

# United Voice

United Lutheran Church

*A Reconciling in Christ Congregation*

2230 Washington Street, Eugene, OR 97405

[www.unitedlutheran.org](http://www.unitedlutheran.org)

February 2021

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*Zoom worship service at 9:30 am on Sundays*



From the Pastor,

Do you believe God has a plan for you? I have always hated that question. It makes me feel

like the goal in life is to figure out what God's plan is for us and get on it. However, I do not believe in a God that predestines everything we do. Or even everything we are supposed to do. I do like to think about the question of meaning and purpose.

Another way to ask this might be, "Do you feel called in what you are doing?" Pastors are asked about their calling all the time. But, what about you? I would argue that your calling is just as important as my calling. The other thing to realize is that we all have many callings in life. We may be called to be married or single. We may be called to be parents, or coaches, or students. We are called in our work and in our play. There is meaning in all these things. My calling as a pastor is no more important than my calling as a spouse, or parent, or friend. God calls us right where we are, right now. And as the prayer goes, "God also calls us to ventures of which we cannot see the ending" (see ELW page 304). I like to say that we are called today and led into tomorrow.

Whether you feel it or not, you are called by God into a life of faith in all that you are doing. The more we get in touch with that call, the more we will find meaning and fulfillment in our lives. The Reformation was really built on two pillars. Is there a God (and what kind of God do we have)? And what is my purpose in the world? I would

like us at United to help one another engage in this question in our daily lives. In Lutheran circles, this is known as the question of vocation. What is your vocation? And remember, there is not just one that claims you for your whole life.

My friend Jack and I once got into an argument at a men's retreat. He was an insurance adjuster and he got upset when I suggested that his calling was just as important as mine. His argument was that it was a lot easier to see my connection with God than in the work he did. It is much easier to serve God in my role than his role. I think the opposite is true. I am often preaching to the choir. People expect me to act in a certain way. People will be more surprised by you when they come to understand that you do what you do because of your relationship with God.

I remember hearing the story of someone in my hometown, upon hearing that they had a calling from God, express that this was much too noble of an idea. "Callings from God are for pastors" is often the thought. I wonder if that is the reason that when pastors fail in their moral actions, their calling comes into question. As a pastor, I am to strive to lead a Godly life. But as a baptized child of God, so are you. Our calling is not to be perfect, but to be about the forgiveness of sins in all that we do.

Luther put it this way, "So vocation belongs to this world, not to heaven; it is directed toward one's neighbor, not toward God.,,. In their vocation one is not reaching up to God, but rather bends oneself down toward the world. When one does that, God's creative work is carried on. God's work of love takes

form on earth, and that which is external witnesses to God's love. If we note properly how much good God bestows upon us, both through His direct creation and through all His created orders, we shall know the truth that He forgives sins. "God has shown the forgiveness of sins in all His creation."



Lent is around the corner. Have you been about the forgiveness of sins lately?

Always in Christ,

Pastor Eric



## ANNUAL MEETING

**SET ASIDE FEBRUARY 7**

9:30 - 10:30 Worship

10:30 - 12:00 Annual Meeting

### Sunday Schedule for February

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**

**February 14 - St. Vincent de Paul - Homelessness  
in Eugene**

**February 21 - "Calling in a Time of Exile" - a  
history of the Exile**

**February 28 - "Calling in a time of Exile" - Why  
did God allow the Exile to happen?**

**March 7 - "Calling in a time of Exile" - The  
Jewish understanding of Exile**

**March 14 - "Calling in a time of Exile" - Jeremiah  
and the Exile**

**March 21 - "Calling in a time of Exile" - Lessons  
from the Pandemic**

**March 28 - Palm Sunday - A look at the Great Three  
Days**



*Wednesdays in February*

There will be midweek Lenten Service in partnership with Central and Emmaus. Lent kicks off with Ash Wednesday on Feb 17.

We will be holding our services at 7pm Wednesdays but they will also be available on YouTube. More information to come.

### Lenten Prayer Stations

As we move into the season of Lent we invite you to take time to Pray, Fast, and Give. One way to do this this year is through the Lenten Prayer stations that will be available at the church. We have set up five stations in the sanctuary for individual household use. We invite you into our sacred space this Lenten season to reflect, pray, and meditate. If you would like to use the stations please check-in with the office to make sure they are not already in use during your desired time. If you are unable to utilize the stations at the church our Lenten Kits will have elements of the stations and we invite you to use these during your prayer and devotion time at home. If you have questions please contact the office or Crystal.

