

# ANNUAL REPORT 2018



**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

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# ANNUAL CONGREGATION MEETING AGENDA

**JANUARY 27, 2019 | 12 – 1:15 P.M.**  
*FC UCC PORTLAND FELLOWSHIP HALL*

**Call to Order (11:50 a.m.)**

**Opening Prayer**

**Greetings from our Conference Minister, the Rev. Molly Carlson**

**Establish Quorum**

**Update on Interim Process**

**Vote to Approve December 10, 2017 Annual Meeting Minutes**  
(See December 2017 Annual Meeting Minutes)

**Elect 2019 Officers**

**Recognition of Outgoing Leaders and Welcoming of New Leaders**

**Present Background on Immigrant Welcoming Congregation Declaration**  
Vote on Immigrant Welcoming Congregation Declaration

**Present Background on 2019 Budget**  
Vote to Adopt 2019 Budget

**Recognition of Volunteers**

**Closing Prayer**

**Closing Hymn (NCH #391)**

# ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES DECEMBER 10, 2017

Moderator Peace Young called the meeting to order at 12 p.m.  
Assistant Moderator Frank Baldwin opened with prayer.

A quorum was affirmed with 52 members present.

The minutes of the December 11, 2016 Annual Meeting were approved as written.

The slate of officers nominated for the 2018 Church Council was presented by Jim McPartland of the Nominating Committee (\*new to Council):

- Moderator: \*Sarah Vazquez
- Assistant Moderator: \*Anne Sullivan
- Past Moderator: Peace Young
- Secretary Treasurer: \*Catherine Clark
- Members-at-large: \*Paris Hancock (one year term); Karin Wriggle (two year term); \*Bill Greene (three year term)

A motion was made and seconded to elect the slate unanimously; there was no discussion. The motion was passed unanimously.

The slate of members nominated for the 2018 Nominating Committee was presented by Ann Laskey of the Selection Committee (\*new to Committee): Karen Horn; Tim Pollard; Lesley Sepetoski; Scott Sorenson-Jolink ; \*Bill Cunitz; \*Dan Schauer

A motion was made and seconded to elect the slate; there was no discussion. The motion was passed unanimously.

Thanks were given to those who worked on this year's Nominating Committee and Selection Committee.

A power-point presentation on the background thinking of the Budget Committee was presented by Sarah



Vazquez. The presentation affirmed that approving the Budget creates a Covenant among members. The Budget is a significant document designed to enable the continuation of our Church's history and heritage, to guide our current work, and to make us accountable and transparent. Sarah also offered her personal goals as Moderator for the coming year: to explore partnering possibilities within the church family as a way of getting to know one another better and building stronger relationships; to create more possibilities for intergenerational exchanges; and to continue the work of making our spaces safe and secure for all who enter them.

Belinda Moos then presented the 2018 Proposed Budget, noting that it is a moral document created to support our Church's ministries. Major changes evident in the 2018 Budget include:

- Less revenue from pledging;
- Increased revenue from venue use;
- Expanded roles of current staff
- An additional staff position focused on Youth Ministry;
- An audit.

Belinda affirmed that the Church's net liquidity is solid. Questions and comments were offered:

- The musicians are deserving of raises. That was affirmed but noted that Budget cuts were called for this year and there was no money for raises for them. One of the goals for 2018 is to spend time in visioning ways to improve our finances; more money for musicians is a recognized goal.
- MACG funding was eliminated. This was also due to the need to cut and reallocate in this year's Budget.
- Our Business Manager is essential to our financial stability and growth, and Cara is a wonder-worker on the Church's behalf.

A motion was made and seconded to adopt the proposed 2018 Budget as presented. The motion was passed unanimously.

Recognition and thanks were given to 2017 outgoing leadership: Church Council members Frank Baldwin, Al Horn, Belinda Moos, Karen Hurst, Christian Logerstedt and, in particular, Peace Young; and Anne Sullivan and Jim McPartland from the Nominating Committee.

Pastors Elizabeth Durant and Michael Ellick led a closing prayer which included naming those from the Church family who died this past year.

We shared a song and adjourned the meeting at 1 p.m.

# ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES

## DECEMBER 9, 2018

*The following meeting minutes will approved in the 2019 Annual Meeting in December.*

Assistant Moderator Anne Sullivan called the meeting to order at 11:45 a.m.

A quorum was affirmed with 53 members present.

A motion was made to extend the 2018 Church Council member and Nominating Committee member positions that expire on December 2018 until January 27, 2019. Margaret Baldwin moved; Sahni Denton seconded; the motion was approved.

A motion was made to recess the 2018 Annual Congregational Meeting until January 27, 2019. Bruce Bishop moved; Sahni Denton seconded; the motion was approved.

Interim Senior Minister Rev. Janet Parker provided an update on the interim process. The focus this fall has been on the pastor and congregation getting to know each other, and having a positive Stewardship season, Advent and Christmas. In early 2019, we will be convening a Transition Team to prepare our local church profile, which requires seeking input from the entire congregation and reviewing the ministries of the congregation. There is no set timeline for preparing the profile, but it may be completed by summer or fall of 2019. When the local church profile is completed, a Search Committee will be elected to evaluate candidate profiles and interview candidates. Rev. Janet will send out a written update after the holidays, and she encouraged us to ask her if we have any questions.

Rev. Janet Parker closed the meeting in prayer.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

# CHURCH COUNCIL AND NOMINATING COMMITTEE FOR 2019 SLATES

## CHURCH COUNCIL 2019

The 2018 Nominating Committee [William (Bill) Cunitz, Karen Horn, Tim Pollard, Lesley Sepetoski, Scott Sorensen-Jolink] has prepared the following slate of nominees for the 2019 Church Council, to be affirmed by the congregation:

- Past Moderator - Sarah Vazquez
- Moderator - Anne Sullivan
- Vice Moderator - Daniel Russo
- Treasurer - Belinda Moos
- 3-year Member-at-large - Margaret Baldwin
- 2-year Member-at large - Paris Hancock
- 1-year Member-at-large - Cheryl Clevenger

## NOMINATING COMMITTEE 2019

The 2018 Selection Committee [Ann Laskey, Cath Clark, Patty Hammond, and Kathy Sheibley] has prepared the following slate of nominees for the 2019 Nominating Committee, to be affirmed by the congregation:

- Tim Pollard
- Karen Horn
- William (Bill) Cunitz
- Dean Sigler\*
- Debb Chapman\*
- Margaret Oethinger\*

\*denotes new member this year

# PROPOSED CHURCH BUDGET

		2019	2018		2018	
		Budget	Budget	Difference	Actual	Difference
Income						
4000 · Giving						
	4050 · Pledges	\$132,672	\$140,000	(\$7,328)	\$121,088	\$11,584
	4051 · General gifts	\$45,000	\$56,200	(\$11,200)	\$53,152	(\$8,152)
	4052 · Flowers	\$900	\$900	\$0	\$720	\$180
	4053 · Memorials and bequests	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$0	\$5,400	(\$400)
Total 4000 · Giving		\$183,572	\$202,100	(\$18,528)	\$180,360	\$3,212
4100 · Tower receipts		\$0	\$2,500	(\$2,500)	\$150	(\$150)
4200 · Designated gifts						
	4202 · Pastors Discretionary donat	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	4205 · Youth missions donations	\$1,000	\$800	\$200	\$2,166	(\$1,166)
	4206 · Christian Ed.: youth	\$500	\$0	\$500	\$0	\$500
	4210 · Choir donations	\$200	\$200	\$0	\$1,317	(\$1,117)
	4212 · Eve's Circle	\$500	\$500	\$0	\$805	(\$305)
	4213 · Eve's Grandma Agnes dona	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$7	(\$7)
	4216 · ArtReach	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$0	\$5,268	(\$268)
	4218 · Other Designated Donations	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$0	\$4,956	(\$3,956)
Total 4200 · Designated gifts		\$8,200	\$7,500	\$700	\$14,519	(\$6,319)
4300 · Building income						
	4301 · PCPA lease	\$193,753	\$190,524	\$3,229	\$190,524	\$3,229
	4305 · Building rentals	\$70,000	\$85,000	(\$15,000)	\$76,126	(\$6,126)
	4310 · Annex subleases	\$16,000	\$28,000	(\$12,000)	\$17,152	(\$1,152)
	4315 · Weddings	\$5,000	\$7,000	(\$2,000)	\$6,950	(\$1,950)
Total 4300 · Building income		\$284,753	\$310,524	(\$25,771)	\$290,752	(\$5,999)

# PROPOSED CHURCH BUDGET

4400 · Grants						
	4401 · Brown Grant #1	\$9,828	\$10,352	(\$524)	\$9,828	\$0
	4402 · Brown Grant #2	\$99,650	\$101,229	(\$1,579)	\$99,650	\$0
Total 4400 · Grants		<b>\$109,478</b>	<b>\$111,581</b>	<b>(\$2,103)</b>	<b>\$109,478</b>	<b>\$0</b>
4500 · In kind donations		<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$1,229</b>	<b>(\$1,229)</b>
4600 · Church sponsored activities						
	4601 · Art Reach commissions	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$0	\$400	\$600
	4602 · Oliver annual lecture	\$1,900	\$1,900	\$0	\$0	\$1,900
Total 4600 · Church sponsored activities		<b>\$2,900</b>	<b>\$2,900</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$400</b>	<b>\$2,500</b>
4700 · Interest income		<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$10</b>	<b>(\$10)</b>
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>\$588,903</b>	<b>\$637,105</b>	<b>(\$48,202)</b>	<b>\$596,898</b>	<b>(\$7,994)</b>
<b>Expense</b>						
6000 · Community Core Ministry						
	6010 · Community general	\$600	\$1,000	(\$400)	\$148	\$452
	6021 · Music director	\$16,846	\$16,516	\$330	\$16,515	\$331
	6022 · Organist	\$16,846	\$16,516	\$330	\$18,715	(\$1,869)
	6023 · Choir leaders	\$18,437	\$17,900	\$537	\$17,481	\$956
	6024 · Fourth Sunday musicians	\$2,400	\$2,400	\$0	\$1,585	\$815
	6025 · Organ repair	\$0	\$700	(\$700)	\$0	\$0
	6026 · Organ tuning	\$350	\$700	(\$350)	\$0	\$350
	6027 · Piano tuning	\$0	\$550	(\$550)	\$495	(\$495)
	6028 · Other musicians	\$600	\$0	\$600	\$0	\$600
	6029 · Music supplies	\$500	\$500	\$0	\$255	\$245
	6031 · Choir Director parking	\$300	\$300	\$0	\$228	\$72
	6032 · Choir Parking	\$300	\$500	(\$200)	\$152	\$148

