



The Viewpoint

News from the Forest Grove United
Church of Christ

September 2021

An Update on the Visioning Process

Dear FGUCC,

As we start a new church calendar year, I want to thank everyone who took the time to fill out the survey for our visioning process and am happy to report that over two-thirds of the congregation filled out the survey. I want to take this opportunity to let you all know the next steps in our visioning process with CONGERGENCE.

Convergence, our consultant, has sent us back the congregational assessment report based on the information we provided in our surveys. The Assessment Report will be reviewed by the Executive Board in the coming months. It will also inform the action steps to be discerned by our church's "visioning task-force," which is currently being formed.

The assessment report yielded some inspiring and helpful input. The good news is that we have so many strengths as a congregation! 90% of us report that church feels like a close-knit family, has a clear mission and purpose, works for justice in the world, lives its beliefs and values, and has a strong ministry that offers meaningful worship. The report demonstrates there is unanimous excitement in the congregation about where we are headed together. Comments in the survey reflect a shared understanding of what we see as strengths of our congregation. Some of these strengths include, "outreach in the community, Pastoral/Ministerial leadership, our UCC affiliation, our open and affirming stance, our youth and children's programming, and our commitment to peace and justice." The assessment report also offers us some suggestions for ways we could grow.

Here is an excerpt from the, "What is Next for Forest Grove UCC," section of the report:

"The question for you as members and leaders of Forest Grove UCC is, **'are you willing to live into God's future?'** Our recommendations, born out of our expertise in the life cycle and renewal of churches, are for Forest Grove UCC to **build financial sustainability, work on change skills, and connect your neighbors to listen for the new thing God is calling you to do in the world.** If you get stuck, our consultants and coaches can help you make concrete plans for improving all these areas. Putting your energy into these things will help your already vital congregation grow more vital and transformational in the years to come."

Our visioning task force will be helping us devise an action plan in the coming months to help us meet these goals and foster vitality and growth. This will be an exciting year and time for our church!

Peace and blessings,

Pastor Brendan

Welcome Back Sunday September 12!

Please join us on Welcome Back Sunday. We are going to create a Mandala together.

Mandala means "circle" and illustrates one BIG circle of belonging, and is composed of many different pieces, like a mosaic. On Welcome Back Sunday we are going to hear from the Wisdom of Solomon that reminds us how we are called to "reflect the goodness of God" for each other. And so to celebrate how we reflect Love and Justice and Spirit for each other, we are going to make a beautiful Mandala together!



Please bring with you to church on September 12th a small shiny piece or object that can be used as a piece of the Mandala that we will build during the reflection time!

Love, Brendan



Welcome Back Learning Community!

- ♥ Learning Community is coming back! We will be starting Sunday, September 19th! Classes are available for grades K-12 and Nursery Care will be provided.
 - ♥ We are continuing to ask all children, youth, and teachers to wear masks; and we will continue to uphold all other COVID safety protocols.
 - ♥ We have missed you and look forward to seeing you on September 19th!
 - ♥ For more information and questions contact Kristy, kristy@fgucc.org.
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Joys, Concerns & Prayer Requests

- Our hearts go out to the family of Jerry and Laura Frye as Jerry's sister, Violet, passed away on August 24. Please keep the Frye family in your prayers during this difficult time. There will be a memorial service on Thursday, September 2, 3PM at Fuiten, Rose & Hoyt Memorial Chapel.
- Our hearts go out to Jane Romig whose brother, Bob Watrous, passed away peacefully on Sunday morning July 11. Some of you may remember their mother Edith Watrous and that Jane and Bob grew up in this church. Both Bob and Jane sang in the youth choirs of FGUCC growing up and Bob learned to play the organ on the church console. "Thanks to all for your prayers and wishes of support; it's so good to be part of the church family."
- Please keep Carolyn Carson and Dick Lane in your prayers as Carolyn continues to recover from surgery in late June.
- Please keep Carol Brown and her entire family in your prayers, especially including Laurie, and Darryl & Gretchen, as the search for Ralph continues.
- Prayers for Bob Browning as he continues recovery at the EmpRes Hillsboro Health and Rehabilitation Center, and welcomes and appreciates cards. The address is 1778 NE Cornell Road, Hillsboro, OR 97124
- 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.)



