



The Link

December 2018



Vancouver
United Church
of Christ

Worship: Sundays 10 AM
www.vanucc.org

Office Hours

Monday thru Thursday: 10 AM—2 PM

Pastor: Rev. Jennifer Garrison Brownell
Jennifer@vanucc.org

Dir. of Membership Exp: Kristina Martin
Kristina@vanucc.org

Interim Office Admin: Elizabeth Spannring
Elizabeth@vanucc.org

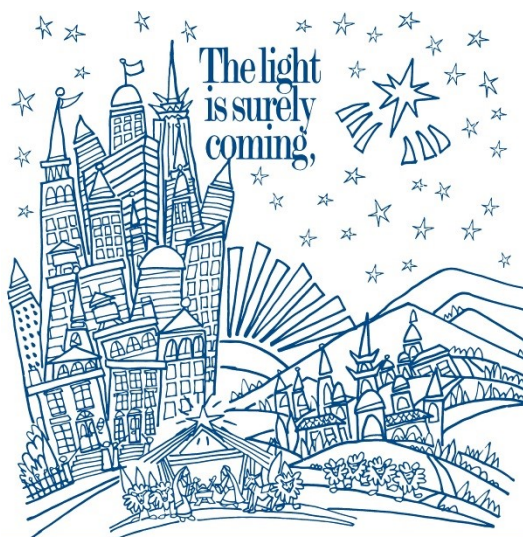
Mission & Outreach Special Offering for December

The United Church of Christ Christmas Fund (formerly Veterans of the Cross) has been helping retired clergy and lay workers for decades. One of the unique aspects of the Christmas Fund is that the funds provide direct financial assistance to individual UCC clergy and lay church employees – the funds do not support programs or institutions, but people. With your continued generosity, more individuals will receive the support of the church in their time of need.

Our retired clergy/lay employees rely on this income supplementation for basic needs such as food, utilities, and living and medical expenses.

Christmas “thank you” gift checks were given to hundreds of retired UCC clergy/lay church employees last year. This special gift at Christmas time reminds these Veterans of the Cross that they have not been forgotten and that the Church is grateful for their service.

Please support this important UCC fund by writing a check to our church and putting “UCC Christmas Fund” in the memo line.



Ted Dawson, Artist

2018
THE CHRISTMAS FUND
for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund



www.christmasfund.org



The Pension Boards
United Church of Christ, Inc.
WHERE FAITH AND FINANCE MEET

LETTER FROM OUR PASTOR



Happy Advent!

It's the most wonderful time of the year, they say. For some of us, the season is happily full with families gathering, bright decorations, ringing music, special shopping, presents, baking (and eating! and drinking!).

It's the most wonderful time of the year, they say. Unless it isn't. For some of us, this season is a grind, or a burden. We spend money we don't have and ingest calories we can't afford. Even in groups we feel lonely, and the bells seem to clang instead of ringing.

For some of us, the season is many of these things, or all of them.

I don't know about you, but I often tend to wish I was feeling or experiencing something I am not. If I'm happy and celebratory, I wish I were more solemn and meditative. If I'm feeling low or sad, I wish I could just perk up. This season, my invitation to you is to be right where you are, wherever you are.

Can you pause just for a breath or two once a day to notice, without judging, what you are experiencing, and how you are feeling about it? Can you, in those moments, allow yourself to know the gentle compassion and firm conviction of Christ? After all, Christ came for this very reason - to show us how to be messily, delightfully human.

However you experience this season, I invite you to find Christ's comfort and joy, and our community's solace and celebration here, with your church family. Whether you are crafting at the Advent Fair or meditating at the Longest Night Service or taking in the glorious music of the choir's choral presentation during worship, there are ways to enter into Advent that meet each of us right where we are.

See you in church!

