



# United Church of Christ-Congregational The Lighted Window



Celebrating 159 years of faithful  
service for Christ and the Church  
**June 2019**

## Sunday Worship Time

10:00am

## Pastor

Rev. Dr. Bill Comfort  
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## Pastor's Ponderings – Oneness

In Louisville, at the  
corner of Fourth and

Walnut, in the center of the shopping  
district, I was suddenly overwhelmed with  
the realization that I loved all these people,  
that they were mine and I theirs, that we  
could not be alien to one another even  
though we were total strangers. It was like  
waking from a dream of separateness, of  
spurious self-isolation in a special world. . . .  
Thomas Merton, Conjectures of a Guilty  
Bystander.

In this passage from the writings of famous  
Christian mystic Thomas Merton I believe  
that he illustrates what may seem like a  
confusing saying of Jesus from the Gospel of  
Thomas. The Gospel of Thomas is a list of  
114 sometimes weird and sometimes  
strange sayings of Jesus. In saying 22,  
part of Jesus' response to a question from  
his followers about how to enter the  
Kingdom is as follows: "When you are able  
to make two become one, the inside like the  
outside, and the outside like the inside...—  
then you will enter in."

When I was in Seminary at Seattle  
University Quaker mystic and spiritual writer

Parker Palmer gave a talk in which he cut a  
strip of paper, twisted it once, and then  
stapled the ends together. In so doing he  
formed a moebius strip. One of the aspects  
of a moebius strip is that is you take a pencil  
and draw a line along one side of the strip  
and just continue you will draw one line on  
both sides of the piece of paper. You will  
have made in inside like the outside and the  
outside like the inside.

In her book Yeshua's Yoga Christian mystic,  
poet and artist Kimberly Beyer-Nelson  
suggests an experiment: "If we consider our  
mind, our consciousness, singular behind  
closed eyelids, then open our eyes to see a  
writing pen, we can feel the interplay  
between mind and an object observed. That  
is the first step—one to two. Then, we can  
feel how, when we shut our eyes, we can  
hold the image of the pen within. But mind  
and pen here have become one, actually  
became one the moment our eyes fell on it  
in 'outer' reality.

I believe that Jesus is trying to get his  
followers to contemplate like these three  
mystics. He is not trying to confuse them or  
set up impossible conditions for salvation. He  
is only trying to get them to have the insight  
Merton, Palmer and Beyers-Nelson have.  
When people follow these simple illustrations  
and keep from allowing the simplicity of

them cause their judgmental minds to make less of the wisdom they are following a wisdom path that will carry them beyond what mystic refer to as the false self to a larger place of oneness with all Creation. Contemplating the weird and strange sayings of Jesus in the Gospel of Thomas in the simple way that these mystics use can bring one to a place "In the heart of God. Calm and quiet is my soul, like a little child resting in his mother's arms." From this place of rest each of us can begin to beave in a transformed way, no longer imagining that we can benefit while the rest of Creation suffers.

*Blessings, Bill*



**Birthdays in June**

- Allison Miles 1**
- MaryLee Hattenhauer 10**
- Jean Emerson 11**
- Lynn Wilcox 13**
- Tama Bolton 14**
- Lyle Miller 18**
- Bonnie Long 22**
- Darrell Clark 23**
- Cheryl Ortega 24**
- Karl Vercouteren 24**
- Traci Church-Witkowski 24**
- Tom Peachey 26**
- Bill Matthew 30**

**June Anniversary**

- John & Deidre Baumgarten 19**

**July Birthdays**

- Olivia Church-Witkowski 4**
- Sohaila Church-Witkowski 6**
- Judy Dinnell 9**
- Rymmel Lovell 26**
- Robert Bailey 30**
- Shirley Ulrich 31**

**July Anniversaries**

- Tom & Sue Peachey 5**
- Jim & Lynn Wilcox 6**



The June pantry item will be PAPER PRODUCTS Please help fill the shopping cart in the Roberts room.

