



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.



Celebrate Pentecost on May 28th with Fire Colors



Pentecost is considered the day on which the Christian church began. Pentecost celebrates the coming of the Holy Spirit 50 days after Jesus' resurrection and gathering his early followers as a church. Historically, Christians borrowed the word Pentecost (meaning 50th day) from Greek-speaking Jews who used the phrase to refer to a Jewish holiday, known as the Festival of Weeks, (*Shavuot* in Hebrew). Leviticus 23:16 instructs people to count seven weeks or "fifty days" from the end of Passover to the beginning of the next holiday, the Harvest Festival.



CELEBRATING PASTOR CATHY



When Pastor Cathy first came to UCUP in 2014, Congregational Care organized "Cottage Gatherings" in people's homes so she could get to know the congregation in smaller groups. In addition to the farewell on the last Sunday of June, there will be two separate opportunities to gather in smaller groups to spend time with Pastor Cathy and Angie, just like we did when they arrived.

Please join us for light snacks and a chance to reminisce together.

Sunday, May 28th - 2-4 pm at the home of Rosemary Jones & Kris Schrantz
6715—71st St Ct W, Lakewood, WA 98499

Sunday, June 4th - 2-4 pm at Franke Tobey Jones - Wellness Center - Follow signs to Bistro.
Please **RSVP with Rosemary and Pat** to let them know which gathering you will attend so they can plan.

FROM SPR Regarding Office Hours

The office hours are changing as of this week due to a change in Jenny Huntsman's employment. She will be in the UCUP office Fridays 8am - 4pm, and Monday and Wednesday evenings to get the mail and check messages. She is contracted for 12 hours a week.

The change is necessary because Jenny has accepted a 3/4 position at her home church in Puyallup. Her desire is to continue with UCUP, and Staff-Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) feels it is important to make this adjustment so that we can keep her assistance during this pastoral transition time. She is a remarkably skilled administrator, and a welcoming presence. We value her work, and wish her well in her new job.

It has been the desire of the SPRC to provide an office presence at the church. This schedule does not do that, obviously. If you are interested in providing coverage a few hours a week in the church office, please let me know.

Leslie Ann Knight, SPR Chair



From the President ~

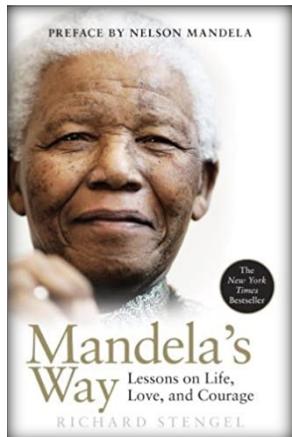
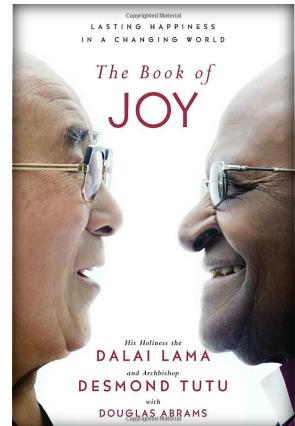
We are Together In Spirit - “Ubuntu” – Nguni languages of Zulu and Xhosa

The book club is reading *The Book of Joy* by his Holiness, the Dalai Lama and the late Archbishop Desmond Tutu. Outside the church office on the wall the Peace and Justice bulletin board posts an article on *Ubuntu*. Check it out before or after worship. Archbishop Tutu talks about the presence of *Ubuntu* - “we are together” wrapping each other in kindness and compassion. His life, a testament to truth and reconciliation as he listened and wept with those who told their stories of torture in the time of apartheid in South Africa, as he prayed and ministered at funerals and vigils.

Kyrie Eleison; *Lord, have mercy;*
Christe Eleison; *Christ, have mercy;*

And as he was a self-proclaimed “Rabble Rouser for Peace” by his autobiography of the same name.

Kyrie Eleison. *Lord, have mercy.*



To breath air is essential. A simple concept. For us to be truly human we must lean on, rely on the humanity of others. In the preface to Richard Stengel's *Mandela's Way: Fifteen Lessons on Life, Love, and Courage* (2009) Mandela draws from the many interpretations emphasizing that this African concept of *ubuntu* is “the profound sense that we are human only through the humanity of others; that if we are to accomplish anything in this world, it will in equal measure be due to the work and achievements of others”.

I think we may have the next two books for our book club.

As we are in this Eastertide and transition and prepare our farewells to Pastor and Angie may we be the space of *ubuntu*.

