

# tidings

## All-Church Potluck Picnic Is Sunday, September 4

**J**oin us after church on September 4 for the annual potluck picnic! Bring a favorite picnic dish to share. Plates, tableware, and beverages will be provided. We'll have tables set up with board games for all ages. Bring the whole family and join the fun!

## Friendship Tea Is Almost Here

by Ruth Rusnak

**M**arteena Sander and Ruth Rusnak will host English Afternoon Tea on Saturday afternoon, September 24. All women *and men* are invited to join us in Fellowship Hall from 1:00 until 3:00 p.m. The menu includes tea sandwiches, fruit cup, English scones, delectable sweets, and, of course, fine tea served in elegant style from porcelain tea pots. This year, Esther Shim will provide live background music for your pleasure while you enjoy treats and conversation.

Just 50 tickets will be sold at \$10 each and will be available in the Narthex before and after worship on September 11 and 18. Be sure to buy yours early!

Ladies are encouraged to wear their best hat. Loaner hats will be available if you don't have one.

For more information, contact Marteena ([heidisgg@yahoo.com](mailto:heidisgg@yahoo.com)) or 503-615-8131 or Ruth ([xiiicatsold@yahoo.com](mailto:xiiicatsold@yahoo.com)) or 503-701-2462.)



## Bee Good to Your Garden

by Pat Stenaros

**M**y yard has fruit trees, berries, a vegetable garden, flowers, and a number of large trees, all dependent on bee pollination to produce food and flower crops. I usually have poppies, borage, fox glove, and red clover around the veggie areas as bee attractors.

Unfortunately, bees are dwindling in great numbers for a variety of reasons—pollution, habitat loss, and disease. This has become a critical concern around the world. There is a Xerxes Society volunteer who is visiting the church's Texas Street property to count and photograph native bees and to record how they are being affected by the European honey bee that has a virus in its colonies. The native bees include a number of different bumbles and various other types found on the western side of the Cascades.

Native bees usually reside in sheltered spaces such as ground holes, tubes, and small woody piles that are away from busy pathways. They are quite mild-mannered (not to be confused with wasps). Hanging a Mason bee holder is a way to attract these pollinators. Our future is dependent on bees!

## Back to Eden: What's the Point?

by Jim Ruyle

**T**hat question hovers around when we see native plants that we planted lovingly not so long ago struggling for life in the summer dryness. May I invite you, as a church, to find time during the week or before church on Sunday to pitch in and water the plants on our property? It's important that we keep our grounds thriving during the summer. Why do we do this? The theological answer is that we are called to do this, to try to save nature. Let's review the principles:

Scientists like E.O. Wilson and Douglas Tallamy tell us that at the rate we are destroying wildlife habitat, we are on course to lose half of the world's species of plants and animals by the year 2100, one-quarter by 2050. That's well within the lives of our children and grandchildren. We're not doing this just by pushing these species away. It's because we're taking away their space and food right where we live. You have to understand the science.

Scientists explain that insects are at the beginning of the food chain and humans are at the other end. Wilson says if all insects died, eventually all of life would die up to and including humans because it is insects that convert the sun's energy to food in the form of themselves that birds and all other wildlife depend on that eventually feeds humans, plus doing most of the pollination that we and other species require for vegetation. The problem is that insects can't eat plants that they didn't evolve with over millions of years. That means they can't eat the foreign plant material that we've imported for hundreds of years. One of the worst examples is lawn grass, the so-called Kentucky blue grass that came from Europe and elsewhere. The only hope is to restore some of the native plants that insects learned to eat in their native habitats millennia ago. That's habitat restoration.

God calls us to life. The church at large is in a position to teach and demonstrate habitat restoration to the world by virtue of the church properties scattered across the land where they can be demonstration plots and teaching centers for their communities. When you think of the life-dependent implications of this issue, it is as important to the future of civilization as any other environmental issue. And yet it is virtually unknown to most people because it hasn't been taught. Now we, the church, are called to do that, and there isn't much time.

Our church has shown leadership by converting about half its lawn spaces to native plants that support wildlife. And we've been noticed by organizations like the West Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District who encourage us and churches like ours and offer financial and other support. In their terms, we are doing habitat restoration. In theological terms, we are saving creation. We can't stop now.

Please, pitch in and water the plants on the church property. This is one small way that we can be a part of saving creation.

