



# Pacific Northwest CONFERENCE NEWS

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Fall 2022

## Seattle Samoan church celebrates 45 years

**In honor of 45th anniversary, congregation raised funds to pay off loan on parsonage**

September 24 was the 45th anniversary of the Samoan Congregational Christian Church Seattle II in Burien. Kelekolio Kolo'i and his wife Dawn have served in ministry there since 2013.

For the church's anniversary, they prepared nearly eight months to raise money to pay off the loan the church had taken out in 2006 to pay \$300,000 for the parsonage.

There was \$32,750 remaining.

The church had members of its 17 families take 75 papers with 75 blocks, selling each for \$10 and raising \$56,250 with that approach.

On Sept. 24, they had a raffle with 10 prizes worth \$1,000, a total of \$10,000 from the \$56,250.

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Samoan Congregational Christian Church of Seattle II members celebrate 45th.

Photo courtesy of Dawn Kolo'i

## Courtney Stange-Tregear is Acting Conference Minister

As acting conference minister Courtney Stange-Tregear leaves behind the title of minister for church vitality, she maintains her commitment to relationship building and storytelling as key components of the style of ministry and leadership the PNC needs.

Shortly after she returned from a three-month sabbatical, which she devoted to being present with and deepening relationships with her family, the PNC Board of Directors decided on Sept. 12 to call her as acting conference minister.

"I plan to work to increase communication, such as rolling out a series of stories about who the Board members are," she said.

Another way she has carried out that

**Board of Director  
begins search for  
new managing director  
at N-Sid-Sen**

commitment is that, for the past three years and even before COVID, she held a weekly online office hour from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m., Wednesdays, except when she is traveling.

Courtney said that an early action was to establish a search committee to fill Mark Boyd's role as managing director at N-Sid-Sen. Mark will be moving to Pilgrim Firs as the new managing director beginning Dec. 1.

The Search Committee is working hard at finding a replacement for Mark at N-Sid-Sen, which may include a short-term position, before a longer-term candidate can be found. Please contact Leah Atkinson Bilinski with nominations or for more information.

She added that the conference leadership committees are meeting, but all need more people.

"The Church Development Committee is doing some exciting work around congregations seeking to affiliate with the PNC," Courtney said. "Approximately six Samoan and Marshallese congregations have begun the process. It's exciting to work where the Church is growing and thriving. This avenue of

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## Courtney Stange-Tregear says 'the conference is everyone's'

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growth is in line with our anti-racism priority to have more congregations of color interested in affiliating. Each congregation is different.

They include a Marshallese church in Spokane Valley, a Samoan church in Alaska and Several in or near Seattle.

"We have a strong team working with Church Development, but there is room for more to join the committee. It is important that the process of affiliation is rooted in relationship. The Committee seeks to walk with and accompany each congregation, aware that the process needs support and that the conference will learn from each congregation seeking affiliation," she said.

Courtney begins when there are numerous situations that require immediate attention. Despite her need to focus attention on them, she said that



**Courtney Stange-Tregear has earned doctor of ministry.**

the priorities of the conference for deepening relationships and anti-racism remain constant.

"I'm a relational person and value collaboration," said Courtney, who is aware that some may feel less connected to the Conference or unsure of what progress is being made.

The end of September, she joined several others from the

PNC at the Antoinette Brown Celebration of UCC women in ministry at Decatur, Ga. She was there with Kelle and Indigo Brown, Amy Johnson, Karyn Frazier and Tara Barber.

At the beginning of her sabbatical, granted after she had been with the PNC for six years, Courtney completed her doctor of ministry degree at Bexley

Seabury Seminary in Chicago. Her thesis was on deepening relationships through storytelling.

Courtney is aware that some may feel the Conference has stalled. She feels it is important to inform people in the congregations around the conference about who their leaders are and who they can call on to share their concerns.

"I am the Conference Minister, but the conference is not mine. It is everyone's, all 7,000 members. Just as the local church is not the pastor's, but is everyone's," she said, looking forward to being able to facilitate more relational connections for collaboration.

She hopes to have more regular conversations, not just once a year at Annual Meeting but more often, especially on the priority of anti-racism.

