



The Viewpoint

News From the Forest Grove United
Church of Christ

February 2021

“Change Yourself, Change the World: The Inner Journey.”

“But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your God who is in secret; and your God who sees in secret will reward you.”

Dear friends,

As I write this letter, we are coming to the close of our church’s fiscal year with our annual meeting happening at the end of January. We continue to navigate our way through unprecedented challenges as a nation. Civil, economic, and social unrest persist, and the pandemic keeps us physically separated from each other. Facing a new year, we focus on the hope of new possibilities. As people of faith we walk with a great vision of healing and wholeness guiding us, and we strive to welcome its coming in all we do. We walk this path together. We accomplish nothing alone. As individuals, we see that great vision come to being by committing ourselves to carrying our own little piece of it to our corner of the world.

It seems like a tall order. It would be easy to become overwhelmed by things beyond our individual control. When faced with turbulent and uncertain times, even Jesus needed to hit the pause button, retreat into prayer, and go inward to listen to his heart and align with the movement of the Holy Spirit. The season of Lent encompasses the six weeks before Easter that correspond with Jesus’s inward journey. During Lent, we join him. We listen to our hearts for the call of the Spirit. We embrace a season of prayer, looking inward, and deepening our spiritual practice. We pause.

When we look deeply inward we discover how we shape the world around us and how we are impacted by the whole. Rather than being overwhelmed by the chaos of the world, we can practice being aware of the peace of God within our own hearts and in our own lives. We can take courage in knowing that when we nurture that peace within ourselves we are contributing to a more peaceful world. Indeed, if we want to transform the world into the realm of God we must first discover it within ourselves, and this becomes our mission during the holy season of Lent.

Who are we when no one else is watching? How does our character manifest when only God is present with us? These are questions we explore during Lent. Lent begins with Matthew’s

gospel in which Jesus invites us to “pray in secret.” We can think of this way of praying as being sort of like physically distancing and sheltering in place with God. During Lent we make sure God stays a part of our “COVID bubble.” The pandemic circumstances have already forced us to go into our rooms and shut our doors. We have that part down. During this Lent we can embrace the ways our current circumstances continue to be conducive for contemplative spiritual practice. As we slowly move into a time when we will transition forward to a new normal, we can allow prayer to fill and illuminate the spaces and places where we might feel isolated or disconnected. How do we do this? What action or sacrifice creates space in your life for hearing the voice of your heart and the call of the Spirit? What brings you closer to the realm of God within yourself, thus enabling you to carry its blessings to the world around you? These are the questions I invite us to explore this Lent. I will be offering a preaching series called, “The Inward Journey.” I will be talking about different spiritual practices each week that we can all do from home as we honor this sacred time of prayer and contemplation together. I invite us all to keep a good Lent this year!

Blessings in Christ, Brendan

Ash Wednesday Service – February 17



Ash Wednesday, February 17 will mark the beginning of Lent. Please watch future publications for details on our Ash Wednesday offering which will be from 4-7PM.

Thanks have been received

Dear FGUCC Family, Amelia and I would like to extend a huge THANK YOU to the congregation. The wedding gift was such a lovely surprise and we are filled with so much gratitude. We felt so moved and felt so dearly loved by everyone’s generosity. We are so incredibly blessed to call Forest Grove UCC our family and home. We look forward to the day to celebrate properly with you all. Until then please know that you are appreciated, you are loved and our hearts are filled with joy because of each and every one of you.

Much love and many blessings, Kristy & Amelia



To Keep Up on the Happenings of FGUCC

- Check out our **NEW*** website for up-to date information, classes and activities at www.fgucc.org
- Like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/fgucc
- Subscribe to “This Week at FGUCC” (just send an email to elena@fgucc.org to indicate you’d like to subscribe)

Joys, Concerns & Prayer Requests

- ♥ Please remember Alice Hoskins as she has some new health concerns. She appreciates calls and cards. (390 East Main Street, Hillsboro, OR 97123, Cell: 503-781-0154.)
- ♥ **UPDATE:** Ruth Holznagel continues to make excellent strides in her recovery and recently moved out of the Judson Park Health Center to her own apartment in assisted living. She appreciates remaining in contact through cards and letters and her new address is: 2181 Ambleside Dr., Ambler Court Apt. 414, Cleveland, OH 44106
- ♥ **SYMPATHY**—Our hearts go out to the family of Chuck Shotwell, who passed away on Monday, January 11 in North Plains. Chuck's parents, Bob and Maggie Shotwell, were lifelong members of FGUCC. Cards for the family can be sent to Chuck's sister Barbara Lave at 20663 NW Quail Hollow Drive, Portland, OR 97229. Gifts can be made in Chuck's memory to: FGUCC Organ Project, P.O. Box 265, Forest Grove, OR 97116.
- ♥ **SYMPATHY:** Our hearts go out to the family and friends of Betty Wedell who passed away on Saturday, January 16. Betty was 101 years old and a long-time member of FGUCC.
- ♥ Please remember Ken and Bette Prickett's son Seth Prickett who recently went to Ghana for the dedication of the Jack Beu Elementary School.



