



Pacific Northwest CONFERENCE NEWS

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April-May 2019

Magnolia holds Community Service Sunday

**150 from church, community
join in service projects
during worship time**

For its first Community Action Sunday on Jan. 27, Magnolia UCC in Seattle involved 150 people from the congregation and community in five service projects running to spruce up some neighborhood spaces.

Two years ago the congregation started discussions about vitality and envisioning what it might mean to be a Vital 3.0 Church, based on UCC's national President and General Minister John Dorhauer's writings on Church 3.0.

"We discussed what it means to be a church in a different way, so it is a force for service in the community," said Marci Scott-Weis, who has been Magnolia's assistant pastor for two years.

"A year ago the congregation decided to look outside their walls to find
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On a Sunday, Magnolia UCC volunteers from the church and community help with cleaning up weeds and overgrowth at Thorndyke Park.

Photos courtesy of Danielle Chastaine

Annual Meeting offers time with clergy of color

Moderator Wendy Blight said the 2019 PNC-UCC Annual Meeting theme is "Many Gifts, One Spirit." It is a one-day event from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday, April 27, at First Congregational Church of Bellevue.

"We will be celebrating the myriad of gifts we bring to our ministry together in this Conference. Every lay leader, every minister, every congregation, has a multitude of unique qualities. When we gather together as one body at our Annual meeting, we recognize that we are not alone in our call to serve. We are joined by the One Spirit that enlivens us all. When we are in one place together, we see that our ministry is mirrored in other places across our Conference and the depth and breadth of God's work is obvious," she said.

**Annual Meeting 2019
Saturday,
April 27
First Congregational
in Bellevue.**

"We will accomplish the business that is urgent and necessary, and will have time to connect with friends and new folks," she added.

There will be time for singing, praying, listening, wondering and voting.

"As some have said, this is our annual reunion at the end of April. It's also the time where we meet new clergy,

new leaders and new friends. It's a time when we lift up what is good, and a time to celebrate those fresh, vibrant ministries being created in our Conference and in the wider church," Wendy said.

The Board and leadership staff focus on deepening relationships around the Conference so "we reflect the world that God envisions. To that end we talk about deepening relationships with clergy, congregations and communities. The morning will focus on deepening our relationships with our clergy of color. Our Justice and Witness subcommittee on Dismantling Racism will present a time of listening and understanding.

There will be a Progressive Revival worship at 7 p.m., Friday.

To register, visit pncucc.org and click on "events."

What are we bringing with us to church?

Conference Comments



By The Rev.
Mike Denton
Conference
Minister

***If we
miss
something
in a sermon,
is it because
of something
we're
not bringing
with us
to church?***

I was riding the bus to a meeting. As I was reaching into my briefcase to grab my headphones, I overheard a snippet of a conversation behind me.

Two women were talking about their churches. It was a joy to hear them compare bible studies and worship and music. I loved hearing one of them talk about the good friends they'd made in at church.

The other woman talked about how the church she went to was mainly made up of "older people" but they'd adopted her children as though they were their own grandchildren.

It sounded as though one of them went to a larger, more evangelical church but, "As far as I can tell, they seem to accept everybody."

The other went to a medium-sized church, mainline sounding church and she wasn't so sure about the congregation "But the pastor has a rainbow sticker on his old Volvo so..."

It was a lovely conversation to overhear. It made my day.

Mixed in with conversation was one statement many of us have heard before but I've been mulling around since.

As they were talking about their previous congregations, one of the women said, "I used to go to _____ and it was great but the preaching there just didn't feed me."

I get it. I mean, regardless of my best efforts I've preached more than one sermon of empty calories myself and I also know that when you connect with a well-preached sermon during worship there's really nothing else quite like it.

With respect to every single preacher out there who sweats over every word and punctuation...

If, as a church attendee, we want to compare a sermon to a meal, it should be one of our smallest meals of the week.

The time we set aside to pray on Monday is more important.

The book or bible study you attend on Tuesday should be more filling.

The protest we participate in on Wednesday is a fulfillment of our vocation.

When we share openly during that walk in the woods with a good friend on Thursday, its good for them and feeds us.

The time reconnecting with friends or family on Friday night is a gift.

The difficult ethical work decision you make on Saturday is a way of living into your baptism.

You get the idea. Hearing a sermon may be an important part of your spiritual nourishment but if you only count on that, you can't really blame the preacher for spiritual starvation.

I understand that good preaching is important but, in maintaining our spiritual health, it's not nearly as important as spiritual practices throughout the week.

If you're missing something during this Sunday's sermon, ask yourself:

Is that because of something that the pastor isn't bringing to their sermon or something you're not bringing with you to church?

Transitions announced

Jermell Witherspoon is the new designated pastor serving Liberation UCC and Everett UCC.

Darrell Goodwin left Liberation and Everett to become an associate conference minister in the Tri-Conference of Nebraska, Iowa and South Dakota.

Karyn Frazier, who is serving in ministry at Fauntleroy Church UCC, a previous PNCUCC Conference moderator, director of Christian education at Northshore and Fauntleroy received her master of divinity from Seattle University, was ordained March 10 at Fauntleroy Church UCC in Seattle.

David Schlicher was installed as pastor of Northshore UCC in Woodinville on March 24.

Happy Applewhite died while visiting his waterfront home in Port Townsend. His celebration of life was Feb. 23 at Plymouth Church, Seattle. He served First Congregational Church in Bellevue until he retired in 1994 and became a member of Plymouth Church.

Bob Fitzgerald, 91, retired UCC pastor died March 28. He was a long time member of University Congregational UCC in Seattle, served Magnolia UCC in Seattle, two churches in California and as interim for other PNC churches, including University UCC and Eastgate in Bellevue. He also worked as a counselor with Youth Eastside Services in Bellevue.

Clergy Training in April 26

Clergy Boundary Training sponsored by the PNC-UCC Committee on Ministry will be facilitated by Tara Barber from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., Friday, April 26, at University Congregational UCC, 4515 16th Ave NE in Seattle. Registration due April 13.

“This is a new, improved, shorter core boundary training, covering the basic understanding of how our health, social location and power affect our ministries,” said Tara. “We will explore how to navigate our ministerial relationships so that we can better serve. We will also review the new proposed Minister’s Code based on the Marks of Faithful and Effective Ministers.”

All clergy with standing and those who are ordained, licensed or commissioned in this Conference need to take a boundary training workshop every three years in order to maintain their standing in the Pacific Northwest Conference of the United

Church of Christ. Retired clergy who have been granted “Inactive Retired” standing in ministry are exempt from this requirement.

For information, call Cassie Emanuel, Westside Committee on Ministry co-chair, at 206-384-6111 or email comcassie@gmail.com.