# PROPOSED CHURCH BUDGET

	6810 · Member Parking	\$1,000	\$2,000	(\$1,000)	\$737	\$263
	6035 · Eve's Circle expenses	\$500	\$500	\$0	\$621	(\$121)
	6036 · Eve's Grandma Agnes exper	\$597	\$597	\$0	\$375	\$222
Total 6000 · Community Core Ministry		<b>\$59,277</b>	<b>\$60,679</b>	<b>(\$1,402)</b>	<b>\$57,309</b>	<b>\$1,968</b>
6050 · General worship						
	6051 · Sub. preacher	\$400	\$400	\$0	\$600	(\$200)
	6052 · Flowers expenses	\$900	\$900	\$0	\$785	\$115
	6053 · Other worship expenses	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$0	\$565	\$435
Total 6050 · General worship		<b>\$2,300</b>	<b>\$2,300</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$1,950</b>	<b>\$350</b>
6070 · Christian education						
	6071 · Chr. Ed. general account	\$1,500	\$2,025	(\$525)	\$1,354	\$146
	6073 · Adult Education	\$500	\$750	(\$250)	\$0	\$500
	6080 · Youth ministry	\$2,000	\$1,500	\$500	\$3,725	(\$1,725)
	6081 · Youth mission trip	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$0	\$5,199	(\$2,199)
	6082 · Fam. retreat scholarships	\$200	\$1,000	(\$800)	\$50	\$150
	6083 · Teen Ministry Coordinator	\$7,200	\$20,000	(\$12,800)	\$3,298	\$3,902
	6084 · Childrens Ministry Coordina	\$4,840	\$4,840	\$0	\$2,512	\$2,328
	6085 · Child Care Provider	\$3,800	\$3,600	\$200	\$3,121	\$679
Total 6070 · Christian education		<b>\$23,040</b>	<b>\$36,715</b>	<b>(\$13,675)</b>	<b>\$19,259</b>	<b>\$3,781</b>
6200 · Peace-making core ministry						
	6201 · Peace-making general acco	\$1,600	\$2,600	(\$1,000)	\$1,363	\$237
	6202 · Local service projects	\$3,600	\$3,600	\$0	\$3,515	\$85
	6203 · Our Church's Wider Missior	\$7,300	\$7,300	\$0	\$7,450	(\$150)
	6204 · Pastor's disc. fund expenses	\$514	\$502	\$12	\$550	(\$36)
	6205 · Open & Affirming expenses	\$500	\$750	(\$250)	\$440	\$60
Total 6200 · Peace-making core ministry		<b>\$13,514</b>	<b>\$14,752</b>	<b>(\$1,238)</b>	<b>\$13,317</b>	<b>\$197</b>

# PROPOSED CHURCH BUDGET

6300 · Hospitality core ministry						
	6301 · Hospitality gen. account	\$1,800	\$2,000	(\$200)	\$1,567	\$233
	6302 · Sunday fellowship expenses	\$1,000	\$2,000	(\$1,000)	\$635	\$365
	6350 · Church sponsored events					
	6351 · Oliver Lecture	\$1,900	\$1,900	\$0	\$0	\$1,900
	6352 · ArtReach Gallery	\$7,000	\$7,000	\$0	\$5,745	\$1,255
	6360 · Other CSE's	\$3,500	\$3,500	\$0	\$1,657	\$1,843
	Total 6350 · Church sponsored eve	\$12,400	\$12,400	\$0	\$7,402	\$4,998
Total 6300 · Hospitality core ministry		\$15,200	\$16,400	(\$1,200)	\$9,604	\$5,596
6500 · Ministerial staff						
	6501 · Sr. Min. Salary	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$0	\$41,459	(\$1,459)
	6502 · Sr. Min. Housing	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$0	\$34,799	\$5,201
	6503 · Sr. Min. SECA	\$6,120	\$6,120	\$0	\$7,563	(\$1,443)
	6504 · Sr. Min. Health/dental	\$11,511	\$9,700	\$1,811	\$17,908	(\$6,397)
	6505 · Sr. Min. Life/disability	\$1,200	\$1,200	\$0	\$498	\$702
	6506 · Sr. Min. Pension	\$11,200	\$11,200	\$0	\$11,180	\$20
	6507 · Sr. Min. expenses	\$1,000	\$2,000	(\$1,000)	\$1,762	(\$762)
	6508 · Sr. Min. Continuing Ed.	\$1,500	\$100	\$1,400	\$744	\$757
	6509 · Sr. Min. Transport/Parking	\$3,520	\$1,000	\$2,520	\$1,081	\$2,440
	6510 · Sr. Min. Cell/Internet	\$0	\$1,000	(\$1,000)	\$0	\$0
	6511 · Sr. Min. Auto expenses	\$0	\$1,000	(\$1,000)	\$1,316	(\$1,316)
	6550 · Asst. Min. Salary	\$4,000	\$24,000	(\$20,000)	\$24,005	(\$20,005)
	6551 · Asst. Min. Housing	\$4,000	\$24,000	(\$20,000)	\$24,096	(\$20,096)
	6552 · Asst. Min. SECA	\$614	\$3,682	(\$3,068)	\$5,513	(\$4,899)
	6553 · Asst. Min. Health/dental	\$2,633	\$9,000	(\$6,368)	\$8,625	(\$5,993)
	6554 · Asst. Min. Life/disability	\$180	\$720	(\$540)	\$0	\$180
	6555 · Asst. Min. Pension	\$1,680	\$6,720	(\$5,040)	\$5,600	(\$3,920)

# PROPOSED CHURCH BUDGET

	6556 · Asst. Min. Expenses	\$0	\$2,000	(\$2,000)	\$2,187	(\$2,187)
	6557 · Asst. Min. Continuing Ed.	\$0	\$1,500	(\$1,500)	\$1,670	(\$1,670)
	6558 · Asst. Min. Parking	\$2,040	\$2,040	\$0	\$2,044	(\$4)
	6570 Ministerial transition costs	\$60,046	\$0	\$60,046	\$0	\$60,046
Total 6500 · Ministerial staff		\$191,243	\$186,982	\$4,261	\$192,049	(\$806)
6600 · Personnel expenses						
	6610 · Reception Assistant	\$12,090	\$0	\$12,090	\$0	\$12,090
	6611 · Communications Coordinat	\$22,700	\$35,360	(\$12,660)	\$32,977	(\$10,277)
	6612 · Accounting Coordinator	\$15,912	\$18,294	(\$2,382)	\$16,056	(\$144)
	6613 · Facilities Manager	\$47,840	\$47,840	\$0	\$47,774	\$66
	6614 · Custodians	\$20,380	\$24,200	(\$3,820)	\$18,876	\$1,504
	6615 · Business Manager	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$0	\$59,971	\$29
	6616 · Business Manager parking	\$2,800	\$2,520	\$280	\$3,075	(\$275)
	6617 · Staff health / dental insurar	\$15,264	\$12,500	\$2,764	\$15,028	\$236
	6620 · Payroll tax expense	\$20,700	\$20,963	(\$263)	\$19,944	\$756
	6621 · Workers Comp Insurance	\$4,800	\$5,000	(\$200)	\$4,004	\$796
	6600 · Personnel expenses - Other	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$0	\$53	\$947
Total 6600 · Personnel expenses		\$223,486	\$227,677	(\$4,191)	\$217,758	\$5,728
6650 · Business Operations Expense		\$3,500	\$3,500	\$0	\$271	\$3,229
6655 · Fundraising Expense		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
6700 · Building and rental expenses						
	6701 · Building rentals	\$10,000	\$12,000	(\$2,000)	\$9,351	\$649
	6702 · Wedding expenses	\$2,000	\$2,500	(\$500)	\$1,835	\$165
	6703 · Sublease expenses	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$0	\$1,752	(\$252)
Total 6700 · Building and rental expenses		\$13,500	\$16,000	(\$2,500)	\$12,938	\$562
6800 · Building/facility expenses						



# PROPOSED CHURCH BUDGET

	6801 · Water		\$5,500	\$5,500	\$0	\$5,445	\$55
	6802 · Gas		\$9,000	\$11,000	(\$2,000)	\$6,288	\$2,712
	6803 · Electricity		\$10,300	\$11,300	(\$1,000)	\$9,714	\$586
	6804 · Sanitation		\$7,000	\$6,000	\$1,000	\$8,917	(\$1,917)
	6805 · Security & Safety		\$5,000	\$6,000	(\$1,000)	\$2,413	\$2,587
	6806 · Repairs - ordinary		\$12,500	\$12,500	\$0	\$15,063	(\$2,563)
	6807 · Repairs - major		\$20,000	\$45,000	(\$25,000)	\$40,782	(\$20,782)
	6809 · Building & kitchen supplies		\$5,000	\$5,000	\$0	\$7,942	(\$2,942)
	6811 · Elevator monitoring		\$2,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$2,032	(\$32)
Total 6800 · Building/facility expenses			<b>\$76,300</b>	<b>\$103,300</b>	<b>(\$27,000)</b>	<b>\$98,597</b>	<b>(\$22,297)</b>
6850 · Annex expenses						\$96	
	6851 · Annex electricity		\$4,000	\$2,800	\$1,200	\$3,951	\$49
	6852 · Annex security		\$600	\$600	\$0	\$427	\$173
	6853 · Annex rent		\$22,607	\$22,236	\$371	\$22,236	\$371
Total 6850 · Annex expenses			<b>\$27,207</b>	<b>\$25,636</b>	<b>\$1,571</b>	<b>\$26,710</b>	<b>\$497</b>
6900 · Office Expenses							
	6901 · Office supplies		\$4,000	\$3,600	\$400	\$5,141	(\$1,141)
	6902 · Office Equipt. Maint.		\$2,500	\$3,000	(\$500)	\$329	\$2,171
	6903 · Office Equip. Purch.		\$3,000	\$4,000	(\$1,000)	\$1,034	\$1,966
	6904 · Postage		\$300	\$300	\$0	\$199	\$101
	6905 · Printer lease expenses		\$8,000	\$8,000	\$0	\$6,546	\$1,454
	6906 · Web/telephone expenses		\$10,500	\$9,500	\$1,000	\$10,911	(\$411)
Total 6900 · Office Expenses			<b>\$28,300</b>	<b>\$28,400</b>	<b>(\$100)</b>	<b>\$24,160</b>	<b>\$4,140</b>
6950 · Other general expenses							
	6951 · Insurance		\$17,124	\$14,500	\$2,624	\$16,513	\$611
	6952 · Conference Delegate Expen		\$1,250	\$1,250	\$0	\$1,283	(\$33)
	6953 · Payroll service		\$2,500	\$2,500	\$0	\$2,943	(\$443)

# PROPOSED CHURCH BUDGET

	6954 · E-giving expenses		\$1,300	\$1,300	\$0	\$1,381	(\$81)
	6955 · Audit Review		\$0	\$15,000	(\$15,000)	\$14,212	(\$14,212)
	6956 · Bank charges		\$50	\$50	\$0	\$156	(\$106)
	6957 Transition Expenses		\$8,000	\$0	\$8,000	\$0	\$8,000
	6959 · Other prof. services		\$300	\$300	\$0	\$340	(\$40)
Total 6950 · Other general expenses			\$30,524	\$34,900	(\$4,376)	\$36,827	(\$6,303)
6960 · Dues and subscriptions							
	6961 · Conference per capita dues		\$3,250	\$4,400	(\$1,150)	\$4,400	(\$1,150)
	6962 · EMO Dues		\$300	\$300	\$0	\$600	(\$300)
	6963 · Other dues		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	6964 · Licenses & permits		\$1,500	\$800	\$700	\$1,458	\$42
	6965 · Stewardship		\$1,500	\$1,500	\$0	\$1,665	(\$165)
Total 6960 · Dues and subscriptions			\$6,550	\$7,000	(\$450)	\$8,122	(\$1,572)
Total Expense			\$713,941	\$764,241	(\$50,300)	\$718,870	(\$4,929)
Net Ordinary Income			-\$125,037	-\$127,136	\$2,099	-\$121,972	(\$3,065)
Other Income							
9000 · Budgeted investment transfers							
	9005 · Knapp Fund transfer		\$2,659	\$2,423	\$236	\$2,423	\$236
	9015 · Oliver Lecture transfer		\$2,130	\$2,079	\$51	\$0	\$2,130
	9020 · Restr. Endow. transfer		\$2,114	\$2,064	\$50	\$2,064	\$50
	9025 · Reserve fund transfer		\$39,937	\$41,577	(\$1,640)	\$46,460	(\$6,523)
	9030 · Pastor's Disc. transfer		\$514	\$502	\$12	\$502	\$12
	9035 · Youth Mission transfer		\$2,500	\$2,500	\$0	\$2,500	\$0
	9040 Building Transfer Fund		\$20,000	\$45,000	(\$25,000)	\$45,000	(\$25,000)
	9050 Reserve Fund Youth Teacher		\$9,132	\$16,000	(\$6,868)	\$6,828	\$2,304
	9055 Reserve Fund Audit Transfer		\$0	\$15,000	(\$15,000)	\$14,212	(\$14,212)
	9060 Reserve Transition Costs		\$46,051		\$46,051	\$0	\$46,051
Total 9000 · Budgeted investment transfers			\$125,037	\$127,145	(\$2,108)	\$119,989	\$5,048
Total Other Income			\$125,037	\$127,145	\$2,108	\$119,989	\$5,048
Net Income			(\$0)	\$9	(\$9)	(\$1,983)	\$1,983



# SENIOR MINISTER'S REPORT

Rev. Dr. Janet Parker  
Interim Senior Minister

*"But now thus says the Lord, who created you... 'Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you.'"*  
Isaiah 43:1-3a

**2018 has been a year of challenge and change for First Congregational UCC.** The year began with new energy due to a dynamic Council and a Visioning Task Force, which produced a proposal in April for a "season of listening and learning." Through this season of listening and learning, the Task Force and Council envisioned a process of discernment and discovery that would lead to recommendations for the future ministry and mission of First Congregational UCC. Thanks to Bill Cunitz, Alice Forsythe, Nanci Tangeman, Karin Wriggle, and Denise and Jessica Denniston for serving on this Task Force, along with Revs. Michael Ellick and Elizabeth Durant. During this same period, plans were underway to recommend that the congregation call Rev. Elizabeth Durant as Associate Pastor of the Congregation (changing her status from Assistant Pastor into a called position with the congregation).