**For information, call 206-725-8383 x 103 or email [courtney@pncucc.org](mailto:courtney@pncucc.org).**

## Moderator welcomes acting conference minister

Moderator Tara Leininger officially introduced Courtney Stange-Tregear, who has been named as the PNC's Acting Conference Minister.

Courtney has served in the PNC for six years as Minister for Church Vitality, and previously served as Acting Conference Minister during Mike Denton's sabbatical.

For several years, she has curated the Lenten Devotional series and devotional book created from the 2020 Lenten reflections. She has been the staff support for the PNC Stewardship Committee and Church Development Committee.

Courtney has led retreats and annual meetings, created the weekly moderator's group to support local church leadership during the pandemic and more.

She was instrumental in the PNC's participation in "Giv-

ing Tuesday," a national day of giving fund-raising event, for which the PNC conference received national recognition.

"Recently I've been working with Courtney as she supports the PNC board and our strategy team, working on vision casting and strategic planning," said Tara. "I appreciate her keen listening, her grounded presence, and her skills as a creative problem-solver."

Tara describes Courtney as "a gifted preacher and a passionate, spirit-filled, theologically-grounded minister. Under her leadership the vitality ministry has led the conference priority of deepening relationships and has increased our capacity to do justice, love kindness, and to walk humbly with God."

Courtney is a member of the United Church of Christ Cornerstone Found board of

directors, the Antoinette Brown Society leadership, and a founding member and chair of the Associate Conference Minister's Alliance.

She has a bachelor's degree from St. John's College, a master's from the University of Leeds, a master of divinity from Andover Newton Seminary at Yale Divinity School, and now a doctor of ministry from Bexley Seabury Seminary at the University of Chicago.

"Our conference is a covenant between each of our churches, our camps, all our clergy and lay members of the PNC churches. Conference leadership is primarily made up of amazing volunteers, and that is by design," Tara said.

"Just like a UCC church is led by its members, a UCC conference is led by each person who participates and shows up,"

she continued. "The PNC staff supports the work of the conference, but all of you make the conference possible.

"In this time of staffing transition, I'm grateful we have someone who can step into the Acting Conference Minister role who knows us and loves our conference. Welcome to our Acting Conference Minister; may her journey with us be blessed!" said Tara on behalf of the Board.

Courtney's email is [courtney@pncucc.org](mailto:courtney@pncucc.org). Her drop-in office hours 9:30-10:30 a.m., Wednesdays, on Zoom, or by calling or texting her.

Arlene Hobson, the PNC executive administrator, at [arlene@pncucc.org](mailto:arlene@pncucc.org), can help guide those with questions to the best person to meet their needs.

**For information, email Tara at [mfcucc1911@yahoo.com](mailto:mfcucc1911@yahoo.com).**

## Transitions announced

The following transitions were approved by the Committee on Ministry at recent meetings:

- They conferred “Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing” on **Stephen Gentle**.

- **Kaye Hult** in Post Falls and **Melinda Townsend** were granted leaves of absence.

- **Elyse Jauregui’s** call to ordination was affirmed.

- Former Conference Minister **Mike Denton’s** transfer of standing was completed to serve in Massachusetts/Connecticut.

- **Janet Matthews** concluded her ministerial service at Fox Island UCC.

- **Roberta Rominger** concluded her ministerial service at Congregational Church on Mercer Island UCC.

**Kelsey Beebe** was supported in her request to transfer her standing to the Wisconsin Conference. Her “Dancing Pastor Ministry” will continue to be supported by the PNC conference and Wayside UCC.

**Sally Balmer** has recently retired from serving at Guemes Island UCC.

The Committee affirmed **Marcia McLaughlin’s** status with the designation of retired commissioned.

**Alice Ling** completed her service with the United Church of Christ Congregational in Wallace, Idaho.

## Communities of Practice program is under way

Communities of Practice groups began in September 2022 and will run through May 2023.

The structure will be online only at the onset, but should the ever-changing COVID situation allow, each group can collaborate to decide how to proceed.

Like last year, participation is open to the Montana Northern Wyoming and the Central Pacific conferences.

Active, retired, specialized ministers and members in discernment are invited to participate.