Or contact the Rev. Michael Denton at 206-725-8383 ext. 102 or by email at revdenton@gmail.com

General Synod announced

National UCC General Minister and President has announced that the 32nd General Synod of the UCC will be held June 21 to 25 in Milwaukee, Wis. The keynote speaker is Matthew Desmond, professor of sociology at Princeton University and Pulitzer Prize winner for the book,

Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City.

Preachers include Kaji Spellman Doussa, Traci deVon Blackmon, Sharon Meishern MacArthur and Amy Butler.

General Synod will celebrate the ministries of retiring national leaders, Jim Moos, who is associate general minister for global engagement, and Don Hart, president and chief investment officer for United Church Funds. It will re-elect the General Minister and President and elect a new associate general minister for global engagement.

For information, visit ucc.org.

Youth Synod is an opportunity for youth ages 13 to 18 to engage with the wider church and experience what the United Church of Christ is like beyond their local churches. The UCC values the youth voice and is inviting youth to engage business coming before the delegates.

There are opportunities to meet the Rev. Traci Blackmon, visit museums, engage in service and meet other youth from around the county.

For information, visit <https://www.synod2019.org/en/uccsynod2019/Youth-Synod> or contact Lara Crutsinger-Perry, at lara@theunitedchurches.org.

Youth opportunities set

UCC Summer Communities of Service are offered for young people ages 19 and older to engage youth with community, gardens, environmental and racial justice, food and economic sustainability, serving with faith communities and social justice

from the end of May to early August.

For information, visit ucc.org/volunteer_scos.

Young Adult Service Communities engage young adults ages 21 to 35 in community organizing, economic and racial justice, accessible education and health care, serving with faith communities and social justice activism from the fall through summer 11 months. **For information, visit ucc.org/volunteer-yasc**

Webinar workshop CANCELLED

A three-part workshop on “The Changing Myth of Mary Magdalene” will be held Friday to Saturday, May 3 and 4, at Fox Island UCC. Cindy Caldwell, who has a doctoral degree in mythology with an emphasis in depth psychology from Pacifica Graduate Institute in Carpinteria, Calif., will lead the lectures with sessions at 7 p.m., Friday, 9 a.m. and 12:30 p.m., Saturday.

For information and to RSVP, email charnley.marsden@gmail.com.

Covenant Groups available

The Adult Spiritual Formation Task Force has four series of Covenant Group sessions available for PNC congregations.

“Covenant Group Ministry is focused on building relationships, exploring aspects of our lives through a spiritual lens, and recognizing that our stories are sacred—filled with the movement of the Spirit,” said Kathie Forman.

“It is a context in which people are truly heard, respected and treasured as the unique individuals they are, beloved children of God,” she said.

Groups are based on mutual respect and trust. Participants can share their stories and thoughts, find care and support, and offer care and support to one another. This small group ministry is multifaceted, she said.

The program provides a covenanted community, authentic listening in safe space, freedom to talk or be silent, opportunities to move the conversation beyond the surface level, acts of service for the church and community, and an environment for building relationships and establishing trust.

“Whether a church is new to small group ministry or seeking new options for ongoing small group ministry programs, these materials can,” said Kathie.

For information, email pkforman@juno.com.

Conference
News
Briefs

Partner with local projects to cleanup, knit, nurture

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ways to be the church in the community,” she said.

That meant involving people from the community, including scout troops, families and neighborhood friends.

Senior pastor Joy Haertig said that the projects they engaged with make a difference in the community.

The five projects they engaged with on the chilly, rainy Sunday were the following:

- At Thorndyke Park, volunteers, including scouts, did forest restoration by removing aggressive weeds—ivy, hawthorn and blackberry bushes—and maintaining areas where these weeds have been removed.

They planted native trees, such as yew evergreen and dogwood as part of 350 plants Seattle Parks and Recreation will replant during the year.

Walter Hughson, who volunteers with the city department, hoped that those who helped also learned how to improve forests and keep neighborhood parks clean, rather than assuming the city will do the work.

- As part of Project Linus, volunteers made blankets for social service agencies and children’s hospitals to give to children experiencing traumatic situations.

- At the Seattle Animal Shelter, volunteers did both indoor and outdoor projects to support the shelter, including walking and playing with dogs.

- A team worked at the Daybreak Star Cultural Center on clean-up and restoration of their Elder Garden.

- A group helped residents at Tiny Cabins in Interbay with removal of blackberry bushes, ivy and other wild plant growth on the perimeter to improve security and general beatification of the village that is adjacent to the Magnolia Bridge. The village, which opened in fall 2017,

houses 55 low-income and previously homeless families in tiny homes built and donated by community organizations.

Joe Procella, the community outreach coordinator, appreciated the support in making their home more comfortable.

Residents there must be alcohol- and drug-free. Most have full-time jobs and many attend Magnolia UCC.

There is an effort now to have plumbing in the tiny homes so residents don’t have to go to the shared kitchen and showers, or use port-a-potties and bottled water.

He is grateful that the church helped with cleanup.

Joy said the church will continue to support and volunteer at the tiny-house encampment beyond the Community Action Sunday, “because they are our neighbors.

Marci said the church has developed a three-year action plan and in prioritizing the community action worship experiences.

“I think 50 percent were from the church and the rest were recruited from all over Magnolia through community service networks and social media,” she said.

Three scout troops assisted. Participants gathered to worship for 15 minutes and then deployed to the five projects in Magnolia and Ballard.

“We posted the projects on our online registration website,” Marci said. “People could go on and sign up for the project of their choice.”

After working two hours, the groups came back for soup and cocoa.

“One Girl Scout asked if they could do it every Sunday,” Marci said.

“The congregation enjoyed bringing multiple generations of families to work on projects,” she said. “The general reaction is that it was a fun and different way to be church, with



One group, top, helps with projects at animal shelter while another group from Magnolia UCC and the community cleans up at tiny houses, below.

Photos courtesy of Danielle Chastaine

members mixing in groups with others. At each site, there was a lay team leader to prepare the site”

Sundays the average attendance is about 70, so the Community Action Sunday doubled participation.

In debriefing, organizers are looking at how to expand it next year, such as by incorporating other church communities in Magnolia. Most signed up to do it again.

For now, it’s once a year because of the logistics challenge of arranging the projects.

“We’re having interesting conversation now about how to be a vital church and how

to measure success if it’s not through donations or numbers of people,” Marci said.

She deems it a success based on the foyer being packed with noisy kids.

“It felt very messy, chaotic and alive,” said Marci, who has served there two years.

Marci, who grew up Catholic, previously did pulpit supply at St. Paul’s UCC while completing a master of divinity degree in spiritual direction at Seattle University. She was ordained in September at St. Paul’s.

For information, call 206-283-1788 or email marci@magnoliaucc.org.

