

BEHOLD!! SMYRNA

September



UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST

Transition Sunday returns in September!

Join us for the next Transition Sunday on September 18, when we will focus on the question, “Who are we now.” This is one of the three focus questions for the interim period, which are also the organizing questions for the Local Church Profile that the Transition Team is working on. The team decided it would be helpful to explore the “who are we now” question before we tackle the questions about mission (“who is our neighbor?”) and vision (“who is God calling us to become?”).

For this Transition Sunday, we’ll be giving special attention to Smyrna UCC’s life of faith—the congregation’s core beliefs and commitments, and how those are reflected in our experience of worship. *And we can use your help!* First, please plan to join us for worship and for an hour following worship on September 18. Second, we are including bulletin inserts for you to fill out over the next few weeks. There are just two inserts but we’ll give you more than one opportunity to fill them out in case you miss a Sunday ☐. The inserts contain questions that invite your reflection on your experience of worship at Smyrna and the beliefs and ideas about God that our worship services express. We’ll use your answers, and the outcomes from our after-church gathering on Transition Sunday to write up this part of the church profile.

Thank you in advance for your participation in our Transition Sunday activities!

Smyrna UCC Reading Group plans

The Smyrna UCC Reading Group has been meeting by means of Facebook and email for a while due to the Covid situation. Hopefully when Covid numbers are better we’ll be able to meet in person, but in the meantime Audrey has been investigating other styles of Book Clubs. For our next reading experience, Audrey has modified the idea of the Postal Book Group in which members use journals to record and mail thoughts between member readers who sometimes live hundreds of miles apart. She has created the idea of Book Tag for our Smyrna UCC group.

A short book has been chosen and included in a Book Travel Bag. Audrey has added a discussion journal and as one reader finishes, he or she’ll pass the book to the next reader at church on Sunday. Readers won’t know the book title until they receive the Book Travel Bag—part of the fun and surprise of this process. Because of the size of our group, it will probably take a couple of months for everyone to receive the Travel Bag so if you’re busy in September, consider joining in October. If you’d like to join, contact:

Audrey Yoder (yoderstore@canby.com) or
Ann Clites (annclites52@gmail.com)
and we’ll add you to the Travel Bag itinerary.

Ministers: All members of the church
Ministers: Rev. Cat Allard; Rev. Janet Parker
Editor: Jeannie Rogers **Asst. Editor:** Elaine Daniels
Church Phone (503) 651-2131
email: smyrnaucc@canby.com
Website: www.smyrna-ucc.org



The Peace of Wild Things, by Wendell Berry

[Listen](#) (click on this link and then click on the “Listen” button)

When despair for the world grows in me
and I wake in the night at the least sound
in fear of what my life and my children’s lives may be,
I go and lie down where the wood drake
rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds.
I come into the peace of wild things
who do not tax their lives with forethought
of grief. I come into the presence of still water.
And I feel above me the day-blind stars
waiting with their light. For a time
I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.

I love this poem. If you haven’t encountered it before, I hope it blesses you as it has me. I know so many people who love this poem and find great solace in it. I think it’s because, for many of us, this poem is almost autobiographical. Like all great poetry, it expresses a nearly universal truth that most people can relate to—the experience of nature as a source of healing, peace, and authentic spiritual encounters with the Sacred. For as long as I can remember, going out into natural environments has been a way for me to find a measure of peace that eludes me in Indoor World...in the hectic busy-ness of the “peopled” world. Since childhood, I have been blessed with occasional profound experiences of God’s presence mediated through nature. And the wonderful thing is that it doesn’t have to be “NATURE,” as in wilderness or places that are hard to get to. It can be “nature” that’s as simple and as easily accessible as your backyard, neighborhood park, suburban street, or balcony with potted plants and access to the sky.