Those interested in participating in a group may contact coordinators Brigitta Remole and Amy Hitchens, who took over in September.

*For information, email [brigitta.ucc@gmail.com](mailto:brigitta.ucc@gmail.com) or [amy@npucc.org](mailto:amy@npucc.org).*

## Boundary Training set

Boundary Training will be held from 6 to 9 p.m., Monday, Oct. 17 ET. It is Retired Clergy Boundary Training with Tara Barber, Stephen Boyd and Melanie Oommen

Maintaining healthy boundaries is challenging at any stage in ministry but it can be particularly tender and difficult attending to boundaries for those transitioning from a last call and in retirement.

Using “A Sure Foundation,” “The Ministerial Code” and Bruce Epperley’s new book, “The Jubilee Years,” Stephen, Tara and Melanie are offering a focused Boundary Awareness Training for those entering and living in retirement. This training completes individual requirements for boundary training *only when* authorized by a local Committee on Ministry.

## Bellingham hosts seminar

First Congregational UCC in Bellingham is hosting a hybrid seminar and Sunday sermon on churches meeting “the moral challenge of climate change” with Jim Antal, UCC activist and public theologian on Saturday and Sunday, Nov. 5 and 6..

Jim serves as special advisor on climate justice to the General Minister and President of the UCC. His 2018 book, *Climate Church, Climate World*, is being read by many churches. He has preached in more than 300 locations since 1988 on climate change and engaged in nonviolent civil disobedience on many occasions.

*For information, visit [www.fcgb.net](http://www.fcgb.net).*

## UCC women hold retreat

The Regional Women’s Retreat will be held in November at Salishan Resort.

The keynote speaker Jennifer Garrison has made a two-minute video, including music from worship leader Christina Kukuk.

*For information, visit <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1tlgcFrFxOp8DWRfybrMJnWvX5huar7us/view?usp=sharing>.*

## General Synod 2023 planned

“Making All Things New” is the theme for the General Synod which will be held June 30 to July 4 in Indianapolis, Ind. For voting delegates it will be in person, but the organizing team is exploring ways to add virtual elements.

*For information, visit [ucc.org/next-synod-now-a-year-away-will-be-in-person-hybrid-aspects-being-explored/?inf\\_contact\\_key=58d474aa756bbfab8cbea5f8b71c165209c74070ac2bf3cfa7869e3efd4ff832](http://ucc.org/next-synod-now-a-year-away-will-be-in-person-hybrid-aspects-being-explored/?inf_contact_key=58d474aa756bbfab8cbea5f8b71c165209c74070ac2bf3cfa7869e3efd4ff832).*

## Justice Jubilee underway

The Justice Leadership Program, building on the success of the online spring Jubilee cohort, will run the fall Jubilee cohort from October 2022 to May 2023.

All participants from the spring cohort, who are from five PNC congregations, agreed that the program was instrumental in their growth as justice leaders, said Rich Gamble, executive director.

“Jubilee is an introductory justice course for adults of any age who want to deepen their understanding of justice and learn practical organizing skills. Program participants meet weekly for skill and knowledge on building workshops, spiritual reflection, and group discussion and support,” he said.

Jubilee is a booster grant recipient of Volunteer Ministries of the National UCC, supported by GLOBAL H.O.P.E.

*For information, email [info@justice-leadership.com](mailto:info@justice-leadership.com) or visit [www.justiceleadership.org](http://www.justiceleadership.org).*

## Sacred Conversations set

Following two days of Sacred Conversations on Racism, at 9:30 a.m., Sunday, Oct. 30, Velda Love, minister for racial justice on the national staff of the United Church of Christ, will preach at the United Churches of Olympia on “A Dangerous Sermon: The Cross and the Lynching Tree,” based on Luke 4:14-31.

The weekend workshop is for the United Churches congregation. The worship is open to anyone interested in attending in person or on zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89506082613> - Meeting ID: 895 0608 2613

“Why are we having this Sacred Conversation?” asked Marcia McLaughlin.

In Velda’s words, “Racial justice and racial equality need to be part of our national dialogue. As Christians in the United Church of Christ, we are responsible for changing the narrative of how we engage the Gospel of Jesus Christ that is inclusive, liberating and radical.”

