

United Voice

United Lutheran Church

March 2021

A Reconciling in Christ Congregation

2230 Washington Street, Eugene, OR 97405

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Zoom worship service at 9:30 am on Sundays



Romans 15: 30 ff. "I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of the Spirit, to join me in earnest prayer..."

From the Pastor,

Welcome, Grow, and Go. These three verbs are worth being conversation partners for us as we consider the direction we want to go at United. I want to focus on the second verb for this Lenten article; grow.

The vision that we have is to grow toward God and one another. This is a noble vision. We have a suspicion that the way we best grow toward God is through such Lenten practices as personal devotions, prayer, meditation, and the like. And these things are all good. I am more and more convinced though, that the best way we grow toward God is in community. This is more difficult as community opens us up to disagreement, contention, and consternation. But like all struggles, when we end up on the other side, we have a more authentic relationship with God and neighbor.

Recently, I posed a question at our men's group whether folks thought they learned more from mountain top experiences or times of suffering. My suspicion of course is that we need both. I have shared with you before that one of the most life-changing experiences for me was when I spent a month in India and Nepal as a 17-year-old. It was both a mountaintop experience, and an

experience that caused a good amount of suffering. Both have continued with me to this day.

While I grew as an individual, it was the communal aspect that I remember the most. I remember exchanging ideas with Moslem students outside of their place of worship, joining Hindus in a meal as I learned about persecution they faced, and sharing communion with Christians who suffered from leprosy. I was on a mountain top as I visited the Taj Mahal, traveled the foothills of the Himalayas, and had these conversations. I struggled together with my travel companions as we fought off dysentery and the like (I lost 20 pounds in that month when I did not have 20 pounds to lose). I struggled with depression as I sought to come to terms with people dying in the street from malnutrition. It is in the tension of the mountain top and the road of suffering that we find ourselves in Lent and in our lives when we strive to grow with God and one another.

Even in this time of pandemic, I wonder how we might strive as a congregation to grow toward God and one another. In our prayer stations that we have set up in our sanctuary you will notice opportunities to think both about your personal walk and communal walk with God. Take time this Lent to come to the sanctuary and join your prayers with this community as we seek to grow in our 'faith, love, and obedience' to God. Immediately after

(continued)

turning inward, you will be invited to turn outward in prayer as we think about what we might take on for the sake of community.

"I appeal to you, brothers and sisters to join me in earnest prayer." In the quote from above, Paul used a Greek word found nowhere else in the Bible. This word described the struggle Christians face. Our struggles occur between the mountaintop and the cross. But we get to do this with one another and a God who is on the journey with us.

Blessings on the journey,

Eric

Sunday Schedule for March

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

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

Norwegian theologian Ole Hallesby described prayer as simply letting God into our lives. God "knocks," he said, "not only in the solemn hours of secret prayer" but "in the midst of your daily work, your daily struggles, your daily grind ... when you need him most."



Prayer, added Hallesby, is as essential to life as air. "As impossible as it is for us to take a breath in the morning large enough to last us until noon, so impossible is it to pray in the morning in such a way as to last us until noon," he said. "Let your prayers ascend to [God] constantly, audibly or silently, as circumstances throughout the day permit."



Wednesdays in March
There will be midweek Lenten Service in partnership with Central and Emmaus. Services will be at 7pm Wednesdays but they will also be available on YouTube.

Lenten Prayer Stations

During 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 are 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.

Only your real friends tell you when your face is dirty - Sicilian Proverb

The comfort connection

Amid suffering, we might feel alone and wonder what good can come of it. But later we may discover ourselves equipped to serve precisely because of what we experienced.

Writer and civil rights activist James Baldwin stated: "You think your pain and heartbreak are unprecedented ... but then you read. [Books] taught me that the things that tormented me the most were the very things that connected me with all the people

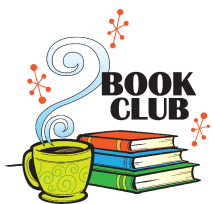
who were alive or who had ever been alive.” Whether through books or direct human interaction, we often learn that our suffering connects us to other people and that our pain gains meaning by moving us to support someone else who’s hurting.

Paul writes of such connection: “Praise be to ... the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God” (2 Corinthians 1:3-4, NIV). May you share the comfort you have received from God with others in pain. As a bonus, along the way you’ll realize you’re not — and never have been — alone.



UNITED LUTHERAN BOOK GROUP, 2021

Our February book selection was written by Louise Erdrich, a contemporary author who we, in our family, have decided is a national treasure! If you have not read her latest book, The Night Watchman, we invite you to do so, and then join the book group on **February 28** for a discussion at 12:30 P.M. on Zoom. Erdrich bases her story on her own grandfather's experience of a breaking of yet another treaty by our U.S.



government with his and Louise Erdrich's own tribe, the Turtle Mountain Band in N. Dakota, part of the Chippewa Nation.

