



An Open and Affirming Congregation
PARKROSE COMMUNITY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



2022



JourneyNotes with Pastor Dianne Rodriguez

Christmas and New Year's Blessings, my good friends. Dorothy's mantra in "The Wizard of Oz" was *Lions and Tigers and Bears, Oh My*. Perhaps during Advent and this Christmas season yours has been like mine, *Omicron variant, snow and icy weather, injustice all around us, Oh My!*

For wisdom that explains our reality I share with your Spiritual leader Richard Rohr's timely diagnoses.

The myths of modernism are dying all around us. Our sophistication and complexity are self-destructing. For several hundred years we were convinced in the West that progress, human reason, and higher technology would resolve human tragedy. They clearly have not. Without denying the gifts of mind and science, we now doubt their messianic promise. More analysis does not necessarily mean more wisdom, and having more options is not necessarily freedom. The accumulation of things is not likely to bring more

happiness, and time saved is rarely used for contemplation.

I invite you to contemplate the fable I shared at the end of my Christmas Eve reflection.

Remember my good friends it is fable and story that feed our souls, not sound bites, and bullet points of information.

Joni Woelfel in her book the Light Within shares a story about her women friends who were steady lanterns of light that supported her during a dark time, a disconnected time, a time when she felt the pilot light in her soul had gone out after they had helped her find her way back to courage and strength, she wrote a celebration fable for her women friends. On the edge of a faraway mountain village in an old and creaking cottage nestled in a hollow, bordered by the forest. There lived a wise woman her age unknown. A well-worn foot path led to a small spring fed stream bellow the



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Pastor Dianne's Open Office Hours:
(Please Call for Availability)

Church Office Hours:
Monday to Friday: 9:00a.m.—2:00 p.m.

Staff

Rev. Dianne Rodriguez, *Interim Pastor*
Lucile Harden, *Moderator*
Aaron Winegar, *Office Administrator*
Erica Martin, *Community Life & Youth Director*
A.J. Wong, *Music Director*
Niki Farley, *Accompanist*
Rev. Charles W. Ross, *Pastor Emeritus*

cottage. The wise woman hummed to herself as she prepared for the party that evening. Her friends were coming to celebrate Nothing At All, their favorite celebration. The occasion came about as you might expect out of nothing at all. One simply would say to another, "time to gather?"

And sure, enough they would soon be on their way to the cottage. For this celebration the wise woman set out her fine China teacups, herbal bread rose on the iron cookstove. As night began to fall, one cold autumn evening the wise woman heard her friend's laughter echoing in the valley below. Snatching a lantern and putting on her old woolen cloak. She rushed out to greet her guests making their way up the path. As the wind spiraled around the lantern and the flame began to flicker the woman pressed the lantern ever closer to her breast. It must not be extinguished. it must remain strong and visible. From a distance the woman's friends did indeed see the light. "Look", one of them said with wonder, "Our host has a lantern in her breast! And another sagely replied, "Of course, she does don't we all? Light within never goes out.

Recently I sent out the following email to update everyone about our campus ministry and next steps with WeShine.



**Urgent Notice about Campus Ministry
at Parkrose**

In an effort to keep everyone well-informed and safe, there are several things you need to know about what is happening with the tented guests on our property. Though at one time we had agreed to allow Brian, Fish, and Russell to shelter on our campus, this is no longer the case.

This decision was reached for several reasons:

- Several violent outbursts
- Non-compliance with simple community courtesy rules
- The buildup of way too much garbage that has caused unsanitary conditions
- Many neighborhood complaints about noise and garbage and trespassing

As discussed in our congregational meeting on Dec. 12th, because of the above reasons, we have given each guest a 90-day eviction notice. Erica has given all our guest's resources for shelter so they can relocate. In addition, a No Trespassing notice was given to a separate person when we established that she was staying overnight on our property without our permission and after being informed that she wasn't to do so.

We have discontinued providing electricity because of damage done to the electrical outlets. We have also discontinued the porta-potty and the handwashing station because of damage done to them, as well as fires.

The environment sadly has become toxic with verbal outbursts, so we caution you to be safe when on the premises.