Judy Thierry,
Congregation President and Moderator



Sunday School will be on vacation for the month of June. We will resume classes the first Sunday in July with our youth in church for communion.

We need volunteers to teach Sunday School for July 9th and August 13th. Rosemary will supply our volunteer with curriculum and be available for questions.

Please contact her at 253.209.4743 to serve in this rewarding capacity.

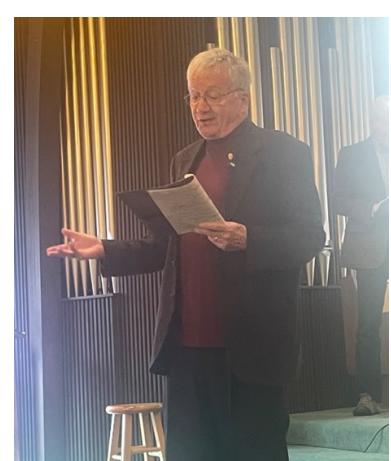


Service of Installation

The Episcopacy Committees invite you to the Service of Installation for Bishop Cedrick Bridgeforth on Saturday, May 20th at 2 p.m. An invited group of leaders from across the area will participate in the event that will be hosted in Juneau, Alaska, by Aldersgate United Methodist Church. Go to <https://gaternw.org/installation/> to watch the live stream.



Thank-you to Neva for directing our Palm Sunday Drama— From the Mount of Olives to the Way of Sorrows: Voices from the Passion



(Photos by Judy Thierry and Pastor Cathy)

PNW UCC NEWS

A Letter to the PNW UCC Conference from Interim Conference Minister Rev. Dr. Courtney Stange-Tregear



Beloveds, the time has come for me to leave my role as the Acting Conference Minister of the Pacific Northwest Conference. You may remember that Rev. Mike Denton left in September, 2022 and I stepped into the CM position in an acting capacity at that time. In the seven months since, I have dedicated my whole self to bringing stability and security to the Conference and our Camps. It has not been a long tenure, but it has been heartfelt, and together, we did a lot in that short time.

Before my tenure as Conference Minister, I served you as your Minister for Church Vitality for six years. As a new position in the Conference, that role grew and adapted over time.

We practiced telling our stories and got better at hearing the stories of others, because the power of relationship is transformative. We increased our ability to collaborate and lean on one another. We pivoted and adapted, struggled and fell short as we navigated the dual pandemics of Covid-19 and Systemic Racism. We've done a lot and there is, of course, still so much more to do, especially with regard to injustice and White Supremacy.

I am humbled and grateful for more than I can possibly list here. Soon, the Board of Directors will communicate more details regarding timing of my departure and what will come next in the Conference Minister position. But I want you to know, and hear me say, how dearly I love you, how deeply honored I have been to serve, and how much faith I have in your ability to go "out on a limb" with faithfulness, wisdom, and courage. Bless you, Courtney

Rev. Jonna Jensen was installed as the new Interim Conference Minister at the UCC Annual Meeting over zoom on April 29th. Here is the announcement shared earlier in April:



The Board of Directors and the Personnel Committee of the PNC are happy to share biographical information on Rev. Jonna Jensen who will join us as Acting Conference Minister on May 1, 2023. Rev. Jensen comes to us with a depth of experience in both local church ministry and judiciary ministry. In addition, for the last several months she has been assisting our churches with Search and Call. We will benefit from her familiarity with a number of our churches and our Conference staff. We're grateful that Jonna has said 'yes' to the Pacific NW Conference.

We will also be sharing our gratitude and saying goodbye to Rev. Dr. Courtney Stange-Tregear at our Annual Meeting. Our Saturday morning worship will include a Service of Farewell and Release for Rev. Dr. Stange-Tregear. This is an important ritual of gratitude, mutual forgiveness, and release of Courtney toward God's next call on her life.