## Hoyt Street Meal Ministry in Need of Volunteers

by Becky Meier

**F**or many years, Hillsdale Church has prepared and served a nutritious meal once each month at Doreen's Place, a homeless shelter on Hoyt Street in downtown Portland. The meal is prepared by a group of volunteers in our church kitchen. A second group then delivers and serves the meal for approximately 100 men at the shelter. We are now scheduling cooks and servers for the coming year (September–August). The meal is prepared and served on the second Monday of each month:

### Cooking

- No cooking experience is required.
- A 3½-hour afternoon commitment (3 to 6:30 p.m.) once every three or four months.
- Contact Becky Meier at 503-635-2303 or [bmeier@pcc.edu](mailto:bmeier@pcc.edu)

### Transporting/Serving the Meal

- A great experience for a family to do together!
- A 1½-hour evening commitment, approximately 6:15 to 7:45 p.m.
- Could be once during the year, every month, or whatever suits your schedule.
- Contact Jack Morby at 503-704-1842 or [morby517@aol.com](mailto:morby517@aol.com)

## Special Service to Offer Healing

**B**e sure to be in church on Sunday, September 11, as we have a special Service of Healing. This will be an important time of forgiveness and reconciliation as we seek to put the past behind us and move forward into the future in harmony together. The choir will be back and this will also be our communion service for the month of September. Don't miss this important worship service!

## From the Pastor

by Chris Hyde



**I**'m excited about the work that has been done on the new church covenant. This document will serve us well, giving guidance to the way that we interact with one another as a church family. It will help us to better face the future with healthy personal dynamics.

One of the things addressed in the covenant is the matter of gossip. Gossip is very common in churches, even though it is an issue that Jesus specifically addressed. None of us is immune from gossiping...we've all participated in it. Gossip is something that actually comes naturally to most people. Therefore, it has been addressed in the covenant in two different statements:

- We choose not to gossip but to speak positively about one another.
- We will speak directly to those with whom we have conflict rather than complaining to others.

So as we strive to avoid gossip as we venture into the future, I wanted to share with you a short excerpt from a book that is talking about gossip. May the following words challenge and help all of us as we strive to put our new covenant into practice.

### Eliminate Gossip\*

*Gossip is black magic at its very worst because it is pure poison. We learned how to gossip by agreement. When we were children, we heard the adults around us gossiping all the time, openly giving their opinions about other people. They even had opinions about people that they didn't know. Emotional poison was transferred along with the opinions, and we learned this as the normal way to communicate. —Don Miguel Ruiz*

Eliminating gossip is a powerful way to honor the creative power of your word. Gossip is a form of judgment and abuse, whether about yourself or others. While the intent is not always malicious, the telling and retelling of a story charged

with emotional fuel tends to reinforce drama. Remember, your words have creative power: What you think and say, charged with emotional energy (energy is motion), is what you create in your experience.

Gossip is like casting a spell, feeding a story of woe, and reinforcing the exact behavior that annoys you to begin with. If you feel yourself eager to spread the news about so-and-so, or if you are in search of someone to tell about the continuing drama of your life, just don't do it! At first, this might feel uncomfortable, since, in general, so much of our communication is about our opinions of others or about some continuing saga in or own lives.

Some of us who have experienced talk therapy have become so adept at sharing our story that when we eliminate gossip, we initially are at a loss about what to say to others. Keep in mind that silence is okay, even though you may not be used to it. Commenting on the present moment, the sound of the wind, the fragrance of honeysuckle in the air, the magnificence of the majestic sunset, or the taste of the food you are eating are all acceptable ways to make conversation.

Eliminate gossip this week, and if you find yourself eager to get into the muck and mire of a juicy story, with many twists and turns in the plot, take a deep breath and choose, in the moment, to eliminate gossip.

#### How to Do It

*Day 1:* Think before you speak. If it's gossip, don't say it. If you're not sure whether or not it is gossip, don't say it.

*Day 2:* Notice when you do gossip and stop, or change the conversation.

*Day 3:* When you are with others who are gossiping, practice saying, "I'd prefer not gossiping about \_\_\_\_\_" or "Rather than gossiping about \_\_\_\_\_, let's talk about what's working in our lives" or "I'm practicing not gossiping and fueling the drama in my life. Would you help me by changing the subject?" Or simply change the subject: "The pasta sauce is delicious" or "Jamie, that's a great color of nail polish" or "I'd love some help planning my next vacation. Pat, what's your favorite vacation place?" And that old standby, the weather, is always something you can comment on!

