



Pacific Northwest CONFERENCE NEWS

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September-October 2016

PNC welcomes Samoan church in Alaska

Faavae Fou church in Anchorage sought connection for youth

Members of the Faavae Fou Congregational Christian Church in Anchorage wanted their youth to have connection with other youth in the wider church.

In April at the PNC Annual Meeting in Wenatchee, after several meetings with the PNC Church Development Committee, they were accepted as members of the Conference.

Mimi Lane and others with the Church Development Committee visited the Faavae Fou Church in Anchorage twice.

The first time was in the summer, when it was light 24 hours. When she entered the room, there were elders, babies, youth, young adults and older adults. The room was full. They shared their Christian journeys, asked about the

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Faavae Fou members meet other PNC members and share in worship at Annual Meeting.

Board welcomes PNC to a new ministry of vitality

By Peter Ilgenfritz, Moderator, PNC

The PNC Board of Directors met Sept. 16 and 17, sitting around tables with bright blue, yellow and green tablecloths with red flowers in glass vases, bottles of water and wine on the table, shiny silverware and sparkling wine glasses. Looking out the tall glass windows of Congregational Church of Mercer Island, we saw tall green trees.

During the dinner of green beans and golden potatoes, chicken stuffed with spinach and cheese and wrapped in bacon, there were three amazing solos expressing longing, hoping and daring. It was a feast for the heart, body and spirit—a true feast.

As we gathered, board members and church members stood in a circle, and

Board blesses Courtney Stange-Tregear as she begins as Minister of Church Vitality.

shared our names and all the places we had come from to be in this one place together.

We named our hope and our question that we are asking as a Board and Conference: What is “vitality”? Where is it found? How can it be nurtured?

That evening and in the morning that followed, we moved from asking a theoretical, analytical question to living into an experience, being immersed in the

experience, life and vitality that came to us in the setting of grace that the church had set for us. We heard the stories shared of a church exploring new ways to risk being and engaging their community. We were fed in so many ways.

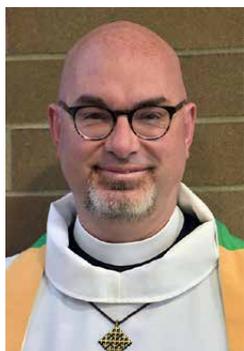
At the end of our evening we gathered in a circle one more time and shared what we had experienced, and the ways we had experienced and witnessed vitality in our midst—in music, food, community, vulnerability, authenticity, risk and stories.

We remarked that this work of “vitality” doesn’t mean another “to-do” to put our already overwhelming lists of “to-do’s” we all have, but an invitation to a way to be—open, curious, question-

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Business journal offers insights for churches

Conference Comments



By The Rev.
Mike Denton
Conference
Minister

Those who follow me on Facebook or Twitter know I often read the Harvard Business Review (HBR). This isn't because I equate church life and organization with business life and organization, which is not helpful to do. There are too many differences in their missions and functions to do that accurately. A church being too numbers focused as the metric of its purpose makes as much sense as a business hosting worship services. They're not the same thing, but both are human institutions. Much of what I learn from HBR about social interactions and challenges human face I find helpful.

A recent article sticking with me is titled, "Leadership May Not Be the Problem with Your Innovation Team." Innovation is not a new word to the church but we don't have the same resources the business world does to study what does and doesn't work. Because so many suggest successful innovation efforts solely depend on leadership, the title caught my eye and the content keeps me thinking. The authors, Daniel Dworkin and Markus Spiegel, find four qualities need to be in place for an organization to have a successful innovation effort: constant energy, creative friction, flexible structure and purposeful discovery.

How do these relate to the church? Constant energy makes church innovation efforts difficult. Many of us are tired, and we hunger for innovation is to find an idea that will add energy to our congregations. The idea that innovation doesn't just require energy but constant energy seems daunting. The authors suggest that three things that help manage this energy:

- 1) Clearly naming limitations, we come up with plans to move to move through them when they emerge.
- 2) Connecting with our purpose beyond numbers, we realize that "to grow our church" only goes so far. "To make a difference in the lives of those who attend and in our community" is something quite different.
- 3) Using a different term, they also suggest the need for transparency and intentional visibility to add to that energy.

As church folks, I suggest two other things are important. Many of our communities are already tired. Once a congregation decides to move forward in a big way, it should take a sabbath. One part of sabbath is rest and another part is getting right with God, each other and the world. Moving into a time of innovation without being rested tends to be a recipe for anxiety, doubt and fear. We need to be rested to be ready.

Creative friction is both a sign of health and requires health. Congregations where the color of the

hallway carpet or use of a variety of music in worship results in conflict will find innovation difficult. Congregations whose primary conflicts are between personalities or who see resolution of a conflict one side "winning" are going to find sustaining innovation difficult. The ground for congregational innovation is established with a focus on congregational health. The Rev. Tara Barber of the PNC does a workshop for congregations seeking to learn what a healthy congregation might be. It's easy to assume that what's normal is healthy but it's normal to eat too much junk food and to pollute.

Innovation requires a flexible structure. That's hard. In addition to our churches frequently having clunky, complicated, confusing structures, flexibility is not usually their strength. There tend to be so many permission expectations that it's hard to move forward in a timely way. Dworkin and Spiegel say it's more important to have structures that empower the innovation needed to solve a problem instead of structures that are given methods to solve problems. So if a church's goal is to have a relevant faith development program, the system would empower those working on it to figure out how to be relevant—and change processes as they learn along the way—instead of following a proscribed method that can't be changed.

A related condition for innovation is what the authors call purposeful discovery. We should expect to be wrong and fail sometimes. Doesn't that sound healthy? Then why is it so hard to do and adjust to. If we're innovating something, by its nature it has likely not been done before—at least in our context. This is what it means to be a "fool for Christ" (1st Cor. 4:11). The apostles were faith innovators, trying many ideas and methods to bring the Gospel to the world. Most of the Gospels and Epistles are about how none of this worked out how anyone expected and the struggles along the way. It's about how structures were imposed and then set aside. It's about how ideals and roles shifted. They listened to and communicated with each other, then made decisions and tried new things based on what they discovered and God revealed.

I've been questioning whether the church can be a place for innovation. My heart has said "yes," but it's hard to put my over-thinking head around it. The article has helpful clues that helped me move to another place.

I sometimes jokingly refer to "The Gospel of HBR." There is Gospel there in the Spirit leaving room for us to embrace our humanity. It's a hint about discovering not just how we are wonderfully and beautifully made but what we might beautifully and wonderfully be inspired to create. This is holy work.

