



The Messenger

December 2015



Christ's Church Methodist & Presbyterian United & Falls City United Methodist Church

Dear Ones:

It is moving to watch you gear up for the Holidays – for the Falls City Community Thanksgiving Dinner, the Hunger Harvest Dinner, with Care Packages for WOU students, spending hours writing thank you notes to Central School District teachers, with offerings for “Imagine No Malaria,” and now with food and funds for Christmas baskets.

As we move through this Advent – Nativity – Epiphany Season, may we remember to care for each other, and ourselves, with gentleness. Under our skin and behind our masks, we are all as vulnerable of heart as the day we were born. We all want to belong, to be loved, to be looked at and truly seen, to be confident that someone will pick us up when we fall, comfort us when we mourn, and rejoice with us -- with or without reason.

“Some children see him...” is our theme this year, with prayers and songs and stories from Native American, Asian, African, European, and Hispanic cultures. Please let me know if you'd like to make food on Christmas Eve that reflects a particular culture or “old country.” We want to make sure that there is hospitality at the “Inn” on Christmas Eve at 7:30pm at Christ's Church. Would you like to make a special bread for the 11pm communion service? Falls City will host the community at 5:30pm with a children's tableau.

Would that we would let ourselves see Jesus through our own lens – not to distort who Jesus was or his message, but to know that he is not altogether foreign and far away. He looks like every baby, even the little one abandoned under the sidewalk in Southern California.

*The children in each different place will see the baby Jesus' face
like theirs, but bright with heavenly grace, and filled with holy light.
O lay aside each earthly thing and with thy heart as offering,
come worship now the infant King. 'Tis love that's born tonight!*

–Wihla Hutson and Alfred Burt

Holy Christmas!

Becky

REGULAR WEEKLY EVENTS

SUNDAY

- 9:00am **Fellowship** (FC Friendship Room)
 9:20am **Worship** (FC Sanctuary)
 10:00am **Prayer Room Open**, CC
 11:00am **Worship** (CC Sanctuary)
 12:10am **Fellowship** (CC Upper Room)

TUESDAY

- 7:00pm **Boy Scouts** (CC Lower Level)
 7:00pm **Committees** (CC Library)
 7:00pm **Adventist Church** (CC Sanctuary)

WEDNESDAY

- 8:00am **Lectionary Discussion Group** (Independence Grill)
 5:30pm **Joy Bells Practice** (CC Sanctuary)
 7:00pm **Choir Practice** (CC Sanctuary)

THURSDAY

- 5:30pm **Valley Zen Circle**
 6:30pm **Book Discussion**

SATURDAY

- 9:00am **Adventist Church** (9am-8pm, CC)

MONTHLY EVENTS

- Dec 1 **Peace, Justice, & Mission Team**, 1st Tue (7pm, CC Library)
 Dec 2 **Horizons**, 1st Wed (1pm, Brookdales Small Dining Room)
 Dec 3 **Stewardship Meeting**, 1st Wed (7:30pm, CC Library)
 Dec 6 **Salem Community Choir, CC** (3:00pm)
 Dec 9 **Board Meeting, FC**, last Wed (7pm, FC Friendship Room)
 Dec 8 **James2 Dinner**, 2nd & 4th Tue (5pm, FC Friendship Room)
 Dec 9 **SPRC Meeting, CC**, 2nd Wed (7am, Independence Grill)
 Dec 13 **Worship Committee Meeting** (after worship, CC Library)
 Dec 15 **Board Meeting, CC**, 3rd Tue (7pm, CC Library)
 Dec 17 **Board Meeting, Western Compass Campus Ministry**, 3rd Thu (10am, CC Library)
 Dec 21 **Christmas Caroling!** (5:00pm)
 Dec 21 **Christmas Chili Open House** (6:30pm, parsonage)
 Dec 22 **James2 Dinner**, 2nd & 4th Tue (5pm, FC Friendship Room)
 Dec 24 **Submission Due Date** for Messenger Newsletter
 Dec 24 **Christmas Eve Service, FC** (5:00pm)
 Dec 24 **Christmas Eve Service, CC** (7:30pm; 11pm)
 Dec 27 **Christian Education** (After Service, CC Library)

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 Methodist & Presbyterian
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 Monmouth, OR 97361
www.christschurchmonmouth.org
 CC's Facebook page:
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Christs-Church-Methodist-Presbyterian-United/576855235764119>

Falls City UMC (FC)
 United Methodist Church
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www.fallscityumc.org

