



All Peoples
United Church of Christ
SOJOURNER NEWS

A Central Oregon House Church

April, 2016

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REFLECTIONS ON A PILGRIMAGE TO THE NEAR EAST

Last month, a group of Disciples of Christ and UCC leaders travelled to the Holy Land and nearby countries in search of a deeper understanding of the work that our Global Ministries organization supports..

The Rev. Dr. Sharon Watkins, General Minister and President, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) tells of a Lenten experience in Old Jerusalem. As the delegation hurried to their next appointment they had to pause for an American Christian group walking the Via Dolorosa behind their leader who was burdened with a cross. As Watkins slipped around the outstretched cross-beam, she was struck by the symbolism that she was “stepping around the cross.”

Jesus, declared that “the nations’ will be

judged on how they treat the hungry, thirsty, stranger, naked, sick and imprisoned - judged as if each of those needy persons were Jesus himself.” (Matthew 25:31-46) As the team visited Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan and the West Bank, they saw many who fit the categories listed by Jesus.

- Tens of thousands of Palestinians from 1948 still crammed into refugee “camps” — generational refugees left by the stalled peace process in a stateless no-man’s-land;
- Millions of Syrians, both internally displaced and refugees, now eking out a bare living in strange places;
- People all across the region fearing for their lives from extremist threats or from being caught at the nexus of powerful international forces beyond their control.

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Watkins notes: “The tempter whispers: it’s hopeless.”

Yet, the delegation came away with renewed hope as they visited site after site where people of faith continue to work for good.

- In Beirut, trainers teach Syrians peace-building and decision-making across religious lines - for a post-war Syria they know will come one day.
- They visited a cultural oasis in the midst of the occupation where art, joy and life

blossom very close to military check points.

- NGO’s brighten the desert with toys for children, dignity packets for women, supplies for refugees living in tents on the Jordanian side of the Syrian border.

Watkins closes by marveling “that Global Ministry partners in the Middle East teach us the reality of hope... and staying on the journey even when that way includes a cross. I’m humbled by their faithful witness.” ▲

WE DO JUSTICE; COME JOIN US

In the United Church of Christ, we do justice. We started in the 60’s with the Civil Rights movement. We’ve been advocating for gay rights since the 70’s. We took on environmental racism in the 80’s. And in 2005, we were the first church in America to endorse marriage equality. Sadly, the remnants of each of these issues are still with us in varying degrees. We are called to continue bringing attention to these issues wherever they appear on the scene.

“What does God require of you but to do justice and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God?”—Micah 6:8

The lead-poisoning crisis in Flint, Michigan’s water, calls attention to the fact that environmental racism is still with us; with it come a great sadness and righteous indignation. Even as major attention and action come to bear on addressing the pain that lead poisoning is causing in Flint, ripples of impact continue to spread.

Young people and people of color across the nation are asking, “What about **our** water?” “Are there other contaminants in our water?”

For answers to these questions and suggestions, please read the accompanying story titled, “Ethical Water Management.” ▲

MODERATOR'S MUSINGS

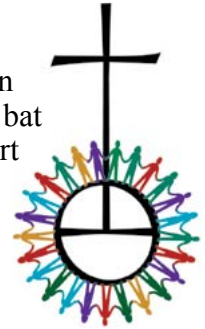
I just finished reading a book that went very well with my sermon of 20 March on eulogies versus résumés. The title is *A Man Called Ove*. It's a novel by a Swedish author, Fredrik Backman. Each of you will probably have a friend or family member like Ove. Ove doesn't talk much, he does instead.

Ove complains a lot, and even kicked the cat at the beginning of the story, but it turns out that Ove has a heart of gold. He can't turn down any request for help whether from a new neighbor, an old friend, a stranger at the train station, down-and-out teenaged boys, or a nearly hairless cat. Ove lobbies the government authorities over any number

of injustices, teaches his Indian neighbor to drive, and goes to bat with the teen's father in support of a "bent" youth.

In the end, Ove's eulogy is stellar. If you are not sure about the difference between the résumé and the eulogy, watch David Brooks TED talk at https://www.ted.com/talks/david_brooks_should_you_live_for_your_resume_or_your_eulogy?language=en. Peace to all of you as you all show Jesus' love and caring for those around you.

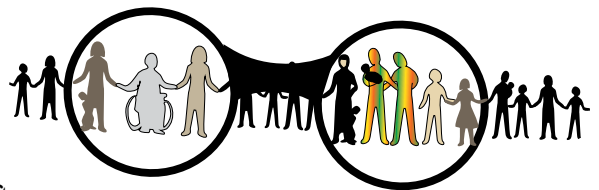
Shalom,
Moderator Nancy Cook



WHISTLING VIVALDI—A COMMUNITY CONVERSATION ON STEREOTYPES—

by Gloria Olson, 3/15/16

Imagine finding a huge box stuffed full of yarn. Reaching to the bottom, you search for the appropriate color, texture and amount to use for a significant winter time activity. After retrieving just the right skein, you search for the end and pull, and pull and pull some



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more... hoping to find the place to begin so you can “create something of value.” That happened last winter when our church group said “yes, we will” to a call by the community of faith of this geographic region. We said, “Yes, we will” to a request to lead discussions while reading a book about stereotypes.