**Once a
congregation
decides
to move
forward
in a big way,
it should
take
a sabbath.**

Transitions announced

Tammy Stampfli has been called as the new settled pastor for The United Churches of Olympia.

Corey Passons will be installed as minister for Community for Interfaith Celebration in Olympia, a UCC member congregation for more than 40 years and an interfaith community for 20 years.

Cristina Airaghi, pastor for children and youth at First Congregational UCC in Bellevue, will be ordained at 1 p.m., Sept. 17, at First Congregational UCC, Bellingham.

Judith Rinehart-Nelson resigned from Zion Philadelphia UCC in Ritzville effective Sept. 30, to begin full-time chaplaincy at Mt. Carmel Hospital in Colville with Providence in Stevens County Oct. 3.

Maurice Montgomery Bell, 83, died July 26. A graduate of Harvard Divinity School, his ministry included work as a community organizer and social change activist with University Congregational UCC, Bellevue First Congregational UCC, the Metropolitan Association of the New York Conference, Seattle Police Crime Prevention and other groups.

Beryl Sibley, 91, died June 4 in Des Moines, Wash. She was active in Beacon Ave. UCC, and local, regional and national UCC leadership, serving from 1995 to 2001 on the PNC Churches and Clergy Committee, and two terms on the national Office for Church Life and Leadership Board.

Armin Kroehler, 94, died July 31 in Honolulu. He served as a UCC missionary in Aizu, Japan.

Westside youth set gatherings

The Youth and Young Adult Task Force is hosting "2nd Sunday" gatherings for youth 6th to 12th grade this Fall, said Cristina Airaghi, pastor for children and youth at First Congregational UCC in Bellevue.

The September event was 5 to 7 p.m. Sept. 11 at SkyMania Trampolines in Kirkland. Others are Oct. 9 at Bob's Corn Maze in Snohomish; Nov. 13 to prepare and serve dinner for Congregations for the Homeless, and Dec. 11 at the Snowflake Lane Parade and Pizza. **For information, call 510-410-1033 or 425-454-5001 ext. 1021.**

Clergy Boundary Training set

PNC-UCC Committee on Ministry is sponsoring Clergy Boundary Training, led

by Tara Barber, from 9 a.m. to 4:45 p.m., Monday, Oct. 24, at University Congregational UCC, 4515 16th Ave. NE, Seattle.

For clergy to maintain standing in the PNC-UCC, they are required to take a boundary training workshop once every three years, said Church and Ministry leadership: Eastside chair Marj Johnston, pastormarj@gmail.com, 509-730-9969 and Westside chairs: Ryan Lambert rvryanlambert@gmail.com 425-822-3811 Judi Edwards, edwards.jc@comcast.net 360-303-0309.

Register at n-sid-sen.org. For scholarships and childcare reimbursement contact Michael Denton, 206-725-8383 ext. 2 or emailrevdenton@gmail.com.

Church offers lecture Oct. 7-9

The Lecture Series at University Congregational UCC, Seattle, features Stephen Patterson, New Testament scholar and former head of the Jesus Seminar, Oct. 7 to 9. He teaches religious and ethical studies at Willamette University.

In *The Lost Way*, he reveals the story behind the discovery of the earliest gospels, accounts that recover a lost ancient Christian tradition centered on Jesus as a teacher of wisdom.

From 5 to 7 p.m., Friday, Oct. 7, before the lecture is an opening reception of the Charles McCollough Sculpture Exhibition, "The Wise and Radical Jesus," hosted by the Creativity Council of UCUC. Charles will speak and show slides at 11:15 a.m., Sunday morning, Oct. 9. **Tickets are at brownpapertickets.com, search Patterson.**

The Lecture Series will celebrate its 10th anniversary in 2017 with John Dominic Crossan lecturing March 3 to 5. It brings leading Christian and non-Christian scholars, teachers, writers and speakers to the church to help stretch understanding of what it means to be Christian today.

For information, visit www.lecture-seriesatucucc.org. To share memories, share stories and pictures at lecture-series@universityucc.org

Michael Dowd available

Michael Dowd, author of "Thank God for Evolution!" is living on Whidbey Island from September through December and is available to preach, teach and speak. He is a former UCC pastor, now Unitarian. His wife, Connie Barlow, is a science writer who works with him.

Michael, who will preach at Everett

UCC at 10 a.m., Sunday, Oct. 16, is an evolutionary theologian, sustainable communities organizer, eco-theologian and pro-science evangelist. After worship, there will be a discussion with environmentalists and the community. He promotes sacred responsibility to future generations, and building bridges between religious and non-religious people,

Other opportunities to hear him include: Oct. 9 and 18 at St. Margaret's Episcopal Church, Bellevue, and Oct. 22 at the University Congregational UCC Men's Retreat at Pilgrim Firs in Port Orchard.

For information, visit www.michaeldowd.org.

Church Council holds event

The Church Council of Greater Seattle will hold a "Weaving Our Strengths" conference of fellowship, inspiration and skill-building to strengthen local churches from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 22, at Seattle First Baptist Church, 1111 Harvard Ave.

The event includes worship, workshops, a resource fair and awards. In 2015, more than 200 people of 16 faith traditions and 60 congregations in 22 cities gathered.

PNC presenters include Kelle Brown, minister of worship and pastoral care at Plymouth UCC in Seattle; Briana Frenchmore, who is on the Farm Worker Ministry Northwest and the UCC Justice and Witness Ministry Committee, and Kyna Grace Shilling, creative worship curator and facilitator with the PNCUCC and at Plymouth Congregational UCC in Seattle.

For information, call 306-525-1213 ext 105.

Holiday concert planned

"On the Beat, Music Retreat!" will be held from 5 p.m. Friday to 5:30 p.m., Saturday, Nov. 4 and 5, at N-Sid-Sen for Christmas jamming, improving music understanding, pitch matching, drumming and more. Participants are asked to bring instruments, 20 copies of a Christmas Gem to share, one to three vocal warm-ups. **Register at n-sid-sen.org. For information, call Gen Heyward at 408-593-9556.**

Book launch scheduled

Kizzie Johes, retired UCC pastor and author, and Scott Ward, illustrator now in Bellingham, will host a book launch for their newest book, *A Tall Tale about a Dachshund and a Pelican: How a Friendship Camp to Be*, from 6 to 9 p.m., Thursday, Sept. 29, at the Edmonds Yacht Club, 326 Admiral Way in Edmonds. **For information, visit kizziejones.com.**

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Pastor has dual standing with UCC, seek to share ideas

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UCC and worked on requirements to join the PNC.

Mimi's next visit was in the winter the darkest time of the year. They finalized their covenant, worshipping and dancing together.

Members of the Faavae Fou Christian Church attended the Samoan Congregational Conference the week before they journeyed to Wenatchee to be with the PNC Annual Meeting.