In late spring, following his own deep discernment process, Rev. Michael Ellick announced his resignation in order to pursue a call to a different kind of ministry outside the parish setting. Together, Council and Rev. Elizabeth decided to hit the pause button on the plans for the season of listening and learning, and the change in Rev. Elizabeth's position, in order to respond to the upcoming vacancy of the Senior Minister position. The congregation bid farewell to Rev. Michael at the end of July.

**Great appreciation is due to Rev. Elizabeth and Council leadership for shepherding the congregation through the gap between Rev. Michael's departure and my arrival as Interim Senior Minister in September.** I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to serve this historic and gifted congregation, and I have enjoyed getting to know many of you and working with your wonderful leaders. I have particularly cherished the opportunity

to partner in ministry with Rev. Elizabeth, who has enormous gifts for parish ministry and is clearly a beloved and valued pastor here at First Congregational UCC. Right after the New Year, the congregation was surprised to learn that Rev. Elizabeth had also discerned that the time had come for her to conclude her ministry here. Rev. Michael and Rev. Elizabeth's resignations have been challenging for the congregation, both because they have been beloved and gifted pastors, but also

because they follow other short pastorates in recent years. I know that for many of you, it may feel like the ground under your feet has been shifting, or that the congregation has wandered off the path into unknown territory. You may be wondering — Where is our compass? What can we learn from all this?

**As your Interim Senior Minister, I am here to reassure you that you are not alone.** First and foremost, God is with you — your constant companion and guide. This is the time to draw deep upon the wells of our faith tradition and our sacred texts, and remember what our spiritual ancestors learned again and again — God is faithful. God does not abandon God's people. If you attended worship during my first few weeks here last September, you may recall that I preached on how we can view the Israelites' wandering in the wilderness as a powerful sacred story that helps us understand the interim time between two settled pastors.

Leadership consultants William and Susan Bridges use the Israelites' journey through the wilderness as a metaphor for organizational transition in their book, *Managing Transitions: Making the Most of Change*. They coin the term "the neutral zone" to describe this wilderness experience of being between the old and familiar land (Egypt) and the destination of their journey (the Promised Land). I find this excerpt from their book particularly encouraging:

"The neutral zone is not the wasted time of meaningless waiting and confusion that it sometimes seems to be. It is a time when reorientation and redefinition must take place, and people need to understand that. It is the winter during which the spring's new growth is taking shape under the earth."

**Within this story of wandering and wilderness, there is good news!** I have already seen the outlines of the new growth that is taking shape in the rich

soil of First Congregational UCC. As reflected other reports, new partnerships have been forming for youth ministry with other UCC churches, for artistic cooperation with other downtown church art galleries, and with churches engaged in racial justice and climate justice. The church stood in solidarity with immigrant communities and, as of year's end, developed a plan for making our church an Immigrant Welcoming Congregation. A resolution to this effect is coming before the congregation at this Annual Meeting for a vote. New people have continued to come to church and kept coming back... and a number of you are preparing to join the congregation as members in early 2019. Additionally, a surprisingly strong pledge campaign for an interim period led to a good number of new pledge units and increased pledges. Thanks to our amazing Stewardship team, led by Bill Cunitz, for their great work!

**"God is with you — your constant companion and guide."**

And when it comes to non-clergy staff, while there was some turnover this year, the church has been blessed by our recent hires of Receptionist Maureen Gullett, Bookkeeper André Cordes, and Communications

Coordinator Leah Abraham. Steve Eggers and his intrepid custodial crew continue to keep our building in good shape and provide great hospitality for all those who use our facilities, and Cara Rothe keeps our whole operation humming along as smoothly as humanly possible. In the midst of other changes, First Congregational is blessed to have stability and continuity in our talented music staff: Choir Director Michael Kelly, and Organist, Grant Edwards. I truly enjoy working with each and every one of these remarkable individuals. If you don't know them yet, take some time to get to know them, and let them know that they are appreciated for all they do!

**Some of you have been wondering where we**

are in the process of moving from the old to the new, from Michael Ellick's tenure to the call of a new settled Senior Minister. Please know that I have been working hard with your lay leaders and staff to steady the ship following Michael's departure, and to develop the knowledge and relationships I need to lead you successfully through this wilderness. **Very soon, Council will appoint a Transition Team that will shepherd the congregation through the steps needed to conduct a congregational self-assessment and to prepare the local church profile.** This Transition Team, in concert with my leadership, will help the congregation engage the five focus points of the congregation during an interim period: Reviewing the congregation's Heritage; strengthening its Leadership; redefining its Mission; discovering its Connections; and preparing for its Future. Please be patient with this process. Experience and wisdom teaches that this process should not be rushed.

**Following the completion of the local church profile, a Search Committee will be formed to conduct the interview process and identify the candidate for Senior Minister to recommend to the congregation. In the meantime, every effort will be made to cover Rev. Elizabeth's responsibilities after she departs.** Most likely, new short-term staff will be hired to take on some of these duties, while others fall to me or to volunteers from within the congregation. In the meantime, remember that planned season of listening and learning? That is more important now than ever, as the congregation assesses its needs for ordained ministry and non-ordained staffing as part of its overall vision for the ministry of the congregation.

**In closing, know this: God is leading this congregation as surely as God led the Israelites through their wilderness time.** "Do not fear," Isaiah exhorts, the God who loves us, calls us by name, and redeems us will surely abide with us through every challenge and every change. Spring is coming.

In love and light,  
Rev. Dr. Janet Parker

# MODERATOR'S REPORT

Sarah Vazquez  
Moderator

*"That all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world will believe that you have sent me." John 17:21*

At the start of 2018, we embarked on another year in the life of our congregation together full of hope and purpose. I shared with you my goals to build stronger, more accountable relationships with one another, to create greater possibilities for intergenerational exchanges, and to continue to make our spaces safe for all who enter. We agreed to get busy and do just that.

What we didn't know was that this year would be full of challenges and changes, wrought seemingly with periods and places of instability, rough terrain, and rocky soil. Looking back, I can only mirror the sentiments of your Interim Senior Minister and Treasurer about such a wilderness — what a journey we've been through, what a resilient people we are, and what a faithful God we serve!

When faced with the turnover of volunteers, staff, and clergy, you showed an unwavering resolve to show up when it counted most:

You supported Reverend Ellick as he protested the incarceration and deportation of immigrant friends; You began in earnest a visioning process for the

congregation; You hosted members in your homes for gatherings of the spirit; You placed protections for staff members who are asylum-seekers; You marched in silence for the end of incarceration and deportation of immigrants; You showed up with faith communities to protest the illegal incarceration of asylum-seekers in Sheridan, Oregon; You welcomed a new interim senior minister; You made 100 Soul Boxes a week to symbolize the 100 persons lost to gun violence every Sunday; You drafted an Immigrant Welcoming Congregation Declaration; You hosted a caravan on its way to protest at NorCor; You held the Ecclesiastical Council of a Member in Discernment and voted to approve them for Ordination pending call; You graciously participated during our interactive worship services; You squeezed tightly together in the Fellowship Hall on Sundays in July while our elevator was being repaired; You welcomed visitors without distinction; You represented First Congregational UCC at Sunday Parkways with a Families Belong Together booth; You marched in the sweltering heat of June during Pride; You served meals at shelters, sat with the homeless; You hosted and attended a Mental Health First Aid Training; You hosted an eco film series event; You continued to show up for members in need through Called to Care; You hosted numerous lectures/concerts/workshops; And you provided an alternative "Blue Christmas" service.

This list highlights the ways in which you, as a faith community, were stable in your roots as you shared your gifts of the spirit for the greater good and for the least of these among us. I am proud to have





served as your moderator and would like to take this opportunity to thank those with whom I served on your 2018 Council, your hardworking and dedicated core of staff members to include those in the music ministry, and lastly, those of you who volunteer tirelessly to support the life and ministry of this congregation.

I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to both the departed Rev. Michael Ellick and recently resigned Rev. Elizabeth Durant for answering the call of service in their lives; we have been blessed by their ministry in the opportunity to worship and serve with, as well as learn from both!

Michael and Elizabeth — we will put into practice whatever we have learned or received or heard from you, or seen in you... and the God of peace will be with us.

In looking ahead to 2019, we have some Transition work to do and Rev. Janet has outlined some of what will take place in the near and intermediate future. I will serve as your past moderator and look forward to supporting the church in this capacity as well as returning to the helm of the Safety Team.

I remain ever so excited for the promise of a new year filled with hope and purpose.

Love and Light,  
Sarah Vazquez

2018 COUNCIL WORK

January

- Reflected on the spirituality of council culture
- Supported Rev Michael’s involvement with the New Sanctuary Coalition
- Raised the idea of extending a formal call to Elizabeth
- Proposed a subcommittee for Visioning, using the book *Holy Conversations: Strategic Planning as*

- a Spiritual Practice for Congregations* as a guiding resource for this committee
- Voted to approve the sale of beer and wine at select church-sponsored events, in accordance with our church policy

February

- Shared our blessings for council’s work together this year, creating a Blessing Our Work document
- The Safety Team and Christian Education Committee outlined specific safety procedures for the children and youth programs
- Held discussion regarding the congregation of Celebration Tabernacle church in North Portland about possible joint worship services

March

- Visioning Sub-Committee named
- Safety Team went to Active Shooter training and presented experience to the congregation

April

- Members of council gathered for prayer and spiritual action to bless this church, walking through each room of the church in prayerful song
- Voted to add Paul Adcock to FOC
- Collectively reviewed and revised Meeting Guidelines draft
- Bill Cunitz presented the work of Elizabeth’s PRC to develop her Call Agreement

May

- Council shared experiences as youth in church and proposed including a youth representative on council to provide another opportunity for youth involvement in the congregation
- Auditors presented a report of their findings to the Financial Oversight Committee (FOC), with both moderator and business manager present
- After Michael’s resignation, Elizabeth requests to temporarily pause the process for her call, to make space for the upcoming senior minister transition
- Moderators met with Conference Minister Molly Carlson to discuss options and ideas for the

upcoming senior ministry vacancy

June

- ”Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner?” small groups hosted in members’ homes
- The Budget Committee was named and approved.
- Moderators met with Rev. Molly Carlson, Conference Minister
- Voted to begin search for an interim senior minister, and name Elizabeth as our Acting Senior Minister until the interim joins us

