



**FIRST
CONGREGATIONAL**

United Church of Christ - Portland

The Pilgrim

August-September 2017 Vol. XVII, Issue 4

A BIMONTHLY PUBLICATION

"I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, God, and that my soul knows very well." - Psalm 139:14



What joy to celebrate new life! We celebrate with Rev. Michael and Alana at the birth of their daughter, Zuzu Magdalene Ellick, on August 5th, at 5:34 PM (weighing in at 7 lbs, 7oz). Mom and baby are healthy and doing well.

Michael writes: "For those who have asked, Zuzu means "fight on" in Laotian, "precious pearl" in Tibetan/Chinese, "Lilly" in Czech, and, if it sounds familiar, it was also Jimmy Stewart's and Donna Reed's daughter's name in "It's A Wonderful Life." We miss being away from our church family while on parental leave, but will be eager to return and share Zuzu with you when the time is right. For now, thank you so much for your prayers, your kind gifts, and all of your support."

What joy to offer Rev. Michael the precious gift of time as he embarks on the life-changing journey of being a new father. I am so proud of our church that we are able to offer Michael and his family this time together.

While Michael is on parental leave until mid-October, our community is invited to draw together, deepen our connections, and support one another. As I have always done, I'm holding all of us in my daily prayers...but also showing up in a new way to take on more responsibility as acting Senior Minister in Michael's absence. This is weighty and wonderful work, and I'm honored to serve in this way.

As we celebrate this new baby with Michael and Alana, I wonder what new life is showing up for us, in our individual lives, and in our common life together. How are we finding ourselves stretched and sustained? What life-giving work is the Holy doing within us?

I know that Rev. Michael will have many special moments to share with us when he returns...and until then, may we celebrate the new work emerging within each of us, confident in knowing that we are, as the Psalmist says, marvelous and wonderfully made!

*In celebration,
Rev. Elizabeth*

Fun July Gathering



at Family

We had a terrific time at our July Family Gathering at Mill Pond Park in NW Portland. It was super hot, so the kids explored the creek, splashing and climbing on rocks, then competed for fastest ever mermaid crawl. The adults enjoyed the shade of the trees and the company of both old and new friends.



Welcome Caroline Patetta to our Nursery!

Our community has been deeply blessed by Nell Egan's loving and nurturing care for the children in our nursery over the past year. As Nell heads off to college, Rev. Elizabeth and the Family Ministries Team are excited to welcome Caroline Patetta, Child Care Provider, in the nursery. Of herself, Caroline writes: "I am delighted to join the community at First Congregational United Church of Christ, and I can't wait to get to know all of you and - of course - your children! I moved to Portland four years ago from Cleveland, Ohio; where I spent five magical years as a nanny to three children. My last four years have been spent both in administration and in the classroom at ChildRoots, where I've built wonderful



relationships with families, children, and teachers. In my free time, I enjoy swimming, painting, singing, and snuggling my sweet dog, Rooney." Please extend a warm First Congregational welcome to Caroline!

Sierra Service Project 2017

This year youth attending Sierra Service Project in Chiloquin, Oregon included Christina Hellums, Vanessa Eli Gavilanes Engelman (from Frog Pond UCC), a detailed report about their adventures in the next issue of the Pilgrim.



Rev. Elizabeth sneaks a photo while the kids eat beside Greenwaters Rest Area in Oakridge, Oregon...enroute to their service trip.

Eve's Circle

Elaine Molskness will be the coordinator for the 2017-18 Eve's Circle year. We invite all or any of the women of First Congregational UCC, young, old, in between, to join our small group for any of our gatherings. We typically meet the 4th Saturday of every month, except August, in Fellowship Hall of the church from 10 AM – Noon.

We still need at least 2 program ideas and volunteer hosts for the new year. If you have any thoughts or desires for a program, please let me know at molsknes@spiritone.com or 503-659-6097.

