

*The Link*



# March

## CARE FOR OUR EARTH #2 BE THE POLLUTION SOLUTION

The **Great Pacific Garbage Patch** still exists. It is a floating “island” of debris, mostly plastic, in the North Pacific Ocean. It spans 1.6 million square kilometers or over 600,000 square miles from California to Japan with Hawaii in the middle. Plastic pollution in the ocean threatens marine life in several ways – poisoning and starving fish, bleaching coral, and harming reefs.

The “Ocean Cleanup” is an organization using high-tech tools to remove trillions of pieces of plastic pollution which is mostly plastic. They use two ships to tow a U-shaped catchment system across the ocean’s surface. It brings the garbage to a larger boat to be carried ashore. They say they recycle a majority of the plastic they collect to be made into new products. Knowing that so much plastic, even in good shape is not the grade that can be recycled, puts that claim in question. The remaining debris is incinerated to generate electricity (thermal recycling) but that process releases toxins and pollutants into our air, soil, and water, ultimately threatening human health.

So, it seems that even our best attempts are imperfect solutions. At this point, we only have **ONE REAL SOLUTION** to changing this situation and that is to prevent plastic from

getting into the ocean in the first place, or, **STOP USING SO MUCH PLASTIC.**

### **YOUR ASSIGNMENT, IF YOU ACCEPT IT:**

Survey what is in your kitchen as you use it in the next several weeks. If it is plastic, is that plastic safe to continue using (no scratches or gouges that release chemicals from the plastic)? If it is safe to use, continue to use it. If there are things that need to be replaced check in a bit later. Don’t forget to look at food and the containers that it arrives in. **I will bring in examples of good kitchen alternatives for those things that need replacing over time. You will see notice of it in the Dove shortly after I get back in town and can get ready.**

I purchased a birthday gift for my daughter in Hawaii. It was one of those posts that are decorated and meant to be placed in your garden. It says in script:

*I pledge allegiance to our earth  
With all her beloved gardens and  
creatures  
For here they dwell*

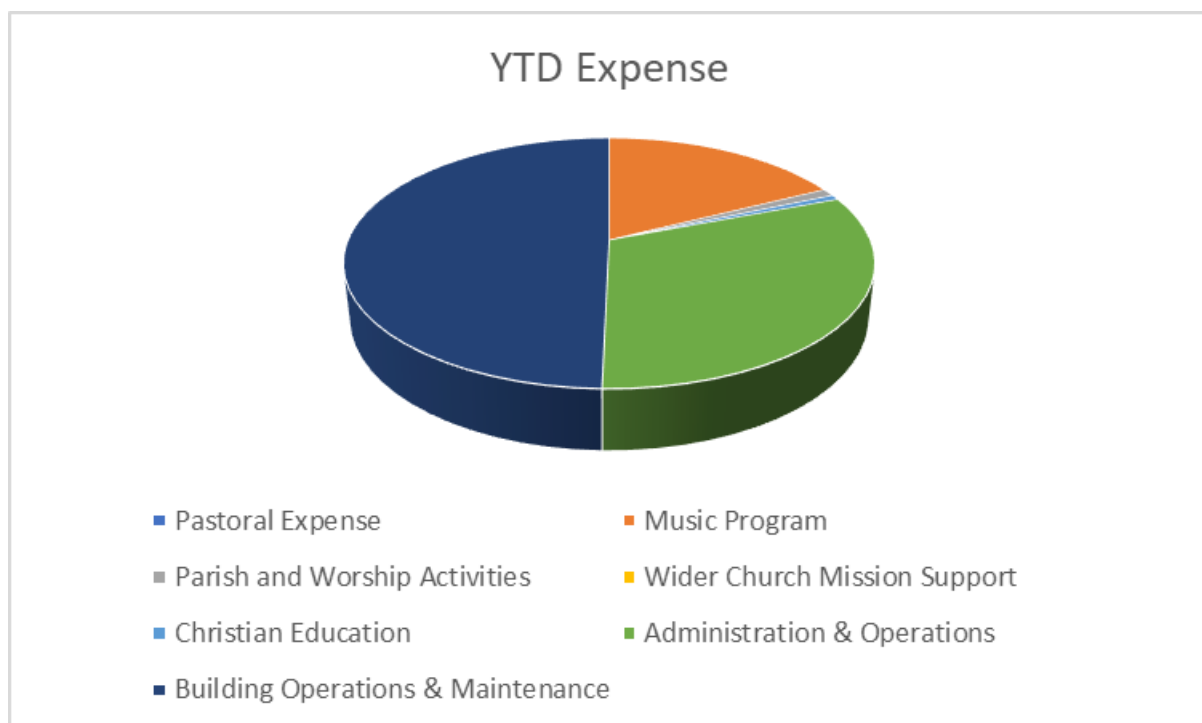
Hoping you are willing to take the pledge!  
Pat Sutherland

## TREASURER'S REPORT—STEVE BLOODWORTH

January has started the year off on a positive note financially, with a surplus of income over expenses of \$25,523.90. Our income for the month included one pledge for the year that was paid in 2022 but recognized in January.