*For information, call the church at 360-943-1210 or contact Marcia 206-228-4354 or at [marcia\\_mclaughlin@comcast.net](mailto:marcia_mclaughlin@comcast.net).*

Conference  
News  
Briefs

## Dawn Koloï shares her journey into ministry

Dawn Koloï, who serves in ministry with her husband, Kelekoloï, at the Samoan Congregational Christian Church Seattle II in Burien, said she is director of Christian education, leads women's and youth groups, and does all the behind-the-scenes ministry.

As part of her role on the PNC-UCC Church Development Committee and Committee on Ministry, Dawn, who is also a member of the Board of Directors, met with others of those committees worshipping Sept. 25 at the O le Malamalama o Iesu Keriso (The Light of Jesus Christ), which meets at Normandy Park UCC. The Rev. Elder Lognvi'I Polu is pastor there with his wife Kone.

"The church called us because they are interested in becoming a UCC church," said Dawn.

The speaker that day was Tafailematagi Muasau, the past president of the Kanana Fou theological Seminary in Pago Pago. **Continued on page 5**



**PNC team with Elder Logovi'i Polu, the church's pastor, and the past president of the Kanana Fou theological seminary Tafailematagi Muasau. Church Development Committee members are Doug Gunwaldsen and Dawn Koloï. Committee on Ministry members are Cameron Sharp and Jerry Chang.**

Photos courtesy of Dawn Koloï

## Anniversary in October provides funds for future

**Continued from page 1**

Members invited family and friends to come and, in the Samoan tradition, throw money as members of 17 families danced.

They added those funds to the \$46,250 to raise \$79,000. They paid the \$32,750 and have enough for the next church project, building a church hall in the next five years.

"It's the biggest fund-raising event we ever did," said Dawn. "The church was struggling in its ministry during COVID. We did not gather. We did not know how to do Zoom. Only last year did we begin to do all in person. This was our first fundraiser since 2019."

After paying off the parsonage, which is used as a church hall, they will look to raising

funds to build a church hall, she said. The congregation meets at the parsonage for feasts, so after everyone leaves, Dawn cleans up.

The Koloï's compensation is from love offerings from church members. Kelekoloï does ministry full time. Dawn teaches for nonprofits and helps Samoan programs through the Office of Samoan Affairs in Seattle.

The Samoan Congregational Christian Church Seattle II was founded in 1977 out of its mother church, Seattle I. The first pastor was a licensed pastor, Tau Atoa, who served just a year before he died in 1978.

Another UCC licensed pastor, Morisa Vili served until the Congregational Christian Church of American Samoa (CCCCAS) became indepen-

dent of Western Samoa in 1980 and the church decided to seek a pastor from CCCAS.

The next pastor, Rev. Emau Petaia came and began building the church building through the UCC Cornerstone Fund. It was built from 1981 to 1983 and the loan was paid. The church then began raising funds for a parsonage. When Pastor Petaia was called to be general secretary of the Congregational Christian Church in American Samoa, the next pastor was Fili Togi, who came in 1995 and left in 2012.

When the Koloï's were called to serve the church in 2013, there were just five families, because many families left when the previous pastor left. Now there are 17 families and 100 members, but more who participate, because many of the

17 families have 20 children.

The church is bilingual, teaching and preaching in Samoan and English. They teach the children and youth Samoan language, helping them learn the alphabet and learn to read. They often use singing to teach the language.

The young adults teach the children and youth the traditional dances

Dawn works with children and youth from other churches, including Lutheran and Catholic, and they share their building with a Honduran Pentecostal Church.

They often have feasts after church Sundays with the wider Samoan community.

**For information, call 206-981-1346 or email [koloij@yahoo.com](mailto:koloij@yahoo.com).**

# Woman minister serves PNC as well as church

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Pago, American Samoa, where Dawn and Kelekolio were students from 2005 to 2011.

"It was a sweet reunion," said Dawn, sharing how he had opened the door for her to study theology there.

**She then shared the story** of her pilgrimage into ministry.

Dawn and Kelekolio were both born and grew up in what is now American Samoa. He and his family moved to Hawaii, where he went to high school. They knew each other through their family names.