I knew little about this book when I said “I will help make this happen.” With that decision once more I learned a huge lesson about participation. If asked others will help!!! Yes, Kurt Lakin and Kathi Bumblis, offered to help facilitate this 6 week series of conversations; Pris Hardin put her talent to work designing a promotional flyer for the series and we made plans for the “untangling project.” Everyone seemed ready to help by inviting people to attend. (I have learned people come together through personal invitation)

In January we began pulling that yarn out of the box and searched for the right spot to begin discussing “Whistling Vivaldi: How Stereotypes affect us and what we can do.” Eleven chapters described research directed

by social psychologist author, Claude M. Steele, Vice President and Provost U of Cal.

We discussed our observations and experiences of living with cultural stereotypes about women, elderly, youth, handicapped, Latinos, whites, blacks and others. Our weekly conversations helped us gain insights about stereotypes we hold and to understand better how they impact our lives. We dug into some of these realities and how they shape the lives of others and our communities. We tried to become more aware of stereotypes we and the community hold, learning ways to overcome limitations of stereotypical thinking. These conversations encouraged us to look at ourselves and our relationships and how we might use this knowledge to grow and expand our organizations, and therefore, our communities.

Getting back to unraveling all that yarn, Claude M. Steele, our author, begins by recalling the first time he realized that he was black. At the age of seven, he learned that he could go swimming at the neighborhood pool only on Wednesday afternoons. He learned

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that he could go to the roller rink only on Thursday evenings. This knowledge bothered him because he realized that these limitations were a “condition of life ... tied to his race.” There was nothing he could do about that. Dr. Steele took us through the research of his life as member of the faculty at a number of universities where he designed significant research programs to help identify the real life reality of living with stereotype conditions impacting performance. This is where I found the “unraveling” to be complex, revealing and meaningful in a study about stereotypes. A person needs to read this book in order to understand better the total message of his research.

In the end all of us know more about stereotypes we hold that impact our own performance. We also realize that a group that holds a particular stereotype about certain individuals will impact performance of those individuals.

We discussed many types of questions. For example: are there places in your community that you avoid because you are not certain you would be welcome due to some aspect of your identity? Have you seen

stereotype threat get in the way of cross-racial relationships and dialogue? How have you entered into conversations that could reduce or alter that stereotype threat? These and many additional questions remain as we continue to “unravel” this huge question. Perhaps we will never get it figured out nor impact the huge stereotypes of our culture. However, I am convinced each of us left with a resolve to be more aware and willing to alter the stereotype threats we experience and observe. And, continue to put our energy to the possibility for “unraveling some of the rest.” The “unraveling” continues. Why did Steele label his book “Whistling Vivaldi”? ‘Guess you need to ask the participants.

The “Central Oregon Season of Justice conversations on stereotypes” was sponsored by Multicultural Activities Central Oregon Community College and Building Common Ground. Building Common Ground is a coalition of organizations whose mission is to overcome oppression in Central Oregon, with emphasis on racial justice. ▲

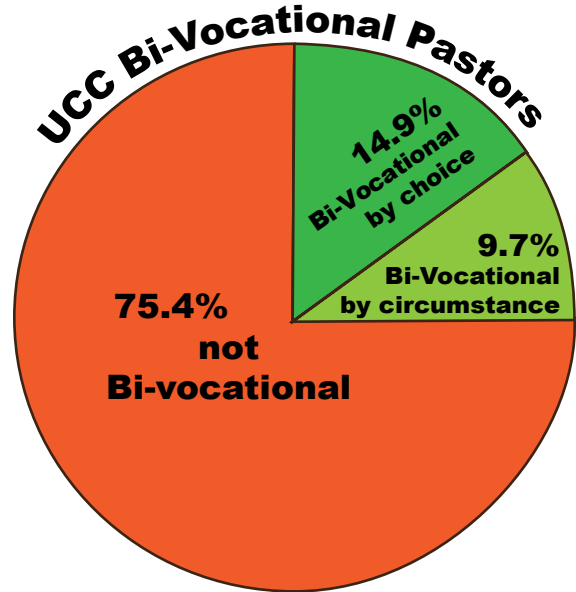
RECOGNIZING UCC'S BI-VOCATIONAL CLERGY

Since its founding in 2001, APUCC has called 3 part-time or bi-vocational clergy. In each case, the arrangement proved to be stressful for the personnel involved whether they lived locally or commuted over the passes from the Willamette Valley.

Now, UCC National, aware that calling of bi-vocational clergy is on the increase, plans a conference for this summer to hear from and encourage support for part-time clergy and to involve UCC administrators in increasing appreciation and support for bi-vocational clergy roles.

