



The Viewpoint

News from the Forest Grove United
Church of Christ

March 2024

Circles of Belonging

"To be human is to belong. Belonging is a circle that embraces everything."

~ John O'Donohue

Dear friends,

During this season of Lent as we prepare for Easter we have been reflecting on the ways we find spiritual grounding and true spiritual refuge in this world. In our church, one of the hymns we often sing together goes, "Lord prepare me to be a sanctuary." Our Christian faith calls us into community because, with the Love that is God in our hearts, we have the power to be a refuge for each other. A beautiful way we have been acting as a spiritual refuge and comfort to each other has been through our Wednesday night fireside gatherings.

Regardless of perspective, I imagine everyone can agree that we are living in heavy times. With regard to the heaviness, I recently overheard a stranger say in conversation, "We sure aren't going to see the change we want to see in the world just by sitting in circles and singing Kumbaya." His comment gave me pause, and I found myself thinking, "actually, I don't think humanity has really tried sitting in circles and singing kumbaya quite enough! What's wrong with sitting in circles and singing kumbaya together? Actually, that sounds powerful and transformative, and I don't really see too many people in the culture 'gathering in circles and singing kumbaya.' Could we please try that more actually? Please?"

"Sitting in a circle and singing kumbaya," is like how we have been holding space for prayer and deepening connection around the fire in this season. On Wednesday nights we have been gathering around the Fire outside, centering ourselves, sharing our hearts, and practicing deep listening. We have been making space for pausing, calming, showing up for ourselves and each other in the presence of life, in the presence of God, around the warmth of a fire. We pass a talking object. When one person is holding the talking object, they speak, and everyone else just listens. In one passing around the circle, each person is given the option of answering the question, "What is breaking your heart?" Each person shares. Each one is heard. In the second passing around the circle each person has the opportunity to share and answer the question, "What makes your heart sing and come alive?" In this circle we hold what is heavy together and

practice remembering the joys and blessings of life and the simple things for which we can always be grateful. This is prayer! This is how we are practicing being sanctuary for each other this Lent. In a culture where we are rushed and generally conditioned to compartmentalize and bottle away what hurts, we discover that when we share those things with spiritual friends and hold it in Spirit, the pain becomes lighter. We see we are not alone with the heaviness. When there is always a risk of allowing what hurts to overwhelm us, together we also help remind each other of the beauty and simple miracles and joys of life. This way of being together is so simple but so powerful. Imagine if more people in this world gathered in circles like that? Would that not transform the world into a place of refuge and belonging? I don't know, but it seems a beautiful way to "be the change," as we are so often encouraged to do. It's through simple acts like showing up for each other with openness, curiosity, and love that we act as the body of Christ for each other and lift each other into the ever present grace and Love that is the Holy Spirit of God. How beautiful to be able to practice letting our hearts be refuge and sanctuary for each other. Thank you church. Keep gathering in circles and singing Kumbaya! You're beautiful.

Love, Brendan



Wednesday Night Fireside Gatherings During Lent—Wednesdays nights during Lent we will gather around the fire in the front courtyard from 6-8PM. This is a wonderful opportunity for prayer, meditation, and fellowship. All are welcome — Please join us!

Palm Sunday, March 24th, 10AM Worship

Maundy Thursday/Tenebrae Service—March 28, 7pm—Sweeping from the power and theatricality of Palm Sunday to the startling joy of Easter, it's easy to skip over the essential devastation that come between. Plan to attend this service that recalls Jesus' last supper with the disciples and then moves into the darkness betrayal and death. This is the path of resurrection and life; remembering and experiencing the dark in this time opens the space in our lives for Easter to be deeply felt and celebrated.

The service will be in the sanctuary. The choir will sing and we'll share communion. **If you would be willing to be a scripture reader for this service please contact Elena.**

EASTER DAY, Sunday, March 31:

- ◆ **Easter Sunrise Service at 6:30 AM**—Please join us for a special Easter Sunrise worship service at **Thatcher Park (on the corner of Thatcher and David Hill Roads).**
- ◆ **Easter Day Worship at 10 AM**—Please join us Easter morning for a jubilant service of worship filled with music presented by the Sanctuary Choir. Following worship we will have an Easter Egg Hunt for the children.

We Need Easter Candy

We're planning our Easter Day Egg Hunt for the learning community children which will follow worship on Easter Day (Sunday, March 31). If you'd like to donate candy for our Easter Egg Hunt, please drop off donations to the church office anytime by or before Sunday, March 24. **PLEASE NOTE:** We need individually wrapped mini candies to stuff into our plastic Easter Eggs. We do have some dairy-sensitive children, so candies of all assortments are welcome. Questions? Please talk to Ella or Elena. Thank you!!!



