

The header features a cluster of colorful flowers (pink tulips, yellow daffodils, purple pansies) on the left. The word "march" is written in a large, dark blue, lowercase sans-serif font. To the right of the word is a blue kite with a string of small triangles. Below the word "march" is the text "The Link 2020" in a purple, cursive-style font.

# march

*The Link 2020*



“Whenever we interact with other people, we experience conflict.” If these words from the Mennonite Church USA guide called *“Agreeing and Disagreeing in Love”* make you feel a little uncomfortable, you are not alone. Whenever I read them, I squirm a little. Like most people, I do not like conflict.

I think of conflict as being an escalation of a situation to raised voices or even violence, but the truth is that the possibility for conflict is always present. Really, conflict is just differing ideas about how something should be done. We have conflict-solving skills that we don't usually acknowledge. Think about the times this week you have made way for someone to go first (or someone has made way for you), or made a choice with another person, and you have thought of ways that you have successfully navigated conflict. Perhaps you have experienced successful navigation of conflict in a family or friend group. When a whole congregation is able not to avoid, but to gracefully move through conflict, that congregation is an example of the reign of Christ here on earth. And we need that model more than ever in this fraught time politically and socially.

*continued....*

Vancouver  
United Church  
of Christ



Worship: Sundays 10 AM  
[www.vanucc.org](http://www.vanucc.org)—[info@vanucc.org](mailto:info@vanucc.org)

#### **Office Hours**

Tues-Thurs: 10 AM—2 PM

Pastor: Rev. Jennifer Garrison Brownell  
[Jennifer@vanucc.org](mailto:Jennifer@vanucc.org)

Building Coordinator: Leslie Chapman  
[Leslie@vanucc.org](mailto:Leslie@vanucc.org)

Office Admin: Elizabeth Spanning  
[Elizabeth@vanucc.org](mailto:Elizabeth@vanucc.org)

## LETTER FROM OUR PASTOR CONTINUED...

Navigating conflict, like any other skill, can be taught, learned and practiced. And the best time to practice is before an explosive conflict has come to the surface. For the next five months, at each of their meetings the council will be studying the art, science and philosophy of navigating conflict at each of their meetings using the document from the Mennonite Church “*Agreeing and Disagreeing In Love.*” A copy is included on the next page if you are interested in following along. In the meantime, notice the ways that you move through conflict and let me know what you notice.

I look forward to hearing from you!

Pastor Jennifer



At our church's annual meeting, the congregation voted not to have a supplemental campaign, but to appeal for increased and additional pledge income. As of February 20, five people have increased their pledges by a total of \$3280, plus we received \$2475 in additional donations. I wish to appeal to those that are financially able, to consider submitting your pledge, or increasing your pledge to your church. Jan Foulke, Your Financial Secretary



Are you thinking about becoming a Vancouver UCC member? We would be delighted if you are and our church community would be blessed.

We invite you to a “Newcomers Brunch” on March 22 after church from 11:30 to about 2:00. Child care will be available. Lunch will be provided and you will have a chance to get to know some of us better and get the answers to any questions you may have.

New Member joining will be on Easter Sunday, April 12. Please RSVP right away to help us plan at [info@vanucc.org](mailto:info@vanucc.org) or Jennifer [@vanucc.org](mailto:@vanucc.org).

Blessings to you all! Pat Sutherland and the Membership group.



# Agreeing and Disagreeing in Love

**"Making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph.4:3), as both individual members and the body of Christ, we pledge that we shall:**

## In Thought

- |                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| Accept conflict  | <b>1.</b> Acknowledge together that conflict is a normal part of our life in the church. <i>Romans 14:1-8, 10-12, 17-19; 15:1-7</i>   |
| Affirm hope      | <b>2.</b> Affirm that as God walks with us in conflict, we can work through to growth. <i>Ephesians 4:15-16</i>   |
| Commit to prayer | <b>3.</b> Admit our needs and commit ourselves to pray for a mutually satisfactory solution (no prayers for my success or the other to change but to find a joint way). <i>James 5:16</i> |