Some things you can do during the eviction process:

- Never be alone in the building or on premises
- Always have your phone on you
- Do not engage with the guests. If they engage you with a request, please tell them to contact the pastor or office
- If violent outbursts occur, please leave the property, and call 911. Then let the office know you have done so

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at 516-673-1231

Moving Forwards

We have established a working relationship with WeShine, a local organization that seeks to establish partnerships with property owners and neighborhoods, faith-based communities, local non-profits, and businesses to create supportive temporary micro-villages that can be replicated throughout the metro area. At the congregational meeting, it was voted for PCUCC to partner with WeShine so we can continue a campus ministry of safe shelter. In the coming months, we will be leasing them property where they will build and maintain a micro village.



Shortly after I sent this email, we were informed that Fish will be relocating to a shelter. He has asked for us to store some of his belongings in the back of the church. Thanks to Tub and trustees this has begun to happen. Erica has offered resources of shelter for all three guests.

Right before Christmas Lucile, Erica, Jan, and myself invited Sharon and Blair to join us for our weekly WeShine check-in. The trinity of moderators (Blair, Lucile, and Sharon) will continue to be a part of these check-ins.

Also, we have met with Bamba to update him on the campus ministry.

For Advent I continued my conversation series, in service. I have thoroughly enjoyed the dialogue I have shared with Jesse and Todd. Thank you, Blair and Clay, for filling in while I attended my mother in law's funeral in Miami.

On December 19th we enjoyed a silly ornament sway fellowship with ever so joyful Lucile- Elf and Tub-Santa. Thank you for the Charlie Brown Christmas music, Niki. And thank you Camie for the pictures! On Dec. 21st I hosted the Longest Night Labyrinth Walk Gathering. Thank you, Erica, Donna and Aaron, for helping make it happen.

I look forward to our service on January 9th which will include Rev. Robert Lee in conversation with me.

On January 29th, I will be hosting a half day spiritual retreat for Erica and our 3 moderators. I also plan on a zoom meeting with the transition team before the end of the month, to discuss next steps with our last two focus points and explore ways to engage the congregation.

This year comes to an end as the new one begins. In our wondering and wandering may we find counsel in Richard Rohr's words. *Our Western philosophy of progress has led us to trust in our own limitlessness and in our future more than in the quality and the mystery of the now. Religion at its best is always concerned with the depth and breadth, paradox and wonder of things.*

Thank you for all you do an especially for who you are!

Shalom,

Pastor Kianne



ANNUAL MEETING

Blessings everyone,

This year, Parkrose Community UCC's Annual Meeting will be held via Zoom. So, we hope you all can join us on Sunday, February 13th at 1:00pm for the Zoom Call.

Your Zoom invite is below. We will be sending out the invite again as the date nears.

Parkrose Community United Church of Christ is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Parkrose Community United Church of Christ's Zoom Meeting

Time: Feb 13, 2022 01:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88065381917?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88065381917?pwd=MThmNWkvdVprLogFVlNiWjBOODEzdz09)
pwd=MThmNWkvdVprLogFVlNiWjBOODEzdz09

Meeting ID: 880 6538 1917

Passcode: 045237

Dial by your location

- +1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)
- +1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)
- +1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)
- +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)
- +1 646 558 8656 US (New York)
- +1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)

Meeting ID: 880 6538 1917

Passcode: 045237

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/keiMMZcCH>

January Birthdays

Vickie Lyman 01/09
 Catherine Todd 01/13
 Sadie Durant 01/13
 Linda Loeffler 01/19
 Rhonda Rowan-Robertson 01/22
 Maurey Cline 01/22
 Owen Rubsam 01/23

February Birthdays

Tanner Martin 02/02
 Ryan Van Benthuyzen 02/03
 Antoinette Bessette 02/07
 Heather Martinez 02/16
 Al Darrach 02/20



KEEP CONNECTED:

Don't forget to call your church friends, especially those who do not receive these electronic messages. This is one simple way we can stay connected during this time.

PARKROSE COMMUNITY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
 God is still speaking.
2021

Name _____ Email _____
 Address _____ Phone _____
 I/We pledge to live by the Congregational Covenant and make a financial commitment to the life and programs of Parkrose Community United Church of Christ in 2022.
 \$ _____ per _____ (week, month, etc.) Yes—I'll volunteer (see other side)
 Signature _____ Date _____

Don't forget to turn in your Pledge Cards!

ANNUAL REPORTS DUE!

