



The Link

January 2019

JANUARY'S JOY JOURNEY



On Christmas Eve, when the sanctuary was filled with voices singing "Joy To The World", I couldn't help but think about the word JOY. What is it? Is joy an idea, an emotion, an ideal? Something else? Depending on who is asked, the answer varies. However, many answers seem to point to joy being somewhat synonymous with happiness. But joy isn't just happiness. Joy is lasting, joy is an internal experience, joy brings feelings of contentment and confidence, joy is a conscious commitment. And joy has been part of the human experience since time began.

In the NRSV Bible, there are 172 references to joy - both as nouns and verbs, based on both Hebrew and Greek words. Joy, and the early peoples' experience of joy, was in many of our foundational stories. I believe this is true because as much as we search for ways to experience God, we also search for ways to experience joy.

For the month of January, please consider joining me on a *Joy Journey* - we will join together as an intentional community to share ways of finding more joy in our lives. Please bring a jar or similar container on January 6th. We'll meet in Clawson Corner immediately following the congregational meeting. Blessings my friends. May the new year bring you great joy. Questions? Contact Kristina Martin (kristina@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



Vancouver
United Church
of Christ

Worship: Sundays 10 AM
www.vanucc.org

LETTER FROM OUR PASTOR



The season of Epiphany continues the themes of peace, hope, joy and love that we explored during advent. May the words of this Christmas prayer guide us into the New Year.

Give us the hope of Mary and Joseph, who set forth on their new life together uncertain of anything but of your steadfast presence and movement in their lives. For many places in the world and our lives where despair and violence have taken hold, give us hope...

Give us the peace of the Magi, gentiles and foreigners, who followed the star across national and religious boundaries and made their way to you. For many places in the world and in our lives where hatred and anger have taken hold, give us peace...

Give us the joy of the shepherds, who felt the ecstasy granted especially those who have set aside terror, and who follow you with eagerness. For many places in the world and in our lives where fear and sorrow have taken hold, give us joy...

Give us the love of the angels, whose song burst forth, unable to be contained, just as your compassion does. For many places in our lives and in the world where apathy and disease have taken hold, give us love...

Make the light that burns this night the spark that ignites a flame, a flame that we carry with us into the coming weeks and months. We know that nothing can put out the fire you have placed within each of our beating hearts.

With gratitude and awe for your coming, we sing Gloria! Amen.



TRADITIONAL AFTER CHRISTMAS BRUNCH

It has been a tradition of our church for decades to have our worship service on the Sunday between Christmas and New Year's be a potluck brunch service.

We will continue that tradition again back in our new beautiful space. Please join us for worship in Bradford Hall at 10 am on December 30 for a great service led by Rev. Richard Trefren and enjoy brunch with friends. Please bring your favorite brunch food to share.



MISSION AND OUTREACH

Outreach...Down Home

Carole Elizabeth

This month, the Mission and Outreach Committee's focus is Martha's Pantry. Since we're in shared ministry with them, it's important for us to support them. They accept food, hygiene items, and cleaning supplies. They also welcome volunteers.

Here's an idea...tithing + Martha's Pantry. This is a suggestion that grew out of Adina's and my life. We like to donate to Martha's Pantry but...we also have short memories. We always think of it as we walk past their door on our way into church. By the time church is over, we've forgotten.

Here's what we've been doing this past year or so. We tithe our groceries. We do our shopping, go through the cashier's line and pay our bill. Then we take a tenth of that receipt and go shopping, this time shopping for Martha's Pantry. Check with Vicky at the Pantry for what they need. She'll also give you tips on how to shop.

Since we decided to tithe our grocery money, we've been able to be more faithful in our commitment to Martha's Pantry. It's fun. It's like shopping for a gift for someone special. You have a limited budget and you get them what they need most. It's a blessing for Martha's Pantry. It's a blessing for the guests of the Pantry who come shopping. And it's a blessing for us. We hope some of you will try this. Bring your grocery tithe items to church on Sunday. After worship is over, give your grocery tithe to someone in MCC and they'll see that the Pantry gets it.



WHO: Winter Hospitality Overflow

March 10-17, 2019



Last year more than 10,000 warm and dry bed-nights were provided by WHO. For 16 winters our congregation has teamed with Congregation Kol Ami to provide the volunteers and support that makes WHO possible in Vancouver. This winter our week begins Sunday evening, March 10, and concludes with the final cleanup shift on Sunday, March 17.

In addition to volunteering for one of the three shifts at St. Paul Lutheran Single Men Shelter, there are also opportunities for providing supplies and food. You can also volunteer to help out when WHO is short of volunteers for one reason or another during other weeks.

Watch the Link and weekly Link updates for more information on WHO. Karen Kulm is our congregation's representative; Sue Meyer represents Congregation Kol Ami.