EASTER TULIPS



We are now taking orders for Easter Tulips. These can be purchased in honor and/or in memory of loved ones and will be used to decorate the Sanctuary on Easter Day, Sunday, March 31. These plants may be taken home after church on Easter Day. The cost is \$10 each. **[Order deadline is Sunday, March 24]**

Your Name: _____

Number of Tulips: _____

In memory of: _____

In honor of: _____

Best wishes to everyone celebrating a birthday in March!



Christine Kidd—2
Tori Eaton—3
Jimmy Houx—7
Yvonne Stacey—9
Peggy Alexander—10
Drew Horn—11
Ben Lawrence—16
Michael Colvin—18
Craig Karge-Moritz—22
Hannah Timm—22
Paul Edwards—26
Emily McGary—27



Your Worship Ministry Team would like to say THANK YOU to the approximately 50 people who participated in last Sunday's music discussion! It's evident how important music in worship is to our congregation, and your enthusiastic participation and creative ideas will help us continue to enrich our music program.

Much appreciation goes to Robert Lacock for creating the framework for our discussion, and to Blake Timm for doing an awesome job of keeping us on track.

Some main take-aways:

- We value and appreciate the music, and the musicians, we currently have.
- We love the variety in our musical offerings, and enthusiastically welcome even more variety!
- We would like more opportunities for congregational participation.
- Above all, we want the music to touch our hearts and fill our spirits. For some, that means emotional and heartfelt, for others it means handclapping, foot-stomping exuberance!

If you have further ideas, or have a musical gift you would be willing to share with us, please let us know!



Women's Spirit Event – Fun with Paints!

Please join us for “Fun With Paints” **Wednesday, March 13, from 6-8**. Bring a snack to share. ALL supplies will be provided.

Peace Table Dinner on Saturday March 16th from 6-9PM

We are hosting a “Peace Table” dinner for the community on **Saturday, March 16**. This Peace Table Dinner will feature the Gaza Monologues produced by Ashtar Theater Company and presented by members of the community along with the Center for Theater and Pedagogy of the Oppressed. Delicious food and enriching community discussion will follow the presentation. All are welcome! Please invite your friends!



St Patrick's Day Potluck

Join together for the annual St. Patrick's Day Potluck on **Sunday, March 17** immediately after service. Bring your best dish and your finest stories for fellowship. This event is hosted by our Nurture Ministry Team.

Donation Request for Care Packages

Please deliver by Sunday, March 10 for Ages 18-22, You're Important To Us! Your Church Loves You!

We are reaching out for the families of our young adults (age 18-22ish) transitioning on educational and non-educational paths. We expect to support 14-23 individuals. Helpful items include:



- ♥ Write down life advice that you would have loved to receive (short and sweet please)
- ♥ Individually wrapped snacks or candies (ex: Takis Fuego, Sour Patch Kids...)
- ♥ Individually wrapped chocolates (ex: Ferrero Rocher Hazelnut Chocolates)
- ♥ Individually wrapped packs of gum
- ♥ Artist sketch pads and art supplies (ex: tubes of watercolor paints and brushes)
- ♥ Small spa/self-care items (ex: Face masks, eye masks, room darkening masks, small hand lotions)
- ♥ Small individual card games/travel games (ex: Uno, decks of cards, travel cribbage)
- ♥ Small to medium denominations of gift cards for national or regional chains (ex: Starbucks, Dutch Brothers, Subway, sandwich shops, other coffee shops)
- ♥ We have young adults in Forest Grove, Portland, Corvallis, Eugene, Los Angeles, Tucson...and more!
- ♥ Small to medium donations of gift cards to Kroger or Amazon.

****If you prefer to donate money (drop off a check at the church or reach out to Nicki or Melissa for Venmo, PayPal, Zelle), Amazon or Kroger gift cards so we can fill in the gaps, that is also an option.****

😊 Thanks to a generous donation from GGs house, we already have a great start with school supply items! 😊

Our church family continues to care and wants to show it! **Please have donated items to the church office by Sunday, March 10th** so packages can be packed and mailed before or by March 18th.

Questions? Please reach out to Nicki Atman (971-998-5538 or nicki.nicu@gmail.com) and Melissa Timm (503-310-1084 or 4MelissaTimm@gmail.com)

Parish Nurse Corner



It's not over yet ... Cold, RSV and Covid season

I thought it would be helpful to review signs of these common viruses

Cold Virus:

Symptoms appear 2-3 days after exposure. Lasting 7-10 days. May include fever, cough, runny nose, sneezing, headache, and sore throat.

RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus):

Symptoms may appear 4-6 days after exposure. Is contagious 1-2 days before symptoms appear. May last 1-2 weeks.

More serious illness for infants less than 6 months old, seniors and those with underlying respiratory illness.

Symptoms may include runny nose, cough, sneezing, fever, wheezing, and decreased appetite.

Covid 19:

Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure. Average length of illness is 5-6 days after exposure.

May infect others beginning up to 2 days before symptoms appear.

Recommended treatment: Isolate for 5 days from time of onset of symptoms, known exposure and or from positive test. Masking for 10 days after onset of illness is recommended.

Symptoms may include fever, cough, tiredness, loss of taste or smell (which may persist for weeks) sore throat, aches and pains.

Prevention:

Maintaining overall good health. Hand washing, covering mouth and nose, clean surfaces exposed to droplets, social distancing and masking are good preventative measures.

Protect others! Please stay home when you are not feeling well.

Spring is on the Horizon!

Shalom and prayers for good health!

Deva, FGUCC Parish Nurse



IN OUR



Thoughts and Prayers

Ongoing—Please remember Barbara Lawrence as she is recovering from knee surgery on Monday, February 12.

Ongoing —Please remember Elaine Foy’s wife Nancy Foster, as she is recovering from rotator cuff surgery on February 16.

Ongoing—Please remember Charla Gladden who is dealing with ongoing health issues.

Ongoing—Please remember Marcia Bickford who is recovering from pericarditis.

Continued remembrance—Please remember John and Mary Welch as John is continuing steady recovery from a heart procedure last fall. He is in regular physical therapy and regaining his strength little by little. John appreciates phone calls and cards.

Continued remembrance—Please continue to remember Richard and Christine Kidd as Richard navigates ongoing health issues.

Continued remembrance—Please keep Russ and Ann Dondero in your prayers as they both continue to navigate health issues. If you would like to send them cards, their address is: Elder Garden Care Home, 4 NE 202nd Avenue, Portland, Oregon 97230.

Continued remembrance—Prayers for Bev Fletcher, Lorren’s wife, who is living at the EmpRes Hillsboro Health & Rehabilitation Center.

Continued remembrance—Please keep Deva Harris Williams in your prayers as she is still continuing to heal and recover from injuries due to a fall in early May.

Continued Prayers—Prayers of healing and comfort for all who have ongoing concerns, including Els Abma, Carol Benner, Bob Browning, Paul and Stephanie Edwards, Lillian Gimre, Charla Gladden, Max Groszmann, Jobina Lacock, Yvonne Stacey, Barbara Strain, and any other friends and family of our church, not named here.

Prayer Calendar for UCC Churches in our Conference—**Today we pray for** Beaver Creek United Church of Christ in Beaver Creek, Oregon and their interim pastor, Valerie Austin.

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.

Prayer Shawl Knitting—Please join us for knitting this month via Zoom on **Wednesdays, March 6 and 20, from 2-4PM**. The link to the Zoom meeting will be sent to everyone in the prayer shawl knitting group via email. If you’d like to participate, please call, or email Elena.

Processing Grief Through Yoga

Beginning on Saturday, March, 2 Anya Doll, a long-time member of the Forest Grove community, will be offering a new class “Processing Grief Through Yoga” on **Saturdays 11AM-12PM in the choir room**. This class is for people who have experienced the loss of a loved one and are looking for a healing path that may include yoga.



Why yoga for Grief?

- ♥ Breathing
- ♥ gentle, body, mind and spirit-nourishing movements that strengthen, and build resilience through balance and flexibility.
- ♥ Yoga classes build emotionally and physically safe spaces and create community with others to encounter and process similar or shared experiences.
- ♥ Deep relaxation

How to prepare/what to bring: Wear loose-fitting, comfortable clothing, bring a blanket, a pillow, yoga mat or a bath towel.

Payment is optional. This is a pay-what-you-will experience.

“In 2019 I earned a yoga teaching certification. Having had arthritis since adolescence and now into my 60s I realize the best way to feel physically and mentally stable, flexible, and in balance is by helping others find their own strength through yoga (and art). ~ Anya Doll”

Let the Library Come to You

Did you know that you can get books, movies, and audiobooks mailed to your home at no cost if you can't make it to the Forest Grove Library?



Washington County
Cooperative Library Services

You are eligible for this free program if any of the following apply:

- You have a physical condition preventing you from visiting the library for at least six months.
- You live in a care facility.
- You are an in-home caregiver.

