



Fremont United Methodist Church

We seek to share the joy of God's love so that all might live with dignity and purpose.

**Staff Recognitions and Joyful Roster
Commissions**

January 20th 10:00am

A Study of the Book of Acts

Tuesday, Jan 15 at 7:00 pm

Sunday, Jan 20 following worship

Hark, the Herod!

When we tell the Christmas story, we don't mention Herod very often. Why would we want to ruin this lovely bucolic story with a mad villain like Herod? He's the guy, you might remember, who killed all little boys newborn to two years of age in Bethlehem. He ordered their murder after the Wise Men visited him looking for the new king whose birth was announced by a blazing new star.

Why does our Christmas story include the likes of Herod? Why is he allowed to occupy any room in this beautiful pastoral narrative of angels and a tiny infant, a loving mother, protective father, adoring shepherds, and eager, generous sages?

I think it's because we need reminding that there's more than one message in this lovely story. It is not just an accounting of how it came to be that God comes to earth in human form. It is also a reminder of the cosmic push-pull between good and evil.

Evil always wants to destroy good. And good often looks utterly vulnerable in the face of evil.

We might consider, for instance, how the likes of Herod shows up in our own lives. Ah, alas, yes.

Think about those impulses with which we struggle, like pushing the buttons of our loved ones; of fighting for the last word in a dispute; driving to close that next deal—to capture that next dollar. Or, if you're a teenager, you might be familiar with the impulse to do things just to be accepted or to experiment with taboos. These things can be like little Herods.

These little Herods threaten budding goodness in us. They can kill grace or blessings that try to break into our lives.

Think about the fact that God did not appear on earth full-bodied, so to speak. God did not come traipsing down the road with the Celestial Host in tow, awing everyone to their knees. No. God came as a vulnerable baby; a baby who needed care and nurture: feeding, wrapping, warming, sheltering; the protective, undivided attention of parents. This baby was completely at the mercy of the likes of Herod.

Now consider what, in our lives, represents the advent of a holy child. What might there be in our life that is a gift from God meant to bring us grace and blessing—meant to save us from ourselves and our dark impulses. These gifts from God often come as did the Christ child—in small and fragile form, in need of attention and nurture. And these gifts are at risk of being destroyed by those darker aspects of our personalities that do not want to be unseated by grace. They want to keep their power over us. It is wise to be aware of them and their virulence.

When God shows up in a manger in a stabled corner of your life, take note. That which is like Herod in you will seek to destroy that holy infant. But it need not be so. You can thwart Herod as did the Wise Men—by defiance.

And not to deflect from our personal accountability, but this same dynamic plays out in our wider world too.

This year, may we all defy the Herod and nurture the Christ: within our own hearts and out there where the world's 'Bethlehems' are under siege.

Yours, in the fellowship of Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be the initials 'LL'.



WORSHIP & SPIRITUAL FORMATION

You're invited to deepen your spiritual life

Covenant Groups are a way fortify your spiritual life by joining a small group of individuals who pray together and encourage one another in life's circumstances. The health and vitality of a congregation directly correlates to the spiritual depth and vitality of its members. Participating in one of these options will enrich you, and you will enrich the life of this faith community. Please contact Joanne Poff if you would like to know more: jepoff@gmail.com

A Study of the Book of Acts

There's so much more to this book than most of us know. We can recite the highlights but it's a story of great depth with insights particularly suited to our day and times. Rev David Weber will lead this study, offering two sessions for 6 weeks: An evening session starting Tuesday, Jan 15 at 7:00 pm and a day-time session starting Sunday, Jan 20 following worship. There will be sign-up sheets in the Narthex beginning Dec 30.



SERVICE & MISSION

"Be the Light" was the theme of Fremont's recent stewardship campaign for 2019. Unending thanks to all who responded so generously in support of Fremont and our vision: "To share the joy of God's love so that all might live with dignity and purpose." As we continue striving to fulfill this vision, as individuals as well as a faith community, Christ's light *will* continue to shine - within us and without - to countless others. We will indeed continue to "Be the Light".

A total of 61 people/families pledged this Fall, compared to 59 the previous year. Stewardship history from the past nine years shows 2011 and 2015 as years with the highest number of pledges, 73 and 75 respectively. The lowest number of pledges was in 2012 and 2018 - both with 59.

This year we're blessed to have received pledges from ten people/families who had not pledged the previous year, offsetting by two the number we lost to a variety of circumstances, including those who re-located. Thirty-four percent increased their pledge for 2019 bringing the total amount pledged for 2019 to \$166,775. compared to \$168,300. in 2018.

The Finance Committee convenes mid-January with your pledges serving as the foundation of a budget, when combined with resources from building use fees, rentals and fundraising, will further our presence as a beacon of hope and a shining light in our neighborhood, our city and the world.