Blessings to each of you, Wendy Blight - Co-chair PNC Personnel Committee

REFLECTIONS ON UCC ANNUAL MEETING

(attending: Judy Thierry, President/Moderator of UCUP; Robert Brown, delegate;
Rev. Cathi Cline, retired UCC clergy; and Pastor Cathy)

A few actions taken by the conference

- changed PNCUCC bylaws to allow hybrid delegates
- changed official PNCUCC documents to use more inclusive pronouns of they/them instead of he/she continued conversations about what it means to be an anti-racist church
- Continued conversation

Report from Robert Brown as delegate to the PNCUCC Annual Meeting:

I arrived for the UCC Annual Meeting being held at the First Congregational Church of Bellingham shortly after 1:15 P.M. The meeting had started. I attended a session on the LGBTQIA+ community and found it to be full of information. Among the things that were taught and shared in the LGBTQIA+ session were: 1) suicide and suicide ideation happens in 70% of kids who either are transgender or are transitioning, 2) the primary purpose of legislation that is against transgenderism in various states seems to be to try to make these people invisible to others, 3) there are many resources to help families with gender change (including several children's books which were shared), 4) kids seem to know that they are the "wrong" sex before age 5, and are often unable to express this with words and become incredibly frustrated, and 5) having multiple allies is the most important key to the success of children who are anywhere on the spectrum of LGBTQIA+. Much of this was new information to me, and it is largely because I have lived in my privileged world of cisgenderism, just like I am privileged to be white (racism) and a man (misogyny). I have learned in all these ways that it is on me to be aware of this privilege and that others don't share it. Please stop me whenever you notice my inattention to your lack of privilege. That session was approximately 90 minutes on Friday.

UCC MEETING—Con't

On Friday night, the Rev. Dr. Traci Blackmon from the UCC conference office addressed the annual meeting on the state of the church and the nation. She particularly addressed her work in Ferguson, Missouri, after the death of Michael Brown. She told the story of Momma Cat (I may have the name wrong), who on one particularly tense night, when the police were at their battle stations and the youth were on edge. Momma Cat and her husband drove, with their truck, in between the groups, got out, set up tables and chairs, got out food from her truck and got it ready, got out paper plates and plastic silverware, and loudly announced so that it could be heard on both sides of the line, something like, "Ok, now, stop your fighting/demonstrating and get over here. I know you're hungry. Come and get it." Rev. Blackmon stated this broke the tension of that evening, and many people from both sides abandoned their positions and came to eat her fried chicken. The Rev. Dr. Blackmon worked to ensure that minorities had a seat at the table in Ferguson, and things changed greatly after the next election. One marker in eliminating racism, she stated simply, is giving power to the oppressed group(s).

Her sermon on Saturday morning was equally impressive. She spoke from the lectionary about after the resurrection, which includes a quote from Jesus saying to Mary Magdalene, "Tell the disciples, and Peter, that I am here." She spoke about that "and Peter" line, not as if Peter wasn't one of the disciples, but that he needed to hear it most. She spoke it to claim that Peter needed to forgive himself for denying him three times as Jesus was on trial. We all need to do this because we all fail on the perfection test.

Among the things that were passed at this annual meeting were that people could be fully engaged whether in person or on-line. This was handled so well, and the issue arose from the fact that there are many people for many reasons who could not attend in person. This change to the by-laws allowed for them not only to hear the meeting, but they could participate in it as well, speaking their truths, voicing their opinions, and voting. We also passed a budget that included \$52,000 for anti-racist activities, kept our commitment to the Faith Action Network, and relies on spending some of our reserves. Oh, yes, the conference does need more income.

We celebrated Courtney Stange-Tregear, who is departing as the acting conference minister, and welcomed the Rev. Jonna Jensen, who is our new interim conference minister.

My subcommittee, the Dismantling Racism Committee, presented a letter which declared that we felt the characterization of our two previous annual meetings as discordant messes was wrong. We feel that part of our healing comes from listening carefully to the voices of the dissenters and challengers, and that that was done. Dismissing the dissenters felt like a form of racism, because the dissenters were largely people of color. Presenting this letter was important to us because we don't want to dismiss anyone's heart-felt opinions and beliefs, and we also felt that the spirit of God was definitely present in the past two annual meetings. If interested in reading this letter, it should be up on the PNC-UCC website by now.

It was a good meeting for me, largely because all my extra time was spent with my wife, Kathi at my other home.
Respectfully submitted, Robert Brown

Report from Cathi Cline, retired UCC Clergy

First I am very grateful to Judy for traveling with me. I had never been to Bellingham before and Judy was my navigator as well as companion. She also graciously shared her B&B with me. After arriving at First Congregational UCC of Bellingham we had time to greet friends and to meet new ones before the meeting started. After a warm welcome from Rev. Benton and introduction of the Rev. Dr. Cheryl Lindsay (Minister for Worship and Theology at UCC National). Several workshops were held on Friday afternoon. I attended the one on Christian Theology for Antiracist Praxis led by the Rev. Andrew Conley-Holcom, who is the pastor of Admiral UCC in Seattle and a member of the Conference Antiracism Committee. He stressed that grace undoes shame, "Goodness" is a problem, love cares about harm, and emotions can liberate. I have a guide to each of these principles, if any one is interested. We ended the day with worship and a powerful presentation by Rev. Traci Blackmon, Associate General Minister of Justice and Local Church Ministries for the national UCC. I will add that, in every worship service, the music offered was fantastic - a bluegrass group, an acapella choir, a choir from a Marshallese congregation, and a blended choir from the Bellingham congregation and attendees of the Annual Meeting.

