

BEHOLD!! SMYRNA

December 2022



UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST

Dear Smyrna Friends,

The season of Advent is often described as a season of active waiting. We prepare (that's the active part of active waiting!) for the birth of the baby Jesus. What does that mean...when Jesus was born over 2,000 years ago? The hymn Joy to the World just started playing in my mind in response to this question! "Let every heart prepare Him room..."

We prepare every year for the birth of the baby Jesus, because Jesus is also the Christ. Just as Jesus was, we are also the incarnation of Christ — the Light of the world. And so is everyone else. So is every THING else. That's the message Richard Rohr writes about in his book *The Universal Christ*. Our Advent/Christmas worship series "Reflecting the Sacred" was inspired by Rohr's statement, "God loves things by becoming them." If God created and loved the world, the world and everything in it reflects the Sacred. If God created and loves us, we reflect the Sacred. There is no separation between God and world, or God and us. As Rohr says, "I have never been separate from God, nor can I be, except in my mind."

So, what it means to prepare for the birth, for the coming, of Jesus the Christ TODAY is to open our hearts and minds to seeing everything in the Light of what Rohr calls the Christ Mystery.

While more events and gatherings are happening this year than the previous two years of COVID-impacted-times, many folks are still being cautious (because many folks are still being infected). Additionally, after two years of relative (or nearly-complete) isolation, some of us have come to embrace a "less is more" attitude. We are able to make choices we didn't think we could make before — when busy, busy, busy was the way of life. If you're interested in a reflective kind of preparation for Christmas, instead of, or in addition to the other kinds of preparation you feel obligated and/or delighted to do in December, coming to worship and/or the Wednesday evening Reflection and Dialogue series will provide space, time, and support for you to have a contemplative spiritual experience of preparing for Christmas.

*Let every heart prepare Him room
And Heaven and nature sing
And Heaven and nature sing
And Heaven, and Heaven, and nature sing*

Advent blessings of Hope, Love, Joy, and Peace on every heart reading this message!
Pastor Cat

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

31119 S. Highway 170, Canby, OR 97013



Mission and Outreach

Thanks to everyone who continues to support the food banks. Food and associated items continue to be brought in every week.

Donations continue to be made during Coffee Hour and this enables us to donate \$500 each to the Molalla Service Center and Canby's St Vincent de Paul at Thanksgiving and again at Christmas.

Stockings are being assembled for "Fill a Stocking, Fill a Heart" and patterns are available for anyone wanting to help. They will be delivered along with any money raised or items collected on December 4th to give time to fill and distribute them before Christmas.

December's Children for Change will focus on the Christmas Fund. For over 100 years, UCC churches have supported this effort to provide emergency grants and gift checks to low-income retired clergy and lay employees of the UCC.

We were pleased to be able to donate \$490 to Doctors without Borders and \$546 to Strengthen the Church in October.

The Monday after our annual Ingathering Sunday, Paulette delivered 298 pounds of food to the Molalla Food Bank and 25 pounds of non food items. This included 43 rolls of toilet paper and 6 rolls of paper towels.

The committee is very appreciative for the continued support of the congregation.

• THE SAME MIND AND THE



• 1 CORINTHIANS 1:10. NRSV

• Church Profile. The team is so grateful that Vice Moderator Ginger Redlinger has joined us for the writing phase.

We are drawing together all the insights and information that we have gleaned from the congregation during our Transition Sunday gatherings and through worship surveys and committee input to craft the answers to the three questions that structure the profile: Who Are We? Who Is Our Neighbor? Who is God Calling Us to Become? And of course, that includes creating the position posting itself specifying what Smyrna is looking for in a new settled pastor.

What can you do? Please keep the Transition Team and its members--Jane Dahl, Sheila Daniels, Barbara Menkel, Debi Veatch, and Ginger Redlinger--in your prayers!

Mission News



Women's Fellowship Bazaar/Auction

It's on! Now through December 10, browse the online [Bazaar/Auction](http://smyrna-ucc.org/bazaar/) at <http://smyrna-ucc.org/bazaar/> There you will find items suitable for Christmas gifts or to keep for yourself. Act now to get first pick but keep checking back as more items will be added.



American Dirt by Jeanine Cummins. Flatiron Books, 2020. A fictional account of a Mexican woman Lydia and her son escaping cartel threats on their lives by immigrating to the U.S. Are the "coyotes" and folks they meet at safe houses along the way people Lydia can trust or enemies to be wary of? A page-turner!

