



CONGREGATIONAL PROFILE

*****January 2024 Draft*****



**First Orthodox Presbyterian Church
Portland, Oregon**

Membership

- We currently have 124 members (101 communicant and 23 non-communicant). Some members have recently moved away, and other regular attendees have not yet joined.

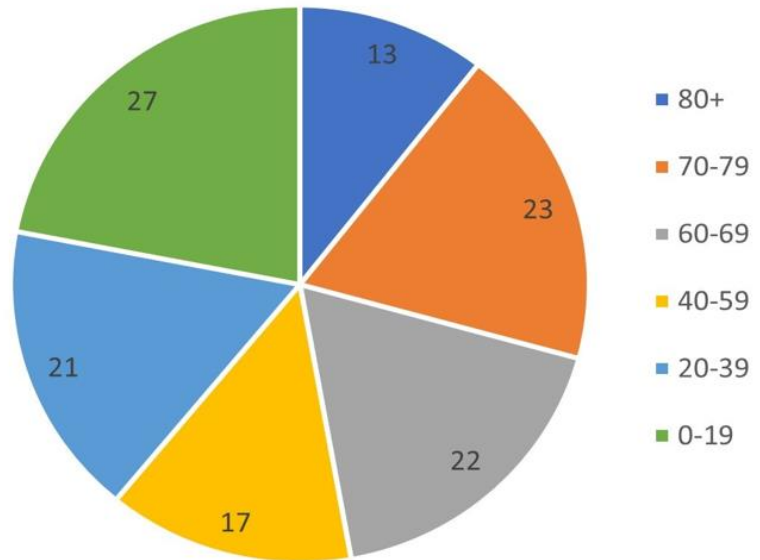
- See the pie chart for members' age distribution.

- The congregation is blessed with long-term members (see pie chart).

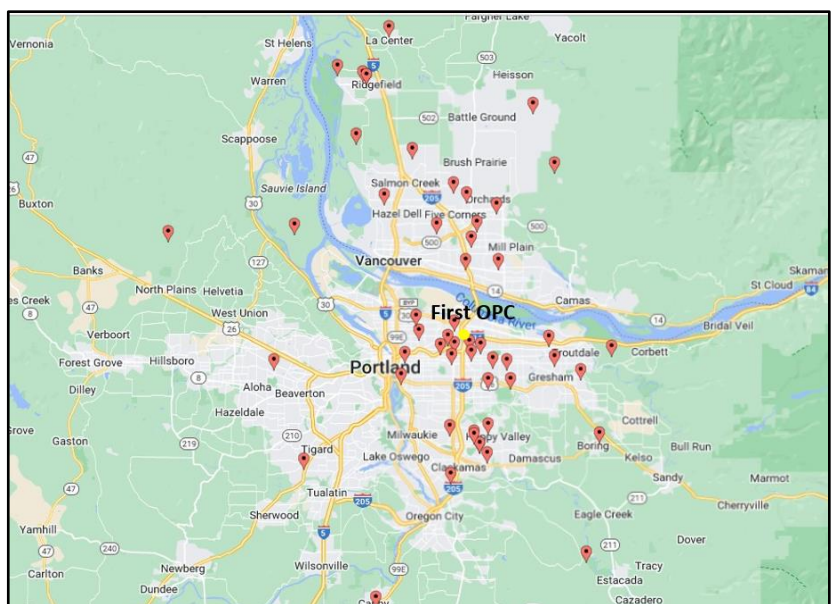
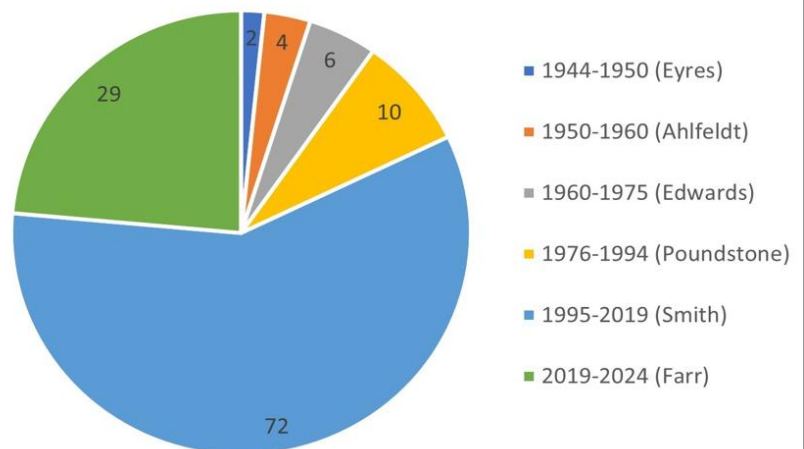
- Some families have chosen to homeschool, some to private school, and some to public school. All get along well together.