Courtney Stange-Tregear offers online Lenten sharing

In introducing a “Weaving with Wonder” Lenten Devotional, Courtney Stange Tregear said her favorite part of being the PNC minister of church vitality is meeting with people and hearing the stories of people around the conference—hearing about their personal lives, past struggles and successes, hopes and fears for the Church and more

“With each story I feel more and more tightly woven into the fabric of the Pacific Northwest Conference,” she said.

She also loves seeing PNC members get to know each other through a storytelling exercise she uses at conference gatherings and congregations.

“Each person listens with genuine interest, curiosity and wonder. Each person is changed, the community is changed, I dare say, the world is changed, by the process of sharing with one another. Sharing our significant, sometimes tragic, sometimes funny, always true stories, weaves us together,” Courtney said.

It reminds her of a woven basket: “Some baskets are loosely woven, unique beauties, which make a statement by their presence. Some baskets are tightly woven, also beautiful, and make their impact by what they are able to do in and for the world. One basket is not better than the other. They each have their place and purpose. But if we try to use the loosely woven basket to carry water or grain, we will be disappointed as much of it falls through the loose weave,” she said.

Courtney finds many people called to have greater impact in their churches, communities and the wider world—to “bend the arc of justice, model radical hospitality, share the love of God, and proclaim the Gospel in all we do,” she said.

“In other words, we want to bring forth the kingdom of God by listening to one another, learning from one another, be-



Courtney Stange-Tregear used this graphic for the stories.

ing woven more tightly with one another, our churches, our communities and all creation.”

So each day at the Lenten Devotional “Weaving with Wonder” website—<https://us3.campaign-archive.com/home/?u=4a3c23c062e20ddd96e6cd3e&id=6a2c5c87cd>—she has included a new “Weaving with Wonder” story, sent by email to everyone who signs up at <http://eepurl.com/gfCsyv> or at <http://www.facebook.com/pastorcourtney>. Stories are written by anyone in the conference or wider community.

Courtney said “stories of about 200 to 400 words should be about a (recent) time that you opened yourself to being woven more tightly. What happened? What did you learn about yourself, others, creation, the Divine? As always, the most important thing is that the stories matter, they are one’s own, and that they are true.

As of March 14, she said the page averaged a 72 percent open rate of the daily email—compared to the industry average of 25 percent. Its averages 240 people a day.

April 1, she wrote that she has found the stories “beautiful and touching.” She has also received emails from PNC folks thanking her for the project.

PNC leadership identified deepening relationships as a priority, so she felt a storytelling devotional series fit. It’s her fourth year using such a devotional series.

“I feel humbled. Every time I read a story I am so touched and inspired that someone was willing to share, not just with me, but with a whole list of recipients. Some of the stories are breathtakingly beautiful. Some are heart-wrenchingly painful. Some are simply hilarious. Each one is written by an imperfect person about their real life. The enormity of such authenticity, honesty, and courage takes my breath away. Every. Single. Day,” she said.

“I feel gratitude, and hope, and joy. Everywhere I go, I get to meet such complex, kind, divinely created, beautifully flawed human beings.

Here are a few stories:

- Peter Ilgenfritz reflected on how he risked to leave a church community and ministry he had loved for 25 years “to follow the Spirit’s call and step out into a new chapter in my life and ministry.”

- Gail Crouch of University Congregational UCC told of conversing in the early 1990’s when the Conference was considering a resolution to become

an Open and Affirming conference with a farmer from a rural church. Division was strong and emotions high in open sessions. He shared about rural life and farming, and she shared about urban life and her diverse friends. “We had shared as part of the fabric of the Conference,” she said. After the vote, he thanked her for the conversation, saying he had many questions but had voted yes.”

“Our stories bring us together and sometimes change us in unexpected ways,” she said.

- Linda Crowe, who retired from Veradale UCC and now attends Westminster, values the personal connections she experiences at PNC events, because her faith journey has been shaped and touched by many people from numerous churches across the region.

At a communion service at a PNC gathering, she recognized the pastor who baptized her, her youth leaders, friends in the church where she grew to adulthood, married and been youth minister; friends from her current church family and from church camps.

“I celebrate that my church family is as large as this Conference—all the people I’ve ever gone to camp with, served with on assorted committees; walked with and worked with while doing justice work; labored alongside, in numerous church buildings and at Pilgrim Firs and N-Sid-Sen, and worked with during mission trips following disastrous hurricanes.

Other contributors include Christine Hanson, 2013 PNC moderator; Stephen O’Bent, music and arts at First Congregational Bellevue; Tara Barber, clergy ethnics and boundary trainer; Kevin Peterson, music director at Normandy Park UCC; Kyna Shilling, PNC leader, and many more.

Stories and devotions can still be emailed to Courtney@pncucc.org.

Westminster UCC celebrates 140th on May 26

As Westminster Congregational UCC in Spokane prepares to celebrate its 140th anniversary, on Sunday, May 26, it is doing so by lifting up not only its history but also its present and future.

When it was chartered as First Congregational Church on May 22, 1879, in the log cabin home of Henry and Lucy Cowley, it was the first church in Spokane, formed by a small group of settlers and two members of the Spokane Tribe.

The Cowleys were missionaries among the Nez Perce Indians in Lapwai. They moved to Spokane in 1874 to work with the Spokane Indians and set up a school for Indian and settler children.

The church first met in the school and then built a church at the corner of Sprague and Bernard. Between 1890 and 1893, they built the present gray stone structure on the present site at the corner of 4th and Washington.

It changed its name both in 1893 when it merged with an early Westminster Presbyterian Church and in 1961 when it voted to become part of the United Church of Christ.

The church's past, present and future is marked by its commitment to be involved with the community and world.

"As a downtown church, we are committed to the city," said Andy CastroLang, the pastor. "In the past few years we researched leaving that corner, including looking at a site on the east end of Spokane Valley, but the congregation voted to stay downtown.



Typical to Westminster's ecumenical outreach, members hold MardiBras event collecting underwear, hygiene items for homeless women at Transitions Women's Hearth day center and Volunteers of America's Hope House shelter—an example of the church ministering ecumenically.

Photo courtesy of Andy CastroLang

"A downtown church is what we are in our outreach, mission and ministry," she said. "It's our identity."

In the 1980s, the church offered a counseling center, a food bank and a clothing bank, housed along with a school in a building it owned, that has since been torn down.

For many years, a group of women met regularly with sewing machines and knitting needles to make layettes for babies.

In the 20th and 21st centuries, its ministries also included support of N-Sid-Sen and world mission.

"Now we are the most progressive Christian church at the city's core," she said. "If Westminster disappeared, there would be a huge hole in the community. Our church is activist in terms of both doing charity and systemic change."

The church ministers ecumenically.

It helped found the Mid-City Concerns Meals on Wheels and actively recruited

volunteers for many years.

It is involved with the Spokane Alliance in community organizing in collaboration with education institutions, unions and other faith groups.