Continued Prayers—Prayers of healing and comfort for all who have ongoing concerns, including 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.

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 September 1 and 15, 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.



KNIT. CROCHET. PRAY.

Best wishes to all of you celebrating birthdays in September!

5—Mary Mullen
8—Bev Maughan
11—Pete Truax
13—Sandy Freeman
13—Deva Harris
16—Kaitlin Thursam
17—Stephanie Lind
20—Laura Frye



21—Julian Garfias
24—Carl Heisler
26—Parker Ramirez
27—Bill Alexander
27—Russ Dondero
28—Windi Withycombe
30—Deena Barrett
30—Steve Whisler

Church Hike Set for Saturday, September 25



All are welcome to join Kristy for a hike on **Saturday, September 25th, at 10 AM**. We will be walking the Banks-Vernonia State Trail and will meet at the trailhead located in Banks. This hike is very easy and we'll only go for a short distance. If you're interested, please contact Kristy at kristy@fgucc.org. Once you have RSVP'd she will email you more details.

Sanctuary Choir Gathering/practice

Beginning on **Thursday, September 9 at 7:00 PM** the Sanctuary Choir will gather for practice in the Sanctuary with masks. All who are vaccinated and like to sing sacred choral music are welcome.

New organ console expected soon!

The organ upgrade is well underway, and the new console is scheduled for installation the week of September 13. Thanks to the devoted stewardship of Paul Minor, the sanctuary is prepared with the necessary wiring and the wood floor is refinished where the lovely new console will sit.



Church musicians will soon be exploring the wide-ranging new musical palette and preparing lovely new service music for the congregation to enjoy in worship. During this time when it is not safe to sing together, we can look forward to prayer, contemplation, uplifted spirits and ongoing fellowship through the new resources of our organ.

— Sarah Ball

Opportunities for Service

We still have several opportunities for service on Sunday mornings including ushering, communion service, filming highlights of the worship service, providing flowers for Sunday mornings, drivers for transportation ministry, and volunteering for Friends of the Blessing Box. Please sign up at the large round table in the narthex. For more information about any of these ministries please do not hesitate to call the office (503.357.9121).

Church Bus Drivers Needed! Two of our long time regular church bus drivers have retired from driving and we're looking for a few new drivers. Please let us know if you're interested in our church transportation ministry. Contact the church office for more information.

Expansion of Blessing Box is in the works



Greetings from the Blessing Box crew! More information will continue to be available as we work out the details of the Blessing Box expansion which includes a refrigerator and freezer purchased with grant monies received from the City of Forest Grove. In the meantime please save your plastic take home containers, and if you are so inclined to purchase plastic silverware, (I know) that will help to get us started. If this project sounds like something you would be interested in helping out with, please let us know.

Val Donley for Friends of the Blessing Box

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 September 1st we have raised \$989.30!** 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)

Pledges and Contributions



Thank you all for continuing to keep your pledges current. 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!

Save the Date for Auction 2021!

We're excited to let you know we're beginning to plan our annual auction for **Saturday, November 20**. After hearing your wonderful suggestions following last year's auction, we were considering the possibility of a "hybrid" auction with the silent auction remaining online and the live auction being held in person. At this point in time the silent auction will definitely remain online, and we'll keep you posted as to details of the "Live Auction" as decisions are made. In the meantime, mark your calendar for **Saturday, November 20, 5PM** and keep your ears and eyes open as further auction plans will be announced.

FIRST Sundays with BEST are Back but...

We can no longer take any packing materials except air pillows. And we are not accepting wine corks at this time. Here's what we "do" welcome on the First Sunday at FGUCC:

- ✓ Real block and food Styrofoam, colored and dyes are okay
- ✓ #6 plastics, such as Solo cups and bowls, "to go" coffee lids, and some cookie trays
- ✓ Air pillows (Bonnie takes to UPS)
- ✓ Fluorescent light bulbs
- ✓ Batteries
- ✓ Planting pots (the Prickett family will reuse)
- ✓ Candle wax (the Prickett family will use)



PLEASE NOTE: #1 plastic tubs can go curbside. Other #1 plastics can now be recycled at events such as James' Recycling, but not on First Sunday. Be sure to check recycling # on your plastics before delivering them to church, and make sure everything is CLEAN. THANK YOU!