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01/02 Bill Ousterhout
 01/04 Kristie Moser
 01/06 Bev Herzog
 01/09 Paul LaRue
 01/27 Gail Saxowsky
 01/27 James
 Simmons

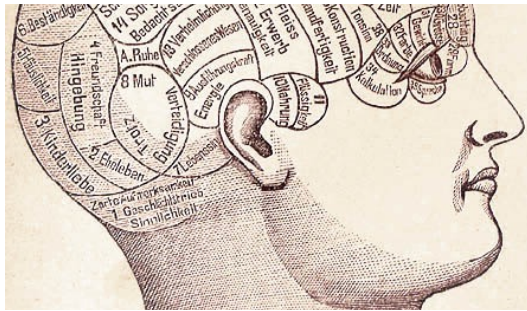
Upcoming Events

In case you are interested in local learning opportunities, Western Oregon University hosts a Community Lecture Series.

They can be reached through the following link:
innovation@wou.edu.

December's presentation is coming soon, at 5:30 PM on Tuesday, December 8. It will be held in Room 205 at the WOU Instructional Technology Center. Refreshments are provided, too.

The topic this month is one you might be interested in learning more about. The speaker might also be of interest to you as Dan Clark is the husband of our church's office administrator, Kim Clark, and both are active with our church sponsored Boy Scout Troop.



Western Oregon University Community Lecture Series



The Dog Ate My Cell Phone: Teaching and Learning in the Google Age

Instructional Technology Center, Rm 205
 Tuesday, December 8, 2015 @ 5:30pm

Join us in ITC 205 for refreshments as speaker Dan Clark gives a presentation on teaching and learning in the Google age.

innovation@wou.edu

Prayer Ministry

Please continue to hold these people in your prayers including: Sue Badgett; Shelby Case; Beth Fleisher; Lisa Fowler; Megan Gipson; Lorraine Reed; Beth Ritchey; Jim & Jean Smith; Lorraine Wells, Georgia Wildfang

Those dealing with health issues including: Maggie Scroggins; Mo Jaffer; Prayer for Morris Johnson who is facing a serious operation; for Wendy Davis LaRue. Also for Mary Lou Hadley who is having radiation for lung cancer. (Both Morris and Mary Lou are volunteers at the Ella Curran Food Bank.)

Those of us who are recovering: Ed Badgett; Heather Badgett; Roland Brown; Tom Ritchey

We offer prayers of thankfulness for travelers who have safely returned from Alaska (Badgetts) and from The Holy Land (Saxowskys); thankfulness for the feeding of 400 at the Thanksgiving dinner in Falls City; and for the opportunities we have to mend relationships during the holidays; for the international climate talks in Paris and its hoped for impact on the world; thanks for so many countries who, with open minds and open hearts, are acting as Christ would have us do, by opening their borders to the strangers... the refugees.

Upcoming Events

Would you like to **make a Native-American basket** under the instruction of Stephanie Wood, a member of the Grand Ronde tribe?

The Polk County Historical Society is sponsoring a class on Friday, **December 11**, from 10:00 AM - 5:00 PM at the Brunk House. The class is already full this year but if you are interested in attending next year, please call Jo Ann King, 503-838-6603. You will end up with a unique gift, either for yourself or someone very



important to you!

– Jo Ann King



Poinsettia Time!

Yes, it's time to order poinsettias in honor of, or in memory of, some you'd like to remember over the holiday season. They will be delivered later in Advent, and you will be welcome to take



them and enjoy them at home after Christmas Eve. Look for an order form in the bulletin beginning Sunday!



Christmas Caroling!

Join us to make a joyful noise while we go Christmas Caroling on Monday evening, **December 21**, at 5pm. Meet at the church, and we will carpool (and walk a little) to sing for individuals and groups for about an hour and a half! Dress warmly and bring a flashlight (a headlamp is even better). And.... if you'd like the carolers to visit you, give the office a call at 503 838-1724.



Open House at Parsonage with Pastor Becky!

Come one, come all! Come to this open house at the Parsonage, 176 Stadium Drive, South on Monday evening, **December 21**. Drop by for chili (both meat and meatless), cornbread, and salad, and...who knows what

else? This is how the Christ's Church & Falls City Christmas Carolers traditionally end their evening and now everyone is welcomed and invited to join in the festivities!

Come about 6:30pm to 8:30pm. Pastor Becky and the Christ's Church Staff-Parish Relations Committee are putting this on and inviting everyone... and those SPRC people are great cooks!



"Winter's Peace" is the theme of the Salem Community Chorus' holiday concert. The group will be singing at Christ's Church on Sunday afternoon, December 6 at 3pm. Come hear Sue Badgett and Pastor Becky and about 80 other people sing lovely holiday songs.