*Day 4:* Share good news about what is going on in your life.

*Day 5:* Notice how often the conversations you are involved in are based on gossip. The more you become aware of this, the more you can change the course of a conversation midstream or simply remove yourself from it. Make sure you do not go on a crusade and judge others. Simply practice eliminating gossip and notice how that impacts those around you.

*Day 6:* Share with five people what you have learned about yourself and eliminating gossip this week.

*Day 7:* Reflect on and write your response to these questions:

- What did you learn about yourself?
- What made it hard to eliminate gossip; what made it easy?
- How do you plan to continue eliminating gossip in your life?

*\*excerpted from The Whole Hearted Life: Big Changes and Greater Happiness Week by Susyn Reeve*

## Opportunities Offered for Bible Study

by Dennis Frengle

One of the things coming out of the recent conversations held as part of the congregational self-reflection was a fairly broad interest in Bible study. Until Pastor Jennifer's departure, she led a Tuesday morning group, the demise of which was specifically mentioned and lamented by several people in the conversations. While there is still alive and well an active group—the Post-Sabbath Bible Study (PSBS) Group—that gathers the second and fourth Mondays of the month from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., the evening hours prove to be inconvenient for some members of the congregation. It is hoped that, moving forward, we will be able to staff a daytime during-the-week Bible study.

In the here and now, the Sunday morning study group will be starting off in the fall (September 11 at 9:00 a.m.) with a very interesting DVD lecture series looking at the Old Testament presented by a noted Jewish scholar, Amy-Jill Levine. For anyone interested in Old Testament study, either now or in the future, this will provide an excellent overview of the textual history, and a look at these familiar writings as they are viewed and understood both from Jewish and Christian perspectives. Lively discussion will follow the video lectures. The study runs from 9:00 until 10:15, and continental breakfast and childcare are provided. Feel free to give Dennis Frengle a call (503-867-6454) if you have questions.

On Monday, September 12, from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m., the Post-Sabbath Bible Study will be starting a series on the popular book *Bad Girls of the Bible: Exploring Women of Questionable Virtue* by Barbara Essex. The book is available from UCC Resources and Amazon, in both paperback and Kindle formats. On September 12th, the group will start discussing Chapter 1 and the reflection questions at the end of the chapter. Anyone interested is welcome to join. Linda Waltmire can provide more information and answer questions (503-320-2350).

## Volunteers Needed to Help with English Afternoon Tea

Marteena and Ruth are looking for volunteers to help set up, decorate, make sandwiches, plate desserts, serve, and clean up at the tea to be held on Saturday, September 24.

On Thursday afternoon, September 22, we need just a few people who can prepare and set the tables for tea. This should only take a few hours.

On Friday afternoon, we need sandwich makers and other food prep, flower arrangers, and miscellaneous helpers to prepare the food and decorate for Saturday.

On Saturday, we need a receptionist/ticket taker, servers, final food prep helpers, and clean-up helpers.



Times for the volunteer activities will be on the sign-up sheets in the Narthex or call Martena at 503-615-8131 or Ruth at 503-701-2462.

## Get to Know Trudi Raz Frengle

by Kathy Schneller

*This article is the first in a series to help members and newcomers at HCC get to know each other a little bit better, and to spotlight some of our volunteer efforts as well. We begin by featuring members of the Pastoral Search Committee.*



**A**s Trudi Frengle talks about her love for Hillsdale Community Church and her ideas for our future, she speaks with calm yet passionate conviction. Her positive attitude is infectious, and hearing her speak about her life experiences soon makes the source of her inspiration clear. Her ideals are grounded in her family's history at HCC, the United Church of Christ's tradition of social activism, and her own experiences as a volunteer and activist.

Trudi is a member of the Raz family, which has played such an instrumental role in founding our church, and she grew up attending HCC, later also attending UCC churches in other cities as an adult. She experienced the church she grew up in as a loving and caring place, an activist organization always working to improve lives around the world. Church life also gave children exposure to multiple generations, teaching them to believe that we should "love one another because love comes from God."

