

The Link

June 2019



Dear Friends,

On May 25, a small group gathered around the lovely new baptismal font and celebrated the wedding of Lynn and Sidney Chan. They chose this scripture from Colossians 3: As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must

forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful.

Here is the meditation that went with those words. Upon reflection, I thought they might be meaningful to the rest of the congregation, too. Many blessings.

"It is such an honor to be here with you and your families today as you make these sacred and beautiful promises to each other. This is an especially poignant day because it was exactly three years ago today that the church was burned by an arsonist. And now, look at the restoration, the beauty, the new life that surrounds us!

continued...



Worship: Sundays 10 AM
Office Hours
Monday thru Thursday: 10 AM—2 PM

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

Dir. of Membership Exp: Kristina Martin
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Office Admin: Elizabeth Spanning
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www.vanucc.org

LETTER FROM OUR PASTOR CONTINUED

The building was not done on a particular day – as you know, the baptismal font we are gathered around was installed just a couple of days ago – a new bowl resting on the stand that has been a part of our church community for generations.

Sometimes we talk about the building like a phoenix rising from the ashes. But when a phoenix rises, it emerges complete and whole from the fire that consumed it. This building, like your marriage, which is not whole and complete today, but is a work in progress that will evolve and grow over time.

That's why its so fitting that you chose this passage from Colossians for your verse today.

Our clothes are not static. Once you get dressed tomorrow, the first day of your married life, you will not look at each other and declare “Well that takes care of that, these are the clothes I will wear every day from now on!” No. Just as we clothe ourselves every day — just as some clothes wear out, and new ones are tried – so will your marriage be an act of resurrection and new life not one time, but every single day. What a blessing to know that you do not have to get it all right today or tomorrow or the next day! What a joy to realize that every day you have the opportunity to again try on compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, patience, love. What a grace that we are – in this building that is a work in progress – reminded that we are also works in progress. May you embrace and enjoy this blessing, joy, and grace every day of your lives together. Amen.



MISSION AND OUTREACH JUNE SPECIAL OFFERING

Becoming An Immigrant Welcoming Congregation



On June 2nd we will welcome Lutheran Refugee Resettlement Services to join us in worship and then for a presentation immediately following church in Bradford Hall. They will speak about the local opportunities we have in Vancouver to put our faith into action. Then on June 9th, Pentecost Sunday, we will have a congregational vote on our resolution to become an Immigrant Welcoming Congregation. Copies of the resolution will be available to read prior to the vote.

Strengthen The Church Offering



ucc.org/stc



Each day, visions and dreams are created in the hearts of many in the United Church of Christ. Through the Strengthen the Church offering, they can become a reality. As God calls our congregations to be “church” in new ways, your gift will plant new churches, awaken new ideas in existing churches, and develop spiritual life in our youth and young adults. Because of this offering, many more will hear the good news that “God is still speaking.”

Please make your check out to our church and put “Strengthen the church” in the memo line. You can also place your check in the special offering envelopes. Your offerings are directed to our Central Pacific Conference, Local Church Ministries, and to national new programs.



To My Many Dear Friends

There's no easy way to express my thanks for all the prayers, calls, visits and loving thoughts sent my way these last few weeks. I treasure every good wish and appreciate my dear church family more than ever.

There have been many special moments and I hope we can find the root cause and deal with the problem.

Special thanks to Nancy Fite and friends for the ukulele serenade. Blessings to all, Connie Opell

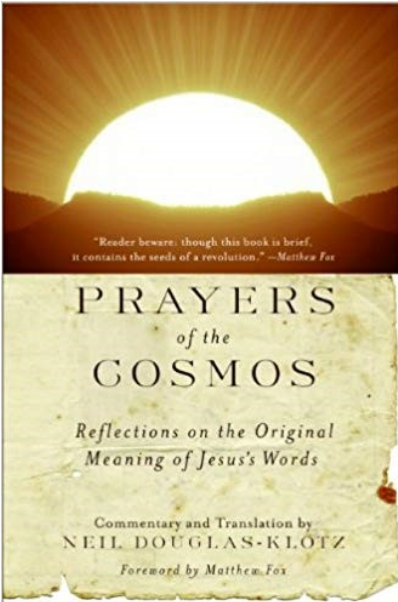
A Six Week Journey into the Words of Jesus in the Original Aramaic

Facilitated by Arlene Arnold

Sponsored by the Spirituality Group

From Prayers of the Cosmos

Translated and with commentary by Neil Douglas-Klotz.