If you need help completing the application, call 503-648-9785 between 9AM and 4PM, Monday to Friday, or contact the Forest Grove City Library at (503) 992-3247

How the program works:

Request specific library items or ask staff for recommendations. Your materials will be mailed to your home. When you're ready, return the items in the mailbag that includes prepaid postage.

BEST Team Recycling Information for March 3

Another recycling update: We can no longer recycle ink cartridges. The Office Depot in Hillsboro closed, and it is not worth the gas to take cartridges to the Office Depot in Cedar Hills. If someone would like to take our cartridges to that Office Depot once a month, use the credit and donate the money to the BEST Team budget, we'd love to hear from you!

PLEASE NOTE: We do not accept fluorescent bulbs or tubes on First Sundays.

At this time, we only accept the following items on First Sunday:



- Clear #1 plastics
- Air pillows
- PakTech handles for carrying 4-6 pack cans
- Candle wax (the Eplers will use)

Cell Phones: We will accept cell phones at any time. (Please place phones in the marked box on the shelf above coat rack in the narthex.)

Battery and CFL bulb recycling information

You can recycle your own batteries, or **you can bring all of them to church on First Sunday and we'll sort and dispose of them properly for you.** If you bring them to us, please contribute to the recycling fees.

All batteries and fluorescent bulbs and tubes can be taken to the Metro Central Hazardous Waste Facility on an individual basis.



We cannot take fluorescent bulbs or tubes on First Sunday.

— Your FGUCC BEST Team

Do you need some extra help at home?



Do you need some help with yardwork or other manual labor? Isaac Dibley, a regular volunteer with the Blessing Box Crew, is looking for additional work to supplement his income. He works nights at Forest Grove Safeway. He can do manual labor such as raking leaves, moving heavy objects, or anything of that nature. He's asking for \$20/hour and will work at a pace that will make the cost worth it. You can contact Isaac directly at 971-354-6292.

One Great Hour of Sharing 2024

During Lent each year, the United Church of Christ holds a special offering called the One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS). The Theme of OGHS 2024 is ***“Share the Light.”***

“You’re here to be light, bringing out the God-colors in the world.” Matthew 5:14-15 (The Message)

This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine ... Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine...” If Jesus had a playlist of music, surely this familiar hymn would be among the top five!

Jesus teaches that faith calls for action. Sharing our light, as the diverse and colorful expression of God’s love here on earth, leads to making blankets, staffing food pantries, cooking meals, building houses and schools, signing petitions for worthy causes, and protesting injustices. A simple song with a simple message—our light is on a light stand, for all to see—shine and share. On any given day, light is shining because we are there through our gifts to OGHS.

Your Contributions make a difference. Your dollars count. Give generously. Share the light!

Donations for this year’s offering will be accepted anytime. Checks may be made payable to FGUCC with memo “OGHS.”

For more information on One Great Hour of Sharing you can visit: www.ucc.org/oghs

Pledges and Contributions

Thank you all 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 (let us know if you’d like more information). You can also donate via 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!

You can Donate to FGUCC via QRCode

If you would like to make a donation to FGUCC, you can scan this QRCode which will take you directly to our FGUCC PayPal donation page. There you will have the option of paying with either a debit or credit card via PayPal. If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to let us know.



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 \$4,581.** If you want to participate in this easy fundraiser, blue bags are available to pick up in the church office. Contact Elena at 503-357-9121 or elena@fgucc.org if you have questions.

Forest Grove UCC Staff

Moderator

Pete Truax — pBTFG@aol.com

Pastor

Brendan Curran — brendan@fgucc.org
Phone: 503-523-6339

Learning Community Coordinator

Ella Tignor — ella@fgucc.org

Office Manager

Elena Parker — elena@fgucc.org

Sexton

John Davis — sexton2862@gmail.com

Parish Nurse

Deva Harris-Williams — fguccparishnurse@gmail.com

FGUCC Media & Tech Specialist (MTS)

Jesse Montez — jesse@fgucc.org

Stephen Ministry

Renee Mills — millsrenergy@yahoo.com

Ken Prickett — qkenbettp@gmail.com

Director of Sanctuary Choir

Sue Armentrout — slt.arm@frontier.com

Laura Frye — lajaneefrye@gmail.com

Service Music Musician

Joannah Ball Sechrist — joannahball@gmail.com

Director of Children's Choirs

Geneva Houx — geneva.houx@gmail.com

Contact Information

2032 College Way ♦ (Mail) P.O. Box 265
Forest Grove, OR 97116
Phone: (503) 357-9121

Office email: elena@fgucc.org

Website: www.fgucc.org ♦ Facebook: www.facebook.com/fgucc