For **March 28th** we have chosen the book The Song of Achilles written by Madeline Miller. This is what a Lincoln H.S. student in Portland said about this book: "I remember reading passages that I loved out loud to my friends at lunchtime, and crying in my bed at midnight when I finished the book. Three years and five rereads later, I'm still in love." (with it)

Because the book we formerly chose for March was so hard to obtain (no copies in the library), we have chosen The Song of Achilles instead.

All are welcome and we hope you'll join us!
Jean Frantz

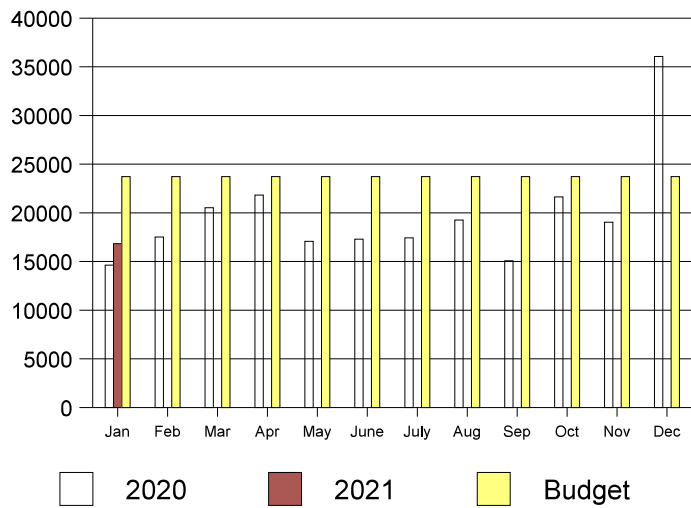
During the pandemic, acts of kindness seemed especially meaningful.

Last spring, as Covid-19 hit Native American communities particularly hard, an interesting transatlantic outreach occurred. Donations from Ireland began appearing in a relief fund for Navajo and Hopi families, leading administrators to suspect the account had been hacked. Then they realized a cross-generational payback was underway.

In 1847, Choctaw Tribe members sent \$170 overseas to Ireland to help with Potato Famine relief. That generosity was never forgotten, and by May 2020, people in Ireland had contributed more than \$4 million toward pandemic assistance for relatives of people who'd helped their ancestors. Many donors included an Irish proverb meaning "In each other's shadows the people live."

The concept of paying it forward dates back to a 1784 letter by Benjamin Franklin. It also echoes Jesus' Golden Rule: "Do to others as you would have them do to you" (Luke 6:31). How might you live out this practice today?

2 Year Giving Comparison
2020 and 2021



Given in January \$16,837.46



Special dates

World Day of Prayer, March 5, 2021

Daylight-Saving Time begins, March 14, 2021

First day of spring, March 20, 2021

Holy Week, March 28 – April 4, 2021

Palm/Passion Sunday, March 28, 2021

MARCH



BIRTHDAYS

- 9 - Craig Chamberlain
- 12 - Zane Wilson
- 13 - Kari Van Orsdel
- 14 - Matthew Wilson
- 17 - Stuart Helikson
- 27 - Karen Ann Wiant
- 30 - Michelle Dodd
- 31 - Sally Cairnes-Wurster
Candy Snook

BAPTISMAL ANNIVERSARIES

- 1 - John Henry Gustafson
- 7 - Jane Barta
- 9 - Susan Lunas
- 10 - Bink Drouet
- 12 - Maija Anstine
John Landon
- 13 - Paige Buenau
- 17 - John Masson
- 19 - Genevieve Brandt
- 25 - Peggy Johnson
- 26 - Randy Sullivan
- 28 - Carolee J. Horning
- 31 - Lee Langdon
Alex Priaulx

ANNIVERSARIES

- 17 - Debbie & Paul Greene
- 19 - Mary & Harry Jahnke
Eunice Kjaer & Chuck Reinhardt

small groups

- 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

Thank you so much for your generous gift of \$200. Food insecurity and the struggle to make ends meet are also part of the new year for far too many Lane County residents. The OSU Policy Analysis Laboratory estimates that food insecurity has doubled in Oregon as a result of COVID.



Food makes a difference, and your support for FOOD for Lane County is making a positive difference in our community right now.

Thank you for your thoughtful generosity,
Sally Dougherty, Development Director
Food for Lane County



Thank you so much for your generous support of Camp Lutherwood Oregon in 2020. It was another

unprecedented year at camp as we navigated the challenges of COVID-19. With your generous support, we have been able to continue basic operations at camp, support three young adult interns and continue with improvement projects around the site. We cannot do it without you!