Blessings,

Jennifer



NEWS FROM THE MEMORIALS COMMITTEE

Update On Memorial Gifts

The Memorial Committee and Inventory Chairperson have been working to identify the past memorial gifts that were lost in the fire. We want to honor those persons in memory of whom gifts were made. Although the gifts were lost and no longer part of our church life, we give thanks for the generosity of the following:

- *Church Altar Lighting and Hymnals*
Don Matthews
- *Lobby Furniture*
Emil Fries
- *Intarsia Christ, Lion & Lamb plaque*
Stephen Page
- *Silk Flower Arrangement*
Laura Bradbury
- *Custom Office desk, bulletin board*
Mildred Appel
- *Entrance Furnishings, Education Wing*
Eileen Mall
- *Marble Altar slab*
Laurence Corlett

The banners kept behind the altar were also lost in the fire. We give thanks for the following, held in memory.

- *Glory Banner*
Kenneth and Bettie Basch
- *Joy Banner*
Toni Agerter
- *I am the Vine Banner*
Esther Vail
- *Miscellaneous Banners*
Norma Davis, Flo Frieske, Milton Essig, June Seacat, Tim Stolle, V. Roth, DeeDee Knight, Ernie Dunbar, Emma Holden, Grace Brandis, Ali Ray, Jerry Nelson
- The choir chairs were not salvageable, but the name plaques that were on the chairs were saved. The plaques are mounted on a beautiful board made by

Jerry Mathis and displayed over the Memorial Table by the elevator.

- The Sanctuary seating (pews) were paid for by memorial gifts from many people. They were not salvageable and have been replaced by the chairs currently in use.
- Many of us purchased hymnals in memory of a loved one. The hymnals were all unfortunately lost.
- Chancel Cross is in good shape. Memorial monies in memory of Emil and Nettie Fries were used for purchase and the plan is to mount outside of church building. We have a beautiful new cross in the sanctuary made by Friends of the Carpenter.
- Many of the hymnal books in the former library were destroyed, but some are still to be found in the new church library in Clawson Corner.
- The bricks for the Honor Garden were purchased with memorial funds. They were saved and will be placed in the church landscaping.
- Memorial funds were also used for the stained glass in the sanctuary roof. The stained glass was mostly destroyed in the fire. Several pieces were salvaged by Daryl DeSilva and made into jewelry pendants which were bought by church members and the profits went to the church restructuring. Other pieces were used in the new stained glass cross.
- There were other tangible memorial gifts that were destroyed or lost, but have been replaced so we will not list those items here. We apologize if we have overlooked something. Please feel free to contact the committee with any questions or concerns.
Memorial Committee: Ruth Hammer, Judy Walter, Connie Oppel

United Church of Christ 3 Great Loves Campaign



This December we will continue the **UCC 3 Great Loves Campaign** by focusing on love for our refugee neighbors. Refugees are proven victims of persecution that flee their homelands in search of hope, justice and a safe place to raise their families. Vancouver has been receiving between 200-400 refugees per year.

Refugees arrive to the United States with very little and they have to quickly begin their lives over again. **Restart Kits** are a significant part of welcoming and honoring them in Vancouver.

The kits are filled with essential items that give refugees the start of what they need to rebuild their lives here. The hope is that these kits would bring honor to refugees coming to Vancouver, reflect their dignity, while also meeting a very tangible need.

We ask that you only collect new items for these kits, and leave the price tag on the item. (Tags will be removed before the family receives them; per regulations the value of items must be recorded.) Sign-up sheets for the Restart Kits will be available at church beginning November 25. **Items are due December 16, before worship.**

Stewardship Progress Report



Over the last two plus years, we have experienced first hand how much we can accomplish together with the help of the Holy Spirit. Now, God is truly "doing a new thing" among us as we move into 2019. There are so many reasons to give. We give because we have hope in the good things God will continue to do in the community and the world through our congregation. We give because we have trust in God's abundance and so we take a leap of faith as we pledge. We give because we have gratitude for the belonging we experience here. Whatever the reasons you give, thank you. You make this community stronger and more vibrant, so that God's work can continue in and through us, together.

