

United Voice

United Lutheran Church

January 2021

A Reconciling in Christ Congregation

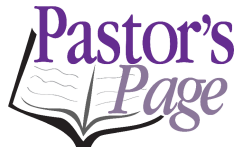
2230 Washington Street, Eugene, OR 97405

(541) 342-5808

www.unitedlutheran.org

unluthch@efn.org

Zoom worship service at 9:30 am on Sundays



From the Pastor,

As you receive this, we will still be celebrating the twelve days of Christmas and looking ahead to

2021. More than most years, I am ready to put 2020 to rest and move on to 2021. Of course, I do not know what the New Year has in store. Will it be better? I hope so. But, I don't know.

Per usual, there is a song running through my head. It is Simeon's song, known as the Nunc Dimittis found in Luke's Gospel. Simeon is the one who takes Jesus in his arms as Jesus is presented in the temple in Jerusalem. From Luke's 2nd chapter right after our Christmas story we get a song from Simeon. "Now Lord, you let your servant go in peace. Your word has been fulfilled. Mine own eyes have seen the salvation which you have prepared in the sight of every people. A light to reveal you to the nations and the glory of your people, Israel."

What will make us ready to go in peace when it is our time. My hope for you is that the light of Christ is revealed to you in your day-to-day life. My second hope is that, together, we at United will be able to share that light to a world in need. The needs of our community seem to be getting greater all the time. Even in the four months I have been here, I have seen the homeless population expanding in front of my eyes. The needs up the McKenzie river are vast. And yet, there is a longing in this community to make a difference with the resources that we have. There will always

be more to do, what will give us the peace we desire?

Recently, a group of us from the church have been reading The Book of Joy. This book's premise is a dialog by the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Tutu on how to find joy. They delve into topics such as heaven and hell, the meaning behind suffering, loneliness, despair, grief and so on. In the Invitation to read the book, these two spiritual giants say the following, "Lasting happiness cannot be found in pursuit of any goal or achievement.... It resides only in the human mind and heart, and it is here that we hope you will find it."

In my short time here, I have noticed there is a strong desire towards social justice and service. That is a good thing. Around these pursuits, we need to lay a foundation of prayer, gratitude, and of course love. The Dalai Lama and Bishop Tutu have something more in common with Simeon than old age. They have all known suffering, grief and pain and yet praise and thanksgiving rings out to the very end of their lives. I know that many of your spirits have been taxed in this last year. But with the right tools, as we come together, we will see that every day is a new opportunity to begin again.

Whether you are just beginning your journey or have more years behind you than ahead of you, a new opportunity exists for all of us to center ourselves in the love that is found in Christ Jesus our Lord. Do not be overwhelmed by the needs that are out there. Instead, look to Jesus to see where we may begin again to make a difference, always trusting

that ultimately the things we cannot control are in God's hands.

Merry Christmas,

Pastor Eric

Sunday Schedule for January

9:30 - 10:30 Worship

10:30 -11:00 Coffee with Pastor Eric

11:00 – 11:45 Adult forum time



**Adult Education Events, Winter 2021,
Sundays 11-12**

January 10

“How does our church welcome LBGTQ communities?”

Now that United has been a consciously LBGTQ welcoming church for over a decade, how do we renew our commitment to diversities of gender and sexuality? We have important questions for the congregation about ways to expand our commitment and outreach to LBGTQ communities, so come ready for discussion! Members who were part of the original Reconciliation in Christ decision will talk about the process, and current LBGTQ members of United will share stories.

January 17

“Social Justice at United: Past, Present and Future”

How can we make the world a fairer place? What is United doing, and what should we be doing in the future, to help make it happen? ULC young adults and children will bring their ideas and suggestions, and church members will talk about our current social justice activities.

January 24

“2021 Budget Forum”

January 31

“Transgender Justice, Identities, and Issues, with TransPonder”

Today we welcome guests from TransPonder, a Eugene group of transgender people dedicated to helping the wider community understand the spectrum of gender identities and the experience and issues that go with it. Get those questions answered at last!

Wednesdays in January

Please join us on Wednesday evenings in January from 7-8 pm for a study of the book of Revelation.

