



All Peoples United Church of Christ **SOJOURNER NEWS**

A Central Oregon House Church

Vol. XVII, Number 12

December, 2017

CHOOSING GRATITUDE OR THANKFULNESS?

With the Thanksgiving holiday fresh on our minds and Advent beckoning, thoughts turn to concepts of gratitude and thanksgiving. Do they differ or are they essentially the same? Such a question reminds me of one of my favorite childhood books. A friend gifted my sister and me with a copy of *The Chatterlings*, by Michael Lipman (1928).

The Chatterlings takes kids on a journey into probing the meanings of synonyms. Lipman's brownie-like elves, led by Prince Tip o' Tongue, set off on a journey to find two words that



mean precisely the same thing. Along their route, one pair of words after another receives consideration and fails due to subtle differences in their meanings. Eventually, the Chatterlings succeed in finding the perfect pair. It's a word game that has stayed with me all these years.

Around Thanksgiving, the word pair "thankfulness" and "gratitude" appeared. They posed the old puzzle—are they synonyms?

My computer dictionary defines thankfulness as "expressing gratitude and relief." By comparison, it defines gratitude as "readiness to show appreciation for and or showing an appreciation of kindness." The two definitions imply small differences of

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meaning; during this season we might take the differences more seriously. Dwelling on one's thankfulness for some unwelcome thing that failed to happen is less fulfilling than feeling warm gratitude for kindness that has shone a light into one's life.

The UCC Advent Devotional, "Watch," calls us to attention. Since Advent is a time of spiritual preparation, perhaps the place to start paying attention is within ourselves. We are called to watch for the elements of our lives for which we are grateful... the kind word, the deep caring and the thoughtful acts of love that give renewal and strength. Then, when relief floods in over what did not happen or for what "could have been worse" we'll find the fortitude to continue on. It is that reservoir of gratitude that enables one to extend love and support to others... to those neighbors that are part of the focus of "The Three Great Loves"— Creation, Neighbors and Children. ▲

HOW ABOUT POETRY SUNDAY?

Calling all poets and poetry lovers! David Cook and Ruth Locke have volunteered to help organize and lead a Poetry Sunday worship. Please review your favorite poems;

write some more as the spirit moves you and share your material with David and Ruth.

This could be another "first" among our APUCC adventures toward richer, deeper faith experiences. Join in! ▲

THE STORY OF STUFF

Like the prophet Amos descending from the hills to scold the early Jews, The Story of Stuff is a website that draws attention to America's fascination with seasonal consumerism. The idea that Christmas requires a huge investment of treasure in "stuff" that fattens the coffers of big corporations is not new to any of us.

Finding new ways to share our Christmas love with family, friends and the needy around the world occupies the energy of many of us. Perhaps it is not too late to find a way to share some ideas among our group for new ways to accomplish expressing our love.

After gleefully announcing to our family that they were each receiving a gift of rabbits or a share of a goat (pick the part you'd claim to have given... chuckle, chuckle) through Heifer International I found a similar organization working through our Church World Service. Next year, I'll give through them. ▲

MODERATOR'S MUSINGS

Thanksgiving Day was a wonderful celebration of gratitude this year. David and I, and Don and Laurie, thank those who came to dinner at Don and Laurie's on 23 November. We have learned over the years, from living places where we have no family, that Thanksgiving is a day to be together, if not with family, with friends. So when we invite you to share the day with us, it is really because we are self-centered as much as altruistic and want to have as many of you as possible to make it a festive celebration.

Many of you have heard my story of how we came to be in Oregon. While attending the seminar that Marcus Borg and John Dominic Crossan held in Bend in 2013, David and I met Laurie and Pris. We learned from Pris that there was a UCC (United Church of Christ) congregation in Central Oregon, one of the prerequisites for us in choosing a place to live. Our first time to meet the congregation was February 2014 and we knew instantly we had found "kinfolk" in Central Oregon. That and a

house to buy was all it took; we have never looked back.

Besides the mountains, the juniper and sage, and the hiking trails, All Peoples UCC, has made our life just what we were seeking. You are a wonderful, affirming group.

Thank you.

Nancy Cook, Moderator



A New Years Dinner Invitation

On January 1, 2018 David and I invite all of you to dinner to celebrate the beginning of 2018. We will gather between 1:00 and 2:00 pm and plan to eat about 2:15 pm. Our house is easy to find in Eagle Crest at 1260 Killdeer Court, Redmond. I'll send reminders nearer the date, but put it on your calendar and we'll celebrate together.

FOLLOWING THE INFO PIPELINE ON PIPELINES—

Love of Neighbor; Love of Creation

Pipelines come under scrutiny for many reasons. People who follow social justice issues have been pursuing cutting off the flow of petroleum from the ground for years. TransCanada's Keystone XL pipeline is back in the news.

Since the 2,147 mile pipeline began operating in 2010, it has gushed 5,000-barrels just this month in Marshall County, South Dakota, and about 400 barrels each in Hutchinson County, South Dakota in 2016 and in Sargent County, North Dakota in 2011.

However, TransCanada's spill risk assessment estimated that the chance of a leak of more than 50 barrels to be "not more than once every seven to 11 years over the entire length of the pipeline in the United States,"

It is cause for enthusiasm when major supporters of native peoples' rights and defenders of the environment, including the great Oglala Aquifer, see another way to protest and impede oil extraction and delivery.