Eve's Circle 2017 - 2018 Tentative Calendar

*Meet in Fellowship Hall of First Congregational UCC, unless otherwise noted.
(This schedule is tentative and subject to change).*

September 23, 2017 10 AM – Noon

Henna Demonstration by Michelle Hatfield.

Ruth Abbott, host

Brunch potluck

October 28, 2017

Jewish Museum tour, time yet to be determined

Nanci Tangemann, host

November 25, 2017 10 AM - Noon

“Undies the Tree” (underwear donations to 2 or 3 charity groups)

Need a volunteer to organize this.

December 23, 2017 10 AM – Noon with lunch at a nearby restaurant

Tour of the Wyeth(Andrew, Jamie and N.C.) exhibit at the Portland Art Museum.

Cost will be \$16 if you are not a museum member, but members may have a guest pass that nonmembers could use. Each person works the entrance fee out on your own.

Elaine Molskness, host

January 27, 2018

Play or concert or other TBD

Judy Bishop, host

February 24, 2018

Desert Mothers (book used at last May's Camp Adams Retreat), will continue the discussion, maybe for 3 or 4 weeks during this month. Specifics TBD.

Margaret Baldwin, host

March 24, 2018 – 10 AM - Noon

Eve's Reads (general sharing of one or more books each person has read during the past year, or whenever, that resonates for that person.) Possibly tea and cookies along with the sharing.

Lou Sevetson, host

April 28, 2018

Open to ideas and a volunteer to host

Idea – tour the Maritime Museum about the history of the Willamette River or ????

May (a weekend)

Eve's Retreat at Camp Adams

Need a small committee to plan and figure out the dates.

General Synod 2017

Our church is currently proud to nurture two Members-in-Discernment, Grant Helbley and Michael Overman, as they journey through the process of discerning a call to ordained ministry. Michael and Grant attended the national United Church of Christ gathering (General Synod) in Baltimore this summer, with generous financial support from our church and the Central Pacific Conference. Read on to hear more about the General Synod experience, as reported by Grant Helbley.

General Synod 2017 in Baltimore was 5 days of stories, prayers, playfulness, and serious business. There were over 3000 people present. 20 resolutions were considered and discussed over the course of 8 plenary meetings, each of them 3 hours long and governed by the strict boundaries of Robert's Rules. Topics included racial justice, disability justice, environmental justice, financial responsibility, and difficult questions of how to think ethically about complex issues like the discipline of children and medically assisted suicide. I watched my new community love and affirm one another, disagree, have difficult conversations with one another, and practice covenant and hospitality together. I even had lunch with the paradoxically named Welcoming and Faithful group whose primary concern is that as the church becomes more welcoming to those on the margins it is no longer comfortable for ECOT (Evangelical, Conservative, Orthodox, and Traditional) believers. They are on a different place in their journey than I am but I recognize the landscape.



Some of the highlights of synod for me was singing with other attendees and delegates in worship, attending a march for immigrant justice led by the family of Guillermo Recinos Morales who has been detained by ICE for 3 months, hearing Rev Naomi Washington-Leapheart preach at the ONA banquet, meeting our new Conference Minister Rev Molly Carlson, and leading a roundtable discussion on gender in the exhibit hall.

I had gone with one burning question, "I know that I love my home church, but will I find that there is a place for me in the larger UCC community? Will they like me? Will I like them? I found my answer in my history and polity class while tracing the roots of incredible theological diversity that nourish the present expressions of the church. In the history of the Christian Connexion I found shared theological origins with the Adventist community that raised me. I found my answer in affirming conversations with leaders in various settings of the church who recognized my own minority identities as an asset and gift for the church rather than a liability. I found my answer in the deep and beautiful heart connections I made with other clergy and members in discernment. The

answer was a clear and strong yes. The United Church of Christ is full of my people. I like them. They like me. It's where I belong.

