



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



2022

Save
the
date

2022 Annual Meeting and Charge Conference

January 23, 2022, 6:30 p.m.

Please plan to join us on Zoom for our annual meeting

<https://greaternw.zoom.us/j/94078370834>

Dial by your location

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

Meeting ID: 940 7837 0834

Suquamish UCC calls Amara Oden as their pastor

I'm thrilled to share that I have received a call to a church!

Suquamish UCC, one hour from Tacoma, voted me in as their full-time solo pastor right before Christmas. I start serving their church in early January. Happily, I and my family will stay here in Tacoma and I'll combine telecommuting and being there in person. It is a lovely church, active and warm and community- and justice-focused, with a deep contemplative component. I couldn't be more pleased with the fit, pleased with finding a full-time call, pleased with being able to stay in Tacoma with my family.

I have such deep gratitude to United Church for the way you welcomed my whole family so graciously, and jumped in to support me in pursuing my call. Even as you were getting to know me, even though the pandemic, I felt UCUP cheering me on, supporting me and my family in spiritual and practical ways as I finished my degree. While I launch into my new life as pastor, I will take with me the lessons of being in community with you all.



Pastor's letter ~

In the past 21 months it seems like one set of uncertainties and anxieties has simply been replaced with another set. How will we enter this third year of living life in the midst of a global pandemic? In the midst of anxiety and grief, this season of living life in a pandemic can be a holy time as well.

Keith Bellizzi, professor of Human Development and Family Sciences, at the University of Connecticut wrote: "Uncertainty has the power to fuel positive change, and even inspire creativity, but only if individuals are able to adapt. Resilience — the ability to adapt to adversity — is key. Research has shown that when faced with adversity and uncertainty, resilient people engage with controllable aspects of their lives, they maintain healthy social support systems, they are able to regulate their emotions to help blunt the stressor and they look for the good amid the stress. In fact, survival and resilience is the norm, not the exception. Stories of resilience and thriving has a rich history and we need to remind ourselves that our track record as individuals for getting through rough times is better than we might think."

The philosopher Alfred North Whitehead asserted that one aspect of creativity is to initiate novelty to match novel circumstances. These are novel circumstances to be sure.

During the liturgical season of Epiphany we will enter into a worship series called "*Drawn In: Living the Creative Life with God.*" We will connect with our inherent creativity and nurture this foundational aspect of being human, giving us renewed energy for passionate work, delightful play, and creative problem solving.

Read through the scriptures below and imagine what creative gifts God has instilled in you

- Genesis 1:1 *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*
- Exodus 35:31, 32, 35 *God has filled them with the Spirit of God, with wisdom, with understanding, with knowledge and with all kinds of skills— 32 to make artistic designs for work in gold, silver and bronze, to cut and set stones, to work in wood, and to engage in all kinds of crafts. God has filled them with skill to do all kinds of work as engravers, designers, embroiderers in blue, purple and scarlet yarn and fine linen, and weavers—all of them skilled workers and designers.*
- Romans 12:6 *We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us.*
- 2 Corinthians 5:17 *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!*
- Ephesians 2:10 *For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.*
- Jeremiah 29:11 *For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.*

In Exodus 31 and 35, God gave Bezalel creative gifts on the construction of the tabernacle of God and God expected him to teach these skills to others. These creative abilities included intelligence, knowledge, and skill in his craft. Just like Bezalel, we were created to glorify God in good works.

We will enter into this six week worship series of being *Drawn In* to the heart of God, with these key themes (in bold), as we enter God's **dream** for our creative lives to give us hope and a future; we will **hover** there to get in touch with our deepest passions. At that point, we may take the **risk** of acting on what we've discerned. And then we **listen** and pay attention to the information we received. We **reintegrate** to further refine the vision and adjust course where necessary. Finally, we **rest** and celebrate what we have accomplished with God and invite further inspiration.

Pastor's letter ~ con't

During the series, I may ask to interview you about what creative gifts God has given you, and invite you to share your creative process with the congregation. At the end of the series, what fun we could have in sharing our creations or how God has inspired creativity within us.