The Cotton Patch Version of Luke and Acts: Jesus' Doings and the Happenings by Clarence Jordan. New Win, 1969. A modern translation with a Southern accent, fervent, earthy, rich in humor.

The Gender Book by Mel Reiff Hill. Marshall House Press, 2013. A colorful visual primer on the world of gender.

Trans-gender: Theology, Ministry, and Communities of Faith by Justin Sabia-Tanis. WIPF & Stock, 2003. Offers ideas of how churches can be more welcoming, inclusive, and supportive of trans folk.

Whole Brain Living: The Anatomy of Choice and the Four Characters That Drive Our Life by Jill Bolte Taylor, Ph.D. Hay House, 2021. Dr. Taylor recounts what her experience of stroke recovery taught her about our brains

DECEMBER WORSHIP LEADERSHIP

- **December 4** - Second Sunday of Advent (Sacred People / LOVE); Intergenerational Service w/ Communion; Pastor Cat leading
- **December 11** - Third Sunday of Advent (Sacred Space / JOY); Pastor Cat leading, Pastor Janet assisting
- **December 18** - Fourth Sunday of Advent (Sacred Knowing / PEACE); Pastor Cat leading, Pastor Janet assisting
- **December 24, 9:00 PM** - Christmas Eve Candlelight Service (Sacred Being); Pastor Janet leading, Pastor Cat assisting
- **December 25** - Christmas Sunday (Surprisingly Sacred); Pastor Cat leading

John Nilsen Concert in the Sanctuary Saturday, December 3, 2022, 3:00 PM

John will play for 45 minutes. A free-will offering will be gathered during his last song. Following the concert all are invited to gather in Friendship House for refreshments and friendship building!

Contact Barb Daniels if you would like to be part of the Hospitality Team for this event. Do you like to bake Christmas cookies or other seasonal desserts? This event provides a great opportunity for sharing your goodies! Women's Fellowship even has to-go containers for those who want to take home a sampling of all the goods.



The Ukulele Class will not meet on the first Thursday of December. Instead the first class of the month will be on **December 8, 2022.**

Thank you to

- ◆ The Smyrna elves who assembled Halloween treat bags - Sheila Daniels, Jeannie Rogers, Ann Clites, Anne Bangs,
- ◆ Barb Daniels, Janet Farrell, and those who helped put placecards in the pews for the part you played in setting up for our All Saints Day observance.
- ◆ Elaine Daniels and all others who are making stockings for Fill a Stocking, Fill a Heart.
- ◆ All those who helped with hospitality for the Transgender Day of Remembrance Event.
- ◆ Ginger for her service to the conference as Editor of the monthly newsletter *On the Way*.
- ◆ Women's Fellowship for providing a Thanksgiving themed meal at the first November luncheon!
- ◆ The Health Committee for encouraging health promoting behaviors in a fun and creative way as we walk to Bethlehem!
- ◆ Paul Yoder for the leaf removal in the parking lot!
- ◆ Our technology team who makes worship accessible to all
- ◆ and to others who enrich our community worship experience: liturgists, musicians, deacons, etc.!
- ◆ The Grounds Committee: Irene, Barb, Linda, and Mary Namit for keeping the grounds in healthy condition!
- ◆ All who contributed to the ingathering of goods for local area food banks on the 27th.
- ◆ All who have contributed items for the Women's Fellowship Bazaar/Auction and to Barb, Tom, and Joel and others who have taken care of pricing, photographing, and posting items online!



Advent Workshop After worship and a potluck lunch on Sunday, December 4, 2022

— There will be several craft stations for making Christmas tree ornaments and other "Reflecting the Sacred" Advent decorations. If you would like to host a craft station please contact Pastor Cat with your idea. Sheila Daniels will

host a craft for little ones, Christine Foster will host star-making with recycled paper, Audrey Yoder will also host a craft.

We want to create minimal trash and use recycled or repurposed materials as much as possible. We welcome other ideas for low-environmental-impact crafts, especially those that reflect (no pun intended) our Advent theme "Reflecting the Sacred."

CHRISTMAS LIGHT FACTS!

1. Thomas Edison Is Responsible for the First Light Display

Shortly after he invented the incandescent light bulb, Thomas Edison was determined to bring light and joy to downtown Manhattan. So, in [1879](#) he laid eight miles of underground wire to bring power to all the strings of lights around the outside of his New Jersey laboratory. Then, in 1882, the Wizard of Menlo Park and his friend [Edward Johnson](#) decorated the first Christmas tree with red, white, and blue lights and put it on display for all to see.