Dawn grew up in a Pentecostal church, and Kelekolio grew up Catholic. They met at her church while she was studying religion at Northwest University in Kirkland. In the Pentecostal church, she could study theology, but not be a pastor.

He had an associate's degree from Honolulu Community College and was taking courses to work with the police department.

When they met in 2005, both wanted to learn more of their mother tongue and study theology in that formal, traditional, respectful language of Samoan elders. They spoke the informal or street Samoan.

**They married June 26,** 2005, and left on Monday to go to Kanana Fou Theological Seminary. Soon after they arrived and Kelekolio passed the entrance exam, Dawn was surprised to learn the school was only for men. So she went to President Muasau and asked why women were not allowed to attend seminary.

**When she told him** she thought she could come and continue her studies in Samoan, he seemed open, she said.

When the school was founded in the 1830s, it was only for men, but "we are in the 20th century," she said.

In Samoan culture for a woman to speak to the seminary president was big. For her

to speak and ask why women were not allowed was a "no-no," Dawn said but she felt neither put down nor ignored.

He took her question to the board, telling them the wife of a freshman asked why women were not allowed.

"I was stunned. I did not know that such attitudes existed in my home country," she said.

The first week, she joined her husband at the orientation.

**"I realized it was a space** only for men and I couldn't be there," Dawn said. "If I had known that would happen, I would have stayed in Seattle."

Students and faculty told her to stay home, not follow him to classes, but clean house, cook food and stay at home.

During the first week of classes, Dawn went to the seminary library.

"The librarian almost did not let me in. He asked who I was," she said. "I told him my husband was a student and I only wanted to read a book. He said I could check out a book, but not use the computers. They were only for students.

"I had my own laptop. I went there three days. I challenged myself, because I did not like what I was seeing, how I felt and that I had left a job in America," she said, repeating her "fierce desire learn to do ministry in my mother tongue."

**Dawn went again** to the president's home to talk with him again, and he was there.

"He was gracious, and I felt safe. Then for the first time he spoke about the United Church of Christ," she said.

President Muasau told Dawn that in 2006, members from the United Church of Christ (UCC) and faculty and students from Pacific School of Religion (PSR) were coming for a visitation the next year.

The Congregational Christian Church of American Samoa and the Kanana Fou Seminary were planning a partnership.

"That could be a chance for you, because the UCC is big for women in ministry," he told Dawn. "If we want to be part of the UCC, that's your chance, but it's between you and me until 2006."

**That August she met** the PSR president, students and teachers. Two weeks after they left, the president talked with her and with the Board of Elders that oversees the seminary.

They summoned her and said if she wanted to pursue studying, to go for it, but she had to pass the next entrance exam in September

"I was so excited. It was the first time my husband knew that I had been working behind the scenes with the president," she said.

Dawn was one of two women who took the exam. She was the only one who passed it.

**"I was so happy,"** she said.

"To this day, I have been devoted to UCC ministry. I helped the church as a whole and the seminary as it gave an opportunity for me, putting me in school with a scholarship."

That, however, did not mean it was easy for her.

"I was the most hated woman in and around the campus. I was told repeatedly that seminary is for men. She was a woman and had on background. They said I was evil and pitied my husband," Dawn recalled with tears in her eyes.

**The bachelor of divinity** study took five years. Her husband completed it a year ahead of her and waited for her to earn her degree.

"Those were the best years of my life even though I got under the skins of prejudiced men classmates," she said.

After graduating in 2011, she had a scholarship from the Council of World Mission and Ministry to study for a master's degree at the Korean Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Seoul. Her husband and his

family moved to California where he completed master's studies at Fuller Seminary. She began doctoral studies at University of the West in Rosemead, Calif., and hopes to finish some day.

Neither finished those studies because they were called to come to the church in Seattle in 2013. Kelekolio was ordained. She was not.

**"In the Samoan church** I'm still considered in ministry. I do what he does, except I only preach Mother's Day, Children's Day and for the Women's Group," Dawn said.

In the 10 years since she graduated, more Samoan women have gone to Kanana Fou Seminary. Eight have been ordained. Two teach at the seminary for women, and the rest are like her serving in ministry with their husbands.

"We do everything together, but Sunday school children are my priority, teaching teachers to teach them," she said.

