



A United Church of Christ/
United Methodist Church
& a LGBTQIA
Welcoming Congregation

UCUP

2020

October Newsletter



We will celebrate World Communion Sunday on October 4th. You may wish to make an altar of flags or dolls from around the world if you have any of those items at home. We celebrate Holy Communion in our homes as we worship on zoom. We trust that God will bless whatever elements you bring to the table that day.

- Special offering for UCC, "Neighbors in Need" as part of World Communion Sunday: https://transactions.ucc.org/CampaignForm/UCChrist/neighbors_in_need
- Offering for UMC World Communion Sunday: <http://www.umcsgiving.org/give-now>

ST. FRANCIS DAY *virtual* BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

We will celebrate our beloved pets and all of God's creation in our worship service on **October 11th**. Instead of our annual gathering in the Curran Apple Orchard, we celebrate this year's Blessing of the Animals close to St. Francis of Assisi's feast day, October 4th. St. Francis is the patron saint of animals and ecology. St. Francis wrote a Canticle of the Creatures, an ode to God's living things. You may know it by the hymn name, "All Creatures of our God and King" or "To you, O God, All Creatures Sing".

Please send any photos of your beloved pets to pastor@ucup.org by October 1st so they can be included in a slide show for our virtual worship service. Your photos can include pets that are currently alive, or those who have died. We will hold a place in our worship to remember those pets who are no longer with us physically. Make sure to send the name of the pet as well.



All Saints' Worship - November 1st

On Sunday, November 1st, we will celebrate All Saints' Day in our zoom worship service. We remember those who came before us in the faith. We celebrate their lives, and remember that we are surrounded by a "great cloud of witnesses". During the service, we will read aloud the names of all church and family members who have passed away in the past year.

If you would like a loved one's name included in the service, please email office@ucup.org or pastor@ucup.org. This element of the service will be pre-recorded in the sanctuary, so **we need to have all names in by October 20th**. During the service, there will be time for you to speak aloud the name of anyone who has impacted your faith, and also light a candle in their memory.

These are the names we are aware of at this time. Church Member: Michael Marcoe. Family members: Leslie Ann Knight's uncle; George Hiyanne - Kathi Hiyanne Brown's father; Bing Scherman, Elizabeth's brother; Rex Schilling, Chuck's dad.

For Those Who Walked With Us by Jan Richardson

For those who walked with us, this is a prayer.

For those who have gone ahead, this is a blessing.

For those who touched and tended us,

who lingered with us while they lived, this is a thanksgiving.

*For those who journey still with us in the shadows of awareness,
in the crevices of memory, in the landscape of our dreams, this is a benediction.*

FROM OUR PASTOR

One way I knew we had reached the six-month mark of “sheltering in place” to do our part in keeping the pandemic at bay, was my appointment with my dental hygienist for my bi-annual teeth-cleaning on the first day of Autumn. My last appointment had been a week before the spring equinox on March 12th, right before our first virtual worship service on March 15th, right before Gov. Inslee’s “Stay Home, Stay Healthy” Proclamation” on March 23rd. The Farmer’s Almanac stated that the Spring Equinox on March 19, 2020 was the earliest it had occurred in 124 years. Perhaps that was an auspicious omen for the year. I was one of the last patients to get my teeth cleaned for the next three months. Many others had their appointments canceled and had to reschedule.

One aspect that has made the “Stay home, Stay healthy” edict more agreeable is the ability to go outside to take long walks. Earlier this month I experienced a foreboding of dread in my spirit, as I noticed the sunset occurring earlier and earlier, with the days growing shorter, and the placement of the sunset occurring farther south each night, a sign that fall and winter were upon us in the northern hemisphere. And then the week-long plague of unhealthy smoke in our air made going outside hazardous to one’s health. It surprised me to notice my contentment when the first rains fell this week. Instead of being glum about it, I gave thanks to God for dampening the scorched earth, aiding the firefighters in their work to put out acres and acres of wildfires burning across the western states. I gave thanks to God for shelter, and the ability to curl up with reading “How to be an Antiracist”. I gave thanks to God for the turning of the seasons of creation. And I am reminded of the quip that **“There is no such thing as inclement weather - there is only inappropriate clothing.”** Ahh, welcome Fall in the PNW.