2. Grover Cleveland Brought Christmas Lights to the White House

Benjamin Harrison may have brought the first Christmas tree to the White House in 1889, but Grover Cleveland decked the halls in 1894. Coming four years after the White House was wired for electricity, President Cleveland requested that the [first family's tree](#) be decked out with hundreds of multi-colored light bulbs. Because of this, he's credited for warming the public up to the idea of electricity in their homes.

3. The First Christmas Lights Were Expensive

The first of anything invented is expensive, and the first Christmas lights were no exception. It cost the average household nearly \$300 (equivalent to \$2,000 today) in the [1900s](#) to light a Christmas tree. This price tag included the cost of the lights, a generator, and a wireman's services. Today, the price to hang your Christmas lights isn't that high, but it still does require some professional help!

LONELY? Medical issues? Need Help?



Please visit the Smyrna Resource page. On Smyrna's website, www.smyrna-ucc.org, just click the Resource tab

I MAY NOT BE A "WISE MAN," BUT AT LEAST I NEVER GOT SO LOST I HAD TO ASK HEROD FOR DIRECTIONS.



A Faith-Based Rationale for Universal Health Care with Mike Huntington, MD

On Thursday, October 27, the Central Pacific Conference welcomed Dr. Mike Huntington to their noon-hour "Swap Meet" to discuss his continuing advocacy for Universal Health Care in Oregon. As many may know, Dr. Huntington is a retired Radiation Oncologist and active member of Corvallis UCC, who saw firsthand, during his many years of practice, the unnecessary suffering and loss of life that too often resulted when patients lacked full health care access. Since his retirement from medical practice, he has dedicated considerable time and energy to advocating, both in Oregon and nationally, for universal access to health care for all. He is also a member of the Justice and Witness Ministry Team for the Central Pacific Conference. Dr. Huntington summarized the growing problem of health care in our nation with compelling information. First, unlike most other developed nations, where the government provides health care for all that is unrelated to employment or personal financial resources, our own system is affected by profit motives and powerful lobbies, most notably, the pharmaceutical and insurance industries. As a result, our health care system is too often focused on profit, rather than care. Next, health care costs in the US continue to rise, accounting for over 22% of our income as a society. Yet, people still too regularly end up in bankruptcy or even homeless, due to health-related debts, and still too often put off getting needed preventative care and treatments, due to high out of pocket costs. Finally, while without question, the US has excellent medical expertise and facilities, and we spend a great deal (more than \$12,000 per person per year) on health care, Dr. Huntington presented evidence that our health as a nation does not compare favorably with that of citizens in other developed countries... unless you compare only US citizens who are 65 and older! As we know, Medicare kicks in at age 65, and thus older citizens of the US (like citizens of all ages in the other developed countries studied), all have access to health care, and their health status then compares quite favorably to the older citizens of other developed countries.

Of note is that Dr. Huntington did not suggest that our Medicare system as it is should simply be extended to include citizens of

all age: Rather, he suggested the system would need significant revisions. For example, in our current system, gaps in coverage require many Medicare recipients to purchase additional coverage, to offset costs of prescription drugs and copayments. Dr. Huntington argued that Medicare Advantage plans, offered by private insurers (and even routinely recommended to older members of the UCC clergy, as one Swap Meet participant pointed out!), were a further complication. These plans, Dr. Huntington suggested, can choose to insure only the healthiest older adults, limit their choice of providers, and then discontinue their coverage if they move or their health status changes. Furthermore, he suggested that private insurers who offer Medicare Advantage plans are using the practice of "upcoding" (assigning multiple diagnoses) to draw more government subsidy, increasing their profits. These practices, which result in traditional Medicare disproportionately covering the highest risk older adults, are causing financial strain on the system that may place Medicare as it is at risk. Instead, he recommended older adults seek Medigap coverage (<https://www.medicare.gov/sites/default/files/2022-03/02110-medigap-guide-health-insurance.pdf>). As noted, Dr. Huntington's "bottom line" about health care would not be to enact a simple extension of what already is (e.g., Medicare as it is, made available to all), but rather, the realization of what could be. He envisions a system where:

- Every person gets care they need, when they need it.
- Every person is provided with healthy living conditions.
- No one goes bankrupt due to health care bills.
- No one delays health care because of cost.