July

- Reflected on Michael’s time with us at his last Council meeting
- Safety Team hosted and attended Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training. Open and Affirming group to be revised to address situations like the one experienced in MHFA training
- Voted to compensate Michael for a backlog of payment error with a 3% increase given the inflation rate of the amount of time Michael was not paid
- Interim minister search committee met to look over and review applicants and conducted video conferencing of applicants
- Elizabeth Durant agreed to being Acting Senior Minister
- Vote: for the time of July 31, 2018 to ending of her Acting Senior Ministership, full lump Senior Minister salary and housing go to Elizabeth Durant
- Asylum Seeker Legislation: Voted that all asylum-seeking staff members working at the Church will continue to receive income even if bill is passed

August

- Interim Search Committee selected Rev. Dr. Janet Parker as our interim Senior Minister
- Voted to approve the interim contract as written
- Voted to approve interim FSA account
- Our church has committed to making 100 soul boxes per week to symbolize the 100 individuals lost to gun violence every Sunday

September

- Shared personal backgrounds with stewardship and how it has informed our current stewardship practices, reflected on what stewardship might look like in today’s church
- Discussed timing of Stewardship Sunday and the annual meeting, due to recent focus on ministerial transition
- Recognized that because the congregation was entering into an interim period, it is premature to restart the process to call Rev. Elizabeth as an Associate Minister immediately. Recommended an Executive Session of Council as well as consultation with Elizabeth’s Pastoral Relations Committee in order to consider next steps and implications for a process to move Elizabeth’s position toward a call.
- Acknowledged that her current compensation package is not in compliance with conference recommendations (regardless of her clergy status)

October

- Voted to compensate music staff member regular salary through October while on medical leave
- Discussed inequity in Rev. Elizabeth’s income as substantial and we believe we should rectify this Discussed options with the Budget Committee suggesting an increase of \$6,000 to begin this process

November

- Discussion of Stewardship season, Nominating slate, and 2019 Budget



# ASSISTANT MINISTER'S REPORT

**Rev. Elizabeth Durant**  
*Assistant Minister*

*"Blessed are those who trust in YHWH; whose trust is YHWH. They shall be like a tree planted by water, sending out its roots by the stream. It shall not fear when heat comes, and its leaves shall stay green; in the year of drought it is not anxious, and it does not cease to bear fruit." Jeremiah 17:8*

The prophet Jeremiah calls us to trust the Holy One in times of heat and drought...times of change. This was a year of big changes for First Congregational UCC. We bid farewell to Rev. Michael in July 2018. I was honored to serve as your Acting Senior Minister until the arrival of our new interim Senior Minister Rev. Janet in September. Now, trusting in God's call, I am saying my own farewell and will be celebrating my last Sunday with you on February 10, 2019.

As I say my goodbye with gratitude for all that I have learned, I am full of sadness and hope. I feel sad to leave the congregation of my first ordained call: the place where I learned all that seminary could not teach me, the place where my own children found friendship and spiritual guidance, the place where your children and teenagers shared their hearts, hopes and fears, with me. You have blessed me generously with your trust, patience and confidence in my leadership as your Assistant Minister. Yet I am also full of hope for all that God is calling

us towards. I feel hope for the "green leaves" that were sustained and renewed this year at First Congregational. It is a time of change, but here is some of the fruit that I saw us born within us this year within my areas of ministry:

## PARTNERSHIPS

We partnered with other churches in new ways this year. We hosted two "White Ally Toolkit" workshops in partnership with local Unitarian faith leaders

that were well-attended by the public. In

May, we hosted a film series on climate justice with St. James Lutheran. We

shared a Sunday Parkways booth with First Christian Church in

July. Thanks to the work our

ArtReach curator, Rev. Dr.

Sheldon Hurst, we are now

part of a "7x7" consortium of art galleries in Portland churches.

Our youth group developed

new partnerships with three

churches: Cedar Hills UCC, Parkrose

Community UCC and First UCC of

Vancouver. We held three overnight youth

events with these churches in 2018, and already have

quarterly events planned for 2019. I attended a CPC

Youth Ministry Networking day and am encouraged

by renewed energy on our CPC Educational Ministry

Team. These partnerships increase the reach of our

resources and also nurture our spirit as we explore

what makes us uniquely "Portland First."

## PEACEMAKING

We were very active in working for immigrant

justice this year, in close partnership with IMIrJ

(Interfaith Movement for Immigrant Justice). Under

Rev. Michael Ellick's leadership, we participated in

interfaith worship services at the federal prison in Sheridan, Oregon, where 123 men (many of them of Sikh faith) were being imprisoned by ICE while seeking asylum. Many of us also participated in actions at the local ICE office on Macadam Ave, including marches, sit-in, clergy risking arrest, and vigils. In early October, our church fed and hosted over 30 marchers on their week-long pilgrimage from Sheridan to NORCOR as part of a week of action with IMIrJ and Rural Organizing Project. We will be considering a resolution to declare ourselves an "Immigrant Welcoming Congregation" at our annual congregational meeting (see Rev. Janet's report to learn more).

## PARENTS & FAMILIES

We hosted quarterly parent gatherings this year, providing spiritual nurture to those who daily give their all to the next generation. We began offering free childcare for Eve's Circle events (big thanks to co-leader Jessica Denniston for her leadership!). We continued to make children and families more visible in the life of our church, adding rocking chairs to the back of the sanctuary in response to parent needs, providing children's bulletins for Sundays when there is no Godly Play, and having youth serve communion with the pastors. We also made a tiny change that

had a big impact, adding a line for the children to our Call to Worship in Lent. It is my hope that we'll

continue to nurture children, youth and families and create more opportunities (like our Lenten coloring pages) for

inter-generational moments of worship and service in 2019.

These are just a few "green leaves" that nurture my hope and faith in the future of First Congregational.



Rev. Elizabeth and youth (Eli, Vannesa and Chstina) at the Sierra Service Project.

I will always cherish the time that we have had together. May the tree that is First Congregational UCC be sustained by the life-giving waters of the Holy Spirit, that all who visit will find shelter under your wide and welcoming branches and nurture in your strong and sturdy roots. Thank you for all that you have shared with me, and Godspeed in 2019!

Trusting in God's call,  
Rev. Elizabeth Durant



# BUSINESS MANAGER'S REPORT

**Cara Rothe**  
*Business Manager*

2019 was a very busy year in the building! We hosted over 60 individual lectures/concerts/workshops. We co-sponsored 15 of those events. We welcomed two new regular groups, an AA Big Book Study, and AL anon meeting bringing us to a total of nine community groups using our space on an on-going basis.

Our Annex office space lost two of its long-term tenants Portland Piano International and Young Musicians and Artists. While we were very sad to see them go, our staff has enjoyed having the ministers using those offices and sharing the offices with us for the first time in three years. Portland People's Outreach Project (PPOP) has been with us for over a year now and we have immensely enjoyed witnessing



the amazing work that they do in the community. Foundation for Philippine Progress has also been with us for a year. They spend much of their time in the Philippines, but we enjoy hearing about their journeys and about the special work that they do for the villages there. (Read more about these organizations below) We are in the process of finding new tenants for our now empty offices.

Our church building received a lot of love this year! We finished all of the repairs on our beloved elevator. This was a very large project and we appreciate everyone's patience as we had worship in the Fellowship Hall. In an effort to better showcase art in the chapel, we gave the walls a fresh new coat of paint. We are very happy with how it turned out. Over the summer, the chancel floor in the sanctuary also got some love. We sanded and completely re-finished the entire floor surface.

PPOP is the Portland chapter of the People's Harm Reduction Alliance. At the core, PPOP strives to love drug users by providing the drug using community with a variety of essential harm reduction supplies, including syringes, Naloxone (the 'antidote' to opioid overdose), and a variety of other injection, safer sex, and wound care materials. PPOP and PHRA embrace widely accepted principles of public health that suggest that providing these items can reduce the transmission of diseases like HIV and Hepatitis C and the prevalence of fatal overdoses, among many other benefits.

The primary purpose of Foundation for Philippine Progress (the Foundation) is to respond to the needs and interests of the people of the Philippines through partnering with organizations and individuals in the Philippines who share the Foundation's values and aspirations for a just and lasting peace in the Philippines



Left: The Aurora Women's Choir performed in the sanctuary in December. Top: Aaron Meyer, middle, poses with KGW reporters to promote his show in December.

## BRINGING THE COMMUNITY INTO OUR CHURCH

- Oregon Natural Desert Association
- Voice for the Voiceless Theater
- American Friends Service Committee
- PSU Honors Union
- PSU School of Business with UCC/Do Good Multnomah
- Aurora Chorus
- American Choral Arts Association
- Kalakendra Indian
- Black Lives Matter Movement
- P'nai of Portland
- Oregon Historical Society
- Hindu Educational and Cultural Society of America
- Oregon Ballet Theatre
- White Ally Tool Kit
- Andisheh Persian Music
- Femme in Public
- Deva Premal
- Netflix
- Indian Classical Dance
- IMIRJ
- Friends of Jung
- Oregonians Untied Against Profiling
- De Paul Treatment Center
- Portland Book Festival
- Tilman Ruff Lecture
- Surj PDX
- Ambient Church
- Aaron Meyer
- Oregon Symphony
- Faber Institute
- Trans Lifeline
- Young Musicians and Artists
- Foundation for Philippine Progress
- Portland Piano International
- Portland Peoples Outreach Project
- Weight Watchers
- Alcoholics Anonymous
- Sex Addicts Anonymous
- Alanon
- PSU Business Group
- Portland Parks and Recreation

# TREASURER'S ANNUAL REPORT

Cath Clark  
*Treasurer*

The 2018 financial report tells a story of resilience. Even in the midst of ministerial changes, declining membership and reduced pledge income, our end-of-year outcomes were fiscally responsible and our budget balanced. Ordinary income was down by \$40k, but expenses were also down by \$45k. We spent \$5k less than expected from reserves.

Our various sources of income come to us largely by grace, allowing space for resilience during times of unexpected transition. 85% of our income comes to us by good fortune in the following forms: income from the land we own, member giving both past and present, and a benevolent grant.

Income from our lease with Portland Center for Performing Arts (\$191k) was the greatest single source of income for the year, with general giving and pledges not far behind (\$180k). Reserve fund

**“The 2018 financial report tells a story of resilience.”**

transfers (\$120k) comprised 17% of our income, and income from the Brown grants (\$109k) brought in 15%. Other sources of income such as building rentals, annex subleases and weddings brought in a combined total of \$100k. Balanced with the costs associated with these

revenue sources, the net income was \$87k. Other income such as designated gifts, ArtReach and in-kind donations brought in just over \$16k.

Our expenses also tell a story of resilience. Even as we tackled major one-time expenses that included the elevator repair (\$40k) and the financial audit (\$15), our ministerial and worship costs remained stable during a time of transitioning from senior minister to interim. With the addition of the

teen leader and support from assistant minister, youth activities flourished this year, and Eve’s Circle rose up to welcome young parents with the offer of childcare at meetings. Sunday fellowship costs were down with the reorganization of responsibilities. Thanks to skilled leadership of our business manager, building and custodial costs were down as well. Resilience also brought us new office staff in the bookkeeper, communications coordinator and reception assistant.



## STEWARDSHIP

William Cunitz  
*Stewardship Team Chair*

The 2018 Stewardship Team got off to a late start this year due to the pastoral leadership transition, but made up for lost time with an energetic program of education, personal witness and outreach on three Sundays in November, culminating on December 2.

The pledge program’s theme, based on UCC Stewardship materials, “What Shall We Bring,” encouraged members to present their best before God and each other during what was expected

to be an extraordinary time of Interim Ministry. Despite the challenges facing the congregation, we explored this church’s many opportunities to fulfill its potential for putting faith into action. A special after-worship presentation highlighted the historical context of our congregation’s pledging in light of both the local and wider church’s financial trends.

Although pledges are still being recorded at this time, we are gratified to note that 38 of 45 pledging households in 2018 increased their pledges for 2019 with an additional 18 new pledges were offered for the upcoming program year.

The congregation celebrates the creativity and dedication of the following members of the 2018 Team: Bill Cunitz, Frank Baldwin, Paris Hancock, Karen Horn, Janet Parker and Avena Ward.



