

BEHOLD! SMYRNA

December 2025

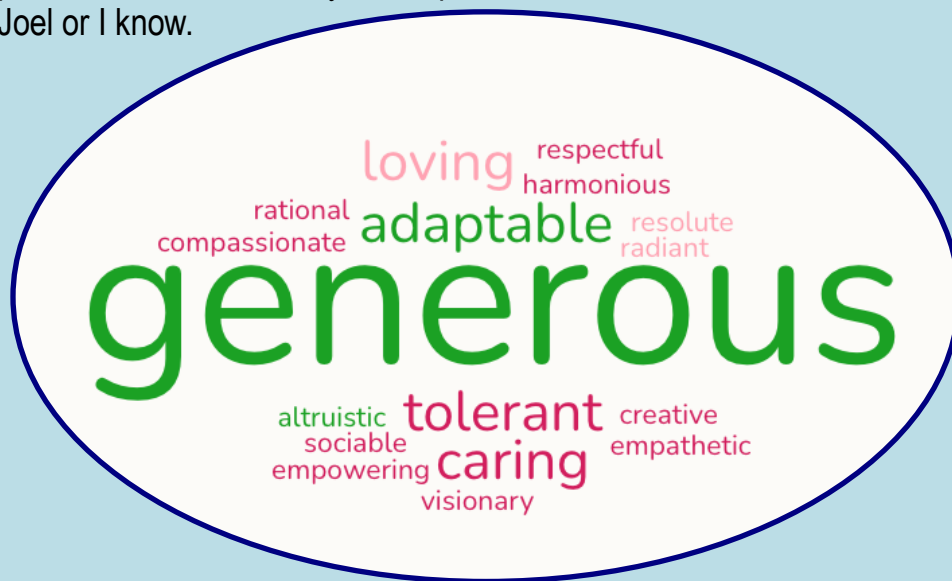


UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST

Dear Smyrna Folks,

A couple weeks ago, we looked at word lists of attributes and were invited to choose some we considered important to us personally, as well as those values we hoped our church community would display. I took a look at those words recently and out of curiosity I added them to a word cloud. The more times a word is listed, the larger it is in the cloud. The largest word did not surprise me at all. We are already a generous people and more generosity is being built here every day.

For example, we still have one more week of November as I write this, and we have already more than doubled our food drive goal for the month. Generosity takes at least two parties — one to give and one to receive. Both are important. If there was never anyone to receive, there would never be an opportunity to be generous. So please remember that if you are part of a household who is in the receiving part of the equation to let Ginger, Joel or I know.



See you in church,
Pastor Jennifer

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“Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, **for GOD loves a cheerful giver.**”
2 Corinthians 9:7

Giving Tuesday

Last year, the Central Pacific Conference joined a growing global movement known as Giving Tuesday. This annual event is dedicated to boosting radical generosity, held on the Tuesday after Black Friday and Cyber Monday. The idea behind Giving Tuesday is to set aside a single day to counter consumerism by giving back.

The theme of this year's Conference Annual Gathering was “Refugia Rising: Sanctuaries of Life in Dangerous Days.” In biology, *refugia* are pockets of life from which more life can spring – a bit of moss sheltered from a volcano blast, a small and dark reservoir of water in a bright desert landscape, or perhaps an energy-filled Kin-dom Seed in the midst of an earthly kingdom.

What is that seed you can help plant that will bring life to the ministries of the Central Pacific Conference? What little bit of life can you contribute to counter the forces arrayed in these days that seek to diminish compassion and community building and hopeful living?

Asha Curran, CEO of Giving Tuesday writes,

When millions unite with a shared purpose, we don't just give what we can—we create real, tangible change. Each donation, each act of generosity, is a building block for community solutions that actually make a difference.

We invite you to make a difference on December 2, 2025 by going to the CPC donation portal on that day. Let's make our collective impact known as we share with our neighbors and create a more hopeful world through our ministries in this Conference and beyond. <https://www.cpcucc.org/donate>

Advent Potluck and Crafts at Smyrna



Christian Education invites you to bring your favorite potluck dish to share after worship on **December 7, 2025.**

After the potluck, stay to create Advent crafts and decorations for Smyrna's tree and yours.

Memory Cafe

Make sure to bring your friends and family to memory cafe on **Thursday, December 4 at noon** as we enjoy the festive music of the Dickens Carolers. The Dickens Carolers have been a Portland holiday tradition since 1985, performing classic Christmas carols in rich, unaccompanied four-part harmony. Dressed in traditional 1840s attire, our professional quartets bring a touch of old-fashioned joy. As always, donations are appreciated.



