

# BEHOLD!! SMYRNA

Sept. 2024



UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST

***Dear Smyrna Folks,***

What a summer it has been! I have been grateful for the long, warm days and the abundant sunshine, but I always look forward to September. As I child, September meant the start of school with fresh pencils and new classes. Even though I haven't been in school for many years, September still feels like a fresh start. I come to this fresh start particularly refreshed after two weeks of vacation and two weeks of continuing education.

The first continuing week was a writing retreat and workshop, funded in large part by the generosity of Women's Fellowship (thank you women!). Ministry work is creative and generative, and The Glen Workshop was a very sweet opportunity to have the wells of creativity and generativity refilled. Being in company with people of faith and getting to hear their stories, as well as hearing from writers and artists about what keeps them going was very lifegiving. There was also lots of time to write, and a visit to a local home, which had the garage turned into an art studio provided an opportunity to try a new-to-me art form, encaustic or painting with wax.

The second week of continuing education was in Las Vegas at the Fellowship of Affirming Ministries Leadership Gathering. There, I heard impassioned preaching, fiery calls to action, deeply convicted prayers and incredible music. The theme was Something Inside So Strong, and we were encouraged in every way to draw on our inner strength as we move forward into the future God has planned for us. One highlight was getting to hear Rev. Yvonne Delk — the first Black woman to be ordained in the UCC and at 85, still a powerful preacher. We were led by Bishop William Barber and Bishop Yvette Flunders - both faith and social justice warriors.

Having had my cup filled, I'm looking forward to bringing both creativity and justice-seeking to our ministry together this fall! See you in church!

Blessings,

Pastor Jennifer

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## Sunday Worship Change —

Beginning Sunday, September 1, Worship services will begin at 10:30 am. Rather than the earlier in summer, later Fall through Spring which we have been doing, we'll try this time for all of the next year.



**Bad Faith: Documentary and Discussion**  
**Wednesday, September 11 @ 7:00 pm**  
**In person in Friendship House or via Zoom.**

Join others from the Central Pacific Conference in viewing the movie via zoom (or in person). The zoom link will be emailed to members of the congregation. If you have friends or family outside of the church that are interested, please ask them to register by emailing the church office or online:

<https://forms.gle/RRxSZTFBoFFBhNFt5>.

Movie followed by discussion and call to action.

BAD FAITH exposes the powerful Christian Nationalism movement and shines a light on its unholy plan to upend the Constitution and impose their version of Biblical law on all Americans. For more information including a trailer visit [Bad Faith's website](#).

Presented by the Mission and Outreach Committee of Smyrna UCC.

## Women's Fellowship Luncheons



As the beginning of Fall is fast approaching, the women of Smyrna want you to know that our Thursday noon time lunches will begin with the first one being held on Thursday, October 10, 2024, followed by a second lunch set for October 24, 2024. Several of our cooks will be away during September touring places abroad and unable to lend a helping hand. We hope to see you all back with your feet under the dining table and a hardy appetite in Friendship Hall in October.

## Memory Cafe is Back!

Beginning in October, the first Thursday of each month will be Memory Cafe Days. Starting at noon, we will have a lunch prepared by favorite chef Louise Adams followed by a short program.

Stay tuned for more information. In the meantime, add the first Thursdays at noon to your calendar.



## September Sundays

**September 1** — Pastor Jennifer preaching Ruth Chapter 2

**September 8** — Pastor Jennifer preaching Ruth Chapter 4

**September 15** — Pastor Jennifer Preaching Mark 7:24-37

**September 22** — Pastor Jennifer Preaching Mark 9:30-37

**September 29** — Guest Preacher TBA Central Pacific Conference Annual Meeting



Smyrna's first ever Potato salad contest was held on August 11, 2024. There were three entries with Barbara Daniels coming in 1st place.

Thank you to all of those who participated by donating. The amount collected was around 360 dollars.

### LONELY? Medical issues? Need Help?

Please visit the Smyrna Resource page. On Smyrna's website, [www.smyrna-ucc.org](http://www.smyrna-ucc.org), just click the Resource tab ....



The work continues to spruce up Smyrna's plant beds. We planted three Chrysanthemums and barked the bed to keep them happy!



### The Problem With Plastic

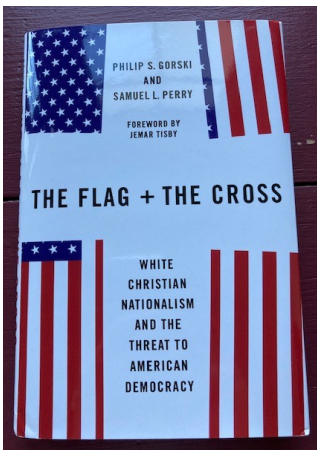
We have all seen and heard of the massive plastic pollution of the earth: piling up in landfills, along the roadways, on the beaches, filling the stomachs of sea creatures, floating plastic islands in the oceans. What we may not have realized is that plastic particles are invading our bodies as well. One way is that the chemicals in plastics can leach out and interfere with hormones or other parts of the endocrine system. Also, tiny plastic particles are entering the human body through the air we breathe and the food and water we consume (and possibly other ways as well), and can be found almost everywhere inside the body; and they increase our risk of heart attack, stroke, and death.

