

THE CRIER
SEP-NOV
An Open and Affirming Congregation
PARKROSE COMMUNITY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
2026

Agenda of Belonging with Pastor Giuseppe Amato

Hello friends,



September 1st was my three-year anniversary. Special dates like this always put me in a reflective mood. Today, I am reflecting on one very important thing that I am so proud of our congregation for fostering: community. Particularly, our small groups.

Our mission statement reads that: "We are committed to loving God, loving one another, and loving our neighbor as ourselves." In my perspective, love requires opportunity for intentional connection. Two-and-a-half years ago or so ago, we created two weekly Connect Groups seeking to foster connection between participants, God, scripture, and even within ourselves. We got to know one another, and to share celebration and hardship together. We considered tough questions that many of us were brought up to see as taboo. Now, we're wrestling with the problematic bits and life-giving nuggets of the Hebrew Bible.

One day, Todd Peterson suggested that we have a monthly potluck where we'd just chit chat and dine together instead of having an official discussion. I am a huge fan of potlucks. What's not to love about good food, right? The real reason I love these has nothing to do with food, though. Rather, it's because of the way we often naturally drop our guards, share a bit of who we are, and simply enjoy each other's company. Now, these have become a staple with their own cast of regulars.

Eventually, Sharon Ericson started the Sojourners Book Group. This was not the first time that she had tried to bring folks from the church together to read and discuss a book, but unlike previous efforts, folks showed up for this one. Forming community can be hard. Every attempt at it carries the risk of ambivalence or rejection. Sharon took

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UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Pastor Giuseppe's Office Hours:
Office -- Mon, Wed & Thurs: 10:a.m.—3:00 p.m.
Home -- Tuesday: 10:a.m.—3:00 p.m.
(Please Call Ahead)

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

Staff
Rev. Giuseppe Amato, *Pastor*
Clay Osburn, *Moderator*
Aaron Winegar, *Office Administrator*
Erica Martin, *Community Life & Youth Director*
Niki Farley, *Music Director*

that risk, tried again, and now we have a group of voracious readers who connect with one another.

Sharon does not know this, but she inspired me to create the monthly Comic Connection group. I love comics, and have found that some of our congregants, villagers, and neighbors do as well. After one particularly enjoyable discussion with some of the villagers about nerd culture, I realized that we had learned more about them through this seemingly inconsequential conversation than the more serious ones that usually come up. I think this is one of the keys to building connections: taking a genuine interest in what others are interested in.

Speaking of shared interests, a few months ago Nic Cole started the bi-weekly Craft and Chat group. Like Sharon, Nic took a risk, and, likewise, their efforts were rewarded with regular participants. As Nic often says, there is no level of expertise required—folks can come with a coloring book and crayons if they want. It is simply an opportunity to make something while sharing good company.

This Summer, Greg Malby also started a monthly Parkinsons support group. Greg realized that this disease has affected a significant number of us. To his credit, he sought to share something that has made living with Parkinsons much more bearable for him: companionship.

Each of these groups are so different from one another, and yet, they all foster greater inclusivity and life-giving relationships. While most of us are Christians, others are Bahai, Jewish, Pagan, Jewish, Agnostic, and Atheist. Some of us are securely housed, others are not. The list goes on and on. We

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are so very blessed to be able to share our lives together!

Three years ago, we were still dealing with the fallout of COVID, a lengthy interim, and losing a beloved pastor. Parkrose was both hungry for and anxious about community-building. And yet, here we are. We've been faithful to the mission God has called us towards, took risks, and have grown in community. While (importantly) every ministry within our church fosters community in some way, our Connect Groups are the most on-the-nose way of doing this. Thank you all for supporting, participating, and starting these groups. Let's see where love leads us next!

With prayerful appreciation,

Pastor Giuseppe

Calendar of Events

Here are some dates to look forward to in the coming months:

September 13 - Welcome Back Potluck

September 20 - Blessing of the Animals

October 10 - Crafter's Bazaar on Sat.

