

The Link December 2023

Moderator's Message

Hello Friends,

I, for one, am breathing a huge sigh of relief coming into the season of Advent. We have come a long way these past 12 months. We will celebrate Christmas with our new pastor and have set ourselves up to move into the new year with optimism and hope for growth and prosperity. Our Council meeting for this month will likely be the last for this calendar year. Those in attendance heard the usual reports about who is doing what, but I noticed a general sense of light-heartedness that hasn't always been there with all our meetings this year. We invited Pastor Steve to attend so he could listen in and get a sense of what was going on with the church, and as we were wrapping up, he commented on how he noticed the same thing and appreciated that. I thought that was a great way to wrap up our Council meetings for 2023 and start us off on the right foot with the new pastor. It is indeed time to sit back and enjoy the ride as we coast into the new year.

Joyful
MERRY & BLESSED

I wish all of you the Happiest of Holidays, and thank you for the time, energy, and support you have given the church this past year.

~ John Marquardt

Meet Pastor Steve

Pastor Steve will be with us on Christmas Eve!



Steve King is a graduate of Claremont School of Theology and currently a member of the PNW Conference of the UCC. He has been in ministry for over 20 years, including: music/art, Christian education, and ministerial roles.

Over the past two years has been serving primarily as pulpit supply for pastors who are on sabbatical or other extended leave. Steve has a passion for seeing the social and spiritual vision of Jesus played out here and now. He is looking forward to ordination in the near future.

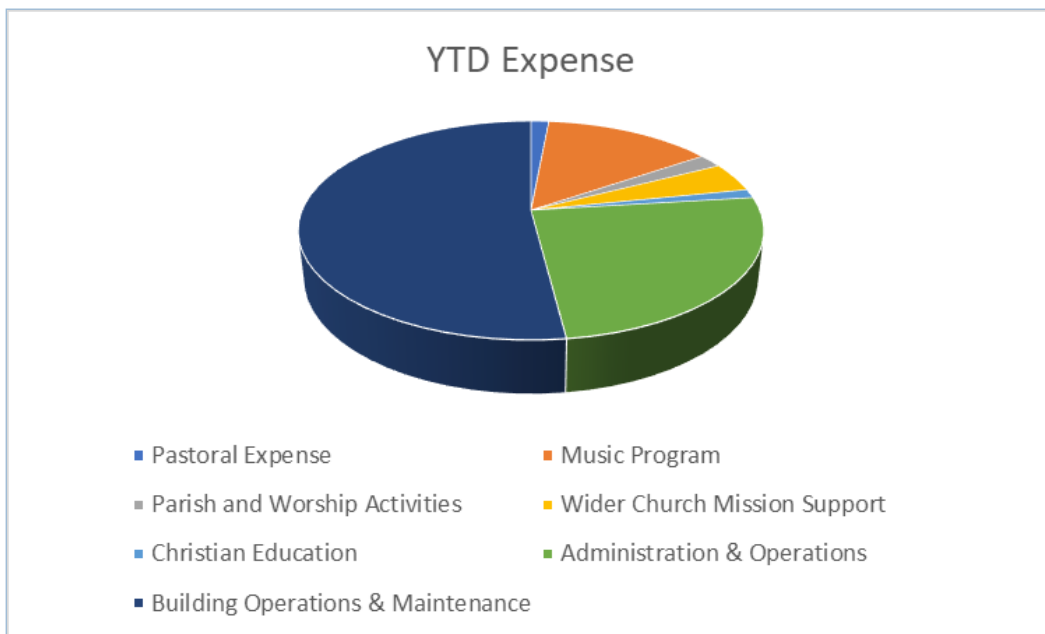
Steve is the proud father of four children, several pets, and husband to Rebekah. He enjoys being outside as much as possible and taking in all the Northwest has to offer, whether through scuba diving, hiking, camping, or cycling. When he can't do any of those, you'll find him reading the nearest book he can find.

TREASURER’S REPORT—STEVE BLOODWORTH

We had a good month in October, financially speaking. As you look through the different categories, you’ll notice that we had pastoral expenses for the first time this year. These expenses were related to the Pastoral Search Committee and their success in helping us call our new pastor. One other expense that was a little out of the ordinary was for our janitorial service as we had the floors downstairs deep cleaned. Martha’s Pantry also contributed to that endeavor and we thank them for that contribution. In the end, we added a little more than \$8,000 to our surplus during October.

Let me know if you have any questions. As always, I thank you for your continued generous support of our church!

	YTD	Budget
Pastoral Expense	2,062	66,466
Music Program	19,606	25,771
Parish and Worship Activities	2,778	3,630
Wider Church Mission Support	6,031	6,580
Christian Education	1,803	4,150
Administration & Operations	34,879	40,563
Building Operations & Maintenance	72,828	99,729
Total Expense	139,987	246,889



Chuck Foulke, Council Representative for Property & Finance



Over the past few months, members of the Church Council have been explaining the responsibilities of their positions on the Council. Hopefully, this will encourage more people to become involved on the Council when open positions occur.

