

THE LINK

March 1, 2017

**First Congregational
United Church of Christ**

Temporary Location for Worship:

Luepke Community Center

1009 E McLoughlin Blvd.

Vancouver, WA 98663

www.vanucc.org

Office Location:

1220 NE 68th Street

Vancouver, WA 98665

360-693-1476

**REMEMBERING
OUR FAMILY
IN PRAYER**

Prayer requests for:

Joan Blair

Harriet Anani

Opal Chapman

Mary Lou Duvall

L. Marilyn Ross

Cordelia McBride

Eric Sander



***From
Our
Pastor***



Awhile back, Ed Martin came to me and suggested a great idea. What if we trained some lay people at Van UCC to preach? This would give members of the church a way to flex some new faith muscles, would help me stay within my part-time hours and assure that all of us hear some new voices from time to time.

In my experience (and I'm guessing in yours) preaching is usually reserved for the ordained folks in a congregation. There is no particular reason this should be so – it's just one of those “the way we've always done things” things. Still, Ed and I knew it would be a challenge and we wanted to offer a special level of support and training for these folks. So, for the last few months, Ed and I have been working on putting together a course we are calling LEAP (Locally Authorized and Empowered Pastors). We have pulled together a group of lay preachers ready to commit to meeting twice a month for feedback and learning, preaching twice in 2017 and digging into a (not small) pile of regular homework. If this works, we hope to continue it into the future, with a new group of lay preachers.

Our new LEAPers are Pam Osborne, Jerry Mathis, Rory Martindale and Kristina Martin. We will have a chance to bless them in worship as a group very soon. In the meantime, please keep them in your prayers, and offer support and encouragement on the Sundays when they are preaching. They are giving a huge gift to the church, and to me, by their commitment and willingness to take a risk on a new thing!

As we give thanks for the LEAPers in our midst, let's take their courage as a challenge to step up our own commitment or to take a risk. Lent (the 40 days before Easter) is traditionally a time when Christians are invited to give something up or to take something on as a way of deepening our walk with Christ, so this is the perfect time! In this season and always, I pray that our community is a place where you can know that you are both challenged and supported in your faith journey.

Peace,
Jennifer

Confirmation 2017 – Pathways Update



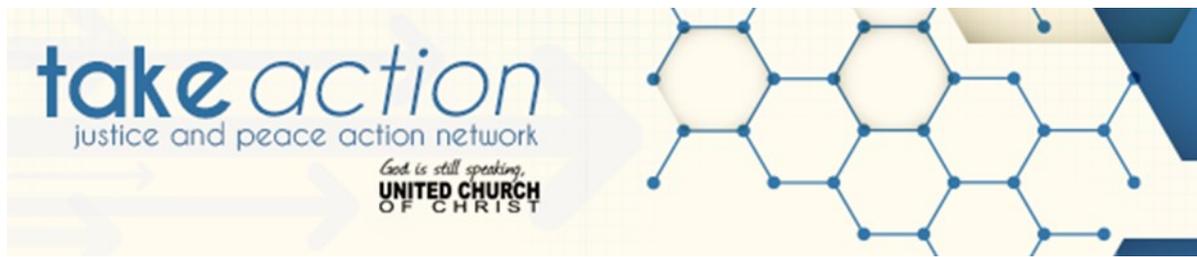
There is an ancient saying attributed to Confucius that says, “If your plan is for one year, plant rice. If your plan is for ten years, plant trees. If you plan is for one hundred years, educate children.” When Rev. Brownell and I designed this year’s confirmation class, we definitely planned for a long term investment in these wonderful young men and women.

Our goal has been and continues to be to challenge them while inspiring them, and our hope has been that they will coalesce into a group that not only supports one another on Sundays, but on other days as well. I am well pleased that after finishing our final retreat, this group of young men and women are all we hoped for and more.

They have learned about the history and tenets of the United Church of Christ as well as Christianity, as well as whom they are as a person of faith. They’ve learned about how Jesus inspired the original disciples, as well as how people are inspired to act for justice and mercy today. They’ve learned about our sacred practices as a church, and they’ve learned how to be the church to one another. But Jennifer and I are most inspired by how they’ve learned to share with us and one another their thoughts and fears, hopes and aspirations, and their faith.