I love this community. I am proud of what this community is doing, and we can do better. One thing I could not have anticipated coming from my Oregon bubble was how white, politically engaged, East Coast, and proud of their liberal theology the UCC is. If this church was formed by 4 streams, it is the Congregationalist stream descended from the Pilgrims and Puritans that dominated the culture of the 2017 General Synod. There was a strong sense of optimism among the assembled delegates that by passing resolutions of witness on issues of social justice and communicating those resolutions to politicians and church members, we are capable of creating the kingdom of God on earth. I couldn't help reflecting on how many of the significant resolutions of the church both present and historical have only been necessary as a result of colonialist ideas and purity laws brought by our spiritual ancestors with the conviction that they could create the kingdom of God on earth. Given this sobering history, I would have liked to have heard more repentance and less self-congratulation from speakers and delegates. The work of social justice is not a brave new venture. There have always been people on the margins calling for justice. We have not invented a new thing, we have begun to learn how to listen. Listening requires from the church a humble acknowledgement that people with good intentions can still do great harm, and that we are doing nothing more than what is our responsibility when we do the hard work of making right the sins of our fathers.

The theme of the Faithful and Welcoming lunch I attended was "Putting Christ in the Center of the Church." While I'm sure our reasons are very different this is one place where I can agree with the ECOT's. At a time when the word Christian is associated with being anti-gay, politically conservative, patriarchal, racist, and nationalist, I am proud to be part of a community of faith that speaks as a Christian witness for the poor and marginalized. I am proud to be part of the Christian counter argument when the loud minority insists that God hates. I know of no bolder anti-colonialist, communist, economic justice, and feminist preacher and activist than Jesus. More now than ever, we need the witness of the historical Jesus speaking truth to power in our churches.



My final conclusion is that the United Church of Christ is a vibrant, healthy, diverse group of people who are seeking to live the commandment of Jesus to "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind, and love your neighbor as yourself." We are a people from different racial and ethnic identities, different theological backgrounds, and different socioeconomic locations, with differing abilities and disabilities, and with differing gender expressions and sexualities. Yet we make the radical claim to share a common identity in Christ. We have come a long way and there is still a lot of work to be done. While it is tempting to try to define our identity by the least common denominator, it is in fact the particularities of our differences that make us strong. This great experiment of unity has had some very rocky moments in the history of the UCC but if General Synod is a faithful reflection of the state of the larger church, faith in the power of covenantal unity is still alive. We do not persist despite each other, we need each other. The kingdom of God is not a thing we create, it is a thing we become when we are all together.

June 23, 2018

Open to ideas and a volunteer to host.

Idea – local writer to come and talk about his/her writing. Anyone know of someone who might be willing to give a talk or maybe a small bookstore owner or employee or ?????

July 28, 2018 – 10 AM - Noon

Planning for the next year.

Moderator Note

Dear Friends,

I hope you are all feeling blessed! This summer has been very beautiful. As you plan your summer trips, don't forget to stay cool and hydrated. We've had some exciting items take place in church this past months. Below are the items and updates on various activities.

CHURCH LIFE UPDATES:

- On July 3rd, 2017, Council approved the appointment of Alison Killeen to the Budget Development Committee. Alison was appointed to the Member-At-Large position of the Committee.
- Our Church's Budget Development Committee has started its work on our 2018 Church Budget. The committee will give regular updates to Council on their progress from now until November 2017. In November, Church Council will be voting on either approval or disapproval of the 2018 Church Budget.
- The Safety Team provided an update on their progress on our Church's Emergency Response Plan. The team also provided an update on the creation of the Point of Contact church member designation. We have about 15 church members who are designated Point of Contacts in emergency situations. These members will aid our church members in properly following the correct steps in response to a church emergency of any type. These members will also be trained in various emergency response subjects.
- Our Community Core Ministry Facilitator, Grant Helbley, provided an update on one of the projects they have been working on. The scope of the project is to provide an online resource where church members can post about ways that we can support each other. For example, offering of rides, meal trains, and just wanting to have some company can be posted to the online resource. Church members will then be able to fill those needs.

