November News

Greetings Conference Members!
Many of you know that the denominational website has been going through a major transition this year. The good news is that it's close to being completed. Take a look and consider signing up for some of the email lists they offer that range from the Daily Devotional, to opportunities for advocacy, and more. The denominational site is easy to find at: www.ucc.org.

Quick Links:
Mike's Denton's blog
Conference Calendar
List-view Calendar
November Celebrations

This packet is always available on our website.

Please save the date for a virtual celebration, as we commemorate more than 30 years of ministry at the Church House, live from Amistad Chapel, on Saturday, December 4 at 2:30 PM ET. We'll honor our first three decades in Cleveland, as we prepare to transition from 700 Prospect to our new downtown location in early 2022.

Look for more details in the coming weeks.
Blessings,
United Church of Christ
Conference Calendar

If you’d like your committee meeting or event added to the calendar, please send the email to pncucc@gmail.com.

November
3  Courtney’s Office Hour; https://meetings.ringcentral.com/jf/14900669066; 9:30-10:30am
4  Justice & Witness Committee meeting; 5:30-6:30pm
4  Moderators Check-in; online; https://meetings.ringcentral.com/jf/1481017260; 7:00-8:30pm
5  Admin & Finance check-in; online; 1-2:00pm
8  PNCUCC Moderator & Board Office 1.5 hours; https://washington.zoom.us/j/9995379164  6-7:30pm
10  Courtney’s Office Hour; https://meetings.ringcentral.com/jf/1490066906; 9:30-10:30am
10  Church Development Committee meeting; online; 2:00-3:00pm
11  Conference Office closed to observe Veterans Day
11  Westside Committee on Ministry meeting; online; 9:30am-2:30pm
12  Admin & Finance check-in; online; 1-2:00pm
13  Conference Council meeting; 9:00am-noon
13  Conference Board of Directors meeting; 12:30-3:00pm
17  Courtney’s Office Hour; https://meetings.ringcentral.com/jf/1490066906; 9:30-10:30am
18  Moderators Check-in; online; https://meetings.ringcentral.com/jf/1481017260; 7:00-8:30pm
19  Eastside Committee on Ministry meeting; online; 10:00am-2:00pm
19  Admin & Finance check-in; online; 1-2:00pm
24  Courtney’s Office Hour; https://meetings.ringcentral.com/jf/1490066906; 9:30-10:30am
25-26  Conference office closed to observe Thanksgiving

December
1  Courtney’s Office Hour; https://meetings.ringcentral.com/jf/1490066906; 9:30-10:30am
2  Moderators Check-in; online; https://meetings.ringcentral.com/jf/1481017260; 7:00-8:30pm
3  Admin & Finance check-in; online; 1-2:00pm

Looking Ahead:
2022 Annual Meeting is scheduled for April 29, 30, and May 1
Giving Tuesday 2021: Rooted in Love

Giving Tuesday is an Annual Fundraiser for Friends of the Pacific Northwest Conference. You can support this campaign by liking and following us on Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/pncucc. Please also comment and share content with your friends on social media. This helps spread the word about our transformative, rooted in love, ministry!

If you are not already, please become a Friend of the Conference by making a one-time or recurring donation here at https://pncucc.org/donate. Make a donation at one of giving levels listed below, or consider becoming a Giving Tuesday sponsor with a $500 contribution.

Be part of our root system! Your gift provides a strong foundation for our conference. Give $22 in honor of the 22 PNC churches supported in their search and call process this year. Or give $29 in honor of our 29 PNC Members in Discernment. Or give $15 in honor of the 15 seminary students the PNC supported with scholarships.

Be part of our trunk. Your gift sustains us in the present and creates a solid core of support that holds us up. Give $272 in honor of the 272 online meetings hosted by the PNC during the pandemic, to deepen relationships and share resources across the conference.

Be part of our branches. Help us reach out and grow! Be part of our future, as we branch out to make the world a better place by supporting vitality in our churches and camps, among our clergy, and within our community. Give $91 and join the 91 Friends of the Conference whose recurring financial gifts make all our work possible.

Your gift of any size is deeply appreciated! These giving categories represent some of the work of the conference, and we hope they inspire you to make a meaningful contribution in support of the PNC. With your support, we are rooted in love.

For more information on Giving Tuesday, Friends of the Conference, and being Rooted in Love, see the Staff Column written by Rev. Courtney Stange-Tregear in this month’s packet.
“They are like trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in its season.” Psalm 1:3a

By now, most of you know that I do not have much of a green thumb. I have actually grown things, but my most successful plants have been those which have grown by accident. The lovely pumpkin patch that sprang up in the tree line where I had left the previous year’s pumpkins to decompose. Or the dozens of tomato starts that appeared in my yard this spring because I never actually cleared away the last summer’s crop.