Since The Fig Tree started, members have also been involved with the 35-year-old ecumenical/interfaith newspaper the covers religion and non-profit news in the region.

Each month, it recruits members to cook meals when the Spokane Friends Church hosts homeless families in its building once a month through the Family Promise Bridges program.

Members support homeless women at Hope House and homeless youth through Crosswalk, two programs of Volunteers of America of the Inland Northwest.

"Just recently we were a good neighbor to people living in an apartment building next door. We took in residents when there was a fire in two units, driving everyone out," Andy said. "The Red Cross came and worked from the church to find housing for people."

Westminster opened this winter as a warming shelter for homeless young adult men and women, and is open through April in conjunction with the City of Spokane. Those who have been housed there will

join in the church's Easter Brunch.

"With UCC churches scattered on the West Coast, we work ecumenically and interfaith with other congregations, organizations and people," said Andy.

Westminster Congregational UCC carries its march banner every year in the Pride Parade, the Martin Luther King Jr Day March, the Women's March, Immigration Rights marches, the 2018 March for Our Lives with young people.

Andy said that when she came 16 years ago in the fall of 2002, the church was tired and demoralized.

"I have buried many of the older members," she said. "In last March, we received eight new members, including a youth, young family and a gay couple," she said.

Westminster is not only LGBTQ friendly, having become open and affirming in 2007, but also it involves people of all ages who come looking for an inclusive church.

"While some traditional, mainline Protestant churches have given up, we are letting the city know we are here," she said. "We are a diverse group of people. We come in all kinds of families. We are a greater

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Westminster celebrates its past, present and future

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family who come together for love, support and freedom of faith expression.”

Its anniversary brochure says: “With our money, the power of our people and our building we serve the city of Spokane, especially those whose voices may not be heard and those without access to power who live in the downtown core.”

The congregation reaches out to the GLBTQI+ community, 12-step groups, artists, musicians, unions, nonprofits, seekers and questioners, sharing its facility and resources

Five members of the congregation were in Puerto Rico the first week of April with a PNC Global Ministries team working on rebuilding after Hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017.

The church also partners with the Unitarian Universalist Church of Spokane in a sister church relationship in Felsorakos, Romania, and is hosting the new pastor and his wife soon.

Members of the Congregation have also served on PNW Conference committees and in leadership.

While the church does have the weight of budget and financial problems with upkeep on a large building, its dedicated, passionate, but small congregation is using legacy funding right now for ministry as a way to strengthen its impact.

The church, which has a pipe organ and a strong music program, rents space for regular use by the Spokane Children’s Choir and Spokane Youth Symphony.

It has for two years rented its space for concerts of the Spokane Symphony, meetings and community events, such as a forum on homelessness.

Through the Spokane Alliance’s leadership education, it



Westminster leaders, Karen Mobley and Pastor Andy Castro-Lang meet at N-Sid-Sen for a retreat.

Photo courtesy of Jennifer Marquis



Westminster offered its building and sanctuary for a 2014 meeting of the Spokane Alliance.



Westminster carries its banner in Martin Luther King March.

has many strong leaders. When the moderator Steve Paulson recently had to step aside because of health, Jane Baker temporarily stepped into his role and the church will vote soon on Cathy Gunderson and Roger Stevens—Spokane Alliance leaders—to be co-moderators.

“We are updating our website, Facebook, and have a new brochure. One member is taking video of sermons and putting them on Facebook and YouTube.

Westminster has invited Spokane’s Mayor and City Council members, other congregations, colleagues in town, as well as members of the conference to join in the May 29 celebration.

“We will have an expanded choir with invitations to former choir members. We will bring our charter from the Museum of Arts and Culture. We will have an art show on ‘How our Spiritual Journeys Inform our Art,’ Andy said.

In a new brochure, Westminster expresses its mission: “We are a welcoming faith community who seek to strengthen our relationships with God and each other by exploring, questioning and nurturing our spirituality. Responding to God’s unconditional love and with Jesus as our model, we strive to live out love, compassion and inclusion. We believe we are called to love all people, serve our neighbors, and seek to transform the world into God’s vision of peace and justice, welcome, inclusion and compassion.”

Its future vision as a progressive Christian community is to serve the least and endure the tough life of witness to the community—and to be a neighbor to neighbors in the city and around the world.

For information, call 624-1366 or visit westminsterucc.org.

Jubilee Justice recruits, reports on JLJ, JLP

Justice Leadership Jubilee, a program of the PN-CUCC, which is designed to help people grow in their justice advocacy skills and focus, is welcoming applications for 2019-2020 Jubilee participants.

Jubilee is an intentional 10-month commitment for adults who want to develop their faith and learn systemic change skills with a community of their peers.

Christine Hanson, the program manager for Justice Leadership Jubilee, said the experience involves:

- Working with a community justice agency that matches one's interests;
- Spiritual reflection and sojourning retreats;
- Learning and skill building through workshops, and
- Engagement with one's home church.

For information, call 509-679-7430, email justiceleadershipjubilee@gmail.com, or visit justiceleadership.org or on Facebook at [justiceleadershipjubilee](https://www.facebook.com/justiceleadershipjubilee).

Jan von Lehe begins

In 2019, Jan von Lehe, justice leadership jubilee associate for University Congregational UCC, said, "I am pleased to be on my journey with the Justice Leadership Jubilee program to find my calling in this new time of retirement."

As one of three Justice Leadership Jubilee associates, she is volunteering six to 10 hours a week with 350 Seattle to support their work toward climate justice by organizing people to make deep system change by resisting fossil fuels, building momentum for healthy alternatives and fostering resilient, just and welcoming communities.

Jan also volunteers one to two hours a week at University Congregational UCC to gain skills in enlivening congregational mission and ministry.



Jan von Lehe is advocating with Earth Ministry in Olympia.

Photos courtesy of Christine Hanson



Climate Church, Climate World connection with Jim Antal. Jubilee associates Jan von Lehe and Kathy Dawson seated on either side. Climate justice supporters Meighan Pritchard, Lin Haggdorn, Roberta Rominger and Mary Ellen Smith.



Barbara Anderson in the Take 5 at Keystone sojourning

The work includes projects with Sacred Earth Matters group and the churches Calling, Engagement and Community Ministry.

"Our work toward climate justice is urgent given the United Nations and United States

reports," Jan said. "I am grateful for the leadership and support in our church and the national UCC to create the Justice Leadership Jubilee program.

For information, call 206-546-4123 or email janvonlehe@gmail.com.

JLP takes a year off

The Justice Leadership Program's advisory council on Feb. 27 approved a recommendation of staff that the young adult residential program discontinue operations for the 2019-20 year to use the time to reimagine a program that will connect young adults with social justice efforts grounded in faith, reported Rich Gamble, executive director of the Justice Leadership Program.

In its seven years, the program has produced "an impressive list of graduates who carry the work of justice into the future," Rich said.

