

BEHOLD!! SMYRNA

January 2021



UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST

Dear Smyrna Friends,

As I write this, I am in the middle of preparations for the Sunday before Christmas, when we will tell “Christmas Tales” as part of our worship, and hear from Mary, Joseph, a shepherd, and pair of innkeepers. A week from tomorrow is Christmas Eve, when we will light candles, listen to the Christmas story, and sing Christmas carols. And the following Sunday is the last Sunday of 2020, when we will have our “Carol Sunday.” We hope you will join us for all these worship services online and then join our virtual Fellowship Hour each Sunday at 11:30 am on Zoom.

As I write this, I am also in the middle of preparing a new duty as a member of the citizen legislature in the Oregon State Senate. I am honored to serve in this capacity, and grateful to the Staff Parish and members of the Church Council who have authorized a six-month leave for me to be able to fulfill the duties of this office before returning to my ministry at Smyrna. I shall miss you, but I will be nearby and will look forward to seeing you again soon.

I know that the Staff-Parish Committee has several well qualified applicants to fill the Supply Pastor position in a half-time role for these months. You will be in good hands.

In the meantime, let us pause to give thanks for what looks like light at the end of the tunnel with this pandemic, as we look past these darkening days to the days with more light ahead. And let us give thanks that the God of love **and compassion is with us as we recall Christ’s birth** – a tiny child in a manger, heralded by unexpected visitors.

Life is often unexpected, sometimes painful, sometimes joyful, but always full of the knowledge that Emmanuel is born – God with us.

Blessings to all this Christmastide and wishing you all a happy, healthy New Year!

Pastor Deb

Ministers: All members of the church

Minister: The Rev. Dr. Deborah Patterson

Editor: Jeannie Rogers **Asst. Editor:** Elaine Daniels

Church Phone (503) 651-2131

email: smyrnaucc@canby.com

Website: www.smyrna-ucc.org

31119 S. Highway 170, Canby, OR 97013



January



In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light.. Genesis 1:1-3

This month, we will spend time considering the importance of new beginnings. In this creation story from Genesis, God creates structure out of chaos – marking the beginning of our world. Now we will consider how people of faith create structure out of chaos.

Follow us in the Sunday bulletins for our progress . . .

Mission and Outreach:

For Thanksgiving and Christmas \$500 was sent to both the Canby and Molalla Food Banks. Any nonperishable food items and also hygiene items can be left in the narthex and Paulette Eyman will check on a regular basis and deliver them to the Molalla Service Center.

The items listed on the Reverse Advent Calendar that the Health Committee sent out, can also be brought to the narthex and they will be delivered to Molalla after Christmas. As of December 15th, I can already report that 2 boxes have been filled and are ready to go. Thank you to everyone who has or will be contributing.

We have been collecting money for The Christmas Fund, a national UCC offering to assist retired clergy and provide for emergencies they might have.

Looking ahead for January and February our "Children for Change" will go to help support the "Salem Drop." This center provides a safe, welcoming and inclusive space where youth can receive peer support, gain leadership skills, meet new people and achieve their goals. A crisis response team is also available to provide relief for students recovering from acts of violence, suicide, or other traumas.



Smyrna Women's Fellowship Virtual Bazaar



The Virtual Bazaar organized by the Women's Fellowship has finished its three-week run, and it was a huge success thanks to all those who helped and all the donors. Only a few items remain unsold or undistributed. After the proceeds were totaled, the group earned \$6,390.80. This includes \$1,095 for campships and \$960.50 in donations to Women's Fellowship. The only expense was for an ad in the local newspaper.

We sold 105 items (including donations) to 50 buyers, some of whom made multiple orders. Considering all the moving parts to this effort, we managed to iron out most of the glitches, and if it is repeated, we will have learned a lot. Thank you, thank you to all of you who helped with this effort.



Thank you to the Health Committee and Mission and Outreach for coordinating the Reverse Advent Calendar! Thank you to all who

made the Women's Fellowship Bazaar such an amazing success! Thank you to the Diaconate and the Women's Fellowship for the poinsettias they delivered!

Thank you to all who participated in making the "2020 Memory Quilt" squares and to Jane Dahl for offering to put it together!

Thank you to Paul Yoder for working on the water line and hanging the Christmas Star and to Jane Dahl for decorating the Sanctuary for the Christmas season for our virtual services! Thank you to Christine Foster and Joel Daniels for weekly music for the virtual services! Thank you to all who participate in pulling together the virtual services!

Thank you to the Nominating Committee for their work in locating committee members for 2021 – Ginger Redlinger, Mary Ashton, Lisa Havre, and Barb Menkel! Thank you to those who helped with our "Christmas Tales" service on December 20th!

Thank you to the Staff Parish Committee for their work on locating a supply pastor during my upcoming leave! Thank you to John Mason, David Clites, and Barbara Daniels for leading the Advent Conversation on "Christmas is Not Your Birthday!" Thank you to everyone for getting in their reports for the Annual Meeting (to be held January 24th at 11:30 am on Zoom! Thank you to Jeannie Rogers and Elaine Daniels for doing Behold! And more – you know who you are! Gratefully,
Pastor Deb

Senior Loneliness Line is ...

A partnership between Lines for Life and Clackamas County with a team of volunteers and staff specially trained in working with older adults. ***Any aging adult experiencing loneliness, isolation, depression or anxiety*** can benefit from a confidential phone call with Senior Loneliness specialists. Please call—SeniorLoneliness Line at ***503.200.1633.***

Someone does care and does want to listen!

The **Seven C's of Pandemic Perseverance:**

Calm

It's really easy to get all twisted up about not only what's happening but the predictions for the future. Stay informed, stay knowledgeable and then turn it off. Allow yourself some space, Stay calm. This situation will pass.