Newsletter

December

15

Deadline

Remember —

the Behold deadline this month is earlier than usual. Get your articles in early for the next newsletter, then relax as you prepare for Christmas.

Worship in December

December 7 —Holy Communion
Second Sunday in Advent
Ezekiel 37:1-14

December 14 —
Third Sunday in Advent
Isaiah 55:1-13

December 21 —
Fourth Sunday in Advent
Pageant honoring Las Posadas

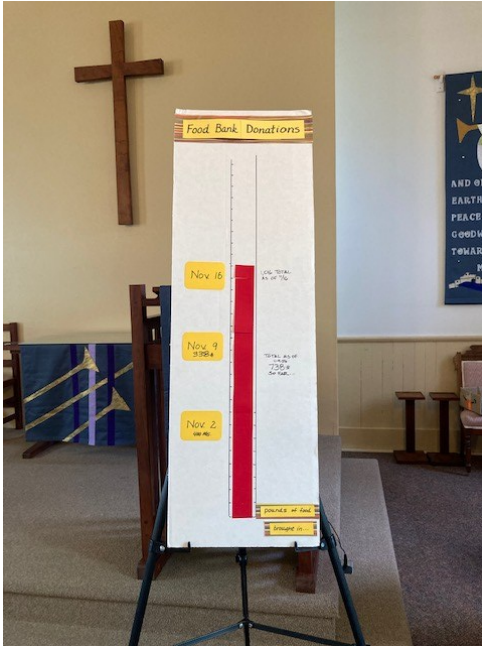
December 24 —
4 PM Christmas Eve Service

December 28



Mission and Outreach

1. We (big WE including our amazing congregation) hit our goal! Well, we DOUBLED IT too! We aimed for collecting 500 pounds this month and we have currently collected and delivered 1,016 pounds of food to the Molalla Service Center!



2. **We have another month to go! Let's see what we can do!**

I suggested to Pat that we build a nativity scene with canned foods but well, we would still need costumes and duct tape so let's leave this Advent decorations in the "idea" category.....

3. The Church Council approved the division of our budget of 2,000 dollars into three donations:

1. Molalla Service Center,
2. Marion Polk Food Bank, and
3. Bridging Cultures in Canby

Socks for the tree

In a Smyrna December tradition, members bring socks, underwear, hats, and scarves to hang on our Christmas tree. This year, socks and underwear are the most needed. Items are then given to local organizations to distribute where needed.

The tree is waiting in the Friendship House — what will you bring?



LONELY? Medical issues? Need Help?

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

4. I shared Rebekah's ideas about food preparation and possible delivery and that is where ANOTHER opportunity came up TODAY.

5. *Gervais School District (Where Amber works) is the distribution point for Marion Polk Foodshare. The families who need the food, are afraid to come in to the school to pick it up so the staff is scrambling to get the food to them. We can help them distribute the food to the 50 families (deliver). ANYONE INTERESTED? :)*

4. Immigrant Rights: The Council discussed the Notary Public opportunity, and asked me to speak with Leo to see if she would like to be a Notary Public to help with Family Safety Planning to help establish guardianship for their children if a parent is taken by ICE. I will meet with Leo first chance I get to see if she is able and willing.

Thanks for everything you do! See you soon!

Ginger



RESOURCE Page

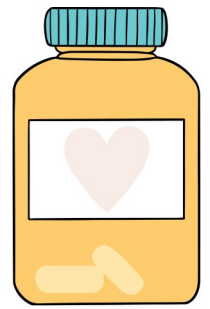
A Helpful page for people in
our community.
(Click here.)

Have you ever wondered what to do with unused medication?

It should not be flushed down the toilet or put in the trash, in order to avoid contaminating our water supply. Opioid medications, in particular, should not be kept around the house where they are within reach of children or others who should not be using them. However, there are several ways to dispose of unneeded medication safely.

Some pharmacies accept unused medication for disposal. Some police departments do as well. Occasionally there are special community events where medications can be turned in for disposal. Be sure to check on what is accepted; they may not want vitamins, for instance.

One method you may not have heard of is the Deterra medication disposal pouches. If you get one, you can deactivate and dispose of unneeded medications, patches, liquids, creams and films by inserting them into the pouch and following the easy directions on the pouch. Once the directions are followed, the pouches can be safely disposed of in the trash. Clackamas County offers free Deterra pouches to the public. Check it out at www.clackamas.us/publichealth/deterra. Other counties probably offer the same thing; check on it if you live in another county.