Contact information for Pastor Eric:

eric@unitedlutheran.org

509-570-8386

United Zoom access:

Meeting ID 259 764 8022 Password 8022

Council Highlights

December 17, 2020



Pastor Eric, guided by Eunice, is looking into using our parking lot as a site for pallet housing for people experiencing homelessness. The council is interested in pursuing the idea, and Eric will ask questions about process and protocol. Wendy is looking into the facilities currently being proposed at the fairgrounds, and what kinds of support we could offer there.

Streaming System - Jon Brandt has been measuring, ordering, and planning for installation. Special Contributions, Trust Fund, and Major Mission Gift plan to fund this project. We are amazed and appreciative of what the team has been putting together with our current (limited!) technology. Constitution review is to be presented at Annual Meeting, to be approved pending Synod approval.

Pastor's Report:

New copier: Cost would be about \$240 per month to lease a new copier, which is more than we have been spending. This was determined to be a critical need that we have, so some "creative financing" will be pursued.

Eric will supervise two mentees through the Team program, this will not affect our future internship program. We will from time to time have Andrew Langford and Ben Nikodemus preaching and involved with activities at United.

Youth: Crystal reported a successful youth event involving gift exchange.

An Opportunity To Give:

The congregation approved moving forward on a new Video Streaming System. If you would like to make a donation please send it to the church office and write (Technology) in the memo line. So far we have received \$1750.00 toward the project. The project is not to exceed \$15,000.00. Thank you for your support!



UNITED LUTHERAN BOOK GROUP, 2021

Happy New Year to our United Lutheran book group! Please join us in reading Scarlet Feather by Maeve Binchy as our January 2021 pick, and Louise Erdrich's new novel, The Night Watchman, in February.

The book group is open to all of United and will meet on Zoom on January 24 and on February 28 at 12:30 pm



ANNUAL MEETING

United's Annual Meeting will be Sunday, February 7. Save the date! Reports for the meeting are due in the office by Monday, January 18



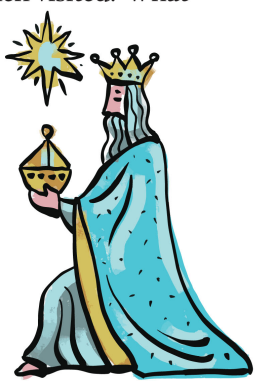
Still searching for a New Year's resolution? None is more worthy than becoming Christ-like. In fact, 19th-century evangelist Henry Drummond calls it "the only thing in the whole world worth caring for."

Two modern-day authors offer more insights. Stormie Omartian points out that we're either making progress or backsliding on this goal. "There is no neutral position in the Lord," she writes. "You are either becoming more like Christ every day or you're becoming less like him." And followers of Jesus must keep the goal always in focus. Christ-likeness is our "eventual destination," writes Rick Warren, but the "journey will last a lifetime."

Bible Quiz

In the story of the Magi, what word is used to give a sense of Jesus' age when the wise men visited? What does it tell us?

- A. "baby"; Jesus was still a newborn in a manger
- B. "child"; when the wise men visited, Jesus had grown past infancy
- C. "youth"; Jesus was probably between 10 and 14
- D. No word is used to suggest Jesus' age at the time of the wise men's visit.



Answer: B (See Matthew 2:1-12.)

JANUARY



BIRTHDAYS

- 8 - Katie Johnson
- 9 - Alex Priaux
- 10 - Paige Buenau
- 13 - John Masson
- 16 - Rachel Hample
- 20 - Paul Frantz
- 24 - Dick Bowers
Leta Swartz
Cameron Wisecaver
- 27 - Ruby Bryce
Sydney Simmons
- 29 - Elizabeth Gustafson
Margaret Kaeser
Ellen Krueger
- 30 - Michael Landon
- 31 - David Glass
Amani Swartz-Baxter