Back in the early 2000s, when I was living in Chicago, I was going through a rough time both professionally and personally, and I got a little depressed. But I found that something as simple as going for a walk outside down the leafy streets of Hyde Park made me feel noticeably better. Something about just being under the canopy of green leaves helped re-set my perspective on life and get a handle on the big picture. It literally lifted my mood. And I felt that God was helping me, you might even say “presence-ing” with me, during these outdoor walks. One day, a way to describe this popped into my head: “green grace.” And I’ve called it “green grace” ever since (maybe for people who, like me, also LOVE and feel deeply connected to water—lakes, streams, rivers, the ocean—you could also call it “blue grace!”). I think this is what Berry is getting at with the concluding words of his poem: “For a time, I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.” (Click on this [link](#) to read about the psychological benefits of time in nature).

As a society, we are going through some tough times. Where do we turn for help and hope in times like these? I hope that as Christians, we turn to God, and yet sometimes that’s easier said than done. It helps to be reminded of concrete ways that we can access a sense of God’s presence and Christ’s peace. Perhaps you already have a spiritual practice that works wonderfully well for you. If so, keep doing it! If not, you might try doing what I do every day when the weather permits: simply make time to go outside for at least 10-20 minutes and focus your attention lightly on some element of the natural world—it could be a tree, or the clouds, a favorite plant, birds, water, whatever you can easily see without going far (or you can close your eyes and take in the world through your other senses). Then simply breathe and invite God to be in your breathing in and breathing out. When thoughts arise, gently note them and let them go. If you wish, you could use a centering mantra like, “Breathing in God’s grace, breathing out God’s peace.” Or “Breathing in God’s love, breathing out my stress.” Or any other mantra you prefer. You can also do this as a form of “walking meditation.” It really helps! I hope you find many moments of joy with “the peace of wild things” in these lovely waning days of summer.

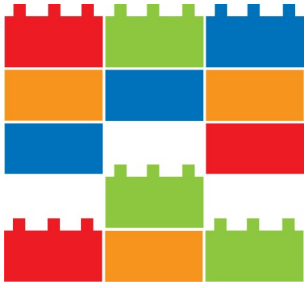
Pastor Janet Parker

SEPTEMBER WORSHIP LEADERSHIP

- **September 4** — Pastor Cat leading
- **September 11** — Pastor Cat leading; Pastor Janet assisting
- **September 18** — Pastor Janet leading; Transition Sunday
- **September 25** — Lay led; Pastors away at Central Pacific Conference Annual Gathering

Scripture Dialog change

Pastor Cat will lead Zoom Scripture Dialog on Thursday, September 1 and Thursday, September 8. This is a change from being held on a Wednesday. The time remains 7 pm



Don't throw those old Lego bricks away!

The Lego company service, Lego Replay, will wash, sort, and donate your old bricks to charities that work with children.

To print a free shipping label, visit lego.com/replay.

From National Institutes of Health — Disaster Preparedness Tips

Prepare to be self-sufficient for at least three days by putting together an emergency kit, including:

- non-perishable food and water,
 - A flashlight,
 - A portable, battery-operated radio or television, and batteries,
 - medicines, anti-bacterial hand wipes or gel, first aid kit,
 - money
 - seasonal clothing, and sanitation supplies.
- ⇒ Conduct practice drills so you and your family know the safe locations in your home for each type of emergency. Decide how and where your family will reunite if separated.
- ⇒ Choose an out-of-state friend or relative that separated family members can call to report their whereabouts and conditions.
- ⇒ Learn first aid and CPR from your local Red Cross chapter or other community organizations.
- ⇒ Learn how to shut off gas, water and electricity in case the lines are damaged.
- ⇒ Make sure insurance coverage is up-to-date and reflects present property values. Check on flood insurance.
- ⇒ Compile an inventory of home contents. Take pictures and/or video. Store in a safe place.
- ⇒ Check chimneys, roofs, walls and foundations for stability. Make sure your house is bolted to its foundation. Secure your water heater and major appliances, as well as tall, heavy furniture, hanging plants, picture frames and mirrors (especially those over beds).
- ⇒ Make arrangements for pets.
- ⇒ Organize your neighborhood to be self-sufficient after a disaster.