HCC was also an open-minded and safe place to engage in spirited conversations. She remembers that when John F. Kennedy was running for president, some members of the church thought that a Catholic could never lead this country. But her father disagreed, and when he spoke out about his beliefs she remembers that an intellectual and respectful discussion followed.

Naturally, she hopes to help us continue all these wonderful traditions at HCC, and wants to ensure that we continue to provide children with the same inspiration she received while growing up.

She also sees us as a sanctuary in which to learn and to explore our deepest convictions, a place where you can join the discussion without being told what you must believe. Trudi would especially like more people in the community to know about our excellent adult education program, led by her husband Dennis. She's justifiably proud of the years of study Dennis has put into studying his subjects, and of the popularity of his classes.

Trudi's history as a volunteer also reflects her desire to pass

on a better world to future generations. She especially values projects that get children involved, such as the time she spent collecting coins for the clean water project, raising funds with the Heifer Project, or picking fruit and making pies for an ice cream social. Projects like this help both adults and children, working together, "to see beyond ourselves" and improve the future of our world. Other volunteer activities include her current service on the Pastoral Search Committee, her work as a Stephen Minister and caregiver, her occasional assistance with Sunday School, her assistance to the homeless, and providing and arranging flowers for the Sanctuary and for special occasions.

She'd also like to see us share the church building and grounds more with the rest of our community, as we have done with the community garden. One suggestion is to offer lectures open to the public.

Her concerns for people have also been fueled by her political activism and travels. She has sailed around the world and met many people from island nations that may soon be underwater if global warming continues. Along with other members of a New York UCC and some of her family, she once rode a bus to Washington D.C. to protest our country's involvement in the killing of clergy in El Salvador, an act consistent with her current concern that the United States seems to be engaged in a constant state of war.

By finding ways around the restrictions placed on interactions with Cuba by our government, she helped to get needed medical supplies to that country. The Raz Frenghes also hosted some of these Cuban doctors in their home. She points out that there are two ways to travel the globe: you can physically go to other countries or you can get to know people from other countries right here at home. "When you get to know people," she says, "then you care about them, and then you want to help them." Making these friends widened her sense of community to a larger world stage.

That is what Trudi would like to see more of here at the church. She wants us to be "loving, and daring, and active." She wants us "to be on the side of love and not give in to fear and negativity," and this is the vision she brings with her as a member of our Pastoral Search Committee.

## Update from the Pastoral Search Committee

by Alexis Hamilton

**A**t the beginning of the pastoral search process, your Pastoral Search Committee promised to welcome your feedback and questions—and we have gotten a lot! Many of them have been handled on an individual basis, but variations of one keep coming up with some regularity—enough regularity that we feel there are probably many of you with the same question, unvoiced, in your hearts, so we thought we would answer that question in a more public way.

The question? Why is the pastoral search process taking so

long, and isn't there a way we could shorten the process and get a settled pastor in place?

We feel your anxiety and concern! This *is* a long process! It began with Pastor Jennifer's departure, when we assembled an Interim Pastor Search Committee and called Pastor Chris to be our interim pastor. An interim pastor has a special position in the life of the church in transition and there are certain expectations outlined at the conference level. Those are (among others):

1. The expectation that the interim will be time-limited;
2. The expectation that the interim period will offer the congregation an opportunity to assess its history, mission, and unique ministries;
3. The expectation that the interim minister and congregation will work together to address issues that would significantly impact the next settled pastorate.

We are deeply in the process of assessment and determining what we want and need going forward, and Pastor Chris is a wonderful guide during this time. Because of the unique opportunity to serve in a time-ended fashion, an interim pastor has the freedom to guide a transitional church through difficult discussions with the goal of leaving us stronger and more prepared to welcome a settled pastor. To insure this freedom, the Interim Search Committee made the decision that the interim pastor, whoever he or she would be, would be an interim, without the possibility of applying for the settled pastorate.

Our discernment process is going well! We have developed a covenant for how we as a church deal with conflict (a problem that was identified from all corners of our church family). We have identified and are naming our financial and attendance issues and bringing out into the open our hopes and dreams for revitalizing Hillsdale so that we grow and thrive and serve Christ for another 100 years. We have conducted surveys to gather demographic information that has been missing from our church records. The results of those surveys have been published. We have had conversations with you, the body of the church, which are helping us determine our direction into the future, and the notes from those conversations are now available and may be viewed at [http://peter.hillsdaleucc.org/publications/community\\_conversations\\_notes\\_2016.pdf](http://peter.hillsdaleucc.org/publications/community_conversations_notes_2016.pdf). Printed copies are available in the Narthex for those who do not have internet access.