Their pastor, Edwin Galeai, is a 1995 graduate of Claremont Theological School. Others in the delegation at Annual Meeting were his wife, Iva, lay preacher Tamnan Nago and his wife, Losi, treasurer Vai Fofunga.

Edwin formed the church in June 2014 to become part of the Christian Churches of America Samoa and the United Church of Christ.

His father also had dual standing with the Central Pacific UCC Conference and said he should have dual standing.

"We are a young church, coming with grateful hearts, hands and minds, bringing respect and unity," he said. "We bring our spirit of celebration and joyful hearts."

While young, he said Faavae Fou's foundation is old. We are new to the UCC but not to being Christians, because we also have ties to the Samoan Christian Community," he said.

He shared some of the history of Pacific Islanders' Christian roots.

The Congregational movement went to the Samoan Islands as missionaries to the people the 1830s. Most Samoans grew up in the Congregational Church, under the London Mission Society led by John Williams and later connecting to American Congregational churches, and eventually the UCC.

Edwin's journey to the Northwest to Alaska came with



The Rev. Edwin Galeai receives a candle from the PNC.

the migration of Samoan families through the armed forces. Edwin is a retired chaplain with the U.S. Air Force. He served in Fairbanks.

Iva said their children were raised outside the Samoan Islands.

When Edwin was to leave Fairbanks and go to the lower 48 where it would be warmer, "God moved us to start the church in Anchorage," she said. "It's not where we first wanted to be, but we saw people hurting people in Samoan churches. Many were staying home and awaiting a prophetic word.

"We established the church in Anchorage to bring us connection for our children to have a safe, grounded place to come to be fed by our culture and Christian faith," Iva said.

"Anchorage is where we are called to be. God opened a door for us here," she said. "I fell in love with Alaska, and now we do not want to move.

Iva said they were surprised that there are so many Samoans, and realized they could start a new church, ministering to families and ministering to

send students.

"We can connect with you. I do not Skype, but my grandchildren do," Iva said. "We love to be in fellowship, hearing what God is doing with others, making bonds, sharing stories and making them ours."

Faavae Fou is starting a homeless shelter.

There is strength in being received, said Edwin.

"I look forward to our young people having fellowship outside our community in the UCC, discussing contemporary issues, doing justice," he said. "I want to pass on the faith to the next generation."

Faavae Fou UCC youth participated in the National Youth Event July 23 to 30 in New York, which included two days at Fautleroy UCC for a community service project before going.

For information, call 907-868-2557 or email egaleai@live.com.



Iva Galeai spoke about the background of the congregation.

Board invited PNC members to explore 'vitality' in churches

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ing, inviting. We made a necklace of the words that we shared and learned with each other that night as church and board.

The next morning the board surrounded Courtney Stange-Tregear, our new Minister for Church Vitality, and blessed her at the beginning of her ministry with what we are learning together about vitality.

This is an exciting, vital season in the life of our Conference. It is a time, yes, as these times are of challenge and change, of endings and beginnings. It is a season that we see, feel and know outside in the turning to fall and within us in the change that is life and our own.

We invite the people around the Conference to join with us to explore "vitality" this coming year. Where do we find it?

We need to open ourselves to being immersed in it, to wonder what stands in the way that hinders its blooming. We invite members of the PNC to risk with us as we engage this year in new ways of being together as Conference at our Annual



Congregational Church of Mercer Island hosted PNC Board members at their recent meeting.

Photos above and lower left courtesy of Peter Ilgenfritz

Meeting Saturday to Sunday, April 29 to May 1, at Pilgrim Firs and in conversation and learning with us in a fall gathering at N-Sid-Sen.

Most important, we ask members of the PNC to pray with us and for us all as we learn together what it means

to be church in this time—our times—of challenge and change.

God is at work. God is calling us to make a clearing, to make some space, and mark this time in the falling of leaves and the rising that it heralds for the newness that is God.

We give thanks for each of person in the PNC and their ministries of vitality and grace and for our ministry together. We are here with everyone in the PNC along the way.

For information, call 206-484-9814 or email pilgenfritz@universityucc.org



Biscuits, fruit, pie flowers spoke of church's warm welcome.



Board bless Courtney Stange-Tregear as she begins ministry.

Photo courtesy of Andrew Conley-Holcomb

Pastor keeps his politics and religion separate

Jim CastroLang, part-time pastor at First Congregational UCC in Stevens County and chair of the Spokane County Democratic Party, keeps his political and religious lives separate. The common thread is progressive values.

For seven years, he has been part-time pastor at First Congregational UCC in Colville.

In 2008, he became treasurer of the Spokane County Democrats and in 2013 was elected chair. This year, he was a delegate to the National Democratic Convention.

“There is a close alignment of the core principles and values of my faith and the best of the Democratic Party,” he said.

“Inclusivity is a key value—including as many people, by giving them power and opportunity. Society is filled with people who suffer from prejudice and people who benefit from privilege they do not know they have,” Jim said. “We need to overcome prejudice and cut down privilege to provide opportunities to those who are disadvantaged.”

His faith and political values both recognize that no one succeeds alone, even though many people of privilege think they succeeded because of their own hard work and skill.

“The theological understanding of the Body of Christ says we do not succeed alone. The arm needs the leg. Success comes in understanding who we are in the context of our community. We are not the whole body. We are part of the body and succeed because other parts of the body support us,” he said.

So Jim said that while many Republicans may see taxes as the government taking away “my resources,” many Democrats see that taxes provide resources for the community “to decide what together we can do together that we can’t do



Jim CastroLang

alone—public infrastructure like roads and social services.

“We support use of taxes to help everyone succeed,” said Jim, who saw that in the theme of the 2016 National Convention and campaign, “Stronger Together,” in contrast with the Republican promising to “Make America Great Again.”

In the Colville church, Jim works with Democrats and Republicans in the context of the church’s commitment to being inclusive. In 2012, the church’s vote to be open and affirming was supported by Republican and Democratic members, expressing openness to people despite their differences.

“We believe there is more than one way to understand God, and we are in church to help each other explore our faith,” he said.

The church has a gay couple and a lesbian couple. Some of them are on the church council.

“Part of being open and affirming is to be inclusive of people who are not open and affirming, but willing to keep trying,” said Jim, who performed what was likely one of the first legal same-sex couple weddings in the county when it became legal.

Jim seeks to bring a sense of respect and dialogue with his involvement with the Colville Ministerial Association. He has

helped coordinate forums, in which local pastors have deepened respect for each other as they have shared their faith and attitudes about other’s faiths.

