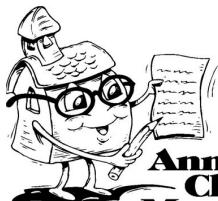


January 2019

United Church in University Place Newsletter

No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you're welcome here.

A United Church of Christ, a United Methodist Church &
an LGBTQIA welcoming Congregation



Join Us for the UCUP Annual Meeting January 13th at 11:30am



UCUP Congregation - it's that time of year again when we get together to review 2018, vote for new officers and a 2019 budget. Please join us Sunday, January 13th, following our Sunday Worship Service. A light meal will be available. All are welcome, but only members may vote. Come share fellowship, food and our future.

We look forward to seeing you on the 13th.
The United Church Board

HAPPY NEW YEAR



Epiphany Celebration - Sunday, January 6th at 5p.m.
Join us in the Fellowship Hall for a Soup Supper, making a few Epiphany crafts, walking a Celtic Spiral, and share in eating the King's Cake.

If you are able to help with any part of the evening, please let Pastor Cathy know. We will need folks to gather evergreen boughs, provide soup, help with crafts, and clean up.

We will start the evening with a soup supper and crafts, then gather around the Spiral made of Evergreen Boughs, with a Christ Candle lit in the center.

The Spiral Service, though not Celtic in origin, draws heavily upon the symbolism of the light and the cycle of the seasons which permeates the Spirituality of the Celtic Christians; a carry-over from the pagan Celts. In many cultures the spiral is a symbol of infinity, eternity, or God. On this evening, our Spiral service will remind us all that each one of us bears a light within – kindled by God and through Christ – to light our way through the physical darkness of winter and through the season of Epiphany. A labyrinth of evergreens will be laid out on the floor with stars scattered throughout the boughs. A white Christ candle is placed in the center. Each participant will make a journey into the middle where, one by one, we will light our own candle from the Christ candle, journey back out of the spiral to exchange our lit candle for a star in the spiral. The Star reminds us of the guiding light that led the Wise men and Shepherds to the birthplace of the Christ Child. That light is still there to guide us in our own personal journey throughout Epiphany.

After the Spiral service, we will feast on a traditional King's Cake, with three hidden treasures and discover who the Wise Ones are for the next year.





From Pastor Cathy

On Christmas Eve, we welcomed well over 200 people to our worship. Here is part of the message from the sermon that night.

Every Christmas Eve, outside a small chapel in Oberndorf, Austria, thousands of carolers bundle up against the cold to sing the world's most-beloved Christmas carol. Amid sparkling lights, and a star-filled sky, two men strumming a guitar, sing, "Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht," reenacting how this beloved carol was introduced for the first time 200 years ago.

Sources say: "It was on December 24, 1818 that the assistant priest Josef Mohr at the newly established St. Nicolas parish in Oberndorf gave a poem to substitute organist Franz Gruber, requesting a fitting melody on short notice for the Christmas Eve Mass, for two solo voices, with guitar accompaniment." There are tales about mice eating their way through the bellows of the organ, but the more likely culprit was water damage from frequent flooding. Because guitar was not an approved church instrument, they had to perform it AFTER Mass.

The song became a beloved carol and a fixture of Christmas Eve worship. Mohr and Gruber could not have known how song would inspire moments of peace, if only fleetingly. On the Western Front in 1914, during World War I, French, British and German soldiers laid down their weapons to join in solidarity singing "Silent Night" on Christmas Eve. Heavenly peace broke out in a spontaneous "Christmas Truce". Perhaps it is only Love's Pure Light that can make soldiers lay down their weapons to become a choir singing Silent Night.

Throughout history we continue to experience the worst humanity has to offer AND by the grace of God coming close to earth with the incarnation of a baby born 2000 years ago, and through the creative expression of the arts, we experience the best humanity has to offer. Josef Mohr penned the poem of *Stille Nacht* as a balm to help counter the horrors caused by the Napoleonic Wars. Many people were sending their children to other countries to find work.