October 25 - Costume Fundraiser

November 22 - Harvest Home Potluck



Everyone is invited to our traditional Welcome Back/End of Summer Potluck on Sunday, Sept 13, after church. Please bring your favorite dish to share whether it is a salad, casserole, dessert, rolls, main dish, vegetables or fruit. It would be helpful if you could write out a list of the ingredients in your dish. If you have any questions, please contact Donna at barkerd860@icloud.com



You are invited to bring your well-behaved pet or a photo of your pet on Sunday, September 20th, for the Blessing of the Animals. If you won't be in church on September 20th, you're welcome to bring a photo of your pet beforehand and Pastor Giuseppe will bless it during the service. If children would like to bring stuffies, we would be happy to bless them! We will also be taking donations of pet food to give to WeShine or Snow Cap.

Report from the Moderator

by Clay Osburn

Hello Friends,

Parkrose Community is recovering from the COVID epidemic. There is hope in the word recovering here, Parkrose is and has been on the mend since its closure during the pandemic. There's been a noticeable difference in 2026. More folks are checking out our community and not just for worship, Wellness Wednesday's is growing, serving 60 plus people at the weekly event.

Recently we've had a welcoming to the newly reopened WeShine Village that was well attended. The International Coalition for Human Rights Philippines scheduled a screening, showing film's portraying the violence upon the peoples of Gaza and the Philippines. Thirty were in attendance for that event.

On a sad note, one of our partners (SoValTi) lost funding for their humanitarian work. That group spent a better part of a decade at Parkrose and will be missed. Tim Logan the director of SoValTi still keeps a space in the building to continue to be a presence on the property.

Parkrose just agreed to make space for the Sudanese Community Associations of Oregon and Southwest Washington. We are excited to have this group join the community and look forward to a long relationship and he diversity these wonderful people from Sudan bring to Parkrose.

A reminder that the very popular Crafter's Bazaar is the second Saturday in October this year. Save the date and look for more information to come via the Weekly Update. We expect pleasant fall weather and plenty of vendors to celebrate this event. Yes, the baby goats will be returning so bring the kids or grandkids.

One more thing on the business side, Parkrose has some Officer positions to fill this coming year. Financial Secretary, Treasurer and the Moderator positions term limits are up. If you are interested in finding out more about these positions or would like to commit to becoming an Officer at Parkrose Community you can contact me at clayosburn@hotmail.com or text me at (503) 705-3577.

Thank you for your support of our loving community.

Blessings to all.

Clay



You Are Invited To **Parkrose Community UCC's** Annual

Crafter's Bazaar & Fall Fest

Join us for a FAMILY FUN EVENT community celebration filled with local artisans, music, community partners & petting zoo!

Vendors -Raffles- Baby goats

OCTOBER

SATURDAY **10** 10:00AM-2:00

12505 NE HALSEY ST.
PORTLAND OREGON
97220

The Call for Vendors has begun!
Sign up here or use the QR code to the right!
Click on Crafter's Bazaar

SCAN ME

East County Youth Collective
FALL GATHERINGS

October 2026

Youth Leader Gathering | Friday, October 9 | 12-2pm | East County Library
Zine Making | Sunday, October 11 | 3-5pm | East County Library
Trunk or Treat | Saturday October 31 | 2-4pm | Gethsamane Lutheran Church

November 2026

Game Night | Sunday, November 8 4-7pm | Covenant Presbyterian Church
Gratitude Gathering | Sunday, November 22 4-7 | Trinity Lutheran Church

December 2026

Carols and Cake | Sunday, December 13 3-5pm | Trinity Lutheran Church
Winter Break Tubing at Mt. Hood | Date TBD

Questions?

Contact Cris Saldivar
cristina@togetherlab.org

News from the Community Life & Youth Ministry

by Erica Martin



A note about my mom, Barbara:

Thank you to those who have reached out in regard to the passing of my mother, **Barbara Jean Simpson**. To many at Parkrose Community UCC, she was an amazing friend, coffee hour hostess, "Lady of the Night" Hostess & participant, Lector reader, Terrific Christian education director, Youth Leader, Sunday school Teacher and most excellent Church Lay Leader.

She was instrumental in the life of this church and the leadership that facilitated the decision to become open and affirming, sell the church Building at 105th ave and help PCUCC look towards the future. Her leadership is still felt here today. She will be tremendously missed by so many.

We celebrated her life on 8/22. If you weren't able to attend her service, and would like a program from that day, please get in touch with me. I can send you one. As well as the YouTube link to her recorded Service.

(Mom, pictured here with me and Pastor Dianne.)

Wellness Wednesdays!

Attendance remains strong, often averaging between 40 +folks, as many as 66 lunches and 18-20 showers. We still need donations of men's clothing, outdoor wear, and hygiene items like toothpaste, soaps, and shampoos. See the list below!

