



The Viewpoint

News from the Forest Grove United
Church of Christ

June 2021

Expanding the Circle by the Power of the Spirit

“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.” – Romans 15:13

Dear FGUCC,

In this season of Pentecost we celebrate and remember the power of Spirit in our lives! We have journeyed through a time of unprecedented challenges and great hardship together this past year. Yet now more than ever, we can also appreciate how we have remained united in Spirit; connected in a circle of belonging by Spirit. This month we continue to pray for the safe return of our dear brother Ralph who presently remains missing. Even in the pain of this time, we were able to gather together in community in a circle of care and support. Throughout the past year and even as we face ongoing hardship, the Spirit continues to sustain us and sends us rippling out as an ever-widening circle to enfold the wider community with Love. Even as we gather in person again and discover what the new normal will be together, we can embrace this transition, “overflowing with hope,” having witnessed the power of Spirit in our lives. Just as the early church was sent out with hearts ignited by Spirit we continue to discover what it means to live into the call together being the arms of Christ embracing the world.

This is a pivotal time for the Forest Grove United Church of Christ! None of us have ever emerged from a global pandemic before and that’s why we are going to embark on a year of visioning the way forward together! To help us, our church’s leadership has chosen to invest in a visioning and vitality program offered by the church consulting group CONVERGENCE (formerly the Center for Progressive Renewal.) You can learn more about Convergence by visiting their website: <https://convergenceus.org/about/>. The visioning process will be an engaging and meaningful project for us to focus on for the 2021-2022 church calendar year. It will be an opportunity to hear every voice so that, together, we can clarify shared message, mission, and purpose; nurture leadership and creative models of care; and adapt for the future in a way that will maximize opportunities for sustainability and growth. This visioning process will require all our participation if it is to indeed help us succeed in growing and expanding the circle. Please read about the steps of the visioning process outlined on the next page. If you have any questions about the process don’t hesitate to share your questions with me by e-mailing, calling, or texting. We need every FGUCC member and friend of FGUCC to participate in completing

the survey by the end of June. Please keep your eyes peeled for the survey in the coming weeks. Again, the church has made this exciting and important investment for our future together and so we need all of us to fill out the survey! We look forward to hearing everyone's input as it will inform the rest of our future planning and visioning. And as we embrace this process let us continue to grow in Spirit. Let us continue to overflow with hope as we move forward as an ever widening circle of God's Love.

In the Spirit, Pastor Brendan

Convergence begins work with Forest Grove UCC

Convergence is a leadership training, coaching and consulting group focused on working progressive congregations across North America. The engagement with Forest Grove UCC is to facilitate the development of a mission focused plan to guide the congregation as it emerges from the Covid-19 pandemic and re-engages the community for future growth & ministry. This work will be accomplished in three phases:

Convergence will seek to engage the entire congregation with an online survey (a PDF version will be available for non-electronic completion by those not able to use internet tools). The survey will be made available to the congregation by June 1. The goal will be to get everyone's participation to complete the survey by June 30.

Convergence will also conduct several one-on-one interviews with key leaders in and outside the congregation via phone & electronic meeting.

Using findings from the survey, interviews and demographic deep dive using tools from Missioninsite, your Convergence team will create an assessment report with our best recommendations on a mission development plan for the Forest Grove Church. This written report will be available in late August and Convergence will host an electronic meeting to present the report and receive questions from the congregation at a time to be determined.

Based on the findings of the assessment report your Convergence Consultant will facilitate online groups around each recommendation beginning in September. Each group will develop a mission plan of how to implement a recommendation for the congregation's work as it goes forward. It is anticipated that these groups will work together via monthly online meetings for 4 – 6 months. A final church gathering in January or February will receive reports from each of the groups and adopt plans to move forward.

The assigned Convergence Consultant:



Rev. Gregg Carlson is an ordained UCC clergy who has worked in ministry settings for over 35 years, including the last 11 years with Convergence as a Congregational Consultant. He has had a diversified career as a solo pastor, church planter, judicatory executive and as the executive minister of two very large churches. He currently resides just outside Atlanta, Georgia, where he and his wife are avid organic gardeners.

Demystifying Dementia: A message from your Parish Nurse

For the next few months, we will be providing some information about Dementia and Alzheimer's in The Viewpoint in hopes that with education and resources, we can help each other navigate and support these conditions that affect us all.

It has been so inspiring how many lives Ralph Brown is touching, and we know his family is not alone in navigating memory loss.

This month we are focusing on the 10 signs of Alzheimer's. Please call Deva 503-887-0242 or Pastor Brendan 401-318-2447 if we can help you in any way.