There is a juxtaposition between the ethereal words and simple music of Silent Night, and living with the realities that confront us every day. 50 plus years ago, two different men, strumming a guitar, recorded a rendition of Silent Night. In that version, the carol is sung over the background of a grim 1960s newscast. Their names are Paul Simon & Art Garfunkel. Imagine singing Silent Night while holding the tension of the news of the 1960's. Here are just some snippets of evening news in that recording: *The recent fight in Congress was over the open housing Section of the Civil Rights Bill, without the votes of their strongest supporters. It had no chance from the start, and everyone in Congress knew it....Dr. Martin Luther King says he does not intend to cancel plans for an open housing march into a Chicago suburb. The County Sheriff said the National Guard would be called out if it was held...Former Vice President Richard Nixon says that unless there is a substantial increase in the present war effort in Vietnam, the U.S. should look forward to 5 more years of war. That's the 7 o'clock edition of the news. Goodnight.*

The juxtaposition between Silent Night and the evening news is powerful and poignant. As we sing this carol on the 200th anniversary of its first debut, we need to remember the different tensions and juxtapositions we hold as people of faith today.

We remember that the Holy Family sought refuge in a foreign country within a few years of Christ's birth because their lives were in danger. Yet, in those moments of history the Divine broke through, and divine presence continues to break through in our midst.

We sing "Silent Night" not as an escape, but in hope and solidarity as people of faith who continue to hold the tensions that surround us everyday - millions who live in poverty, political oppression, and those who must forcibly migrate in order to survive.

"Silent Night" is one of those pieces of music that can transport us to a place of encountering the divine, as the Holy reaches to our deepest, innermost core. May this simple melody and message of peace continue to resonate with us, as we put our weapons down, and worship Christ - the Savior who is born into our hearts tonight.

From Our President

It's next year!



Every year in late December, I get a kick out of ending conversations and meetings with "See you next year!" I've loved that gag since I was a kid, and it never seems to wear off. I'm hopeful that indicates a child-like wonder, rather than just plain childishness. But within the joke, the wish, lies an amazing miracle that happens every year. We turn this ordinary day, into a new beginning. A cold winter night becomes a time for celebration, reflection, community, taking stock, of letting go of the past and setting goals for the future. Of believing we can begin anew, just because we collectively decided that this is where our annual journey around the sun begins! And, for a time, we find an extra measure of Hope that next year will be better than this. We, as people, are generally great at seeing the negative; but, as we move into a New Year, we decide to practice seeing the wonderful possibilities, even when we know there are challenges to come.

And so, we reflect on the year at UCUP. It's been eventful! The year started with the failure of the drain field for our septic system, beginning a theme of investing in our building and grounds, that went on to include repairing water damage after a leak in the upstairs bathrooms, remediating mold in the exterior wall of the education wing, painting the building, sealing and striping the parking lot, purchasing an AED for the church, and installing programmable thermostats to better control our heating costs. We have dealt with personnel and programmatic changes, as well. Our Sunday School teacher, Jem, moved to Spokane in February, and the congregation has rallied to volunteer to teach our youth as we search for someone new to take up this mantle permanently. Staff-Parish Relations worked hard on updating our Safe Church Policy, and many came out to be trained, and we instituted the monthly rotation of our as-yet-to-be-named Worship Teams to assist with the many tasks of holding worship services. We celebrated record attendance at our Blessing of the Animals service, and shared disappointment and concern at the suspension of the Family Housing Network program. Through these events, and the many other joys and concerns, through the events ordinary and extraordinary, local, national and world-wide, we have continued to come together to support each other, problem-solve, challenge each other and ourselves, and seek to be good stewards of our gifts, and God's Light and Grace in the world. We continue to be the amazing community of United Church in University Place.

And now, we have the opportunity to do it again! 2019 will bring new challenges, obligations, opportunities, and amazements! We already know we will need to do some further investing in our building, repairing the remaining windows on the ground floor of the educational wing and upgrading the infrastructure of the church to allow for effective high-speed internet service to support our programs. We will have to make decisions about how to proceed, how to fund these investments, and where to place our time, talents and treasure as we move forward. To help guide us in these decisions, the Board has scheduled the 2019 Annual Congregational Meeting for Sunday, January 13th after church. I hope you are all able to attend to discuss and vote on the slate of officers for 2019, and the proposed 2019 budget. In order to accommodate this time, the January Board meeting will be held a week early, on 1/7/2019 at 6:30pm.

