



Given a choice between life and death,
choose life. Given a choice between right
and wrong, choose what's right. And given
a choice between a terrible truth and a
beautiful lie, choose the truth every time.

Mira Grant

quote fancy



An Open and Affirming Congregation

PARKROSE COMMUNITY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



2022



JourneyNotes with Pastor Dianne Rodriguez

As I write this article, Easter Sunday is behind us, and Earth Month is in full bloom. I want to share with you the following poem by Karen Tirabassi, because I believe she captures the essence of living life to its fullest - every day.



The interplay between Resurrection Sunday and Earth Day is most powerful.

Easter memories for Earth Day

It's Earth Day. I should write about environmental responsibility, but Easter hasn't let go of me, as it should for the next three-hundred-fifty-two days. I am remembering the introit duet, sung tenderly to each other – alto angel, soprano Mary, one wearing a mask and one not wearing one. And the lay reader crying her way

through the gospel,
of Mary's grief and wandering
through graves and growing things,
(perhaps some loss of her own)
“Where have you put him.
I want to hold him one more time.”
Later, our small children
at the casual Easter picnic lunch,
are so focused on the red and white kite
flown by the one teenager,
that they run after its shadow,
They don't notice us
hiding plastic eggs
in the rough bark forks of branches,
mulch clumps, budding crocus,
new wild grasses,
just for the joy of their finding.
One who can be found but not held,
sung across all divides,
wept in kaleidoscope eyes,
tangled in all our winds and trees,
and then fly free,
is always mistaken for a gardener
not only on one particular day.

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Sharon Ericson, Lucile Harden, Blair Loudat,
Moderator

Aaron Winegar, *Office Administrator*
Erica Martin, *Community Life & Youth Director*
Niki Farley, *Accompanist*
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Her words powerfully remind me of some advice my spiritual director gave me while I was in training - when I found myself having to make a difficult decision. While trying to discern making a good choice, Helen simply quoted Deuteronomy 30:19: *I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live.*

I wondered on that day, while I was facing a very complicated challenge: is it that simple to choose life? Today I wonder: can we live in a way that every day is Resurrection Sunday and Earth Day? Maybe, maybe not, but the words choosing life have been a guiding principle in my discernment process as an individual, and in pastoring a community.

In our Courageous Church gatherings, we're exploring Dawna Markova's book, *I will not die an unlived life: Reclaiming Passion and Purpose*. Along with this book, I'm currently working with our tri-moderators in presenting a covenant to the congregation. The covenant will offer guiding principles in how to live as a community. The guiding critical choices come from Paul Nixon's book: *I Refuse to Lead a Dying Church*. He ends the book with the invitation: *"When the choices are difficult, sometimes we opt not to choose, but to remain in perpetual indecision. I want to invite you to make a choice: choosing life over death, choosing community over isolation, choosing fun over drudgery, choosing bold over mild, choosing frontier over fortress, choosing now rather than later."*

Reflecting on Holy Week and Easter Service

I believe, beginning with Palm/Passion Sunday Service, that we experienced life, community, fun and boldness in our worship together.

The Close Encounter play offered us the opportunity to imagine Jesus' entering Jerusalem through the perspective of the woman at the well, Nicodemus, the blind man, Martha, Mary, and Lazarus. Thank you to Parkrose's thespians for making your characters come alive!

My artist friend Carolyn captured the paradox of the palm/passion theme in her pastel drawing: *Even the Stones Cry Out*. Carolyn gifted her artwork to Parkrose. Once it's framed, it will be hung in the sanctuary.

For Holy Thursday we shared a liturgy remembering the significance of water, bread, and silver in the life of Jesus' ministry. We ate together and shared and in-depth conversation over a one act play, *Paper, Rock, Schism*.

On Good Friday we walked the labyrinth and the Stations of the Cross.

Easter Sunday began with a delightful Easter Breakfast, hosted by the youth. The breakfast was followed by "embracing new life" as community in service while we received a new covenanted member, Ann, to our Parkrose congregation. Ann and I had worked together during April in how she and Parkrose would live in covenant statement.

After service we blessed the mural created by our youth, and unveiled the salmon run created by many folks in our community. And most importantly, turtles joined in to remind us of longevity, perseverance, steadfastness, protection, retreat, healing, tranquility, the Earth, and transformation.