How do we connect our spiritual journey to seasonal cycles, and to the liturgical year? Celtic spirituality invites us to pay attention to the Summer & Winter Solstices, the Spring & Autumnal Equinoxes, but also what is called the Cross-Quarter Days of Samhain, Imbolc, Beltain, and Lughnasa. Before you think that your pastor is going all pagan and new-age on you, it is good to remember that Christianity absorbed many pagan elements and adopted or co-opted pagan rituals and holidays as its Holy-days.

Christianity was influenced by the Roman festival of Saturnalia - an ancient pagan holiday that honored the Roman God Saturn. It took place between Dec 17th - 25th. It was a week of revelry and giving presents. Christianity co-opted the Saturnalia festival, naming the concluding day, December 25th, as Jesus' birthday. The Philocalian calendar (dated around 354) contains the earliest reference to the celebration of Christmas. Curiously, Puritans banned celebrating Christmas, making it illegal from 1659-1681 in Massachusetts because of its pagan history. According to the New Unger's Bible Dictionary: "The word Easter is of Saxon origin, Eastr, the goddess of spring. By the 8th century Anglo-Saxons had adopted the name to designate the celebration of Christ's resurrection." Others say Easter derives from the name of an ancient Chaldean goddess Astarte, who was known as the "Queen of Heaven." Her Babylonian name was "Ishtar." As the goddess of love and fertility, Ishtar's symbols were eggs and rabbits! Worshipping Ishtar during an annual spring festival was intended to ask her blessing of fertility on the crops being planted at that time of year.

To the Celts, time was circular rather than linear. Theologian and poet John O'Donohue writes: *"The Celtic imagination loved the circle. It recognized how the rhythm of experience in nature and divinity followed a circular pattern."* Esther de Waal in her book "The Celtic Way of Prayer" writes: *"A people who farmed and knew the pattern of the seasons, who lived close to the sea and watched the ebb and flow of tides, who watched the daily cycle of the sun & the changing path of the moon, brought all of this into their prayer. The holding together of how dark & light, cold & warmth, came naturally to a people whose whole livelihood showed death and rebirth, dying and new life, was a natural part of their existence."*

Christine Valters Paintner writes in her book, "The Soul's Slow Ripening" that *"There is wisdom to be gleaned and areas of our spiritual life to pay attention to and practices for each season. By attuning to rhythms of the earth, Celtic monks allowed nature to be a wisdom guide that could teach about life's rise and fall."*

The Celtic year begins, not on January 1st, and not the beginning of Advent, as our liturgical calendar does, but with the festival of Samhain on October 31st, when nature appears to be dying down. It is known as 'Seed Fall': the understanding that from death and darkness springs life and light.

Perhaps in this season of the pandemic there is an invitation to pay even more attention to the turning of the seasons, and reflect on what comes up for you in the embracing of each season: joy, grief, memory, anticipation, letting go. Angie and I just reflected that a year ago we recognized that it would be the last Blessing of the Animals for our beloved Denali, and that we would likely be adding her name to our sacred All Saint's cloth in 2020. As we anticipate both the Virtual Blessing of the Animals coming up on October 11th and our All Saints' Worship service on November 1st, we are both experiencing tender feelings about the blessing this beloved pet of ours provided in our lives. The turning of the seasons help us pay attention to our interior life in a more intentional way.

Cross-quarter days are midpoints aligned with equinoxes and solstices. November 1st is the midway point between autumn equinox and winter solstice, and is the beginning of the new year in Celtic tradition. Falling right after All Hallows' Eve (Samhain), it coincides with All Saints and All Souls Day. In Celtic tradition, remembering ancestors is an intuitive way of beginning anew. We can draw wisdom from those who traveled the journey before us. They believed it to be an especially "thin time" where the veil grows more transparent, and the wisdom of our ancestors is closer to us. Reassured we are not alone, we are surrounded by a cloud of witnesses and Communion of Saints just across the veil.

Winter invites us to gather inside, listen for voices we may not hear at other times - the inner wisdom and voices of those who came before us. The earth's turning can mirror our own spiritual journey and soul ripening. What is it the season for? The author of Ecclesiastes tells us there is a proper time for everything, an organizing to life and the universe. Seasonal wisdom invites us to consider what is coming to ripeness your life right now and how we might respond.