"We have learned a great deal and e hope to use those insights to develop a program that is a more sustainable related to our aspirations and our resources," he said.

Although the young adult residential program will not operate next year, the Justice Leadership Program will continue its curriculum project, the Jubilee program and the Northwest Pilgrimage. However, the 2019 pilgrimage will not be held.

"The JLP has been a laboratory to build a model to use here and replicate elsewhere," Rich said.

"We expanded to eight this year, but found it exceeded our capacity. So we now have six interns who will complete their 11-month commitment," he said.

As he looks to the future, he does not know what next steps will look like.

The Justice Leadership staff with engage alumni, agencies where they served and UCC congregations that participated in hosting the interns to reflect on their experiences, evaluate what they learned in the model and offer proposals for the program in the future.

For information, call Rich Gamble at 206-632-6021 or email keystone5019@gmail.com.

Sarah Haycox's research finds civil rights leader

Because of the research and campaign by fifth grader Sarah Haycox, who attends Richmond Beach Congregational UCC in Shoreline, people in the community know about a local civil rights leader.

One day after a soccer game, she noticed a small stone marker near the field. On it was a metal plate with the image of Edwin T. Pratt and the dates 1930 to 1969. The memorial had been made 20 years ago by local school children.

Wondering about this person who lived such a short life, Sarah began to do research and found that he was a local civil rights leader.

She learned that he was executive director of the Seattle Urban League, working to end housing discrimination in the Seattle area, to desegregate Seattle schools and to promote job equality.

When he and his wife Betty moved to the Meridian Park Neighborhood in Shoreline in 1959, they were one of the first black families to live in the all-white suburb.

Nine months after the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., on Jan. 26, 1969, two men fatally shot him when he answered the door at his Shoreline home and then fled the scene in a car. The murder was never solved, she said.

While few of the people Sarah talked with had ever heard of Pratt, she told them about his leadership, bravery and compassion.

"He set an example for adults and children," she said.

Thinking he needed more recognition than a stone marker outside a restroom, Sarah began educating the Shoreline community.

When she learned that the school district was planning an early learning center across from her school, she went to work speaking at community



Sarah Haycox stands outside the new Edwin Pratt Early Learning Center, which the School District named to honor him because of her efforts.

Photos courtesy of Jane Wiebe and Richmond Beach UCC

groups and proposing that the school board name the building for 400 three- to five-year-old children after him.

Sarah conducted petition drives and spoke at school board meetings. The church encouraged members to write letters or email the school board in support of the name.

She collected about 2,000 signatures to an online petition.

As a result of her efforts, the Shoreline School District Board voted at their meeting in May 2018 to name its new early childhood center after Pratt.

Now other children will know his name.

A park and fine arts center in Seattle were also named for him.

Her campaign succeeded with the help of Richmond Beach UCC, where the 11-year-old attends with her mothers, Jane Wiebe and Cheryl Haycox, and her sister Katherine.

On Jan. 7, the Edwin T.

Pratt Early Learning Center opened its doors. In early February members of the Pratt family flew to Seattle to commemorate the anniversary of his death and to visit the new school.

As a result of her efforts to champion the work and Pratt's life, Sarah was selected as the first recipient of the Edmonds-based Lift Every Voice Legacy's "Beloved Community Award."

Pratt's daughter, Miriam Pratt Glover, presented the award.

Sarah also received the Richmond Beach UCC "Peace, Respect, and Love in Action" award and the King County Martin Luther King Jr. Distinguished Service Medal.

On Jan. 26, the 50th anniversary of his assassination, the Shoreline City Hall opened an art exhibit, "Living the Dream, Dreaming the Life: Edwin T. Pratt in the 21st Century."

Seventeen local artists, in-

spired by Pratt's life and legacy, worked with the Black Heritage Society of Washington State and with a Collections Care Grant from 4Culture, presented documents and photographs from the Pratt Family archive.

The materials offered understanding of his life as the first black homeowner in an exclusive white suburban neighborhood when home ownership was an American dream but not accessible for many people of color, Sarah said.

The exhibit is open through April 26.

Sarah was also profiled on CBS national news and in various news stories in newspapers in the region.

Sarah also realizes that this civil rights advocate's work must continue "so people treat each other as equals and realize we're all humans,"

For information, call 206-542-7477 or visit www.rbcucc.org.

25 from PNC and DOC-NW work in Puerto Rico

Disciples and UCC folks spent the first week of April rebuilding homes in central Puerto Rico on a Mission Pilgrimage to Puerto Rico arranged through the Global Ministries Committee and led by Randy Crowe, who led similar recovery work teams for several years in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

The team of 25 is staying at Camp Morton, a DOC camp there, while they help homeowners in the mountains near Barranquitas, PR, rebuild after Hurricanes Maria and Irma, said Mary Olney-Loyd in Facebook reports.

“From the dorm where we are staying, we can see equipment moving earth to repair a landslide at the camp,” said



Meighan Pritchard, Rick Russell and Gary Loyd were ready to work on their first day on repairs in Puerto Rico.

Photos courtesy of Mary Olney-Loyd and Meighan Pritchard

and daughter Grace Lambert of Kirkland UCC; Meighan Pritchard and Rick Russell of Prospect UCC, Mary and Gary Loyd of All Pilgrims, Ed Philyaw and grandson, Cole Dalton, of St. Paul’s UCC, and Jim Spraker, Dan Durland and Jocelyn Colt-Durland of Plymouth UCC all in Seattle; Mary Rupert, Margaret Ennis, Kent Johnson, and Randy and Linda Crowe of Westminster UCC in Spokane; and David and Kathy Helseth, Dennis Boyd, Becky Buell, and Jim and Cheryl Prokop from Englewood in Yakima.

For information, email randycrowe.crowe@gmail.com or participants’ Facebooks.

Mary. “With the loss of many trees, there have been landslides in many places in this mountainous land.”

While one group resealed a roof, Mary and Margaret Ennis of Westminster UCC in Spokane scraped and painted the walls and the ceiling of a carport.

“My worker buddies,” said Mary, “are Randy Crowe who knows carpentry and Margaret. We drink lots of water.”

“Randy fixed window cranks and put in an inside door. Margaret and I scraped walls and ceiling of a carport and to paint,” she said.

Tasks included sealing a roof, bathroom repair, demolishing and replacing a roof, painting, repairing/replacing windows and doors, and installing floors.

The team members were Eric Johnson from Wayside UCC in Federal Way; Van Kichline, Dick Johnson, and Ryan



Norma, the group’s hostess, prepares fish, rice, beans salad cooked green bananas and three root vegetables.



Randy Crowe with Margaret Ennis, both of Westminster in Spokane, repairs a window and put in an inside door.



Equipment cleans up landslide after a recent rain. Dorm where team is staying is in the background.