"I love teaching the word," she added.

**Dawn has served nine** years with the PNC-UCC, beginning with serving on the Church Development Committee. She has been on the Board of Directors four years and is a member of the anti-racism group.

Dawn also serves as moderator of the Pacific Islander and Asian and American Ministries (PAAM) of the national UCC, which works in the Northwest with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. It involves churches that are Japanese, Chinese, Hawaiian, Filipino, Samoan, Marshallese, Tongan, Chuukese, Micronesian and East Indian.

She is secretary for the Women's Group in the CCCAS Conference in Seattle, which includes five PNC-UCC Samoan churches.

**For information, call 206-981-1346 or email koloij@yahoo.com.**

## Board moderator open lines of communication

### Reflections by PNC-UCC Moderator Tara Leininger

One of the observations from many in the PNC since May has been a lack of communication on the part of myself, the Board or from the staff.

This was unintentional but, once we entered the summer, we faced many challenges and changes.

- We had the conference minister of the past 14 years accept a call into a new ministry, which surprised many of us.

- We had the camp director at N Sid Sen resign, seeking to live near family in Western Washington.

- Our minister for church vitality took a long-overdue and well-deserved sabbatical.

It took me a bit to get my feet under me as the moderator. For one thing, I didn't trust myself or the position I had accepted.

During the pandemic, things were so blanketed by distance and isolation that to suddenly be *the moderator* of the conference was disconcerting.

Fortunately, I had several people reminding me that I was the person in charge, that I had authority to act, and that I had to do just that—act.

There was action to be taken, and some of it is still forthcoming, but things have moved



Tara Leininger is now the PNC-UCC moderator.

quickly.

- We bade farewell to Mike Denton, with thanks and blessings.

- We welcomed as our Acting Conference Minister Court-

ney Stange-Tregear.

- We are getting the search committee together to find a camp director for N Sid Sen. We hope to have someone in

place before Mark leaves in November.

Of course, there are also the usual fires and issues that the conference faces on an almost daily basis.

Which brings us back to communication. Who wants to know and how much do you want to know?

I've been told that those who feel left out of the loop have been creating all sorts of dire situations: stop that!

Rather than imagine the worse, try asking me! Ask a board member. Ask Courtney. Call Arlene and have her direct your call to someone who can help you.

In the meantime, Courtney, Vice Moderator Indigo Brown and I, and the Board will do our best to keep you posted.

My grandmother was of an era where the phrase "no news is good news" was a given.

I guess in many ways it's a lesson I still use. I didn't have any news to share so I didn't say anything – which was wrong. I will do better.

If something is worrying you, don't make yourself crazy. Give me a call or an email, and I'll be glad to communicate with you personally. Shalom!

**For information, join the PNC-UCC Google link or email [mfcuuc1911@yahoo.com](mailto:mfcuuc1911@yahoo.com).**

## Task Force offers suggestions on inviting BBIAPI

The PNC-UCC Dismantling Racism Task Force has prepared a document on "Welcoming Our Black Brown Indigenous Asian and Pacific Islanders (BBIAPI) pastors and guest speakers to our predominantly white churches."

The task force members are Amara Oden, Andrew Conley-Holcomb, Christine Hanson, Elizabeth Maupin, Kelle Brown, Lenore Marentette, Lin Hagedorn, Robert Brown and

Steve Claggett.

The document helps white churches examine if their place may be a "dangerous space" for inviting people and be aware that being welcoming involves going beyond having open hearts and good intentions.

**Congregations are invited** to look at whether they historically have been excluding or hostile, and be aware of how to become partners in anti-racism work.

BBIAPI pastors have made it known that until churches are committed to work towards worship that is anti-racist they may not be welcoming.

"This work is never-ending, it is a life-long journey, and we will make mistakes along the way," the task force recognizes.

**They offer some questions** for to people reflect on whether their congregation is BBIAPI welcoming. These questions invite reflection, to begin or con-

tinue imagining an anti-racist world and a congregations role in creating that world.

### The questions include:

- What inspired the church to invite a BBIAPI pastor or guest?

- What does the church hope to gain from a cross-cultural leader?

- Has the congregation committed to anti-racism, both as individuals and as a congregation? How?