Along with many other major Christian denominations, the United Church of Christ supports a single payor health care model nationally, a decision made at its General Synod in 2013. Closer to home, at the Annual Meeting of the Central Pacific Conference in Pendleton, OR in 2018, delegates voted to formally endorse universal publicly funded health care. The website of Health Care for all Oregon (<https://www.hcao.org/>) is an excellent source of information about this ongoing movement and related legislative progress here in Oregon.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Bryant, Smyrna UCC Health Committee

December 2022 at Smyrna

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																							
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">Nov 2022</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; font-size: small;"> <tr><th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>T</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td></tr> <tr><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td></tr> <tr><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td></tr> <tr><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">Jan 2023</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; font-size: small;"> <tr><th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>T</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td></tr> <tr><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td></tr> <tr><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td></tr> <tr><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td></tr> <tr><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table> </div> </div>				S	M	T	W	T	F	S			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30				S	M	T	W	T	F	S	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31					1	2	3	<p>b.d. Julia Peterson</p> <p>Transition Team Mtg w/ Pastor Janet on Zoom</p> <p>World AIDS Day</p>		<p>3 pm John Nilsen Concert at Smyrna</p>
S	M	T	W	T	F	S																																																																																							
		1	2	3	4	5																																																																																							
6	7	8	9	10	11	12																																																																																							
13	14	15	16	17	18	19																																																																																							
20	21	22	23	24	25	26																																																																																							
27	28	29	30																																																																																										
S	M	T	W	T	F	S																																																																																							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7																																																																																							
8	9	10	11	12	13	14																																																																																							
15	16	17	18	19	20	21																																																																																							
22	23	24	25	26	27	28																																																																																							
29	30	31																																																																																											
Women's Fellowship Bazaar through Dec 10																																																																																													
4	5	6	7	8	9	10																																																																																							
<p>11 am Worship</p> <p>Second Sunday in Advent -- Sacred People / LOVE</p> <p>Advent Crafts after worship</p>	<p>7 pm AA/AO</p>	<p>7 pm Diaconate via Zoom</p>	<p>7 pm "Reflecting the Sacred" dialogue with Pastor Cat via Zoom</p> <p>b.d. Barbara Daniels</p>	<p>11 am Ukulele Class</p> <p>Transition Team Mtg w/ Pastor Janet on Zoom</p>	<p>b.d. Nikolas Peterson</p>	<p>bd Jeff Marshall</p>																																																																																							
Women's Fellowship Bazaar -- through Dec. 10																																																																																													
11	12	13	14	15	16	17																																																																																							
<p>11 am Worship</p> <p>b.d. Chris Bangs</p> <p>Blood Pressure Clinic after worship</p> <p>Third Sunday in Advent -- Sacred Space / JOY</p>	<p>7 pm AA/AO</p> <p>b.d. Jeannie Rogers</p>	<p>Health Committee mtg via Zoom</p>	<p>7 pm "Reflecting the Sacred" dialogue with Pastor Cat via Zoom</p> <p>b.d. Genevieve Freeman, Rebekah Yoder</p>	<p>11 am Ukulele Class</p> <p>b.d. Paulette Eyman, Tina Marshall, Steven Rigg</p> <p>Behold!! deadline</p> <p>Transition Team Mtg w/ Pastor Janet on Zoom</p>		<p>b.d. Josh Marshall, Garrett Veach</p>																																																																																							
18	19	20	21	22	23	24																																																																																							
<p>11 am Worship</p> <p>Fourth Sunday in Advent (Sacred Knowing / PEACE)</p>	<p>7 pm AA/AO</p>	<p>7 pm Church Council via Zoom</p>	<p>7 pm "Reflecting the Sacred" dialogue with Pastor Cat via Zoom</p> <p>b.d. Kevin Yoder</p>	<p>11 am Ukulele Class</p>																																																																																									
25	26	27	28	29	30	31																																																																																							
<p>11 am Worship</p> <p>Christmas Sunday (Surprisingly Sacred)</p>	<p>7 pm AA/AO</p>		<p>Wedding Ann. Leo & Marsha Sano</p>	<p>11 am Ukulele Class</p>																																																																																									

**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 LIST

- Pat Bullard
- Jane Dahl's daughter Beth
- The Holt family: Emily, Isabella, Barack
- Mary Namit's cousin Alex
- Jeannie Rogers' brothers, Steven and John, and family
- Anne Stronko
- Garret and Debi Veach
- 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.