We have gathered the information that we need to complete the Church Profile, which is the first step in soliciting resumes and getting to know who is out there and finding the perfect pastor for us. Currently the team is working on our "splash statement," which gives prospective pastors a snapshot of who we are as church, and wrapping our arms around all of the wonderful input you gave us through both the surveys and the community conversations so that we can translate that into the proper format for the Church Profile. (If you are interested in seeing a blank Church Profile, so that you

can see the types of questions we are answering, visit this link <http://uccfiles.com/pdf/local-church-profile.pdf>)

We want to assure you that there is a process and that we are working in the process—and in fact, we are right on track within the process! I am very proud of the work that the Pastoral Search Committee, the Consistory, and the congregation (not to mention Pastor Chris!) are doing to identify and deal with any of our peculiar needs before we call a settled pastor, as well as to identify and celebrate our hopes and dreams for our mission and our future. We are in process. and process can feel unnervingly unstable! But it is necessary.

Why is it taking so long? It does feel like a long time, doesn't it? Jennifer left almost a year ago. But the search committee for a settled pastor was commissioned at the very end of February, and the average time to find a settled pastor is 18 months to two years, from the commissioning of the committee. Some of you may remember the search for Pastor Jennifer. I am told that it took two years. It may have seemed to have happened more quickly, but her predecessor was an interim. That doesn't mean that we are dragging our heels so that we stretch the process out until we get to two years just because we can! But we are committed to doing our best to gather the best information and input from the congregation, and, with God's guidance, finding the best possible candidate to lead us into the future.

We want to encourage your continued feedback and questions. We want you to have confidence that we as a church and we as a committee are working steadily and deliberately to forge a path forward. We want to be as transparent as possible, but ask you for your patience and compassion as we do this hard work.

Committee Members: Carol Doyle; Trudi and Dennis Frengle; Alexis Hamilton, chair; Cathy Thomas; Mike Van Loo; Nancie Wamser

## Neighborhood House Food Pantry Seeking Helpers

**T**he Neighborhood House food pantry is in great need of volunteers! Their current need is for able-bodied people comfortable with lifting 15-30 pounds for an extended period of time (at your own pace to not cause any harm or discomfort). On Tuesdays and Thursdays between 11 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. there is food to unload from their truck. On Mondays and Wednesdays, they can use help all day long with general sorting, stocking, receiving donations, and serving clients. From 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. there are two- to four-hour shifts available. To volunteer or learn more, contact Jimmy at [jdebiasi@nhpdx.org](mailto:jdebiasi@nhpdx.org)

Offerings	Year-to-Date Budgeted	Year-to-Date Received	Shortfall
as of August 31, 2016	\$123,383	\$102,447	\$20,936

At Hillsdale Community Church, United Church of Christ, we want to honor God in our relationships. Therefore, we value and commit to the following:

**To *Respect* each other, ourselves, and all of Creation.**

- We will accept that there will be differences of opinion, perspective, and style, and will embrace the diversity of our spiritual family.
- We choose to be quick to listen, slow to speak, and mindful of the words we choose.
- We respect the community God has built at Hillsdale Community Church and will avoid creating divisions or factions.
- We choose to walk hand-in-hand even when we don't see eye-to-eye.

**To be an *Open-Minded* spiritual and religious community, because God is still speaking.**

- We will listen with open minds to the opinions, ideas, and concerns of others, and will respond with thoughtfulness and sensitivity. We will remember that our church is stronger when each person is heard.
- We recognize that disagreements and conflicts are normal and natural and are an opportunity for growth. We will strive not to let conflicts diminish relationships.
- We choose to learn from one another rather than to enforce our particular point of view.

**To *Communicate* kindly, clearly, and directly.**

- We will ask questions to seek understanding, and will honor each person's point of view.
- We will speak honestly about principles and ideas rather than personalities.
- We choose not to gossip, but to speak positively about one another.
- We will speak directly to those with whom we have conflict rather than complaining to others. We will seek pastoral advice as needed.