Of the 7,400 authorized UCC clergy, one in four — about 1,850 — are bi-vocational. Just as recognition of the role of interim pastors enhanced those positions years ago, we can

hope that the lives of bi-vocational clergy may also improve. Someday there might be one again in APUCC's future. ▲



COMING TO A PIZZA BUFFET NEAR YOU!

On April 25th, at our regular Last-Monday-Night fellowship at Izzy's in Redmond, we will have a special visitor. Stan Paine, of the Aging and Spiritually (A & S) network has

agreed to meet with us. He is interested in an informal discussion of what A & S is about and how All Peoples might wish to be a part of the network in the Central Pacific Conference (CPC). Stan is a part of an international Aging and Spiritually organization addressing both

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the concerns and contributions of seniors in churches and elder communities. Co-founder David Rozell is also part of the international organization. They discovered that each belonged to UCC churches in Oregon and that sparked the idea that a special interest group within the CPC might raise awareness about elders' needs and potential in the conference. The network hopes to circulate ideas for discussions, "Wisdom Circles," and ways to care for church elders in an organized fashion that could include inter-generational participation. ▲

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

A dinner/celebration on Easter afternoon marked the end of Lent and the start of the next season of Christian life for All Peoples UCC. Our tradition of gathering for worship on the first and third Sundays of the month leaves the remaining Sundays open for members to choose their own patterns of worship, learning and growth— hence the 2 p.m. hour for the Easter meal.

Delighted diners bearing potluck dishes arrived at the Cook home for a full afternoon of fellowship and conversation. Special

thanks to the Cooks for opening their hearts and home to the gathering.

The Bible Bookworms continues the study of Tony Jones' "Did God Kill Jesus?" The book is prompting many questions regarding the wide variety of Christian faith perspectives laid out by Jones.

Clerk Mike Lovely reports the results of the Five-4-Five annual UCC offering titled One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS.) All Peoples exceeded all our previous OGHS offerings by collecting a total of \$345.00!

Other money matters include the regular monthly donations from the church treasury to The Bethlehem Inn—\$125 and Jericho Road—\$50. Total gifts from individuals added up to: \$60 for St. Vincent de Paul in Bend, \$30 for St. Vincent de Paul in Redmond, and \$40 for Jericho Road.. ▲

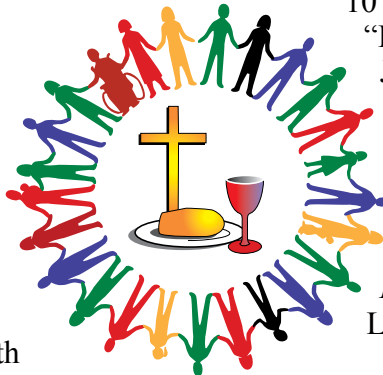
A strong nation, like a strong person, can afford to be gentle, firm, thoughtful, and restrained. It can afford to extend a helping hand to others. It is a weak nation, like a weak person, that must behave with bluster and boasting and rashness and other signs of insecurity. -Jimmy Carter, President

APRIL WORSHIP PLANS

All Peoples UCC meets to worship the first and third Sundays of each month at 11 a.m. Bible study meets from 10 to 10:45 a.m. Worship will be in Redmond at St. Charles Hospital's Juniper Room.

FINDING ST. CHARLES HOSPITAL IN REDMOND

- **From the north**—From Hwy 97 reroute in Redmond, right on Larch; first left on Canal, right on Kingwood, 3rd right into parking lot.
- **From the south**— coming north on Redmond Hwy 97 reroute, exit left at Glacier, right on 5th all the way north through town to Kingwood, right on Kingwood, go 1.75 blocks, and turn left into the hospital parking lot.
- **From east or west** on Hwy 126, go north on 5th and follow south-side directions.
- **Finding the Juniper Room**—Enter at the main entrance or the next door on the left. Go left to the end of the hall and then right to the first room on left, opposite the rest rooms.



WORSHIP SCHEDULE

April 3rd—11 a.m. Worship: Laurie Power
10 a.m. Discussing of Part IV of “Did God Kill Jesus?” by Tony Jones.

Nancy Cook leading.

April 17th—11 a.m. Worship:
David Cook

10 a.m. Bible Bookworms;
discussing Part V of *Did God Kill Jesus?* by Tony Jones—
Laurie Power leading discussion.

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PO Box 1287, Bend, OR 97709

allpeoplesucc@gmail.com

Please join us every first and third Sunday for
worship at 11 a.m.

For additional information and location/date
of the next worship service, email the above.

Moderator: Nancy Cook: ncook963@gmail.com

Newsletter editor: Pris Hardin, prisbill@earthlink.net

Facebook: Sue Flory: facebook.com/allpeoples.ucc

Webmaster: Nancy Cook: www.allpeoples-ucc.org