RETIREMENT PARTY TO HONOR KATHY WOOLLEY



Our beloved office administrator Kathy Woolley has made the decision that it is time to retire and enjoy the good life.

Kathy has lovingly and faithfully served our church and congregation for 19 1/2 years. We would like to honor and thank Kathy by throwing her a retirement party. We will party in Bradford Hall after worship on Sunday, January 27. This will be a potluck lunch.

We would love to be able to send Kathy off with a monetary gift for her to enjoy the start of her retirement. If you would like to make a donation, you can write a check to Ken Rowe (please, not to the church) or you may give cash to Ken.

You can also leave donations in the church office with Kristina or Elizabeth. Ken will then put all the donations together in a Visa gift card for Kathy. If you have any questions, please contact Leslie Chapman or Ken Rowe.



Stewardship



FINAL REPORT

Jeff Osborne, Stewardship Chair

As of Sunday, 12/16, we have closed this year's stewardship campaign, although if you still have a card to turn in, we'll still be happy to receive it.

I am pleased to report that we received **98** pledge cards representing pledges totaling **\$226,282** for the 2019 Operating Budget. We ended short of our

\$228,880 goal by **\$2,598**. The final figures will be updated in the draft budget to be presented to the congregation in January.

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.

Thank you for your generous support of our **Refugee Restart Kits!** In 2019, we will be continuing our journey to become an *Immigrant Welcoming Congregation*. This will include book recommendations for adults and youth, films, discussion, and some immersive activities for those who are interested.

When the alien resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress the alien. The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God.--Leviticus 19:33-34



OASIS GROUPS



The Prayer Shawl Group meets on the second Thursday of each month at 10 am in Clawson Corner. All knitters and crocheters are welcome to join us.

We currently have a good supply of prayer shawls and baby blankets on hand. If you would like to give one to someone you know who is in need of a little comfort and/or joy, please ask in the office or check with a member of the group. Contact Joanie Nelson for more information.



The Theater Group met at Hockinson High School on December 8 to see the matinee production of "Fiddler on the Roof". It was a delightful performance

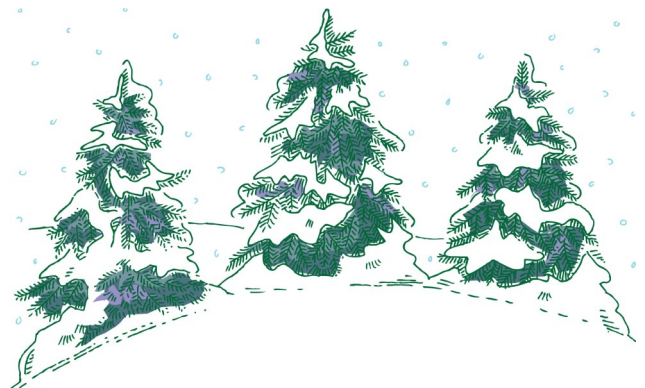
expertly directed by Greg Saum. We followed the performance by a meal & conversation at Chelatchie Crossing.



The Performance Group is performing on January 2, at the luncheon for the homeless at Friends of the Carpenter. Please volunteer your talent to this event. I'm sure the audience will be so appreciative. I imagine they don't get much entertainment in their situation. A repeat of our Thanksgiving Talent show would be welcomed! Contact harrietcleo@yahoo.com.



The Wine Tasting Group had a get together December 28, at the home of the Foulke's. Please contact Tom Renner if you are interested in future events.



OASIS GROUPS

Cooking for the Homeless

The Oasis group for cooking for the homeless has selected dates to meet at church and cook a delicious and hearty meal for the homeless. Even if you have not signed up for the Oasis group, you are more than welcome to join us for one or more of the dates.



If you have youth that would like to help, there will be plenty of things they can help us with. All of the food we prepare will be given to Dave Slocum and Judy Enders to assist them in their mission of feeding between 100-120 people every Sunday evening. You are also welcome to join Dave and Judy to help serve the meals any Sunday. If you would like to donate food, milk, juice or money to help the cause, please contact Dave Slocum, John Greenauer, or Leslie Chapman for more information. Currently scheduled dates are...

Mondays: 10 am - 12 pm

January 14
January 28
February 11
February 25
March 11
March 25

Wednesdays: 6:30 - 8:30pm

January 16
February 6
February 20
March 6
March 20

If you plan to attend one or more of these cooking sessions, please let Leslie or John G. know. We would like to keep groups to 6 to 8 people as to not overcrowd the kitchen. Thank you all for your generous support.

PARISH LIFE

AFTER WORSHIP TREATS

Every Sunday after worship we all enjoy having cookies or cake or cheese and crackers or some fruit. Many of you have provided these delicious treats and we thank you for your generous gifts that we share during fellowship time.