### Lenten Kits

Many hearts, minds, and hands have been working hard to create Lenten Kits for our congregation. These kits will include a plethora of items to help guide your Lenten journey. Some items will be meant for a specific service or time and others will be for your use throughout the season. Items in the kit will be labeled and a letter from Pastor Eric will also be included. We will be delivering the kits to your homes in a no contact manner on the afternoon of Sunday, February 14th. If you have any questions please contact the office or Crystal.

## Council Highlights

January 21, 2021

**Treasurer's Report** - Another strong month. General fund grew in 2020. Our congregation continues to be generous, and our finances hold steady. John went through the budget, which will be recommended by the council at the Annual Meeting. A motion was made and passed to recommend this budget to the congregation at the Annual Meeting.

**Social Justice Proposal** - A motion was made and passed to present the idea of hanging an RIC flag in our front window to the congregation at the Annual Meeting, with the expectation of moving it periodically.

**Thank you to Damion for your service on the Council!**

**Eric is working on a Mutual Ministry Committee;** the Council Executive Committee will serve in this role for now.

**Streaming System** - Jon and Zach have been working hard to get the system in place.

**Worship** - Worship is outdoors in the summer, in person in Fall.

**Intern program** is still in the works.

**Pastor's Report-** We have about a 50/50 chance of having an intern, we'll find out in April. Eric will continue his supervisory roles at Central and Emmaus, with whom we will collaborate for Lenten services.

**Youth** - Crystal is planning some in person youth and family events, including vacation bible school and family camp. Lenten kits will be delivered to families, and prayer stations are being developed for Lent. Some outdoor events are also being planned.

**Property** - v Roof and gutter improvements are being made. An outdoor light has been repaired at the intern house.

**Education** - "Calling in a Time of Exile" programming is coming.

## UNITED LUTHERAN BOOK GROUP, 2021

Please join us in reading 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 February 28 at 12:30 pm



**From Sandy Raney -**

THANKS  
FROM THE  
HEART

"My friend Laura passed away last week. After a bone marrow transplant 5 years ago, and the many hideous side effects she struggled with daily, the leukemia returned and within a month she was gone. She made the most of those 5 years which she wouldn't have had if she hadn't had the transplant. She planned and attended with joy her daughter's marriage (to a "nice Jewish boy" I might add) and saw the arrival of her delightful little grandson Ezra who they call Ezzy. She was mad for him and read to him daily online. For many years at United Lutheran, I took advantage of our verbal prayer time to pray for Laura. I wanted her to heal with all my heart. It was one way I could help and I know you all prayed with me for her which I really appreciate. Lots of you would ask me how she was and it was so comforting to have such a community alongside all of her many other friends and family praying for her recovery.

Also, our wonderful prayer chain kept up their prayers for her year after year with devout dedication, love and compassion. Thank you, thank you so much.

I loved Laura and I didn't want her to go. It's devastating. She was so special and I know special when I see it! A gorgeous example of a human being. I could go on and on about her value to everyone who knew her. We even shared the same birthday which to a Virgo is extremely significant.

So, I thought I'd tell you all and Thank You for supporting Laura and me too for all these years. One last ask ...please pray for her husband, Tom. He could use our help.

The people at United Lutheran are the best. Shalom and Happy New Year,  
Your very own "Jewtheran"  
Sandy Raney"

# FEBRUARY



## BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

### BIRTHDAYS

- 2 - Genevieve Brandt
- 3 - Bink Drouet
- 4 - Bill Bezuk  
Monica Hample
- 8 - Cade Wisecaver
- 10 - Brent Whittaker
- 11 - Susan Lunas
- 12 - Joanne Gulsvig  
Michael Glass
- 16 - David Hample
- 19 - Tom Landon
- 22 - Julia Frantz
- 23 - Randy Sullivan
- 24 - Alison Dodd
- 27 - Carolee Horning
- 28 - John Gustafson