Now, the Sierra Club, Greenpeace, and a cadre of affiliated organizations have swung into

action against the big banks that still back pipelines. The current list includes such funders as Citibank, Chase, and Wells Fargo among others. Divesting from patronizing such financial institutions may seem like a small step but if enough accounts are discontinued, the banks will notice. (When a Costco floor-sales person invited me to reopen my Costco Citibank VISA account, I told him why I refuse to do so. He said several people had given him the same reason!) ▲

FIND A BETTER BANK TOOLKIT

How to Bank with One's Values by Divesting from Banks that Fund the Fossil Fuel Industry

The "url" below is a resource created by the members of Northshore United Church of Christ, a congregation that broke ties with Wells Fargo (*see previous story*) after discovering their church funds indirectly helped to finance the Dakota Access Pipeline. All Peoples UCC banks with a Bend credit union but some of our members, or others with whom they talk might benefit from knowing how this divestment process can unfold.

<http://www.uccfiles.com/pdf/UCC-Di-vest-Toolkit-2017.pdf> ▲

(Keep this information)
UCC WORSHIP RESOURCES
LECTIONARY

by Nancy Cook

All Peoples United Church of Christ (APUCC) members share responsibility for leadership and preaching during worship. Since most of us are not trained in theology or as pastors, we may need some help in finding resources to plan the worship service. The United Church of Christ (UCC) web site is very useful in planning worship services. To access the general page on resources for worship, go to the UCC web site (<http://www.ucc.org/>). Click on the red area on the left where it says "Worship Resources" (<http://www.ucc.org/worship>). While I may not choose to use only resources from the UCC site, I generally begin my search for a scripture text, prayers, call to worship, communion format, and benediction, on this page.

I access the information on the Worship Resources page by clicking on the

plus sign on each of the gray lines. The plus sign opens and reveals links to other resources, shown in red. I generally start with the link to the "Revised Common Lectionary (RCL)." The RCL is a list of scriptures for each week of the year. It is presented in a three-year cycle that covers most of the New Testament every three years. For each week there is a reading from one of the four Gospels, the Old Testament, the Psalms, and the Epistles. Worship leaders choose the text they want for their message from this list of readings. With so many suggested readings for the week, there is always a rich variety of possible texts.

In addition to the RCL, the UCC Worship Resources page also provides a link to what is called the Narrative Lectionary. The Narrative Lectionary provides a sequence of scripture readings in a four-year cycle that is organized in a series of "texts following the sweep of the biblical story, from Creation through the early Christian church." You can find these readings on

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the web site Working Preacher (<http://www.workingpreacher.org/>).

The Working Preacher web site also provides links to commentaries on the readings from the RCL.

Clicking on the plus sign on that bar brings up a document titled “Worship Ways,” which generally contains opening and closing prayers and often a call to worship. Sometimes the document includes a script for communion that I like to use. Look under Model Worship Services and Thematic Prayer Liturgy for suggested hymns to accompany the scriptural text(s) for the week.

The most difficult part of preparing a worship service is interpreting the scriptural text. There is only minor help for that on the UCC web site, but some suggestions are available under the line Sermon Preparation. For further suggestions, contact Laurie Power or me, Nancy, for references to other helpful internet sites. Laurie also has some books that

may help with theological interpretation of the lectionary readings (RCL). ▲

FEED THE CHRISTMAS FUND

Of the five annual collections received by the United Church of Christ national offices, the Christmas Fund is appropriately scheduled during this Advent season. The Christmas Fund provides direct financial assistance to retired and active United Church of Christ authorized ministers and lay employees and their surviving spouses, including pension and health premium supplementation, emergency assistance, and Christmas thank-you checks. The Christmas Fund provides direct financial assistance to retired and active United Church of Christ authorized ministers and lay employees and their surviving spouses, including pension and health premium supplementation, emergency assistance, and Christmas thank-you checks. ▲

Editor’s Note—For those of you who are wondering, this issue of Sojourner News comes to you from the foothills east of Chula Vista, CA. We Hardins made our trip south safely without facing any snow on passes.▲



APUCC NOMADS WANDERING AGAIN

All Peoples calls itself a “house church” for good reason. Since it’s founding, 16+ years ago, the congregation has worshipped in nine different locations and, on occasion, sought haven in private homes.

And now comes another move! For about four months, the much appreciated conference room at the Redmond St. Charles Hospital will be occupied on Sunday mornings by hospital staff working on a major project.

Our up-coming relocation, however short term it may be, begins in January. Moderator Nancy Cook has arranged for us to meet in the Redmond Public Library’s conference room. Thank you, Nancy, for swinging into action to find a temporary home. Expect planning sessions for managing the transition smoothly as the time draws near.

In the past, when we have weighed the trade-off between renting/buying our “own”

worship space or accepting this sort of inconvenience while directing our collective treasure toward service to others, we like to think that we have chosen the more Christian option. **Hallelujah ▲**

BOOKWORMS TAKE NOTE

Announcing—

The Great Loves Book-Read Project

Over the next two years, UCC national is recommending a parade of books, each of which will focus on one (or more) of the Three Great Loves—creation, neighbor and children. Each book selection will have a study guide available. Book choices will be independently optional; participation can be by individual, small group or by entire congregation. Maybe we need a book-survey committee to aid in previewing? ▲

DECEMBER WORSHIP PLANS

All Peoples UCC meets to worship the first and third Sundays of each month 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 above.
- **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.



SOJOURNER NEWS

is a monthly publication of
All Peoples United Church of Christ
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Please join us every first and third Sunday for
worship at 11 a.m.

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WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Dec. 3rd—11 a.m. Worship—Nancy Cook
10 a.m. Discussion period—Exploring
Advent “Awake” booklet.
..... Laurie Power & Nancy Cook
leading.
Dec. 17th—11 a.m. Worship—
Laurie Power
10 a.m.—Continuing study of
Advent “Awake” readings.
Laurie Power & Nancy Cook shar-
ing leadership again.