## In Action

- |                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| Go to the other...           | <b>4.</b> Go directly to those with whom we disagree; avoid behind-the-back criticism.* <i>Matthew 5:23-24; 18:15-20</i>  |
| ...in the spirit of humility | <b>5.</b> Go in gentleness, patience and humility. Place the problem between us at neither doorstep and own our part in the conflict instead of pointing out the others'. <i>Galatians 6:1-5</i>  |
| Be quick to listen           | <b>6.</b> Listen carefully, summarize and check out what is heard before responding. Seek as much to understand as to be understood. <i>James 1:19; Proverbs 18:13</i>  |
| Be slow to judge             | <b>7.</b> Suspend judgments, avoid labeling, end name calling, discard threats and act in a nondefensive, nonreactive way. <i>Romans 2:1-4; Galatians 5:22-26</i>   |
| Be willing to negotiate      | <b>8.</b> Work through the disagreements constructively. <i>Acts 15; Philippians 2:1-11</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify issues, interests, and needs of both (rather than take positions).</li> <li>• Generate a variety of options for meeting both parties' needs (rather than defending one's own way).</li> <li>• Evaluate options by how they meet the needs and satisfy the interests of all sides (not one side's values).</li> <li>• Collaborate in working out a joint solution (so both sides gain, both grow and win).</li> <li>• Cooperate with the emerging agreement (accept the possible, not demand your ideal).</li> <li>• Reward each other for each step forward, toward agreement (celebrate mutuality).</li> </ul> |

## In Life

- |                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| Be steadfast in love  | <b>9.</b> Be firm in our commitment to seek a mutual solution; be stubborn in holding to our common foundation in Christ; be steadfast in love. <i>Colossians 3:12-15</i>  |
| Be open to mediation  | <b>10.</b> Be open to accept skilled help. If we cannot reach agreement among ourselves, we will use those with gifts and training in mediation in the larger church. <i>Philippians 4:1-3</i>   |
| Trust the community   | <b>11.</b> We will trust the community and if we cannot reach agreement or experience reconciliation, we will turn the decision over to others in the congregation or from the broader church. <i>Acts 15</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In one-to-one or small group disputes, this may mean allowing others to arbitrate.</li> <li>• In congregational, conference district or denominational disputes, this may mean allowing others to arbitrate or implementing constitutional decision-making processes, insuring that they are done in the spirit of these guidelines, and abiding by whatever decision is made.</li> </ul> |
| Be the body of Christ | <b>12.</b> Believe in and rely on the solidarity of the Body of Christ and its commitment to peace and justice, rather than resort to the courts of law. <i>1 Corinthians 6:1-6</i>  |

\*Go directly if you are European-North American; in other cultures disagreements are often addressed through a trusted go-between. Mennonite Church USA (adopted by the General Conference Mennonite Church Triannual Session and Mennonite Church General Assembly, Wichita, KS July 1995)

## MISSION AND OUTREACH

### March Special Offering: ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING



One Great Hour of Sharing® is one of four special mission offerings of the

United Church of Christ. This Lenten Offering supports the disaster, refugee, and development ministries of the UCC. Through the One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) offering, we are planting seeds of new life.

Together, we are investing in communities worldwide: providing education to girls and boys, empowering communities through vocational training, supporting microcredit lending and seeing people through to self-sufficiency, empowering families with skills to support themselves and their neighbors, and participating in sustainable solutions that offer dignity to all.

These are just a few ways the OGHS offering touches God's children, in addition to disaster relief and refugee initiatives. Through your generosity, the world is a better place. But more is needed. Today, you have an opportunity to plant seeds into the lives of others. Be a co-worker with God. Building, planting, watering...and trusting that God gives growth to all good gifts shared in faith. Thank you for your partnership. Thank you for your generosity.

**To give: simply make your check out to our church and write "OGHS" in the memo line. You may give any Sunday in March.**

### Volunteers Still Needed

We still have volunteer spots open in March.



Will you help our neighbors? **Sign up now for WHO.** We continue to

partner with our friends at Kol Ami to host at the St. Paul Lutheran Church site men's shelter. Sue Meyer (Kol Ami) and Karen Kulm (VanUCC) are the Coordinators.

If you sign up now, you can get your preferred "job" as a host, or a food or supply provider. Remember, mature youth 10 and above can sign up to help – 1 youth per adult.

**Thank you** to all who have already volunteered! We still need volunteers for March 4 to the morning of March 8. If you are a seasoned "veteran" please invite a new person to serve with you and share in this meaningful experience.

Volunteering is easier than ever by using SignUp. **Here's how it works in 3 easy steps:**

1. **Click this link** to go to our invitation page on SignUp: <https://signup.com/go/pqqfCYV> **Make sure the calendar is on March** to find the shifts available during our shared week shifts.