Blessings, Andrea Scofield, Executive Director



CROSS OF TRIUMPH

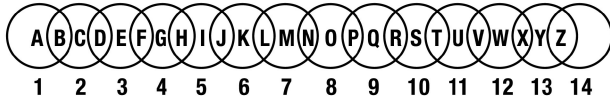
Also known as the Cross of Victory, this cross symbolizes Christ's final triumph and his reign throughout the earth. The Cross of Triumph is often depicted atop Jesus' scepter when he's shown in his kingly office.

Sometimes you have to stop thinking so much and just go where your heart takes you - Unknown

Puzzle!

Use the code to complete the blanks — and find out how God wants us to treat people.

CODE:



1,2 3 6 5 7,8 2,3 1 7,8 2,3

2 8 7 8,9 1 10 10 5 8 7,8 1 10,11 3

10,11 8 8 7,8 3 1 7,8 8 10,11,4,5 3 9,10

3,4 8 9,10 4 5 11,12 5 7,8 4 3 1 2 4,5

8 10,11,4,5 3 9,10 5,6 11 10 10,11 1 10

5 7,8 2 4,5 9,10 5 10 10,11 4 8 2,3

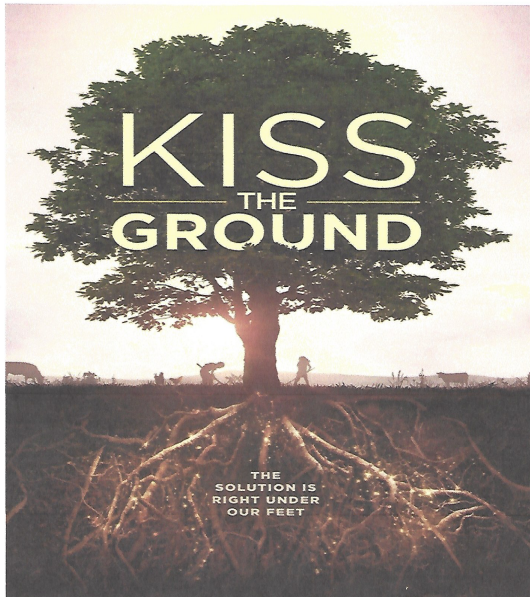
3,4 8 9,10 4 1 11,12 3 13 8 11

EPHESIANS 4:32, NIV

Answer: Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. Ephesians 4:32, NIV

caring for GOD'S earth

Thursday, April 22, 2021
Movie @ 7pm



Activists, scientists, farmers and politicians turn to regenerative agriculture to save the planet's topsoil.

Trailer... <https://youtu.be/K3-V1j-zMZw>

Join the Webinar here:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87168261757>

Presented by Eugene Interfaith Earthkeepers

"There is no such thing as 'human community' without the earth and the soil and the water and all living forms. Without these, humans do not exist. In my view the human community and the natural world will go into the future as a single sacred community or we will both perish in the desert." -

Thomas Berry, *The Dream of the Earth*

"Violence is the last refuge of the incompetent" Issac Asimov



Laud & honor on Palm Sunday

The Palm Sunday anthem "All Glory Laud and Honor" is one of Christendom's oldest hymns. St. Theodulf of Orleans, who helped reform the church under Charlemagne, wrote the lyrics in the year 820 while imprisoned in France.

The lyrics recount Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, an event the medieval church reenacted every Palm Sunday. Clergy and townspeople processed from fields through the city gates, behind a Jesus figure riding a donkey. At the gates, children began singing the hymn in Latin — Gloria, laus et honor — and onlookers soon chimed in.

City gates may be a thing of the past, as the website Hymnary.org notes, yet we still praise our blessed Redeemer "because we know just what kind of King he was and is — an everlasting King who reigns not just in Jerusalem but over the entire earth. What more could we do but praise him with glory, laud and honor."

All glory, laud and honor to you, Redeemer, King,
to whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas
ring.

You are the King of Israel and David's royal Son,
now in the Lord's name coming, the King and
Blessed One.

That's the point!

If prayer stands as the place where God and human beings meet, then I must learn about prayer. Most of my struggles in the Christian life circle around the same two themes: why God doesn't act the way we want God to, and why I don't act the way God wants me to. Prayer is the precise point where those themes converge.

--Philip Yancey

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Especially for:



March 7 3rd Sunday in Lent Exodus 20:1-7, Psalm 19, 1 Corinthians 1:18-25, John 2:13-22

March 14 4th Sunday in Lent Numbers 21:4-9, Psalm 107:1-3,17-22, Ephesians 2:1-10, John 3:14-21

March 21 5th Sunday in Lent Jeremiah 31:31-34, Psalm 51:1-12, Hebrews 5:5-10, John 12:20-33

March 28 Palm Sunday Isaiah 50:4-9a, Psalm 31:9-16, Philippians 2:5-11, Mark 14:1-15:47



Preparing for Easter

United Voice

is published monthly by
United Lutheran Church

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