Ministry Team Leads, it's time to turn in your annual reports! This year, reports are due Monday, January 24th! While there's still plenty of time, the deadline will sneak up on you fast if you're not careful!

Conference Dues!

As ever, the church will take up a collection for Conference Dues for the Annual Meeting. This year's dues will be **\$15**.

courageous
CHURCH

REIMAGINING OUR COMMON GROUND
 FOR THE COLLECTIVE GOOD

You are invited to attend a weekly study group every Tuesday at 1 p.m. in the Mariners Room to hear a diverse group of church leaders discuss Courageous Church.

Please join us.

REPORT FROM THE MODERATOR

BY LUCILE HARDEN



Jan-Feb 2022

Dear Friends,

First of all, Happy New Year to All. As we begin a new year, may we all look forward to a happy

and healthy new year. The snow may not have been convenient, but it has been a beautiful diversion to slow us down a bit.

I look forward to working with Blair Loudat and Sharon Ericson as we serve as your tri-moderators for 2022. I also look forward to serving with Pastor Dianne and all of our officers and ministry teams. Thanks to all who attended our Congregational Meeting in December to elect officers, pass the 2022 budget, and approve our partnership and development of a safe shelter with WeShine.

I am excited to begin our partnership with WeShine and the building of a safe shelter program on our property. We are committed to purchasing four of the pods for the program, and we expect the construction of the program to begin in January, 2022. Erica will be the point person in working with WeShine.

We will continue our partnership with Feed the Mass and continue to distribute meals on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. We could not do this without the wonderful team of volunteers who either pick up meals or help distribute them. Our partnerships

with Darkness to Light, SoValTi, and Providence will continue as well.

To keep everyone safe, we will continue to live stream our Sunday service, and also offer to bring that to anyone not having access to internet. For the present time, everyone is welcome to attend services in person, but we do ask you to wear a mask. Air purifiers and fans have been installed in the sanctuary to maximize air circulation.

On the same subject of keeping everyone safe, we ask anyone coming into the building that they do so only when someone else is in the building. We also ask anyone who enters the building with a key, please make sure doors are secured when you enter and when you leave. We want to keep our staff, visitors, and our building safe at all times.

If anyone needs anything—a meal, shopping, or transportation, please don't hesitate to call. We have a group of volunteers ready to help. Don't forget to call a friend you haven't seen or heard from in a while, too. We are a true community, and we need to watch out for one another.

Blessings to all,
Lucile



News from the Community Life & Youth Ministry

Winter 2021

Happiest of Holiday Seasons!



We have been busy in the Community Life & Youth Ministries office!

Advent Kits, Microvillage partnerships with We Shine and Providence Behavioral Health and as well, we

enjoyed a bit of social time at our December fellowship.

Advent Care Kits

We assembled **16 Advent kits** for our Families & Friends. The kits were filled with loads of Christmas delights. Care kits have shown to be a terrific way to stay connected and to keep “crafty” and busy during at home times. Featured here is Sharon Mackie’s grandson, Mikey, with his clever Snowperson. Nice Job!



We Shine & Community Life

Along with church leaders Jan from **We Shine** & board, we continue to move along in constructing the pods and Microvillage. We continue to navigate this project with Providence Behavioral as a service partner. Providence has assisted us with many requests and

service referrals. We look forward to the next phase- construction of the pods! For even more information, please also read Janet’s article that was submitted for this edition of the **CRIER**.



Interested in building the pods?

Attend the informational session via **ZOOM, Tuesday, January 4th from 7-8pm**. Please contact Erica Martin to get the ZOOM invite.

YOUTH

Caring for Creation- Turtle Surveys!

Spring turtle monitoring is just around the corner. This past spring and summer, the youth participated in monitoring surveys for Western Painted Turtles (*Chrysemys picta*) and Western Pond Turtles (*Actinemys marmorata*).



While our turtle friends are hibernating, we can still help them! Come help build basking platforms!

SAVE THE DATE -Saturday, January 22nd from 10am-2pm CE Room at PCUCC!

Please RSVP with Erica

American Red Cross Blood Drive at Parkrose UCC!

Save the Date!

When? Monday, March 14th, 2022

Location? Parkrose Community UCC-
Eastminster Hall

Time? 12:30 pm- 5:30 pm

Appointment only

Sign up online: <https://www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/driveresults?zipSponsor=ParkroseCUCC>

As we enter the winter season -which happens to be cold & flu season as well- we will continue to practice safe distances and mask wearing in person to observe continued Covid responsibility. If you have any questions about our Sunday School & Youth programs, please feel free to contact me.