**To *Serve Others* first and honor the journeys of all who enter our community.**

- We will remember that we are here to serve others, and that means we may be inconvenienced as we carry out God's work in the world.
- We will seek to discover what is best for our church as a whole, not just what is best for ourselves or those who think as we do.

By God's grace, we commit to loving and serving one another and our community. We pray that our life together will be a demonstration of the love that Christ has already shown us.

# September 2016

(visit our live calendar at [www.hillsdaleucc.org/calendar](http://www.hillsdaleucc.org/calendar))

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			6:30p Open Co-ed AA Meeting <sup>R4</sup>	1 9:00a Walking Group <sup>UL</sup>	2	3
4 9:00a Adult Study Group <sup>MH</sup> 9:00a Children's Activities <sup>SS</sup> 10:30a Worship Service <sup>SA</sup> 10:30a Children's Sunday School <sup>SS</sup> 11:45a All-Church Potluck Picnic, <sup>FH</sup>	5 Labor Day - Church Office Closed	6 7:30a Men's Breakfast <sup>GT</sup>	7 10:00a Meals on Wheels <sup>MC</sup> 6:30p Open Co-ed AA Meeting <sup>R4</sup>	8 9:00a Walking Group <sup>UL</sup> 7:00p Choir Rehearsal, <sup>CR</sup>	9	10
11 9:00a Adult Study Group <sup>MH</sup> 9:00a Children's Activities <sup>SS</sup> 10:30a Communion Worship Service <sup>SA</sup> 10:30a Children's Sunday School <sup>SS</sup>	12 Transition Projects/ Hoyt St Meal <sup>KI,BC</sup> 6:30p Post-Sabbath Bible Study, <sup>MH</sup>	13 7:30a Men's Breakfast <sup>GT</sup> 7:00p Consistory Meeting, <sup>MH</sup>	14 6:30p Open Co-ed AA Meeting <sup>R4</sup>	15 9:00a Walking Group <sup>UL</sup> 7:00p Choir Rehearsal, <sup>CR</sup>	16	17
18 9:00a Adult Study Group <sup>MH</sup> 9:00a Children's Activities <sup>SS</sup> 10:30a Worship Service <sup>SA</sup> 10:30a Children's Sunday School <sup>SS</sup>	19	20 7:30a Men's Breakfast <sup>GT</sup>	21 6:30p Open Co-ed AA Meeting <sup>R4</sup> 7:00p Foundation Meeting <sup>MH</sup>	22 9:00a Walking Group <sup>UL</sup> 7:00p Choir Rehearsal, <sup>CR</sup>	23	24 1:00p Friendship Tea, <sup>FH</sup>
25 9:00a Adult Study Group <sup>MH</sup> 9:00a Children's Activities <sup>SS</sup> 10:30a Worship Service <sup>SA</sup> 10:45a Children's Sunday School <sup>SS</sup>	26 6:30p Post-Sabbath Bible Study, <sup>MH</sup>	27 7:30a Men's Breakfast <sup>GT</sup> 10:00a Tidings Deadline	28 6:30p Open Co-ed AA Meeting <sup>R4</sup>	29 9:00a Walking Group <sup>UL</sup> 7:00p Choir Rehearsal, <sup>CR</sup>	30	

BC=Bud Clark Commons (655 NW Hoyt St) FH=Fellowship Hall GT=Golden Touch (SW Barbur at 19th) KI=Kitchen MH=Mt Hood Room  
MC=Multnomah Arts Center (7688 SW Capitol Hwy) R4=Room 4, Education Wing SA=Sanctuary SS=Sunday School Rooms, Downstairs UL=Upper Parking Lot

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In Christ, we the members of Hillsdale Community Church United Church of Christ, declare ourselves to be an open and affirming congregation. We cherish and embrace individuals and families of all kinds. Believing that God's unbounded love and grace are offered to all and meant to be shared and celebrated by all, we seek to be a congregation that includes all persons, embracing differences of age, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, mental and physical ability, as well as racial, ethnic, or social-economic background. We welcome all to share in the life and leadership, ministry, and fellowship, worship, sacraments, responsibilities, and blessings of participation in our congregation. We commit to be a community of faith and spirit that works toward openness and understanding, offering justice, healing, and wholeness of life for all people. We believe that through our diversity, all can grow and practice a unity of faith that transcends our differences.

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