“What we do in the UCC is to try to open doors of understanding, while some try to slam the doors shut,” he said. “It’s part of the culture wars that some fear losing something and seek to close the door.”

Jim grew up Catholic, became a priest and then left the priesthood in 1982. While doing youth ministry he met and fell in love Andy, whom he married after he moved to Tacoma and she followed in 1983. They did lay jobs with Catholic churches in Bremerton and Bellevue, but soured when Archbishop Raymond Hunthausen was being investigated.

In 1988, they moved to Olympia. Jim worked with the House Democratic District Office, supporting Democrats in the state’s House. He also was involved with Associated Ministries of Thurston County. Jim and Andy visited Disciples of Christ, Church of the Brethren and Catholic churches, and the United Churches of Olympia.

The United Churches—UCC and Presbyterian—was looking for a youth minister. Andy was hired. As it evolved into a family ministry, she was licensed.

In 1992, Jim completed a process with the PNC Committee on Ministry that granted him privilege of call in the UCC. Andy started at San Francisco Theological Seminary in 1995. While there, Jim worked as interim of South Berkeley Community UCC and as head of operations for an Internet Security software startup company.

After Andy graduated in 1998 and went to serve a church in Nebraska, He worked in technology there. They moved to Spokane in 2002 when Andy became pastor of Westminster Congregational UCC.

Jim served two years as an interim at Walla Walla and two years in Ritzville, and worked as a consultant with Plymouth Congregational UCC in Colfax and did sabbatical coverage and consulting with Veradale UCC.

Through the years, he has been involved with the Democratic Party, from licking stamps for campaigns to attending conventions. He was a delegate to the 1980 Colorado State Convention and to 1986 Washington State Convention. He also attended the 1984 Democratic National Convention in San Francisco.

In Olympia, he was treasurer of Thurston County Democrats for two years, and in Nebraska, he was also involved.

While Jim seeks to keep his politics in Spokane, some in the church know about it because of a newspaper article.

“It’s good I’m pastor of a church outside Spokane County. Two years ago, I wrote a press release on an ethics investigation of the region’s Congresswoman. The Colville newspaper’s headline said, ‘Colville pastor’ calls for the ethics investigation to be settled. The press release was from me as chair of the Spokane County Democrats, not me as a pastor,” he said.

At the 2016 National Convention, as a Bernie Sanders delegate with a long commitment to the party, Jim sought to engage new people, some of whom were protesting, to work for local candidates and serve the bigger cause of making change.

“I saw a maturing in the group. It was exciting to see the process move from disagreeing to working together for a cause,” Jim said. “That happens in churches too, when we set aside our selfish interests so we can progress.”

For information, call 509-998-7203 or email jcastro-lang@gmail.com.

Colville church celebrates its 125th anniversary

While Ginny Denton has been a member of First Congregational UCC in Colville just four years, she has become fascinated with its history as she has undertaken editing the churches' 125-year history.

"As a newcomer, I did not at first understand the ownership of some of the long-term members," she said.

She has recorded how Cushing Eels, a missionary in Washington, started the church in 1890. He started several other churches in the area.

The small congregation in Colville has swelled and declined over the years with multiple adult and children's groups.

"It's a small congregation again in this era that going to church is less of a priority for many people," Ginny said.

She has recorded how people have remodeled and painted the building, made tablecloths and aprons, and served people in the church and community over the years.

Ginny moved to Colville four years ago after she retired from working 23 years with the Sierra National Forest Service in Oakhurst, Calif., where she grew up in an Episcopal Church and raised three children.

She came to Colville with her partner, Karen Nooney, who works with the Forest Service. When Washington legalized same sex marriage they found Jim CastroLang's name on the list at the County Courthouse of people who would perform same-sex marriages.

They visited the church, which voted in 2012 to be open and affirming, and were amazed by the "extravagant welcome" they felt. Since Jim performed their wedding, they have been active, helping with worship, work projects, Friday community lunches and the winter warming center.

Sandi Mason, who grew



Ginny Denton, Sandi Mason and Patty Braun enjoy lunch at a recent retreat at N-Sen-Sen.



Photos of the Colville First Congregational UCC building in 1895 and today.

Photo courtesy of First Congregational UCC Colville

up Catholic in Kalispel and Spokane, has been a member of the UCC church since she and her husband, Doug, moved there in 1976, for his work at the sawmill.

The highlights of the church for her are its fellowship and family unity. She has served on the church council and as financial secretary because of her computer skills.

Sandi also helps at the Friday community lunch, serving 30 to 50 people at the church.

Because this town of more than 5,000 is the county seat, it has offices of the Department of Social and Health Services and the Rural Resources Family Support Center. As a result, there are many homeless people and people needing services, who live there and come there.

The main industries include a pellet-wood-gas stove manufacturer and a boat builder. It is also a farming area.

When Sandi first came, the

church had about 125 members, and now there are about 50 members with 20 to 30 attending. There are 28 other churches.

The UCC church works with the Lutheran church, combining services in the summer and helping on community outreach.

Patty Braun has been a member for 10 years. She grew up on a farm north of Kettle Falls in a family active in churches.

She and her husband were married 53 years ago in the Lutheran Church in Colville.

Patty said Jim serves the church 16 hours a week and is involved with the community and Ministerial Association.

She said members have been working on different aspects of the anniversary celebration.

For example, Mary Lou Hobbs found a stained glass window from the 1980s and is putting the pieces together.

Others are gathering old minutes and photos.

The UCC church is the oldest Protestant church in town. The building is the church's second one, because the original building was destroyed in a fire.

"A majority of the people are retired. We have no Sunday School. We still have a monthly meeting of Ladies Night Out," said Patty.

As the church's musician, she plays piano, accordion, violin and organ.

The anniversary will be celebrated from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Saturday, Sept. 24, with an open house that includes history displays, photos and an anniversary cake.

At the 10 a.m. worship on Sunday, Sept. 25, Conference Minister Mike Denton will preach. After the service, there will be a luncheon.

For information, call 509-684-6361 or email gdenton1@me.com.

PNC Men's Retreats have been held for 25 years

The 2017 PNC annual Men's Retreat in February at Pilgrim Firs will be the 25th.

Rick Russell, former pastor of Eastgate UCC in Bellevue, has been attending or helping with leadership and planning for 10 years.

He said the biggest attendance reported was in 1995 when the presenters were the Interfaith Amigos—UCC pastor Don Mackenzie, Rabbi Ted Falcon and Imam Jamal Rahman.

Presenters have included out-of-state people from the national UCC setting, Berkeley and elsewhere, and local leaders such as the late musicians Tom Hunter of Bellingham and Tom Colwell of Seattle.