Rev. Steve Garnaas-Holmes writes: *All the seasons and changes belong to one earth; all are part of one living process, one breathing planet, one beautiful organism. One life. The currents that cool one side of the globe warm the other. We are all part of one living being. One's songs of courage are woven with the threads of another's suffering. Another's joy flows through our sorrow. When we pray for our own healing, without knowing it we seek the healing of the world. When our hearts go out to others who we think suffer more than we, both are strengthened. Our struggles and blessings, prayers and thanksgivings are not separate; they are one. We are all one being, one cell, one Life. We are all the prayer of one God, one Love. In your particular place today, in your weather, on your path, you are not alone. Those who suffer and who rejoice, who pray and who despair, who need life and who offer life, all are with you. All are in you. And we are all in God, whose love is our blessing, our unity and our life. Living or dying, we belong to this Love. This is the day God is creating. Give thanks and rejoice.*

*Deep peace of the running wave to you ~ Deep peace of the flowing air to you
Deep peace of the quiet earth to you ~ Deep peace of the shining stars to you
Deep peace of the gentle night to you ~ Moon and stars pour their healing light on you
Deep peace of Christ the light of the world to you
Deep peace of Christ to you*

FROM OUR PRESIDENT

One. Breath. At. A. Time.

The Pacific Northwest Conference of the United Church of Christ has maintained a lively e-mail exchange throughout the pandemic. There have been A LOT of emails (gee, I thought I had retired!!), but the exchanges between UCC pastors, moderators, and conference staff have been interesting, as have the numerous online meetings and webinar programs. It's been nice to have the connections when so many conferences and events have been cancelled. The United Methodist Church conference has also maintained online connections, and recently several in our church family participated in the virtual annual conference. During this conference, Pastor Cathy was officially assigned to United Church in U.P. for another year. Hooray!!

In his frequent e-mail messages, UCC Conference Minister Mike Denton reminds us to keep breathing – Take a deep breath. Let it out slowly. Take another deep breath, and let it out slowly, too. When, on top of everything else, we were in the midst of the wildfire crisis, Mike exhorted us to breathe, and he said, simply:

This.

Will.

Not.

Last.

Forever.



In the responses, someone added a (breath) after each word, and a couple of folks noted that, <cough> <gasp>, it was hard to breathe in all the smoke.

The smoke was just clearing, and the simple act of breathing was starting to feel somewhat normal, when news of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg's death was reported. This sad news seized our hearts, renewed the sense of anxiousness that seems to define this year, and stole our breath, again.

It's hard work to settle our minds and take those controlled breaths, but it does help.

Speaking of breathing, one of the areas of concern addressed in our plan for Reopening and Transforming our church amidst the COVID crisis was the ventilation system in our church sanctuary and fellowship area. We have poor air circulation in our 50-year-old building, and that's a concern for both health and energy usage. The facilities team has been looking into the situation, and at its September meeting, the UCUP Board approved modifications to the heating and ventilation system, with expenditures up to \$20,000 to modify airflow in our sanctuary, fellowship area, narthex, and downstairs fellowship hall. With these upgrades, we'll be able to bring in 100 percent fresh air from outside when our building is occupied (an improvement from the current 28 percent), and better control recirculating air for energy efficiency when the building is not occupied. These improvements will be good for our health, not only in consideration of the coronavirus, but anytime we're in the midst of cold and flu season. The energy savings will be good for our budget, and good for our Earth.

So take a deep breath, my friends. This will not last forever, and one day we will be breathing fresher air in our sanctuary, in the company of our beloved church family.

Marilyn Thompson,
President



Our condolences to Chuck Schilling and his family on the death of Chuck's father.....Congratulations to Christine and Dave Crossley on the birth of their son, Fletcher, on September 16 (8lbs 4ozs).....Best Wishes to Amara Oden, as she serves her UCC internship at Magnolia UCC. Please keep all of them in your prayers.

