



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.



ADVENT SEASON – Worship Activities during Advent



The stories, scriptures, and traditions of the Christmas season have been passed down to us throughout the generations. Like a tapestry woven throughout time, the Christmas story weaves us in with our own story. Our theme from Generation to Generation... reminds us of the ways our lives are interconnected and woven together. The work of God is always unfolding—in and through us. This Advent, may you remember that you belong—to a story etched into the wrinkles of time, to generations that have come before and will come after, to a love that won't let you go. Join us for Sunday worship at 10am - in person or on zoom.

Christmas With Our Congregation

We are lighting the Advent Wreath & preparing for this joyous season with some special worship fun for our congregation.

December 4th—Share Your Christmas Greetings ~ Bring or send a Christmas Card to church to add your message to a display.
(Notes in red are from Janet's Worship and Hospitality Team) See Theme of the day on page 2.



December 11th-Cookies & Canned Food ~ Share a dozen of your favorite holiday cookies for the hospitality table-yum.

We can choose a better way. We enter into Joseph's story in Matthew 1, when he is also told by the angel to not be afraid. Joseph has the courage to choose a better way. We too have choices to make in discerning a better way in our lives.



December 18th - Ring Those Christmas Bells ~ "bring a bell" Do you have bells in your family? Bring one for our display.

We see God in each other. When Elizabeth receives Mary into her home in Luke 1, she sees God at work within her cousin and responds with a blessing. How might we offer blessings to one another when we see God at work in our midst?



December 22nd - Blue Christmas/Longest Night Service - 7pm

As we move closer to the "longest night" – the Winter Solstice—we will hold a "Blue Christmas" service to acknowledge and remember the losses in our lives. If you are struggling with grief, loss, pain, or stress during this season, please join us in a contemplative service to **Come. Sit. Be.** This will be a special service for those who are finding it hard to rejoice and instead feel a heaviness in their heart.



December 24th - Christmas Eve Service - 7pm

We tell this story every Christmas Eve because it illustrates God's desire to be in relationship with us. We tell this story because we are invited to come to the manger and witness the miracle of birth. We tell this story because it brings us hope and good news. We tell this story because it is a story we need to hear again and again. We tell this story to continue to thread together the generations with hope.



December 25th - Christmas Day - God dwells with us.

Join us at 10am on Christmas Day - either in our sanctuary or on zoom - for an impromptu Christmas pageant.

January 1st - Start the New Year in 2023 by joining with your UCUP faith family at 10am on the 8th day of Christmas.



Pastor's letter ~

Last Sunday we entered into the new liturgical year and began our Advent worship theme *From Generation to Generation. The theme is taken from Mary's Magnificat:*

*Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;
for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is God's name.
God's mercy is for those who are in awe of God from generation to generation.*

The root word of “generation” – “gen” means “origin” or “birth.” During this holy season of Advent we are asking the questions: What have our ancestors of the faith passed on for us to continue? What are we being called to generate or bring forth in this season?

On December 4, we will listen to the conversation between the Angel Gabriel and Mary from Luke 1, known as the Annunciation. In that sacred encounter, the Angel Gabriel appears to Mary, saying the most common phrase written in the Bible, “Be not afraid.” *We can easily imagine how perplexed, confused, and yes, afraid, she must have been. Did you know that this phrase, “Be not afraid” appears in the Bible 365 times. It's almost like the myriad authors of scripture through multiple generations called a meeting across time and space to ensure readers could find comfort in a different scripture passage bearing the words, “Be not afraid” for each day of the year.*

I find it curious that in the December 2020 issue of *Christianity Today*, Kate Shellnutt wrote an article with the title: “2020’s Most-Read Bible Verse: ‘Do Not Fear’”. Here is an excerpt from the article:

Using data from 2020’s most-searched internet keywords and verses on *The Bible Gateway & YouVersion Bible App*, people all across the globe sought out the reassurance of the sacred words, “Do not fear” during the intensity and uncertainty of 2020. Bible searches soared online, with a record number of people turning to Scripture for passages addressing fear, healing, and justice.

Bible searches spiked corresponding to major events (Pandemic, Political, Climate Change related), with “fear” becoming the YouVersion Bible App’s top search term early in 2020. In Bible Gateway searches, the words “fear” and “fear not” grew in 2020, ranking 6th in keyword searches.

Isaiah 41:10 ranked as the most searched, read, and bookmarked verse on the app: “Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you.” Isaiah’s assurance to “do not fear,” which was the Bible App’s top verse globally this year and 2018, also ranked as the No. 1 verse in the US, India, South Africa, the Netherlands, & the Philippines.

While 2020 is a year many say they’d like to forget, people continued to seek God and turn to the Bible for strength, peace, and hope through every hardship.