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# Taiwanese church teaches children language

As an extension of their weekly classes from 3 to 5 p.m., Sundays, the Taiwanese Christian United Church of Christ (UCC) Church that meets at Keystone UCC in Seattle held a summer camp in August to teach Taiwanese, as well as to enjoy the facilities at Pilgrim Firs Conference and Retreat Center at Port Orchard.

Jerry Chang, who has been pastor of the Taiwanese church since 2016, said the camp served 105 children, youth and adults.

“We use Taiwanese in our worship services, but the classes are also open to children from other Taiwanese families in the Seattle area,” he said, noting that there are 800 young Taiwanese professionals working at Amazon alone, plus more at Microsoft.

Many, as in Taiwan itself are Buddhist or Daoist. Taiwanese people are 90 percent those two faiths. Only five percent are Christian.

“We teach the weekly class for 15 students and offer hospitality. We do not teach religion as part of it, but invite the children to attend the service where they will hear Taiwanese and feel comfortable with it,” Jerry said. “We are sensitive to those whose families hold Buddhist or Daoist beliefs, but in work-



**Taiwanese children learn mother language at Pilgrim Firs.**

Photos courtesy of Jerry Chang

ing together through the classes we build relationships and show love and care.”

Most of the service is in Taiwanese, but worship leaders also translate some stories into English and Mandarin.

“We thought it would be a good outreach to offer the camp. We had \$5,000 budgeted to encourage all Taiwanese families to participate in the summer camp. The 18 families who joined received 30 percent support,” he said.

“Then we applied for the

PNC Anti-Racism Fund for another \$5,000 for another five families—three middle-income families for 50 percent support and two low-income families for 100 percent off,” Jerry added. “The 105 campers were from 23 families, plus 12 from the church paid their own resources.

The Taiwanese Christian Church in Seattle was established in 1989 as part of the United Church of Christ.

Like most (95 percent) of the church members, Jerry is a first-generation immigrant. He

grew up in Taiwan and came to St. Louis, Mo., for his college studies to earn a bachelor’s degree and to study at Eden Theological Seminary. He lived 16 years there, working and studying. Most church members also came to the U.S. to study.

Jerry grew up Presbyterian and was a Presbyterian (USA) student at Eden, but there learned about the United Church of Christ and chose to serve a UCC church. He was ordained in 2019 after he was called to the Seattle church.

“Our members and other Taiwanese in the area want to keep up with the mother language and culture,” he said.

In the classes, the children, who are elementary ages, learn songs and dances that they can share in worship.

Taiwanese undergraduate and graduate University of Washington student groups uses the church space for gatherings like a spring festival, speakers from Taiwan and a Hong Kong photography exhibit.

Jerry drives 45 minutes to an hour to the church from his home in Renton. Others come from Redmond to the east, Everett to the north and Puyallup to the south.

**For information, call 425-891-7004 or email [njc2025@gmail.com](mailto:njc2025@gmail.com).**

## Anti-racism work involves ongoing, sacred work

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- Have they done anti-racism training to critically reflect on their cultural privilege as a dominant culture church?

- What steps can they take to ensure the physical, emotional, and spiritual safety and well-being of the speaker before, during and after the visit?

- Has the church completed a Racial Audit to learn how to change practices and behavior?

- Have they developed relationships inside and outside

the church to respond to anti-Blackness realities and anti-racism work?

- Is the church financially compensating the pastor fairly for the emotional, spiritual, and intellectual work the interaction will require?

**The Dismantling Racism Task Force** said this is “transformative work that requires us to dig deep and examine our personal and cultural history, the collective trauma we have done and continue to do, and

the systems of oppression we knowingly and unknowingly support, sponsor and uphold.

“**We have much work** to do. If we commit to the individual and collective transformation, we will make progress, but this work will never be done. We, children of God, are the stewards of what is now and what will become,” they said.

The task force added that congregations do not have to walk the journey alone.

“If our journey is grounded

in love, if the goal is accountability in word and deed, if we seek a world that affirms interconnection and strives to find collective liberation, we will be transformed by our commitment to this work,” they said. “This is our sacred duty, our sacred work. We are here to offer companionship for this journey.”