List of tasks for the day for the volunteer teams.

UCC is sending aid to partners in Mozambique, Zimbabwe

The national United Church of Christ and Disciples of Christ usually collect Offerings for One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) and the Week of Compassion during the spring.

As news of Cyclone Idai, the worst cyclone ever, hitting the southern hemisphere in Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi, the national United Church of Christ and Disciples of Christ Global Ministries is preparing to work through local partner churches.

People in the conference and region congregations are invited to give extra gifts as part of those offerings, designating for: funds for recovery from Cyclone Idai.

Donations may also be made by going online to ucc.org and giving to OGHS, or going to the Global Ministries website, globalministries.org.

Marco Cable, the Africa Executive for Global Ministries, is in contact with the partner

churches in the region. Global Ministries which is a joint effort of the United Church of Christ and the Disciples of Christ has four partners in Mozambique and two in Zimbabwe.

One partner, the United Church of Christ in Mozambique (UCCM) has its headquarters and most of churches exactly where the storm hit.

The UCCM confirms media reports that Beira, an important port city of 500,000, is estimated to be 90 percent destroyed and many rural communities inland from there were simply swallowed by rising floods from several rivers, including the Zambeze.

“Several days of winds, rains, floods and mudslides meant many people were still being rescued from rooftops and trees a week later and hundreds of thousands of people are much in need of everything,” he reported.

“Of first importance: food,

clean water, clothing and shelter,” he said.

Devastation means no electricity, bridges and roads are washed away, the main Beira hospital is 60 percent destroyed, including the surgical unit. Thousands of houses destroyed completely.

“Help has to arrive by boat or helicopter in most places though as floods recede, walking will take some folks home,” he said. “Local fishing boats have rescued many.”

The chair of the UCCZ board wrote of the panic and confusion as the cyclone ravaged communities in Chimanimani and Chipinge.

The church is rescuing people and recovering bodies marooned on islands with no food, clothing or shelter, trapped by mudslides and under collapsed buildings, and under water or mud.

“UCCZ infrastructure at the main mission centers of Chikore, Cinaa, Beaconhill and Mount Selinda, although affected, were not devastated and no loss of life has been recorded yet.”

Damaged bridges and roads to mission stations and damaged church buildings are reported across the country. Electricity is off and there is no means of communication.

“The church is now shifting from rescue operations to relief services, collecting clothes, blankets, medicine, drinking water and tents.

“We trust God will give the strength to overcome, so that we can provide counselling to the bereaved and the affected,” said the UCCZ leader.

In 2017, the PNC-UCC and Northwest Region DOC Global Ministries Committee in the Pacific northwest hosted Kim and Eric Free speaking in many of churches, said Ruth Brandon of the committee.

They had worked in agriculture and with women and

youth in that very area.

Retired UCC pastor, Ruth Brandon from Everett worked as a Global Ministries missionary with Mozambicans for eight years and, like the Frees, knows people there.

A long-time mission area with a hospital, school and churches is in the storm-damaged highlands area of eastern Zimbabwe.

Mary Stamp, of Westminster UCC in Spokane, visited Mt. Selinda when she attended a World Council of Churches Assembly in Harare, Zimbabwe in 1998. Members at the Cheney church, Willie and DeDe Gamon had spent several months there and gave her contacts.

Both Ruth and Mary testify to the mutual help church people in the devastated area give to neighbors, but even with governmental assistance, there is no capacity to meet needs for recovery this time without the world assisting.

Ruth heard from Anne Crane who served at Mt. Selinda for several years that the president of the UCC Zimbabwe reports that Mt. Selinda suffered “some significant damage,” but there were no deaths there during or immediately after the storm.

The death toll in Beira alone will likely surpass 1,000, according to reports.

At the time this was written, cholera, which kills quickly and spreads with contaminated water, had begun to bring further deaths and the whole battered region had registered over 800 deaths, Ruth said.

As flood waters recede more bodies will be found and more people who have had neither food nor clean water for will desperately need scarce medical care.

There are updates available at www.globalministries.org/Africa and check *Africa News*.



Behind a team sealing a roof in Puerto Rico are pine trees that were damaged in Hurricanes Maria and Irma.

Pastor visits six nations on interfaith peace mission

Paul Ashby, pastor of Richmond Beach Congregational UCC in Shoreline, returned in March from a “Peace, Respect, and Love in Action” Mission visiting six nations in Asia.

Last spring, he was one of more than 700 people applying for a Lilly Endowment Sabbatical Grant. He learned in late September that he was awarded a fully funded grant of \$46,533, that included funds for his wife, Pam, to travel with him.

His travel, completed the end of March, was to do interfaith peacemaking in Asian nations where televangelists and missionaries have spread a message of rejection and judgment against other faiths. He went to share in dialogue about the compassion of Jesus of Nazareth.

Paul based the dialogues on that theme, “Peace, Respect, and Love in Action,” which has been central to Richmond Beach UCC’s ministry.

His inspiration is from the Trappist monk Thomas Merton, a pioneer of interfaith dialogues, who provides a method based on sharing common ethical values, speaking respectfully about differences, and reflecting on ways different faiths open the human heart and consciousness to compassion, mercy, service to the poor, and forgiveness, said Paul.

He held public interfaith dialogues with Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish, and Daoist religious leaders.

The mission took the Ashbys to Penang, Malaysia; Kandy, Sri Lanka; Phnom Penh, Cambodia; Hanoi, Vietnam; Chang Mai, Thailand, and Taipei, Taiwan. They met people for dialogue and visited many temples, mosques, cathedrals and synagogues.

Paul chose Malaysia because it is a tolerant, inclusive Muslim majority country where there is harmony and respect among the Muslim, Buddhist,



Paul Ashby on the steps of a Hindu temple in Sri Lanka.

Photo courtesy of Pam Ashby

Hindu and Christian groups.

“Malaysia is a country that practices freedom of religion and breaks stereotypes of Muslim countries with Sharia law,” he said. “We held a dialogue at a Buddhist temple across from a Hindu temple up the street, named Harmony St., from a mosque in Georgetown.”

Many emails went into the arrangements, and discussion of what topics to consider. The topics were karma and ethics, ways to meditate, and how they live together in peace.

It contrasted to Sri Lanka, where he met with Hindu and Buddhist leaders who had engaged in acts of terror during a 26-year civil war that bombed sacred sites.

“I asked what the nature of the war was, why they fought and what they hoped to gain,” Paul said. “I explored the impact of the disharmony on the culture and people. Many felt shame about it and did not want to talk about it. Visiting the Temple of Buddha’s Tooth, I asked about it having been bombed by Hindu nationalists.”

The war seemed futile to Paul because Hindus wanted a separate nation within Sri Lanka, when a ferry ride away is a Hindu nation, India. He noted that part of nationalism is the

belief that every religion has the right to its own nation.

