



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

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

UCUP

November Newsletter

2021

ALL SAINTS SUNDAY - November 7, 2021

This Sunday—November 7th—is the day we celebrate All Saints in worship - a time to remember and give thanks for All Saints of God, especially those who have passed away in the last year. We celebrate their lives, and remember that we are surrounded by a “great cloud of witnesses”. If you have a particular saint who touched your life with God's love and formed your life in faith, be ready to speak their name aloud and light a candle in their memory. If you are at home, consider creating an altar of photos of those who have died. We will celebrate Holy Communion as we gather as the Body of Christ.



Reflections on All Saints

By the Rev. J. Bennett Guess, executive director of the ACLU of Ohio and ordained minister of the UCC

Thirty years ago, as a newly ordained pastor, I thought we should have a special service on All Saints Day, even though it didn't fall on a Sunday and it wasn't their custom.

When the evening arrived, 30 bulletins sat neatly folded in the narthex and my typed sermon manuscript was waiting for me at the pulpit. I lit the sanctuary candles and dozens of votives around the chancel. Dressed in my black robe, with white stole, I listened in my little office, just off the sanctuary, for any sounds of the big wooden church doors opening.

Nothing. Not a sound. Around 7:06 p.m., the realization came that not a single person was going to show. I felt foolish, stupid.

Just as I was blowing out the candles and taking off my robe, someone walked in. It was my mother, who had driven 30 miles to be there. Looking at the empty sanctuary, she asked if she had mistaken the date. I barked back abrasively, "We're not having it."

But sensing my deflation, as only a mother can, she said emphatically, "Well I'm here and I came to worship!" So, feeling a little bit like a mother-child pretend worship tea party, I re-lit the candles, zipped up my robe, stepped into the pulpit.

"May the Lord be with you," I said. "And also with you," she responded.

And together, we recited an opening litany, calling forth all creation, all human kind, to come and sit with us, to stand beside us, recalling all that God has done for us and remembering God's mercies from generation to generation to generation.

After a few moments, the awkwardness subsided as, together, we felt that room being filled with all the love that a mother and son could have for one another, which was good imagery for All Saints Day, given how the communion of saints is about love and hope and faith being passed down from one generation to the next. Every hymn was sung, the sermon delivered, and prayers prayed. The Eucharist was blessed and shared, and the benediction pronounced.

In the Catholic tradition, priests say the mass daily, even if all alone. They participate in the communion of saints and the assurance that somewhere in the world, the church is at prayer.





President's letter

Celebrating Our Many Gifts

Hello, Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

This month I'm wearing another hat, and speak to you not only as president, but also as a representative of the Stewardship Committee. It's that time of year, when we take time to consider pledges of money, time and talent to our church. Our theme this year is drawn from a favorite hymn, *"Many Gifts, One Spirit."*

I have always loved packages. I love the practice of selecting a gift, wrapping it carefully, and presenting it to the recipient. Of course, it's fun to receive packages, too! Thinking of our gifts to the church in those terms – as precious, carefully selected, and lovingly wrapped gift boxes is a lovely way to visualize our stewardship pledges.

We have so many beautiful gifts to share! In addition to the money that enables us to support our talented staff, operate our building, and fund our programs, each of us has talents to share. These may be skills and abilities, such as singing, teaching, speaking, repairing, or organizing; or they may be the equally important gifts of listening, sharing, laughing, crying, accepting, and forgiving. Like a big, colorful pile of packages at a birthday party, these gifts come in all shapes and sizes, each one unique, and each one special.

As you consider your stewardship pledges for 2022 with careful intention and generosity, I invite you to imagine placing those gifts in a shiny box, wrapped with ribbons and bows, and bringing it to United Church in University Place. We so need the time, talent, engagement, and presence that each of you bring. It takes many hands to carry out the work of our church and to be a voice for understanding and justice in our community.

What's in your gift box for the coming year? Thank you for prayerfully considering your stewardship pledge, and for saying "yes" to opportunities to serve through our various committees and programs.

With gratitude,
Marilyn Thompson,
President





Pastor's letter

Reflections from Renewal Leave

What a gift to luxuriate in a whole month to step away from pastoral responsibility at UCUP and engage in a period of intentional exploration and reflection, drinking from God's life-giving waters, and regaining passion and creativity for ministry. What a gift to know that the church would be tended to by the many gifted leaders within our congregation and the capable hands of our staff.