### BAPTISMAL ANNIVERSARIES

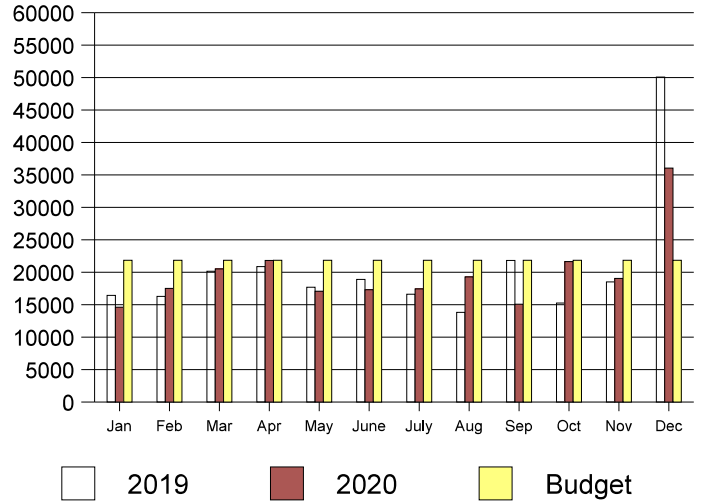
- 9 - John Masson
- 15 - Katie Johnson  
Ellen Krueger
- 17 - Tom Mains
- 21 - Kingston Baxter

### ANNIVERSARIES

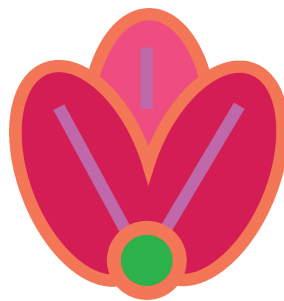
- 20 - Kathy & Tom Mains



2 Year Giving Comparison  
2019 and 2020



**Given in December \$36,061.00**



### Special dates

- African-American History Month**
- Transfiguration Sunday, February 14, 2021**
- Valentine's Day, February 14, 2021**
- Presidents Day, February 15, 2021**
- Ash Wednesday, February 17, 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



Dear Members of United Lutheran Church,

Thank you so much for your generous support of our Holiday Joy program!

This year has been especially challenging for our community and your generous holiday spirit made it incredibly special for your neighbors in need. Your support meant 585 households received holiday cheer!

Thank you again for supporting your most vulnerable neighbors in this community. St. Vincent de Paul is committed to ending the cycle of homelessness and we are proud to serve those in need.

Most Sincerely,

Terry McDonald  
 Executive Director, St. Vincent de Paul

Also from St. Vincent de Paul

Thank you for your gift of \$200 toward our programs. On behalf of our Board of Directors and the thousands of people we serve through our vital mission, St. Vincent de Paul of Lane County values your generous support.

On behalf of Centro Latino Americano, I want to thank you for your generous donation of \$200. During this difficult time of the COVID-19 pandemic, your contribution will make it possible for us to help the community meet immediate needs, like rent



assistance, and cleaning or other household items. We are so grateful that you and others across Lane County are stepping up to make sure everyone gets through this crisis healthy and safe.

**HIVAlliance** Thank you so much for your donation of \$200. HIV Alliance strives for Care, Prevention, Education and Engagement. Every donation helps us to reach more of the community, to help them learn about their testing options, prevention methods, harm reduction tactics and HIV education in Oregon.

*INDIAN EDUCATION • TITLE VII*  
*Serving Eugene, Public School District*



Thank you SO VERY MUCH for your ever so generous donation of \$200 to our NATIVES Program. That money will be so useful this coming year as we face serious shortfalls in services to students due to COVID and increased costs. The funding will be used to provide support to tribal students in so many ways. Our current focus is to provide support to families facing personal shortfalls due to loss of income. We continue to provide food and personal product assistance and this money will be so helpful.



ReconcilingWorks  
LUTHERANS FOR FULL PARTICIPATION

Dear Partners at United Lutheran Church,

Thank you for your generous gift of \$455. Reconciling Works appreciates your commitment to this holy work knowing the challenges that can come with COVID-19. Thank you friends, for helping us come together and build community!

You make it possible! Thank you for your generous gift of \$100 to Camp Lutherwood Oregon. Your gift allows us to provide outdoor experiences that bring all people into a deeper awareness and connection with God, self, neighbor, the community and the earth.



