



The Viewpoint

News from the Forest Grove United
Church of Christ

October 2024

Truth and Reconciliation at our Central Pacific Conference UCC Annual Gathering

“Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to live in.” -Isaiah 58:12

Dear friends,

I wanted to take a moment to celebrate our congregation’s participation in our wider church’s ministry. As the Forest Grove United Church of Christ, we were one of the first churches in this part of the world that later become the United Church of Christ. As the United Church of Christ, we are part of a larger body of churches that serves a vision of healing, justice, and peace for our world. In our faith tradition we are part of a prophetic line stretching back to the prophets, like the prophet Isaiah that calls us as people of God to be, “repairers of the breach.” I want to share some of the ways we are participating in efforts to “repair the breach” and begin mending what was broken in our involvement with the Central Pacific Conference of the UCC at this year’s CPC annual gathering.

As I write to you, several members of our congregation are preparing to take the trip to Umatilla country in Pendleton where this year’s annual gathering is being held. The theme for this year’s annual gathering is about truth and reconciliation regarding our denomination’s past missions and how those efforts negatively impacted the indigenous peoples of this land. As part of the weekend’s programming, we are going to be learning indigenous perspectives on the history of the land and the way our church’s presence here impacted the indigenous peoples who have been here and remain here. Part of our learning will include a visit to the Tamastlikt Cultural Center and hearing from our keynote speaker, Louie Bluecoat. Louie is a member of the Standing Rock Tribe. Some additional themes we will be exploring together include “developing an understanding of the land as a living-breathing being, building mutually supportive connections with indigenous communities, memory and truth telling, and unlearning shame.” We will also be exploring the topic of reckoning with our institutional past and coming to understand the process of that reckoning as a necessary spiritual practice to make present and on-going efforts of repair possible.

I imagine that there will be an opportunity for us to hear back from some of our delegates who participate in this meaningful gathering by the time you are reading this letter! Reconciliation and repair are always repetitive and cyclical processes for all of us, individually and collectively, as we strive together to live and embody the Love of Christ in our lives and for each other.

In Christ, Brendan

Upcoming Events for Youth & Families:

Intergenerational Membership Retreat is set for Saturday, October 26

Anyone who is interested in membership with Forest Grove UCC is welcome to participate in an intergenerational membership retreat here at FGUCC from **11AM to 3:30PM on Saturday, October 26**. If you have any questions, please talk to Pastor Brendan.

Update on Kitchen Project

The kitchen is finally complete and we passed final inspection with flying colors!

We are deeply grateful to every single individual and all the movers and shakers who participated in making this dream a reality! We will be having an official “Kitchen Blessing” celebration, and this date will be announced very soon.

Thank you, thank you, thank you!!!



We have a brand-new quilted dust cover for our organ console!

This work of art was crafted to protect the organ while keeping clear the view of the lovely oak cabinet work. The fabric colors and quilt pattern were selected to harmonize with and enhance the sanctuary’s décor. While the main purpose is to protect the organ manuals, during its construction seamstress Beth Genly also envisioned her project as a tribute to FGUCC’s musicians. Beth is a newer member of the choir and was attracted to this church because of the variety and quality of music we offer. Thank you, Beth!

— Sarah Ball



Caring for Our Community Auction 2024

Mark your calendars, because our big event of the year is coming up:
Caring for Our Community Auction: A Night at the Museum,
Saturday November 23rd!