As your Council representative for Property and Finance, I deal with all things related to the church finances and the church property & grounds. Perhaps this position can best be explained by listing some of the things Property & Finance has been involved with over the past five and a half years that I have been the P&F Council representative. So here we go:

- Preparation of the annual church budget
- Ongoing monitoring of church income and expenses
- Painting the exterior of the sanctuary and centennial wing
- Remediation of stormwater drain lines and the connected dry wells
- Bi-annual outdoor cleanup days in spring and fall

- Sealing and striping of the parking lot
- Negotiations with the County regarding their purchase of some of our land along 68th Street
- Relocation of the church sign at 68th Street because of the sidewalk project on 68th Street
- Negotiate with the developer of the land to the east of the labyrinth to preserve as many trees and as much vegetation as possible
- Selection of a new insurance carrier for the church
- Research and selection of a new security company for the church
- Re-siding of the centennial wing
- Selection of new church software that allows remote access to church databases
- Investigation of options for maintenance of our 31-year-old elevator
- Research our various church names and find a pathway to one unified name



THANK YOU to the following for their participation in the fall workdays! John & Nancy Fite, Sandy Mathis, Tom Renner, Ed Martin, Frederick Villahermosa, John Marquardt, John Greenauer, and Jan & Chuck Foulke.

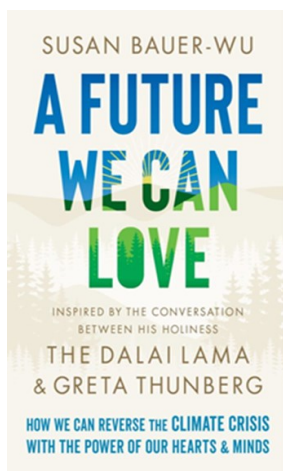
The Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund



The Christmas Fund has been caring for active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ for over 100 years, providing emergency grants, supplementation of small annuities and health premiums, and Christmas “Thank You” gift checks each December to our lower-income retirees.

United Church of Christ congregations and members have blessed the Christmas Fund with their generosity for many years. This year, your care and compassion will be especially appreciated by those servants of the church who are facing a time of need. Thank you!

Discussion Group in the New Year



The book “A Future We Can Love” by Susan Bauer-Wu is on some of our reading lists. There has been talk about gathering a group to meet a couple of times to discuss the book in the new year (January 2024). Please read the book if it interests you. Expect to hear more about

discussing it together. Talk to Loretta Railing or Sandy Mathis if you have questions.

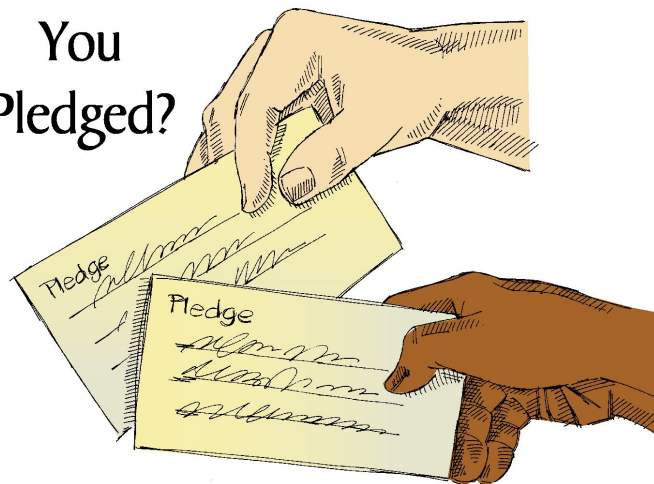
Greetings from your Financial Secretary!

First, a heartfelt thank you to everyone who has kept up with their pledge this year. We are in a good place, financially, to welcome our new seated pastor, Steven King. Secondly, this is when our work begins. We all have a job to do to make this relationship work. We need to step up where we can and provide leadership for this church.



There are several open positions that need filling, including moderator, moderator elect, and financial secretary. Take a risk; pray about it; there are people to support you along the way. I know we will be a loving, supportive congregation for Pastor Steve and his family.

Have You Pledged?



Pledge Sunday is December 10. Please bring or mail your pledges for 2024 so that we can budget for next year. God is still speaking through us! Thanks be to God!

~Jan Foulke

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
Sunday, December 24, 8 pm



The Christmas season is upon us already. It is our tradition to have a candlelight service on Christmas Eve, followed by cookies and wassail. Please feel free to bring your favorite cookies to share.

~ Kaye Kipp, worship team



The Giving Thanks annual pledge drive is off to a great start with several pledges returned on Sunday from those passed out at the potluck. The remaining pledge cards and information packets have been mailed.

If you have not received your packet by December 1, please contact John Greenauer at 360.608.3674 or Jpgreenauer@gmail.com.



