

BEHOLD!! SMYRNA

March 2023



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

What are *you* seeking this Lent?

By Pastor Janet

Pastor Cat and I are delighted to be walking with you through Lent this year using a Lenten resource that Pastor Cat found called **“seeking: honest questions for deeper faith.”** Lent provides a wonderful opportunity for reflecting on our lives at a **deeper level than we normally make time for. It’s a season** when, at least in church, we honor and make space for opening our hearts to the needs, questions, and concerns of our soul. Far from being the dour and austere time that we often associate with Lent, this season can be a time for inspiration, joy, and discovery as we make time to nurture our spirits and our **relationship with God. You may still wish to “give something up” for Lent**, though that is not required. But as Pastor Cat said at our Ash Wednesday service, it can also be a time to take something on—a new spiritual practice. This year, we are inviting everyone into the spiritual practice of *seeking*—of living with our difficult questions about our lives and about God, and of living into new **insights when, by God’s grace, they come.**

Lent is the 40-day period (not including Sundays) that begins on Ash Wednesday and concludes with Holy Saturday (the day before Easter). Lent will be underway by the time you receive **this, but if you haven’t yet given yourself a few moments to meditate** on what you are seeking in your heart of hearts this Lent, I invite you to do so now. Find a quiet place where you can be alone or uninterrupted, take some deep breaths, and consciously invite your awareness to turn towards Spirit, who is around us and within us at all times. Once your mind has settled and your **heart is quiet, simply ask yourself this question, “What am I seeking at this time in my life?”** You may sense an answer to

your question through words or images that swim up into your **consciousness, but if you don’t, that’s okay...the important thing** is to ask, and live with, the question. Just asking the question is radical and transformative; it signals your openness to change, **to Spirit’s movement in your life. To aid your meditative practice,** I invite you to pray this poem/prayer which is provided in our Lenten resource and which we used on Ash Wednesday. You may notice the allusion to Isaiah 58:1-12, which we read during several services in February, as a touchstone for our journey towards Lent.

“at the start”

by Rev. Sarah Speed

Is this the fast I choose?
Will I wake with the sun each morning?
Will I start with thank you?
Will I peel back the cage around my frame to let you in
or will I get too busy? Will my Bible collect dust on the shelf,
along with my journal, along with my sense of self,
or will I roll back the stone and wade in?
Every new season beckons something of us—
attention, beauty, the chance to create.
This season is no different.
So, like moths to the light, will we find our way toward God,
or will we hover, circling fake suns?
I am seeking something deeper.
I am kicking off my shoes.
I am starting this season on holy ground.

by Rev. Sarah A. Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

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Input Invited for Pastoral Relations Committee

Your Pastoral Relations Committee's purpose is to support a healthy relationship between the pastors and congregants to enhance the effectiveness of the church's ministry. It serves as an advisory group, which means that any ideas, expectations and concerns you have can be shared with members of the Pastoral Relations Committee before they meet. Currently those members are Barbara Menkel and Janet Farrell. Our next meeting is on March 19, following worship. While meetings of the committee are confidential, no anonymous input will be considered.



The committee also is a support group for the pastors' leadership, interpreting roles, functions, boundaries and needs of the pastor to the congregation.

Your valuable input is appreciated, especially as we anticipate the transition from interims to a settled pastor.

~ Janet Bess, PRC Chair



New Books in the Library...

The Galapagos Islands: A Spiritual Journey by Brian D. McLaren
"Take a spiritual pilgrimage to one of the world's most fragile ecosystems, the birthplace of Darwin's world-shaping theory. McLaren reflects on how his faith has evolved and how the natural world awakens his soul." This is an entertaining read for those interested in what it's like to travel to these famous islands and to learn more about Darwin's faith journey and why his theory of natural selection may be better described as "survival of the best-adapted" rather than "survival of the fittest (most ruthless)."

Healing After Loss by Martha Hickman.

Martha Hickman first published her book in 1994 several years after the accidental death of her 16-year-old daughter. It continues to be a popularly recommended book for those who are working through grief. Martha Hickman writes in the introduction, "Hundreds of people whose words--in chance conversation, in letters, or through the printed page--form the flashpoints for these meditations." The writing is simple and profound, practical and compassionate and speaks to any loss the reader might be experiencing.

