

All Peoples
United Church of Christ
SOJOURNER NEWS

A Central Oregon House Church

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WE ARE NOT ALONE

When All Peoples United Church of Christ (APUCC) decided to “go it alone” without pastor or church building, the congregation knew that it was not entirely alone. In 2007, there was an emerging house church movement. As early as 1966, Nate Krupp, publisher of the book, *God’s Simple Plan For His Church*, described it as “... a movement away from clergy-dominated services and programs to mutually participating assemblies of believers, from a gospel of “easy-believism (sic)” to the gospel of the Kingdom, with its call to repentance and submission to Christ as Lord, from one-man leadership to plurality of servant leadership and from gathering in church buildings to gathering in homes.”

APUCC’s decision to switch to lay leadership was originally economic. A congregations of fewer than 10 or 12 parishioners certainly had no funds to pay clergy or even to rent worship space. Behind the financial pressures, however, lay the deep conviction of the congregation that their strong progressive beliefs were not likely to be found in other denominations.

A recent article in the Christian Science Monitor Weekly reports an interesting lay-leadership movement among “mainline” denominations. Author Jeffrey MacDonald describes financially strapped congregations that turned to part-time lay leadership discovering a new vitality. Parishioners report a sense of belonging that energizes and

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increases participation. Congregations with lay leaders preaching, serving communion, leading prayers and even doing pastoral counseling, are discovering fulfilling ways to “do church” without full-time, ordained leadership and, in a few cases, even without church buildings.

Katie Runde, an artist and musician in Christ Episcopal Church in Vermont, says, “If I’m in a rut, sometimes I’ll sign up for preaching and it always helps. You’re keeping the congregation in mind while you’re writing. You have to reach out, not just turn inward.”

The Rev. Darren Morgan, associate minister of the Maine Conference of the UCC reports that 68 percent of Maine’s 156 UCC congregations now have part-time pastors. At a recent Central Pacific Conference meeting back here in Oregon, someone characterized All Peoples as being “ahead of the curve” since we work with neither trained clergy nor a church building. Ahead-of-the-curve, we may be but church historians depict our church model as having deep roots in the life of the early Christian church.

The apostle Paul served as church founder and itinerant encourager. Most of the congregations he started worked on their own with only occasional visits from Paul, his protégés and a few epistles from Paul.

Time travel back to the 21st century, All Peoples strives to walk in the footsteps of those early Christians. But in our time, we not only serve each other; we serve social justice causes as we try to more fully live out the message of Jesus Christ.

As guest priest Rolfe Lawson noted when visiting St. Lukes Episcopal Church in Fair Haven, Vt.,

**“You concentrate on being
the church,
and the numbers come,
or don’t come.
Who cares? It’s what you
are doing as church that
counts in the
LONG RUN.”**

MODERATOR'S MUSINGS

I am writing this the morning after our monthly last-Monday (24 April) fellowship meal at Round Table Pizza in Redmond. I want to briefly summarize the conversation in which several of those attending discussed advocacy efforts in Bend and Redmond for immigrant rights. We have some strong supporters of social justice in our midst.

At least two of our group are deeply involved with the sanctuary and immigrant rights movements in Bend and the fledgling movement beginning in Redmond: Emilie Marlinghaus <emagen@bendbroadband.com> and Gloria Olson <gloryo76@gmail.com>. Both Emilie and Gloria spoke during our meal on the efforts taking place in recent months as advocates in Deschutes County have worked to understand and formulate plans in case help is needed by immigrant members of our communities. Emilie has been attending meetings in Bend for organizations that are attempting to prepare in case local residents need help and advocacy due to persecutions, or even arrests. Gloria is working to organize a

group based in Redmond for “rapid response” to incidents that may occur. If you are interested in being more involved, you can contact either Emilie or Gloria.

I have also compiled and sent out via email several links to meetings and information that were provided by Emilie and Gloria. If you did not receive the email or have discarded it and wish to have another copy, contact me via email at <ncook963@gmail.com>.