I am pleased to report that as of November 26, **83** pledge cards have been returned, leaving **48** yet to be heard from. Pledges for the 2019 Operating Budget total **\$192,772**, short of our \$228,880 goal by **\$36,108**. The Stewardship Committee appreciates the prompt return of these pledges.

If you still have your pledge card, please return it to the office or mail it in the pre-addressed envelope or place it in the offering on Sunday.

-- Jeff Osborne, Stewardship Chair

Soul Spa

Saturday, December 1 & 15
1-3 PM, Clawson Corner



Do you need a break from the pressures and expectations of this busy time? Give your soul a breather during the hustle and bustle of the season. Pray, reflect, create, lay your grief or anger to rest and find healing.

Pastor Jennifer and Pat Sutherland, retired hospice nurse, will be your guides through a gentle ritual experience. There will be two different, free-standing programs, so feel free to attend one or both. Free of charge. Childcare provided.



Longest Night, December 21 7 pm, in the Sanctuary

*A Service of Healing and Hope on the
Longest Night of the Year*

If you are grieving, ill, lonely or just plain tired, this season can seem especially difficult.

The Longest Night service is a time to reflect and meditate in the company of one another, as we remember God's promise of the return to the light.



On solstice, gather with others who are ready to stop and notice the quieter gifts of the season. Facilitated by Pam Osborne and Pastor Jennifer, and led in partnership with MCC of the Good Shepherd.

PARISH LIFE

Christmas Eve Cookies and Wassail

One of the great traditions of our church is enjoying Christmas cookies and wassail after church on Christmas Eve. This year we will continue that tradition after the 10 PM worship service. We invite you all to bring some of your favorite cookies or candies to share with the congregation. You may bring your goodies to church that afternoon or evening or if you prefer, you may bring them to church with you on Sunday the 23rd.



OASIS GROUPS



The Movie Group outing for November was a movie followed by dinner at Twigs. While there is no organized

outing for December, you are encouraged to attend the *Jim Fischer & Friends Christmas Concert* on Sat, Dec 1 at 3 pm-First Presbyterian Church, 4300 Main ST, Vancouver, WA. A free will offering will be taken for Friends of the Carpenter. Contact Sandy Mathis for more info.

The Daytime Card Group

welcomes anyone that loves to play cards and games. On December 18, at 12 PM we will have a potluck in

Bradford Hall. Leslie Chapman will be our hostess and will let you know what you can bring. Give her a call at (360) 910-0020 if you're joining us for the first time. We are open to anyone who loves to laugh and grow friendships.



Join Us For Breakfast

The Women's Breakfast Group will meet Saturday, Dec 8, at 9:30 AM at The Peachtree Restaurant and Pie House at 6600 NE Hwy 99, Vancouver, WA 98665. All women are invited.

The Cooking for the Homeless Group

listened to a great presentation from David Slocum. If you signed up for this Oasis Group and have not joined a small team yet, please contact Leslie at (360) 910-0020 or haydnmacgrandma@gmail.com to get on a team.



The Theater Group attended the play *Flu Season* at PSU in November and plans on seeing *Fiddler on the Roof* in December. Contact Pam Osborne at (360) 904-5902 if you'd like to join us.



YOUTH CORNER

JUNIOR YOUTH GROUP

5th-7th Grades

Christmas Ships Parade

Wednesday, December 5, 7-9 PM

View the Christmas ships! An after-dark activity for our middle schoolers. Meet at the church at 7 PM and carpool to Vancouver's new waterfront park to view the Christmas Ships Parade. If you've never seen this, it's an amazing experience. Dress for the weather, we'll be outside for at least an hour. Pick up from the church will be at 9 PM.

