xuan Xuan (shin shin) Villeneuve, who along with Heather (and Daisy), volunteered to spend their Saturday in the dirt!. MPFS has two more plant give aways scheduled May 25 and June 8, which will be followed by BDOP 2 to start filling in the remaining 50% of our open ground. Probably Saturday June 15.

I'm spending more and more time onsite now that the weather is warming and the plants are growing. If you'd like to join me, pull a few weeds, maybe toss a plant or two in the ground – come on over and join us (Daisy will be on-duty!).

We do have a couple of returnees to the boxes from last year, they are just getting their feet on the ground as well.

To volunteer, email Andy at jhhhgg2659@gmail.com



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