# COMMUNITY CORE

## Nanci Tangeman *Community Core Facilitator*

The strength of our congregation – our community – shined this year. As we faced changes and challenges in leadership it was important not only to share information, but to remind people that church goes beyond the pulpit. Our lay leaders worked hard to do this and the congregation responded. The vitality of our community came from many places: the Called to Care team who reached out to members not able to attend services; the ushers and greeters meeting every person entering the church on Sundays; the small groups described here. That strength was also reinforced by activities outside those designated as “community” on these pages: the series of Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner events; 52 weeks of Fellowship hour meals; folding Soul Boxes together; film screenings; community art exhibits and every opportunity we had to spend time together and renew our relationships with each other.



UCC. We are called by our faith to care for our church family. This team reaches out to homebound members, members with ongoing health crises and those who can only attend church occasionally due to mobility/age/health. The team meets quarterly.

For the first half of 2018 Rev. Elizabeth Durant acted as our coordinator and ministerial leader. Lay leadership is now provided by Ann Laskey, with continuing ministerial leadership by Rev. Elizabeth Durant. Going into 2019, our team includes two new members, Susan Adcock and Avena Ward, and ongoing members Patty Hammond (past coordinator), Al Horn, Janine Vaughn and Alice Forsythe.

We thank Toby Kushner for recent past service and Rev. Bill Cunitz for his support.. A special thanks goes out to Judy Bishop for several years of service.

## EVE’S CIRCLE

### Eve’s Circle Coordinators

- Alice Forsythe & Jessica Denniston 2018-2019
- Elaine Molskness 2017-2018
- Unofficially, Judy & Nanci 2016-2017
- Nanci Tangeman 2015-2016
- Heidi Levy 2013-2015
- Marcia Yeater 2012-2013
- Judy Bishop 2010-2013

## CALLED TO CARE

## Ann Laskey *Called to Care Facilitator*

Called to Care is a ministry of care and concern for the spiritual community of First Congregational



*May 2018 Eve’s Circle Retreat. Left to right, back row: Elaine Molskness, Mary Laswell, Lou Sevetsen, Ariel Henry, Judy Bishop, Rev. Elizabeth Durant, Katie Stellmach, Nanci Tangeman, Jessica Denniston Middle row: Karen Hurst, Celeste Rose, Janine Vaughn, Amanda Guthrie Front row: Margaret Baldwin, Ann Laskey, Gwen Pierce, Alice Forsythe, Patty Bonney*

Eve’s Circle, open to all female-identified people, plays an active role in the church. The fourth Saturday morning of each month is devoted to exploration, service and connection with programs and outings coordinated by members.

For the first half of the year, Elaine Molskness continued her leadership. We kicked off 2018 with a screening and discussion of Lady Valor: The Kirsten Beck Story about a transgender Navy SEAL. We repeated our annual book discussion, Eve’s Reads, and spent a morning making prints with Jan Holt, artist and docent at the Portland Art Museum. The theme of our 2018 Eve’s Circle retreat in May at Camp Adams was Braving the Wilderness: Showing Up Unapologetically as Our True Selves. This year we experimented with a one-day program, giving people the option to spend Friday and/or Saturday night in the cabins for some unstructured togetherness.

Led by Rev. Elizabeth Durant, 18 Eves claimed their belonging and belovedness through song, art, stories, meditation and silence. Rev. Elizabeth led activities based on the works of Brené Brown, Sonya Renee

Taylor and Geneen Roth. Amanda Guthrie and Ann Laskey provided more information and exercises about physical, as well as spiritual, well-being. As usual, there was good food, time for walking the woods, a little bit of music and plenty of laughter. This year there were stories that spanned generations, as grandmothers and great aunts were honored. The planning committee did an exceptional job: Janine Vaughn, Karen Hurst, Judy Bishop, Lou Sevetsen and Nanci Tangeman, along with leader, Elaine Molskness. It has been a joy to have Rev. Elizabeth play an active part in Eve’s Circle. She has given us new perspectives in so many areas, including helping us look more compassionately at ourselves and others.

After our summer break, we returned with co-leaders Alice Forsythe and Jessica Denniston. This co-leading arrangement has been a good collaboration. With an active mother at the co-helm, we have made childcare available this year. That way other parents with young children could feel more free to attend – although, so far, it’s only been utilized by one child. Caroline Patetta has provided childcare during all meetings held at the church.





*Undies the Tree 2018. Back Row, L-R: Emily Rampton, Kathy Sheibly, Sandy Hill, Judy Bishop, Mary Laswell. Middle Row, L-R: Cheryl Clevenger, Donna Clatworthy, Patty Bonney. Front Row, L-R: Nanci Tangeman, Jessica Denniston, Alice Forsythe, Ariel Henry, Karin Hurst.*

September's meeting kicked off the year with a program about The Soul Box Project coordinated by Cheryl Clevenger and Nanci Tangeman.

We entered our October meeting with news that a gunman had opened fire at a synagogue in Pittsburgh earlier that morning. We folded Soul Boxes for the victims, while interim Senior Minister, Rev. Dr. Janet Parker shared her story. In November, we were met with more tragic news. Myrna Lawlor had died. Her memorial service was the afternoon of our meeting. We decorated the Christmas tree with underwear for our annual Undies the Tree drive, including an angel for Myrna. Then many Eves went to work handling the decorations and most of the food for the reception, supporting Myrna's daughter, sister and their families who had come from out of town. That afternoon was a powerful demonstration of community in our congregation.

In December, our favorite docent, Elaine Molskness, led us through the Poetic Imagination in Japanese Art: Selections from the Collection of Mary and Cheney Cowles.

Eve's Circle coordinated their annual Undies the Tree drive, collecting 545 pieces of children's underwear,

socks, mittens and hats (plus a few toys) for Human Solutions holiday store, Portland Homeless Family Solutions and Portland Public Schools PTA Clothes Closet. Several packages of boys' underwear were also donated to a NE Portland family whose house burned in December.

Eve's Circle Gatherers included Elaine Molskness, Alice Forsythe and Jessica Denniston.

## USHERS & GREETERS

### Julie Blanchard *Spiritual Path Group Facilitator*

Many thanks to very faithful Greeters Roger and Debra Perry. They have been welcoming people most every week, at the front of the church, on Sunday mornings for many years.

Also thank you to ushers who serve reliably every Sunday: Margret Oethinger, Bill Cunitz, Kathy Sheibley, Ron Clevenger, Cheryl Clevenger, Al Horn, Dorothy Coombs, Emily Rampton, Jack Allman, Jim McPartland, Belinda Moos, Debb Chapman, George Rodgers and Julie Blanchard, usher coordinator.



*Greeter. Roger Perry.*

Ushers are scheduled one Sunday per month, but there are substitutes available when needed. They welcome visitors and regular worshipers, and give them an Order of Service. They also



*Greeters & Ushers. Top: Debb Chapman and Jojo Mella. Left: Debra Perry.*

answer questions, welcome children, assist people with walkers and provide hearing devices – whatever helps people to share in a safe, welcoming place.

## CHURCH LIBRARY

In 2018 the church library mantel passed from long-time librarian Carol Lynch to Paris Hancock. Carol and her husband, Frank, carefully curated the library for about five years.

The library collection includes a wide range of subjects – biography, religion, fiction, politics, art and children's books. Almost all the books are available for checkout on the honor system. The church library is located right off the Fellowship Hall, next to the kitchen. Librarians are Carol Lynch & Paris Hancock.



*Librarian. Carol Lynch.*

## THE ARTIST'S WAY

- Gwen Pierce
- Joseph Becker
- Judy Bishop
- Nanci Tangeman
- Ruth Abbott
- Suzanne Mattox

In 2014, a dozen of us came together to work and play our way through Julia Cameron's book, *The Artist's Way*. We finished the book in mid-2015 and still continue to be connected, sharing articles and ideas throughout the year.

This year we managed to meet several times: Twice at the Portland Art Museum to see *Common Ground: Photographs* by Fazal Sheikh, 1989 – 2013 and *Modern American Realism: Highlights from the Smithsonian's Sara Roby Foundation Collection*; a trip to J. Pepin Art Gallery, a contemporary art gallery reframing the perception of mental illness by exhibiting the work of professional artists alongside



*The Artist's Way. L-R: Judy Bishop, Gwen Pierce, Suzanne Mattox, Ruth Abbott.*



stories of their creative journeys; a lunch picnic at Gwen Pierce’s home and another at Judy Bishop’s.

We made Soul Boxes at Nanci Tangeman’s home and had a creative check-in at church. Throughout the year we sought each other out at church and via email to catch up and support our creative paths.

## SPIRITUAL PATH GROUP

**Patty Bonney**  
*Spiritual Path Group Facilitator*

The Spiritual Path Group gathers every Tuesday at noon for an hour in the chapel to share experiences, strength and hope. The group welcomes people who would like to join them. Patty Bonney began leading the group in the middle of the year.

## OUT OF THE DARKNESS

**Cara Rothe**  
*Business Manager*

In December we held a new event geared to those who had no room for the holiday cheer.

“Out of the Darkness: An Alternative Christmas Experience” was birthed from our desire to provide space for those grieving, in pain and in dark times of their lives during the Advent/Christmas season. The night included silent meditation, readings, candle lighting station, an art table, a walking meditation throughout the sanctuary and other activities that were aimed to help participants through their “dark



*The chancel and the sanctuary were transformed into meditative spaces for “Out of the Darkness: An Alternative Christmas.”*

night of the soul.”

We had a little over 20 people participate who attended the event. Grant Edwards played music for us and Joe Becker created glass stones that were handed out to participants.

The night would not have been possible without the help of Sheldon Hurst, Gary Vaughan, Tim Pollard, Rev. Janet Parker, Leah Abraham, Alicia Teller, Maureen Gullett and Steve Eggers.



*Rev. Elizabeth and Annie Tarter with youth (Andy, Keelin, Lucy and Jojo) during the confirmation beach retreat.*

## FAMILY MINISTRIES

**Rev. Elizabeth Durant**  
*Assistant Minister*

What a year of big changes! This year we sustained our ministry to children, youth and families with a new staff hire for our youth group, new partnerships with other UCC churches, spiritual gatherings just for parents, and cherished holiday traditions. We began the year with “star words” distributed by the children during worship on Epiphany Sunday and a youth group trip to the Chinese Garden to celebrate the New Year. Our youth group held their annual Shrove Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser in February, raising money for our summer trips (of which there were many!). We marched together with

thousands of other Portland students, teachers and parents in the “March for Our Lives” to advocate for an end to gun violence.

In March, we were overjoyed to welcome new Teen Ministry Coordinator, Annie Tarter. Annie joins us after graduating from Western Oregon University in June 2017. During her teenage years, Annie was highly involved in the youth and teen programs at the UCC congregation in Eugene. Outside of her work with our church, Annie supervises a staff of 11 Resident Assistants at Portland State University as a Residence Director with University Housing and Residence Life.

On Palm Sunday we celebrated with palm branches, singing and marching. This year, the youth group hid the eggs for our children’s Easter Egg hunt, then gathered with Rev. Elizabeth in the church library where they hunted for Starbucks cards in bibles (and read some great scripture along the way!). On Pentecost, the children helped “spark” a wave of “holy





Youth during their Haunted Halloween Party.

fire” as we celebrated “We are the Church!” together. With sadness, we bid farewell to Batya Podos in June, as she retired from over four years of leading our children in Godly Play. Batya and her spouse Gail moved to Albuquerque, New Mexico. (We were so grateful to have Rev. Amanda Guthrie fill Batya’s position on a temporary basis from May through early December, and are now continuing to recruit for the position of Children’s Ministry Coordinator.) We recognized our graduates in June, celebrating William Laskey and Jeremy Clark who graduated from middle school, and Miley Minor who graduated from elementary school and joined youth group. We gifted third-graders Jayden Laskey and Betty Fallico with bibles.

