



Rose City Park

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

APRIL NEWSLETTER 2021

I grew up in a small town in the Appalachia Confronting racism as a lifelong journey

By Ben Judkins

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I grew up in a small town in the Appalachian Mountains. My first experience of race and racism was in the second grade.

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My mother was the town nurse and was often called out in the middle of the night to address some medical emergency. She sometimes took me with her, and this time we went to an area of town I had never seen before — what we call a holler, with about 20 ramshackle homes. As Mother was addressing the medical issue in the back room, I played with the kids in the front room.

The next day at school, I went looking for the kids but did not find them. After pestering my teacher, who would not tell me where they were, I was eventually sent to the principal's office. He told me the kids went to another school about 45 miles from our town. It was 1954, before the Brown v. Board of Education decision. I did not think much about it at the time, but it left a definite impression on me through the years. Why did they have to go so far away to school?

Several years later, when I was president of my church's Methodist Youth Fellowship, I invited a young Black man to visit and sing hymns while playing his guitar. My MYFers loved him. The church leaders, not so much.

A few years later, I was appointed to the official board of that church.

It was 1968, at the height of the Vietnam War and the civil rights movement. My education in the church had led me to be in support of the civil rights movement and in opposition to war, especially the Vietnam War.

My fellow board members, all white, male and generally over 50, believed the opposite. Through much of the first meeting they spoke disparaging words about civil rights leaders and downright hateful words to describe the enemy in Southeast Asia. That experience alone probably steered me away from becoming a United Methodist minister.

It was years later that I had more positive experiences with race and ethnicity — first as a VISTA volunteer in Arizona working with Mexican migrants and second in the United States Army, where I led race relations workshops for about three years. I had a desire to learn more, so I decided to get a Ph.D. in sociology and took one of my first college teaching jobs at an HBCU — a historically Black college and university.

It was there that I first learned about institutional racism, a more sinister form of racism built into all of society's institutions. It challenged the traditional approach to racism, which looked primarily at person-to-person discrimination or the negative treatment of people by other individuals. It was also controversial in the church, where many faithful people find it threatening, as it undermines a simple notion of individual agency on which personal salvation appears to be premised.

Over the next several years, teaching primarily at Christian colleges and universities, I would implement public programs in cities where I lived to help build community from diversity, encouraging residents to not only learn about and interact more with those who were different than them, but to better understand the challenges that racial and ethnic minorities faced because of historical and present-day policy decisions. Churches were often the institutions most involved in these efforts.

The struggle for social justice comes from many sources. The church, however, might be the most likely institution to lead constructive change on not only racial inequalities but a host of other social problems that we face in America and the world. While other institutions have tried, none of them have a built-in incentive to improve race relations or to address inequality and other social problems. The church does. We are commanded to love our neighbor as we love God and ourselves.

Events in the first few months of 2020, especially several killings of African American people by police, brought attention to structural and systemic issues in relation to racism and discrimination to the church. Perhaps for the first time, leaders of some churches, white as well as Black, are beginning to talk about the importance of addressing the racial divide on a structural rather than just an individual level. This is a major shift for churches that have traditionally focused primarily on eliminating prejudice through personal transformation.

I was shocked, but extremely pleased, when Bishop Cynthia Fierro Harvey, president of the Council of Bishops for The United Methodist Church, announced the new 2020 initiative “Dismantling Racism: Pressing on to Freedom.” She mentioned all of the underlying issues surrounding institutional racism: economic hardship, the lack of adequate health care, broken systems, antiquated structures, police brutality, the absence of accountability, the continuance of white privilege and power.

Finally, the church I love was beginning to not only understand the nature of racism but actively doing something about it.

Judkins is a semi-retired sociologist and lifelong United Methodist.

An Update From The Board

Your single governance board met via Zoom on Sunday, March 21 and again on Sunday, April 11 to work on both our vision statement and the mission statement for Rose City Park United Methodist Church. Although they sound similar, they actually have very different purposes. Without a vision of what we would like the church to look like in 3 to 5 years, we can't begin creating our mission, which answers the question, “Why are we here?” Another way to say it is a vision statement provides a future view or destination for the organization and a mission statement is a guiding light of how to get to that destination.

This example of a vision statement is from Nike: “Bring inspiration and innovation to every athlete in the world.” Whereas, their mission statement is to “do everything possible to expand human potential.”