Date	Greeter	Reader	Coffee Host	Child Care
6/2			Klea Caroline	
6/9		Sheri	Miller	
6/16	Sheri			
6/23				
6/30				

**LET'S HAVE A CHURCH PICNIC**

Does anyone remember the last Church Picnic?? Well, it's time to have another one, and Council is looking for a few folks to organize the event. The date, location, and perhaps a theme are to be determined by these creative, fun-loving folks. Please respond by e-mail, phone, or in person to the church office.



## Calendar of Events

Jun 2—8am Men's breakfast  
8:30 Breakfast  
Jun 5—10:30am Creation Care  
11:30am Book Group  
3pm Diaconate  
Jun 9—10am Pentecost & Choir  
Sunday  
Jun 11—2:15pm Church Council  
Jun 18—2pm Prayer shawl meeting  
Jun 19—10:30am Creation Care  
Jun 23 -29 Pastor Bill on vacation  
Jun 25—1pm Lucile Torgerson  
Memorial

AA MEETS: Mon-Fri 7-8am

Mon & Fri 6-7pm

Sat & Sun 5-6pm

Tues 5:30-6:30pm

## Women's Fellowship News

Summer is very, very near, officially on June 21<sup>st</sup>. Women's Fellowship is taking its annual summer respite during June, July and August. Save the date for the new year's first meeting on September 9<sup>th</sup>. Yes, the new year for Women's Fellowship begins in September 2019 and continues through May of 2020!! Not all members will be taking the summer off though. Rosemary Ross, Jan Leonard, Caroline Homer and Joy Krein are part of the new year's planning committee. They will be meeting over the summer to determine programs for the new year. Suggestions, new ideas are always welcome. Just let one of us know!!

Our May meeting concluded the year 2018-2019 with a salad luncheon held on May 6<sup>th</sup> in Tenney Fellowship Hall with 20 in attendance. Raz Mason was our guest speaker and her program was based on

her current focus concerning excess CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere. She is executive director of CO<sub>2</sub> Foundation. Her presentation brought vivid awareness to the problem. We all must strive to help reduce this horrendous obstacle in our atmosphere. Her slide presentation illustrated the issue. To learn more, use your internet connection to visit the website that offers explanations and a possible solution. CO<sub>2</sub> Foundation.org. Thank you, Raz, for taking time to share your knowledge and concerns with us. At our business meeting we voted to help support Columbia Gorge Peace Village's day camp with a full scholarship that amounts to \$365. This year the camp will be located at the Underwood Community Center August 5-9<sup>th</sup>. We announced to save Nov 1-3 so a group of us women can attend the NW Women's Retreat to be held at the Oregon Gardens in Silverton. It was decided that we will be sponsoring a children's program or possibly another child through Global Ministries. Details will be assessed over the summer by Corliss Marsh and Joy Krein.

Thinking back over our year, I am in appreciation for all the participation from our members and speakers. Thank you for your time and energy that goes into developing a program, giving a devotional and hostessing a meeting.

Joy Krein



## News from the Creation Care Group

You are probably aware that we have formed a Creation Care Group. This group grew out of our Lenten Study on the connection between our Christian faith and care for Creation. The purpose of the group is to find ways to act that will be

beneficial to the Earth. We are energized by the list of Be the Church values displayed in the Tenney room. (See the next page.) The kinds of actions that we are taking so far are: writing an item for our church newsletter each month, providing a creation care moment on the second and fourth Sunday during worship and having an information table on those Sundays in the coffee area. The group meets on the Wednesday before the second and fourth Sunday of each month at 10:30 in the Isabella Gray Room. All of you are invited to attend. One of our main focuses is on the Climate Change crises. Our energy choices directly affect the health of the air and climate. The byproduct of energy derived from burning fossil-fuel is carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), a powerful greenhouse gas. As individuals and as a society, we must choose to reduce carbon emissions. The most important steps are to use energy more efficiently, replace fossil fuels with clean energy sources such as sun and wind, protect forests, and explore Carbon Dioxide Removal technologies. It is our hope that by taking these steps we will not only stem global warming – We will also provide secure energy supplies and generate new jobs and prosperity in clean technologies. Some of the needed actions are things individuals can do in our homes, churches, and workplaces. In order to make the scale of change that is needed to stop global warming we also need to educate and influence other people and our government and the people and governments of the other countries of the world to act in big ways.