I imagine every generation experiences times of doubt, fear, and confusion, which prompts them to seek out this message of hope and peace and comfort from scripture. Just as Mary received these words from the Angel Gabriel, these words have the power to comfort us and to give us courage to enter the story and give birth to the new thing God is doing in our lives.

Blessings,
Pastor Cathy



President's letter ~

Friends in Christ,

At work where my colleagues celebrate Hannukah and Kwanza, I am careful to say "Happy Holidays."

It's lovely here at church to say to you "Merry Christmas to you!"

As the year comes to an end, I have much to be grateful for at UCUP: Our church Board has worked so hard all year, taking care of the day-to-day business of the church—no small job! Our church family has stepped up both in saying yes to being in leadership next year and in pledging. I love this church!

I hope you have heard about the rejection of the Jonestown United Methodist congregation's petition for disaffiliation from the United Methodist Church by the Arkansas Conference bishop. Thirty-five churches' petitions for disaffiliation were approved; three were not. A group of Jonestown members came to the meeting to request more conversation and discernment in their church before the petition is deliberated. Their request was granted. Yes, many churches across the country are disaffiliating. I grieve for that, but it is heartening to see the process being handled with discernment, respect, and graciousness as seen in the Arkansas Conference. Perhaps there can be dialogue in the future.

I am especially grateful to see my beloved daughter-in-law living with much better pain management. I am grateful for the loosened COVID restrictions, so we can see each other in person at church or elsewhere.

I am grateful for the United States and much of Europe so strongly supporting Ukraine. I am grateful that we got snow.

What are you grateful for? I hope your list is big and your troubles small as we end this year.

In Christ's love,

Tanya Sorenson

Board President



Introducing ~ Bishop Cedrick D. Bridgeforth

The Rev. Cedrick D. Bridgeforth, director of innovation and communication in the California-Pacific Conference, was elected to the episcopacy as a bishop by The United Methodist Church's Western Jurisdiction on Nov. 4 at Christ United Methodist Church in Salt Lake City. He becomes the first openly gay African-American man to be elected a bishop in The United Methodist Church. "It is the church where I found purpose — even when it felt like it was chewing me up and spitting me out," Bridgeforth said, with his husband, Christopher Hucks-Ortiz, standing next to him. Bridgeforth was the second bishop elected at the Nov. 2-5 meeting, following the election of Rev. Carlo Rapanut, from the Greater Northwest Region. Bishop Bridgeforth will become the bishop of the Greater Northwest Episcopal Area on January 1, 2023.





Joys

Submitted by Joyce Demarest

JOY was sitting down for a meal and visiting at the pot-luck the Steward Committee hosted on Sunday, the 20th... AND they made at least 4 different kinds of soup for. A big THANK YOU to the soup makers, those that set up AND to those that helped the Committee clean up...while visiting those at the table where I sat, we learned that Robert and Kathi Brown were expecting daughter Alina for a visit, from Australia!...and that Pamela Maddess has a great idea, for after the service, on one of the Sundays in December. Hope it comes about.....on the 27th it looked like JOY for Wes and Emma was having their Grandpa and Grandma to sit with... . it's really a JOY to be back in the Sanctuary: to visit with Pastor Cathy after the service, Jeff Anderson's music, greet fellow members and visitors in person – if you haven't been back yet COME ON DOWN/back...and please bring an item/s for the food bank.

December Birthdays

2 David Ohls	14 Jim Davis
3 AJ Milleret	16 Neil Rader
8 Vic Bode	17 Duncan Foley
9 Emily Hartley	20 Jeff Andersen
Marge Lehmann	22 Kathy Munn
10 Pat Mail	24 Cathy Law
11 Bruce Foreman	25 Jesus of Nazareth
12 Janet Wicks	31 Jim Cash



Peace & Justice ~ Giving and Sharing

December 9 is the deadline for donating gifts of money with a line item to Family Housing Network for the two families we have adopted. Each family will receive a gift card to shop for its household gift buying. Generally each individual receives about \$50.

Thank you.



If Experiencing Homelessness:
Call 211 in Pierce County



Greetings!

As many of you already know, Wes let us know this Fall that they are gender non-binary and use they/them pronouns. Many of you have already been told and have been very supportive, but we also wanted to more explicitly share this so everyone is aware.

We are so grateful for this church family where Wes, and those of us in their family, can feel safe and supported in sharing who they are. We are also grateful for this congregation that is willing to grow, learn, and change in pursuit of that support. If you are not familiar with language to support nonbinary folks, a couple of guidelines include not just changing pronouns, but adjusting other gendered terms. Wes found a nice list of gender-neutral terms to try. Additionally, they have suggested being aware of other verbal habits many of us having, including phrases like “guys,” “sir,” “ma’am,” “Mr.,” etc.