On Saturday, we conducted the business of the conference, including a resolution to amend the by-laws to allow on-line, as well as in-person voting, the budget, and the election of new officers and board and committee members. We held a service of release for our Acting Conference Minister, Rev. Courtney Stange-Tragear, and greeted our new ACM, Rev. Jonna Jensen. The highlight of the day for me was hearing Rev. Traci Blackmon preach. Her reflection on Simon being renamed Peter by Jesus, even after he had vowed to never forsake Jesus, but denied him three times, touched me because there have been so many times that I have failed to keep promises or fallen short of what I should have said or done. But God's grace allows us to turn back and begin again, in the path of love.

Sunday brought us again to worship. This time the preacher was Cheryl Lindsay. With hugs and farewells, I left the meeting feeling uplifted, but quite tired.

Cathi Cline

Christ Is Risen ... Easter Service



May is Hunger Awareness Month: Support our Walk for Hunger!

May is Hunger Awareness Month in Pierce County, and UCUP will be supporting the Emergency Food Network by participating in the annual Hunger Walk. The in-person walk takes place May 6 at Fort Steilacoom Park, and our team members will also be participating virtually throughout the month.



The need is great. More than 2 million visits were made to EFN's partner food pantries in Pierce County during 2022, and a large percentage of these visits were on behalf of children and seniors. Hunger in Pierce County is an issue that continues to grow more critical as inflation impacts costs of essentials such as food, gas, and medicine. Pandemic era boosts to the SNAP program (formerly food stamps) ended in February, leaving families with less money for food purchasing.

In 2022, the Emergency Food Network served over 2 million visits throughout the county from individuals and families experiencing food insecurity. The network serves more than 75 food pantries, meal sites, and shelters in the county.

While I am unable to participate in the Hunger Walk on May 6, I will be dedicating all of my walks and hikes in May to the Emergency Food Network and Hunger Awareness Month. Don and I will also be participating in a Food Repack at EFN this Saturday, joining with other members of the Ambassador Board.

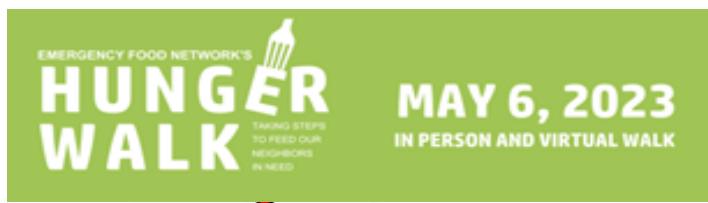
You can register to join Team UCUP in the Hunger Walk, or make a donation online:

<https://runsignup.com/Race/69925/Donate/HMCzdskXZ1RvmPBe>

Other opportunities to support EFN in May including the "Give Big" Day, May 2 and 3, and the Letter Carrier's Food Drive on May 13.

Thank you for supporting Team UCUP!

Peace and Justice Committee Marilyn Thompson



First, let's look forward. On May 7 and June 4 of this year, FAN will be holding its Spring Summits. This is a chance for FAN to tell us of our legislative accomplishments (which are many this year) and also to begin working on our FAN agenda for the next legislative session. Please go to fanwa.org to register for either of these sessions. They are both held on Sunday mid-afternoon, and anyone who is a direct member of FAN or an affiliated church is more than welcome to participate. We are an affiliated church; therefore, you are encouraged to attend. More details can be found on fanwa.org.

The legislature passed some really great bills this year. They increased budgeting to help with housing the homeless, they increased budgeting for schools and school meals, and they passed a bill to end the sales of automatic weaponry used for military purposes to the general public. This was a really successful year as far as FAN's priorities are concerned. We still have work to do; however, so don't stop helping the efforts of

Faith Action Network. There will be another fall meeting, and the event that culminates the calendar year is the FAN Annual Dinner. Look forward to those events.

Joys & Concerns



THANK YOU to all the Teams for the 'goodies' they serve at Fellowship Time...especially Team 4 for the Mediterranean type items they served on Palm Sunday. – very fitting for the day's service.

