

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

A Central Oregon House Church

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### **HAVE YOU MET ANY REFUGEES LATELY?**

Perhaps, your answer is “None,” or “I’m not sure.” After all, ... what is a refugee supposed to look like, anyway? Refugees do not wear buttons or ID tags labeling them as such. An article in the Oregon Humanities magazine by Zahir Janmohamed notes that in reality, refugees prefer not to be labeled as refugees. Following the trauma, stress and uncertainty of their refugee experiences, they would like to be accepted for a new identity in their new land, be it student, homemaker, language learner, farm laborer, physicist, friend, etc.

The United Nations High Commissioner for refugees states that as of 2015 there were 65.3 million refugees on this earth. That is 1 out of every 113 people or more refugees

than after World War II. In 2015, according to the Oregonian, 934 refugees “resettled” in Portland, only 1 from Syria and most from Burma. Many of the people from Burma were of the Rohingya sect, a group who arrived in Burma in rickety boats as illegal aliens. They had experienced brutal treatment there. In 2015, researchers from the [International State Crime Initiative](#) at [Queen Mary University of London](#) reported that the Burmese government was conducting a campaign against Rohingyas that amounted to genocide.

While the Janmohamed article notes that many of the resettled folk in the Portland area are currently students, many do not match the stereotype of refugees seen in the

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news over recent years. They are not wearing rags, and hauling what few belongings they can carry in makeshift bundles. Neither are the refugees from countries to the south of the U.S. Most often labeled illegal aliens, many of those crossing our southern borders have traveled through multiple countries to get here. For some, their journeys originated in the Caribbean and even from the African continent. President Trump's labeling them

as Mexican criminals is ill-informed at best and hateful and ignorant at worst.

As progressive Christians, we are called to reach out to the disenfranchised and those in need. For starters, we have to operate on our love of neighbor and compassion. Beyond that, the next prerequisite is to identify individual feelings, beliefs and needs. Is there a "skill set" that prepares us to do so?

The tremendous pressure that the U.S. government seems driven to put on refugees in general, Muslims in particular, leads us to want to help them whether we are aware of refugees in our midst or only know of organized groups afar to whom we can give aid. Perhaps we could join with others in Central Oregon to welcome and protect displaced persons or we could contribute our "widow's mite" to help organizations farther away. In any case, the size of the problem cries out for some action in the name of our Christian values. ▲



## MODERATOR'S MUSINGS

### 2017 Community Book Discussion During the Season of NonViolence

How lucky we are to live in the Bend-Redmond area and experience many of the cultural events available to all of us. One such event that I have found satisfying since I moved to Central Oregon is the Season of Nonviolence sponsored by Central Oregon Community College's (COCC) Multicultural Activities group. Each year this group reaches beyond COCC into the Bend and Redmond communities to set up book conversation groups that fit the stated objective of Season of Nonviolence to honor "the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Mahatma Gandhi, Cesar Chavez and Wilma Mankiller and their work to advocate for human rights using nonviolent methods of resistance." Seven groups, meeting at various times and in various places, discussed the topics of this year's discussions.

The 2017 book discussions were based on *Racism without Racists* by Eduardo

Bonilla-Silva, which details Bonilla-Silva's own research and the research of others concerning the attitudes of both whites and blacks toward African-Americans. As with other books used for this discussion series, Bonilla-Silva is very critical of the attitudes of white Americans towards Black Americans. He ends the book with much criticism of the failure of the Barack Obama presidential administration to truly resolve the race relations issue. In the end Bonilla-Silva admonishes white Americans who want to help that they politically resolve the American racial divide through both a personal practice to challenge racism and an organized "new" civil rights movement that needs to become militant again.



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I found the discussions during our meetings especially valuable because I heard others' interpretations of the assigned readings. Participants also often recommended other readings or activities which enriched the discussion of the material. For example, one of the participants in my discussion group recommended reading Ta-Nehisi Coates works for another view of the attitudes of Black Americans. I plan to follow up on his suggestions with Coates article in *The Atlantic* titled "My President Was Black" as well as his book *Between the World and Me: Notes on the First 150 Years in America*.