“In Cambodia, I saw the aftermath of the Pol Pot dictatorship from 1975 to 1979, that killed 2 million of 7 million people to try to kill all forms of religion,” he said. “I found temples revived and religion back. People talked of the suffering, pain and horror, but out of it were gentle. They were the most grace-filled people I met.”

He went to Vietnam to see what happened to religion after communist talk of religion being the opiate of people.

“I found religious groups flourishing, including Cao dai, a form of Daoism which has a big blue eye as its symbol,” Paul said. “The Catholic Church was also doing well in the North, as well as the South. We visited many cathedrals and saw young people attending.”

The Buddhist leader, Thich Nhat Hanh, who had fled, returned for his final days.

“I also saw there the wasteful damage and uselessness of war to spread capitalism and democracy,” Paul said. “While communists had won, I saw capitalism doing well there.”

In Thailand, he and Pam saw many of the Buddhist temples in Bangkok and Changmai.

In one historic district, there were 37 Buddhist temples in an area of 20 by 10 blocks. There were also Catholic churches, a Hindu temple and two Muslim mosques.

There he had dialogue about the nature of compassion and whether its practice interferes with another person’s karma. A Buddhist monk said someone’s compassion would be part of a person’s karma.

While most spoke English, in Taiwan, few did, so he had to have translation when asking at a Daoist temple about the role of luck and the role of grace.

“Before I went, previous travels convinced me that good travel makes for good religion,” Paul said. “It teaches us to tolerate and appreciate others, to see people of different faiths and practices.

“Travel helps us see a wider picture of the world. If we see a wider picture of the world, we see a wider picture of God,” he said, “making it hard to be judgmental.”

Paul had gone to Europe to study in France during college. He also went to Europe during seminary, 10 years and 25 years into ministry.

The grant follows decades of interfaith outreach and peacemaking for Paul. He received an award for helping Tibetan Buddhist refugees, and the Oklahomans for Equality “Spiritual Inclusion” award for leadership in creating understanding among faiths. He did postdoctoral study on Asian religions at Harvard University.

Paul is vice president of Seattle Soto Zen, has had sermons published in a Hindu journal and was given a lifetime member to the Vedanta Society of Western Washington for his interfaith peace work in Seattle.

Paul believes that “God is greater than any one theology or anyone’s imagination.”

For information, call (206) 542-7477 or visit rbcucc.org.

Gen Heywood convenes faith leaders, Earth Day Vigil

Gen Heywood, pastor at Veradale UCC has been convening Faith Leaders and Leaders of Conscience, which prepared a statement they presented at the Spokane Islamic Center on March 29 and is organizing an Earth Day Vigil, “For the Healing of the Earth,” Monday, April 22, at the Tribal Gathering Place beside Spokane City Hall.

At the mosque, three members of Faith Leaders and Leaders of Conscience (FLLC) members read a statement, signed by 19 individuals and organizations:

“We stand in deepest sorrow with you, our Muslim neighbors and friends. We weep and mourn the 51 Muslim children, women, and men who were killed in a horrific act of violence as they gathered peacefully for Friday prayers in Christchurch, New Zealand, on March 15, 2019. We share the global condemnation of this and all similar acts of violence. We join with our Muslim neighbors and friends in prayer.”

“We call all people of faith and conscience to join us in listening to those hurt and threatened by anti-Muslim bigotry. We stand in solidarity with the American Muslim Institution’s (AMI) recent statement, proclaiming that:

“We join Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern in condemning the worst terrorist attacks ever in one of the most peaceful and welcoming countries in the world. We join all peace-loving New Zealanders in mourning with the families over the loss of the victims of this senseless and hate-filled attack. Islamophobia, hate, and xenophobia have no place in New Zealand nor any other country in the world.”

“We stand together in the compassion that is rooted in each of our different religious and moral traditions. We declare that all humans are



Among those participating in reading a statement of compassion and solidarity with the Spokane Muslim community were UCC members of Faith Leaders and Leaders of Conscience, including Jim CastroLang, pastor of First Congregational UCC in Colville, at the left front; Gen Heywood, pastor of Veradale UCC, at the center front, and Diana Koorkanian-Sauers, who attends Westminster Congregational UCC and is president of Congregation Emanu-El in Spokane, at the right.

neighbors and deserve love and respect. Love for every human being will triumph over hate. We offer comfort to our American Muslim neighbors and join them in sorrow and outrage. We love you and hold each of you as precious to the fullness of our country and our communities. You belong with us and we with you.

“We will persist in the higher way of compassion known in many practices and by many names. May we gain the needed strength, even while we grieve, to be transformed from fear to love, from division to unity, from desperation to hope. Let us recommit to shaping a world of respect, tolerance, safety, and peace for all. No exceptions,” the statement concluded.

Rabbi Tamar Malino of Temple Beth Shalom added a word of deepest sympathy from the Jewish community as she presented a copy of the FLLC statement to Mamdouh.

The Faith Leaders and Leaders of Conscience (FLLC)

are planning the Earth Day Vigil on April 22, and another a “Vigil for the Healing of the Earth” the first Sunday in October at the SuperFund site at the Cataldo Mission in Cataldo, Idaho.

“We plan to repeat these events every year,” said Gen. “We hope by meeting every six months, different groups working on separate aspects to heal our Earth can gather, report to each other what they are doing and encourage others to join with them.

“The care of our planet crosses all cultures, class divisions, religions and non-religions. We are one people when we are united in the healing of our one planet,” said Gen.

The April 22 Earth Day Vigil will open with reading the statement American cultural anthropologist Margaret Mead gave before the United Nations on March 1977.

Bell ringing will be followed by opening words from Chairwoman Carol Evans of

the Spokane Tribe of Indians, as well as other tribal leaders.

People affected by the Bunker Hill Mine in the Silver Valley and Midnight Mine on the Spokane Reservation will also speak.

There will also be presentations by people who are challenging the proposed silicon smelter in Newport.

Along with area tribes— on the Spokane, Coeur d’Alene, Kalispel and Colville Confederated Reservations—about 20 groups working to heal the Earth, such as Spokane Riverkeepers, 350-Spokane, Pax Christi, the Silver Valley Resource Center, Catholic women religious and others will share information on how to join their work.

Other organizations working to heal the Earth may contact Gen to sign up to share resources.

The Faith Leaders and Leaders of Conscience of Eastern Washington and North Idaho work to overcome racism, militarism, poverty and ecological devastation, said Gen.

These goals come from are the principles set forth by the Poor Peoples Campaign: A National Call for a Moral Revival. All four barriers affect ecological devastation.

In June 2018, the FLLC began working on a vigil to draw attention to the reality the Inland Northwest is the largest superfund site in the nation, said Gen.