I am so grateful for the contributions and fellowship of each of you, and those who don't get a chance to read this, as part of our beloved UCUP community. Thank you for making this a place where we are truly welcome, whoever we are, and wherever we find ourselves on life's journey. I am excited to continue that journey with you into 2019, and beyond.

Happy New Year!

Chris Berry - President of the Congregation





Joys & Concerns



It was only 10:30 a.m. last Sunday when the stars came out.

You know them as Sophia Whitney, Soren Fohrman, Jimmy and Jeremiah Bodie and Wes and Emma Berry. With the help of Neva Laurie-Berry and Pamela Maddess, they told us the story of the bright shining star at the time of Jesus' birth. Sorry if you missed it!

The good news is that Mary Jones is back home, being watched over by her family. The bad news is that before returning home she fell and has some new bruises. Please keep her in your prayers, along with Vic Bode - still healing from recent surgery. Continue to remember those that find it hard to or are unable to get out on Sunday mornings: Doris Larsen...Win Bjarke...Michael Marcoe...Yvonne Begeman...Donna Shoe...Michelle Wallace...Randi Byrd...Deb Howard...Joan Martin...Billie Jo Morgan... and others.

As we end this year, the Care & Concerns Committee would like to thank Pastor Cathy for her leadership and baker Kathy for her muffins...and we pray that all of you have a very good 2019.

From all of us,

Pat Mail, Deb Howard, Shirley Paulson, Ardie Herbel, Vic Bode, Kathy Munn, Joyce Demarest and Mac (who rarely misses a meeting)!



My Sister's Pantry Item of the Month: Chili



UCUP has a nice place to sit awhile.
Just outside the offices underneath the
Peace and Justice bulletin board



My Sister's Pantry - December

Thank you to all who donated baby food items for needy young families.

Judy T. on behalf of Joyce D.

1 Jim Fohrman
2 Jon Foreman
16 Randi Byrd
Elizabeth Scherman
20 Hadi Dadashian
21 Cierra Gillard
25 Joan Martin
28 Michelle Wallace



Peace and Justice

On the windy mid afternoon of Friday, December 14th, I took some UCUP donation items in a small suitcase down to the AIDNW RV which is located outside the exit gate of the NW Detention Center in the Tide Flats. Surrounded by a mix of vacant lots, semi trucks, old train tracks and warehouses.

Already in the van were 15 people grouped together talking, and there were volunteers interviewing newly released individuals. I wanted to take a picture to share with you to soak up the feeling in the small space - hospitality? Concern? Focus? Spirit? Instead you have the photo of the donation slip.



Our UCUP board approved an additional benevolence request this year for AIDNW.

Doing its work unseen by the general public AIDNW is clearly visible to the detainees who enter and sit and seem mostly dazed and silent and then move one with information and connection to community. The vehicle is open to visitors 3:30pm M-F - visit take backpacks, socks, winter clothing, snack.

Be encouraged Matthew 18:20 "For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them."



I have a friend from water aerobics who volunteers regularly at the AIDNW RV. She told me they can use a few small roller suitcases as sometimes those released have more stuff than will fit in a backpack. She also said winter coats are needed as often people were detained when the weather was nicer and they don't have much in the way of outerwear.

AND, if anyone wants to make a BIG donation (or knows of someone who does), the RV they use is old, leaks and they are sorely in need of a new (or newer) one.

THANK YOU everyone who bought a gift (or 2 or 3...) for our FHN family giving tree! On Monday, December 17th, I delivered 6 large bags of beautifully wrapped gifts for them. I know they will be thrilled!



"Back-to-Back Shoulder-to-Shoulder" early intervention is the key in young families.

Infant donations are sooo happily received by these moms, new moms - those who are engaged in a mother infant program that Dawn works with a program of Catholic Community Services.