Pride Sunday was a joyous day, and for the first time, we included trans colors (pink/white/blue) in our decorations, bringing bunches of balloons and lots of glitter with us as we marched in the parade. Our summer theme for the primary school children was the “Summer of Sharing.” We invited members of the congregation to share their talents and hobbies with the children. The children learned about planting flowers, learning about indigenous religious traditions, building paper airplanes, making prayer beads, creating art and more! Thank you to: Sandy Hill, Jack Allman, Paris Hancock, Dean Sigler, Tim Pollard, Karen Horn, Karen Hurst...and our regulars

Anne Sullivan, Daniel Hunter, and Eileen Deerdock. Special thanks to Rev. Amanda Guthrie, who recruited volunteers and managed our program! Our youth group had a busy summer! In late June, Annie Tarter accompanied our high school seniors Brendan Sullivan and Macey Minor, as they attended Western Regional Youth Event in Hawaii. Over 400 youth from United Church of Christ congregations in the western United States gathered in Honolulu for four days of worship, learning and service. We had two fun coast trips in partnership with Parkrose Community UCC, including a day trip to Warrenton and Seaside to do marine debris monitoring and a camping trip to Bandon to volunteer with Washed Ashore.

Rev. Elizabeth and three of our youth/young adults (Christina Hellums, Vanessa Hellums and Eli Gavilanes) participated in Sierra Service Project, spending a week doing home construction, battling the yellow jackets, and sharing in sacred conversation with 70 youth on the Spokane Indian Reservation in Wellpinit, Washington.

In late August, our families gathered at Camp Adams for S'More Family Camp led by Rev. Elizabeth and Rev. Amanda. We enjoyed swimming/boating/wading in Mill Creek, making crafts, playing games, and, of course, roasting marshmallows for s'mores



Participants at the holiday cookie decorating party.



Left: Youth sell pie to raise funds for the summer trips. Right: Decorating the youth lounge.



over the campfire. Many thanks to all the families who came, including Bruce and Judy Bishop for their supportive presence. Gratitude to Rev. Frank Baldwin who played guitar for our Sunday morning worship in the camp pavilion.

In the fall, we celebrated the return back to school and welcomed our new interim senior minister, Rev. Janet Parker. We took a trip to the pumpkin patch with Parkrose Community UCC and had our Second Annual Halloween Party with a Haunted Kiva (creepy science lab and terrifying shrieks, huzzah!). This marks the second year we sent care packages to our college youth, including Nell Egan, Conor Egan, Colin Horn, Christina Hellums, Zak Johnson, Logan Minor, Landon Minor, and Lillie Minor. We received many thanks from our college students and hope to keep this tradition going next year. Our youth held their annual Holiday Pie Sale on the Sunday before Thanksgiving and we again raised a generous amount for our summer trips...thank you!

In December, we enjoyed our cherished holiday festivities. Thanks, as always, to Paris Hancock for making our candlelight Advent Spiral a unique and extra special tradition. Many thanks to Eileen Deerdock and Annie Tarter for helping our children present their posada play, and to the Gavilanes Family for bringing so many yummy tamales for

our pinata party! We also had fun inviting children to don costumes as “last minute angels” during our candlelight Christmas Eve service.

**Parents:** We offered four “Parent Gatherings” this year (February, May, June & September). These before-church meetings in the church library were an opportunity for parents to rest, connect with one another, and receive some spiritual nourishment. We explored the themes of wonder, Sabbath, hope/heaviness, and blessing/belovedness, led by our pastoral leaders (Batya, Rev. Amanda and Rev. Elizabeth). Childcare was provided for these gatherings.

**Nursery:** We are grateful for the continued presence of Caroline Patetta who nurtures our youngest ones with thoughtful, playful and encouraging care. We purchased some new items for the nursery this year, including a large wooden rocking boat that the toddlers adore, and some additional small toys to encourage creativity. Caroline often brings in some of her own materials to help keep the little ones engaged. In the fall, Rev. Elizabeth spruced up our bulletin board and nursery entry way to make it more appealing.

**Godly Play:** Our Sunday School program for children ages 4 to 12 continues to benefit from the





faithful leadership of teachers. Our volunteers this year included Rev. Amanda Guthrie, Anne Sullivan, Eileen Deerdock, Daniel Hunter, Chris Clark and Karen Horn. Thanks to a generous Christian Education budget, we were able to refresh supplies and add some new art response materials in the fall. Rev. Elizabeth and Rev. Amanda led a Godly Play training in late November and we're pleased that Paris Hancock, Margaret Baldwin, Frances Menlove and Rev. Janet Parker have all agreed to be occasional Godly Play leaders.

**Youth Group:** Annie Tarter kept our youth engaged this year with fun games and activities that encouraged and deepened friendships, while Rev. Elizabeth led monthly confirmation classes, including a confirmation retreat at the beach (thank you to the Bishops for hosting us!) in December. We created a new "Youth Lounge" in our church building this year. The youth helped shop for furniture and created their own decorations to make the old Heritage



Left: Pumpkin Patch trip to Fazio Farm. Right: Kids at the Shrove Pancake Fundraiser in February.

Room (off of the fellowship hall) into their own space. They dubbed themselves "The God Squad" and created artwork for the walls.

Our youth group adventures this year also included three lock-in gatherings in partnership with other UCC churches: we watched "Wrinkle in Time" and explored courageous Bible characters at Cedar Hills UCC in March, volunteered at SnowCap and played "four nouns" at Parkrose Community UCC in July, and hosted a lock-in in our amazing church building (one youth called it a 'castle') in November (scavenger hunt; The Incredibles; lava lamps...it was FUN!). Youth from Vancouver UCC also joined us at these events, and we are so delighted to build partnerships with these 3 UCC churches, and look forward to more events planned for 2019.

Join us! As we enter 2019, our Family Ministries team includes Anne Sullivan, Eileen Deerdock, Daniel Hunter, and Levi Helbley. Our team meets monthly in the church library (usually on first Thursdays) and is always eager to welcome new members who have a passion for caring for children and youth. Please contact Annie Tarter (atarter@uccportland.org) if you are able to volunteer your time with our children and youth.

# HOSPITALITY

**Karen Hurst**  
*Hospitality Core Facilitator*

The Hospitality Core Ministries are opportunities for experiencing and celebrating the communities that exist among our church family members and the wider world with which we are connected, or sometimes are not yet connected in ways that we are conscious of but need to be, and therefore have the possibility of creating.

I am grateful for having been asked to be Hospitality Core Facilitator for 2018.

The regular times of conversation with the other facilitators and with our pastoral leadership were especially important and meaningful to me, providing new ideas to consider, new ways of considering, and a clearly spiritual foundation for our endeavors.

I have also become much more appreciative of who we are as a church family, our willingness to do, our acceptance of constant transition as the reality of life, our embracing of our passions and visions, and our sharing nature.

**"I have also become much more appreciative of who we are as a church family."**



Many thanks to you all for being part of my growing, learning, and becoming on this life journey.

We can celebrate our experiences of Hospitality that were particularly evident in 2018:

## FELLOWSHIP HOUR

This is the time when we share with old friends, meet and include newcomers and make new friends, and offer refuge and something to eat to those who join us from the street.

The 2018 reshaping of how Fellowship Hour gets hosted meant that more than 100 of our members and friends participated in preparing and/or providing food after worship each Sunday.

- Your Core Facilitator provided oversight.

- 12 Team Leaders — one each month — took charge of menus and contacting their Birthday Month Team members to solicit participation.

- Those who were on our lists by birthday month volunteered their time, their favorite recipes made up for us to share, and their purchases that rounded out the tables. There were families that provided everything for one Sunday, groups that took charge of a single Sunday, and individuals who brought items one or more of the weeks.

- We added allergen-free options so that most everyone who joins us can participate in the sharing of food as well as of fellowship.

There was a positive response to the organizational





*Fellowship Hour.*

system; people liked being able to participate. We will continue to plan by months in 2019, and your leadership people (see the Core Facilitator for specifics) will welcome new participants and will plan or promote the occasional additional activity during Fellowship Hour (balloons and cake and sitting in many new groups at tables have proved popular).

A special thanks to the twelve who accepted responsibility for leading each month. And a big thank you to all who participated — and thereby made everything happen.

## LITERATURE

A start was made to make available a variety of take-

away folders and sheets that provide information about who we are at First Congregational UCC Portland. Some of the take-aways are from the denomination; some have been created in-house. They are a work-in-progress.

## GUESS WHO'S COMING TO DINNER

In late summer/early fall, ten households hosted meals for groups of 8-16 people each, most of whom did not know whom they would be sharing their time with. There was delicious food (of course), delightful conversation (goes without saying, even if we were with new-to-us folks), and some intentional discussion (not always what we do) around ideas

raised by the changes that inevitably accompany transition. Many thanks to the hosting folks, the discussion facilitators, and the participants who took seriously the opportunities to be and share with others during one of these occasions.

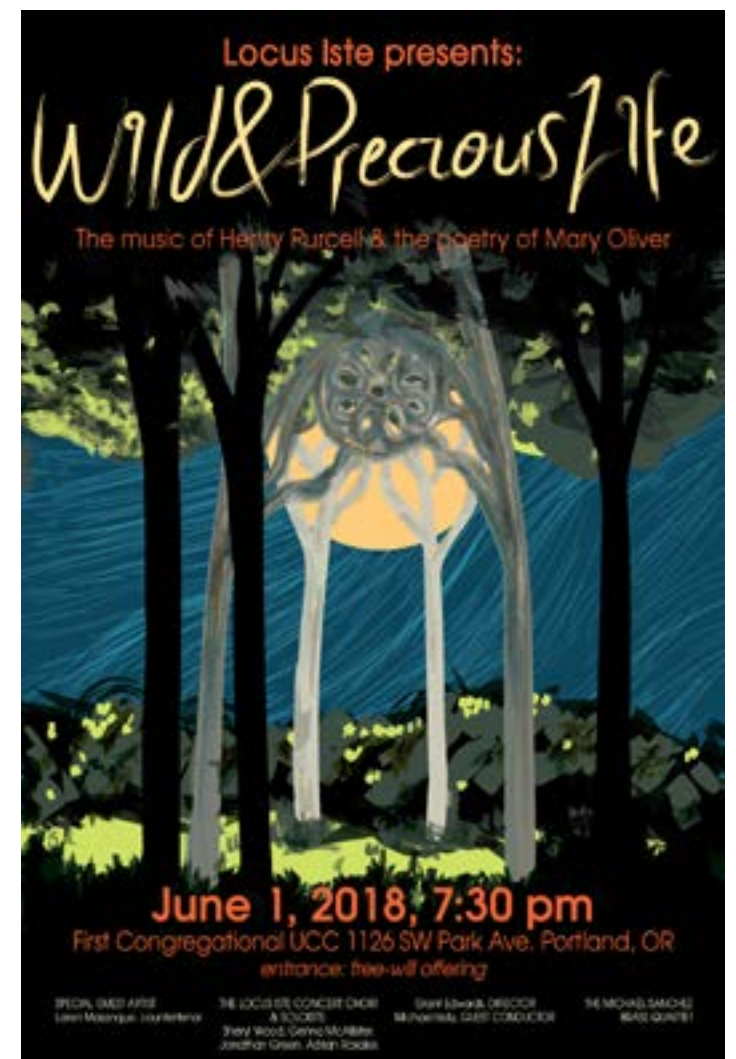
## PENCIL TABLE

This area, which includes the welcome visitors table and the name tag board, as well as the pencil table, was created in order to provide space to promote the activities, interests, and involvements of those in our church family. It also, most of the time but not always, was attended by a church family member who could greet newcomers, answer questions from one and all, encourage folks to participate and sign up, provide name tags to those who were without, and be a smiling face for one and all.

Thank you to those who filled this role during the year.