— Deva Harris Williams, FGUCC Parish Nurse

10 Warning signs of Alzheimer's

1. MEMORY LOSS THAT DISRUPTS DAILY LIFE.

One of the most common signs of Alzheimer's disease, especially in the early stage, is forgetting recently learned information. Others include forgetting important dates or events, asking the same question over and over again, or increasingly needing to rely on memory aids (e.g., reminder notes or electronic devices) or family members for things the person used to handle on their own.

What's a typical age-related change? Sometimes forgetting names or appointments, but remembering them later.

2. CHALLENGES IN PLANNING OR SOLVING PROBLEMS.

Some people living with dementia may experience changes in their ability to develop and follow a plan or work with numbers. They may have trouble following a familiar recipe or keeping track of monthly bills. They may have difficulty concentrating and take much longer to do things than they did before.

What's a typical age-related change? Making occasional errors when managing finances or household bills.

3. DIFFICULTY COMPLETING FAMILIAR TASKS.

People living with Alzheimer's disease often find it hard to complete routine tasks. Sometimes they may have trouble driving to a familiar location, organizing a grocery list or remembering the rules of a favorite game.

What's a typical age-related change? Occasionally needing help to use microwave settings or to record a TV show.

4. CONFUSION WITH TIME OR PLACE.

People living with Alzheimer's can lose track of dates, seasons and the passage of time. They may have trouble understanding something if it is not happening immediately. Sometimes they may forget where they are or how they got there.

What's a typical age-related change? Getting confused about the day of the week, but figuring it out later.

5. TROUBLE UNDERSTANDING VISUAL IMAGES AND SPATIAL RELATIONSHIPS.

For some people, vision problems are a sign of Alzheimer's. They may also have problems judging distance and determining color or contrast, causing issues with driving.

What's a typical age-related change? Vision changes related to cataracts.

6. NEW PROBLEMS WITH WORDS IN SPEAKING OR WRITING.

People living with Alzheimer's may have trouble following or joining a conversation. They may stop in the middle of a conversation and have no idea how to continue, or repeat themselves. They may struggle with vocabulary, have trouble naming a familiar object or use the wrong name.

What's a typical age-related change? Sometimes having trouble finding the right word.

7. MISPLACING THINGS AND LOSING THE ABILITY TO RETRACE STEPS.

A person living with Alzheimer's may put things in unusual places. They may lose things and be unable to go back over their steps to find them again. He or she may accuse others of stealing, especially as the disease progresses.

What's a typical age-related change? Misplacing things from time to time and retracing steps to find them.

8. DECREASED OR POOR JUDGMENT.

Individuals may experience changes in judgment or decision-making. For example, they may use poor judgment when dealing with money, or pay less attention to grooming or keeping themselves clean.

What's a typical age-related change? Making a bad decision once in a while, like neglecting to change the oil in the car.

9. WITHDRAWAL FROM WORK OR SOCIAL ACTIVITIES.

A person living with Alzheimer's may experience changes in the ability to hold or follow a conversation. As a result, he or she may withdraw from hobbies, social activities or other engagements. They may have trouble keeping up with a favorite team or activity.

What's a typical age-related change? Sometimes feeling uninterested in family or social obligations.

10. CHANGES IN MOOD AND PERSONALITY.

Individuals living with Alzheimer's may experience mood and personality changes. They may be easily upset at home, at work, with friends or when out of their comfort zone.

What's a typical age-related change? Developing very specific ways of doing things and becoming irritable when a routine is disrupted.

Thank you Learning Community Teachers!

This year has been an unusual year for the Learning Community. All year we have been meeting online over Zoom. Despite this unconventional way of having Learning Community, our teachers have risen to the task and have brought the same positive energy and love as always. Our children and youth are incredibly lucky and blessed to have these volunteer teachers in their lives. We as a church community are so blessed to have these teachers share their time, talents, and love. I would like to lift up and acknowledge the following: Patricia Spears, Carrie Everett, Ben Lawrence, Heather Burk, Jeannine Murrell, and James and Geneva Houx. Thank you for all of your hard work and dedication this past year!

Kristy Haines, Coordinator of Spiritual Formation

Church Community Clean Up



All are welcome to join in this service opportunity-the Church Community Clean-Up **Sunday, June 27th, 11:30 AM-12:30 PM.** This event will take place following our outdoor worship service, located in the courtyard on the corner of 21st and College Way. Our goal is to go around downtown Forest Grove and pick up litter. Trash bags will be provided by the church and gloves for those who don't bring their own. This is an all-ages event, but we ask children under the age of 12 to be accompanied by an adult. Please remember to bring your mask, gloves, and your own lunch/snacks. For any additional questions please contact Kristy at kristy@fgucc.org.