Thank you!

Robert Greaves & Paul Karr, Stewardship Co-Chairs

'Lead the Way' Launch Party

A new movement is emerging in the Columbia District out of the dreams of the laity. New relationships are forming, community is being created across congregations and a new vision is taking shape. Come be part of this highly participatory event, featuring the 'World Cafe' model! Share your voice, your thoughts, your passion, and lead the way!

Registration will open January 7th, 2019.

Lunch and snacks provided. More information coming in early January.

When: February 2nd, 2019 | 10am to 2pm

Where: Oak Grove UMC

14700 SE Rupert Drive
Oak Grove, Oregon 97267



To Beth and John for their above & beyond work for the Christmas Tree Sale and all those who helped! and who bought trees!
Bless you all.

To all who took on new leadership and committee & team responsibilities for this coming year. Please be present if you can on Jan 20 when we commission all who are named in the 2019 Joyful Service Roster.

To Thom, Paul & John who are keeping watch over & clearing debris from our exterior drains to make sure we don't flood.

To Tanner and all who participated in this year's Pageant & Family Service and to Lynn, Olivia, Sandi, Herb and the choir for their ministry in the Candlelight Service.

NE Emergency Food Bank

Thank you to the 20+ volunteer food crew team (you know who you are!) who spent a few Saturdays in 2018 helping Portland's hungry with food for their families. The ink is not yet dry on the 2019 schedule so if you would like to join us for a few hours on a 4th Saturday of a month contact Jeff Michel to find out more. 5095michel@gmail.com



FUN & FELLOWSHIP

Christmas Tree Sale 2018

Thank you to all the volunteers who helped to make our annual tree sale a success. We do not have the final numbers yet. But we want to let you know how much we appreciate everyone's support and work, including those who addressed flyers and contributed stamps for the flyers, the set up and take down team, our wonderful cookie bakers, the tree unloaders, and of course all those who sold trees in the cold and rain.

Thank you!
John Shapland
Beth Skillern

P.S. If you should happen to find one of the string cutters in your pocket, please return it to the office or place it in the offering plate. Thanks.

Fremont United Methodist Women will meet on Wednesday, January 16th at the home of Jane Cotton from 10 to noon. The program will be given by Claudia Roberts on her recent trip to South Korea. All women of the church are invited.

Stone Soup Meet and Eat will be meeting on January 19, in the Fellowship Hall. We are an inter-generational group of Fremonters and friends who enjoy a pot luck dinner and fellowship one time per month. We are open to singles, families, young and old. Just fix a dish to share and come at 5:30 PM. All supplies will be provided.

We are usually done by 7:30 PM. For more information you can contact Claudia Roberts at clarobb@juno.com. We would love to have you join us. If driving is a problem, let us know and we can pick you up.

OTHER NEWS OF NOTE

Upper Room Magazine and The Upper Room Disciplines

Due to the decrease demand FUMC is suspending its subscription to the Upper Room Magazine because the minimum subscription requires, we order 10 magazines, and most have these have gone unclaimed. If 8 new people sign on to receive this devotional, then we will continue the subscription. Otherwise those of you who appreciate and want Upper Room can order yours at upperroom.org, a 1-year subscription is \$13.99. Please advise church office if you would be a new subscriber.

The Upper Room Disciplines is a book which includes a selected scripture passage, a meditation on the scripture, and a prayer or suggestion for reflection. Disciplines offers 7 days of engagement with the upcoming Sunday's lectionary texts. Each week of devotions is written by one author and focuses on one theme to provide extended depth into how the ancient stories of the Bible apply to our lives today. This can also be ordered on the Upper Room website.

Looking for a vacant room

Curious about what's going on the church today? Looking for a room to meet? Check out our new room use board located across from the Bob Nelson room for up to date schedule of room/event bookings.

Finance Committee meets Thursday, January 17 at 7pm in the Bob Nelson Room

The Trustees will meet on Thursday, January 10 at 7pm in the Bob Nelson Room.

Ministry Council meets on Thursday January 24 at 7pm in the Bob Nelson Room.

FREMONT UMC MINISTRY TEAM

Ministers
Pastor
Director of Music

All the People
Linda Quanstrom
Lynn Rognsvog

Youth & Family Ministries Program Director
Music Assistant
Childcare
Administrative Assistant
Bookkeeper
Custodian

Tanner Morton
Janet Orjala
Béatrice Kanyandekwe
Madalyn Bach
Alan Silver
Patricia Bailey

Office Hours: Monday 9:00am-5:00pm & Tues-Thursday 9:00am-1:00pm
Monday is the pastor's scheduled day off.