Life is miraculous that way. We make plans but can’t ever be certain what might come of the seeds we plant. Or which seeds might germinate unexpectedly and grow into new crops. While some of us are clearly greener thumbed than others, there is for everyone an amount of uncertainty, and of hope that goes with gardening. Perhaps this is why our scriptures tell of seeds, plants, and fruits.

Four and a half years ago, at the 2017 Annual Meeting, the Pacific Northwest Conference launched our Friends of the Conference Fund. Not long after, our Board of Directors agreed to prioritize deepening relationships for increased vitality. These were like saplings; further developed than the seeds of discernment which brought them forth, but not yet clearly bearing fruit.

We didn’t know then how these trees would grow and flourish, nor how interrelated they would become. We didn’t know, but we had faith that our intentional listening and relationship building would increase our capacity to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God.

We didn’t know just how much we would need each other, or just how much we would come to rely on the strength and depth of our relationships. We didn’t know how rewarding and faithful it would feel to contribute to the Friends of the Conference. Or how much we would come to rely on all our Friends. We didn’t know just how rooted we were, until every aspect of our lives was tested; and the trees we planted began to bear fruit.

Last November, in the middle of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Conference Stewardship committee planted another sapling. Joining a global generosity movement, we launched a Giving Tuesday Campaign called Give Thanks. We recruited sponsors to invest and form the backbone of a social media fundraising campaign. These sponsors were individuals, churches, community organizations, and wider church covenanted partners. We produced resources, giving levels, gifts, and all that goes with a fundraising campaign. Then, on Giving Tuesday (which is like a moveable feast day, always on the Tuesday after Thanksgiving) we joined with thousands of other non-profits in raising funds and sharing publicly about the mission of our conference on social media.

The saplings we planted way back in 2017, plus the saplings we planted since, had grown and borne fruit. By the end of 2020 we had nearly 100 recurring givers to Friends of the Conference, nearly 100 Giving Tuesday donors, and had raised over $25,000 for Friends of the Conference.

We have been rooted in love; it is clear that our love is bearing fruit! One of the amazing, miraculous things about fruit is that their seeds in turn become the trees which bear the next crop. Giving Tuesday is not just a sign of the fruit that comes from our rootedness. Giving Tuesday is a campaign also about all the new seeds, ready to germinate and grow. See, Giving Tuesday is a public expression of community and gratitude. When we participate in Giving Tuesday, through our donations, through our sharing of gratitude, through our likes, shares, and comments on social media, we are spreading seeds much further than we can even know.

Blessings,

Courtney

PS. More information on Giving Tuesday and Friends of the Conference is in the Stewardship Column of this month’s Packet.
Boundary Training for Specialized Ministers

Boundary Trainings have traditionally focused on the issues faced by local church ministers. Our ministers serving through COVID in specialized settings have an even greater need for a training that better attends to their unique circumstances. Rev. Stephen Boyd, MESA Minister for Chaplains and Ministers in Specialized Settings and Rev. Tara Barber, MESA Minister for Ministerial Support and Accountability have developed a Boundary Awareness Training with case studies and examples based on the experiences of specialized ministers. They are piloting a training for those in the West on Monday, November 15, from 4:30-7:30pm. The certificate of fulfillment for this BT will satisfy your every three year requirement for Authorized Standing.

Register in advance for this meeting:

https://UCC.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJ0oce6hrjwoH927UnNITjVBLIANLh4oByzE

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.
UCC Webinar—The UN Climate Conference through a Moral Lens

Not since the Paris Climate Agreement in 2015 has there been a UN climate conference as important as the one taking place in Glasgow, Scotland from October 31st to November 12th. In a world where global inequality is thoroughly enmeshed with the climate crisis, there are a number of key moral questions at stake in this gathering of leaders from over 200 countries. Of central importance is whether wealthy countries will stop investing in fossil fuels and start investing in a clean and just transition to renewable energy. In this webinar, we will hear from the following international climate policy specialists who will discuss the conference as it is happening: Kelly Stone from Action Aid, Chloe Noël from the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns, and Ruth Ivory-Moore from the Environment and Corporate Social Responsibility Program of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Even if you can’t make the scheduled time of 1 pm ET on Wednesday, November 10th, still sign-up, and we will send you a recording. Register now!