Thank you for your continued support of First Congregational, Vancouver United Church of Christ! Here are the expense numbers for January:

	YTD	Budget
Pastoral Expense	0	66,466
Music Program	2,219	25,771
Parish and Worship Activities	121	3,630
Wider Church Mission Support	0	6,580
Christian Education	80	4,150
Administration & Operations	3,941	40,563
Building Operations & Maintenance	6,273	99,729
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>12,635</b>	<b>246,889</b>



## CONGREGATIONAL NEWS



**The Prayer Shawl Group** meets on the second Thursday of each month. The next meeting is March 9 at 10 am and all knitters and crocheters are welcome to join us. Please contact Judy Walter for more info.



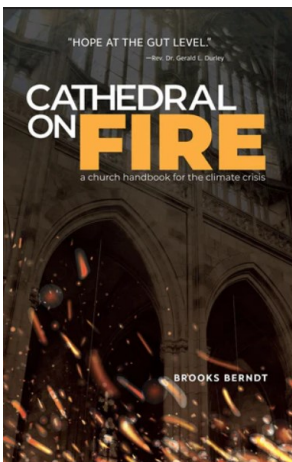
### Hearing Assistance Available for our Sanctuary

*What was that?* If you have trouble hearing during live services, we may be able to help. We have personal assistive listening devices for use with or without your own hearing aids. Please let me know if you'd like to try one that connects to our amplification system by Bluetooth. I can meet with you previous to services to get the assistance. Jeanie Beary Stolle [Jtstolle@comcast.net](mailto:Jtstolle@comcast.net)



**On March 19** we ask that the kids bring change to church for One Great Hour of Sharing. This year OGHS is supporting disaster relief. [Learn How You Can Help.](#)

Do you have a jar of spare change at home? Or have change hanging around in the couch cushions or in the car? Maybe your grandparents have a bowl of change they wouldn't mind donating?



### Book Group Coming April 16

We will be discussing the book *Cathedral on Fire*, by our former pastor, Brooks Berndt. We will meet on Sundays following worship and the coffee fellowship time. The first meeting will be on April 16 and the last on Pentecost, May 28.

Please let Sandy Mathis know if you can join the discussion group and there will be a sign-up sheet available at church. Let Sandy know if you wish to participate via Zoom. Books will be available at no cost to participants. We look forward to being inspired about ways churches can help with climate justice. Here is a [link to the book for more information.](#)

## CONGREGATIONAL NEWS



**Altar Flowers for Sunday, March 26** will be provided by Ruth Hammer in memory of her husband Merrill (Mike) Hammer.



### Mission & Outreach Update

In January 2023, M & O members shopped and delivered 15 “Restart Kits” to Lutheran Community Services Northwest for refugees. We put together nine twin kits and six queen kits. The restart kits consisted of the following: a comforter, a set of sheets, pillowcases, pillows, blanket, and a mattress pad. The money that paid for this came from the generosity of the Naselle Congregational Church when it closed down. Contributed by Nancy Fite, M & O member.



### Turkey and Syria Earthquake Response

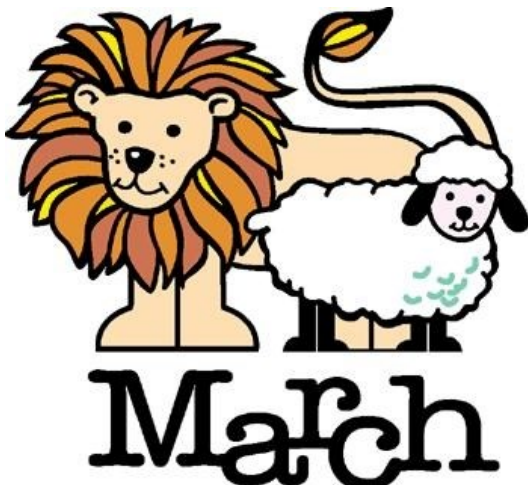
If you wish to provide financial support to help those affected by the devastating earthquake that struck on February 6, the United Church of Christ has established a fund. The needs are great and will be needed long term. You can find information about donating by check or online [HERE](#).



**Taizé Group** – A simple Taizé Group meets on Monday’s at 7 pm. The service will last less than one hour and is held weekly at the church in Clawson's Corner. Taizé services consist of scripture or other inspirational readings, prayer, simple music, and silence. Please join us if you can. If you have questions, contact Wendy Wright or Sandy Mathis. You may also [Join Via Zoom](#).



March 2 . . . . .	Cory Saum-Blystone
March 4 . . . . .	Eric Pykonen
March 4 . . . . .	Patricia Yates
March 6 . . . . .	Cameron Pykonen
March 8 . . . . .	Christi Brittain
March 15 . . . . .	Emma Schnabel
March 16 . . . . .	Steve Bloodworth
March 18 . . . . .	Amelia Murchison
March 21 . . . . .	Alice Rowe
March 23 . . . . .	Ed Frank



Vancouver  
United Church  
of Christ



*Sunday Worship: 10 am*

1220 NE 68th St • Vancouver, WA 98665  
www.vanucc.org—info@vanucc.org  
(360) 693-1476

*The office is open Tuesdays & Thursdays  
10 am—2 pm*

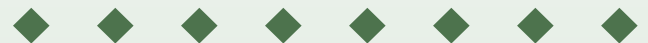
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The LINK is published the 1st week of each month. The **Due Date** for articles is the **4th Monday** of the preceding month.

Submissions should have:

- Articles in WORD format or text in the body of an email.
- Pictures submitted as attached jpgs.
- Permission of the copyright holder for all copyrighted materials.
- Email info to Elizabeth@vanucc.org