Hiking with Kristy

All ages are welcome to join Kristy for a hike on **Saturday, June 5th, 10 AM.** We will be hiking Wahclella Falls located in the Columbia River Gorge. This event will not take place if RSVPs are not made, so please be sure to **RSVP with Kristy no later than Monday, May 31!!!**



If you interested in learning more about Wahclella Falls hike, please visit this website, [https://www.oregonhikers.org/field_guide/Wahclella Falls Hike](https://www.oregonhikers.org/field_guide/Wahclella_Falls_Hike).

For any other questions please contact Kristy at kristy@fgucc.org.

Kristy Haines, Coordinator of Spiritual Formation

Brendan's Community Office hours

Pastor Brendan is hosting community office hours from 3-5pm every Wednesday, and you are invited to join in at Bella Donna's, located at 2007 21st Avenue directly across the street from FGUCC. If outdoor seating is not available, we will bring beverages back to Brendan's office, or meet in the church courtyard, if the weather is nice.

FGUCC In-Person Worship is back!

Psalm 133:1 — *How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!*

Dear Friends of Forest Grove United Church of Christ,



It's with great joy that we announce our return to in-person worship starting **Sunday, June 13 at 10AM**. We will be meeting outside in the front courtyard at College Way. We assure you we will still be taking safety precautions as we take baby steps toward the new normal.

- ♥ We will still be wearing masks when we gather.
- ♥ Chairs will be spaced out three feet apart. Individuals and family units are asked to sit three feet apart from others.
- ♥ If both individuals have been vaccinated, hugging should be safe. If you and/or others desire hugs, we ask that you check in with one another to make sure the other person would like to be hugged.
- ♥ Members of the choir will sing to/for the rest of us but only small groups will be allowed to sing at first.
- ♥ We will have a Covid-safe ice cream social following the service on the 13th to celebrate our being together in person again.
- ♥ We will move to in-person indoor worship starting on Sunday, September 12 at 10AM for Welcome Back Sunday!

These plans are in alignment with what other UCC congregations are doing and the recommendations of public health institutions.

Blessings and Joy, Pastor Brendan and your FGUCC staff!

We need you for the new Stephen Ministry Class!



We are planning to start a new Stephen Ministry training class this fall. Have you ever considered the idea of becoming a Stephen Minister? If you have the gifts of compassion, listening, encouragement, and more, are you ready to use them? In the process you will make a difference not only in the lives of others, but in your own life. The training and service create a transformative growth experience personally, spiritually, and relationally. The skills learned enhance all of your relationships, while being supported by a constant, caring community of Stephen Ministers!

Think about it. If you have questions or want to be included, give us a call. I know it seems early to start, but we do need to begin the process. Renee Mills 503-314-4855 or Ken Prickett 503-324-4220.

Blessings, Renee Mills and Ken Prickett

Joys, Concerns & Prayer Requests

- Please keep Carol Brown and her family in your prayers during this time as ongoing search for Ralph continues. Also, please keep Carol in your prayers as she recovers from back surgery on May 25.
- Please remember Els Abma as she continues to recover at Robison Rehab Center from recent hip surgery.
- Prayers for Bob Browning as he continues recovery from major surgery. He's still at the EmpRes Hillsboro Health and Rehabilitation Center, and would welcome and appreciate cards. The address is 1778 NE Cornell Road, Hillsboro, OR 97124
- Prayers for continued healing for Melissa Turner who continues to recover from a broken femur several months ago.
- Please remember Alice Hoskins as she deals with ongoing health concerns. She appreciates calls and cards. (390 East Main Street, Hillsboro, OR 97123, Cell: 503-781-0154.)
- Please remember Ruth Holznagel as she continues in her ongoing recovery. Ruth appreciates remaining in contact through cards and letters. Her address is: 2181 Ambleside Dr., Ambler Court Apt. 414, Cleveland, OH 44106



Newborn—Congratulations to Renee Mills' upon the birth of her second grandson. Renee's daughter Kat and husband Chris gave birth to Oliver William Gallo on Friday, April 30. Oliver joins his big brother, Teddy.

Sympathy—Our hearts go out to the family and friends of Tom Wallsted who left this life mid-afternoon on Saturday, May 1. Tom was a member of FGUCC for about 20 years, was an assistant custodian working with John Davis for a several years and Tom was the person who began and promoted "Elijah's Barrel" several years ago. There will be a celebration of Tom's life in the near future and we will announce this when the date has been set.