From 35 to 60 attend, with an average of 45 to 50, ranging in age from a grandson to grandfather. Sometimes there have been three generations in a family, grandfather, son and grandson.

The Men's Retreat planned for Feb. 3 to 5 at Pilgrim Firs, preceded by a silent retreat Feb. 2 to 3, will feature PNC Conference minister Mike Denton speaking on "Eldering."

After studies at Bangor Seminary in Maine, Rick and his late wife Jennifer returned to Prospect UCC in Seattle, their home church, to be ordained in 1984. Then they served churches in New Hampshire for 17 years and Jennifer connected with Global Ministries in India and China.

In 1998, Rick earned a doctor of ministries at Andover Newton Theological School in the Boston area, focusing on "Men's Ministry in the UCC: Past, Present and Future."

In 2001, he returned to the PNC as pastor at Eastgate and Jennifer served at First Congregational UCC in Bellingham.

"When I first came to Men's Retreats, I came to listen and experience the retreat,"



Men gather for presentation during the PNC Men's Retreat in January, 2015, at Pilgrim Firs.

Photos courtesy of the Men's Retreat

said Rick, who had connected with the national UCC men's ministry until staff and funds were cut.

Responsibility for organizing the retreat varied over the years with Richmond Beach UCC and University Congregational UCC responsible for several years. Then Eastgate UCC took on the leadership.

In recent years, planning has been done by Michael Phipps of University Congregational, Hans Dankers of Monroe UCC, Steve Guy of Wayside UCC in Federal Way, and Rick. They arrange the program, plan the schedule and do the publicity.

The retreat consists of small group meetings, with program Saturday morning and evening and Sunday worship.

At a Wisdom Circle on Saturday evening, men share about what they are experiencing, listening to each other, Rick said.

There is plenty of music. In recent years it has been led by Don Jenkins of Kirkland UCC.

"There is nothing like men singing songs of faith wholeheartedly," said Rick, who has helped lead it for 10 years.

It has been the same week-

end as the Super Bowl—a reflective alternative to the aggression and violence of football—but ends in the morning so the man who want to go home and watch the game can do that.

For Rick, it's important because the Men's Retreat gives men permission to reflect on their faith and lives, to assess who they are and want to be.

That reflection happens in the context of friendship, conversation, music and scriptures.

"As a retreat, it is at a place set apart, offering time to look at life anew in touch with relationships and faith," he said.

There's a draw for Rick, having grown up in a home with strong women. His father died, and his brothers were four

to six years older, so Rick spent much time with his mother and three sisters. His mother grew up in Maine, and he lived there until he was 11. She remarried and moved to Seattle. He began attending Pilgrim Congregational UCC, now All Pilgrims Christian Church.

"Men's ministry fills a need for men to be around other men and experience what is unique to being men," he said.

Rick recognizes that it's a challenge for some men to pay \$140 and leave their families for a weekend, when they might like to take a weekend with their families, but many are repeat attendees.

For information, call 206-999-6968 or email myrtos@comcast.net.



Musicians team during the 2016 Men's Retreat.

Seven young adults begin in justice leadership

The Justice Leadership Program (JLP) for young adults, ages 21 to 35, is welcoming seven interns in September, said Elizabeth Dickinson, manager of the JLP program, which is an affiliate of the UCC Young Adult Service Communities Network.

New 2016-17 partner agency are 350.org and Earth Ministry. New congregations are First Congregational in Bellevue and Northshore UCC in Woodinville.

The interns are Iris Chavez, David Choi, Latanya Jenkins, Emily Martin, Anya McMurrer, Denise Parry and Daniel Solomon.



Iris Chavez is interning at the Church Council of Greater Seattle and Keystone UCC in Seattle. Raised in Spokane, Iris graduated from Whitworth University with a double major in sociology and political science/international studies with a minor in French. She seeks to bring people of different cultures together. Iris was an Act Six scholar at Whitworth, a leadership and scholarship program that addresses underrepresentation on college campuses. She was a cultural diversity advocate on her campus leadership team.

With her interest in activism and advocacy that flourished with her involvement in United Students Against Sweatshops,

she is eager to begin working toward social change and social justice with JLP.

David Choi joins Faith



Action Network to work with more than 100 congregations advocating for social justice in Washington's halls of power. He'll partner with the Rev. Greg Turk and at All Pilgrims Christian Church to be stewards of God's mission in Seattle.

A longtime native of Virginia, David is American born with Korean roots. He recently graduated from the University of Virginia, where he studied government. Arriving from the suburbs of Washington, D.C., he is on a life-journey of following Jesus and a quest to discover what the "West Coast, Best Coast" is about as he moves from Washington to Washington.



Latanya Jenkins begins her year of leadership, advocacy and education with placement in the Justice Leadership Program with Washington Low

Income Housing Alliance and Plymouth UCC in Seattle.

She recently earned a bachelor's in social work with a minor in global African studies at Seattle University. There she was a freshman mentor, resident assistant and president of Black Student Union.

Latanya wants to do advocacy work and to be challenged professionally and spiritually as she prepares for a career that centers the voices and actions of oppressed and marginalized communities.



Emily Martin will be interning at Earth Ministry and serving at First Congregational UCC, Bellevue. She was born and raised in the St. Paul/Minneapolis, Minn., and came to Olympia to attend Evergreen State College to study environmental justice. Emily is excited to be working on issues at the intersection of social and environmental justice this year.



Anya McMurrer, original-

ly from New Jersey, recently graduated from McGill University in Montreal with a bachelor's degree in psychology with minors in English and music.

While there, she was involved in several mental health initiatives. She volunteered and helped to manage McGill's student suicide hotline, worked in peer counseling as a resident advisor, and worked as the mental health coordinator for the Students' Society, ensuring that students had access to quality behavioral health care.

Anya, who is also passionate about racial and economic justice, will work with the Greater Church Council of Seattle in housing and homelessness and will serve with Northshore United Church of Christ this year.



Denise Parry is excited to work with the Seattle/King County Coalition on Homelessness and Prospect Congregational UCC.

A native of Gold Beach, Ore., Denise recently graduated from the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma with a bachelor's degree in sociology and anthropology and a minor in gender and queer studies. At UPS, Denise involved in the Puget Sound Queer Alliance, Needlecrafts for Charity, Advocates for Detainees Voices, Puget Sound Garden Club, Advocates for Institutional Change and Repertory Dance Group.

Continued on Page 10

Interns will work with six agencies, churches

Continued from Page 9

Denise is passionate about the intersections of poverty, disability and marginalized identities and they presented research exploring these intersections at the 2015 and 2016 Lewis and Clark Gender Studies Symposium, as well as the 2016 Pacific Sociological Association Conference.