In addition to our local advocacy efforts already in progress, the United Church of Christ Justice and Peace Advocacy Network designates the first Sunday in May as Immigrant Rights Sunday. On May 7, 2017 we will be celebrating Immigrant Rights Sunday during our worship service. I hope you will all join us as “...we...lift up immigrants on this day: to learn about their concerns, honor their contributions



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to our country and communities, hear their pain, pray for their well-being, and listen to hear where God is leading us regarding issues of immigration.” (Justice and Peace Advocacy Network April Newsletter: <http://www.ucc.org/jpanet_04_06_17?utm_campaign=jpanet_apr6_17&utm_medium=email&utm_source=unitedchurchofchrist>). ▲

“THERE IS MORE TRUTH YET TO BREAK FORTH...”

John Robinson, early Pilgrim pastor in Leiden, Holland, sent a letter aboard the Mayflower to be read to the passengers as the ship dropped anchor just off shore at Plymouth Rock. His words affirmed the concept that the living God would still be speaking on into the future. Prophecy? Yes! Details? No!

As our friends in the United Methodist Church (UMC) struggle over the issue of permitting LGBTU members to serve as ordained faith leaders, the words of Robinson’s prophecy echo in our hearts.



Would the United Methodist Judicial Council cast out of her position the gifted, newly elected Mountain Sky Area Bishop Karen Oliveto because of her sexual orientation?

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Where is God's truth in this frustrating situation?

By the time you read this newsletter, the verdict will likely have been announced. In the meantime, Bishop Karen's defense was described on the internet. Her statement was caring and free of blaming. She noted that her detractors had failed to say anything about her qualifications, reputation as a cleric and her preparation for the job. Rather the charges emphasized her homosexuality, her same-sex marriage (to a deacon of the church) and the fact that that "life style" was forbidden in Methodist polity.

Bishop Oliveto also pointed out that she was, indeed, not the first LGBT bishop of the UMC; she is just the first one out of the closet and living openly with her sexual orientation.

According to the web write-up, objections to the idea of approving a lesbian bishop come from factions of the southern United Methodist churches and a solid block of the



Methodist churches in Africa. That group is very vocal in their opposition.

As this issue of Sojourner News goes to press, the UMC Judicial Council has released its verdict. The ruling is complex and unsettling. Karen Oliveto, is still a bishop of The United Methodist Church, assigned to the Mountain Sky Area, with all the rights, privileges, responsibilities and protections that every clergy person enjoys. The council then created new law that impedes participation of LGBTQ clergy in the future.

Pray for the Christians on both sides of this divide as they struggle to discern the path forward for founder John Wesley's denomination of the faithful. ▲

POST EARTH-DAY ALERTS

Earth Day has been celebrated for over 20 years. This year, it fell on April 29th. With the federal government seeking to dismantle the Environmental Protection Agency many of the protections put in place over the years, are severely threatened.

Alaska Wildlife Refuge Drilling?!!

Alaska's Sen. Lisa Murkowski and her fossil fuel-boosting colleagues are threatening to mount a sneak attack on the wildlife refuge via the budget process. Please guard that vital area and protect it for the ecosystem and

An Earth Day Photograph!

Out of respect for copyright, try to imagine this to be the powerful photo found on the UCC national website.

Picture a world globe the size of a softball.

Zoom in close on the globe cupped in the hands of a child. Cradling the child's hands, teen-sized hands support the child's and, supporting them, a pair of adult hands embraces the smaller pairs.

Can you see it?

its animals for which it was laid out in the first place.

Selling Out Our Monuments?!!

All National Monuments established since 1996 are under scrutiny with an eye toward opening up to extraction industries according to an administration review order—mining, drilling, etc. What kind of stewardship is that? ▲

UCC NATIONAL OFFICERS ON BUDGET NEGOTIATIONS

The “just allocation of resources” is modern language for a topic that Jesus spoke to using different terminology. When the U.S. administration calls for a huge boost to military spending and corresponding cuts to agriculture, human services, the EPA and the State Department (for starters), our Christian values demand serious and forceful protest.

Last month, Washington, D.C. was the scene of a conference called Ecumenical Advocacy Days. Protests there were peaceful, but serious and forceful, leading to several arrests. Doug Grace, the director of Ecumenical Advocacy Days, was arrested along with UCC's Rev. Blackmon. Blackmon said, “It's important for us to send a strong

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message to Congress and the President that this budget is immoral, and we will do all we can to oppose it. We will not be silent or stand idly by while those most in need are harmed. We will not watch as families are ripped apart through mass deportations and our air and water are polluted because of corporate greed and deregulation.” ▲

JERICHO TABLE—May Volunteers

Serving at Church of God Seventh Day,
205 NW 4th Street, Redmond.