We've received word that Win Bjarke fell and broke a hip last month. She's been in a nursing home, in Renton, since the surgery to repair the break. BUT she hopes to be back in her apartment at Merrill Gardens in Renton by the end of the month AND getting her cat back from Chris and Dawn....

'So Long, It's Been Good To Know You', Blanche and Lahra Beesley sold their home in Lakewood and drove to Oklahoma to visit family, then it's going to be on to Arkansas and Texas, then Scottsdale to visit Carol Shogreen – then they are going to decide where they want to settle.....a newer member, Yvonne Begeman, will be moving to the Tucson area in mid-October, driving there with her daughter. Our prayers for safe travel.

The name (& age) of the artist, of the Care & Concerns new birthday card, is printer in the lower right corner, it's 'Emma B 7'. The Committee would like to thank Emma Berry for drawing their new birthday card and we believe that when you take a good look at the card you will have a happy birthday.

School has started, please keep the teachers and students (and parents) please in your prayers...along with those working the 'front line' caring for COVID patients, including Elizabeth Scherman's daughter, Annika.

Sorry I can't write, 'Welcome Back Choir', but I'm sure that everyone that sees the ZOOM services wants to say 'Thank You' to Jeff Andersen, Stuart Lane, Don Thompson, Don Morgan, AJ Milleret, Neva Laurie-Berry and Wes and The Small Family Singers (did I miss someone?) for the music we do have every Sunday...and we continue to say THANK YOU to Pastor Cathy, Neva Laurie-Berry, Don Thompson and Tom Milligan and all those that work their magic to bring the ZOOM services to us...and Thank You to everyone that is teaching Church Sunday School via ZOOM, on September 13th Ellen Davis did it all the way from Charlottesville, Virginia!.....Think it was Neil Rader at the Fellowship Time, following the service on Sunday, the 20th, that suggested that Pastor Cathy will have a hard time when we start meeting in the sanctuary again and she won't be able to mute us during her message time. HAPPY FALL EVERYONE...REMEMBER TO WEAR YOUR MASK

Happy Birthday!

october birthdays

- 6 Norma Rader
- 8 Peter Burhop
- 10 Sophia Whitney – 10 yrs
- 11 Lahra Beesley
- 15 Ron Wicks
- 18 Meredith Sage
- 21 Kathleen Kenna
- 25 Angie Wolle
- 27 Tom Milligan
- 31 Blanche Beesley



LOVE

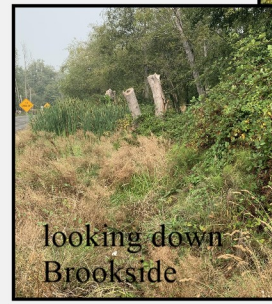
welcome to the world!
fletcher crossley



SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

Did you know a creek runs underneath the west part of our church property?

Each Sunday in September we studied and reflected on a different relationship we have with the outdoors. Forest, Land, Wilderness our Seasons curriculum for our 7 to 11 year olds. Children will have the opportunity to make wire sculptures on September 27th as we read about water in Revelations, Genesis, Psalms, and Matthew.



looking down Brookside



looking north to parking lot

and River Sundays was

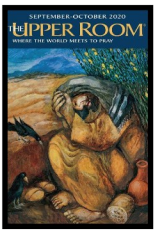
Judy Thierry,
on behalf of Faith and Spiritual Formation

BACK² School



Cheryl Stone and Nancy Moffett made back to school gift baskets for our Sunday School students and dropped them off at their homes.

What a welcome gift as our students and parents navigate the challenges of virtual school. A big thank you to Nancy and Cheryl for connecting with our kids.



Just a reminder that UCUP has a subscription (published in odd months) to The Upper Room. Please feel free to grab one off the narthex table. If you need access to the church to retrieve one, or if you'd prefer one was mailed to you, please contact the office.

You can also access an online version here: <https://www.upperroom.org/standingorderchurches>

Fourth Sunday Forum: The Collision of Climate Change and Covid September 27th

On September 27th, Greening plans on hosting a Fourth Sunday Forum with Doctor Barak Gale. Now living rather locally, he graduated from MIT, where he studied thermodynamics. He also is a past Board President of the Washington Wilderness Coalition. Subjects we expect him to discuss include changes in headgear, changes in climate, some images from the Mountaineers, talk about thermodynamic engineering, statistical curves of Covid-19 and (my own favorite: IPCC [UN global-warming] scenarios, and some “realistic strategies to flatten the curves.”