Confirmation is heading into its final stretch as the confirmands and their mentors work together to better understand what each one’s faith is and how to best share that faith with us now and in the future. Please keep Boean Marquardt, Amelia Martin, Emma Schnabel, Milo McTigue, Olivia Martindale, and Anne McNally and their mentors in your prayers so that they might know they are loved by this community of faith.

As their teacher, youth group director, and confirmation co-leader, I cannot say enough how proud I am of these six teens who not only know more about their faith and their church today than last summer, but also are finding their voice.



Friends –

I am so grateful for your steadfast commitment to the work of justice and peace in these difficult, challenging days. To support and strengthen you in that work moving forward, I want to personally invite you to attend the [2017 Ecumenical Advocacy Days Conference](#) in Washington, DC, April 21-24, 2017. This is a great opportunity to expand your advocacy capacity, connect with other Christian leaders, and feed your spirit.



The theme of this year's conference is as timely as ever: **“Confronting Chaos, Forging Community,”** highlighting the themes of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s historic address at Riverside Church 50 years ago. In that address, he identified the intersection of the “three triplets” of racism, materialism and militarism, and the challenge they present to people of faith.

Keynote speakers this year include Tamika Mallory, national co-chair of the Women's March on Washington and a leader in the Black Lives Matter movement, and our own UCC General Minister and President John Dorhauer, who will be delivering an address on white privilege. New this year is several timely skills-building workshops on community organizing, sanctuary churches, media advocacy, spiritual resilience and dialoguing across difference.

Can you imagine what we could do together by creating an ever-growing cohort of UCC advocates well-trained to lead the work for justice in local communities? Can you imagine how this effort could impact the life of the United Church of Christ and inspire us in our work to build a “Just World for All”?

I hope you will [join us](#) and help spread the word about this opportunity. If you are not able to attend, perhaps your congregation can send someone or help to provide scholarship assistance for others who might otherwise be unable to attend, especially young leaders.

We look forward to standing with you side-by-side in the ongoing work of justice advocacy. Heartfelt thanks to you for your faithful ministry and witness.

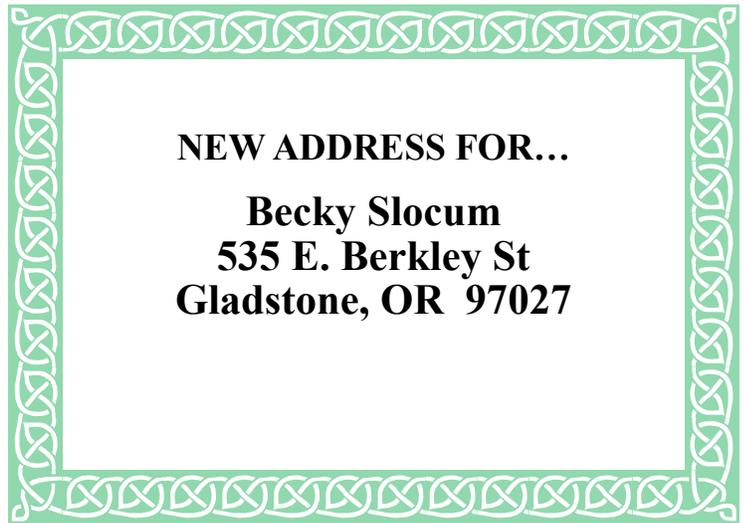
Continued courage in the struggle,

Sandy Sorensen
Director
United Church of Christ Washington Office

P.S. We do have some funds available for UCC young adults who would like to attend. [I invite you to apply by 3/17.](#)

Birthdays
of the Month

March 04	L. Marilyn Ross
March 04	Patricia Yates
March 04	Eric Pykonen
March 08	Irma Slocum
March 08	Christi Brittain
March 12	Kristin Mauke- Wiswall
March 15	Emma Schnabel
March 16	Willow Wilson
March 21	Alice Rowe
March 21	Connie Oppel
March 23	Ed Frank
March 26	Nita Calvert
March 26	Sharie Lewis
March 28	Dorothea Johnson
March 30	Kathleen Williams



**Mission & Outreach Special Offering For March:
ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING**

In times of human suffering and need: You are *here* for our neighbors through your gifts to the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering (OGHS.) When you feed the hungry, care for the sick, welcome the stranger – you feed, and care for and welcome Christ. When you give to OGHS to those who suffer through natural disaster, war, or systemic poverty, you let them know that you are *here*.