A free will offering will be shared between the Chorus and a mission project. If you'd like to bring cookies for the gathering following the concert, you are invited to do so!



Worship: Advent Class***Stories from Israel:
Following Jesus' Footsteps***

The first three Sundays in Advent, the Saxowsky's will share stories from Israel gleaned from their recent trip to the Holy Land on Sunday evenings, 5-6:30pm. The first meeting will have happened by the time you receive this newsletter...but please join the group at the next to-be-announced home (Please call Sherry Pittam at 503.838.2667 for more info.) Soup will be provided, and along with the pleasure of your company, please bring a dish to share.

Worship Advent Services

Our theme this Advent comes from *Some Children See Him*, an Alfred Burt Carol from the 1950s. It reminds us that, for good reason, we see the face of Jesus "like ours." These services will offer hymns, carols, and prayers from different traditions. A brief meditation on Scripture for the day will be offered, but the "sermon" will be children's Christmas stories. So bring the kiddos and grandchildren and great-grands! Traditions featured will be Native American, Asian, African and African-American,

European, and, on Christmas Eve, Hispanic. Thanks to Kim Clark, our Administrative Assistant, for assisting with finding baby dolls (and Kay Graven, who has access to display dolls from different cultures), and Rosie Lieuallen, retired children's librarian, for sleuthing out stories and loaning books from her extensive children's book collection.



The children in each different place will see the baby Jesus' face like theirs, but bright with heavenly grace, and filled with holy light. O lay aside each earthly thing and with thy heart as offering, come worship now the infant King. 'Tis love that's born tonight!

The Star of Bethlehem
by Edward Burne-Jones
Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery

Worship: Christmas Eve

In Falls City, we will gather at **5pm** for Lessons and Carols and a children's tableau of the Nativity. We will sing "Silent Night" by candlelight. Please join us for this community-wide service.

At Christ's Church, we have two opportunities to worship together:

- **7:30pm** for our family service: Join us for award-winning children's author Katherine Paterson's Christmas short story, "Joseph's Story," lessons, carols (some Hispanic), candlelight, and a brief "posada" event, as Christ's Church offers hospitality to the Holy Family and all who gather for refreshments following the service.
- **11:00pm** for our quiet communion service with Scripture, song, prayer, and sacrament.



Worship – GUEST COMMENTARY

This month includes a follow-up guest column by Megan Gipson. Thank you for sharing part of your spiritual life with all of us, Megan.

I'm back! Mama came to me in a dream and I would like to share. The short version being this;

I awoke in a celestial mansion. My sister by my side, I crawled as a child to the door where I became ageless. Sneaking into the lush garden embracing a clearing in front of this vast mansion sat in a circle about twenty spiritual beings. They were all radiant and emanating such peace. Teaching these beings, my mother sat in the center and handed out a word puzzle to be solved with a quote and would reveal the days lesson. They murmured to each other but none could see the answer. I peeked through the foliage and looked over one beings shoulders to see the puzzle myself. Mama was coming around to encourage the students and saw me, she smiled and I whispered the answer " God, I have come home". Mama began to glow and warmth filled me. Looking me in the eye she spoke, "you are perfection". I awoke with tears streaming down my face and my heart bursting with intense love.

Just tonight I picked up one of her journals to see if there was any writing or quotes to go beside such a dream and first page I opened to there is this quote, "no one has ever seen God". If we love, God lives in us and his love is perfected in us." Followed by, " there is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear, for fear has to do with punishment and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love."

Humm.... I can tell you my mama was good at the love thing and in this dream she exposed me to a moment that will stay with me for eternity, a moment of perfect all embracing love. As Christmas comes and we get to celebrate the beginning of Christ's life in flesh, I want to give you this gift, this moment of perfection. A birth moment. When you feel down on yourself remember God created you and he is perfection, he made no mistakes, you are perfectly you! Merry Christmas from mama and me!

– Megan



Faith in Action



A Hallelujah! to all those folks who helped write thank you cards to our local teachers and school district employees! About 200 cards were delivered today, November 30th!!!

Great work by Christ's Church in reaching out to our community.



This Season of Advent - the beginning of the church year. The four Sundays in Advent are a time of anticipation and waiting for the birth of Jesus.