Mission Trip Youth and Parent Q & A

Sunday, December 9, 9:15-9:45 AM

CONFERENCE ROOM

Come learn about the 2019 Youth Mission Trip to be held July 28-Aug 2. Youth, ages 6th grade and up, are invited to travel to Southern Oregon and work at Sanctuary One (a non-profit care farm). Registration for the Mission Trip opens December 15. We'll also have an opportunity to catch up about the youth program. We'll have coffee on and something to nosh. See you then!

NEW Combined Youth Group Service Opportunity 5th-12th grades

Monday, December 17
6:30-8:00 PM

Assemble Christmas Baskets for Martha's Pantry's families. Snacks provided.



SENIOR YOUTH GROUP

8th-12th grades

Pizza & White Elephant Gift Exchange

Sunday, December 16,
11:15 AM-1:30 PM

It's our 2nd Annual
Pizza Party and White
Elephant Gift

Exchange! Gear up for
finals week with fun
and relaxation.

Bring \$5 for pizza and a wrapped white elephant gift.



LOOKING AHEAD

Thursday, Jan 3, 1-4 PM

JUNIOR YOUTH GAME DAY, at church

Sunday, Jan 13, 11:15 AM-1:30 PM

SENIOR YOUTH GAME DAY, at church

Monday, Jan 21

COMBINED YOUTH GROUP

MLK Service Day at Martha's Pantry

Friday & Saturday, Feb 8-9

Conference-wide Lock-in for 6th-12th graders at Cedar Hills UCC, Beaverton

Monday, Feb 18

COMBINED YOUTH GROUP

President's Day Service Day

Sunday, March 17

COMBINED YOUTH GROUP

Service project TBD

July 28-Aug 2

6th-12th Grade Mission Trip to Southern Oregon

AROUND TOWN

Grinch's Pancake Breakfast & Photo Shoot

You're Invited!

Saturday, December 22: 10 AM-1 PM

Adults \$15

Kids \$5 (under 12)

Photos \$20

Presented by the
Kiwanis of Fort
Vancouver



Bradford Hall, Vancouver UCC
1220 NE 68th St-Vancouver, WA 98665

Bearing Witness: A Service of Healing and Wholeness for Survivors of Sexual Trauma

Sunday, December 9, 5-6 PM

Westminster Presbyterian Church is hosting this service for all those who are survivors of sexual trauma, who seek community and healing. The service will include readings, silence and healing prayer for those who wish to be prayed for. For more information, please contact Reverend Beth Neel at (503) 287-1289.

Westminster Presbyterian Church
1624 NE Hancock, Portland, OR 97212

Fred Meyer and AmazonSmile Community Rewards

Shopping at these businesses is a simple way to generate funds throughout the year. Both organizations will make quarterly contributions to our church. Anyone can contribute throughout the year if you have a Fred Meyer Rewards card or an Amazon Smile account.

Are you a Fred Meyer Customer?

Whenever you use your Rewards Card when shopping at Freddy's, you will be helping our organization earn a donation. If you do not have a Rewards Card, you can sign up for one at the Customer Service Desk of any Fred Meyer store. Rewards Customers still get the Rewards Points, Fuel Points and Rebates. This is a separate program and in addition to these other benefits. To sign-up [Re-enroll or link your Rewards Card now](#)

AmazonSmile

You shop. Amazon gives. Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to the charitable organization of your choice. AmazonSmile is the same Amazon you know. Same products, same prices, same service. Support your charitable organization by signing up here <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/91-6001726>

To choose your charitable organization search for **First Congregational United Church of Christ**—make sure to select Vancouver, WA! For more info please contact Ken Rowe.

MARTHA'S PANTRY



World AIDS Day Commemoration

Saturday, December 1, at 7 PM

Vancouver UCC

1220 NE 68th St-Vancouver, WA 98665

On this 30th anniversary of World AIDS Day, we gather to remember, to mourn and to take action. Please join us as Jerry West, Martha's Pantry founder, shares the story of this life-changing ministry which has been serving people with AIDS and HIV for more than three decades. He will reflect on how the work of Martha's Pantry has changed, and how it is the same. Music provided by harpist Kit Stowell.