A common health problem is atherosclerosis, a buildup of plaque in arteries which reduces blood flow to vital organs. The plaques typically include a mix of cholesterol, fatty substances, waste from cells, calcium, and a blood clotting protein called fibrin. Now scientists have found tiny plastic particles within these plaques, and have discovered that people with plaque containing plastic particles are more than four times as likely to have a heart attack or stroke or die from

any other cause over the next three years. Future research will probably investigate which bodily organs are being damaged by plastic and how the damage is occurring. It is impossible now to avoid exposure to plastics; but there are ways to reduce exposure, including:

- drinking out of steel or glass cups or bottles instead of plastic ones, avoiding plastic straws
- not microwaving food in plastic containers (since heat speeds up the breakdown of plastics)
- and not using plastic bags at stores.

While we can all help to decrease plastic usage, it will require the scientific and healthcare and political communities to make a meaningful change. The United Nations has been working since 2022 toward the world's first-ever plastics pollution treaty and is hoping to finalize a treaty. In the here and now, drink your water from the tap rather than a single-use plastic bottle, throw away your plastic straws, try not to use plastic food containers, use reusable bags at the grocery store, and try any other method you can think of to minimize exposure to plastics. Your body will thank you.



**Beginning SEPTEMBER 8**, we will gather in Smyrna's library at 9:30 am for the first of a 4-week study of the book *The Flag and the Cross: White Christian Nationalism and the Threat to American Democracy* by Philip S. Gorski and Samuel L. Perry. Join us for conversation on the Introduction and Chapter 1.

There will be copies of the book available on the front table in the Narthex for \$15, or if you want to get an earlier start, Ann Clites can drop them off to you on Thursday. (If the cost is a hardship for you, let me know and we will get you a free book).

## Becoming an Age Friendly Congregation

One thing everyone reading this holds in common is that we are all older than we were yesterday! Ideas about aging continue to evolve as people live longer. Science is trying to catch up to that reality. There is no significant research in the last century of people over 65, because there just weren't that many people in that age group! But recent research indicates that most people are happier after 40 and happiness peaks well into the 70s. As churches, we often fall prey to culture's ideas about older folks, and can dismiss elders' gifts. At Smyrna, we want to avoid that trap and embrace the age of Active Wisdom. On Sunday, August 25, a couple dozen folks, facilitated by Joshua Barbur and Pastor Jennifer, gathered after worship to talk about how we can be a more Age Friendly Congregation. Here are some of the ideas that came to the forefront:



**-Some of the conversation centered on shifting capacity that happens for all of us as we age. We wondered how to prepare for a diminishment of independence without a loss of community (and without worrying our kids!).**

\*Some of us feel that one way to deal with diminished independence and function is to accept and let go. For others of us, moving ahead and embracing new technology is a path. Maybe for many of us, the path lies somewhere in between!

\*Let's have some conversation about when and how to know when to stop or reduce driving, especially for those of us who live in rural areas.

\*We'd like to learn more memory retention techniques.

\*We'd like more learning about world events, especially from people's personal experience.

\*How about a book study on aging? One suggestion is *How We Love is How We Die* by Buddhist nun Pema Chodron.

**Many older people feel isolated. How to keep connected? It helps to have a purpose, make a difference and work together as a group. We need a creative, cultural shift in our thinking about aging.**

**Some ideas:**

\*Memory Cafe is back by popular demand. First meeting, October 3 at 12 noon.

\*Lines for Life Senior Loneliness Line offers a compassionate listening friend for elders in Oregon. Call 503-200-1633.

\*Could we set up an in-church "adoption" program where younger church members adopt elders?

**Interested in meeting in a small group for more conversation on the Age of Active Wisdom, following up on some of these ideas, and making plans for 2024-2025 Memory Cafe season? Let Pastor Jennifer know!**

# September 2024 at Smvrna

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																																			
<p><b>1</b></p> <p>10:30 AM Worship Service b.d. Karyl Carlson Scriptures: Ruth Chapter 2 Wedding Ann. Scott &amp; Angela Stierle</p>	<p><b>2</b></p> <p>7 pm AA/AO b.d. Margaret Adams, Dave Clites Wedding Ann. Dan &amp; Beryl Fisher</p>	<p><b>3</b></p> <p>Wedding Ann. Dan &amp; Louise Allee</p>	<p><b>4</b></p> <p>7 pm Diaconate mtg via zoom</p>	<p><b>5</b></p>	<p><b>6</b></p>	<p><b>7</b></p> <p>Wedding Ann. Philip &amp; Barbara Daniels</p>																																																																																																			
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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



- Paul and Mary Ashton
- Pat Bullard
- Beryl and Dan Fisher
- Genevieve Freeman
- Lisa Havre
- The Holt family
- Jeannie Rogers' brothers Steven and John
- Virginia Yoder
- Anne Stronko and Roger Marin
- The Crispin family

31119 South Highway 170  
Canby, Oregon 97013



Please pray for peace and ease for Lisa Havre and family and friends of Larry Sumpter who passed away on August 23 in Salem.

*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.