Office of Management



Smyrna Worship Services return to 11 am on the Sunday after Labor Day — September 12, 2022.

Women's Fellowship has been meeting to discuss the return of the Women's Fellowship Luncheons (traditionally held Fall through Spring).

Further news will be announced in September — details to follow!



Thanks to:

- Halaina Crispin for serving as our lifeguard at Camp Adams
- Barb Daniels for bringing refreshments
- Virgil for playing his recorder
- Christine for singing and bringing a beautiful bouquet of roses.
- Thank you to Barb Daniels and others who stepped up to lead worship on the 14th of August when Pastor Cat was ill!

LONELY? Medical issues? Need Help?

Please visit the Smyrna Resource page. On Smyrna's website,

www.smyrna-ucc.org, just click the Resource tab ...



Mission and Outreach

Thank you to everyone who contributed to our “children for change” during this last month. As a result, the church has sent \$326.66 for the Heifer Project, \$1095.71 to Church World Service for blankets — enough to buy 110 blankets! — and \$99.47 for Ukraine Relief.

During September and October, we will focus on an organization located in the Lebanon area, “Hand to Hand Farm.” It was established in 2010 and the goal was to provide a day camp for children with autism. After several years of offering this opportunity to individual children, it was decided to run a family camp experience. This camp runs from 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. This is 5 days a week during school breaks. At camp parents attend classes focused on rebuilding yourself and your family and the children spend time with volunteers to take part in farm projects and fun activities which put their skills and learning into practice. They work with the Oregon Department of Human Services.

More information can be found on Facebook.

www.facebook.com/handinhandfarm or
www.handinhandfarm.org

Paulette continues to deliver food, paper products and pet food to the Molalla Service Center.

-Elaine-



Dear friends,

Thank you so much for being a sponsoring CWS Blanket congregation! Church World Service couldn't do our Blankets ministry without congregations like yours. We are so grateful for your generosity.

Blessings,
Tonda Pirtle

Donor Relations Coordinator, Church World Service
PO Box 968, Elkhart, IN 46515
Phone: 574.264.3102
Email: tpirtle@cwsglobal.org



Faith and Democracy in Crisis: Resisting Authoritarianism, Protecting Human Dignity

WEDNESDAYS, SEPTEMBER 14-OCTOBER 26, 2022, 7:00-8:15 PM (PDT) ON ZOOM

All are invited to join this seven-week course, which is being hosted by [Spirit of Grace](#) church for the wider ecumenical community. Learn about the political and theological dimensions of the anti-democratic insurgency attempting to take over the federal government. We'll bring this authoritarian insurgency into conversation with foundational Christian teachings on church and society from Lutheran, Catholic, and United Church of Christ traditions and formulate visions for Christian resistance that protect human dignity as created in the image of God. We'll conclude with opportunities to carry that vision forward into action through ecclesial and civic networks.

Each session will include time for presentation, small and full group discussion, and a spiritual practice to sustain us through challenging times. A number of sessions will have advance reading of 6-12 pages. More information can be found at SpiritofGracePDX.org. Registration is required by September 12. Additional questions can be directed to Pastor-Robyn@spiritofgracepdx.org

PRIMARY PRESENTERS:

Brian Brandt, Ph.D., is a retired ELCA pastor, holds a Ph.D. in Christian Ethics (Dissertation on MLK, Jr.'s doctrine of redemptive suffering), and considers himself a theologian of the cross.

Janet Parker, Ph.D., is a United Church of Christ pastor, Christian Ecofeminist and Social Ethicist currently serving as Interim Pastor at Smyrna UCC in Canby, OR.

GUEST PRESENTER ON CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING:

Anna Floerke Scheid, Ph.D., is an associate professor of theology at Duquesne University focusing on ethics at the intersection of politics and religion.

September 2022 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

- Pat Bullard
- The Holts' grandson Barack
- Mary Namit and Ginger Redlinger
- Florence Pease
- Jeannie Rogers' family
- Irene Schriever
- Anne Stronko
- Virginia Yoder

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.