Nancy Cook, Moderator

## **LENTEN DISCUSSIONS ON SPIRITUAL PRACTICES**

All Peoples "worship-Sunday" discussions will concentrate on ways to enrich our spiritual lives. On March 5th, Laurie Power and Kathi Bumbulis will introduce techniques for centering prayer. All are invited to suggest topics for later sessions throughout Lent. ▲

## **JERICO TABLE—Volunteers**

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

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

March 6—Evelyn Doherty & David Cook

March 13—Gloria Olson & Gerry Soto

March 20—Laurie Power & Liz Douville

March 27—The Lukens/McFadden Family

## **TRUMP ADMINISTRATION PULLS THE RUG OUT FROM UNDER TRANS YOUTH**

NPR reports that about 150,000 youth ages 13 to 17 identify as transgender. Nevertheless, with a stroke of the pen the administration has withdrawn the Obama directive that required schools, nationally, to allow trans youngsters to use school accommodations that match their orientation.

Andy Lang, executive director for the UCC Open and Affirming Coalition, is urging churches in the denomination to publicly demonstrate their support of transgender people.

"The Open and Affirming Coalition urges all of the UCC's 1,400 ONA churches to stand

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now — visibly and in public — with their transgender neighbors,” said Lang. The ONA Coalition advocates for the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community in the UCC, and equips congregations to declare publicly their full welcome and inclusion of LGBTQ people. “We cannot be silent when the rights, freedoms, and human dignity of the transgender community are left unprotected by federal law. We ask that ONA churches, if they haven’t already, contact their state equality organizations to learn ways they can advocate for their trans neighbors. The Coalition is ready to help every church make those connections.”

By turning decisions regarding LGBTQ student treatment back to the states, the door is opened to harassment and bullying of trans youth even though their civil rights are still protected nationally. Who will make that fact “real” in the schools? ▲

## **RETIREMENT FAREWELL FOR WALTER JOHN BORIS**

For about seven years, the Rev. Dr. Walter John Boris has served as Conference Minister of the Central Pacific Conference, UCC. He has submitted his resignation as of March 31st.

The First Congregational Church UCC of Portland is hosting a reception in appreciation for his service. The event is planned for March 19th at 2:00 p.m. Walter John and his wife Cindy look forward to moving east to be with their daughter and her family as they welcome a new grandchild.

Send cards and/or contributions to the monetary gift to:

1st Congregational UCC

1137 SW Broadway,

Portland, OR 97205,

ATTN: Walter John’s retirement.

## HEALTHCARE INITIATIVE ON THE MOVE

The following letter to All Peoples comes from a friend at the Corvallis UCC.



I write you as a fellow UCC member and as an advocate for universal healthcare.

I am a retired cancer doctor and lead the Health Ministries Team at Corvallis First Congregational United Church of Christ. We are working to bring about health care for all, for Oregon and the nation.

Do you already have individuals, a committee, or a team working on healthcare equity? Are you willing to share with us what you are already doing in this area of social justice? How can we cooperate?

Here's what we have done so far here in Corvallis.

- In early 2014 we had four Adult Forum sessions about healthcare equity and the need for major changes in our healthcare system. These were led by physicians and other care-givers in our church aided by visiting speakers including a retired minister.

- In May, 2015 the church voted to approve the concept of healthcare as a human right.

- In September, 2015 the church voted to become a member of the state-wide organization, Healthcare For All Oregon <<http://www.hcao.org/>>. The Episcopal and Presbyterian churches here have also joined HCAO. Membership requirements are:

- Educate our congregation and our community about the need for universal healthcare

- Agree to donate at least \$100 to HCAO each year, and/or

- Offer meeting space for HCAO activities periodically

In 2016, our church reorganized its committees into Circles and Teams with more open structure and convenient meeting times to encourage participation. Our Health Ministries Team (HMT) was created and has met monthly to plan activities:

- Seven members of the Team joined in city-wide canvassing in October, 2016 for a Corvallis advisory ballot measure urging the Oregon Legislature to create a universal

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health care system for Oregon. The measure passed with a 3:1 margin.