Sarah Bessy offers this quote for writers, knitters, bakers, crafters, and everyone who creates: *"I've stopped asking whether or not anyone needs my writing or my knitting. Because I need it. I do it because I was made to it, because it makes me feel fully alive to do it. Because I'm working out what God has already worked in. Because I believe even a knitting pattern brings glory to God. Because this life was redeemed by Jesus and this is a bit of redemption right now. It's a bit of beauty and wholeness, an act of discipleship to Creator, a resistance of professionalization and commercialization to simply take time to participate in the wonder of stepping back to pronounce something as entirely good."*

Our lives have changed significantly in the pandemic, but when we hear God's call and respond creatively, may we face the challenges of our personal and congregational lives in the spirit of Lamentations 3:22: *The steadfast love of God never ceases, they are new every morning.*

Blessings in this new year,
Pastor Cathy



Silent Night on Christmas Eve

Fifty people gathered in the sanctuary for our Christmas Eve service, with more people gathering on zoom and social media. We started out the service with a tribute in memory of Seamus Neary, our piper (along with Suzanne Woof) for over 20 years. We will miss Seamus' presence and pipes for future gatherings on Christmas Eve. We parted ways with our virtual friends near the end of the service so we could step outside to more safely sing together Silent Night and Joy to the World.



Many thanks to Nancy Moffett who helped prepare the chancel area for Christmas (complete with hay for the stable), and to Ron & Janet Wicks for building barn doors and a manger fence for our theme: *The Inn: Housing the Holy*. It really made a unique backdrop as we celebrated Advent and Christmas, and Winnie's Celebration of Life. (Nels built and painted the backdrop for the Christmas pageants that Winnie directed for many years.)



President's letter ~

Hello, Siblings in Christ,

As we turn our calendars to a new year, it's also time to gather for our annual meeting and charge conference and complete transitions in our church leadership. Like me, many of our officers and committee chairs served in their positions for two years or more and are now preparing to pass the torch to new leaders. Our 2022 annual meeting will bring a lot of change, and a lot change means a lot of opportunities: there are opportunities for fresh ideas, new approaches and, most importantly, opportunities to serve.

Yes, serving the church as an officer, trustee, committee chair, or committee member takes time. And yes, sometimes these jobs can bring challenges and headaches. Yes, we are a very engaged community of Independent thinkers and sometimes we disagree. It's all part of working together in a community that has the diversity we seek and celebrate.

On the positive side, however, serving the church is an incredible honor that brings so many rewarding experiences and fun times in fellowship. There's an old adage that says, "the more you put into an organization, the more you get out of it." It certainly applies to our church, and I might suggest that the adage also applies to our faith.

For me, the past two years have been both challenging and rewarding. Who could have imagined what lay ahead when we assumed our posts two years ago! My term as president started with great plans and a full agenda for an all-church planning meeting and retreat that was to have taken place on March 7, 2020. It was the first of many events that were cancelled as the COVID-19 pandemic impacted all of us in our day-to-day lives, our jobs, our vacations, our family celebrations, and, of course, our church activities.

Priorities were rearranged, the planning retreat agenda filed, and the development of a COVID operating plan, our "Reopening and Transforming Plan" became Job #1. We all added "Zoom" to our vocabularies, and we learned to meet, work, and worship in the virtual world. Very little of the original plan that I had assembled for my term as your president remained, but the transformation part of our reopening plan was, truly, transformational – at least for me! I was drop-kicked into new formats for communicating, leading meetings, and assembling teams. It was not always smooth, and certainly not easy, but this church congregation tackled the challenges with tenacity. The many ways in which we shifted, adjusted, and supported each other were both amazing and heartwarming.

I am so appreciative to all of you who have reached out with helping hands and words of support, or who shared a chuckle when, both literally and figuratively, we had to re-boot. The sense of community in this church is something I cherish. We are united in love, united to serve, and I love how we have persevered with common mission throughout this difficult pandemic.

I end my term with a grateful heart. Thank you for the opportunity to serve and to be transformed by the love, commitment, and faith of United Church in University Place.

Marilyn Thompson,
President

EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT—The Path is Finished . . .

December 11th saw Tanner Harding's Eagle Scout project team in the rain and then shine refurbishing the path! Six scouts and six adults laid cardboard, garden cloth and fastened in edging before laying in 3 yards of gravel. Over Christmas break, Tanner finished the project, installing the bench. Thanks Tanner!