## Book Group

The next book group meeting will be June 5 at 11:30AM. The book choice is *EVICTED* by Matthew Desmond. This well-known sociologist won the Pulitzer Prize for Non-Fiction in 2017. The book follows 8 different families in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Those who read *NOMADLAND* last fall will appreciate this searing examination of life in America today and the struggles faced by average citizens.



Our UCC Banner

*Protect the environment.*

*Care for the poor.*

*Forgive often.*

*Reject Racism.*

*Fight for the Powerless.*

*Share earthly and spiritual resources.*

*Embrace diversity.*

**LOVE GOD**

*Enjoy this life.*

## **Local Church Ministries assembling working group to revise Manual on Church**

May 17, 2019

Written by **Connie Larkman**

The United Church of Christ Faith Education, Innovation and Formation (Faith INFO) Team has put out a call across the denomination to find individuals committed to discerning the form and function of the local Church in the 21st century.

The Justice and Local Church Ministries team is tasked with reimagining the UCC Manual on Church (MOC) to better serve congregations ministering in the world today. Faith INFO is now assembling a working group that can spend the next few years examining the ways the manual needs to be reworked and rewritten. Local Church Ministries has determined the MOC, last revised in 2004, needs to better address the changing landscapes of church and denominational life that impact many aspects of congregations, including ways that churches are formed, reformed, and live in covenant with one another.

"Faith INFO is about serving Local Congregations," said the Rev. Chris Davies, team leader. The final document will be created in service to local congregations. For example, it could be used to help define covenants. Or, what are marks of faithful local congregations? It may be a policy manual on how to do church.

"My work is to listen and affirm what the denomination needs," she continued. "These are all possibilities. We'll be listening to what the working group wants to do and making it happen."

Right now, Davies' team is focused on identifying individuals to form the working group that will lead the denomination-wide conversation on the Manual on Church. Faith INFO seeks those with a sense of call, who can listen for God's guidance, and are enthusiastic about studying UCC understandings of ecclesiology (theological understanding of the nature and structure of church) and the function of the local church. The aim—to bless the denomination with an

insightful resource for local churches of today and of tomorrow.

"The challenge will be finding people who are inspired and committed to the life of the UCC, in particular to addressing to covenant and policy," Davies said. "Those involved will have to be willing to commit to a working group that could continue up to five years and last through many gatherings."

Faith INFO has issued an invitation across the wider church, seeking nominations for the working group, looking for individuals who represent diverse facets of people and positions in the United Church of Christ; including but not limited to: lay people, clergy, church planters, conference staff, affiliated ministries and beyond.

The team has sent out a call to particular constituency groups and written to every single local congregation in the denomination.

All UCC members are welcome to submit nominations, including self-nominations. In addition to contact information, the team is interested in each nominee's UCC experience and the skills and perspectives that nominee would bring to the working group. Two references are also requested.

Nominations are open now through July 1, 2019. One can apply online at <https://app.smarterselect.com/programs/58262-United-Church-Of-Christ>.

While building the working group is critical, Davies is committed to ensuring that all interested parties in the UCC can participate in the group's conversation. So a church-wide survey is also part of the process of reimagining the MOC.

"The working group has to determine the MOC scope and function. Just as important to note, a survey will come out in early June, before General Synod, so individuals across the life of the church can participate in this information gathering process," Davies said. "We want all those who are interested to be able to add input into the scope and function of this Manual on Church for the working group."

Members of the working group will be asked to make a four-year commitment to this project, including an estimated 5–7 in-person gathering across those four years