Denise, who previously worked in a chemical storeroom for UPS bioethics and gender programs and at a fishery in rural Alaska, expects to be challenged intellectually and spiritually by this experience.



David Choi, Anya McMurrer, Emily Martins, Latanya Jenkins, Inez Chavez, Denise Parry, David Solomon and Abi Velasco comprise the 2016-17 JLP team.
Photos courtesy of Barbara Anderson



Daniel Solomon is a 23-year-old Connecticut native and member of the East Woodstock Congregational Church. Currently working at Plymouth

Church in Seattle and at 350 Seattle, he is eager to partner with the activists there and at other agencies. He has done mission work for the UCC, on multiple trips to Bolivia and through fundraisers and soup kitchens around Connecticut.

The 2015-16 interns who completed their internships announced their plans, said Elizabeth.

Ann Marie Do, who worked with CCGS, will spend time with her family, reflecting on her year and considering seminary.

Hannah Long-Higgins, who

interned with Unite Here, is blogging and doing photography in New York City, where she is studying at Columbia University School of Journalism.

Alyssa Nedrow, who was with FAN, is traveling and taking photos in Cambodia and Thailand for two months.

Julia Urban, who helped the Coalition on Homelessness, is dispensing java and justice as a barista in St. Paul, Minn.

Abby Velasco was hired as development and event coordinator with the Housing Alliance, where she was the JLP in-

tern. She will continue to serve at Prospect UCC and be part of the JLP community this year.

They valued their experiences and classes in community organizing, undoing racism, creating sustainable change, joining rallies and living in intensive community.

For information, call 206-320-0432 or visit facebook.com/JusticeLeadershipProgram or justiceleadership.org.

Persons interested in participating in the 2017 to 2018 internship year may visit www.ucc.org/volunteer_yasc.

Five adults begin in justice leadership jubilee

The Justice Leadership Jubilee Program begins in October with an incoming class of five associates.

The Justice Leadership Jubilee (JLJ) program is a 10-month, 15-hour-a-week justice training and leadership development program for older adults.

Like the Justice Leadership Program (JLP), JLJ places associates to work in social justice agencies and they are working in their home UCC congregations, said Rich Gamble, pastor

at Keystone UCC in Seattle and coordinator of the program.

The goal of JLJ, as with JLP, is to empower and support social justice leaders, extend the efforts of local and regional social justice programs, and increase the ability of local UCC congregations to participate in the work of justice.

JLJ, a PNC program, is a nonresidential program in the greater Seattle area. Participants work with a cohort of peers

“With this being the first

year of the Jubilee Leadership Jubilee program it is considered a field test for the program,” Rich said. “This year’s associates will help shape the future form of JLJ through their participation.”

One day a week, they work in a social change agency, like the Church Council of Greater Seattle, 350.org or Meaningful Movies.

Once a month, they will join a social justice training on topics like racism, class, non-violence, advocacy and social

change.

They will also meet regularly as a group with a “Spiritual Sojourner” to deepen spiritual, vocational and personal growth. Then they will bring their new skills and information to their congregations.

The program manager for Justice Leadership Jubilee is Clare West.

For information, email justiceleadershipjubilee@gmail.com or visit the Facebook page or www.justiceleadershipjubilee.org.

Missionary couple have to leave Mozambique

Kim and Erik Free, an Oregon missionary couple serving in with the United Church of Christ in Mozambique have been brought back to the United States early for their safety.

Since April 2013 they have served pending financial support with the Global Ministries of the United Church of Christ and Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Global Ministries was raising \$50,000 for each year of their four-year appointment.

Mozambique is dealing with an insurgent political force causing insecurity in the central provinces of the country where they were working, said Ruth Brandon of the PNC/DOC Global Ministries Committee.

Erik, a pastoral minister, and Kim, a registered nurse were working with the UCC



Kim and Erik Free return early because of war.

of Mozambique on rural development such as rebuilding churches, establishing health clinics and promoting agriculture.

They are currently being

debriefed by the national missions office and they will help decide how to use their probable six months here on home assignment.

Ruth is in touch with the

office handling their itineration and once she knows the timeline she will let PNC and DOC churches in the region know so they schedule their visits.

“Let us be ready to receive them with gratitude and interest to hear the story of the good work they have been doing, and of the Mozambican partner church that received them,” said Ruth.

The official announcement from Global Ministries also asks this: “Keep Kim and Eric, the people of Mozambique, the United Church of Christ in Mozambique, and Global Ministries in your best thoughts and prayers.” Their newsletters and blog are online at globalministries.org

For information on scheduling visits, call 937-367-4978 or email arembem@mac.com.

Keystone UCC member shares ties with Wells of Hope in Uganda

Margaret Graham, a member of Keystone UCC in Seattle, will share at her church’s Festival of Hope in November about the Wells of Hope, a project she connects with in Uganda.

Her son Graham Kaplain, who is now working with the Clinton Health Access Initiative in Sierra Leone, spent a year working in Kampala, Uganda, on a global health fellowship. His housemate’s parents, Francis and Ellen Ssuubi founded Wells of Hope.

In 2002 in Murchison Bay Prison in Lusica, Kampala, a prisoner, who was later acquitted, wrote about inmates’ biggest worry being about their families and children.

Francis began preaching and to inmates and finding ways to take care of their families. Wells of Hope Ministries was founded in November 2005.

In 2007, it starting paying

school fees for children and in 2010 started a school.

“The program helps the children of prisoners by providing housing and school for elementary-age children, housing for secondary-age children and visits between children and their incarcerated parents, including food, clothing and health care,” said Margaret.

“In 2016 they are planning to expand the program to open a Wells of Hope in Nepal and Kenya,” she said.

Margaret, a Keystone member for five years and a retired occupational therapist for the Seattle School District, has adopted children and donated.

Wells of Hope Ministries is a Christian nonprofit serving people affected by crime.

For information, call 206-353-1323, email magraham4@comcast.net or visit wells-of-hope.org.

Website compiles worship resources

After five years serving a church in southeast London, Ana and Tod Gobledale, are in a new ministry serving three churches in and near Salisbury, Wiltshire, United Kingdom. They had served two United Reformed Church congregations in London since 2010.

As mission associates and former missionaries in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Australia with Global Ministries, they have visited PNC congregations on itineration. They were also interim co-pastors of Kirkland Congregational UCC.

Recently while on sabbatical, Ana compiled “Worship Words,” a website with resources for progressive Christian worship leaders from resources she compiled. She invites others to submit original prayers, songs and liturgies.

“Over 40 years of ministry, I have scribbled down thoughtful words I’ve heard, cut out items from worship sheets and

church bulletins, and kept a list of resources I would love to use,” she said. “I’ve carried piles and files from one ministry to another.”