Continued Prayers—Prayers of healing and comfort for all who have ongoing concerns, including Winnie Beu, Carol Benner, Marcia Bickford, Bob Browning, Ann and Russ Dondero, Paul and Stephanie Edwards, Lillian Gimre, Max Groszmann, Lois Johnston, Christine & Richard Kidd, Carlene Krueger, Jobina Lacock, Jean & Bob Nixon, Yvonne Stacey, Holly & Sherri Vann and their family, Tom Wallsted, and any other friends and family of our church, not named here.

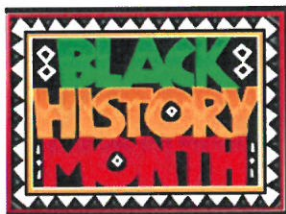
How to get on the prayer chain—Are you or someone you know in need of extra prayer support? Our church has a confidential prayer chain ministry. If you'd like to be added to this prayer chain, please contact the church office or Sandy Mueller at fguccpray@gmail.com. Thank you!

Sharing prayers in worship—If you would like your personal prayer concerns shared with the community during our on-line worship service on Sunday mornings, please submit them to Brendan via email at brendan@fgucc.org by Friday at 6pm with the title "prayer request" in the subject line. You can also text him prayer requests at 401-318-2447 by Friday at the same time.

Prayer Shawls—Do you, or someone you know, need a prayer shawl? Please call Elena in the church office to make a request at 503-357-9121 or elena@fgucc.org. The Prayer Shawls are such a wonderful gift—A gift from the heart that touches the hearts of others.

Prayer Shawl Knitting—Please join us for knitting this month via Zoom on **Wednesdays February 3 and 17, from 2-4PM**. The link to Zoom will be sent to everyone in the prayer shawl knitting group via email. If you'd like to participate, please call or email Elena.

An Invitation to Celebrate Black History Month



An invitation from Forest Grove City Library: “Join us on Facebook (@ForestGroveLibrary) or on our YouTube channel this February for two exciting and thought-provoking live-streamed programs honoring Black History Month.”

The Fire is Upon Us: James Baldwin, William F. Buckley Jr. and the Debate over Race in America (Tuesday, February 9, @6:30 pm; and

Why Aren't There More Black People in Oregon?: A Hidden History with Walidah Imarisha, Tuesday, February 23, 2021 at @6:30 pm.

Also in recognition of Black history month, Susan Shepard shared her Bean Pie recipe and message with us to include in the February newsletter.

An African American friend told me about bean pie about 10 years ago. He said it was invented by American Black Muslims to help poor people get more protein in their diets and to celebrate the feast at the end of Ramadan. I made it for my adult kids at Thanksgiving and they wanted me to make some more for their New Year's Eve party. They thought it would be fun to have guests try to figure out the ingredients.

With love, Susan Shepard

Bean Pie Recipe

2 cups of cooked navy beans (or other white bean)
1 stick of butter
2 tablespoons of flour
4 eggs

1 tsp nutmeg
1 tsp cinnamon
1 14oz can evaporated milk
2 cups of sugar
2 tablespoons vanilla

Preheat oven to 350

In blender mix beans, butter, milk, eggs, cinnamon and flour. Pour into mixing bowl and add sugar and vanilla. Pour into pie shells. Bake for one hour

Best wishes to all of you celebrating birthdays in February

Rod Burrus—12
Renee Mills—14
Sydney Molin—16
Alice Hoskins—17
Lily Lind—17
Evan Butler—26
Ava Bichsel—27



Please join us for Virtual Fellowship Hours

Michael Colvin and Susan Shepard are currently hosting Fellowship Hours. A check in time for all will be done at the beginning of fellowship, and then a "break out room" will be available to discuss the sermon. If you're interested in hosting, please contact Michael at michaelotiscolvin@gmail.com so he can do a tutorial with you. This will be an ongoing meeting on Sundays at 11AM, and the room will be open around 10:50. Here's the Zoom link inviting everyone who'd like to join in:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81437926497?pwd=SW05LzhDMDJINzkrR3I1blA2V2FFdz09>.