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## Mark Boyd will be managing director at Pilgrim Firs

As Mark Boyd's position as managing director of N-Sid-Sen Camp and Retreat Center near Harrison, Idaho, ends Nov. 15, he was anticipating moving to be associate director at Pilgrim Firs in Port Orchard.

Then Wade Zick, managing director of Pilgrim Firs, announced his plan to leave that position and move to Uruguay.

Mark has been named as the new managing director of Pilgrim Firs.

"We are grateful for Mark's decades of leadership in our conference. He will be returning to Lake Flora after nearly 10 years at N-Sid-Sen on the shores of Lake Coeur d'Alene, said Alice Ling, Eric Johnson, Nicole Ballard, Leah Atkinson Bilinski and Courtney Stange-Tregear.

"Although we will miss his beautiful pictures and reflections from the shores of Lake Coeur d'Alene, we look forward to seeing the gifts he will bring to Pilgrim Fir," they said.



Julie and Mark Boyd at farewell barbecue at N-Sid-Sen.

Mark previously served as Pilgrim Firs' facilities manager, as well as directing the PNC Confirmation Camps and Junior High Camps there.

Mark also serves on the UCC Outdoor Ministries Association (OMA), connecting OMA and other northwest camps as well as participating in and leading national camp events.

Mark was raised in the Puget Sound area, and served

as youth minister for the United Churches of Olympia, as well as managing plumbing distribution facilities in Tacoma and Tumwater.

Bringing deep faith, humor and humility to what he does, Mark "has a profound gift for hospitality, extending radical welcome to all. His love of the outdoors and his nature-inspired poetry is an inspiration to many of us," said Alice.

### Search team forms

With Mark leaving Nov. 15, there is limited time to find someone well-suited to taking the position. So the present plan is to find a candidate willing to fill the position on a short-term basis, followed by a candidate who might serve for a greater length of time.

Courtney has formed a search committee with Alice, Eric, Nicole, and Leah.

"We have some leads, and we're hopeful for possibilities ahead," said Alice.

***Because of the immediacy of finding someone to fill the managing director role in about a month, and because of the short-term nature of that role, they will conduct a fast-paced search process.***

***They request that candidates send a resume with three phone references to nsidsen-search@gmail.com by Oct. 15.***

***They are not yet receiving recommendations for anyone to fill the longer-term role.***

## Wade Zick plans to teach English in South America

Wade Zick recently announced his resignation as managing director at Pilgrim Firs.

"It is with a wide range of emotions that I write about my departure from Pilgrim Firs. It is an emotion of great sadness to be leaving a vibrant, thriving camp ministry that has worked to transform lives, bring healing in many different ways, and provided a space for creativity to flourish. There has been much accomplished in the past seven years that we can be proud of what we accomplished together," Wade wrote.

"It is also with sheer joy and excitement to announce that Lalo and I are able to move into this next chapter of our lives as we move abroad," he said.

For 15 years they have



Wade Zick leaves Pilgrim Firs.

been planning this move to set up their new home in Uruguay, which he says is a progressive South American country that

was the first nation in the world to legalize gay marriage.

Leaving Pilgrim Firs on Oct. 31, they will first spend time in Spanish language immersion in Mexico with plans to move in 2023 to South America.

Lalo will work as a digital nomad. Wade will complete TEFL certification to teach English.

"It will be a different pace of life," said Wade, who is grateful for the agreement to allow for a quick departure with plans for a smooth transition.

Pilgrim Firs staff are equipped for this transition with the depth of experience Mark Boyd brings and assistant director, Zac Norenber has along with kitchen manager Ashley Harrington and other part-time hospitality staff.

"I leave knowing the camp is in good hands and ready to keep flourishing," Wade said, also expressing gratitude for the conference.

"Providing ministry leadership in these times is difficult. However, there is always an abundance of hope for a more just-filled world, actions that live out our commitments, and intentions that are prioritized in building relationships across the churches and the conference," he added.

"Thank you for letting me serve among you and alongside you. This chapter in my ministry career was action-packed and so full of joy," he said. "I am beyond excited for this next chapter to begin."

***For information call 360-876-2031 or visit pilgrimfirs.org.***