



The Viewpoint

News from the Forest Grove United
Church of Christ

August 2022

Sheep among Wolves on the 4th of July.

"I am sending you out like sheep into the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves."
—Matthew 10:16

In the gospel of Matthew, right after Jesus sends the disciples out into the world to proclaim the good news, "with authority over unclean spirits," he also says to the disciples, "I am sending you out like sheep into the midst of wolves." He was speaking to a people besieged by empire and forces of systemic hatred and violence. His words ring true to us today as it would seem we find ourselves feeling similarly, "like sheep among wolves." The wolves are showing up everywhere and we find ourselves asking if anywhere remains safe? We see the wolves coming for our children in their schools. They are attacking people simply out buying their groceries. They come for carnage at community events like Fourth of July parades wrapped in their banners of white supremacy and hate; and they bring their lust for death even into churches as well. I am sad to acknowledge that we the people who still value the idea of basic human goodness find ourselves today like sheep among wolves.

As the pastor of this church I have the remarkable honor of hearing the stories of elders in this congregation who remember living under Nazi occupation. They remind me of how World War II was fought under the premise that fascism cannot be contained or appeased but can only be uprooted, contained, and obliterated for it being objectively evil. They draw parallels to the rise of fascism they witnessed in the 30's to the madness we see unraveling in our poor United States of America today. They tell me how fascism was emboldened by the willingness of ordinary good citizens to do and say nothing. As we currently see our American democracy and the common good under threat by extremist groups that would violently overturn the institutions of our democracy, destroy the republic, and rejoice in the violation of women's bodily sovereignty, the roll back of civil liberties, and other basic human rights, we must speak and act. We can be grateful that we still have opportunities to speak up, "with authority over unclean spirits." As followers of Jesus, we can and must speak up when we see much of this extremism being ushered forward by a popular perversion of "Christianity," that has distorted Jesus from the light of divine love and the humble servant of the abject poor into a symbol that stands for militarism, violence, prosperity theology, anti-science, limited government that neglects the vulnerable, and fierce nationalism. We must speak up and take action as many of us do, like in our petition drive

to end gun violence, and all the various ways we create opportunities to proclaim the good news of the gospel through our actions.

These are heavy times. It might feel like being sheep among wolves, but we can take comfort in how our faith tradition sings to us of the victory of the lamb! It is the gentle ones, the meek, the peacemakers, the ones who hunger and thirst for justice who are blessed. It's in our love and solidarity with "the least of these," that we find ourselves in alignment with the triumphant Spirit that lives to reconstruct this world into the realm of God which is justice and peace. With that truth beating in our hearts we have authority over the unclean spirits taking the Lord's name in vain. In today's context, compassion itself has become, once again, our great act of resistance. Showing up to sing together has become a beautiful act of resistance to this current status quo that would have us afraid to walk down our streets in peace. It's when we show up for our world in the liberating Love of Christ's bleeding heart that we have authority over the unclean spirits and corrupt powers and principalities! So let's stay strong, stay wise, and continue taming the wolves! The lamb has already won the battle.

In Christ, Pastor Brendan

Changes to Covid Regulations for Worship



Dear FGUCC members and friends,

With the continued high numbers of positive COVID-19 cases in Washington County, and with a highly contagious strain of the virus being the most prevalent in the United States, the FGUCC COVID Committee has recommended, and the Executive Board has approved, the following adjustments to the COVID protocols for attending worship.

- Anyone attending worship is required to wear a mask over the nose and mouth. It is highly recommended that the mask be an N-95 or KN-95 mask.
- Speakers during worship may remove their masks while they are speaking.

The COVID Committee will re-evaluate the protocols at such time as the number of weekly cases per 100,000 in Washington County drops below 200. Other factors will be taken into the committee's discussions, including hospitalization rate.

We appreciate everyone's understanding as we continue to keep our church and wider community safe and healthy. Thank you!

Blake Timm, Moderator
For the FGUCC COVID Committee

Save the Date for Auction 2022!

We're excited to let you know we're beginning to plan our annual auction for **Saturday, November 19**. The format will be similar to last year's auction: the silent auction remaining online and the live auction being held in person with live music, delicious appetizers, plus wine, beer and other beverages. Please start thinking about items you'd like to donate and ways you'd like to help. In the meantime, mark your calendar for **Saturday, November 19, 5PM**.

– Bonnie McDowell, Auction Coordinator

Church Bus Update

We've gotten evaluations from two mobility vehicle companies and they agreed that we will not be able to fix or replace the lift in our current bus. Parts are obsolete and the bus is too old to retrofit. So we are continuing our quest for a newer used bus. We're going to make the Build-a-Bus our Fund-an-Item for the auction again this year and hope to finish the job that we so admirably started! Thanks for all your support.



Ken Prickett and Bonnie McDowell



Children's Choir starting up again!

This fall the Children's Choir program will begin again, at last! If your child is 2nd grade or older and is interested in making music with us, please contact Geneva Houx via email at Geneva.houx@gmail.com. Rehearsals will be on Sundays after church. (Starting date will be determined soon.)

Best wishes to all of you celebrating birthdays in August!

1—Kristin Ludwig
2—Winnie Beu
2—Phoebe Edwards-Leeper
4—Pamelajean Myers
5—Zoe Bichsel
6—Carol Benner
6—Rob Foster



14—Stephanie Edwards
23—Eric Murphy
25—Brandi Frye
26—BJ Jones
26—Naomi Frye
30—Nathan Lawrence
31—Caia Bowen

Pastor Brendan's vacation

Pastor Brendan will be on vacation August 1-31. If you have any pastoral concerns during Brendan's absence, please reach out to Stephen Ministers Renee Mills (503-324-7603) and Ken Prickett (503-324-4220), or Terri Wyborny (714-883-3274), and Elena Parker (503) 357-6960.