Thank you for being a vital part of the Camp Lutherwood community. We appreciate you!

Every year most of us may make some of the

same resolutions: exercise more, read more, watch less TV, lose weight, get in touch with old friends, do daily devotions, etc. Now, a month in to the new year, perhaps some of those resolutions, have been kept, some, as Pastor Dodd used to say, "not so much".

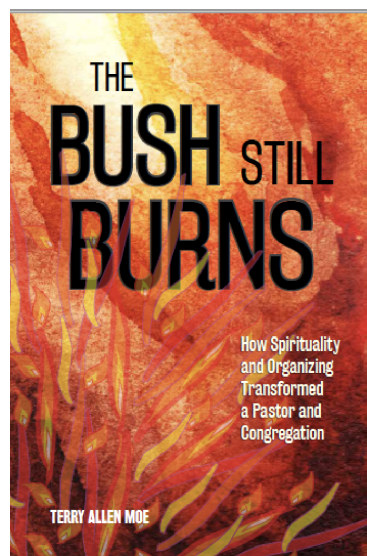
Now we might pay serious attention to THINK BIG, or outside the box to resolutions which will affect the larger world. Think about using Governor Brown's Carbon Policy plan to "swap out" the state's existing automobile fleet with zer-emissions vehicles and add charging stations at public buildings. At the same time, the Dept. Of Transportation is required to conduct a statewide analysis of what infrastructure the state needs to expand use of electric vehicles, and begin evaluating the greenhouse impacts of transportation projects as part of its planning.

Happily, one of the "benefits" of this epidemic has been a noticeable decrease in air pollution. Can we continue the pattern once the epidemic is past?

Included in her plan is to further ratchet down the carbon intensity of gasoline and provisions for updated energy efficiency standards for appliances and directives for reducing food waste. In total, the action impacts 19 state agencies and commissions, directing a large portion of the state's bureaucracy to do its work toward reducing emissions. That sweeping nature is certain to make it a target - both legally and rhetorically - of Republicans and industry groups.

If you approve of Governor Brown's Carbon Policy - (did I mention in New Year resolutions "Get in touch with your legislators"?) Now is the time to make your position known. I believe in "speaking my piece" when I feel strongly about an issue. And I believe you CAN make a difference.

*Ernie Rjaer*



## The Bush Still Burns:

*How Spirituality and Organizing Transformed a Pastor and Congregation*

By Terry Allen Moe;

Foreword by Susan L. Engh

Fortress Press: March 23, 2021

**Terry Allen Moe** served as pastor of Redeemer Lutheran Church in

Portland, Oregon, for thirty years. He was also a leader in the Portland Organizing Project, Metropolitan Alliance for Common Good, IAF Northwest, and member and chair of Sustainable Works. He also was a contributing member of the Congregation Based Organizing Team of the ELCA for seven years.

*"Terry Moe's vision, creativity, courage, authenticity, and collaborative spirit shimmers through the pages of this book—a primer in how to grow into formidable spiritual leadership with our struggling neighboring communities and challenged mainline congregations. Blending the wisdom of cutting-edge community organizing, ancient spiritual practices, and intentional congregational life, Pastor Moe's work is and always has been well ahead of its time. Read this! You will discover a wise companion and mentor for your own journey."*

—**Laurie Larson Caesar**, bishop of the Oregon Synod,  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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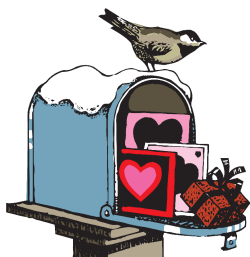
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<https://www.broadwaybooks.net/bush-still-burns-terry-allen-moe>

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*Especially for:*

February



**February 7<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Epiphany** Isaiah 40:21-31, Psalm 147:1-11,20c, 1 Corinthians 9:16-23, Mark 1:29-39

**February 14 Transfiguration of Our Lord** 2 Kings 2:1-12, Psalm 50:1-6, 2 Corinthians 4:3-6, Mrk 9:2-9

**February 21 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Lent** Genesis 9:8-17, Psalm 25:1-10, 1 Peter 3:18-22, Mark 1:9-15

**February 28 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Lent** Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16, Psalm 22:23-31, Romans 4:13-25, Mark 8:31-38



## United Voice

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