“A superfund site is one so polluted that it will take an enormous amount of money to clean and contain it,” she said. “The hope is that these vigils become opportunities to build friendships, strengthen our resolve, and put our thoughts and prayers into actions ‘For the Healing of the Earth.’

For information, call 408-593-9556 or email genheywood@att.net.

N-Sid-Sen has fire station on site, busy despite snow

In November 2018, Mark Boyd, managing director of N-Sid-Sen Camp and Conference Center, announced that N-Sid-Sen would be hosting a new fire boat in conjunction with East Side Fire District.

That is now complete.

“In fact, not only is there a new boat house with a fire boat sitting in our cove, but also there is a fire station on site. East Side Fire District has named this station #4.

East Side Fire District is a volunteer fire department, meaning this is not a manned station, he said.

“What it does mean is a possible discount in our insurance,” Mark said. “It also means EMT’s and fire district folks will have an even quicker response time.

“It means that we have a brand new dock to replace our badly worn out one at no cost to us and all maintenance will be done by East Side Fire District,” he said. “We also have a new dock for our groups for mooring or just hanging out on.”

It also means something new and large in the once empty cove.

It means a big building in the skyline where there was nothing.

It does mean the likelihood of a couple of vehicles coming into camp as they head out to assist folks in danger.

Mark said that it is important to know it is extremely unlikely that any folks will be coming into camp needing emergency assistance.

This station will be for housing the fire boat, not for transporting folks into or through camp.

Mark reported that “this year N-Sid-Sen had more than three feet of snow which kept us busy plowing, shoveling and pulling campers cars out.

“In spite the snow, or perhaps because of we had a steady



New dock and East Side Fire District Station #4 boathouse for a fire boat change the view in the cove at N-Sid-Sen on Lake Coeur d’Alene.

Photo courtesy of Mark Boyd



Camp dog, Sage, stands in a path that was dug to the beach.

flow of groups coming out.”

Most folks enjoyed sitting in Forrester lodge around the fireplace, watching the snow-fall outside, he said.

Most of the snow has melted and rains are coming, but Mark expects the water level will not rise as high as it did last year.

Mark continues to post photos on Facebook along with verses to offer moments of connecting with camp and sharing faith and life reflections along with reflections of the sun, sky and scenery, like on March 31:

A new day
with new possibilities
A new spring
with abundant responsibilities
A brighter joy
grows from within
The sun brings it,
we carry it forward.
We are the brightness.

For information, call 208-689-3489, email mark@n-sid-sen.org or visit n-sid-sen.org.

Camps re-evaluating priorities, exploring new ways of operating

Digging out and replacing decades-old septic pipes at Pilgrim Firs Camp and Conference has become a metaphor for Wade Zick, managing director, for the broader work needed at both Pilgrim Firs and N-Sid-Sen.

Over several weeks during the winter, Pilgrim Firs replaced a failed septic line for a cabin. That helped staff understand both the scope of the work and the costs for replacing the failing decades-old concrete septic lines around camp.

“This kind of project is not glamorous and yet is vitally important work that we do to make sure people can use the restrooms and that our sanitation is up to code,” he said.

On the camp programs and life, he said, “We need to dig into our most common practices of how camps are led and replace systems that are failing from under the surface.

“We have been engaged in that digging and replacing work at Pilgrim Firs and N-Sid-Sen,” he said.

Some of the digging requires asking about core mission priorities, funding priorities of staffing versus maintenance, looking at poli-

cies that inform a host of ways the camps operate and creating a sustainable vision to move into the future.

“That is a lot of digging to unearth the things that we need to replace,” Wade said. “We need to be clear that the work of unearthing will at times lead to things that don’t ‘smell’ as good – that is part of the risk.

Some of that work has already been done in shifting summer youth camps to N-Sid-Sen, so the camps no longer internally compete against each other for campers and staff,” he said.

Pilgrim Firs has started to focus on the arts community for future growth and partners in this work, he said.

“We have had visioning conversations with core constituent groups that are both reflective of the UCC and other user groups,” he said.

Pilgrim Firs has also started to prioritize future growth over maintaining traditions— while also having a priority of addressing the deferred maintenance issues to have a future.

As expected, some of the work has led to frustrated people, Wade commented.

“We have been inconsistent

in our messaging and communication as this is often unclear work as we are trying to learn new behaviors and try new ways of being camp,” he said. “We have bumped up against traditions that were deeply rooted and resistance to change can be profoundly difficult. All of that is to be expected and all of that is with the desired outcome for a camp that has a more sustainable and healthy future.”

A book Wade tries to read yearly is “A Failure of Nerve: Leadership in the Age of the Quick Fix” by Edwin Friedman.

The author points out that systems can become stuck needing a spirit of creativity and a willingness to learn through failure. He states that “for a fundamental reorientation to occur, that spirit of adventure which optimizes serendipity and which enables new perceptions beyond the control of our thinking processes must happen first.”

Both Pilgrim Firs and N-Sid-Sen are trying new ways of doing things “because we must, to both survive and to thrive. The time has arrived for us to behave and work differently.

Understandably this work can look messy and does not always make people happy,” Wade said.

“That needs to be okay. In order to move from our places from stuck-ness we will have to try new behaviors, prioritize differently and be willing to fail on occasion. We have deferred this work for too long and frankly the systems underneath are no longer all working or on the verge of collapse – much like our septic system,” he said.

“My hope is that you join us in this work. What does that mean?”

- Try some new ways of being camp with us.

- Take risks with us that might produce failures along the way.

- Send financial support to buffer the transitions—or help pay for the new septic lines needed.

- Most important, however, be in a spirit of solidarity with us to change as our future depends on this work of the digging and replacing old systems, Wade said.

For information, call 360-876-2031, email wadezick.pf@gmail.com, or visit pilgrim-firs.org.

Youth camp at N-Sid-Sen focus on ‘Peace Works’

Campers for 2019 youth and family summer camps at N-Sid-Sen will focus reflections around the theme, “Peace Works - Empowering the Next Generation of Peacemakers.”

Kaila Russell of the Outdoor Ministries Committee said that campers will consider how peace is a prayer and is life’s work. They will look at stories of peace and justice in Scripture. She encourages churches to recruit youth to go to camp this summer.

July 7 to 13 will be the Intermediate Camp led by Stephen Hadden and Kaila, and Junior High Camp led by

Leah Atkinson Bilinski and Leda Zakarison.

Eric Anderson is director for the Kids Camp, which is July 14 to 17, overlapping a few days with Senior High Camp, which will be July 14 to 20. Cory Mclay and Anna Colwell will lead Senior High Camp.

Other camp directors are Bruce Wilson for the Emerging Adult Camp, July 19 to 21; Amy Johnson and Ryan Lambert for Family Camp 1, which will be July 28 to Aug. 3, and Janet Malley for Family Camp 2 (Camp Together), which will be Aug. 4 to 10.

Registration will be online at n-sid-sen.org.