MARCH WORSHIP LEADERSHIP

- March 5 — 2nd Sunday in Lent; Pastor Janet leading seeking: *How do we begin again?*
March 12* — 3rd Sunday in Lent; Pastor Cat leading *Daylight Savings Time begins seeking: *Will you give me a drink?*
March 19 — 4th Sunday in Lent; Pastor Cat leading, Pastor Janet assisting seeking: *Who sinned?*
March 26 — 5th Sunday in Lent; Pastor Cat leading seeking: *Can these bones live?*

Search Committee Progress

The Search Committee and Transition Team have been working together to finish our Local Church Profile, something we need prior to advertising for our next settled pastor. Once the Church Council approves the profile, it will be submitted to the Central Pacific Conference for "validation" and the position posting (part 1 of the complete profile) placed on the UCC ministry opportunities web site. After it is posted potential candidates can look at it, and if they are interested, apply through the conference.



You can help! In discussions, the conference minister told the committee that many successful pastoral candidates are identified through church members' "networking" with friends, family or associates. So if you know, or know of, someone who might be interested in responding to our position posting, tell them about it. Here is where our position posting will be posted: <https://oppsearch.ucc.org/web/default.aspx>

The conference also validates applicants for us, and the committee will get ministerial profiles of those who apply. This **won't start until the profile is validated and posted, but that should be completed in the next week or two.**

Dates to Remember

Wednesdays in March at 7:00 PM - Discussing our "Seeking" theme for the Week via Zoom

Sunday, March 5 — Health Committee mtg after worship

Tuesday, March 7 — 7:00 PM Diaconate meeting via Zoom

Sunday, March 12 — Daylight Savings begins

Blood pressure checks after worship

Sunday, March 19 —

♦ Pastoral Relations Committee meets after worship

♦ One Great Hour of Sharing

Monday, March 20 — Behold!! Deadline

Tuesday, March 21 — 7:00 PM Church Council on Zoom

Sunday, March 26 — *Spring Days of giving*

Taking your blood pressure at home

High blood pressure, as we know, can lead to adverse health conditions such as heart attacks and strokes. There are multiple medications which can help to lower blood pressure to a normal range and decrease the possibility of one of these health emergencies.

Taking blood pressure readings in a healthcare setting is routine; but sometimes an erroneous high reading can be caused by **“white coat syndrome,”** when people experience anxiety in the office setting. People are often asked to purchase a blood pressure monitor and check their own pressure at home on a regular basis.

There are blood pressure cuffs which fit around the wrist and others which fit around the upper arm. The upper arm cuffs are generally considered more reliable. Check the manual for your machine for specific instructions for that machine.



Monitoring your blood pressure involves three easy steps:

1. Do not exercise, smoke, eat a large meal, take cold medicine or drink caffeine for at least 30 minutes before taking your blood pressure. If you are taking blood pressure medication, take it after measuring your blood pressure.
2. Sit with your back straight, feet flat, and legs uncrossed. Place the cuff snugly on your bare skin directly above the elbow bend or on the wrist, depending on which type of cuff you have. Place your arm, palm facing up, on a table or other surface which is at heart level.
3. Press the start button. Stay still and relax until the machine is finished. Then record your numbers in a tracking log.

Take your blood pressure about the same time each morning and evening, and share your readings with your doctor at your next appointment.

LONELY? Medical issues? Need Help?



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

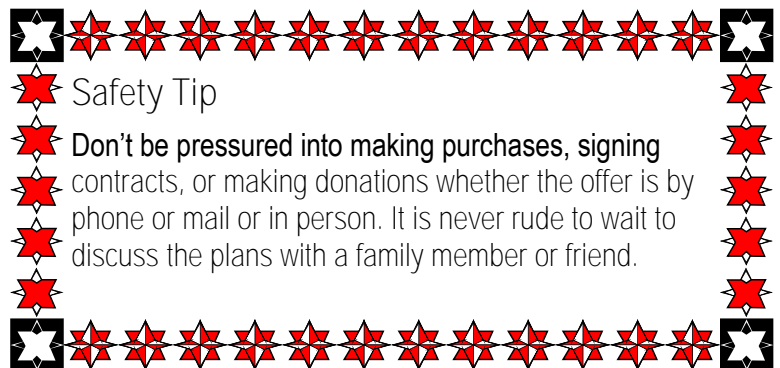


Smyrna's April road cleanup is scheduled for Saturday, April 29th. Please mark your calendars and please attend if you can. The more the merrier!

Thank you!
Rick

Thank you to

- Rebekah Yoder and Kristin Wilson for their leadership of the cookie bake off and soup Sunday
- everyone who made soup, baked cookies, and voted with dollars!
- everyone who contributed to the collection for Guide Dogs for the Blind.
- Lois Johnson for giving Arlene a ride to church.
- Mary Namit for making the ashes for Ash Wednesday and t Lisa Havre and Janet Bess Farrell for helping to prepare them for distribution.
- Nancy Bryant for assisting with the online Ash Wednesday service.