Worship Words offers free inclusive, progressive, lectionary-based and ready-to-use.

Resources use gender inclusive language and imagery for people and God; respect the breadth of religious experience in Christianity and across other religious and spiritual traditions; are lectionary- and theme-based—responsive to current events—and are ready to use for special services.

As she shared the idea with colleagues, they asked to access the website, and started sending items from Australia, Brazil, the United States, New Zealand, Guatemala and the United Kingdom.

For information, email worshipwordsmatter@gmail.com or visit worshipwords.co.uk.

60 from PNC join in National Youth Event in Orlando

About 60 youth and adults, representing 14 churches from the Pacific Northwest Conference, joined 3,000 youth from around the nation at the joint United Church of Christ and Disciple of Christ National Youth Event July 26 to 30 in Orlando, Fla.,

Kevin Peterson, a chap-erone from Wayside UCC in Federal Way, said that many ideas were discussed around the theme, “Believe,” based on Hebrews 11: “Faith is the confidence that what we believe will actually happen.”

For him, the words of a song sung at the closing worship summed up the discussion and challenge to youth on believing:

“Believe in the joy found in community and friendships; believe that we can shape and are shaped by culture; believe that empathy and cross-cultural dialogue is possible; believe that God loves us fiercely and endlessly; believe that the Gospel can be found in the unlikelyst of places, but most importantly, believe that in this world of brokenness, we are empowered and called to be love in this world, no matter our age or what anyone else tells us. Let your light so shine!”

“That was a powerful and important message for everyone, especially youth, to hear,” said Kevin.

He praised the youth, chap-erones, national staff production team and volunteers who pulled together the 2016 National Youth Event.

Conference Minister Mike Denton and Amy Johnson, a member of Wayside UCC and a member of the national staff in Justice and Witness Ministries also participated.

Kristen Almgren of Admiral and Fauntleroy UCC did much of the behind the scenes legwork, including registration, and Staci Schulmerich of Richmond Beach UCC made

arrangements for the flights.

Jenn Hagedorn helped organize the pre-event, held at Fauntleroy. She led a workshop raising awareness of privilege as part of the focus on how young people are shaped by their culture and community, said Tara Barber, coordinator of the group.

Philip Coleman, one of eight attending from University Congregational UCC in Seattle, felt that the NYE “brings together the best of the best.”

He found it to be a “transformational and formative” event—a time to learn about how cultures interact, about work to bring joy to veterans at a VA hospital and about inspirational speakers who work to change the world.

Speakers included The Peace Poet, Aidan Thomas Hormaday, Miko Peled and Trisha Prabhu.

“We were taught that we can change the world. All it takes is us risking a small part of ourselves to believe,” Philip said.

Interacting with UCC and DOC youth, he learned about accepting people, learned about who the UCC is and learned about “our part of this world as youth of the church.”

David Weasley, acting youth director at First Congregational UCC Bellingham, shared his reflections in the church newsletter.

“What a blessing it was to attend the National Youth Event with five of our high school students, traveling with a larger group from Whatcom County and a larger crew from the Pacific Northwest Conference. We all came together with 3,000 other UCC and Disciples youth in Orlando for three days of worship, service and exploration,” he said.

PNC youth spent a few days beforehand doing some service, learning about and getting to know the others travel-



Youth engage in discussion at the National Youth Event.



Youth join in a mission project at Fauntleroy UCC before the NYE.

ing with them.

On Sunday, Aug. 21, the youth gave a report to the Bellingham church during worship.

For David, some of the “holy moments” of the NYE included studying anti-racism with PNC youth in Seattle, and seeing youth be inspired to dig more deeply into the themes in a workshop.

Another holy moment was seeing youth be brave in sharing honestly and in reaching out to new people, forming and re-kindling some dynamic friendships with other youth in the conference.

In conversations about the theology of Disney World, where the conference was held, one youth noticed that there were few symbols of any religion present at the Epcot Center.

“We spent some time discussing what other religion, what other priorities might be

getting in the way, and how we might respond as people of faith,” David said.

Bellingham youth experienced worship that was dramatically different from worship at their church, and choose to risk an encounter with that worship.

“I was particularly touched when one of our young people described her wonder at the spirit-filled performance of a dance group of young African-American women,” he said.

“There were also heart-filled conversations with youth who are deciding what is important in their identity, who are continuing to discern their calls in the wider world and who keep being willing to consider how the Divine is appearing in their lives, hearts and communities,” David said.

For information, call Amy at 253-653-2786 or David at 360-734-3720 or email johnsona@ucc.org.

Extended family has strong ties to N-Sid-Sen camps

Of the 500 participating in programs of the PNC camps, 20 were members of the extended family of Trudy and Ron Lambert.

For four years, Trudy, a member of Veradale UCC, has led Kids Camps at N-Sid-Sen with Gale Peterson of Kirkland UCC.

Trudy's daughter, Sarah McDonald, also at Veradale UCC, has led Junior High Aqua Camp several years with her sister-in-law, Meredith Lambert, who is Gale's daughter.

Sarah's brothers, Ryan and Pat, both met their wives at N-Sid-Sen. They were Sarah's cabin mates. Both had their weddings there.

Pat's wife is Meredith.

Ryan, who is pastor at Kirkland UCC, and his wife, Shauna, have led Family Camp I at N-Sid-Sen for several years.

Shauna, the daughter of Mike and Kathy Ellsworth, grew up in Deer Park UCC.

Sarah has led Midwinter Retreats at N-Sid-Sen for more than 16 years and has led Junior High Aqua Camps for the last two years with Meredith.

Sarah has been going to camps since she was four years old, when her family was Disciples of Christ and attended as part of the United Ministries cooperative regional ministry of Disciples, UCC and Brethren churches.

Her three children, Emma, 13, Cole, 15, and Randy, 18, have been at camps since they were babies.

"It's an important place in our lives and the lives of so many other people. It's a safe place to be with the Conference commitment to welcome people where they are. That welcome is unique. The world does not offer it," said Sarah. "Camps can come and be who they are. We encourage them to feel a sense of ownership of the camp. It's everybody's place. We can take pride in it."



Trudy Lambert, left, and Gale Peterson, right, share two grandchildren.

Photo courtesy of Trudy Lambert

By describing the experience at Junior High Aqua Camp, which Sarah helped lead this summer, she pointed to the importance of camps.

At Junior High Aqua Camp, she and Meredith helped lead campers in discussing "Fearless Faith" and what courage is, especially in the midst of different expressions of spirituality.

Sarah's daughter invited interfaith friends.