The Parish Life ministry coordinates the coffee hour and we are looking for additional people to provide some of our snacks. If you would like to contribute, we invite you to sign up for a Sunday (or more than one) on the list provided at the treat table. Parish Life will send a reminder notice the previous week as a friendly reminder. Thank you!



FREEZER FUND

We Would Love Your Help!

Our beautiful new kitchen has been a wonderful addition to our newly re-imagined building. We are a commercial grade kitchen except for one important item. We do not have a commercial freezer. Funds from the insurance company were not enough to purchase a new commercial freezer for our kitchen.

We are currently utilizing the old, small residential freezer we had before the fire. This will work for our own use for freezing things like cookies or ice. However, if we wish to freeze items that will be used for things such as feeding the homeless, have building rentals including use of the kitchen or hold any large event, we must have a larger commercial freezer.

We would like to purchase a freezer that has double doors and is 54" wide and meets Health Department regulations. This will be very similar in style to our current refrigerator.

The estimated cost of the freezer is \$2,500 including tax. A fund has been established and several hundred dollars in seed money has already been donated. To help us attain our goal of \$2,500, you may write a check and note **Freezer** on the memo line and drop it in the offering plate any Sunday mornings or you may mail a check to the church. If you would like to make a cash donation, we request that it be in a sealed envelope and clearly marked **Freezer** on the envelope. You may also place this in the offering plate. If you have any questions please contact Leslie Chapman, Joan Blair, or Brenda Gaston. Thank you and blessings to you all!

YOUTH CORNER

LOOKING AHEAD

Junior Youth Game Day

NEW DATE AND TIME

Junior Youth Group (5th - 7th grade) Game Day

Saturday, January 5
11 am – 12:30 pm

Senior Youth (8th – 12th grade) Game Day

Sunday, January 13
after church until 1:30 pm

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

Friday and Saturday, February 8-9

Combined Youth Group Service Days (Times TBA)

Monday, January 21
Monday, February 18
Sunday, March 17



On Monday, December 17, youth volunteers helped assemble Christmas Baskets for Martha's Pantry's families.



The Junior Youth Group bundled up in early December for a field trip to see the Christmas Ships at the newly renovated waterfront park.

AROUND TOWN



PeaceHealth
Southwest Medical Center

PeaceHealth Hospice Volunteer Training

PeaceHealth is seeking volunteer help in lending comfort and compassion to those facing terminal illness. They are asking for a volunteer commitment of four hours per week for at least one year.

Training Dates: Monday, January 7 & Monday January 14, 9 am—5 pm

5400 MacArthur Blvd, Vancouver, WA 98661

A light lunch and snacks will be provided

Basic Training topics include all information required by Medicare. Questions or to RSVP: (360) 696-5069 or email RSSW-HospiceVolunteerServices@peacehealth.org



Pastor Jennifer and son Elijah travelled to the border for day of solidarity and learning.

At the airport, they received a blessing from Rev. Linda Jaramillo (former Vancouver UCC intern and minister for Justice and Witness to the national UCC) and church member Kit Stowell.





January BIRTHDAYS

Jan 3. Ken Rowe

Jan 7 Charles Ross

Jan 18 Allison Kocher

Jan 22. Danya Marquardt

Jan 24. Dorothy Mathews

Jan 28 Judy Dahlen

Jan 31. Martin Borcharding

A note from Sheldon Yellen
Belfor Property Restoration

Dear Tom Yates,

I want to thank you for the note you sent...

Most of all for the ever-so-kind words regarding Rich & Ed...

And to everyone at the church please find our very best and know that we will always Be Grateful for the Honor of serving you in your time of need.

All my Best!

Sheldon '18

January 2019

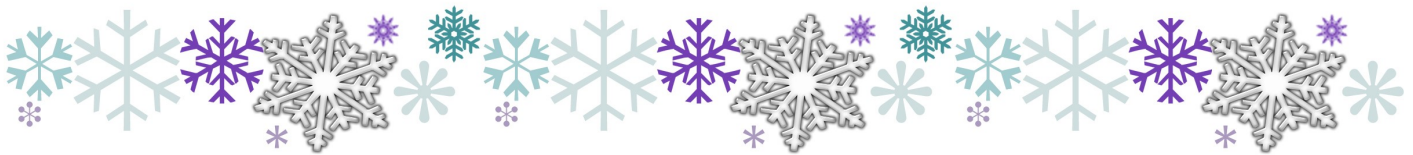


Tuesday, January 1—New Years Day!

Sunday, January 6—Epiphany

Sunday, January 20, 11 am—12:30 pm
Godly Play Open House

Monday, January 21—Martin Luther King Jr. Day



Special Concerns

Joan Blair
Michelle Esposito
The Family of Jim Ferner
Doris Fletcher

Steve Hitchens
Dorothea Johnson
Marilyn & Bob New
Josiah Renner