Celebration of Life for Chuck Shotwell—Family and friends are invited to attend a celebration of life for Charles (Chuck) Robert Shotwell at McMenamins Grand Lodge on **Saturday, June 12 at 2:00 pm**. There will be a short service in the Children's Cottage followed by a reception and musical tribute in the Spruce Grove directly behind the Cottage. COVID restrictions will apply.

Continued Prayers—Prayers of healing and comfort for all who have ongoing concerns, including Winnie Beu, 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, and any other friends and family of our church, not named here.

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.

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!

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.

Prayer Shawl Knitting—Please join us for knitting this month via Zoom on **Wednesdays June 2 and 16, 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.

Best wishes to all of you celebrating birthdays in June!

Melissa Timm—1
John Welch—7
Sydney Timm—8
Armani Garfias—10
Dick Lane—14
Jobina Lacock—15
Ivan Edwards-Leeper—17



You are invited to participate in a Climate Summit!

Grace, Grief and Grounding: A Faithful response to the climate crisis, cultivating shared wisdom, connection and hope.

Dear FGUCC Friends,

Our beloved Pacific Northwest region is facing dramatic threats due to climate change. We no longer speak of fires, but rather “fire seasons.” We’re experiencing devastating losses of habitat, species diversity, water availability, and pollution impacts. These losses also disproportionately harm black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC) and people in poverty.



Please join us for a time of faithful imagination and truth-sharing. We are all invited to participate in this Climate Summit, free of charge, scheduled for **Saturday, June 12, 2021 from 9AM-1PM** via Zoom. Pastor Brendan is helping with this event facilitated by Rev. Dr. Sara Rosenau. For more information, please contact Rev. Dr. Jennifer Yocum, UCC Missoula, jennifer@uccmissoula.org (Montana/Norther Wyoming Conference).

Registration link:

https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUpeGupj8tHdT_gkdvkRrxhvF_vfsp5AfP

Peace and blessings, Brendan

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!



Current Can & Bottle Collection Update

Thank you everyone for your continued enthusiastic support of the Can & Bottle Collection for our FGUCC Youth Ministry. **As of May 24 we have raised \$587!** If you want to participate in this easy fundraiser, blue bags are available for you to pick up at church. For any additional questions please contact the church office. Thanks again!

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

2021 Strengthen the Church offering:

Please join us in common mission, vision, and purpose by supporting the 2021 Strengthen the Church offering.

Dear FGUCC Friends,

Your gifts to Strengthen the Church empower the work of conferences and the national UCC setting as we practice extravagant welcome, celebrate God's continuing testament, and together change lives.

Strengthen the Church donations will help the United Church of Christ continue as a Spirit-inspired and world-changing Christian movement. We will continue to benefit from best practices, insights, and innovations across the life of the UCC. Once again thank you for continuing to help the UCC expand its light by supporting the 2021 Strengthen the Church offering.

You can make checks payable to FGUCC with note on memo line: **2021 Strengthen the Church Offering**. Thank you for your support of UCC offerings.

Additional information about the Strengthen the Church can be found at www.ucc.org/stc.



Gender Justice Workshop: Saturday, June 5, 10AM-Noon **on Zoom: Practicing Gender Justice: Safety & Equity in the Church**

Please join us for this important Gender Justice Workshop on **Saturday, June 5, 10AM-Noon via Zoom**. This workshop will enable us to honor our resolution for gender equity and safety and explore our responsibility as people of faith to create safe healthy congregations and whole communities.



Register Now

Background

Our churches in the Central Pacific Conference committed to gender safety and equity at our 2019 annual meeting. Our awareness was raised by #ChurchToo, a movement that started on social media to bring to light the sexism, sexual harassment, abuse and assault that happens within faith communities. This movement seeks to create safer, more equitable spaces for women and non-binary persons to serve, lead, and minister.

Our faith calls us to promote gender safety and equity, to empower women and non-binary persons, both lay and ordained, to raise issues regarding sexism and discrimination, reinforcing the covenants and standards of behavior which bind us together as conference, clergy, lay leaders, and members. This workshop will enable us to honor our resolution and explore our responsibility as people of faith to address these issues in order to create safe healthy congregations and whole communities.

This Workshop is co-sponsored by CPC Justice & Witness, Local Church Ministries, and the Committee on Ministry. \$10 suggested donation; please contribute as you are able.

Trainer Bio: Lauren D. Sawyer, MA, is Program Manager for FaithTrust Institute, a national, multifaith, multicultural organization working to end sexual and domestic violence. An educator and ethicist living in Seattle, WA, Lauren has taught courses in philosophy, ethics, and religion for undergraduate and graduate students across the country. She is currently completing her Ph.D. at Drew Theological School. Lauren's writing on gender and sexuality has been published by Feminist Studies in Religion and Feminism and Religion

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