Angie joined me for the first two weeks as we explored a good portion of New England as summer transitioned to autumn. From the Berkshires in Massachusetts to the Green Mountains and sugar shacks of Vermont to the rugged coast of Maine to the White Mountains and covered bridges of New Hampshire, we logged over a thousand miles on our rental car and over two centuries of history of the land upon which we traveled. The autumn leaves of New England hold the same beauty as they do here in the Pacific Northwest; they are simply more abundant, and the sight around every bend of the two lane country roads we traveled continued to take our breath away with the abundant breadth of color. God's creation is truly magnificent.

Taking renewal leave during the transition of summer to fall was a good reminder to allow nature to teach me the art of letting go in order to make way for renewal. Every year trees lose their leaves, and it is both sad and beautiful, painful and necessary, inevitable. I took a gentle cue from the dancing and falling leaves, trusting that everything is falling into place. From Ecclesiastes 3: "For everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven." A time to slow down, to make space for real rest. Time to release my grip, on what I need to let go of, to welcome what is meant to be new.

I spent a week on my own exploring Whidbey Island, Orcas Island (where I practically had Deception Pass and Mt. Constitution and Turtle Back Mountain all to myself), and visiting with friends and family I haven't seen in years. We celebrated Angie's birthday out on the Oregon Coast in the midst of the windstorm, what some were calling a "bomb cyclone". We braved our way through the wind, crashing waves, pelting rain with a few sunbreaks, to appreciate the power of nature and the ability to experience it up close. And so grateful to return indoors to the simple pleasures of a hot beverage, a warm blanket, and a good book.

I am back - renewed and refreshed - ready for all the joys and challenges that ministry provides. I was able to watch all our October worship services and I am so profoundly grateful to Jim & Nancy Davis, Laura Giddings, Chris Berry, and Amara Oden for their beautiful and poignant witness of God's leading in their lives and in our life as this community of faith; to Bill & Vicki, Joe & Tanya, Stuart, Judy, Dennis, Diane & Ben Small for their worship leadership; to Neva for continuing to orchestrate behind the scenes; to our Worship production team for continued music and visuals; to Jenny Huntsman, our office manager who kept the office running; to our Stewardship team led by our President Marilyn Thompson, getting off to a great start. Indeed, within this congregation we have Many Gifts, One Spirit!!!

Blessings,
Pastor Cathy



We, the members of United Church in University Place, condemn Islamophobia, violence and the destruction of property.

We stand, prayerfully, in solidarity with our neighbors at the Tacoma Islamic Center and grieve with them the damage to their building. May peace be upon you.

October 14, 2021



UCUP Responds to Fire at Islamic Center

From Marilyn Thompson

Earlier this month, an arson-caused fire at the Tacoma Islamic Center caused extensive damage and necessitated the closure of the center. The members of the local Islamic community have received an outpouring of support and financial gifts to support their rebuilding. They are currently using temporary gathering space at Tacoma Community College and St. Mark's Lutheran church. It was recently reported in the news that the individual suspected in the arson has

been apprehended. United Church in University Place has reached out with expressions of support and a message on our reader board, and we continue to be in communication with our Islamic neighbors.

Interfaith Gathering

From Pastor Cathy Law

Sadly, there have been other attacks on places of worship in the greater Tacoma area:

- October 24 - a fire, also determined as arson, damaged the parish office at St. Charles Borromeo Parish.
- September 21, 2021 – aggravated assault on Buddhist nun at Khmer Theravadin Buddhist Temple in Tacoma
- September 2021– break-in and attack on Khalsa Gurmat Center in Federal Way



Bob Rudolph & Nancy Moffett deliver a plant and message from our church to the Islamic Center.

To address this spate of attacks, faith leaders from the affected places of worship -- along with faith leaders across the area worked together with Associated Ministries and Tacoma Community College to host an Interfaith Solidarity gathering to condemn violence or attacks on places of worship and to emphasize our unity and resilience. This gathering was held on Sunday, October 31st and limited to 125 people to maintain COVID protocols. Pastor Cathy, Leslie Ann Knight, Bob & Pat Rudolph were able to attend this important gathering. As a church, we continue to extend our care, concern, and prayers to St. Charles Parish and the Islamic Center of Tacoma, and other affected houses of worship.

Elise DeGooyer, Co-Director Faith Action Network traveled from Seattle to attend. This is FAN's reflection from the gathering last Sunday: The interfaith community in Tacoma gathered together, standing with the Islamic Center Of Tacoma and St Charles Borromeo Church communities who experienced recent arson, along with the Khalsa Gurmat Center Federal Way and other Catholic and Black churches who have experienced vandalism. An injury to one is an injury to all, but love prevails. Special thanks to FAN board member Aneelah Afzali of MAPS AMEN and the staff of Associated Ministries for organizing and inviting us. Gratitude to the elected officials who attended to honor the importance of faith communities. Gratitude for Rev Cathlynn Law of United Church In University Place for their message of solidarity on their reader-board.