Gender-neutral title/term	Instead of...
Child	Daughter/son
Family member	
Grandchild	Granddaughter/grandson
Grandparent	Grandmother/grandfather
Individual	
Mx	Ms./Mrs./Mr.
Nibling	Niece/nephew
Parent or guardian	Mother/father
Sibling	Sister/brother
Group member	
Student	

(Adapted from: <https://www.aboutkidshealth.ca/Articlecontentid=3968&language=English>)

Please let us know if you have any questions. If you catch yourself making an error, just quickly correct yourself and move on. The effort and awareness are very appreciated!

Chris, Neva, Wes and Emma Berry

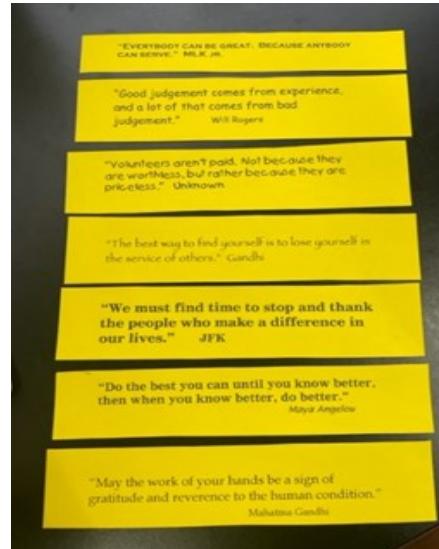
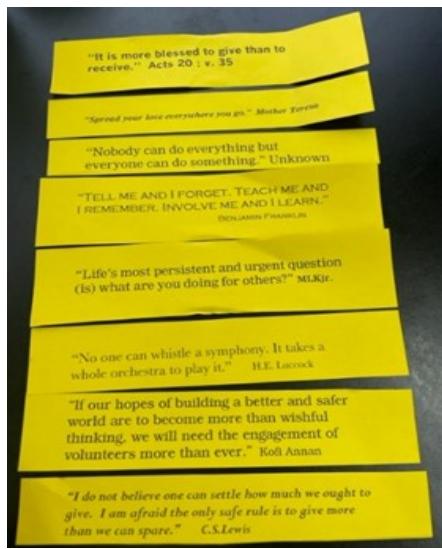
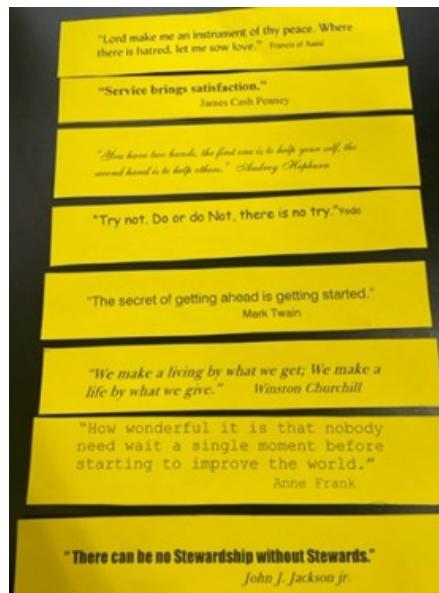
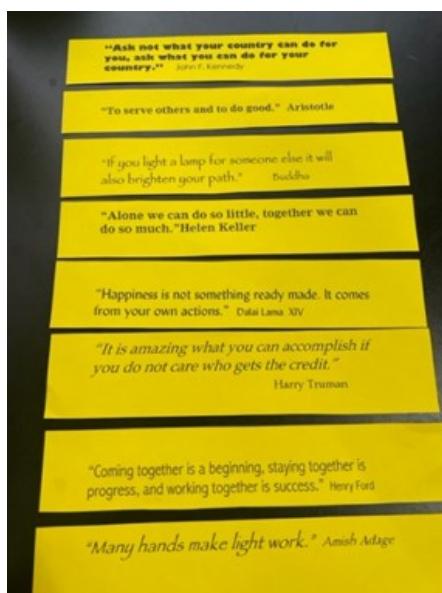


Stewardship Campaign ~ Joe Becker & Paul Koppe

The stewardship campaign this year kicked off in October and ran through November. Our theme this year was "Ask not what your Church can do for you, ask what you can do for your Church." It was based on John F. Kennedy's famous quote from his inaugural address and featured many quotes on stewardship and volunteering from others besides Kennedy. Janet Wicks and Robert Brown added some comic moments to the campaign, noting you don't need a Steward nametag to be a steward for the church. Our campaign ended on Consecration Sunday with a Stewardship Soup Luncheon hosted by our very own Stewards of the Soup.