CHURCH COUNCIL UPDATES:

- We affirmed the creation of a new Congregation Care group. The group will be put together to help support our Ministers with care of congregation members. The group will help with items such as, church member house visits, travel to church members in needed of support, etc. Church Council already thinks there are church members who are already doing some form of Congregation Care. With this group creation, we are hoping to have a defined team that the Ministers can call on for support of this kind.



- We affirmed the hiring of retired Minister, Hector Lopez to be an assistant to Elizabeth Durant, as Elizabeth becomes our Senior Minister, during Michael's Paternity leave. Michael's Paternity Leave will be from Mid-August to Mid-October. Hector has worked with our congregation in many ways before and we are excited to share this new connection with him. There will be plenty of opportunities for us all to have one on ones with Hector in the coming future.
- Our visioning portion of Council this month focused on determining the best ways to make sure that we have church participation through volunteering. We at Church Council understand the importance of our Church members who volunteer to fill roles on their spare time and who support our community. We want to keep our church volunteering up and we want to make sure we support our church volunteers as they support us.
- We shared our ideas on what we think the frame work of the Church's Fundraisings Committee should be. We talked about the ways that the newly developing committee can provide for our church. We also highlighted any draw backs that we saw in relation to the Committee. We hope to have the newly forming committee functioning on church projects late October of this year.
- We also talked about our thoughts on the presence of many individuals that have been using the front of our church porch as a place of dwelling during most morning and afternoons on weekdays and weekends. Church Council, Church Ministers and Church Staff are aware of the issues that the front porch dwellers have been causing. While keeping in mind the safety of all the people in our community and the different perspectives that our church community members have on the dwellers, we (Council, ministers and staff) have good ideas on how to move forward in making the number of dwellers in our Church front porch more manageable. We hope with the good ideas being implemented we will provide a safer interaction with the dwellers and our church. We are also asking that during this time our church members be patient with us on this topic. Please also let our church Facilities Manager, Steve Eggers, our Church Ministers, our Church Business Manager, Cara Roth and I know of any uncomfortable situations that you may have experienced on the front church porch. All of our contact information is listed on the back of your Sunday Bulletin.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

- I'm looking for two people in our community who are interested in being our Church Stewardship Captains. The Stewardship Captains will plan and oversee the Fall 2017 Pledge Drive. We are very much in need of folks to fill this position. If you are interested and need more information, please let me know. If you or someone you know fits this interest, please let me know.
- I'm looking for people in our community would like to be a part of the Fundraising Committee. The Committee is a new committee to the church. I'm looking for people who would like to plan fundraising events and help with grant writing for our church. The members of this Committee will meet as needed.
- If you or someone you know would like to participate in these opportunities, please let me know.

In closing, make sure to have some fun in the sun this summer.

Peace,
Peace Young, *Moderator*

Upcoming Events

AUGUST

SATURDAY and SUNDAY, AUGUST 26TH-27TH

S'Mores Family Camp

Camp Adams

Calling all families with children ages 0 to 18ish! Join us for an awesome time of fun, fellowship and family in the forest at Camp Adams on August 26th to 27th. We'll swim in the creek, hike/walk/breathe, have field games, family projects, worship, good food, and of course....campfire with songs and s'mores! Come for the day or stay for the night. This is a great way to unplug and connect with other families. Register now at: <http://uccportland.org/family-camp>

SEPTEMBER

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 10TH - 2:30 PM

Bob Larsen Memorial Service

Sanctuary/Fellowship Hall

Please join us on Sunday, September 10th at 2:30 PM as we celebrate the life of member Bob Larsen with a memorial service in the Sanctuary, followed by followed by a potluck reception for family and friends in the Fellowship Hall.

We need volunteers to help coordinate the reception...and since many hands make light work, plenty of helpers to bring and serve food and clean up. Please contact Rev. Elizabeth at edurant@uccportland.org if you are able to help.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 10TH - Noon

United Church Funds Presentation on Socially Responsible Investing

Fellowship Hall

"Ever wonder how our church's investments line up with our beliefs? Come and find out on Sunday, September 10 at noon, right after Social Hour when Katie McCloskey, Director of Sustainability for United Church Funds will talk about how UCF screens investments for such factors as tobacco, guns, fossil fuels and other issues of concern. There will be a short presentation with plenty of time for questions and discussion."