2. **Enter your email address:** (You will NOT need to register an account on SignUp)

3. **Sign up!** Choose your spots. **Make sure to save and confirm.** SignUp will send you an automated confirmation and reminders. Easy! Note: SignUp does not share your email address with anyone. Need more information? Speak to Dave Slocum or Karen Kulm. Here is a link to the WHO Volunteer Information: <http://whoprogram.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/WHO-2019-Intro-JS.pdf>

## COUNCIL MODERATOR'S UPDATE—NOTES FROM JEANIE FOR MARCH 2020



Growing up in Eastern Montana, I anticipated winter's end with even more excitement than here, now, in the Pacific Northwest. Springtime has always been my favorite season of the year. Helen Keller and her teacher, Annie Sullivan, have always been my idols. This quote is the perfect reminder to all of us as we transition to the Lenten Season in church life as well. Our church council is transitioning with a few new members, and a plan for a new diaconate with training throughout Lent. If you feel the call to serve our membership, please join in the trainings with pastors, Tom Yates, and Jennifer during the month of March. We are also renewing our mission and volunteers for work groups following the All Church retreat. I also want to promote our Oasis groups to everyone.

During February I went with the Wine tasting group to the Wine and Seafood festival at the Convention Center in Portland.

Our movie group had dinner out and went to see the Oscar nominated movie shorts at the Kiggins theater.

Both were fun adventures and great opportunities to share time and fellowship with other members of our congregation. It's always more fun to enjoy activities in groups.

Check with Pat Sutherland if you want to join any of our many social groups.

Please remember that the Council is YOUR council! Meeting minutes are always posted on the church bulletin board and all officers and representatives look forward to receiving any feedback you might have. Together, we are the body of Christ, doing the work to "be the church".

May the blessings of this community echo throughout our gathered experience, and may the peace and love of Jesus be in all our hearts. May the Lord help us recognize the blessings of re-birth, revitalization in our church, as well as in our personal lives. Blessed and Blessings all, Jeanie

Jean Beary Stolle [Jtstolle@comcast.net](mailto:Jtstolle@comcast.net)

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**Daylight Savings Time begins  
2 am Sunday, March 8**



Time to  
Spring Ahead

## CONGREGATIONAL NEWS

### **Covenant Partners Make Us All Stronger**

When we resettled back in our building in September of 2018, we also created a covenant relationship with our two building partners - Metropolitan Community Church of the Gentle Shepherd and Martha's Pantry. Since then, our partnerships have grown and developed. Like the green sprouts that come up in a garden, sometimes those partnerships have grown in ways we have planned and sometimes in ways that have surprised us.

-We share weekly Bible study together (join us any Wednesday at 12:15!)

-We celebrated our covenant in a joint worship service on a Sunday morning.

-The youth have worked with Martha's Pantry on special seasonal projects and at least one member of the church is volunteering every week in the pantry. In addition, Pastor Jennifer serves on the Martha's Pantry Board of Directors as the secretary.

-Martha's Pantry, MCC and UCC shared the leadership for a moving World AIDS Day Service.

-We partner on cooking a weekly meal for the homeless—with food from Martha's Pantry

-Martha's Pantry has allowed UCC the use of their van for UCC youth mission trip and confirmation retreat.

-UCC and MCC are sharing leadership for an upcoming Peace Vigil on Sun. March 8, 2 pm.

-We have a new opportunity to celebrate our partnership.

On Sunday, March 29, MOD Pizza will give 20% of all profits to Martha's. Eat there, have a great meal and support a great cause! We look forward to more ways we can continue to water the fertile ground of this partnership in the days, weeks and months ahead.

### ***Special Concerns***

Joan Barber  
Jeremy Chapman  
Opal Chapman  
Carole Elizabeth  
Wayne Fletcher  
Brenda Gaston  
Steve Hitchens  
Janet Hunter

Jerry Mathis  
The family of Jean Matthews  
Connie Oppel  
Karen Owen  
Gary Roberts  
Sue Rush  
Kathy Woolley

## CONGREGATIONAL NEWS



St. Patrick's Day Potluck—Sunday March 15, after church

Everyone welcome, bring a dish to share. Prizes for most creative hat/hats! (all ages)

Spread the blarney.....and join in the fellowship!

Sponsored by the Membership group....call Nancy Fite for information (360) 696-0380.