Religious Community leaders and elected officials

Fire at Islamic Center (con't)



Dr Abdulhakim Mohamed of Islamic Center Of Tacoma



Dr Jasmit Singh of Khalsa Gurmat Center



Tacoma Mayor Victoria Woodards



Rabbi Sarah Newmark



Congressman Derek Kilmer



Pastor Cathy with FAN Co-Director Elise Degooyer, and Dr. Leslie Ann Knight



Mike Yoder of Associated Ministries



Joys & Concerns



Submitted by Joyce Demarest

First, we want to express our concerns for the local Islamic community and thank Bob Rudolph for acting so fast in showing his and United Church's concern for them following the fire that was set in their Bridgeport center of worship.

Second, a BIG THANKS YOU to those that filled in for Pastor Cathy, both on Sunday mornings. giving the message or following up on any concerns that came up during the month of October. A special thanks to President Marilyn Thompson for keeping us moving forward.

WELCOME BACK, PASTOR CATHY!

Our prayer list has a number of people on it that are under going treatment for cancer: Cathi Cline AND her brother John, Duncan Foley, Dorothy McCuiston's brother-in-law, Hugh, and Kathy Munn's daughter, Mary Kay. Jenny Hartley is in a care center recovering from a broken hip. Please keep her in your prayers and along with Emily who is over-seeing her care. Please keep all caregivers on your prayer list and all those suffering from COVID. We give thanks that Laura Balcom's father is out of the hospital and pray for her mother who had to have another blood transfusion. Keep Cindi Bodie and the boys in your prayers AND remember our former pastor Joanne Brown who is suffering with a number of medical problems.

Status on Church Reopen Plan

Reopening Plan Update for November

Church to Resume Hybrid Services

The United Church in U.P. Reopen Ad Hoc committee continues to monitor recommendations and protocols for activities during the COVID-19 pandemic. With Pastor Cathy's return in November, the church will resume hybrid worship services, with the option to attend services in the sanctuary, to join on Zoom, or to view the recorded service at any time on FaceBook/YouTube. It is no longer necessary to sign up in advance to attend in-person worship. Here is a summary of our Reopening status:

1. Maintain modified Stage 3 for November (allows in-person attendance up to 25 individuals).
2. Return to hybrid worship (includes options for in-person or Zoom).
3. The ad hoc committee will meet in mid-November and, in consultation with the board, determine if we are comfortable increasing the maximum attendance number to 50 for December.
4. Eliminate the requirement to sign up in advance to attend in-person worship.
5. Continue to require masks and sign-in protocols.

We look forward to seeing you in church and on the big screen! Questions regarding our reopening plan and COVID safety protocols can be directed to members of the ad hoc committee: Marilyn Thompson, Chris Berry,



November Birthdays



4 Dawn Foreman
Leslie Ann Knight
5 Joe Becker
7 Tanya Sorenson
9 Rosemary Jones
10 Stephen McQuillan
11 Chris Berry
18 Sharon Britcher
28 Nancy Moffitt
30 Addy Harding



Faith Action Network

The Faith Action Network's Annual Dinner is coming up on Sunday, November 21, 2021. This year, as last year, it will be a virtual celebration. Last year, when we met virtually, we had a pre-party with the church members before we attended the dinner. We can do that again if there is interest. In any case, if you want to attend the virtual dinner, please either register and let me know that you have done so, or call me and I will register for you. To register, you may call the FAN office at 206-625-9790. If you do this, make sure that you tell them to put you into the UCUP group. Otherwise, you may register online at bit.ly/FANDinner2021. When you do this, also ensure you are put into our group. Either way, please say you are in the group, and your place at the table is paid for. Then write a check to the church with the memo line saying for "FAN Annual Dinner." The suggested amount is \$70.00, but you can pay what you can afford, including nothing.

Last year's dinner had great speakers, music, and awards, and I expect the same this year. We will also be celebrating Paul Benz's retirement. He has served as the director of our political outreach, and he has been very effective. In my opinion, he needs a grand send-off. Among other things we will be celebrating is the most successful legislative session we have had in the recent past. There will be optional opportunities to contribute to Faith Action Network during the entire dinner. I encourage you all to attend.

Respectfully submitted,
Robert M. Brown

Win Bjarke living with Chris & Dawn

Message from Dawn Bjarke: Friends of Winnie ♥️. She's good!

Chris and I moved her home with us and we are welcoming any and all visitors that care to see the Grand Lady👑👑



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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.

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Weekly

Sundays

10am LIVE & ZOOM Worship
JOIN US!



***We are United with God,
United in 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
6:30pm Men's Discussion Group
on Zoom



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