*Pencil Table.*



## LOCUS ISTE

**Grant Edwards**  
*Musician-in-Residence*

In 2015, First Congregational launched Locus Iste, an occasional series of evening services featuring music and poetry, organized by Musician-in-Residence Grant Edwards. The series is named for the choral motet, "Locus iste a Deo factus est" by Anton Bruckner, and roughly translates, "This place is sacred". The hour-long programs (presented usually on Mondays) give us an opportunity to remind



ourselves that all poetry is prayer, and all music is meditation.

The 2018 season featured the return of the Locus Iste Concert Choir, conducted by Grant Edwards, in a program entitled “Wild and Precious Life,” a title borrowed from the last line of Mary Oliver’s poem, “The Summer Day”. Inviting us to contemplate the brevity and incalculable value of our lives on earth, this program presented the music of Henry Purcell (1659-1695) alongside carefully selected poems by beloved American poet Mary Oliver (1935-2019). Conducted by Michael Kelly, Bruckner’s motet “Locus Iste” opened the program, which closed with the premiere of “The Choristers’ Hymn” (When in our music God is glorified) by Grant Edwards.

The major choral work on the program was Purcell’s exquisite Funeral Music for Queen Mary, sung with great skill and expression by the 21-voice choir, particularly showcasing the solo voices of section leaders Sheryl Wood, Genna McAllister, and Adrian Rosales, along with guest tenor Jonathan Green. (Rehearsals were moved to Wednesdays this past season so that our wonderful staff singers could participate.)

The program also featured guest male soprano Loren Masanque in impressive performances of three Purcell arias, including the famous “Dido’s Lament”. Trumpeter Michael Sanchez joined us once again as well, in a stunning performance of Purcell’s Trumpet Tune, and leading a brass quartet in both solo and accompanimental textures. Other musicians included Michael Kelly on piano, Craig Gibson, Kevin Egan, and Marek Harris on brass, Dale Tolliver, cello, John Vergin, continuo organ (graciously loaned to us from St. James Lutheran), and Max Kolpin on timpani.

This ambitious program was made possible through generous donations of the volunteer choristers, members of First Congregational, and a large donation by Jim Whinston, son of Melicent Whinston, past member of our Chancel Choir.

The Locus Iste concert choir is open to all who love singing, and welcomes singers of all ages and skill levels from our congregation as well as Portland State University and the surrounding community. With rehearsals on Monday evenings beginning January 7, its fourth season continues in 2019 with the world premiere of Grant Edwards’ 75-minute oratorio Letters from Emily, with texts by Emily Dickinson and full orchestral accompaniment. Performances are Friday, May 31 and Saturday, June 1.



**Sheldon Hurst**  
*ArtReach Gallery Curator*

For the ancient Greeks *poiesi* was the word for poetry. One of Aristototele’s books was *On Poetry*, a discussion of its meaning. To the philosopher poetry had specific reference to making things that are structured to carry meaning in a significant way, specifically writing, drama, lyric & epic poetry, and art. The action and doing related to *poiesi* are meant to convey the work of a poet for the ancients.

A while back I had a fascinating discovery: the word **doer** in “Be **doers** of the word, and not hearers only” (James 1:22) is very closely related to the Greek word for poetry. I found that to be amazing. So my new translation is: “**Be poets of the word, and not hearers only.**”

When we insert the word **poet** in the verse, we revive the ancient meaning and begin to see how important it is to include these creative artists in our midst, those who are able to make and do things that are structured to carry meaning in significant ways. In fact artists encourage us to do likewise.

**IMPLEMENTATIONS:**

**Gallery Space** The gallery began to regularly use both the Fellowship Hall and the Chapel for gallery spaces. Thus we were able to incorporate Installation art: Gunn’s *Lokeshvara Moonlight* and Carrera’s *Revelation*.

**Artist-in-Residence:** We also used the chapel for a three-week Artist-in-Residency program with Werner Ryschawy from Essen, Germany, September 10-30.

**Painting:** The Chapel Gallery was newly painted into a uniform wall color.

**Projection Screen:** A new electronically operated screen was placed in the Fellowship Hall to be used for gallery programing and the church at large.

**Social Concern:** Soul Boxes, representing those killed by gun violence, were installed in the Chapel Gallery during the Corita exhibition.

**Education:** Gallery education expanded to now include information booklets, Artists’ Receptions and the Curator’s Events on a regular basis.

**Puppet Sale:** Celeste Rose held a Puppet Sale, and the proceeds went to the education program in our church.

**7 X 7 Gallery Consortium:** We began a cooperation with community churches with art galleries. 7 x 7 is a consortium of art galleries in Portland Churches which has as its purpose to promote the work of each gallery and to affirm the creative spirit in artists and viewers. We agreed to advertise together and we started discussing some additional possibilities for our work together.

**2018 EXHIBITIONS:**

**What Was He Thinking?**  
Jan Balet  
December - January 14  
This exhibition carried over from 2017. Dr. Hurst curated the exhibition and worked with the Balet Foundation to create a book: *Living Art: The Art of Jan Balet*. The exhibition traveled to two colleges in New York.

**Corita & The Begotten Word**  
Corita Kent & Poetry BroadSides  
February 4 - March 25  
One of the most interesting couplings in the art world is the Verbal with Visual. The role of the late Corita Kent is to bring about the wonderful experience of delightful splashes of color with significant philosophical, religious or poetic insights.

The exhibition brought many of her works of art to illustrate how the work influenced the rise of Poetry BroadSides. In some sense, this is a reminder of the poets we can be, not just hearers; the creators we can be, not just see-ers.

**Conceal - Reveal**  
Sanje Elliott and Jef Gunn  
April 1 - March 27  
One of the greatest visual delights is that which rises out of spiritual discipline. Both Elliott and Gunn are practicing Tibetan Buddhists. Their art develops out of and is expressive of their spiritual chants, based on traditional mantras.

We benefited by their art, and their invitation for us to join them in the exercise of mantras that led them to create Yantras (visual mantras). These artists obviously are poets, not just hearers.





From "Revelation: Everything that Rises Must Converge" by Lauren Carrera.

## Scientia

Lauren Carrera - Investigations and Revelation

June 3 - July 29

Lauren Carrera gave us an amazing way to reconsider knowledge (Scientia in Latin) through the exhibition of two themes of her art: 1. Revelation: Everything that Rises Must Converge, and 2. Investigations. Both shows were a profound exploration of the knowledge we share among many faith groups and with our sciences that doggedly pursue an expanded understanding of the world. Indeed, this too is a poetic search, not a level of entertainment in the presence of our incredible world of nature.

## Disruptions

August and September 2018

Our exhibition of Carola Penn's paintings was DISRUPTIONS. At the Curator's Event for this show, one of the participants referred to her work as 'prophetic,' an indication that they realized the intention of her work was to raise consciousness -- to get us to look at what our economic, social and political decisions are doing to the earth, to our cities and to our people. Indeed, her show gave structure to disrupt our complacencies and to help us consider options that are more creative.

Her art was a kind of "poetry" in the ancient sense of the word, and her intention was structured to give us a meaning that encouraged us to have a poetic response. A booklet introduced the artist and gave a brief interpretation of her work.



Painting from the Statt Finden - Taking Place exhibit.

## Statt Finden - Taking Place

September 30 - November 25

Our exhibition of abstract art by Werner Ryschaw and Annegret Reichmann was titled STATT FINDEN in German, TAKING PLACE in English. The work is abstract and therefore requires very different interpretive abilities, because its meaning is noted in the process of making which is evident in

the drawing and painting that we see.

Our response is to consider seriously the means by which the forms emerge, the processes used to create, and the actions related to each work. As such, the poetry of this art (the resulting structure that carries meaning) expects us to do some work too: to find meaning in the forms, to discover references, to realize the dynamics of related lines and shapes. We do this daily with sounds and actions of other people; now we do it with the poetry of the visual artist. Our poetic response might be to consider our relationship to lines and shapes that take place throughout our daily lives. A booklet introduced each artist and an interview and an essay were included.

## Artist-in-Residence

September 11 - 30

As part of this exhibition, Werner Ryschaw served as our Artist-in-Residence for three weeks in September prior to the show. Coming from near



Essen, Germany, he set up a temporary studio in our Chapel adjacent to the main gallery in Fellowship Hall. He worshiped with us and became acquainted with many members and gallery visitors. John and Patty Bentley, members of the Congregational Church in Beaverton, hosted him for the first ten days, and Margret Oethinger from our congregation hosted him for the second 10 days. He gave a brief interview during the reception and was actively involved with gallery visitors throughout his stay.

## Life's Lines

December 2 - 30

During the month of December, church members and friends were invited to submit a personally



Calligraphic work by Cornwell Studio.

meaningful short quotation, line of poetry, scripture verse or inspirational saying. These are written lines that help us express life's meaning and purpose. A bound copy of the entries will be given to the library.

These quotations were displayed along with a collection of calligraphic work by Kathrin Cawein. This calligraphy was given to our church in 1997 shortly after Ms. Cawein died at 100 years of age. The collection includes selected biblical passages related to the Nativity, Ministry and Death/Resurrection, all references to the life's lines that help us interpret the meaning of Jesus.

ArtReach Gallery Committee includes Bob Olsen, Tom Corbett, Win Martinson, Barbara Bennet, Mary Maxwell and Sheldon Hurst.



# PEACEMAKING

Alice Forsythe  
*Peacemaking Facilitator*

I was lucky to serve with two other facilitators, Karen Hurst and Nanci Tangeman. For at least the first half of the year we had the opportunity to meet together with one of our ministers. We also chose to attend the Church Council monthly meetings as able. This gave us good insight into the needs of the church as well as our ministry staff.

Our Outreach programs continue, although Goose Hollow volunteers opted to discontinue when that program was moved closer to the Lents neighborhood. Transition Projects and Potluck in the Park continue, albeit with a few scheduling snafus along the way. New volunteers are always welcome. You can find sign up volunteer sheets at the Pencil table in the Fellowship Hall.

The 2019 peace facilitator will be announced soon.

**“The joy of serving as a facilitator is the serendipity that accompanies when you allow each person to make their own unique contribution.”**

person to make their own unique contribution.



## SPARE CHANGE

Our spare Change program benefited four wonderful local non-profit organizations: Sisters of the Road, Portland Literacy Council, Sexual Abuse Resource Center, and People’s Committee for Human Rights in the Philippines. Many times a combination of scheduling conflicts prevented a representative from talking to our congregation. However, two women from Portland Literacy were able to come and they made it clear just how much our seemingly small contribution meant to their organization.

## SOUL BOX PROJECT

Nanci Tangeman  
*Soul Box Project Co-coordinator*

In late 2017, Marsha Schauer, mother of member Dan Schauer, learned about The Soul Box Project during the Portland Open Studios weekend. The Soul Box Project is a community art project to raise awareness of the U.S. gun epidemic. The Project is collecting one origami Soul Box for every person killed or injured by gunfire in the U.S. since 2014.



That number is currently more than 211,000. The Project displays these Boxes by the thousands to reveal the number of gunfire victims. Marsha told Dan, “I think your church would be interested in this.” Those words sparked a close partnership with the Project and its founder, Portland artist Leslie Lee and First Congregational.

In January our ArtReach Gallery hosted the first public art installation by the Soul Box Project. What began with 752 Soul Boxes, one for every child aged 11 or younger who was killed or injured by gunfire in the US in 2017, eventually grew by 949 Boxes from congregation members who folded during fellowship hours, at home, with friends and neighbors. In March, several congregation members marched with the young people in the March For our Lives in Portland. Marchers carried 4,624 Soul Boxes – one for every child 18 or younger killed or injured by gunfire in the U.S. in the past 15 months. First Congregational served as the collection point for the Boxes after the march. More than 1,700 Soul Boxes from the chapel installation were added to the central Soul Box inventory.