It looks beautiful Tanner. Wow!!!

Well done Eagle Scout!!



What a pretty bench. So inviting!

(Photos by Judy Thierry and Pastor Cathy)

Cares & Concerns



Submitted by Ardie Herbel

Prayers for all those who are fighting Covid in their families for a quick recovery. Prayers for Kris' niece diagnosed with breast cancer and continued prayers for Tom's brother Kevin continuing to battle cancer. Also a friend of Nancy Moffett, John, who has cancer. Our prayers are with any others in our church family or friends who have cancer.

Many thanks to all those who came to help Cathi with chores and to decorate for Christmas. She is now cancer free. Thanks be to God. Continued prayers for Laura Balcom's mother and those in the Care Center where Paul Koppe's wife Gay resides. Prayers for all those in the path of the tornadoes in the Southeast, and the wildfires in Colorado. May they find comfort with each other and those reaching out from across the country. Blessings on Kathleen and Hadi as they plan for job changes to San Diego. We received news that our longtime friend of UCUP Donna Shoe passed away on December 6th at the age of 99. We will miss you Donna.



Happy Birthday!

- 1 *Jim Fohrman*
- 11 *Joyce Demarest*
- 16 *Randi Byrd*
Anthea Hubanks
Elizabeth Scherman
- 20 *Hadi Dadashia*
- 29 *Michelle Wallace*

FINANCE POSITIONS OPEN--VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Our 2022 Board positions have been generously filled with two exceptions:

Financial Secretary, who monitors church income: **Open**

Chair of Finance Committee, who runs monthly meetings and ensures the monthly financial reports are prepared for the board: **Open**

Our church has three positions that share the responsibility for our finances.

Don Thompson has agreed to take over the role of Treasurer (Thank you, Don!), responsible for church outgo (expenses). These three positions work together to ensure our church finances work seamlessly and transparently.

Please, prayerfully consider answering yes! to one of them.

You will have the support you need to do the job.

Questions? Contact Tanya Sorenson, your incoming president,
@ 253-970-3110 or
tanyatalk411@gmail.com for more information.



Faith Action Network

The 2022 Interfaith Action Day is scheduled for Thursday, February 10, 2022. It will be all virtual. The morning sessions, held from 9:00 AM-12:00 PM, help you prepare for your meeting with our representatives and senator. FAN (Faith Action Network) will supply you with your meeting times, which could be Thursday afternoon (which they attempt to fill up first) or anytime on Friday.

Preparatory sessions for IFAD (Interfaith Action Day) will be held Thursday, January 6th at 7:00pm and Sunday, January 9th at 3:00pm. These sessions help you to be extra-prepared and are also a good time for you to ask questions of FAN leaders about how these priorities were decided upon and any other questions you may have.

To register for IFAD, call FAN (206-625-9790), ask to be registered, say you live in the 28th (or different) legislative district, attend United Church in University Place, and wish to participate. Just call me, Robert Brown at 253-376-0031 and I would be more than happy to complete the registration on your behalf (in part, because I would love to know how many people are planning to attend).

We (FAN members) meet in May or June to get started on this legislative agenda, in October to get to know those in our cluster, and again at the annual dinner in November where we celebrated some of our successes. Please join in because this is one way we make our state a better place.

Respectfully submitted,
Robert M. Brown



All Good Things

All good things" — seven veterans and seven family members each received \$50 giftcards from our generous UCU

family. Family Housing Network makes this happen through their day center program and veterans outreach.



The Heat Is On!

Furnace replacement - it takes an armada of trucks. (Photo by Judy Thierry.)

After a few chilly Sundays in the sanctuary, we're pleased to report that two new furnaces have been installed and warm air is once again circulating in the sanctuary. The two old furnaces that served the sanctuary space failed, and the facilities committee and board determined that, given the age of the old furnaces and the high cost to repair, it was time to install two new units. Total cost for the furnaces and installation was just over \$14,000. Many thanks to Don Thompson who shepherded the process, met with technicians, gathered bids, and stayed at the church while the contractor's crew completed the installation. The work was completed just in time to keep the building warm during the week-long deep freeze at the end of December.



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Or where you are on life's journey, **you're**
Welcome here.

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University Place**

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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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