Communicate

– Stay in communication not only with others. Many will be in touch with their others through a variety of different media (Skype, Teams, GoToMeeting, Email, Slack, etc.). Remember to connect with them on a personal level to ask how they are doing.

Connect

We are fortunate to live in a time where non-contact connections are so easy. Reach out to a friend you might not have spoken with in a while, either on the phone or via text, and ask them how they are doing. Offer to check in from time to time to see how things are going. The good news about this pandemic is that we **have some free time that we didn't have before.**

Care

– If you are fortunate enough not to be in a high risk category for this virus, remember that others are. I have a dear friend who is immunocompromised. **It's weird that I can't see her, but I have offered to do things to help.** Same with my elderly neighbor. Remember also, that others may not want to see themselves as needing help ... **let them know you both can help each other so they feel part of helping someone too.**

Calisthenics

– OK – no one uses this term anymore except the US armed forces. **Everyone says 'workout'.** Give me some leeway here. I had to shoehorn the concept into a 'C'-word.... Whatever you

want to call it, try to keep moving in your exile. Download a workout or yoga routine to practice in your home. Take a walk if you are able to stay away from other people. Do squats. Bench-press the dog (if you have one of those little ones). Do something that keeps you active for part of the day. **It's good for your brain and body.**

Cabin Fever

— **We don't know how long this will last, although there is now light at the end of the tunnel.** Do what you can to change up your routine. Read a book if you normally watch TV. Play a card **game...you know, that weird activity people did before video games, Social Media, and streaming service binging?** Write something about your experience during this pandemic. **Do something that takes you out of the idea that you're stuck on a little island.**

Cook or Clean

— OK, neither of these may sound like tons of fun for some people but you might feel better if you take time to clean out those **stuffed drawers or closets you've been meaning to get to for a while.** What better time to do it than when you are obligated to **stay at home? I realize that some people don't like to cook but if you do, making some meals you can freeze for later when you are back at work and don't feel like cooking can really feel like you've accomplished something.**

OR

You can binge watch Breaking Bad or The Crown if nothing else comes to mind.

Just remember, we're all in this together.

Edited from Andrea Gibbs, MBA

Annual Reports needed: Deadline January 5, 2021

If you are on one of Smyrna's committees or boards, find out who is responsible for the report -- it could be you!

Pastor
Moderator
Board of Trustees
Grounds Committee
Diaconate
Scholarship Committee
Finance Committee — 2021 Fundraising dates

Clerk's Report

Mission and Outreach
Staff/Parish Committee
Building Use
Board of Christian Education & Christian Nurture

Women's Fellowship Report

Nominating Committee — Officers, Board & Committee Members
Memorial Committee
Heartline
Cemetery Committee
√ Health Committee
Earth Care Committee
Camp Adams

Treasurer's Report — separate from annual





Friends in the Lord

Proverbs 27:17 (NIV) says, "As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another." It's important to choose friends who help us be more like Jesus. How many words can you make from the word *friendship*?

F R I E N D S H I P

2-letter words: _____

3-letter words: _____

4-letter words: _____

5-letter words: _____

Words with 6 or more letters: _____



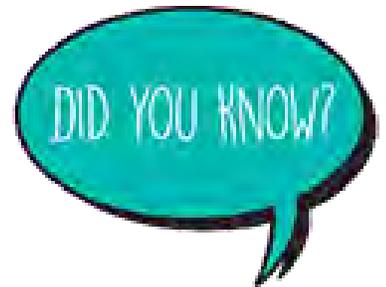
The pastor was looking over the crèche the day after Christmas when he noticed that the baby Jesus was missing. He went outside and saw a little boy pulling a new red wagon. In the wagon was Jesus.

We walked up to the boy and said, "Hi, there. Where did you get the baby Jesus?"

The boy answered honestly, "In the church."

"Why did you take him?" the pastor asked.

"Well," said the boy, "I prayed to the Lord Jesus and asked him for a wagon for Christmas. I told Him that if He gave me one, I'd take Him for a ride in it."



Attending church 4 times per month (virtually or in person) adds 7 years to your life??

Answers include: in, is, hi, he; hip, end, sip, dip, rip, nip, pie, sir, hid; ship, send, ride, dine, find, fine, drip, shed, dish, fish, rind, ripe, hide, fried, pride, siren, fresh, ferns; friend, fisher, diners, rinsed, shrine, finish, shinier, insider, hinders, inspired, refinish, finished

January 2021 at Smyrna

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																				
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**No matter who you are,
or where you are on life's
journey, we welcome
you.**

SMYRNA



UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST
a just world for all

Prayer Requests

Please remember all who live alone, those who have health concerns, particularly:

- Sandra Mahar
- Paul Burkert
- Josh Marshall
- Roberta Rigg
- **Angie Maurer's brother, Tim**
- Donna Yenne and her aunts Dee and Dot
- Carolyn McCall
- and those who are facing other challenges.

Let us hold each other in prayer, and give thanks for this Christian fellowship.



If you know anyone who should be on the prayer list in the Behold, please let Jeannie or Elaine know. If they would enjoy receiving cards notify someone in the Diaconate.

Mission Statement

Smyrna United Church of Christ is striving to be:

- ♦ A place of peace, where we offer to all an extravagant welcome wherever you are in your life journey regardless of your ethnicity, marital status, religion, gender, race, age, disability, national origin, or sexual orientation, and where we teach the stories of God's love and call on our lives.
- ♦ A spiritual haven, where we accept and care for all people and God's creation in an outreach of grace.
- ♦ A lighthouse of God's compassion, where worship, teaching, learning and spiritual growth take place in community, powered by thought and action.
- ♦ A Christian people, working for God's realm in ecumenical harmony with other people of faith and conviction.