We accept any time (in the boxes over the coat racks):

- ✓ Cell phones – (You can also take phone back to the store where it was purchased.)
- ✓ Printer cartridges (the church gets cash for these or they can go back to the store where purchased.)

Special Notes:

Message from Bonnie: I will provide lots of paper and plastic bags from previous recycling, and I'd love for people to take those for their future garbage and/or recycling needs, so please help yourself to as many as you want! Thank you!

Message from Eric: If you're dropping off batteries, CFL's, fluorescent tubes or items for Metro please fill out the sheet provided for Metro.

Books available

We have extra copies of the following books that were part of our Book Study in 2020. Let us know if you'd like to have any one of these for reading—otherwise these poor books will sit here in the church office gathering dust!

- ✦ Living Buddha, living Christ, by Thich Nhat Hanh
- ✦ The Cross and the Lynching Tree, by James H. Cone
- ✦ Kill the Indian, Save the Man, by Ward Churchill

For more information please contact Elena at 503-357-9121 or elena@fgucc.org

Host Homes needed for High School Students

Greetings everyone! Celeste Goulding has asked if we can get the following important message out on her behalf:

Two local students are in need of immediate Host Homes with Second Home. One enrolled in Forest Grove High School, one enrolled in Century High in Hillsboro (but enrolled in the distance-learning option). One has a gender-fluid identity that is not supported in their home and the other is from a family that is facing housing crisis as a unit. Both these students are facing having to leave their community of choice due to a lack of appropriate housing for them. One has a cat that they are committed to keeping with them. Do you have a spare room in your home? With mediated support could you see yourself providing housing for a young person this school year?



Please contact Celeste at cgoulding@emoregon.org or 503-985-8815.

New Worship Update

On behalf of church staff, first and foremost we would like to thank the congregation for your constant adaptability and grace during this pandemic. We are here again asking for that adaptability and grace. Due to the uptick of cases caused by the Delta variant, we made the decision to request no singing during worship. We will continue offering up numerous other musical moments throughout worship, but we are asking all to refrain from singing. This difficult decision was made by many dedicated people on our worship ministry team, our parish nurse, and our staff. We believe that this decision, while difficult to make, is also the best decision that will protect everyone in our church community physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Thank you all for your understanding through this constantly changing time.

We pray that we can continue to find joy in gathering together safely, and open our hearts and minds to new aspects of worship for the spirit to speak to us.

Covid Updates from our Parish Nurse

Covid continues to impact our world and our community. We all so much want to be able to live, work, praise and play together.

Sadly, the Delta variant and unvaccinated people are creating another surge and Oregon is a hot bed of Covid. Vaccinations are easily available and the Pfizer Vaccine has now been officially approved by the Federal Drug Administration. We strongly recommend being fully vaccinated, and getting the third vaccine (booster) when it becomes available, especially for individuals with a compromised immune system or chronic health conditions. (Ask your health care provider if you're unsure if you meet that requirement.)



Best Practices to mitigate infection.

- ♥ Masks and Hand washing
- ♥ Social distancing
- ♥ Outside dining, or food to go versus indoor dining. (We do want to continue to support our local businesses.)
- ♥ Check area for crowds where social distancing is more challenging. Assess for good ventilation in buildings in any crowded areas.
- ♥ Shopping online, delivery or self-pick up is a great way to further protect yourself.
- ♥ Our children, especially those under 12, are at greater risk – more children are getting ill.
- ♥ Be brave and ask people who you want to spend time with “Are you fully vaccinated?”

At Church

- ♥ Expect instrumental music at church for now instead of singing. (Ah voices of praise in church – it was so nice while it lasted...)
- ♥ Social distancing and masks

We know so much more than at the beginning of this pandemic. We know how to reduce severity and incidence of this horrible illness, and that's VACCINATION.

Pray for your health care workers, housekeepers, respiratory therapist, aides, lab staff, doctors and nurses – They are very overworked and tired!

I pray for your good health and wellbeing.