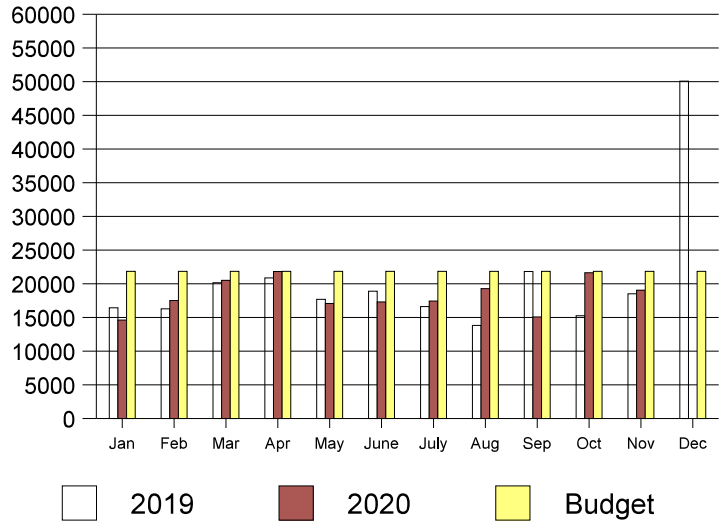
BAPTISMAL ANNIVERSARIES

- 9 - Thomas Gustafson
Patricia Dodini
- 11 - Thea Petersen
- 13 - Denise Wendt
- 14 - Alex Hirsch
- 22 - Marc Spence
- 29 - Kathy Saranpa
Mark Raney

ANNIVERSARIES

- 28 - Bob and Sherlene Schmidt

2 Year Giving Comparison
2019 and 2020



**Given in November
\$19,047.50**



Special dates

- *New Year's Day, January 1, 2021
- *Epiphany, January 6, 2021
- *Baptism of the Lord, January 10, 2021
- *Religious Freedom Day, January 16, 2021
- *Martin Luther King Jr. Day, January 18, 2021
- *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, January 18-25, 2021
- Inauguration Day, January 20, 2021



- Men's Group** meets on Friday mornings at 9:00 am
- Mary Magdalene Circle** meets on the second Tuesday of the month at 6:00 pm
- Prayer Group** meets on Thursdays at 4:00 pm
- Theological Book Group**, meets one Saturday a month at 9:00 am
- Book Group** meets on the last Sunday of the month at 12:30 pm
- Knitting Group** meets on Wednesdays at 4:30 pm



Emergency Fund for Our Unsheltered Neighbors set up by Christian Women United of Lane County

In response to their distress over the removal

of campsites during this pandemic, scattering our unsheltered neighbors to even more unsafe and unhealthy conditions, the CWU board has set up an Emergency Fund seeded with \$500 from their operating funds. They are inviting members and supporters to contribute generously. Through this fund CWU is supporting our unsheltered neighbors through a local nonprofit which is doing outstanding outreach with the most marginalized: Carry It Forward: (from their mission statement) "The name Carry It Forward is meant to highlight the mutual benefits of direct service to our unhoused neighbors. Our work is designed to reduce suffering by meeting basic human needs while developing a sustainable model for incorporating unhoused individuals in the work of helping themselves and the community.

Please mail your donation to CWU of Lane County, c/o Nancy Vrijmoet (Treasurer), 42091 McKenzie Hwy, Springfield, OR 97478

Make the check to CWU of Lane County with "Emergency Fund" on the memo line. (100% of your donation will go to Carry it Forward)



Office: 541-998-6444
lutherwoodoregon.org

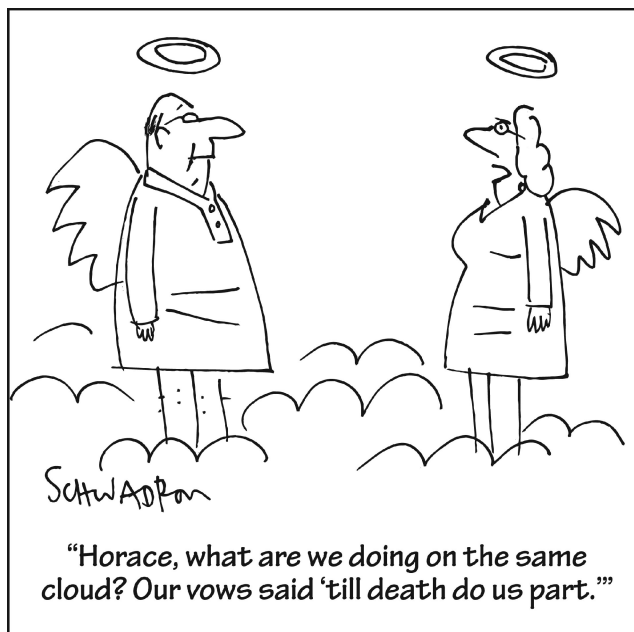
Mark the Calendar!

The Annual Meeting of the Camp Lutherwood Association will be held on Saturday, February 6th at 9:30am on Zoom. Each Association congregation (those who give to camp during the calendar year) receive one vote.