[Hyperlink: https://UCC.zoom.us/webinar/register/5216355227857/WN_ZcFBt1mMQBWkHRkfGfw2-w]

Special Events
COP26, the United Nations climate summit, has begun! The leaders of the world have gathered in Glasgow to negotiate their new commitments to avert climate crisis. We all took hope five years ago when the Paris Agreement was signed. The commitments went farther than ever before – but not far enough. This is the first of the five-yearly update sessions prescribed in the Paris Agreement. Our leaders must be more courageous this time if we are to curb global warming before it reaches the 1.5°C threshold. The PNUCC Environmental Justice Team invites each church to include prayers for COP26 in worship on November 7. Here are some resources to help.
COP26 and the United Church of Christ

COP26 is the United Nations climate conference taking place October 31 to November 12 in Glasgow, Scotland. The letters stand for “Conference of the Parties” – the gathering of the world leaders who signed onto the Paris Agreement five years ago. They promised to halt global warming before it exceeded 2°C – and ideally 1.5°. But the actions they pledged do not go far enough. That will be the challenge they face when they meet this month.

Every country prepared a plan (called a nationally determined contribution or NDC) setting out its commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. NDCs are revised and strengthened every five years with COP26 seeing the first revision. Unless the current NDCs are strengthened, the 2° goal will not be met. It is crucial that politics and economics give way to the urgency of the climate crisis. The demands of justice must outweigh national stalling, posturing, and self-interest. This is a tall order!

We in the United States have heard very little about this conference, but it is big news in the United Kingdom. They have produced some excellent worship resources, and they have given enthusiastic permission that these be shared across the United Church of Christ.

Please pray for COP26 in your worship on Sunday, November 7.

1. Eco-Congregation Scotland is leading the way. They began a year ago (COP26 was postponed a year because of the pandemic), calling their churches to action. Here is the briefing they prepared for their churches. Here is the link to their worship resources. They offer new words to familiar hymn tunes.
2. The UK Climate Sunday website has links to many resources.
3. Doxecology is a collection of songs from Resound Music, a group of UK Christian songwriters. This YouTube video of their song, “If the fields are parched,” could be played during worship if you have a CCLI or OneLicense music streaming license.
4. This resource from the United Reformed Church offers good litanies, prayers, and a Communion liturgy.
5. Season of Creation is an international ecumenical partnership dedicated to environmental awareness. Here is a service they created drawing upon Native American sources.
6. Christian Aid UK (the mainstream ecumenical aid agency supported by all the churches) published a worship service on climate justice which could be adapted with a bit of creative effort. They use the visual image of a river, beginning at its source and moving through stages to its mouth, with stories and interactive prayers at each stage. Even in a simpler version, this could really bring the scope of the issues to life.
7. The Episcopal Church (USA) has recruited a delegation to be online witnesses to COP26 with their Presiding Bishop. They will hold a virtual worship service on Saturday, October 6, 11 a.m. Eastern time to pray for the conference. The delegation will report back at the conclusion of COP, Friday, November 12, 2:00 p.m. Eastern time.
A prayer for COP
by the Rev. David J.M. Coleman, the chaplain of Eco-Congregation Scotland (read by David on a YouTube video which he has given the UCC permission to use)

Sustaining God
as in November, at great cost and with great urgency the leaders of our species
and those with concern for their common home will gather in Glasgow,
we ask for your welcoming, affirming presence
in the many layers of gathering
which are part of that event.
Give to those who make decisions
a freedom from the burdens of a past
which have pushed us to this cliff-edge.
=====================================
Give a dawning vision of your offer of healing
greater than the blocked horizon of what it might cost
Argue and wrestle with the powers and principalities
of expediency and despair
========================================
Open every human ear to the voices of the Earth,
and of sisters, brothers, siblings
who already suffer sharply
Save us from the despair of complacency
and the toxic temptation
when the visitors have departed
to embrace ‘business as usual’
for that ‘normal’ has gone
=======================================
And our only future
will be in wakefulness
trust,
 hope,
yes, joy
as we live out your love for the Earth we are part of
through your Word made Flesh
Jesus, our Friend.
Hosanna- God help us!
AMEN
The Rev. Amanda Kersey, a chaplain in our conference, serves as the Department of Corrections (DOC) liaison on the TBI council for Washington. This coming November, a chaplain will discuss spiritual care and how that discipline can be incorporated into person centered care. These are free and provide pretty amazing information that would be helpful for parish clergy, medical chaplains, etc. The link below is for the November conference but people can go to https://tbieventsportal.org/#webinar and view previous conferences.

The Center on Brain Injury Research and Training at the University of Oregon has partnered with Washington State DSHS, and the TBI Council of Washington to develop the Building Capacity: Brain Injury Conference Series.

Every brain injury is unique and requires an individualized approach. This conference will provide the opportunity for participants to gain an understanding of person-centered approaches across multiple modalities.

Join us on Friday, November 12, 2021 from 10am-3pm PT for this FREE Online Event.

Register: https://uoregon.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_rpleMsRz-h0Q7fSBuIEw
November Celebrations
Best wishes to our clergy and their partners on their special days.

Ordinations

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