We are really glad to have heard about Dr Gale through the Lions Club, and even more glad he has volunteered to share some time with us.

Submitted by Roger T. Martin



Tacoma Urban League

At the conclusion of our White Fragility study group, one way we talked about the church taken action was to make a benevolence donation to a local organization that supports Black people.

After some research, Peace and Justice decided to make a donation of \$300 this month to the Tacoma Urban League.

The mission of the Tacoma Urban League "is to assist African Americans and other under served urban residents in the achievement of social equality and economic independence." This organization was established in 1968 and "is devoted to empowering African Americans and other disenfranchised groups to enter the economic and social mainstream. From its earliest days in the civil rights movement, through years of partnership with government and public agencies, the Tacoma Urban League has been a beacon of hope and a catalyst for change in the South Puget Sound African American community."

To learn more about the Tacoma Urban League and its programs, visit their website at thetacomaurbanleague.org.



OGHS and UMCOR

In March of this year we received a special offering to help fund One Great Hour of Sharing and the United Methodist Committee on Relief. This is a once-a-year special offering that we take to help us all be a presence of compassion and assistance in a world torn by disasters, poverty, climate change and violence.



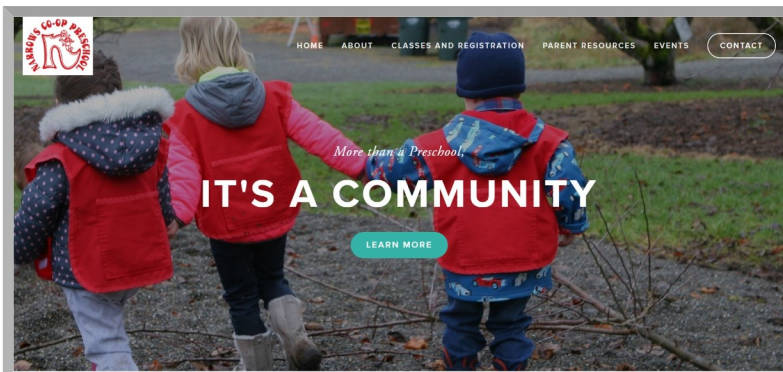
This year these funds are also being used to help with COVID 19 relief in the hardest hit areas around the globe. Those who are severely impacted by these things need our help, our love, and our prayers. This church has always been generous with all of this, and this year was no exception and we are grateful for all of the donations received.



However, because this special offering was taken just as we moved to virtual worship, we, and many other congregations, were unable to promote OGHS and UMCOR as normally would have been done. As a result, the total offerings were lower than in previous years, just when the needs are even greater. The United Church of Christ reports that the OGHS offering was only half of what it had been the year before.

Therefore, Peace & Justice is asking that any one who is able, please give to this offering by designating OGHS or UMCOR in the memo line of your check, or by selecting the OGHS option on our web donation page. All donations received will be split equally between One Great Hour of Sharing and the United Methodist Committee on Relief. Thank you all.

Cathi Cline
for Peace and Justice Committee



“Learning to play in the sandbox” – Narrows Cooperative preschool has started virtual classes and will begin small group outdoor sessions in October. We have been privileged to be the physical home for the Co-op for over 40 years. Children require early socialization with their peers and playing side-by-side fosters their growth and development.

The Narrows Board, including new incoming Board President, Aimee Crawford, along with Bates Technical teachers and early childhood consultants, have put forward

a reopening plan, and the UCUP board approved it in September. Enrollment is catching up to pre COVID19 numbers. Look for children playing if you happen to drive by.

Know of interested families with children ages 2 – 5? Call 253-256-2150.

Judy Thierry, UCUP liaison

am ASSOCIATED MINISTRIES is working on lasting solutions, And YOU are a key part of our success! Join us this fall as we focus on the vital part we all play in building a community marked by compassion and justice.

Each day between November 9-12 we'll hear from resilient neighbors, passionate leaders and dedicated AM staff, sharing stories of hope and how you can invest in making a difference. We'll gather online each day between 5:00-6:00 pm and focus on a different aspect of homelessness; join us for one, two, three or all four of these informative and inspirational sessions!