For all of us, 2020 has been challenging in ways we never imagined. As we close out this year, despite the difficulties, we have much to be grateful for, especially you! If we have learned anything over the past two years at Camp Lutherwood, it is that we can overcome many obstacles and still stay true to our mission.

Your continued support of Camp Lutherwood Oregon keeps the mission of camp moving forward. Any gift you can send now to camp's annual fund will ensure that camp is ready to welcome guests and campers back soon. Learn how you can give today by visiting our website.

Please contact the office (541) 998-6444 or office@lutherwoodoregon.org with any questions.





Food for Lane County is handing out lunches to go. They are currently using hired staff and a limited number of volunteers.

They are handing out an average of 60-80 lunches a day, 4 days a week.

While we can't help in the kitchen, what we can do is bake

cookies/bars/sweet breads, etc. that

can be packaged as dessert. We currently have 4-5 people baking about once a month to meet our goal of delivering one batch of home baked goods a week. If you are interested in baking please contact Cara - 541-324-2780.

Puzzle!

Complete each saying below. Then place the words from those blanks in the correct order to complete Proverbs 23:4.

1. When the going gets tough, the tough _____ going.
2. People who live in glass houses should _____ throw stones.
3. If the shoe fits, _____ it.
4. "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is _____ to enter the kingdom of God."
5. Good things come _____ those who wait.
6. When in Rome, _____ as the Romans do.
7. Don't wear _____ your welcome.
8. If you want something done right, do it _____ .

 Write the unscrambled proverb here:

_____ PROVERBS 23:4

Epiphany epiphanies

Sometimes brief words of ancient wisdom can spark an "aha!" moment — a revelation of new insight about God or faith. Here are some epiphanies for the season of Epiphany.

"If we approach with faith, we too will see Jesus ... for the Eucharistic table takes the place of the crib. Here, the Body of the Lord is present, wrapped not in swaddling clothes but in the rays of the Holy Spirit."

—St. John Chrysostom (347-407)

"So that we might also have the means to go, the one we were longing to go to came here from there. And what did he make? A wooden raft for us to cross the sea on. For no one can cross the sea of this world unless carried over it on the cross of Christ."

—St. Augustine (354-430)

"You wish to see; listen. Hearing is a step toward vision."

—St. Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153)

Live in the light

Often we want to be able to see into the future. We say, "How will next year be for me? Where will I be five or 10 years from now?" There are no answers to these questions. Mostly we have just enough light to see the next step — what we have to do in the coming hour or the following day.

The art of living is to enjoy what we can see and not complain about what remains in the dark. When we are able to take the next step with the trust that we will have enough light for the step that follows, we can walk through life with joy and be surprised at how far we go. Let's rejoice in the little light we carry and not ask for the great beam that would take all our shadows away.

—Henri Nouwen, Bread for the Journey

Answer: Do not wear yourself out to get rich. Proverbs 23:4

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Especially for:

January



January 3 **2nd Sunday of Christmas** Jeremiah 61:1-10-62:3, Psalm 147:12-20, Ephesians 1:3-14, John 1:[1-9] 10-18

January 10 **Baptism of our Lord** Genesis 1:1-5, Psalm 29, Acts 19:1-7, Mark 1:4-11

January 17 **2nd Sunday after Epiphany** 1 Samuel 3:1-1 [11-20], Psalm 139:1-6,13-18, 1 Corinthians 6:12-20,
John 1:43-51

January 24 **3rd Sunday after Epiphany** Jonah 3:1-5,10, Psalm 62:5-12, 1 Corinthians 67:29-31, Mark 1:14-20

January 31 **4th Sunday after Epiphany** Deuteronomy 18:15-20, Psalm 111, 1 Corinthians 9:16-23, Mark 1:29-39



United Voice

is published monthly by

United Lutheran Church

Editor: Linda Anderson

Publication Deadline: 2nd Monday of the month

email unluthch@efn.org

Pastor: Eric Dull

Director of Music: Philip Bayles

Congregational Ministry Assistant: Crystal Miller

Office Manager: Linda Anderson

Mid-Week Meal Cook: Diane Masson

Council: Bob Johnson, *Pres.*, Carolee Horning, *V. P.*,

Sally Krueger, *Sec.*, John Gustafson, *Treas.*, Damion

Kasper, Paul Greene, Thea Petersen, Rebekah

Whittaker, Marc Spence, Wendy Stoner, Randy

Sullivan