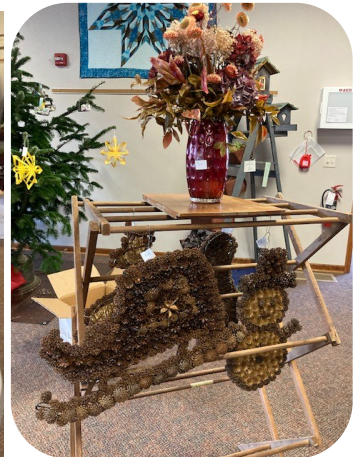
Recent Donations to Smyrna's Library are available on the Narthex book shelf

- Becoming Kin: An Indigenous Call to Unforgetting the Past and Reimagining Our Future by Patty Krawec. Broadleaf Books, 2022.
- Educated: A Memoir by Tara Westover. Random House, 2018.
- The Flag + The Cross: White Christian Nationalism and the Threat to American Democracy by Philip S. Gorski and Samuel L. Perry. Oxford Univ. Press, 2022.
- On Indigenuity: Learning the Lessons of Mother Earth by Daniel R. Wildcat. Fulcrum Publishing, 2023.
- The Overstory: A Novel by Richard Powers. Norton, 2018.
- White Women: Everything You Already Know About Your Own Racism and How To Do Better by Regina Jackson and Saira Rao. Penguin Books, 2022



Women's Fellowship Bazaar

On November 29, the Women's Fellowship Annual Bazaar offered a variety of handcrafts, home baked foods, and Christmas ornaments for sale; and hearty soups and breads were served for a freewill donation.





In November, we met to practice the ancient art of orizomegami, dying coffee filters, mulberry paper and rice paper. Beautiful flowers were created, fellowship and snacks shared.

Join us on **December 13 at 10:30 am** for our next adventure in creativity!

Energized by a morning spent creating art, Mary strapped on a leaf blower and herded the fallen leaves away from the parking area.



**No matter who you are,
or where you are on life's
journey, we welcome
you.**



- Paul and Mary Ashton
Barack Holt and Family
- Anne Stronko and Roger Marin
- The Crispin Family
- Murlene Liechty
- John Farrell (Janet Bess' brother)
- Christine Albright
- Winter Pebley
- Jeannie Rogers' brothers, Steven and John
- Butch and Gene, Ethel Henderson's sons and the rest
of her family

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.

December 2025

Smyrna Church, Holidays in United States

Dec 2025 (Pacific Time - Los Angeles)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
30	1	2	3	4	5	6
	BD: Julia P 7pm - AA/AO Meeting	UCC Giving Tuesday Fund 10am - Office hours 11am - Office meeting - Jen 7pm - Diaconate @ zoom	12:30pm - Gentle Yoga 2pm - Bible Study @ https:	10am - Office hours 12pm - Memory Cafe	1pm - Bell Practice 6pm - Meaning Makers	Gottwald & Itschner Family
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
2nd Sunday of Advent BD: Barbara Daniels CH: Mission & Outreach Reader: Janet Bass 10:30am - SS: Jeannie 10:30am - Worship 3pm - Bentley Family	7pm - AA/AO Meeting	BD: Nikolas Peterson 10am - Office hours 11am - Office meeting - Jen	BD: Jeff Marshall 12:30pm - Gentle Yoga 2pm - Bible Study @ https:	BD: Chris Bangs 10am - Office hours 12pm - W. F. Luncheon 7pm - Church Council Meeting	BD: Jeannie Rogers 1pm - Bell Practice	10:30am - Art and Soul @
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
3rd Sunday of Advent BD: Genevieve Freeman BD: Rebekah Yoder CH: Christian Education 10:30am - SS: Joshua/Kristin 10:30am - Worship 1pm - John Nilsen 2:30pm - Rebekah Bday Party	BD: Paulette Eyman BD: Tina Marshall 7pm - AA/AO Meeting	10am - Office hours 11am - Office meeting - Jen	BD: Garrett Veatch BD: Josh Marshall 12:30pm - Gentle Yoga 2pm - Bible Study @ https:	10am - Office hours	1pm - Bell Practice 6:30pm - Meaning Makers	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
4th Sunday of Advent All Ages Christmas Pageant BD: Kevin Yoder CH: WF(A) Reader: Karyl Winter Days of Giving 10:30am - SS: Debi 10:30am - Worship 2pm - Stutzman Family	7pm - AA/AO Meeting	10am - Office hours 11am - Office meeting - Jen	Christmas Eve Christmas Fund 4pm - Christmas Eve Worship 4pm - Reader: Mary	Christmas Day	Pastor Jennifer out of office	
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
Pastor Jennifer out of office CH: Diaconate Team B WA: Leo & Marsha Sano 10:30am - SS: Rebekah 10:30am - Worship	7pm - AA/AO Meeting	10am - Office hours	New Year's Eve			