- Our members are geographically dispersed. The Portland metro area has the largest concentration of households, but about 40% of members live scattered in Clark County, Washington (see distribution map). Most members under 60 live in the suburbs, outside the city limits of Portland itself.

Current First OPC Membership by Age



Current Membership by Year of Reception



Worship

- The weekly services could be categorized as traditional, somewhat formal, and historically conscious. The session flexibly accommodates the different emphases of ministers.

SAMPLE ORDER OF SERVICES (1/21/2024)

MORNING WORSHIP 10:30 A.M.			EVENING WORSHIP 6:00 P.M.		
Call to Worship			The Lord's Greeting and Call to Worship		
<i>Hymn</i>	O God Beyond All Praising	TPH 241	<i>Hymn</i>	Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing	TPH 429
<i>Confession of Sin</i>			<i>Prayer of Invocation</i>		
<i>Assurance of Pardon</i>	Ezekiel 36:25-27		<i>Psalm</i>	LORD, Let My Cry before You Come	119V
<i>Reading of the Law</i>	Deuteronomy 6:4-5	Pg 151	<i>Prayer for Illumination</i>		
<i>Hymn</i>	Glory Be to Jesus	TPH 348	<i>Scripture Reading</i>	Psalm 119:169-176	Pg 516
<i>Old Testament Reading</i>	Isaiah 52:13-53:12	Pg 613	<i>Sermon</i>	A Word for All Seasons: "The Gracious Final Word"	
<i>Psalm</i>	We Give You Thanks, O God	75	<i>Hymn</i>	I Sought the Lord, and Afterward I Knew	TPH 427
<i>New Testament Reading</i>	Mark 10:17-35	Pg 846	<i>Prayer of Intercession</i>		
<i>Sermon</i>	"Discipleship At What Cost?!"		<i>Offerings</i>		
<i>Hymn</i>	Jesus, I My Cross Have Taken	TPH 513	<i>Hymn</i>	Amazing Grace	TPH 433
<i>Pastoral Prayer and Lord's Prayer</i>					
<i>Hymn</i>	All Things Are Thine	TPH 729			
<i>Apostles' Creed</i>					
<i>Hymn</i>	Gloria Patri	TPH 572			
<i>The Lord's Supper</i>					
<i>Benevolence Offering</i>	Crossroads Prison Ministry				
<i>Hymn</i>	When I Survey the Wondrous Cross	TPH 338			
<i>Hymn</i>	Hallelujah! Hallelujah!	TPH 566			

- Morning services start at 10:30, typically going until 11:30-11:45 (with approximately 100 members and visitors present).
- Evening services start at 6:00, typically running to 7:00 (with approximately 40 members and visitors present).
- The congregation has been blessed with faithful, expository preaching for its entire 80-year history.
- The platform furniture includes a pulpit, a baptismal font, and a communion table.
- The Lord's Supper is celebrated monthly in the morning services (3rd Sunday) and once a month in the evening services (1st Sunday). A whole loaf is used for the broken bread. Wine is served in trays with individual glass cups.
- The congregation regularly uses the *Trinity Psalter Hymnal* (2018), with occasional selections from the 1990 *Trinity Hymnal*. Both are currently in the pews.
- There is no choir, but the congregation is adept at singing robustly in four parts.
- The congregation is accustomed to singing many metrical psalms but is not an exclusive psalm-singing congregation.
- We currently have only piano accompaniment (4 rotating pianists). The church has an organ not currently being employed for worship. Accompanists attempt not to be noticeably distinctive: the tempo is dignified and played as written without improvisation, with the goal of supporting the congregation's worship.
- Pew Bibles are the English Standard Version.

- Children are encouraged to be in church and to participate in all services. There is no children's church. Other than the occasional crying baby, distractions are limited. A nursery (staffed with a pair of approved non-related members) is available for very young children in the morning services.
- We share a joint Good Friday service with other Reformed churches in the area.
- The church has a cordial relationship with all regional NAPARC churches and shares the pulpit with them freely.

Education

- We currently have only one Sunday school class for the entire family, 9:30 to 10:15, with typically 20 to 30 people present. There have been many different teachers, well prepared and experienced, covering books of the Old and New Testaments, Church history, and various doctrinal topics. The class is accustomed to an interactive style. We have no Sunday school during the summer months.
- Ladies Bible Study and a Men's book study group alternate every other Saturday morning.
- Church Library is well stocked with past and current books, though not frequently used.