### **Interfaith Peace Vigil**

**Sunday, March 8, 2:00 PM**

**Vancouver United Church of Christ + MCC of the Gentle Shepherd co-hosts**

1220 NE 68th St, Vancouver, WA 98665

People throughout our nation and across the globe are weighed down with concern for the current state of our world. Watching the news unfold can fill us with fear, strengthen divisions between peoples, and even foster violence. The Interfaith Coalition of Southwest Washington invites our community to gather in prayer to replace fear with hope, divisiveness with unity, and violence with a commitment to non-violent peace. Please join us for a monthly 2nd Sunday Interfaith Peace Vigil from 2-3 pm at rotating locations. Please save the dates and watch for locations.

## OASIS GROUPS

**Mary Jo Ebel Circle** has decided to change their name and will now be known as Friendship Circle. Because of demographic changes in the congregation over time, affecting participation in Circle programs and activities, programs will no longer be planned, but the women's group will continue to meet at the church for fellowship on the third Wednesday of each month at 12:30 pm (new time) in Nettie Fries Lounge. Coffee and tea will be served and participants may bring a sack lunch if they wish. All are welcome.

**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. Contact Joanie Nelson for more information.

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**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 March 14.

## CONGREGATIONAL NEWS—NEW MEMBERS



**Jessica Murchison**—Jessica was born in Portland, OR but has lived lots of places. She is married to Todd Murchison and has two kids Amelia 10 and Oliver 6. Amelia and Oliver attend Pioneer Elementary School and Amelia has been in the Spanish emergence program since kindergarten. Jessica went to live in Cabo, Mexico with her mother and sister when she was 13. She attended high school there, she graduated from Washington State University in Pullman and is a Spanish High School teacher at Benson High School in Portland. She also graduated from culinary school in Portland. She is currently attending school to obtain her administration licensing.

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**Peg Miller**—Irma Slocum was her very first Sunday school teacher. She was baptized in the UCC church when it was downtown. Dave Slocum was part of the youth group that her parents took on a field trip to Oaks Park for skating. She has history with us!

Peg is a retired critical care RN. She started at Clark College and ended with a masters degree from UCSF. She retired from the Air Force reserve on November 11, 2011 as a Lieutenant Colonel. Her passions are cycling and woodworking. She was the first woman to finish the Silver State 508 mile bike ride in the 60-69 year age group in 48 hours! WOW

**Meg MacDonald**—Meg grew up in the Chicago area where her dad was a UCC pastor for 33 years. She moved to Vancouver from Colorado to be with her daughter Sarah's family. Meg is an artist with degrees in both art and geology. Her primary medium, and her passion, is etching. While in Colorado she helped organize and manage an art co-op.

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### **The Bison Family—Charging Bear, Sarah, Nuna, and Kaya**

Charge is a member of the Southern Ute tribe. He has participated in 12 Sun Dances. He is an excellent mechanic and works at the local Firestone establishment.

Sarah is Meg MacDonald's daughter. She is an excellent cook and has been a caterer and has run a food truck.

Charge and Sarah moved here from Ignacio, Colorado which is the headquarters for the Southern Ute tribe

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### **Bevyn Rowland and Cath Busha**

Bevyn (who uses the pronouns she/her/hers) and Cath (who uses they/them/their and she/her/hers) are engaged and will be married this October. They have a wonderful second grader and two gorgeous rescue dogs. They have been visiting the church for about a year and fell in love with the genuine, progressive lived values of the congregation especially the commitment to anti-racism, LGBTQ inclusion, immigrant justice and service with and for people who are houseless and hungry. Bevyn is a clinical psychologist and faculty member at a local college; Cath is a social worker by education and training, who is now applying those skills as an administrator at the same college. They are excited to join this community.





### **The Waszazak/Willis Family**

Shannon Willis was born in Texas, grew up in Florida, moved to the NW after high school, and worked for a time with the Sierra Club. She returned to Florida for college, got married to her former husband and moved all over the US, including California, where she earned her master's degree in art. Since then, she returned to the NW and has been teaching art at the college level. Recently she has been able to take a break from teaching and be able to focus more on being a mom.

A little over 10 years ago Shannon had Kaiya. Kaiya is a survivor, with different, special gifts and abilities. She is looking forward to being old enough to become a church member, too!

Mike grew up in New Jersey, went to the University of Delaware, and attended graduate school in South Carolina, where he earned his master's degree in English and teaching. He has always enjoyed creative work, and his vocation is as a product designer and working in marketing. He moved to the NW 14 years ago.