Safety Tip

Don't be pressured into making purchases, signing contracts, or making donations whether the offer is by phone or mail or in person. It is never rude to wait to discuss the plans with a family member or friend.

Walk to Jerusalem

We are doing our annual Walk to Jerusalem during the Lenten season, ending on Easter. Your exercise will help us get there.

To participate, please stop at the Health Committee table when you enter the church on Sundays. 15 minutes of any activity equals one mile, and/or eating 5 servings of fruits and vegetable a day counts as one mile for that day.



Smyrna UCC Technology Committee Report February 21, 2023

Installation and implementation of our new technology is proceeding! A number of us have gathered on several Saturdays. Paul Ashton has unpacked all the new equipment Tom Pfandler delivered for us, several weeks ago, and has been working on the setup in the back corner of the church. Adam Maurer has twice donned protective gear and ventured into the attic, to install the cables to the new speakers, now mounted on the side walls, and all ready to be hooked into the new sound board. This coming Saturday (Feb. 25), he plans to again make the journey above, to install our new video cameras. We will have two cameras, mounted high on the back wall of the church, on either side of the door.

Once all of this is in place, the sound will come only through the microphones and will be separate from the video. This will be a huge improvement: At present, our single camera (which is essentially a camcorder) is the only source of sound for our videos, and there is no way to limit or adjust what it picks up... So yes, we hear whatever goes through the microphones and old speaker system, but we also get the footsteps, conversations, kitchen noises, etc., and all of that can be heard on the video recording!! Also, once our new equipment is installed and online, Paul will be able to fully monitor and control the volume and sensitivity of the microphones, improving the sound quality for those of who are present in church. For those watching later at home, our two cameras will also adjust remotely, allowing the operator to quickly and accurately shift focus of the video feed to various places in the sanctuary, such as the pulpit, the Communion table, the piano, the organ, the choir area, etc. Not only will this greatly improve the quality of our worship videos on YouTube, it will also give us the option to livestream, in the future.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Bryant, Technology Committee

Spring Days of Giving

Smyrna's Spring Days of Giving will be on March 26. These quarterly offerings are for the Building Repair Fund which was set up some years ago so we would be able to take care of things like painting, roofing, heating systems and so forth. Please designate your donation as Days of Giving. Thank you.



Smyrna UCC Glenda Yoder Sano Scholarships

The Smyrna United Church of Christ/Glenda Yoder Sano Scholarship Committee will be accepting applications through May 15th, 2023. The applications are available by contacting Rick Gano, rgano@canby.com. Eligibility Requirements are: the applicant must be a current or recently graduated high school senior or in a post high school program making satisfactory progress, and must be an active participant in Smyrna UCC with active participation during the past year in the life of Smyrna UCC (Examples would be participation or assistance with the worship, Sunday School, grounds cleanup, Strawberry Social, Chili Cook-off, Octoberfest booth, Canby/Marquam highway cleanup, Vacation Bible School, etc.).

This is the 19th year that Smyrna has provided church members scholarships for furthering their education after high school. The church scholarship is granted in memory of *Glenda Yoder Sano*, a 1963 Molalla High graduate and a long-time member of the Smyrna Church family, who, as many of you know, was instrumental in starting and continuing many youth programs in our church.

[Rick Gano, Smyrna UCC Scholarship Committee](#)

Mission and Outreach

In January and February we raised money through Children for Change to benefit the Guide Dogs for the Blind program. It has been very successful and we will report totals later.

In March and April Children for Change will raise funds to support Second Home, a program of Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon of which Smyrna is a member. Second Home connects volunteer host homes with unaccompanied high school students experiencing homelessness. Second Home allows students to focus on completing their secondary education and realize their full potential.



On March 19th we will be receiving offerings for One Great Hour of Sharing. Watch for more information about this important event of the UCC.

We put out information about how people can donate to earthquake relief for Turkey and Syria with a check or online with a memo for earthquake.

March 2023 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 LIST

- ◆ Pat Bullard
- ◆ Richard Daniels
- ◆ Genevieve Freeman
- ◆ Beryl and Dan Fisher
- ◆ The Holt family
- ◆ **Jeannie Rogers' brothers Steven and John, and family**
- ◆ Anne Stronko and her partner Roger
- ◆ Garrett Veatch
- ◆ 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.