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 17TH - 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

Ecclesiastical Council for Grant Helbley

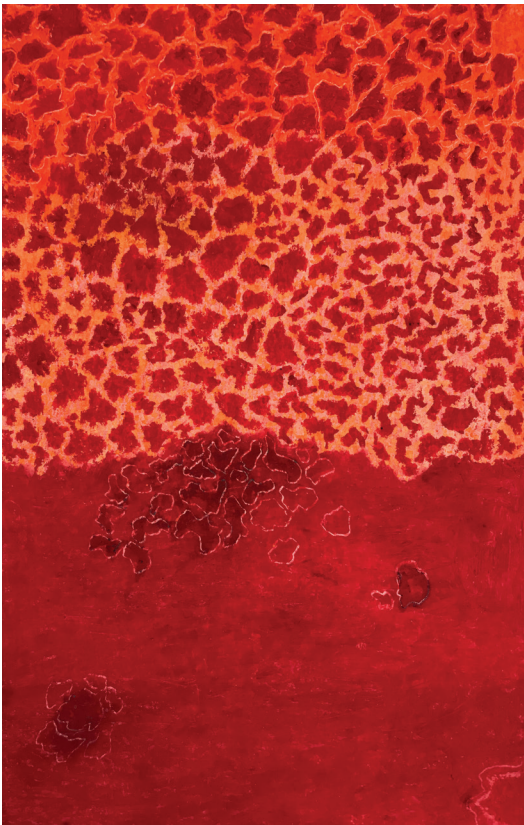
Sanctuary

ARTREACH GALLERY PRESENTS

YU-WHUAN WANG

SKIN • TIME

ConsciousnessUnconscious



August 6 - September 28, 2017

GALLERY HOURS

M - F 10am - 2pm

Sunday 9am - 1pm

OR by appointment

Dr. Sheldon Hurst, Curator 503.748.9419

ARTREACH GALLERY

at First Congregational UCC

1126 Park Avenue

Portland OR 97205

www.uccportland.org/artreach

OREGON REPORTS MORE HATE CRIMES THAN ANYWHERE ELSE IN THE COUNTRY PER CAPITA.

P.S.: Please join me for one of the following monthly activities:

- Moderator Moment: Providing descriptions of the Governance during the church service every third Sunday.
- Moderator Love Story: Sharing a loveable every third Fellowship meal, and our testimonies to your side.



SO WHAT DO WE DO ABOUT IT?

Starting with the premise that the opposite of fear is friendship, and the opposite of “hate crime” is “building the beloved community,” join a diverse cross-section of your neighbors on the fourth Sunday of each month to make new friends and deepen your community relationships. Each gathering will welcome a different community leader who will share their vision of “what they are for” here in Oregon, and offer us a chance to discern and discuss what we are for as well. Refreshments will be provided by Po’Shines: Cafe De La Soul. Brought to you by the Beloved Community of Oregon.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 27TH, 5P-7P, AT THE MUSLIM EDUCATIONAL TRUST COMMUNITY CENTER

10330 SW Scholls Ferry Rd, Tigard, OR 97223

Our August Forum will welcome Kelly Weigel, Executive Director of the Western States Center, a group dedicated to building the power of community organizations that challenge and transform individuals, organizations, and systems, in order to achieve racial, gender, and economic justice. Kelly Weigel will offer her own vision of the kind of world she is working for, and offer us some guiding questions to do the same.

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Our calling is to live into the kingdom of God more fully by cultivating community, practicing hospitality, and publicly demonstrating and advancing God's peace.

Rev. Michael Ellick, **Senior Minister** | Rev. Elizabeth Durant, **Assistant Minister**

Communications Coordinator, communications@uccportland.org

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