"They took a spirituality quiz," Sarah said. "I point out that our spirituality changes hourly, daily, weekly, monthly and yearly. Where we are in our faith journeys changes as we are in adulthood."

Another strength of the camp experience, she said, is that campers live together and build a sense of community.

"Tubing on the North Fork of the Coeur d'Alene River is a time to just be, after the youth have been run through a structured week," Sarah added.

The float trip was cold, but a culmination of the community experience, as were the water Olympics, a talent show and a climb of all 41 junior high campers to Inspiration Point.

Community was also deepened by a combination of good conversations and having fun.

"The youth come from different backgrounds. Life is heavy for some. So we have deliberate conversations and time to be silly," Sarah said.

One of the daily silly times is when she does cabin check each evening and dresses in silly costumes.

Hiking to Inspiration Point on Friday capped the week. It was also a time for sharing the history of the camp, given to the former Washington North Idaho UCC Conference by the Ford family in the 1940s.

"We talked about creation and did crafts as a whole group. In addition, crafts were optional during aqua time," she said.

Midwinter in March is a "quick weekend" from Friday evening to Sunday morning for junior and senior high youth at N-Sid-Sen.

"It gives a weekend hit of camp, when teens are excited to see people from camp and to have a break from academics and activities with no social media or cell phones," she said.

While she has led it for more than 16 years, she plans to step down this year so someone else can step into leadership.

"We need new people to be part of camp leadership, people with younger children and ties

to other congregations. To grow camp, we need new camp leaders.

"Camp programs at N-Sid-Sen and Pilgrim Firs are extremely necessary. I encourage friends to take their children to camp, and those who come get hooked," Sarah said.

Trudy, who grew up in North Hill Christian Church in Spokane and joined Veradale UCC 16 years ago, has been coming to camps since 1978. For 10 years, she was a counselor at Junior High Aqua camps, and she has been co-directing Kids Camps about 10 years.

Her husband, Ron, and Sarah's husband, Rory, have often brought their boats to N-Sid-Sen to pull people for tubing and waterskiing. Both have also attended Family Camps.

She said Ryan and Shauna's children, Grace, 14 and Marin, 9, have come to camps, as have Pat and Meredith's daughters, Megan 17 and Ashley, 15. This year, Randy, Cole, Megan and Ashley were counselors in training at Kids Camp.

Gale's daughter Brooke Yule has co-directed Junior High with Eric Lofgren for four years. Her daughter, Libby was at Kids Camp this year. Her son and daughter-in-law, Chip and Kelly, have two sons, Eric and Evan, who have come to a Family Camp and Kids Camp.

"Camp is a place of beauty, calm and peace, a place to gain a sense of God's creation in a setting of positive interactions with adults and other children," Trudy said.

"Camp keeps people involved in church," she said. "Camp has definitely had an impact on the extended Lambert family's lives."

The extended family also spent Labor Day weekend at N-Sid-Sen.

For information, call 509-244-1444 or email sandrmdonald@aol.com.

More than 500 attend 2016 camps at Pilgrim Firs and N-Sid-Sen

By Kyna Grace Schilling
of the Outdoor Ministries
Task Force

More than 500 people came to Pilgrim Firs on Lake Flora near Port Orchard, Wash., and N-Sid-Sen on Lake Coeur d'Alene north of Harrison, Idaho, this summer.

With the theme "Fearless Faith: Courage In Community" summer campers shared Bible stories and stories from their own lives about standing up for injustice, forgiving others and welcoming strangers.

Campers shared the joy of community, rest, relaxation and, above all, fun!

In a recent New York Times article about summer camp, author Dominique Browning writes "the most profound vacations are the ones in which we reinvent ourselves."

Did you reinvent yourself at camp this summer? We want to hear about it.

Campers with summer camp memories, stories and insights to share may connect with Pilgrim Firs and N-Sid-Sen on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. They can also stay connected @N_Sid_Sen and @PilgrimFirs.

Clergy retreat set Nov. 14-16

Every year, there are two clergy retreats. A non-programmed, reflective one at N-Sid-Sen after Easter and a programmed one at Pilgrim Firs.

This year's Nov. 14 to 16 Pilgrim Firs retreat will focus on the message behind the "Be The Church" identity campaign and will include discussion of how churches can measure their activities.

Kristina Lizardy-Hajbi, head of the national UCC Center for Analytics, Research and Data, will be the presenter, helping numbers come alive.

Between workshop sessions will be time for rest, conversations, hikes in the woods or canoeing on Lake Flora.



Senior High Aqua Campers build a new bench on a trail at N-Sid-Sen. They used wood from trees cut in the spring.

Photo by Max Aquino



Rainbow flag on the sign at Pilgrim Firs for the LGBTQ retreat.

Photo by Wade Zick

Teens build benches and bridge, new counselors offer leadership

Tony Kliment, who co-directed Senior High Aqua Camp at N-Sid-Sen with Sheila Thiema, said campers at N-Sid-Sen did a service project, building two benches beside trails and a bridge over a drainage area on the trail to Inspiration Point.

They used planks from trees cut in February and March and made the benches by digging holes for posts and attaching the planks. They also helped spread wood chips from the trees on the trails.

About 32 campers came,

and five counselors were former campers.

Tony, formerly at Westminster UCC in Spokane and now in Seattle, and Sheila of Verdale UCC were glad to see the young people coming back as counselors, so there can eventually be a "changing of the guard" in camp leadership.

He said the Young Adult retreat led by Max Aquino and Jennifer Towner at Pilgrim Firs also helps build momentum for future leadership.

For information, call 206-963-8983.

By Wade Zick - Pilgrim Firs Fundraising continues

for the mattress campaign and several folks have written checks in direct support as Friends of Pilgrim Firs. Donations can be made at Pilgrim-Firs.org or pncucc.org.

This fall and winter, Pilgrim Firs is hosting several events. Registration and costs are at Pilgrim-Firs.org.

- An Environmental Justice Training will be Oct. 19 to 21.
- OWL (Our Whole Lives) Trainings for all three age levels will be Nov. 11 to 13.
- A "Living in God in These Times" Retreat will also be held Nov. 11 to 13. It is a prayerful, playful retreat for church members and pastors.
- The PNC Clergy Retreat is Nov. 14 to 16.
- The Middle School Mid-Winter Retreat will be Jan. 6 to 8, 2017, and High School Mid-Winter Retreat is Jan. 13 to 15.
- There is also Sabbath Space for clergy and church staff.

During the weekdays is a time to come retreat, read, rest and be renewed. Those interested in making such a retreat should call for available times. The cost is by donation and meals are on one's own unless a group is on site.

For information, email wade@pilgrim-firs.org.



Sage tries on N-Sid-Sen T-shirt.

Photo by Mark Boyd