From the introduction:
“The richness of expression present in the native Aramaic language of Jesus is a treasure that has been lost—or limited only to scholars—for too long. To

discover this treasure, we must challenge ourselves to participate in the prophetic and mystical tradition that Jesus has represented.

“

This small book has inspired me and deepened my appreciation for the Lord’s Prayer and other sayings of Jesus. It brings me to tears as I **feel** what Jesus meant and know the truth of what is there.

For a long time, I have wanted to bring this to those in our congregation that I know would also find it inspiring and even life changing.

We will meet Mondays at 11-12 am in the back of the sanctuary June 10-July 15
Please buy the book and begin reading it before the first session.

Adopt a Plot

Hear Ye Hear Ye!!!!



We are in need of volunteers to weed and manage our various landscape areas. A site map of our grounds will be in the narthex for the next several weeks. It shows where we need volunteers. Please take a look at this map and sign up for an area that you would like to manage for the summer.

Also if you are interested in weeding and harvesting in the church garden, we always need volunteers for that. Please contact Chuck or Jan Foulke 360-768-8687, 360-787-8832, if you have questions. Thanks!

Sunday June 23, after worship

Informational Conversation

Join us for snacks and coffee and conversation!



There will be a discussion about potential changes to the alcohol policy, facilitated by John Fite.

CONGREGATION NEWS

Memorial Funds



UPDATE FROM THE MEMORIALS COMMITTEE

The Memorials Committee has been meeting on a regular basis since being back in the re-imagined church. We have been busy contacting families, working with Property & Finance, and getting input as to the best way to use the memorial funds. So far we have used funds for choir robes, directional and room signs, kitchen flatware, and freezer, All Saint's Day supplies, collection plates, small stained glass cross, music, video system, sound system, and sanctuary doors.

We have used funds donated in memory of Carol Balsigner, Darrell Brandenburg, Lynn Degerstadt, Betty and Jim Ferner, Wilda Fries, Mike Hammer, Anne Kamp, and Marvin Sundheim. We are working on using and disbursing the remaining funds.

When a fund has been depleted or transferred, we make an entry in the Red Book kept in the memorial cabinet by the elevator. There are three books and entries have been made as far back as 1959. The current book is being updated with the latest entries by Nancy Fite, calligrapher, who took over after Joan Blair passed away. We urge everyone to look at these books and the plaques above the stand. Because of the generous donations to the Memorial Fund, much has been done to make our church beautiful and enhance the worship services. These funds cover the cost of items that are outside and beyond the normal church budget. We welcome input and questions from you regarding the work of our committee. The Memorials Committee—Ruth Hammer, Judy Walter, Connie Oppel



FLOWERS IN THE SANCTUARY

If you would like to provide flowers for a Sunday service, please sign up in the office - there is a large white sign-up sheet hanging on the door in the office. Come on in and sign up!



Our church library is evolving! Please check it out in Clawson Corner. There

are many resource books and books relevant to the social and economic issues we face today individually and as a church.

The books are not organized by author or subject yet; it's a work in progress. We have provided a box next to the shelf units for you to donate books. We are looking for books by progressive Christian authors as well as books that cover the social issues we are passionate about as individuals and a church. Please use the "check out" binder for borrowing books.



A church emergency plan is a document that answers all the questions of what, where, when, how, and who, in the case of a sudden calamity. The more specific the plan is, the less precious time will be lost in the event of a disaster .

In December 2018, Church Council authorized a sub-committee to develop a safety plan for our church. On any given Sunday there are eyes observing the surroundings inside and outside of the building to be sure that everyone is safe. There is an on-going work-in-progress ensuring that the congregation is as safe as they can possibly be. You will notice some changes in the coming months.

First, one of the more obvious visuals you will see is an evacuation plan that will be posted throughout the building that will assist everyone to evacuate the building in the case of an emergency, to fire, tornado, earthquake, power outage or other emergencies that would require evacuation. Please take time to study it.

We are identifying items that need to be acquired that are not in the current budget, including two AED's (Automated External Defibrillator), each one is approximately \$1625. A fund has been started to acquire them. We are also looking into purchasing three medical bags placed strategically around the building and at least two first aid kits, among other items. If anyone wishes to contribute, you may send a check in care of First Congregational Church and write on the memorandum line, "for AED purchase" or "medical supplies". Any contribution is appreciated.