- Twelve church members were part of 500 Corvallis residents who marched for health care justice during the presidential inauguration on January 20, 2017.
- We devoted some Adult Forums in February, 2017 to the movement for universal health care.

In my work at the cancer center I met patients who had experienced worrisome symptoms for months or even years but delayed coming in for medical care because they were afraid of medical bills. Sometimes the patients would come to the emergency room in crisis. It seemed very unfair, especially when I learned that other countries did not let this happen. We can stop it here by educating the population and our legislators.

Please call or email me with names and contact information of any in your congregation who might be interested in moving Oregon and the nation toward a universal health care system. We may be able to interest the Central Pacific Conference of the UCC in making a formal

commitment for universal health care. Such a decision has been made by a Lutheran synod in Oregon and would be in keeping with the national UCC Synod declaration in 2009 supporting «H.R. 676 – Single Payer National Health Care Reform to Advance Health Equity for All and to Eliminate Health Disparities.»

I look forward to hearing from you soon. I and others working with HCAO will be happy to come to your church for a presentation and discussion of the universal health care movement.

Mike Huntington MD  
541-745-5635 or 541-829-1182

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  
39th US President  
Nobel laureate (b. 1924)



## ARIZONA UCC PASTOR ON THE JOB... HARD DUTY

While many in our congregation read the news portion of the national UCC website, it is appropriate to relay a quote from one of the most recent press releases. The headline reads: UCC Clergy Incensed, Grieved by Looming Immigration Crackdown. Since we snowbirds are currently in Arizona, we are vividly aware of the fear that grips many of the Latinos in this area.

Tucson is so close to the Mexican border. The Rev. Delle McCormick pastors Tucson's Rincon Congregational UCC. Describing her up-coming day, McCormick wrote:

"I lead worship for 300 children who are seeking asylum in the U.S., many of whom now face an even higher probability that they will be deported back to the violence from which they fled.

"I am gathering my energy to face those with whom I am meeting to help prepare for the onslaught," McCormick contin-

ued. "One family in particular has been here for twenty years and has three children, two of whom are citizens and all of whom are straight-A students. Their extended family has many members who now are facing deportation. They are loving, honest, and hardworking people who contribute so much in their presence here. And they are frightened and angry, but mostly frightened as they face the likelihood of family members being deported." Log on to:

[http://www.ucc.org/news\\_ucc\\_clergy\\_incensed\\_grieved\\_by\\_looming\\_immigration\\_crackdown\\_02222017](http://www.ucc.org/news_ucc_clergy_incensed_grieved_by_looming_immigration_crackdown_02222017)

to read the "rest of the story" and gauge the full brunt of UCC clergy passion. ▲

## TALK-SHOW GUEST NOTE

During a Sunday morning TV interview on NPR, a consultant to philanthropic foundations, pointed out:

*This is the 2nd Golden Age of Philanthropy  
because, it is the  
2nd Golden Age of Economic Inequality!*

How's that for straight talk? ▲

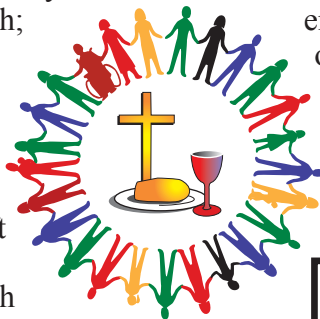


## MARCH WORSHIP PLANS

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

**Mar. 5th**—11 a.m. Worship—Becca Tatum  
10 a.m. Discussing spiritual practices that enrich our Lenten experience and throughout the year. Laurie Power will lead.

**Mar. 19th**—11 a.m. Worship—  
John Eggum  
10 a.m. Laurie will continue the series of Lenten reflections and discussions of spiritual practices.

### SOJOURNER NEWS

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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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