Diapers (size 1,2), wipes, formula (WIC doesn't last a full month) small infant play things, board books are good news incentives in these interactions.



Back to-Back

Shoulder-to-Shoulder

High chairs refurbished from St. Vincent de Paul's will make their way to homes and interview intake rooms.

Above articles submitted by Judy Thierry



Christmas Pageant - The Tiny Star

by Arthur Ginolfi, adapted by Dr. Neva Laurie Berry

Many thanks to Neva for writing and producing this year's pageant, adding in a few scientific facts about stars and adapting it to the personalities of our kids. Here is the script:

A very long time ago, there was a tiny star named Starlet. She was so small she could hardly be seen. All the other stars were much bigger and brighter than Starlet. At night, when people looked up at the sky, they saw all the big, bright stars. But no one ever saw Starlet. Even the other stars didn't notice her.

Sirius: I'm Sirius, the dog star. I'm the brightest star in the night sky. Ancient people thought I brought the summer heat.

Polaris: I'm Polaris, the north star. The whole sky rotates around me. I've guided ships for hundreds of years.

Starlet: Excuse me...

Canopus: I'm Canopus, the second-brightest star in the sky. Ancient people used me to mark the seasons and to guide their ships, and two mountains are named after me. I'm so bright that spaceships navigate by my light.

Vega: I'm Vega, the second-brightest star in the Northern Hemisphere. I was the first star to be photographed. Scientists have called me "the next most important star in the sky, after the Sun."

Alpha Centauri: I'm Alpha Centauri, the closest star to Earth. In the Southern Hemisphere, I never set. NASA wants to send a mission to search for planets orbiting me.

Starlet: Excuse me!

Other stars: What?

Starlet: You're so bright! Can I learn to twinkle and sparkle like you?

Sirius: Oh no, Starlet.

Polaris: You can't shine like us.

Canopus: Or twinkle and sparkle.

Vega: You are far too small.

Alpha Centauri: And too far away.

Starlet: No one ever sees me. I wish I were bigger.

Narrator: Later that night, the wise old moon looked at Starlet.

Moon: Why are you so sad?

Starlet: I try to twinkle and sparkle. But I am the smallest star in the sky. No one ever sees me.

Moon: Don't be sad. How big or small you are is not important. Someday, somewhere, someone will see you.

Starlet: But when?

Moon: Someday, somewhere.

Narrator: Many years passed. Night after night, Starlet shone, but no one ever saw her. Then one night, Starlet began to fall from the sky! Down, down, down she fell. Starlet landed gently on the roof of a little stable. Everything was dark and quiet. The only sounds she heard were those of the animals. (animal sounds from off stage) Then Starlet heard a baby crying! She looked inside the stable and saw a newborn baby lying in a manger.

Starlet: This stable is cold and dark. Maybe I can shine enough to make it brighter.

Narrator: So Starlet moved closer to the baby. When the baby saw Starlet and felt the warmth of her gentle rays, he began to smile. The more the baby smiled, the brighter Starlet shone! The whole stable glowed. It was a miracle. As Starlet grew brighter, she began to rise. Up, up, up into the sky, higher and higher, brighter and brighter. Starlet was now the brightest star in the sky. She shone brighter than Vega and Polaris, brighter than Alpha Centauri. Even brighter than Sirius! That night, everyone saw the magnificent star that Starlet had always been. This was the moment she had always wished for! And on that special night, shining over the little stable in Bethlehem, Starlet was the most beautiful star the world had ever seen.