Do you like board games? Puzzles? Socializing? If you answered YES to any of these, feel free to drop on by Martha's Pantry EVERY TUESDAY from 10 am-2 pm for game day. Host Andy says "there's always coffee going and something to nibble on." Especially on these long and rainy winter days, it's a great way for the pantry's volunteers, clients (and yourself!) to enjoy some warmth and relaxation.

Christmas Food Baskets



Martha's Pantry is facilitating the annual Christmas Food and Gift Basket Program assisting people living with HIV/AIDS, and their families, in SW Washington.

Last year over 80 households were served. Sponsors may also support the program by volunteering time to help or sending a contribution. Food and gift baskets need to be at the pantry by DECEMBER 16.

For more info contact MCC (360) 695-1480, Jeanie (360) 833-0966 or Sharon (360) 721-0388.

Suggested Food Items:

- Turkey
- Cranberry Sauce
- Potatoes
- Turkey Gravy
- Stuffing Mix
- Green Beans
- Mushroom Soup
- Rolls or Bread
- Fruit or Juice
- Dessert or Candy
- Black Olives
- French's Crispy Onion Rings
- Holiday Beverage
- Aluminum roasting pan



December

BIRTHDAYS

Dec 2 Nancy Woodworth

Dec 6 Norma Priel

Dec 8. Olivia Martindale

Dec 11. Jennifer Brownell

Dec 11. . Chloie Chronister-Brittain

Dec 13 Jack Melton

Dec 13 Judy Walter

Dec 15. Jan Foulke

Dec 17. Chuck Foulke

Dec 18. Dan Schnabel

A Letter is a Welcome Gift From the Home Front!

In March of 2019, Josiah Renner is expected to return stateside. Let's help make these last four months in the Army go quickly for him!

Letters and cards from the congregant would certainly be welcome, as would prayers for his continued safety.

As this is a APO/FPO address a first-class stamp is all that is needed to send mail to him in Korea!

Church Friends
Vancouver, WA



Spc. Renner, Josiah
560th Medical Co.
Camp Casey, Unit #15342
APO, AP 96224

Congregational Meeting Sunday, December 16



Following worship there will be a congregational meeting to adopt the preliminary budget for 2019.

Please remain in the sanctuary after worship for this short meeting.

New Church Photo Directory!

We will be publishing a new church directory using our church database rather than working with an outside firm. Updating the Church Directory will be a great way to learn each other's names!



Every Sunday during Advent, Kristina will be taking photos after worship. So pick your Sunday

when you're having a good hair day, show up at the back of the room, and "smile!", that's all there is to it. See you there!

Mission and Outreach

would like to thank you all for providing seven bountiful Thanksgiving Baskets to members of our church family. You are blessed to be a blessing!



Advent Begins Sunday, December 2



Join us for the Children's Pageant at 10 AM; all children are invited to participate. Following worship is the Advent Festival in Bradford Hall.

Parish Life will provide a soup and bread lunch. Join in the fun making Advent crafts and decorating cupcakes for dessert.



SPECIAL CONCERNS

Joan Blair

The Family of Jim Ferner

Doris Fletcher

Steve Hitchens

Dorothea Johnson

Marilyn & Bob New

Connie Oppel

Tim Oppel

Josiah Renner



Celebrate Advent and Christmas With Your Church Family

Sunday, December 2, 10 AM

Children's Christmas Pageant—All children are invited to participate

Sunday, December 2

Advent Festival following worship

Sunday, December 16, 10 AM

Choral Christmas Presentation

Friday, December 21, 7 PM

Longest Night

a Service of Healing and Hope on the Longest Night of the Year

Monday, December 24, 4 PM

Christmas Eve service inspired by *Godly Play*

Monday, December 24, 10 PM

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service followed by wassail and cookies

Sunday, December 30, 10 PM

Post-Christmas Brunch