A new church directory will be emailed after the beginning of the year. Please ensure that your address, email or phone details are up-to-date by submitting them to leslie@vanucc.org by December 15. Additionally, if you'd like your birthday included in the monthly newsletters, please provide us with that info as well.

Name Tags

If you need a new nametag, please send your request to leslie@vanucc.org.



The following requests were sent to the prayer circle this past month.

Please pray for: Ken Kerr; the family of Kathy Fazio, Virginia Dunbar's daughter; Marilyn New; Pat Sutherland; Kristina Martin's mother Linda Wagner; Norma Lee Priel; Steve Koykar; and Leslie Chapman's cousin Jonathan Hylton.

Please send prayer your requests to Lucie Murchison your council representative for Care at care@vanucc.org.



Giving Thanks Potluck

Thanking God for all who helped set up, clean up, and serve food during the pledge drive kickoff potluck on November 19. We couldn't have done it without you!

- Janet, Jack, and Simon Melton
- Rachel and Tyler Corey
- Lynn Chan
- John and Carol Greenauer
- Marilyn Jones
- Sandy Mathis
- Michele Holden
- Ellie Bradley
- Stephanie and Eric Pykonen
- Pat Sutherland
- Kaye Kipp
- Patty Todd
- Wendy Wright
- Nancy Fite



Just a reminder that Pledge Sunday is December 10; thank you for submitting your pledge. Thanks, Jan Foulke



OASIS MOVIE GROUP RESUMES

Our first outing, ironically, will be a Christmas Concert.

What: Oregon Repertory Singers "Glory of Christmas"]

When: Sunday, December. 3, 2023

Time: 4 pm

Where: First United Methodist Church, 1838 SW Jefferson St ▪ Portland, OR. 97201

Even if you are not interested in joining the movie group, you are welcome to join us at the wonderful ORS Christmas concert. This is a popular concert, so you need to buy your tickets soon. [Tickets are \\$25, \\$35 or \\$45](#)

Read more about the concert [HERE](#).

Afterwards we will eat dinner at Gustav's in Vancouver. Please let me know if you will be dining with us. Any questions, call Nancy Fite.

A Silent Prayer Group will meet in Clawson



Corner for the first three Sundays in Advent from 4:30-5:30 pm. Please contact Sandy Mathis for more info.

Celebrate Advent and Christmas With Your Church Family



Sunday, December 3 – First Sunday of Advent

Advent Festival: All are welcome to join in after our Sunday church service. As we begin the four-week time of preparation before Christmas, we'll start the season with games, crafts, and fellowship. Christian Ed will arrange a delicious taco bar for lunch and you're welcome to bring your favorite dessert!

Silent Prayer Group: 4:30–5:30 pm, Clawson Corner

Sunday, December 10: Second Sunday of Advent—Youth Advent Activity

This Sunday during Children's Time, some of our talented youth will be playing ukuleles and singing Christmas songs for the congregation. After church, all children are invited to Megabytes for pizza and video games. If you have any questions, please contact Gina at CE@vanucc.org.

Silent Prayer Group: 4:30–5:30 pm, Clawson Corner

Thursday, December 14: 3-4 pm – Blue Christmas Gathering

If you are experiencing the blues during the holidays, you are invited to attend this gathering. The event will include prayer, reflection, and candle lighting, and will be led by Jan Foulke. Please call Jan with any questions 360-787-8832.

Sunday, December 17: 10 am – Third Sunday of Advent—Choral Christmas Presentation

Silent Prayer Group: 4:30–5:30 pm, Clawson Corner

Sunday, December 24: 10 am – Fourth Sunday of Advent

Gather with us for Sunday worship as we light the fourth candle, the candle of Love.

Sunday, December 24: 8 pm – Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Join us for our candlelight service as we celebrate the Festival of Lessons and Carols that originated in England in 1878. We have reimagined this service with readings from prophets, poets and pastors through the ages alongside the traditional scripture.

Sunday, December 31: 10 am – Sunday Brunch

This Sunday, instead of worship in the sanctuary, we will gather for a traditional Christmas brunch to share different foods with one another. Bring your holiday leftovers and join us in Bradford Hall for a time of conversation and fellowship.

Vancouver United Church of Christ



Sunday Worship: 10 am

1220 NE 68th St • Vancouver, WA 98665
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(360) 693-1476

The LINK is published the 1st week of each month. The **Due Date** for articles is the **4th Wed.** 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.
- Send articles to elizabeth@vanucc.org.

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

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DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- December 2 Nancy Woodworth
December 6 Norma Lee Priel
December 8 Olivia Martindale
December 11 Chloe Brittain
December 13 Jack Melton
December 13 Judy Walter
December 15 Jan Foulke
December 17 Chuck Foulke
December 18. Dan Schnabel
December 19 John Marquardt
December 20 Oliver Murchison
December 24 Christopher Schindler