The stewardship campaign was well received. As of press time for the newsletter, time and talent sheets and pledges received have been received from 34 individuals or families, with the pledges totaling approximately \$140,000. While this total is less than needed to meet our budget, there is still time to send a pledge in if you have not done so already. Several people who have pledged in the past have not yet sent in their forms, so hopefully the pledge total will grow in the next several weeks to meet our financial needs. Last year there were 42 pledges for approximately \$184,000 dollars. Pledge packets are still available in the narthex or by contacting the church office.

Here are photos of our Stewardship quotes and the Stewardship soup luncheon . . . thank you Janet!



Thank-you to our Stewards of the soup, and all those who provided soup and food, helped set-up and clean-up for our Stewardship soup luncheon



Thank-you to those who stayed to “Deck the Walls” of our Church for Christmas





Faith Action Network Dinner

held Sunday November 20th, 2022

Thank you to Robert Brown who continues to keep us connected to our ministry partner, Faith Action Network. Jim & Nancy Davis, Peter Burhop, Pastor Cathy & Robert attended in-person their annual fund-raising dinner. Here is a note from Elise DeGooyer, FAN Executive Director:

*Our hearts are full of gratitude for all of you who attended in-person and online, sponsored, supported, volunteered, invited others, and **helped make our first hybrid Annual Dinner a success!** We experienced so much solidarity as we celebrated together and helped keep FAN moving forward into a new year of advocacy and organizing for justice. 320+ guests filled the rooms in Renton and Spokane. And 150 people participated online! Rick Steves joined us via video as he expressed his faithful support for FAN and offered a generous \$50,000 matching gift to keep our advocacy strong. **We are nearing \$140,000** in contributions toward our \$150,000 goal.*



Alternative Gifts Fundraising Events

There's still time to give to your favorite charities before the year comes to an end. Two fundraising events many of us attended in the past were back in-person this fall: the Associated Ministries annual breakfast and Faith Action Network's annual dinner.

A few of us attended these events, but when we don't attend in person, we may forget to give.

Please consider making a donation:

Associated Ministries website: <https://associatedministries.org/>

Faith Action Network website: <https://fanwa.org/>

Please contact Dorothy McCuistion for additional information



GREENING Activity Group

Upcoming Activities for the UCUP Greening Activity Group

After the long, disconnected experience with our ongoing pandemic, things are coming alive again. A recent flurry of notices from various agencies in Tacoma, along with a few meetings and hearings, have made the development of the Tacoma Tideflats a current-affairs event again. Greening members were very successful in being heard through our participation in hearings and our submission of formal public comments for the record, including the requirements for Non-Interim Regulations and our demands for a new Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for ongoing development of the Tideflats.

Multiple ideas UCUP members submitted for the draft EIS seem to have been implemented, and some were actually printed in the first rough draft. The new notices regarding the Tideflats include continued references to the ideas we submitted for inclusion in the new EIS and new requirements for inclusion of real scientists in writing the new EIS and regulations, which were completely absent in the Tideflats liquified natural gas (LNG) development.

Greening is going to keep abreast of the upcoming release of the formal Draft EIS and promise to let UCUP members know when the formal comment period for the document is announced. We will also provide you with methods to provide your comments for record and announce when hearings might occur for which the public will be invited to participate.

Please contact Roger Martin by txt to 253 569 7793 or email at fbrogert@yahoo.com if you would like links to the newest official communications from Tacoma regarding the Tideflats situation. If you sent an email, please back it up by a txt or phone message advising me to look for your email. Thanks! Submitted by Roger Martin, Greening Activity Group



Giving Back—UMC Free Food Pantry

On Monday November 21st Kay and Steve Shaben loaded up their car with pounds and pounds of food donated by our UCUP family. They drove it over to the United Methodist Church on 19th Street and unloaded it into their Free Food Pantry. The UMC restocks the pantry every Sunday so the before photo shows what was remaining on Monday. Some misc. items and cans of pinto beans. It took Kay & Steve about $\frac{1}{2}$ an hour to restock the pantry (see after photo) Monday. On Tuesday (24 hours later) they took over some additional items and the pantry was empty once again (except for the pinto beans). Any food donations you are able to make would be appreciated. Please feel free to drop donations at UCUP and they will be taken over.



(Before)



(After)

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Rev. Cathlynn Law

Music Director: Jeff Andersen

Nursery Attendant: Addy Harding

Office Admin: Jenny Huntsman

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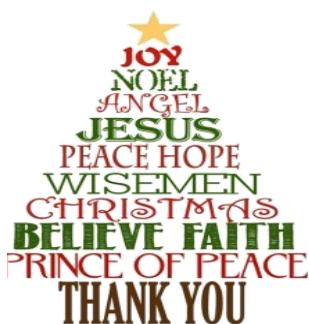
No matter who you are,
Or where you are on life's journey, **you're**
Welcome here.

United Church In 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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