Special thanks to our stellar volunteers Cecilia, Sheryl, Jacob and Tanya for their help scooping pet food, sorting donations and cleaning up after folks on Wednesdays. Their support makes these Wednesday events FLOW EASIER. Thank you

We anticipate partners to join us on Wednesdays- **Care Oregon** to assist with Oregon Health Plan enrollment. **Animal Aid** will also be back to distribute pet supplies and food to our community in the near future. We recently hosted **Access Wireless** and **Sumner Nursing College** for FREE Health Screenings

In addition, they are seeking a more grassroots fundraising effort-such "hiring a team" for brush clearing, painting, light



construction. If interested, Click the link on their website. **https://www.cultivateinitiatives.org/** scroll down to **Hire a Crew** or **Donate!**

Donations Needed for our Community Ministry:

<u>These items are always in high demand</u>-

- "Gently used" men's & women's clothing & shoes- all sizes needed (Pro tip: Think to yourself "what would I wear camping? A flannel shirt or a silky nightie? Please bring the flannel. Thank you in advance)
- Pet food- especially Dog Food (Dry and Canned)
- Hairbrushes & combs • Toothpaste & personal care items
- Fleece Blankets
- Bottled Water & Granola Bars
- Pull Tab Cans Soup, Stews, Tuna & dried goods.

** Cash Donations are always appreciated for Wellness Wednesdays for Coffee, 5lb or 10lb bags of Sugar & Half & Half. A volunteer found a $5 dollar bill on their way to church and donated it to the coffee fund! We stretch that donation dollar as far as we can!

Sunday Mornings & Sunday School Class:

Summer News!

We are excited to return to our former classroom space!

To bless the space, we had the kids write their names on the walls, as the walls will eventually have a mural painted on them. *(I mean when do they get to do that at home?)*

Lea procured a tiny refrigerator, where we can keep juice and snacks. We hope to have the Mural and "renovations" completed by the end of September. There are a few updates that are needed.

We hope to add books to our Faithful Families Library as well as honor my mom's love of All kinds of books, with the "Barbara Simpson Memorial Library for Progressive Theology".

It's getting pretty cozy in there!



Classroom Pets!!!

We now have semi-permanent classroom pets. We acquired 2 Hermann Tortoises; Both tortoises were rescued from nearby Fairview Creek headwaters, several years ago. Someone released them into the wetland environment. *They are land tortoises, not aquatic turtles.*

My City Nature colleague, Laura, found them and asked if we wanted to adopt them. I of course said Yes! They live part time with me in my Yurt and part time at church.

Both females and are used to the children picking them up and handling them.

Stop by and meet them sometime in Classroom 4 after worship one Sunday.

East County Youth Collective Plans on the horizon!



I continually meet with Cris our East Co. Youth Collective Organizer and we are cooking up some exciting things for the coming fall goodness.

We are looking forward to working with the Youth event design team and programming for fall open houses at our anchor congregations. Please see the Flyer attached.



Want Updates? Let us know if you are interested.

Email me cedirector@parkroseucc.org

Cris Saldivar: cristina@togetherlab.org

Save the Date For Our Annual Crafter's Bazaar

Saturday, October 10th, 2026, from 10-2 pm.

(Please note: this date was modified)

*Vendor applications are open! Register online at parkorseucc.org, Scan the QR code on the insert - click on Crafter's Bazaar!

**Seeking Raffle Donations-Get in touch with Erica if you would like to sponsor a basket.

Want to serve on this amazing, rad & fun planning committee? Get in touch with Clay or Erica. **Let's put the FUN into fundraising**.

Go where wonder grows, my lovely friends and stay connected.

Respectfully Submitted,

Erica Martin



September 20th, 2026
11am -12:30pm

Parkrose Community UCC
12505 NE Halsey St,
Portland, OR 97230

Questions?
cristina@togetherlab.org

NOTICED, NAMED, KNOWN AND VALUED

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE TO HELP A YOUNG PERSON FEEL BELONGING?

Come learn simple, practical ways to be a trusted adult, create belonging, and join the Youth Solidarity Movement (YSM) a movement of people showing up for young people and one another.

TOGETHER LAB

Parkrose Community United Church of Christ
P.O. Box 30063
Portland, OR 97294

Stamp

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.