All of us on our campus are boldly shouting in so many ways that our community **chooses life!**

Transition Team Update

The transition team and I will be meeting in May to discuss our last focus point, "future." In June we will offer two gatherings to engage the congregation. Once our dates are set you will find them in the updates, and invitations sent out via email.

Service Update

Beginning with our April 24th service, the reflection questions that guide our conversation in service will be included in the bulletin, and presented in the service as a power point. I'm encouraging everyone to engage in the conversation, whether you are livestreaming or in the sanctuary, by commenting during the conversation on our Facebook page. It is my hope that during the conversation some of those comments can be shared and further discussed. So please be bold and remember there is no right or wrong answers. Your thoughts matter!

Many blessings! Thank you for all you do and who you are - Easter People.

Shalom,

Pastor Kianue



UCC Northwest Regional Women's Retreat XIII

November 4,5,6 2022



The UCC Northwest Regional Women's Retreat welcomes women to Salishan Resort on the Oregon coast for our regional retreat Nov 4,5,6 2022. Explore the website at www.nrwr.org for information on speakers, workshops, the venue and registration. Registration forms are available in the Entry Hall.

REPORT FROM THE MODERATORS

BY THE MODERATORS

May-Jun 2022

FACING FORWARD



The church needs to change – not just our church but all church.

After nearly 3 years of pandemic, it is clear that things will not go back to “normal”. In our church there are several connected explorations: Reckoning with Racism through Common Table at Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon; Courageous Church which explored new ideas with national thinkers and leaders of churches from a broad perspective; and the work of the Transition Team.

Things we’ve learned:

We aren’t going back.

Younger folk aren’t interested or have time for our old ways of being church. And they are interested in spiritual connection and social justice.

The way we conduct the business of the church must change – we can’t depend on retired folks who are aging to do all the work that needs to be done. And not everyone who may be interested in leadership lives in the neighborhood and can drop everything to attend to things at church.

We need to think about our community broadly – not just who comes here but who is out there? Whose voices need to be amplified? Who are the vulnerable in our community? How are we in community with folks, and not only by the charity we supply.

We also need to home in on who might be a “fitting” partner in ministry with us as

we call a new pastor at some point in the future. What legacy are we leaving? Will we spend all our assets doing things the old way?

The transition work has lifted up some key things about our history and “DNA”. We have “always” ministered with the community in addressing houselessness and food insecurity. We are willing to try new things and to back away if that doesn’t seem to work. We are open to partnering with organizations that focus on the things we do. We are open to change.

With all these questions in mind, several things will be going on. The Council will be reading the book “I Refuse to Lead a Dying Church” over the next months – one chapter at a time. Paul Nixon is the author; feel free to get a copy and read along.

The three Moderators will be reading “Changing the Conversation, a Third Way for Congregations.” by Anthony Robinson.

We are working on covenant and stewardship – do they connect? How do they connect to me? You?

Many more questions than answers. We hope you’ll join us in the conversation. And engage in community as we face forward.

WE ARE THE CHURCH!

The Moderators



May Birthdays

Pat Eck	05/01
Susanne "Sue" Rubsam	05/04
Niki Farley	05/05
Erica Martin	05/13
Nicole Pruitt	05/16
Delia Rowan-Robertson	05/26
Lee Berry	05/28
Lucile Harden	05/30

June Birthdays

Betty Gray	06/03
Greg Malby	06/07
Clay Osburn	06/09
Jerome "Tub" Harden	06/13
Cyndi McKee	06/16
Secilly Martinez	06/17
Blair Osburn	06/20
James Mackie	06/22
Sharon Ericson	06/23
April Avery	06/25
Rechie Mangalindan	06/25
Paula Everist	06/25



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.