Mike and Shannon met online and were married last year in June. Shannon and Kaiya moved from Tigard to Vancouver in June also, and have been pleasantly surprised to find that the public school and help with kids with different gifts has been better than they imagined!

In their free time Mike enjoys making guitars on commission. Shannon has discovered that she loves to knit—she's making her first sweater and starting to make hats for the homeless. She's also recently discovered the joys of gardening and watching the frequent four hummingbirds out of their window.

They found Vancouver UCC online when looking for a female pastor and a place celebrating inclusivity. They felt at home thanks to the warm welcome of Kristina Martin, Pastor Jennifer, and Leslie Chapman who helped them get involved almost immediately with cooking for the homeless.

They enjoy making a difference – Kaiya especially loves helping people.

## AROUND TOWN

### Refugee Community Forum

Lutheran Community Services Northwest will hold the next Refugee Community Forum on March 12 from 1-2:30 pm. We will have updates on the program at the local and state level and have the opportunity to connect with our community partners, as well as a guest presentation. Please RSVP by 3/9 to [jasbridge@lcsnw.org](mailto:jasbridge@lcsnw.org) if you plan on attending the Refugee Community Forum.

We will meet at the YWCA in the Community Room (3609 Main Street).

As part of our work doing refugee resettlement in SW Washington, we invite participation at our quarterly meeting from: the state refugee coordinator; the state refugee health coordinator; local governance; local and/or county public health; welfare and social services; public safety; public education and other community stakeholders and any other interested parties. All are welcome and we look forward to seeing you there!

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### CHRISTOPHER TO PERFORM IN A BACHATHON

Our organist Dr. Schindler will join five organist colleagues in this year's Bachathon at First Congregational UCC\* in downtown Portland on March 15 from 2 to 5 pm. The Bachathon is an annual fund-raising program of the Portland Chapter of the American Guild of Organists to showcase organ works of Johann Sebastian Bach. Admission is free; voluntary offerings are accepted. Attendees may stay for the whole afternoon or come when they can and leave when they must.

(As of now, Christopher does not know at what time he will perform his ca. 20 min. set of Bach selections).

\* 1126 SW Park Ave (SW Park Blocks)

### LGBTQ+ Cultural Competency Worship

Presented by Dan Hammer,  
Lambert House

Sat, March 14, 2020 - 1:30 PM – 5:30 PM

Holy Spirit Church, 2400 Northwest 9th Ave  
Battle Ground, WA 98604

#### Training will include:

Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation 101  
Emerging LGBTQ+ Vocabulary  
Responding Well When Someone Comes Out  
Extended LGBTQ+ History in the US

\*IMAGINE...

...a young man from the youth group tells his youth pastor that he is gay and doesn't know how to tell his parents.

...a mother comes to the pastor seeking to reconcile her belief with her love for her lesbian daughter.

...a Sunday school teacher comes out to the children's pastor as genderqueer and asks if/how the church community is willing to support them.

We will give you:

A deeper understanding of the issues  
Knowledge that creates safer environments  
A better ability to support, communicate, and connect

Who Should Attend: Faith Leaders and Congregants, Allies and Families of LGBTQ+ People, Teachers and Staff, LGBTQ+ People Community Members.

For more info: [HealingBridgeInfo@gmail.com](mailto:HealingBridgeInfo@gmail.com)  
Snacks are provided.

Sponsored by: Healing Bridge/Connect BG  
[www.connectbg.org](http://www.connectbg.org)

Lambert House

[www.lamberthouse.org/faithleaders](http://www.lamberthouse.org/faithleaders)

Episcopal Church of the Holy Spirit

[www.holyspiritbg.org](http://www.holyspiritbg.org)



# MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- March 4 . . . . . Eric Pykonen  
March 4 . . . . . Patricia Yates  
March 6. . . . . Cameron Pykonen  
March 8 . . . . . Christi Brittain  
March 8 . . . . . Irma Slocum  
March 15 . . . . . Emma Schnabel  
March 16 . . . . . Steve Bloodworth  
March 16 . . . . . Willow Wilson  
March 18 . . . . . Amelia Murchison  
March 21 . . . . . Connie Oppel  
March 21 . . . . . Alice Rowe  
March 23 . . . . . Ed Frank  
March 26 . . . . . Nita Calvert  
March 26 . . . . . Sharie Lewis  
March 30 . . . . . Kathleen Williams