Demystifying Dementia: A message from your Parish Nurse

Dearest church family,

As we move toward fall many of us create new routines and are stretching our brains to keep track of new schedules, appointments, etc. For many the more we have to keep track of, the more difficult it is to keep our days on track.

This month's focus on memory changes is a 10-step self-survey to help discern what kinds of memory changes you may be experiencing. This is great information to share with your Health Care Provider. Early intervention and diagnosis of memory changes is very important for interventions to keep us functioning optimally.

We are doing this series as we keep Ralph Brown and his amazing family in our hearts and prayers.

10 Steps to Approach Memory Concerns

What to do when you notice changes in others

If you notice changes in friends, family or others close to you and are concerned for their health — particularly when it involves changes in memory, thinking or behavior — it can be difficult to know what to do or say. Although it's natural to be uncertain or nervous about how to offer support, these are significant health concerns. The steps below can help you feel more confident as you assess the situation and take action.

ASSESS THE SITUATION

1. What changes in memory, thinking or behavior do you see?

What's the person doing — or not doing — that's out of the ordinary and causing concern?

2. What else might be going on?

Various conditions can cause changes in memory, thinking and behavior. What health or lifestyle issues that could be a factor? E.g., family stress or health issues like diabetes or depression.

3. Learn about the signs of Alzheimer's and other dementias and the benefits of an early diagnosis.

Visit alz.org/10signs to educate yourself on the 10 Warning Signs of Alzheimer's and why it's important to know if dementia or something else is causing the changes. Do you notice any of the signs in the person you're concerned about?

4. Has anyone else noticed the change(s)?

Find out if friends and family have seen changes. What are they?

TAKE ACTION THROUGH CONVERSATION

5. Who should have the conversation to discuss concerns?

It could be you, a trusted family member or friend, or a combination. It's usually best to speak one-on-one so that the person doesn't feel threatened by a group, but use your understanding of the person to determine what might work best.

» Name(s): _____

6. What is the best time and place to have the conversation?

Have the conversation as soon as possible. In addition to choosing a date and time, consider where the person will feel most comfortable.

» Date: _____
» Time: _____
» Location: _____

7. What will you or the person having the conversation say?

Try the following:

- » I've noticed [change] in you, and I'm concerned. Have you noticed it? Are you worried?
- » How have you been feeling lately? You haven't seemed like yourself.
- » I noticed you [specific example] and it worried me. Has anything else like that happened?

Write additional conversation starters below.

8. Offer to go with the person to the doctor.

Ask the person if he or she will see a doctor and show your support by offering to go to the appointment. Some words of encouragement may include:

- » There are lots of things that could be causing this, and dementia may or may not be one of them. Let's see if the doctor can help us figure out what's going on.
- » The sooner we know what's causing these problems, the sooner we can address it.
- » I think it would give us both peace of mind if we talked with a doctor. Write your own ideas below:

9. If needed, have multiple conversations.

The first conversation may not be successful. Write down some notes about the experience to help plan for the next conversation.

» Location took place:

» Date/time of day:

» What worked well?

» What didn't?

» What was the result?

» What can be done differently next time?

REACH OUT FOR HELP

10. Turn to the Alzheimer’s Association® for information and support.

» Visit alz.org/education to take our free Dementia Conversations online program. Learn how to have honest and caring conversations about common concerns — including driving, doctor visits, and legal and financial planning — when someone begins to show signs of dementia.

» Call our **24/7 Helpline (800.272.3900)** to speak with a master’s-level clinician who can provide more information about how to discuss memory concerns with someone close to you.

The information in this series is provided by the Alzheimer’s Association.

Please feel free to reach out to Deva for information or support at 503-887-0242.

— Deva Harris Williams, FGUCC Parish Nurse

Neighbors in Need All Church Offering 2021

In 2021, Neighbors in Need “Unfailing Love” offering is focused on supporting organizations and projects that are serving homeless and immigrant neighbors or communities. One-third of NIN funds support the [Council for American Indian Ministry](#) (CAIM). Two-thirds of this offering is used by the UCC’s Justice and Witness Ministries (JWM) to provide funding grants to UCC churches and organizations leading justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects in their communities.



Most UCC churches collect the offering on October 3, 2021 as part of World Communion Sunday, but contributions can be made at any time.

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