*Soul boxes. Left: Blessing the 3,456 Soul Boxes made by the congregation. Top: Phil Oliver and Sahni Denton fold Soul Boxes during Fellowship Hour*

Then, in late August, the congregation served as the test congregation for the Project’s We’ll Take the Sabbath program. We committed to folding 100 Soul Boxes every week, holding space for the 100 people (on average) who are shot in the U.S. every Sunday. We eventually contributed another 3,456 Soul Boxes to the Project. Our congregation contributed around 12 percent of all Soul Boxes in the Project’s first year. Members continue to fold Soul Boxes. In December, the national UCC website featured a commentary written by Nanci Tangeman about our participation titled “Soul Boxes Honor Lives, Underscore Gunfire Epidemic.” It reads:

*The police were still searching the Pittsburgh synagogue when our women’s circle convened. The news was fresh enough that some of us hadn’t heard about it yet. Before we began that meeting, as we shared what we knew, we began to fold Soul Boxes. It wasn’t long before we had eleven small origami boxes, one for each person killed at the Tree of Life Synagogue on October 27.*

*The Soul Box Project is collecting one origami box*





Soul Boxes folded by Dorothy Coombs and decorated by Nanci Tangeman.

— a Soul Box — for every person killed or injured by gunfire in the United States since 2014. The Boxes will be displayed in public spaces around the country to raise awareness about the epidemic of gun violence. The Project began after the mass shooting in Las Vegas on October 1, 2017. Our congregation at First Congregational UCC began making Soul Boxes a few weeks later.

We folded Boxes during fellowship hours. We brought in Boxes that we'd folded at home with our families, friends and neighbors. In February, our church's ArtReach Gallery hosted the first public display of Soul Boxes — 732 Boxes for the children under age 12 shot in 2017. In March, we joined young people in the March for our Lives, carrying 4,624 Soul Boxes — one for every child shot since January 2017.

Some of us remembered the AIDS Memorial Quilt in the 1980s. We understood the power of art to change

perceptions. What we didn't understand was the power of taking time to purposefully acknowledge a victim.

We saw people who would never protest at a rally take this one small action for responsible gun control. We heard people share their stories. We felt our hearts open to healing as we folded. After an accident. Or a suicide. Or an ambush in a place of worship. The day after our women's circle meeting in late October, our senior minister delivered the eleven Soul Boxes to an interfaith vigil at a local synagogue.

We participated in the We'll Take the Sabbath initiative this fall. To hold space for the 100 people shot on an average Sunday, we folded 100 Soul Boxes each week. In December we blessed 3,456 Soul Boxes to be used in future installations. In February, we'll march in a funeral cortege of 36,000 Boxes — one for each person shot in the U.S. in an average year — at the Oregon State Capitol. And until the gunfire epidemic in our country is under control, we'll continue our Soul Box-folding practice.

Nanci Tangeman and Cheryl Clevenger were the co-coordinators of the Soul Box Project.

## POTLUCK IN THE PARK

**Ron Clevenger**  
*Potluck in the Park Coordinator*

During 2018 our church provided beverages (procure, prepare, deliver and serve) to about 300 to 700 hungry and thirsty (many, many homeless) persons in downtown Portland every Sunday afternoon. And again, on Christmas morning for about 1500 to 2000 persons in the Portland Museum across the street from our church. We have four teams, one for each week responsible for the success of this program.

A huge thanks to our committed team leaders and their assistant volunteers :

Week 1: Vanessa Verrill \*  
Week 2: Ted Heid, Gabriel Trainer, Paris Hancock  
Week 3: Alice & Scott Forsythe, Amalie Roberts  
Week 4: Ron and Cheryl Clevenger

The occasional fifth Sundays and Christmas morning are covered by one of the above teams. A huge thank-you to each team leader and helpers as this task could not be done without the help and commitment of our very special volunteers.

\* Although Vanessa is not a member of our congregation, she understands the important mission of the Potluck program and has volunteered for many years as one of our team leaders.

## IMMIGRATION TASKFORCE

**Bruce Bishop**  
*Committee Member*

Last month, we met to draft an Immigrant Welcoming Congregation declaration for the congregation's consideration. Earlier this month, we held a forum so that everyone could learn more about this step and offer suggestions. We are pleased to be presenting our finished draft at the annual meeting for your review and, we hope, approval.

As a group, we think the declaration is not just words, although it contains just words. We think it signifies our belief about what Portland First Congregational UCC stands for — welcoming all, whether strangers, immigrants, visitors or others — and what we as church's members can do with our voices, resources, and actions, not just as individuals,



Members read a recent draft of the Welcoming Congregation declaration during Fellowship Hour.

but as a church community, on behalf of immigrant justice.

Our declaration draws from similar statements already adopted by the Central Pacific Conference, the national United Church of Christ, and at least seven local UCC churches in Hillsboro, Hood River, Lake Oswego, Milwaukie, Portland, and White Salmon, Washington. Other churches are currently acting similarly.

But just approving the declaration is not the end of this work. It's just the beginning. Once we've affirmed the declaration, we will have to put our words into action by figuring out how we as a church can best be welcoming and supportive to the immigrant community. Please join us in this important effort.

As Walter Cronkite might have said, "That's just the way it is."

Committee Members: Frank Baldwin, Bruce Bishop, Daniel Hunter & Rachel Steven



# OUR GRATITUDE TO REV. MICHAEL

With Our Deep Gratitude and Love for Senior Minister **Michael Ellick**.  
Thanks for the memories and blessings on your journey!



# OUR GRATITUDE TO REV. ELIZABETH

With Our Deep Gratitude and Love for Assistant Minister **Elizabeth Durant**.

Thanks for the memories and blessings on your journey!





# MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS

2018 MEMBERSHIP - 297

NEW MEMBERS - 0

MEMBERS REMOVED DUE TO INACTIVITY - 71

MEMBERS REMOVED BY REQUEST - 4

2019 MEMBERSHIP - 222\*

MEMBERS AND FRIENDS WHO DIED IN 2018:

Andrew Adcock  
Estill Deitz  
Bev Garmire  
Ruth Heyward  
Myrna Lawlor  
Rebekah LaBar

\*It is standard procedure during an interim period to do a thorough review of the church membership rolls in order to come up with an accurate current church membership count for the local church profile. This is a good practice to undertake every few years in any case. Inevitably, churches find that a number of people who are still on the rolls have effectively lapsed into inactive status or have moved on without notifying the congregation. This year, letters were sent out to every member who has not been active in the church either through participation at church services or events, or via financial contribution, for a period of three years. Those who did not respond that they wished to remain on the rolls have been removed due to inactivity/lack of response. People whom pastors and staff were unsure about either have been contacted or are in the process of being contacted, so they were not removed even if we didn't hear back from them by the deadline set.

# CHURCH STAFF

## Ministerial

Rev. Dr. Janet Parker  
*Interim Senior Minister*

Rev. Elizabeth Durant  
*Assistant Minister*

## Worship

Dr. Michael Kelly  
*Music Director*

Genna McAllister  
*Section Leader*

Grant Edwards  
*Musician in Residence*

Adrian Rosales  
*Section Leader*

Josh Randall  
*Section Leader*

Sheryl Wood  
*Section Leader*

## Christian Education

Annie Tarter  
*Teen Ministry Coordinator*

Caroline Patetta  
*Child Care Provider*

## Office

Cara Rothe  
*Business Manager*

Leah Abraham  
*Communications Coordinator*

Andre Cordes  
*Bookkeeper*

Maureen Gullett  
*Office Assistant*

## Events & Facilities

Steve Eggers  
*Facilities Manager*

Chris Carey  
*Facilities Staff*

Aria Sims  
*Facilities Staff*

Anthony DeArmas  
*Facilities Staff*

Max Wolfe  
*Facilities Staff*

Emily Ogara  
*Facilities Staff*

Mpagi Kirumira  
*Facilities Staff*



# SENIOR PASTORS

Rev. Horace Lyman, DD	1851-1854
Rev. P.B. Chamberlain	1855-1862
Rev. G.H. Atkinson, DD	1863-1872
Rev. J.D. Eaton	1873-1876
Rev. J.A. Cruzan	1877-1881
Rev. Frederick R. Marvin, MD, DD	1882-1885
Rev. T. Eaton Clapp, DD	1886-1894
Rev. George R. Wallace, DD	1894-1896
Rev. A.W. Ackerman, DD	1896-1902
Rev. Elwin L. House, DD	1902-1906
Rev. Luther R. Dyott, DD	1907-1917
Dr. W.T. McElveen, PhD	1919-1923
Rev. Clement G. Clarke	1923-1928
Rev. Raymond B. Walker, DD	1929-1959
Rev. Royald Caldwell, DD	1960-1970
Rev. Lincoln Y. Reed, DD	1971-1986
Rev. John Rogers, DD	1987-1994
Rev. Patricia S. Ross, DMin	1994-2008
Rev. Anton DeWet, DMin	2010-2013
Rev. Michael Ellick	2014-2018

# MODERATORS

Harold Cake	1960	Marcia Yeater	1988
George Geist	1961	Scott Tetrick	1989
Reginald Titus	1962	D'Anne Gilmore	1990
Robert Dressler	1963	Charles Knapp	1991
Dwight Schwab	1964	Marguerite Oliver	1992
George Culbertson	1965	Charles Hinkle	1993
Egbert Oliver	1966	Cathy Tinker	1994
George Woodworth	1967	Bruce White	1995-1997
Keith Sime	1968	Becky Koch	1997-1998
George Smith	1969	Julie Blanchard	1998-2000
Calvin Van Pelt	1970	Ted Liljeholm	2000-2001
Winthrop Wells	1971	Bob Groves	2001-2002
George Casterline	1972	Carol Lynch	2002-2003
Robert Jack	1973	Tim Pollard	2003-2005
Laura Lusk	1974	Elaine Molskness	2005-2006
Leonard Garmire	1975	Carl Toland	2006-2008
Howard Campbell	1976	Debbie Knudson	2008-2009
Polly Casterline	1977	Alan Koch	2009-2010
David Johnson	1978	Ellen Bradley	2010-2012
Elmer Moke	1979	Richard Moody	2012
Shelly Reece	1980	Julie Young	2013
Dawn Dressler	1981	Ann Laskey	2014
Ron Zahler	1982	Ross Runkel	2015
Margaret Shafer	1983	Al Horn	2016
Ron Stites	1984	Peace Young	2017
Julie Blanchard	1985	Sarah Vazquez	2018
Megan Walth	1986		
Ervin Hummel	1987		



Interim Senior Minister:	Rev. Dr. Janet Parker	revparker@uccportland.org	(503) 946-1043
Assistant Minister:	Rev. Elizabeth Durant	edurant@uccportland.org	(503) 946-1042
Pastor Emerita:	Rev. Dr. Patricia Ross		
Music Director:	Dr. Michael Kelly	mikelly44@gmail.com	(360) 904-6429
Moderator:	Sarah Vazquez	moderator@uccportland.org	
Musician in Residence:	Grant Edwards	uccmusic@comcast.net	
Section Leaders:	Genna McAllister	Adrian Rosales	
	Joshua Randall	Sheryl Wood	
Core Ministry Facilitators			
Community	Nanci Tangeman	community@uccportland.org	
Hospitality	Karen Hurst	hospitality@uccportland.org	
Peacekeeping	Alice Forsythe	peacekeeping@uccportland.org	
Teen Ministry:	Annie Tarter	atarter@uccportland.org	
Childcare Provider:	Caroline Patetta		
Business Manager:	Cara Rothe	cara@uccportland.org	(503) 946-1045
Communications:	Leah Abraham	communications@uccportland.org	(503) 946-1041
Facilities Manager:	Steve Eggers	seggers@uccportland.org	(503) 946-1050
Bookkeeper:	Andre Cordes	accounts@uccportland.org	(503) 946-1044

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST – PORTLAND, OR

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WHOEVER YOU ARE, WHEREVER YOU ARE ON LIFE'S JOURNEY,  
**YOU ARE WELCOME HERE.**