Concerns & Prayer Requests

- Please remember Craig Moritz and his family. For the next several months Craig will continue undergoing chemotherapy and radiation treatments every other week at OHSU. After 2-years of battling multiple myeloma cancer and having that go into remission, he was diagnosed with a second exceedingly rare cancer called Ewing's Sarcoma, which is intertwined with the soft tissue in his back and spinal cord.
- Continued prayers for Lorren Fletcher's wife, Beverly Fletcher, who is in rehab at EmpRes Hillsboro Health and Rehabilitation Center.

Continued Prayers—Prayers of healing and comfort for all who have ongoing concerns, including Deena Barrett, Ann and Russ Dondero, Paul and Stephanie Edwards, Lillian Gimre, Max Groszmann, Lois Johnston, Carlene Krueger, Stella Schrag, 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 worship service on Sunday mornings, please submit them to the church office by 4:00PM on Thursday afternoons via email to elena@fgucc.org with the title "prayer request" in the subject line. For private prayer requests, please reach out to Pastor Brendan at **401-318-2447**, or a Stephen Minister.

Prayer Shawls—Do you, or someone you know, need a prayer shawl? Please call or email Elena in the church office to make a request at 503-357-9121 or elena@fgucc.org.

Flowers for Sunday mornings

Would you like to furnish flowers to decorate the Communion table for a Sunday service? If so, we invite you to pick a date and sign up on the sheet in the Narthex. Either yard flowers or store bought are welcome! If you would like someone to arrange them for you, just note that on your sign-up. Thanks for helping add beauty to our service!



At Home Communion



The sacrament of communion is an important part of our relationship with Jesus, and the Worship Ministry wants to reach out to those of our congregation who are home bound or unable to attend church for any reason so as to include them in this sacred covenant. Anyone interested in having Pastor Brendan bring communion to their home may contact Elena at elena@fgucc.org, 503-357-9121, or Pastor Brendan at **401-318-2447**.

We are holding in-person fellowship hours!

We need people to “host” Fellowship (i.e. make coffee, put out and serve water, juice, packaged snacks, glasses, cups and napkins) All supplies are provided and ready for our hosts to use in the church kitchen, so you don’t need to prepare or purchase anything to host fellowship. If you are interested in helping us restock some supplies, the item we currently need the most is ground coffee. We’re serving individually wrapped snacks and will accept donations of snacks as well. If you have any questions, let us know. Thank you!



Blessing Box Needs



During the month of August we are requesting donations of fruit, canned or dried for the Blessing Box. Please place your donations in Elijah’s Barrel in the narthex. Thank you for your generosity!

Volunteer Opportunity

We are looking for volunteers to help with regular maintenance of the Blessing Box area. This involves taking regular turns to check that fridge and freezer and dry goods shelves are clean, and also that the general area is tidy and clean. Please contact Elena if you’re interested or if you’d like more information. There’s a sign-up sheet in the narthex on the Welcoming Table.

Dew Drop Workshops with Jeane Canon (in person and hybrid)



Jeane Canon offers workshops that include an Essential Oils Introductory Class a few times each month; they are held on occasional Tuesday evenings and one Saturday afternoon (the workshop schedule varies; see current calendar posted on bulletin board in fellowship hall*). These workshops are great for beginners and often include make & take projects. Please contact Jeane right away to let her know if you would like to join a workshop via Zoom; Jeane will provide you with the Zoom link, workshop materials and supplies for projects in advance. *You can find the most current calendar of upcoming Dew Drop Workshop sessions on the bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall, or contact Jeane for more information: jeanecanon@yahoo.com or 503-997-7228. Everyone is welcome to attend.

First Sunday with BEST Team is on August 7



Here's recycling we welcome:

- 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
- 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 can no longer take any packing materials except air pillows. Also, we are not accepting wine corks or planting pots at this time.

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.)

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.

Reminder regarding Batteries!

Alkaline batteries can be placed in the trash as they are not considered toxic waste. So if your battery says "alkaline" on it, Metro recommends you simply put it in the garbage. Other batteries are considered toxic, so please do not throw them in the garbage, but instead bring them to your FGUCC BEST Team for proper disposal at Metro. We will accept other batteries that are considered toxic, including hearing aid, lithium, normal and heavy duty as well as rechargeable. If in doubt, bring all batteries to us on first Sunday and we will sort them out.

Pledges and Contributions



Thank you for continuing to keep your pledges current. You can sign up for electronic giving with Vanco, which is a very simple option and setup, and fees are very low. (Please let us know if you'd like more information). You can also 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!

Year-round Fundraising made simple via Amazon Smile!



If you are interested in a simple way to benefit the church when you shop on Amazon, you can shop directly via the church's Amazon Smile account. In doing so, the church gets credited directly for any purchases you make. The following link will direct you to shop at smile.amazon.com and automatically generate donations for Forest Grove UCC. We also encourage you to bookmark this, so all your eligible shopping will benefit the church: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/93-0419356>. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to let us know. Thank you!

Can & Bottle Collection Fundraiser



Thank you for your steady support of the Can & Bottle Collection for our FGUCC Youth Ministry. To date we have raised \$2,216. If you want to participate in this easy fundraiser, blue bags are available to pick up in the church office. For any additional information please contact Elena at 503-357-9121 or elena@fgucc.org.

To Keep Up on the Happenings of FGUCC

- Check out our webpage 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)
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