Christmas Pageant *The Tiny Star* Pictures

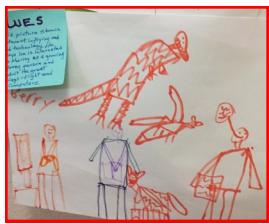


Sunday School News

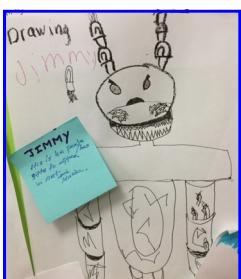
We are still seeking to hire a Sunday School teacher, and are grateful to Judy Thierry, Angie Wolle, Nancy Moffett, Rosemary Jones, Robert Brown, Dennis & Ben Small, Nora de Sandoval, and Cindi Bodie. Thanks to Nancy Moffett, for introducing us to a friend of hers, Cheryl Stone, who joined us in worship this fall, & who will help teach Sunday School starting in January. What an answer to prayer! Since we want Cheryl to be part of our worshipping community as well, please prayerfully consider if you can teach one or two Sunday this Winter and Spring. Rosemary Jones and Robert Brown will be happy to help orient you to the curriculum and where supplies are. Talk to Pastor Cathy or to Robert if God is leading you to help out in this important ministry.

Faith and spiritual growth Below is art from some of our UCUP children, inspired by their studies of MARK 10:2-16, "finding our way" in giving and receiving — as shared by Jimmy, Wes, Kiera, Emma and Jeremiah.

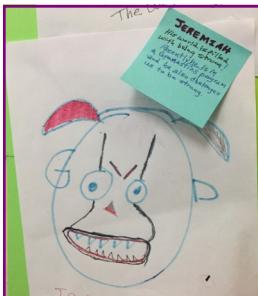
Jimmy has gifts to offer in art & music



Jeremiah's World is filled with being strong & he challenges us to be strong. He is in a gymnastics program



Wes Wants to share his interest in flying & technology. As a growing young person & adult, he wants to share great things in flight & computers



Kiera Likes to share art with others - happily

Emma likes to share beautiful colors with friends & make them happy. She is 5yrs old

Peace and Justice will meet Sunday January 6th from 11:30am to 12:30pm

We will review 2018 activities and select a committee chair for 2019.

We will map out benevolences for the first four months of the year.

Thank you to UCUP members for their generosity as we shared our shopping time/hours, wrapping talents and monetary/treasures with others here in Pierce County, with seafarers who enter our port, the homeless, immigrant families, mothers and infants, struggling families who want to celebrate Christmas and those in lands distant.

Be thinking of our 4th Sunday Forum topics and concerns that Peace and Justice might host. All are invited. If you have ideas, concerns or questions, contact one of the members.

Judy Thierry on behalf of P&J



Volunteer Day at My Sister's Pantry January 26 - 10am—12:30pm

UCUP will be helping feed the hungry on Saturday, Jan. 26th from 10am to 12:30pm at My Sister's Pantry. UCUP volunteers will be packing boxes, handing out fresh vegetables and fruit, helping to cook the free meal that is served to everyone, and assisting in the Clothes Closet. The Pantry is in the basement of 1st United Methodist Church at 621 Tacoma Ave S, Tacoma, WA. 98402.

Please sign up in the Narthex. See Ruth Cannon if you have questions about how you can help with this important outreach.



Invitation to Worship at Living Stones Prison Fellowship on Jan. 26th

In partnership with Mount Cross Lutheran Church, members of UCUP are invited to worship with the Living Stones Prison Fellowship on Saturday, Jan. 26th. We will meet at the Mount Cross church parking lot at 4pm and carpool to the Washington Corrections Center near Shelton to join the men of Living Stones.

The prisoners lead the evening worship service through their music, ushering, Scripture reading, testimonies and distribution of communion. It is a wonderful opportunity to fellowship with Christian brothers, and the only requirement is to undergo a routine background check prior to the service. If you are interested in attending, please provide your full name, date of birth, last 4 digits of SSN, and email (if available) to Dennis Small by Friday, Jan. 11th via phone at 253-565-5645 or email at dsmalffamily@comcast.net.

Peace, Dennis Small



Hey the Family Housing Network family will be receiving gifts from UCUP.

Chris and Rosemary are making a selection.