A written emergency plan will be available, but prior to that plan being completed there are things that will need to happen. It has been determined that the Federal Emergency Management Association (FEMA) has a grant that will assist houses of worship in the US to purchase safety equipment for natural disasters. Grant writing is time-consuming, but if successful can be a major benefit and can offset costs some of the items mentioned above.

There will be updates periodically as various portions of the plan are completed.

Ken Rowe, Chair - Emergency Church Plan, sub-committee to Church Council

OASIS GROUPS



The Breakfast Group meets at 9:30 AM every 2nd Saturday at the Peachtree Restaurant and Pie House at 6600 NE Hwy 99, Vancouver, WA, 98665. Please join us at the next breakfast on June 8.



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. Please contact Joanie Nelson for more info.



OASIS GROUPS—MARY JO EBEL CIRCLE MEETING

At the May 15 meeting, Pam Osborne spoke about her volunteer work with Kaiser Hospice. Co-hosts Judy Walter and Virginia Ebersole provided refreshments and as always, everyone enjoyed the social time! We're taking the summer off and meetings will resume in the fall.



AROUND TOWN

2019 Hops Interfaith Night



Date: Wednesday, July 24, 2019

Time: 7:05pm First Pitch

Gates open at 6:00pm

**vs.: Salem-Keizer Volcanoes
(San Francisco Giants affiliate)**



Come join the Hops in celebrating our diverse religious community and take-in a ballgame together on a beautiful night at Ron Tonkin Field. Spend quality time with members of your congregation outside of the church as well as meeting new families in the community with similar interest.

Our Interfaith Night Package will include a group-rate Field Reserved ticket and a limited edition 2019 Hillsboro Hops Interfaith Night t-shirt for \$24.

Every congregation that has anyone attend will be recognized during the game with a Video Board announcement.

BONUS: *There is a competition for the congregation that has the most people attend! The winning congregation will have the opportunity to have 3-5 members of their choir sing the National Anthem prior to the game.*

- Field Reserved Seating down the left field line
- Exclusive Interfaith Night T-shirt
- Hours of family fun!

Registration deadline is Monday, June 24, 2019.

To buy tickets over the phone or for any questions regarding Interfaith Night, please contact Jarred Alkire at 503-640-7272 or JarredA@hillsborohops.com

AROUND TOWN

Save the Date!

Northwest Region Women's Retreat Nov. 1-3, 2019

Theme: *Wade in the Water*
Keynote Speaker: Linda Allen, Songwriter

Workshop opportunities and registration information will be on the website soon.

Location: Oregon Gardens, Silverton OR

Spread the word! Plan to come.



Rally with the *Juliana v. United States* youth plaintiffs for our constitutional right to a stable climate

JUNE 4, 2019 | 1:30 P.M.

DIRECTOR PARK

815 SW PARK AVE, PORTLAND, OR

Follow @youthvgov or visit
www.youthvgov.org for more information

RSVP here: bit.ly/youthgovpdx



The 26th Annual Lyle's Myles 5K Run/Walk will be held on July 13, 2019, in association with



Saturday in the Park, Vancouver's annual Pride festival. The race will start at Esther Short Park in downtown Vancouver, and the course will be a quick, flat out-and-back along the shore of the Columbia River. AIDS is very much a global issue but also local to Clark County. Proceeds collected for Lyle's Myles will be split between three non-profit organizations working for a World without HIV/AIDS. 30% of proceeds go to Global Partners for Development, funding projects in Africa to break the cycle of poverty and save lives. 60% goes to Martha's Pantry in Vancouver, providing food, toiletries, clothing and more to the poorest and most needy individuals and families living with HIV/AIDS. The remaining 10% of funds raised will go to Cascade AIDS Project in Portland. Sponsored in part by the Vancouver Metro Sunset Rotary Club. For more info contact John Fite.



June BIRTHDAYS

June 3 Bert Martin
June 3 Sue Rush
June 4 Elias Martin
June 5 Brenda Houchen
June 7 Claude Blair
June 7 Liam Holden
June 12 Virginia Dunbar
June 12 Cynthia McNally
June 12 Allison Schnabel

June 13 Sterling Roberts
June 14 Rory Martindale
June 17 Doraine Kohler
June 18 Kimberly Lewis
June 19 JoAnn Kersavage
June 20 Marcie Ramberg
June 21 Jeff Schnabel
June 26 Lynn Chan

Special Concerns

The Family of Joan Blair
Michelle Esposito
Steve Hitchens
Dorothea Johnson

Marilyn & Bob New
Karen Owen
Gary Roberts