FINANCE TEAM REPORT

1/2022	
PLEDGES	\$4,575
OTHER INCOME	\$4,437
TOTAL INCOME	\$9,012
EXPENSES	\$26,752
2/2022	
PLEDGES	\$7,350
OTHER INCOME	\$3,439
TOTAL INCOME	\$10,789
EXPENSES	\$20,210
3/2022	
PLEDGES	\$19,040
OTHER INCOME	\$2,677
TOTAL INCOME	\$21,717
EXPENSES	\$21,135
1ST QUARTER	
PLEDGES TOTAL	\$30,965
OTHER INCOME	\$10,553
TOTAL INCOME	\$41,518
EXPENSES	\$68,097

courageous
CHURCH

REIMAGINING OUR COMMON GROUND
FOR THE COLLECTIVE GOOD

Please join us each Tuesday at 1pm in Mariners where we will explore, reflect upon, and discuss the questions and content of each chapter of Dawna Markova's book *I Will Not Die an Unlived Life: Reclaiming Purpose and Passion*. This activity promises much to think about.

News from the Community Life & Youth Ministry

Spring has revealed to us the many gifts it offers!

Greening up your Lenten Practice!

Thank you for those who participated in the jar collection and refill day here at Parkrose UCC.

On the Tuesday of Holy Week, Mandy set up her refill station many jars were refilled with dish soap, shampoo & conditioner, cleaner and barkeepers' friend. We hope to have Simple Sundries come back for more community refill days. We are negotiating to have her refill products available for the soon to come We Shine Village!



Want to learn more about our partner Simple Sundries? simplesundries.life

Festive Spring & Easter Card Making with Doug!

This was a fun time for many! **Thank you, Doug** for bringing all the special, sparkly craft supplies for cardmaking! We hope to have another card making event soon!



"Uncharted" Youth & Families Private Viewing Party!

We had the entire theater to OURSELVES! We enjoyed each other's company and ate a ton of popcorn

together! We look forward to other fun outings like this!



Easter Sunday: A lovely Sunday!

What a most wonderful day filled with goodness!

We had a wonderful Easter Sunday. We got to see our friends and experience a meaningful Sunday worship. While it was different from years past, the day had a feeling of nostalgia but with a message for today.

We dedicated the Youth Mural, courtyard planting and community salmon art installation. The theme is Resilience. In times of pandemic and civil unrest, the youth mural illustrates messages of hope and change for the good.

With concerns of climate change, the courtyard planting, "pocket prairies" and native plantings offers refugia for biodiversity and honors the role that prairies play in the Willamette Valley's regional history.



The salmon art installation represents an understanding of our connectivity to our care for creation, uniqueness and creativity in community. Each salmon sends a

message created by the painter of beauty and **RESILIENCE**.

As per Harvard Business Review's article on "What is resilience and why it matters", *Resilience was defined by most as the ability to recover from setbacks, adapt well to change, and keep going in the face of adversity.* It is what I think of Parkrose UCC, the ministries, community partnerships and her people. Life IS happening here.



Thank you to the many that supported these projects. I especially would like to lift up the Youth and their creative process and coming up with their own unique messages and designs. Each of you inspire me.

Thank you to the many who helped with the organization of the **Youth Easter Breakfast** a fundraising success! We raised over \$1100.00. This will help the Youth get to California for their participation in Sierra Service Project

In case you weren't overloaded with cuteness on Easter, during Sunday school a wedding was conducted by a few of our young people and our "petting zoo" tortoises.



I think we need to consider a classroom

pet as it can be a wonderful Ice breaker for new kiddos.

😊 Stay Tuned!

WeShine Update!

Progress is being made with WeShine! WeShine's board has been hard at work making things happen behind the scenes!

Here are a few updates as this alternative safe shelter project moves forward:

1.) They have launched a GofundMe campaign! gofundme.com/f/helping-our-unsheltered-neighbors-a-pod-at-a-time

Grants are continually being written and awarded. I recently submitted a grant application to East Portland

Action Plan's Community Support Fund to help with hygiene and shower access for the villagers.

2.) Pod panels have been built. Next steps: Building permits are being submitted and creating a schedule of the work onsite before the pods arrive. Anticipated timeline has been pushed out some.

3.) If you want to sign up to join building parties or find other ways to get involved, please visit weshinepdx.org and fill out the "Join Us" form. You can also contact Erica Martin if you would like to participate in Constructing the Pods onsite when the time comes!

4.) We will keep you informed with the next steps, which will include all the details of setting up the pods onsite at Parkrose UCC!

Share joy always, my friends.

Erica

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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.