- The website charityauction.bid/FGUCC2024 will open on Nov 1 and tickets for the party will go on sale. Tickets: Adults - \$25 each, kids, 12 and under - \$5 each
- You can **view items** in the chapel after church on Nov 17 and ask for help setting up your phone.
- **Online bidding** for silent items will begin Wednesday, Nov 20, 8 am. There is no charge for viewing and bidding on online items. The silent auction will close at 6:15 on Nov 23 during the party, so bring your phone for those final bids. Look for folks in the top hats, who will be able to assist you.
- **The party** will be on Saturday, Nov 23, 5-8 pm with dinner, music by our own Castle Road and no-host beverages. Come dressed to the nines for an evening out at our very own art museum! Live auction is 6:30-8 pm with checkout at the end so you can take your items home with you.
- There will be a limited number of silent items that will close electronically at 5 pm when the party starts. You can then bid on those items at the party, on paper until 6:15 when all the bidding closes. Back by popular demand for those who like that last minute scramble for bids!
- **How to bid on silent items:** If you plan to bid on your phone, it's easiest if you download the Auctria mobile app from the Google Play Store or App Store. Open the app. Enter charityauction.bid/FGUCC2024 as your event. Go to Menu, online registration. You must register with a credit card but you can choose to check out later with a check or cash to save yourself credit card fees. Click on Catalog. You can scroll through all items, or choose a category under Show Me, or put a word into the Search bar. When you find an interesting item, star it. You can later see all your starred items under Show Me, so you can minimize later searches. Follow bidding instructions for each item. Questions? Ask Bonnie, chiroqueen704@msn.com.
- **Join-ins will be different this year.** Bidding will start at full value, but bidding can go higher once all seats have a full value bid, so everyone will get a chance for a seat at a limited seat event.
- We will donate a full 25% of our proceeds directly to four local, deserving charities: **Blessing Box, Care Partners, GG's House and New Narrative.** The proceeds also support our church in providing free or low-cost building space for many community functions.

- **Please volunteer!** Sign up at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F044DADAD23A1FC1-50976988-fgucc> or talk to Bonnie (chiroqueen704@msn.com) or Kathleen (kathleenlacock1@gmail.com). If you have traditionally volunteered for a particular job, please sign up right away to reserve your favorite volunteer opportunity. Thank you to all our volunteers.
- **Offer great donations.** Please hand your items directly to Elena Parker, Bonnie McDowell, Elaine Foy or Deva Harris-Williams, along with a completed donation form. We will be accepting donations from **October 6 through November 10.** Please consider offering events and experiences. Be creative. If you enjoy something, share it with others – we love join-ins! We'd also appreciate donations of like-new toys for the kids' auction (we have enough games!).
- We are asking all committees and commissions to offer a join-in, preferably a family event or with childcare. So talk to your committee members about hosting and run your ideas past Bonnie McDowell.
- Got nice wine you aren't drinking? Please donate it. See Laurie Kerns Frye or Bonnie McDowell.

See you at the museum!

Bonnie McDowell, chiroqueen704@msn.com

Come Sing With Us!



Our Sanctuary Choir will begin Fall rehearsals on September 5. We meet in the Choir Room on Thursdays at 7:00pm, and new singers in any voice part are always welcome – tenors and basses greeted with particular enthusiasm! This is a great time to join us, as we prepare to kick off our Fall season on Deep Roots to Strong Wings Sunday, September 15.

If you have questions, call Sue Armentrout at 971-712-9724, or email her at slt.arm@frontier.com.

Children's Choir is Starting up this Month!

Children's Choir rehearsals will begin on Sunday, October 20. If your child, age 7 and up is interested in singing, they are welcome in the Angel Choir. Children ages 3-6 are welcome in the Cherub Choir. Please contact Geneva Houx at geneva.houx@gmail.com or 503-806-0921 (text) for details.

— Geneva Houx, Director of Children's Choirs

Ongoing Support Needed for the Lawrence Family

Dear friends,

Thank you so much for your ongoing support of the Lawrence family since Barbara was first diagnosed with cancer. Ben and Barbara really appreciate the community support during this time as Barbara is undergoing long-term chemo.



Our goal is to continue to provide meals (or gift cards) 2-3 times a week to make things easier for them as they are in for a very long haul. You can sign up on the “Take Them A Meal” schedule (see link below to sign up). Delivery of meals needs to be by 5PM and NO CONTACT. (The schedule is open to allow flexibility.)

THANK YOU for supporting our community!