May 2021 end gently for us all,

~Erica

WeShine is Ready to Go... at a new site and with a new pod design.

WeShine Initiative (Welcoming, Empowering, Safe Habitat Initiative, with Neighborhood Engagement) has been moving forward with site development. Although we were working with the owner and developer of the former Gordon's Fireplace property for a micro-village site, it turned out that the short lease length (9 months) they were able to offer was inadequate for WeShine purposes. We are thankful for their initial support—it helped us make huge strides in our planning and readiness to proceed.

In the meantime, we have received unanimous support from the Parkrose Community United Church of Christ's Council to develop a village in partnership with the church and the Providence Health System. Since our aim is to shelter the most vulnerable of Portland's unhoused population, we are collaborating with the congregation to decide which group we will serve at this micro-village.

Although we were drawn to the artistry and coziness of the Conestoga hut, originated in Eugene, we ultimately decided to use our own design for our sleeping pods. The WeShine volunteer building team felt that the Conestoga huts would be complicated for volunteers to build, were not very portable, and were incompatible with city requirements for power and heat in each sleeping pod. Our volunteer architect and two experienced builders put together a prototype panelized pod design and are finalizing the instruction manual to guide our volunteer building helpers. Our engineering volunteers are working on the site plan to connect to existing power, water and sewer at the church site. Need we say -- we are in awe of the skills, commitment and hearts of our amazing professionals who have chosen to volunteer with us!

We have proposed a budget to support the development and operation of 3 villages, including the one at the Parkrose Community church site, during the 2022 calendar year to the Joint Office of Homeless Services (JOHS). We expect to receive their answer very soon. We are in search of a warehouse where our building helpers can assemble the panels for each pod. The panels will then be taken to the village site where they can put together by another group of volunteers armed with power drills and good screws! As soon as we get funding, we are ready to go! <https://www.weshinepdx.org>

Jan-Mar 2022 Free Community Support Schedule



Education

Structured discussion groups that focus on specific topics for 6 weeks (1/24/22-3/4/22).
Online using Zoom.

- **Breathe, Move, Write**
Tuesdays 2:00-4:00pm
- **Grief & Complicated Circumstances**
Tuesdays 5:30-7:30pm
- **Living with Grief**
Thursdays 2:00-3:30pm

Social Hour

Online Zoom groups where participants determine the topic each week.

- **Living with Grief**
Mondays 12:00-1:00pm
- **Caregivers Together**
Tuesdays 10:30-11:30am
- **Grief & Complicated Circumstances**
Thursdays 11:30-12:30pm

Mornings at Meinig

Meets in-person at a park in Sandy
weather permitting
Registration required for details
Group is limited to 10 individuals

Facebook Groups

You can connect with others in similar situations when you have time using the two private Facebook groups:
Caregivers Together
and
Living with Grief

*For more information about
accessing support, contact
Bereavement Coordinator*

Laura Lirette
M.Ed, MSW, CSWA
llirette@mthoodhospice.org
503-668-5545

All groups are free

No connection to
hospice required

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TESTIMONIES, NOT TESTS OF THE FAITH

The United Church of Christ embraces a theological heritage that affirms the Bible as the authoritative witness to the Word of God, the creeds of the ecumenical councils, and the confessions of the Reformation. The UCC has roots in the "covenantal" tradition—meaning there is no centralized authority or hierarchy that can impose any doctrine or form of worship on its members. Christ alone is Head of the church. We seek a balance between freedom of conscience and accountability to the apostolic faith. The UCC therefore receives the historic creeds and confessions of our ancestors as testimonies, but not tests of the faith.

OPEN AND AFFIRMING



In Galatians 3.28 we are reminded that despite our differences we are all "one in Christ Jesus." Therefore, we, the people of Parkrose Community United Church of Christ, declare ourselves to be open and affirming. With God's grace, we seek to be a congregation that includes all persons, embracing differences of sexual orientation, gender, marital status, age, mental and physical ability, as well as racial, ethnic, religious, political or social-economic background. We welcome all to share in the life and leadership, ministry, and fellowship, worship, sacraments, responsibilities and blessings of participation in our congregation. This is God's church and no matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.