Would you like to participate in worship?



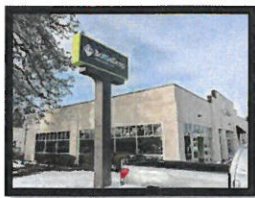
We continue to miss our congregation's presence and participation in worship, and your involvement would be very appreciated at this time! You are encouraged to record videos of yourselves delivering children's messages, giving the invitation to offering, reading the scripture passage, or providing special music (singing or instrumental). If you're called to enrich our worship services in this way, please contact Elena, Kristy or Pastor Brendan for more

information and to coordinate for the coming Sunday.

Option for participation in worship

We continue to offer the opportunity for people to come in to church during the week (Mondays and Tuesdays only) for Kristy to record scripture readings, music etc. If this option appeals to you, please let us know so we can coordinate timing. Otherwise, just send your recording(s) to Kristy by Wednesday mornings at 10AM, so she can edit these into our worship service (kristy@fgucc.org). Thank you!

Can & Bottle Collection is up and running successfully.



We thank everyone for your enthusiastic response to the new Can & Bottle Collection for our FGUCC youth ministry. Blue bags are available for you to pick up at church. Due to COVID and other safety restrictions that come with returning cans and bottles, we set up an account with the BottleDrop Center which makes it more efficient and easy to donate, and this has been very success for us to date.

Thanks again everyone, for your enthusiastic response to this fundraiser for our youth! If you have any questions, don't hesitate to let us know.

Kristy Haines, Coordinator of Spiritual Formation (kristy@fgucc.org)

Pledges and Contributions



Thank you all for continuing to keep your pledges current during this time. If you normally make contributions or pay your pledge by check, please continue using this method. (Mail checks to FGUCC at P.O. Box 265, Forest Grove, OR 97116.) You can sign up for electronic giving with Vanco, which is a very simple option and setup, and fees are very low (let us know if you'd like more information). You can use PayPal on our church's website at www.fgucc.org. If you have questions or need more information, please contact Elena at elena@fgucc.org or (503) 357-9121. Thank you for your generosity and support!



Washington County libraries have (hooray, hooray) eliminated overdue fines. We will no longer charge for overdue materials, and if you had overdue fines, they have been removed from your account.

We have made this change because WCCLS libraries are for everyone – our libraries' mission is to serve all residents of Washington County – equally, affordably and with easy access. Studies have shown that overdue fines most severely impact communities of color and/or with lower incomes, and don't significantly promote the timely return of library materials. So, this change was an easy, logical, happy choice for our libraries.

— Stephanie Lind

Community Blessing Coat Rack!

The coat rack is still up for the winter and is located at the Main Street entrance of FGUCC under cover behind the Blessing Box. We are accepting donations of coats, gloves and scarves.

If you need one, take One – If you can, leave one.

We are being called to serve the unhoused

"Open Door," is a day center for our unhoused neighbors in Cornelius that provides morning coffee, a mid-day meal, showers, a place to rest, and other services on a daily basis. They are very much in need of volunteers! Please contact Jeff Shapiro at 503-707-9308 for more information about how and when to volunteer. Thank you!

Warm Blankets Needed for the Unhoused!

Open Door is in need of blanket donations for our unhoused brothers and sisters during ongoing winter weather. . Donations can be dropped off at church or directly to Open Door located at 34420 SW Tualatin Valley Hwy, Hillsboro, M-F from 3-5. Questions, please call or email Elena at (503) 357-9121, elena@fgucc.org. Thank you!



December 18, 2020

Deva Harris-Williams
Forest Grove UCC
P.O. Box 265
Forest Grove, OR 97116

Dear Deva,

You have our heartfelt gratitude!

Thank you for your donation of holiday gifts for a family in our Head Start program. You have brought delight and joy into the lives of a family enduring much hardship during this difficult year. Their holiday will be brighter, because of you.

With your partnership, Community Action brings hope, help, and change to the thousands of local families who are striving to overcome conditions of poverty and build a safe and secure future for their children. Your support ensures that families like America Smith's have the help they need to withstand the current crisis and have opportunities for a better tomorrow. I hope you will enjoy reading America's story, enclosed in this letter.

Again, thank you for your gifts to a local family in need. Your generosity is deeply appreciated.

Sincerely,

Kemp Shuey
Executive Director

*Community Action is a 501 (c) (3) organization.
The tax identification number is 93-0554941.
Please retain this letter as a receipt of your gift.
No goods or services were obtained in exchange for this gift.
Your gift is tax deductible as allowed by law.*

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