**** Please read the allergy section VERY carefully as Dairy, Tree Nut, Shellfish, and Sesame allergies cause MAJOR ISSUES ****

Sign up LINK: <https://takethemameal.com/UTFT1829>

Ushers Needed



- If you can smile and say Hello: you can be an Usher
 - If you know where the bathrooms are: You can be an Usher
 - If you know where the Learning Community is: You can be an Usher
 - If you can count for attendance: You can be an Usher
 - If you can be an Usher: Please see Kevin Young or Rod Burrus
-

Communion at Home

The sacrament of communion is an important part of our relationship with Jesus and our Ministry Team wants to reach out to those of our congregation who are home bound or unable to attend church for any reason to include them in this sacred covenant.

Anyone interested in having communion at home, please email or call Elena at elena@fgucc.org or 503-357-9121.





IN OUR



Thoughts and Prayers

Joys and Prayer Concerns

Sympathy—Please keep Molly Siebert and her family in your prayers as her husband Steven passed away on Sunday, September 22. A memorial service and reception are scheduled for Friday, October 18 at 2:00 PM here at FGUCC.

New—Prayers for ongoing recovery, health and wholeness for Roy Cotton as he navigates cancer treatment.

New—Please continue to remember Richard and Christine Kidd as Richard is in hospice care.

New—Prayers for ongoing recovery, health and wholeness for Lori Epler as she navigates cancer treatment.

Thanks have been received from Lori Epler—I want to thank everyone for all the love and prayers that you have been sending. I'm through my first 3 rounds of chemo, resting up for the next 3. Your prayers and knowing I'm loved helps me every day – Thank you!

Ongoing—Prayers for ongoing recovery, health and wholeness for Barbara Lawrence as she continues to navigate cancer treatment.

Ongoing—Prayers for ongoing recovery, health and wholeness for Charla Gladden as she continues to navigate ongoing health issues.

Ongoing Prayer Concern—Prayers for ongoing recovery, health and wholeness for Carol Benner as she transitions to living at Jennings McCall Assisted Living after several months in the hospital and rehab.

Continued remembrance—Please keep Russ and Ann Dondero in your prayers as Russ is now in hospice care. If you would like to send cards, their address is: Elder Garden Care Home, 4 NE 202nd Avenue, Portland, Oregon 97230.

Continued remembrance—Continued prayers for healing and good health for Bev Fletcher, Lorren's wife, who is living at the EmpRes Hillsboro Health & Rehabilitation Center.

Continued Prayers—Prayers of healing and comfort for all who have ongoing concerns, including Els Abma, Carol Benner, Bob Browning, Paul and Stephanie Edwards, Charla Gladden, Max Groszmann, Carlene Krueger, Jobina Lacock, Dick Lane, Patricia Spears, Yvonne Stacey, Barbara Strain, John and Mary Welch, Deva Harris-Williams, and any other friends and family of our church, not named here.

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.

Wanted: Large Wide mouth canning jars

Do you have any unused canning jars that need a new home? We are preparing soup for our 2nd annual Day of Art Hearth & Buns event on Sunday, December 8 from 11AM to 4PM in Fellowship Hall. We need a bunch of 32-oz wide mouth canning jars for the soup we are canning to have available for sale. This year we will have an option to preorder soup to pick up on the day of the event.

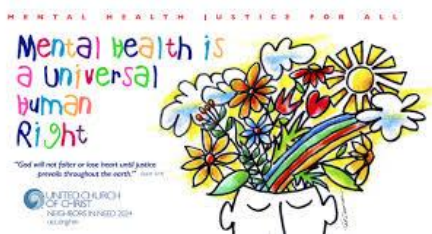


This event is a fundraiser for the Blessing Box Community Fridge.

From your Blessing Box Team!

Fill the Barrel – Donations always welcomed! Let’s continue to fill Elijah’s Barrel for the Blessing Box! Needs include peanut butter for PB&J sandwiches, mayonnaise, as well as pepperoni, salami, dry parmesan cheese, and pizza or pasta sauce for our very popular Pizza Bread! Thank you!

Neighbors in Need All-Church Offering



The Neighbors in Need theme for 2024 is “**Mental Health Justice For All!**” This year’s focus is on Mental Health Justice. In 2015, the General Synod of the United Church of Christ passed a resolution to become WISE (Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, and Engaged) for mental health.