Our support is given through partner organizations responding to health, education and agricultural development needs, refugee initiatives, and both international and domestic disaster response. When we give, as the United Church of Christ it means that the church can stand strong, in the midst of need whether it is nearby or far away. When God's love abides in us, we are moved to respond with our own material goods to the needs of other members of God's family.

To give: simply make your check out to our church and write "OGHS" in the memo line. You may give any Sunday in March. Thank you for being here!



Mary Jo Ebel Circle

The Mary Jo Ebel Circle will meet Wednesday, March 15, 2017 at the home of Ruth Hammer, 507 NE 99th St. Space 4, at 1:00 PM. Ruth and Connie are hosting.

Our program will be about Women's Fellowship information and up-dates about its mission.

Beverly Crossman, Ellie Bradley and others will share their experiences and participation.

The fire department prohibits parking on the streets of the park, but spaces are available on the south edge of the open area just beyond Ruth's spaces. Carpool if you can.

Come prepared for good information and fellowship.

Blessings, Connie and Ruth

p.s. Call for more info and/or to confirm.

Connie: 573-8997

Ruth: 574-7359

The Hannon's are Moving!

Here's their new contact information:

John and Mary Ellis Hannon

Mail:

6715 NE 63rd St. Ste 103 #466
Vancouver, WA 98661

Home:

5300 NE 82nd Ave #312
Vancouver, WA 98662

Email:

hannon848@yahoo.com



United Church of Christ 101

The Membership Ministry is hosting an evening for those who are interested in learning more about the church, meeting a few people, and considering the possibility of becoming members. It will be March 26th at 7pm at Pam and Jeff Osborne's home at 4103 NE 45th Circle. Please RSVP to Kathy in the church office at 693-1476 if you would like to attend.



Women's Breakfast Group

All women of the church are invited to celebrate sisterhood, fellowship and friendship when the *Women's Breakfast Group* meets at 9:30 a.m., Saturday, **March 11th** at the Peachtree on Highway 99.

March 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Ash Wednesday 10:00 Bible 102 6:00 Service Vancouver Heights Methodist 7:00 Bible 102	2 7:00 LEAP	3	4
5 1st Sunday in Lent 10:00 Worship/Communion	6 3:30 Spirituality Home of Michele Holden	7 7:00 Choir WSSB	8 10:00 Bible 102 12:00 Communications Office 7:00 Bible 102	9 10:30 Prayer Shawl in Office 1:00 Memorials Office 7:00 Parish Life office	10	11 9:30 Women's Breakfast Group at the Peachtree
12 2nd Sunday in Lent Confirmation 10:00 Worship	13	14 1:00 Membership office 7:00 Choir WSSB	15 1:00 MJE Circle office	16 7:00 M&O Carole and Adina	17 	18
19 3rd Sunday in Lent 10:00 Worship	20 3:30 Spirituality Home of Michele Holden	21 7:00 Choir WSSB	22 6:00 P&F office	23 7:00 Council office	24	25
26 4th Sunday in Lent 10:00 Worship 7:00 UCC 101 At the Osborne home. (see article)	27	28 7:00 Choir	29	30	31	



Youth Group Spring Service Project

Any teens or grown-ups who want to help celebrate Earth Day 2017 are welcome to come to the **2nd Annual Invasive Species Scavenger Hunt** at LeRoy Haagen Memorial Park (NE LeRoy Haagen Memorial Drive, near Firstenburg Community Center). Meet at 10am near the restrooms near the parking lot. Bring gloves and wear weather appropriate clothing and shoes. Afterwards, let's stop for lunch at Ichi 18 Teriyaki (near Winco). Bring a friend and money for lunch! Please RSVP with Kristina (360) 635-1075 so she can let the organiz-



We will be having an Easter Egg hunt on Easter Sunday (April 16th) following the service. All are welcome to participate, but please bring your own basket. Our confirmation class will be hiding the eggs so even the "big" kids should have fun searching for them. Hippy-hop-pity-hope to see you there!



Easter Egg Hunt Help Needed!

Are you a fan of fun? I am looking for some volunteers to help me put together Easter Eggs for our Easter Egg Hunt this year. If you can donate plastic Easter Eggs, jelly beans, or empty egg cartons, please deliver them to the trailer by April 5th. Many, many thanks!!!



Have You Returned Your Secret Shopper Evaluation Form?

If not, please bring it to church this Sunday.

Thank You!