Blue Christmas Service - IN the Dark

On the darkest night of the year, when we held our Longest Night Blue Christmas service, Mother Nature decided to whip up a tornado across the bridge and cause the power to go out at the church. Regardless of wind and rain, cold and dark, 32 folks braved their way to the church for an intimate candlelight service in the darkened sanctuary. With beautiful music coming from our new baby grand piano, faces glowed by candlelight as we prayed and sang. Many thanks to Pamela for delicious hospitality; to Sharon, Joe, Cathi and Joyce for welcoming folks; to Tanya, Pamela, and Leslie Ann for assisting in worship; and to Jeff and the choir for holding us in the spirit with beautiful music. Neva commented how appropriate it was since our Advent theme has been "Learning to Walk in the Dark!"



Celtic Christmas Eve Service





Carpets get a Winter Cleaning

Have you noticed that our carpets received a good cleaning last month?

Many thanks to Jim Cash for arranging carpet cleaners, and for moving all of the Furniture!



Welcome our new Baby!!!

We may not have known about a baby beforehand to lead the parade as the symbolic Christ child on Christmas Eve, but our sanctuary has received a new baby, a baby grand piano!!! Hank & Judy Thierry donated the piano from their home, and it was consecrated in worship on December 16th. Hank said that the plan was for Jeff to come play the piano in their home each week. When that proposal didn't fly, they decided to donate the piano to UCUP instead. Our hearts are filled with gratitude and our ears are filled with beautiful music.

Many thanks to Hank & Judy.



Evangelism via Reader board & Facebook. Way to go Viral!

Did you know that in the era of social media, our reader board sometimes has messages that reach a broader community than just our neighborhood? Someone, unrelated to our church, took a photo of this message and posted it to their Facebook page. It turned out that in the span of one week, this post was SHARED, not just liked, 5000 times!!! We have had other posts that have garnered the attention of Social Media, just not to this extent. Our reader board has turned up on 20 best church reader board messages this past year.

Thanks to Tom Milligan and trusty assistant Hank Thierry for reaching a broader community.

UCUP attends The Rialto for Windham Hill & The Revels

What fun to be out and about enjoying Christmas concerts and run into fellow UCUP members at two different events.

Not in photo

(Ruth Cannon & Mollie Chaffee)



**New Year
Fresh Start
RESOLUTIONS
determination
GOALS AND DREAMS
PEACE
joyful beginnings
OPPORTUNITY
HOPE**

January

Every Sunday—10am Worship Service
10:15am Elementary Sunday School

2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 New Years Day Office Closed	2 No Bible Study 6:30 Finance	3 7:30—9:pm Choir Rehearsal	4	5
6 11:30am P & J Mtg	7 6:30pm Board Let It SNOW	8 6:30pm SPR Mtg.	9 12pm Brown Baggers Bible Study & Lunch	10 7:30—9:pm Choir Rehearsal	11	12
13 11:30am UCUP Annual Mtg. & Vote	14	15 6:30pm Men's Group in the Youth Wing	16 12pm Brown Baggers Bible Study & Lunch	17 7:30—9:pm Choir Rehearsal	18 6:30pm Play, Boogie & Jam Night	19
20	21	22	23 12pm Brown Baggers Bible Study & Lunch	24 7:30—9:pm Choir Rehearsal	25	26
27	28	29	30 12pm Brown Baggers Bible Study & Lunch	31 7:30—9:pm Choir Rehearsal		



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 Music Director: Jeff Andersen
 Nursery Attendant: Addy Harding



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No matter **who** you are,
or **where** you are on life's journey, you're
welcome here.

Newsletter

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January 1, 2019

**United Church In
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Weekly

Sundays

10am Worship Service
With Rev. Cathlynn Law

10:15am Elementary Sunday
School (5yrs to 11yrs)

Wednesdays

Noon-2pm Brown Baggers
Luncheon & Bible Study Group

Thursdays

7:30pm-9pm Choir Practice
(Sept—May)

***We are United with God,
United to Love,
and United to Serve Others***

Monthly

1st Sunday of the month
Communion during worship

1st Tuesday of the month
1pm Alzheimer's Support Group

3rd Tuesday of the month
6:30-8pm Men's Group:
"Concerns in Our Hearts & Souls"

3rd Friday of the month
6:30pm P,B & Jam Night
Bring your instruments!

4th Sunday of the month
11:45am 4th Sunday Forum



God is still speaking.
**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST** 