Fellowship

- A Ladies' Prayer Meeting is held on Wednesday mornings using Zoom. The office administrator circulates a prayer list by email, based primarily on the updates from the Wednesday Zoom call.
- The members host a shared dish meal after the morning service on the first Lord's Day of every month, and a "coffee hour" time of informal refreshments follows the morning service on other weeks.
- We host an annual Family Camp (Wednesday dinner through Saturday lunch in eastern Oregon in mid-August with a guest speaker), inviting other congregations in the presbytery.
- Regional fellowship meetings for members in Washington state
- Occasional work days for the church property

Local Outreach

- Afternoon devotional service at **Park Forest Care Center** on the first and third Sundays of every month
- A group of ladies prepare a monthly pizza dinner at **Shepherd's Door**, a nearby women's and children's shelter. A few also volunteer weekly at other activities there.
- The Benevolence offering supports three local outreach programs:
 - **Crossroads Prison Ministry**: a few members correspond with prisoners
 - **First Image**: a local crisis pregnancy ministry
 - **Portland Rescue Mission**

Financial

- The congregation enjoys financial stability, with significant savings and no debt, as well as consistently strong giving (\$331,884 last fiscal year)
- The congregation owns a spacious facility in well-kept condition. The sanctuary (250 capacity, plus a balcony) was built in 1964, and the connected building with a fellowship hall and classrooms was built in 1990.
- We gave \$427,523 to OPC Worldwide Outreach over the past three fiscal years.
- Our overall benevolence giving in the latest fiscal year was \$208,100.

Staff

- The congregation employs a part-time office administrator (currently one of the ruling elders, ~12 hours a week).
- There is a part-time janitor (~5 hours a week).

Officers

- There are four ruling elders elected to lifetime service:
 - **Gerrit Schouten** (1981 to present; serving as moderator during the interim)
 - **Tom Bradshaw** (1997 to present; session clerk; member of our presbytery's Candidates & Credentials Committee)
 - **Mark McConnell** (1998 to present; member of our Presbytery's Home Missions Committee and Ecumenicity Committee.)
 - **Steve Chapman** (2023 to present; was a deacon in the congregation for 20 years)
- **Rev. Don Poundstone** is serving as the session's ministerial advisor during this interim.
- There are also four deacons elected to lifetime service:
 - **Bill Schouten** (1981 to present)
 - **Braden Anderton** (2021 to present, attended denominational diaconal conference in 2022)
 - **Eric Martens** (2021 to present; currently serving as chairman)
 - **David Purdy** (2021 to present)

Technology

- The church website regularly directs visitors to the church but needs an update.
- Streaming of services began at the start of the COVID-19 epidemic, which has been useful as an aid to shut-ins and vacationers.

Community Life

- The women excel in providing weekly refreshments, monthly fellowship meals, emergency meals, help to shut-ins, and social and craft events.
- Several members prepare Bible studies for their neighbors.
- There is a monthly book club meeting. Also, many members regularly get together with others in their area, in southeast Portland and Vancouver.
- Much willing help goes on throughout the church body, often in a decentralized, organic way. Members take turns bringing the disabled or elderly to church, for example.
- There is a sound emphasis on the primary tenets of our shared faith, and members extend grace to each other in areas of controversial doctrines, politics, etc.
- Several members are active in pro-life causes with a human rights and healthcare emphasis, such as 40 Days for Life, Sidewalk Counselors, and the First Image crisis pregnancy center.
- The church charges nominal rent to Vietnamese immigrants, Heaven's Grace Church. Their members share in the monthly fellowship meal on the first Sunday of the month.

Surrounding City

- Portland is in the middle of a scenic part of the country, with the Cascade Mountains, Pacific Ocean, and Columbia River Gorge all within an hour's drive.
- Portland is a multi-cultural city, friendly to walking and biking. Portland is a politically progressive city, pushing higher-density housing.

Neighborhood

- The church's neighborhood was built in the 1940s. Property costs have increased to the point where the area now attracts younger professionals. The neighborhood on either side of 82nd Avenue is solidly middle-income, with home ownership of separate dwellings prevailing.
- The blocks adjacent to 82nd Avenue are well-known in Portland for sex and voyeuristic businesses. Prostitution is openly solicited on the streets and in the motels near the church.
- The church cooperates with police operations against drug and human trafficking and violence.
- When vagrants have occasionally happened into fellowship meals, members have greeted and

- conversed with them, without tolerating threatening behavior.
- Although they remain committed to the church, many members feel little sense of connection to the church neighborhood.
 - Members living nearby are developing outreach to the neighborhood.
 - Working with police, city offices, and neighbors, members helped to remove a violent drug camp behind the church on Milton St. The Police increased patrols. There is a good relationship with the city government.
 - Neighborhood Christians from non-Reformed churches meet regularly at the building to consult with members and to pray for the church.
 - Members help neighbors plan information events and social occasions and have frequent opportunities to talk comfortably about Christ and the church.

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