- *Setting aside a time each day is a way of marking time until Christmas, and it helps provide an opportunity for reflection as well as family time.*
- *An idea - Make your own Advent Wreath, or use a single candle and light it during devotions. There are many ideas online on how to make and use an Advent wreath, along with other Advent ideas.*



Wealth and Riches!
Both of our denominations will be holding their international denominational

gatherings in Portland next summer. Jo Ann King, our lay leader, will invite you to register to be a volunteer for the United Methodist Church's quadrennial General Conference (May).

The Presbytery is looking for a contact person as they recruit volunteers for the biennial General Assembly (June). Please see Pastor Becky if you would be willing to be our information hub for General Assembly.

DENOMINATIONAL NEWS

The United Methodist Church on Gun Violence: A call on churches and members to promote safety.

Violence and, more particularly, violence to children and youth is a primary concern for United Methodists. We recognize and deplore violence which kills and injures children and youth. In the name of Christ, who came “and proclaimed peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near” (Ephesians 2:17) and challenged all his disciples to be peacemakers (Matthew 5:9), we call upon the church to affirm its faith through vigorous efforts to curb and eliminate gun violence.

Gun violence is killing children throughout the world, including the United States. In the United States alone, there are an estimated 223 million firearms. Approximately one out of every three households owns a handgun. The risk of handgun violence to children and youth is more prevalent in the United States today than in any previous generation. Communities and schools in the United States are so exposed to large numbers of privately owned guns that no mere attempts at providing slightly better security can match the awful threat of guns finding their way through our well-intentioned safety systems...

Gun violence in US schools has emerged as a growing and disturbing trend. The United Methodist Church supports ministries that address the issue of violence and crime prevention for children/youth in urban areas through the Communities of Shalom. Violence is no longer confined to the streets of urban areas but has occurred at an increasing rate in US suburban communities. Over the past several years, high-profile cases of school shootings involving suburban youth killing and injuring teachers and peers alike have once again brought the issue of guns and youth to the forefront of national attention...

For more information, check <http://umc-gbcs.org/resolutions/gun-violence-3426-2008-bor>.

For Syrian refugees, faith groups want a US welcome mat

PC(USA) joins others in urging welcome, not fear of refugees

NOVEMBER 23, 2015

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Religious groups, including the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), are pushing back against a wave of opposition toward Syrian refugees and working to preserve the U.S. as a haven for them.

“We’re really in emergency mode,” said Jen Smyers, director of policy and advocacy for the **Immigration and Refugee Program at Church World Service**, one of the nine U.S. nonprofits that work with the federal government to resettle refugees.

“We’re talking to the media nonstop. We are sending letters and petitions and making phone calls to all the governors as well as to members of Congress right now,” she said. “Every voice is needed to make sure they understand just how important the resettlement program is.”

<https://www.pcusa.org/news/2015/11/23/syrian-refugees-faith-groups-want-us-welcome-mat/>

Amid hysteria, a call for hospitality

By Bishop Roy I Sano

Nov. 23, 2015 | OAKLAND, Calif. (UMNS)

Note: Bishop Sano spent his teenage years in a Japanese internment camp. His insights on what is happening today are fascinating, relevant, and offer a path to preventing similar wrongs today.

After President Obama urged the United States to welcome some 10,000 refugees from Syria, more than 20 governors said they refused to welcome refugees in their states... If we do not curb such reckless pronouncements from public figures, frightened and angry people will become violent in the war on terrorism. I can attest personally to the costs of such fear and hatred...

<http://www.umc.org/news-and-media/amid-hysteria-a-call-for-hospitality>



Editor's Corner:

Christmas and the Advent Season can be stressful for anyone. When issues like Climate Change, Resettlement of Refugees, Systemic Racism & Gun Violence, Poverty & Hunger, not to mention Political Demagoguery surface, what are we to do? Allow me to redirect you to what Pastor Becky wrote in her ponderings on the first page of this newsletter. To wit, *"may we remember to care for each other, and ourselves, with gentleness. Under our skin and behind our masks, we are all as vulnerable of heart as the day we were born. We all want to belong, to be loved, to be looked at and truly seen, to be confident that someone will pick us up when we fall, comfort us when we mourn, and rejoice with us -- with or without reason."* What a good and balanced perspective those words hold for

each of us as we contend with the stressors of the season and current events. We must not allow fear to be used as a weapon against us but instead to love one another, as we would have others do unto us. Peace to all, and may the blessings of the season sustain and enrich us all.

—Joy

"Gentleness and kindness
touches hearts and souls."

Anthony Douglas Williams ~ Inside the Divine Pattern



Financial Corner: As of Nov 16, 2015, Christ's Church financial Income and Expenses are as follows:

Income:	\$ 98,056.38
Expenses:	\$ 91,336.23