- Nov 9 - Youth homelessness
- Nov 11 - Family homelessness
- Nov 10 - Housing our veterans
- Nov 12 - Chronic homelessness



Registration is free at <https://associatedministries.org/get-involved/focusweek/>



This year's event will be virtual due to the COVID-19 pandemic. While we will miss seeing everyone in person we're working hard to make sure the event is a meaningful way to give so that no person goes hungry.

VIRTUAL AUCTION | October 19 - 25, 2020

Our Virtual Silent Auction will give you the opportunity to purchase incredible experiences and items all while supporting our neighbors in need. Information on ways to bid will be provided to all registered attendees prior to the auction opening.

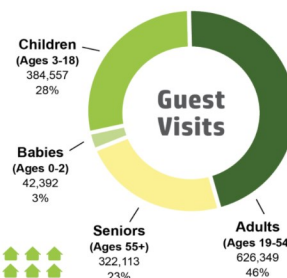
LIVE EVENT | October 24, 2020 | 7 PM

Join CEO Michelle Douglas and Board President Alice Phillips for a short live event online to learn more about EFN's work and mission.

Register: <https://efoodnet.ejoinme.org/Abundance2020>



Food Pantries, Meal Sites, and Shelters Served by EFN



Providing Pierce County with a consistent, diverse, and nutritious food supply so that no person goes hungry.

*Reflects 2019 data

9 Reasons Why You Should Vote (and Tell Other People to Vote Too)



We are confronted with injustice every day and sometimes the problems of our world seem too big to confront. But our faith is infused with hope and built on a foundation of action. While it is tempting to disengage from the political process, as people dedicated to creating a just world for all we know that we cannot. One of the best ways we can work for change is by voting. Not convinced? Here are 9 reasons that you should vote (and tell your friends to vote too):

- 1. **Your voice may be missing** - Nonprofit VOTE and the U.S. Elections Project calculated that in 2016 only 60 percent of eligible voter actually cast their votes – that means 40 percent of the electorate stayed home. Those who cast the votes elect our representatives.
- 2. **Your vote could tip the balance** - Some elections come down to the wire. Each vote is vital.
- 3. **There's more at stake than you might think** - Voting doesn't just effect who gets elected; there are often ballot measures in local and state elections on everything from funding for schools to changing local ordinances. Voting helps you participate and have a voice in what's happening at every level of government that affects you.
- 4. **It's fun** – Going to the polls is a great way to get to know your neighbors.
- 5. **Cold, hard cash** - Congress holds the purse strings on the U.S. budget and determines how our taxes are allocated. It's your money, you should have a say in how it's being spent. This applies at the state and local level too.
- 6. **Bragging rights** – Think of the Insta-cred you'll get when you share your "I Voted" stickers. #doitfortheagram
- 7. **People fought and died so you could cast your ballot** - For many groups of people, the right to vote was hard fought. Less than 100 years ago women couldn't vote and while the 15th Amendment, which was passed after the civil war granted the right to vote for citizens regardless of race, it wasn't until the Voting Rights Act of 1965 that many African Americans were able to vote. Today we still see voter suppression in many states, which makes it harder to vote or register to vote.
- 8. **You can shape the policy debate** - An active and engaged electorate requires our government to pay attention to us. It often feels like one vote is meaningless, but all of those drops in the bucket add up to something remarkable. Is there an issue you care about A LOT? Do you work in a soup kitchen or food pantry? Have you been involved in the immigration debate? Is your heart breaking over families separated at the border? It is your vote that determines who will respond to the challenges that our country faces.
- 9. **Our faith calls us into the world to be salt and light** – Voting is an important part of our civic lives, but also our faith lives. By voting we can proclaim the values we hold as part of our faith, those uplifting the dignity and humanity of each person, love of our neighbor, and love of God.



JOIN US!
SUNDAY MORNINGS AT 10AM
FOR OUR LIVE ZOOM WORSHIP
SERVICE!



FIGHT FOR THINGS YOU
CARE ABOUT IN A WAY
OTHERS WILL JOIN YOU
RIP JUSTICE RBG

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