A just world for all is a world where the human rights and well-being of people with mental health challenges are respected, no matter who you are or where you are in life’s mental health journey.

As you may recall, one-third of this offering supports [Council for American Indian Ministry \(CAIM\)](#). Two-thirds are used by [Justice and Witness Ministries](#) to provide [grants](#) to UCC churches and organizations as well as supporting a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects.

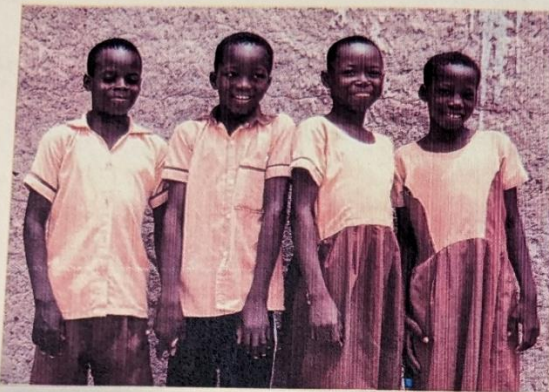
While many of our churches collect the offering on October 6, 2024, as part of World Communion Sunday, contributions to this offering can be collected on any Sunday during the calendar year. We thank you for your support and generosity!

Framework International Update

Below is an update on Framework International buildings currently in progress. Seth Prickett is Ken and Bette Prickett's son and the founder of Framework International. Of particular interest is the mention of the "Jack Beu Primary School," built in 2020. (Jack was Winnie Beu's husband who passed away in December 2019.)



Empowering West Africa's youth through the construction and renovation of its public schools.



The Jack Beu Primary School, in the northern Ghanaian village of Zeemboug, was built by Framework International (FI) in 2020. This school block has grown to serve nearly 300 students. "Nearby" villages send their kids there too – some students are walking as far away as 5 kilometers (3.10 miles) to attend school!

Zeemboug's children are thriving in school, and they don't want to stop learning. The only thing potentially stopping them, there is no junior high building in their village. *Together, we can change that.*

Framework is committed to building a three-room junior high block in Zeemboug. This will allow for more children, who have aged-out of primary school, the opportunity to continue their education. Right now, their junior high students are being taught in two crudely built mud huts with insufficient roofing and ventilation. School may stop for these students during the rainy season, which is four months long! Zeemboug's students deserve a safe and sturdy school building in which to continue their education.

FI Track Record and Solutions

Since 2004, FI has been building schools in Ghana. In 2023, we built our 10th primary school in the village of Hasowodze; and we recognize the key partnerships Rotary Clubs in Oregon had in helping to accomplish this.

Ghana provides free public schooling through the junior high level, contributing administrators, teachers, and curriculum. But the country's population growth is outpacing its infrastructure development, especially in rural communities. If there isn't a school in a child's village, or the school is in poor shape, parents may not allow their child to attend. This is especially true for girls, who need to be home to help with mid-day chores. We are able to build, renovate, and maintain schools at a fraction of the price it costs the government by using local materials and workers.



Financial Strength and Accountability

Framework International is a volunteer board-led non-profit organization, with very little overhead, allowing nearly 100 percent of donations to go directly to the building or renovating of public schools in Ghana. Once a school project is completed, FI oversees its maintenance and repairs. Board members or in-country team members make on-site assessment visits to our schools, and are in contact with school administrators regarding building needs.

The cost to bring Zeemboug their brand new three-room junior high school block is \$40,000.00.

Best wishes to all of you celebrating birthdays in October!



Chris Harter—3
Charmel Herinckx—3
Andrea Meeuwsen—4
Ralph Vasey—4
Ellaine Whisler—4
Phil Zapf—6
Ruth Holznagel—7
Logan McGary—7
Carol Pauli—13
Justin Hoekstra—17

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 \$5,445!** 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.



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!

BEST Team Recycling Information

Did you know? Batteries: can now be recycled curbside in Forest Grove? To learn more go to:

<https://www.washingtoncountyor.gov/swr/battery-recycling>.

Reminders: We can no longer recycle ink cartridges. Also, 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.)

All 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

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)
 - Link to Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/forestgroveucc/>
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