Prayer for Neil as he recovers from a fall (no bones broken)... for Elizabeth's son, Sam, who has COVID, and daughter, Annika, who has a respiratory virus...Dennis having chemotherapy following cancer surgery...Kathleen's mother in memory care...Prayers that Tanya 's job interview goes well...Cindi asks prayers for family reconciliation and financial stability....Prayers Cathi's sister, Ann, recently widowed. Prayers of thanksgiving that Tom was able to travel to Florida to celebrate brother Kevin's 60th birthday...and prayers of thanks for family members to help Allison while Tom's away.

Prayers of Thanksgiving that Pastor Cathy, Robert, Judy, and Cathi were able to attend the UCC Annual Meeting in Bellingham the last weekend in April.

Prayers for United Church – there's only 2 months left before the UMC Conference and Pastor Cathy's new appointment to Cedar Cross UMC in Mill Creek....Prayers of THANKS for the years she has been with us.

We're sorry to report the death of Gay Blanch, on Sunday, April 30th. She has gone to join God and is finally at peace. Our condolence to her husband, Paul Koppe, and family and to her family at United Church. Gay's history with United Church goes back to when she was in Sunday School at Aldersgate UMC. Many of us will remember the great craft projects she'd set up, for both adults and kids...and for giant size cookies that could fill a whole plate. Information on her Celebration of Life to come.

If you would like to send a card to Paul, his new address is:

15108 183rd Ave East, Bonney Lake, WA 98391

May Birthdays

12 Wes Davis

23 Sam(antha) Burhop

4 Tanner Harding

27 Kathi Hiyane-Brown

30 Nancy Davis

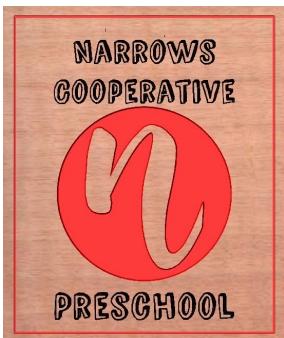


Fellowship time Sunday May 7th—

Please welcome our Narrows CO-OP parents.

The end of school year is approaching and the Narrows Preschool parents in appreciation will serve and provide our fellowship time eats and treats. This is the first time in over 4 years we have shared this special time together.

*More than a Preschool,
IT'S A COMMUNITY*



FROM PEACE AND JUSTICE - “Period Packs”

The UCC General Synod, which will be held at the end of June in Indianapolis, will be collecting menstrual period packs to be given to Church World Service for their work in assisting those who have experienced disasters. The Peace & Justice Committee has decided to participate in the collection of the items needed for these packs and I will take them with me to the General Synod. I will place a suitcase in the narthex at church in which you can place your contribution of the items needed. You may also make a monetary donation to the church, specifying "period packs." I will then purchase the things still needed to complete the packs. Here is a list of the items needed for each pack:

Here's what you'll need:

- One 1-gallon size re-sealable bag
- Two 2oz bottle hand sanitizer
- Three 4-gallon bathroom trash bags
- One travel pack of Wet Ones
- 5 regular Tampons
- 5 super absorbency Tampons
- 10 Pads (Unscented. Long super ultra-thin.)
- Bath-size soap (3 oz. bar or larger. No Ivory or Jergen's soap. Do not remove from packaging.)
- One pack of flushable wipes (Unscented. 42 count)
- Six fragrance-free laundry sheets (placed in small, Ziploc bags)
-

Assembly Tips

- Place all items in the plastic bag, remove air, and seal.
- All items must be new.

Do not enclose personal notes, money, or extra items in the kits.

Peace, Cathi Cline, Chair of Peace & Justice



Walk - Sharing the Journey

Join the UCUP Walkers on Monday, May 15, 9:30 AM at Dune Peninsula Park in Tacoma. We'll meet by the building next to the parking lot. The walk is mostly a flat sidewalk that can be a long walk including Pt. Ruston, or a shorter walk staying in Dune Park. Here's a link to the park map and other information about the park: <https://www.metroparkstacoma.org/place/dune-peninsula/>



Frank Herbert, the author of Dune, was a Tacoma native. Included on the park website is this four minute documentary about Frank Herbert and the creation of the park. It's worth a look even if you're unable to walk with us. <https://www.metroparkstacoma.org/tacomas-real-life-dune/>

RSVP to Dorothy McCuistion: dorothymcc@nventure.com

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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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