Arrive by 4:30 p.m.; finish around 6 p.m.

May 1—David & Nancy Cook

May 8—Liz Douville & Laurie Power

May 15—Bill & Pris Hardin

May 22—Emilie Marlinghaus & Susi Sutton

SPEAKING OF VOLUNTEERS...

April 25th found 10 of All Peoples’ volunteers at the annual Jericho Road Appreciation Reception. Several others could not make it but their generous, caring support was appreciated in absentia. At least three of our group serve Jericho Road in leadership roles. Volunteers from all over the area put in a total of 6,000 hours last year,

Dr. Mark Keener, Board chairman, presided

over the program while Tate & Tate catering made everyone feel REALLY appreciated with a delicious spread of “light refreshments.” Board members contributed to the “light” feast by bringing cookies and dessert.

APUCC volunteers should know that, aside from organizations supporting the needy in the Portland area, Jericho Road is the largest such organization in the state. AND, 90% of Jericho Road’s funding goes directly to program. Each year, the need for its services increases. Clearly, the entire community is behind the efforts of Jericho Road.

The **housing program** served 86 families including 190 children in 2016—a 19% increase over the previous year. **Emergency services**, under the leadership of Bob Troutman, provides for immediate needs in the areas of fuel, repairs, food, clothing, water, wood, bus passes and emotional support. Last year, the **weekend backpack program**, led by Mary Kimmel, delivered 2452 bags of food to tide food-insecure families over weekends. Rusty Johnson coordinates the **Jericho Table hot meals** program that served 13,000 meals last year—

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they served 859 meals to children. Those meals are available 20 to 25 nights per month.

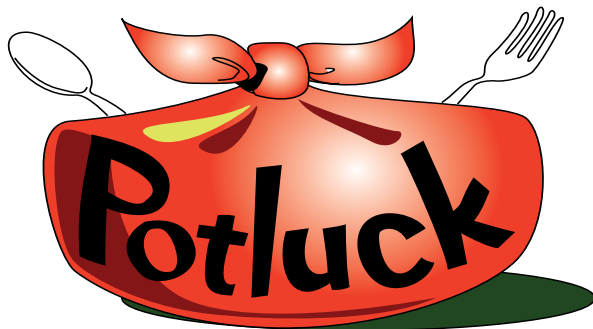
A few of the many partners in service include Mosaic Medical, the Foundry Church Shower Truck, St. Vincent de Paul, and Thrive. These organizations' offerings are available at Jericho Table on Thursday nights. Other donations include fresh fruit and pizza. Keener noted that the **Winter Warming Shelters** at various churches were crucial during this very hard winter.

In Redmond, Sarah Kelly, Executive Director of Thrive meets with individuals in need at Jericho Table and at the library to share her expertise and resources in solving some of the more in-depth problems of Jericho Road's clients. In addition, Thrive serves 7 or 8 other cities in Central Oregon.

For more info, visit Jericho Road's website: <https://www.jerichoroadofredmond.org/> ▲

FUN ON MAY'S LAST-MONDAY

APUCC's usual Last Monday of the month will be a Memorial Day potluck/barbeque at Hardins' place near Terrebonne instead of the usual meeting at Round Table Pizza. We'll gather at 1 p.m. for food and fellowship. Maps will be available upon request and at church. We will provide meats along with condiments, table service and beverages. Your weekend guests are welcome, too. Expect more detailed information to come as the time draws closer. ▲



“[W]e need to find ways of sharing our intimate experiences of the Mystery, for we are one. It is through one another that we will know more of the Life that flows within us all. It is through sharing our fragments of insight that we will come to a fuller picture of the One who is at the heart of each life.”

John Philip Newell

MAY WORSHIP PLANS

All Peoples UCC meets to worship the first and third Sundays of each month at 11 a.m. Study and discussion group meet from 10 to 10:45 a.m. Refreshments begin at 9:45 a.m..

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; turn right and enter the first room on the left



WORSHIP SCHEDULE

May 7th—11 a.m. Worship—
David & Nancy Cook

10 a.m. Discussing “The Glass Castle”
by Jeanette Walls, pp 1–72.
Laurie Power leading.

May 21st—11 a.m. Worship—Pris Hardin
10 a.m. Discussing “The Glass Castle”
by Jeanette Walls, pp 73–144.
Laurie Power leading

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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.

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