Prior to the March 21st meeting, we asked for input from both the board members and the congregation. We knew we wanted to be a church that works to meet the needs of both our congregation and our community at large.

We found that so many of the ideas we presented revolved around that theme. After editing, revising, and evaluating the meaning of words, especially the word grounded, we all felt very comfortable

with the following vision statement: Rose City Park United Methodist Church is a grounded place where real needs are met in real ways by showing grace and being the hands and feet of Jesus to each other and our community.

To make clear, in this statement “grounded” is meant to reflect to the congregation the idea that we plan to maintain a firm foundation in our faith and our direction forward. On Sunday, April 11th, we met again on Zoom to consider a mission statement. Ideas from Sunday’s Zoom worship service were shared with the board, as were ideas submitted by various board members.

Once we had narrowed our choices down to 2 statements, we again looked at the thoughts expressed. We wanted to make certain that the statement was not too broad to be something we could undertake and not too narrow to keep us from achieving the vision we have put forward for RCPUMC. Again, after excellent conversation and give and take, even debating if welcome and nurture were both needed, we created a draft mission statement that we wish to pray and ponder about until our next meeting on May 2.

The draft mission statement is as follows: To grow together as disciples of Jesus Christ by seeking a deeper relationship with God. To invite, welcome, nurture and respond to ALL people with compassion and God's love through our actions, locally and in the world. We invite you to join us in praying and pondering about the above mission statement.

If you have questions about the process we followed or suggestions for us to consider, please contact board chair Kay Pettygrove at kayp1024@gmail.com, board co-chair Chris Anderson at christypdx1@gmail.com, or Pastor Dan Benson at pastor@rosecitypark.org. Kathy Green

Financial Update

The first quarter of the financial year ended on March 31. Those of you who have contributed during the quarter will soon receive from our bookkeeper, Andre Cordes, an email detailing your quarterly contributions. Please watch for it. At this point in the year, I am very happy to let you know that we are at 103.3% of our pledged giving and 73% of identified non-pledged giving. This is such good news for RCPUMC.

In addition, members and friends donated \$1175.00 to UMCOR Sunday. Thank you! Andre has, also, let us know that last year’s PPP loan in the amount of \$22,613.00 was forgiven, so it is now counted as income from a grant and may be used during 2021. In addition, he applied and we were awarded another PPP loan for \$12,000.00,

which will be on the books as a liability, until it is forgiven.

We thank Andre for handling all of this on our behalf. Thank you,
Andre!!

In attempting to be very transparent, next month I hope to be able to provide you with the final income and expense figure for the first quarter. That amount is not available at this time.

If you have financial questions, please contact me at kgreen109@me.com. If I can't answer them, I will get the answer from our bookkeeper.



Congregation News

(This is a new monthly newsletter column. If you have anything you want shared, that has not been sent to the Prayer Chain, please contact Patricia Holman at: pholman1025@gmail.com)

BIRTHDAYS OF THE MONTH

We rejoice with those who celebrate birthdays in April:

4/4 Alex Allen

4/11 Harriet Jackson

4/18 Dawn Nilson

4/22 John Green

4/29 Chris Anderson

JOYS

Ruth Ball asks for prayers of gratitude for being home after a day at Kaiser emergency with atrial fibrillation, and that there is effective medication to treat it.

Nancy Hesselman Turner gives thanks for how well her shoulder is healing. She began physical therapy April 12.

The beauty of God's creation SPRING!

Cecilia O'Leary loves in-person Kindergarten! Thanks to all the teachers and parents who have gone the extra mile during the pandemic.

Congratulations to John and Kathy Green on their new rescue dog, Betsy.

LeAnn Kelley's 15 year old grand-daughter, McKenna, is starting her own baking business, Par•La•Mai. She will be selling sweet and savory items and is currently making homemade cinnamon rolls with cream cheese frosting. Take and bake - or baked for you. All made to order. Pick up or delivery on Saturday or Sunday. If you are interested send her a note at m.kelleysiel@gmail.com and let her know if you would like to be on her mailing list.

CONCERNS

Corinne Tate is dealing with extra pain from a fall.

Julie Fleming's daughter is pregnant. Prayers for a healthy baby as she copes with two vertebrae in her lower back that have no cushion.

LeAnn Kelley's son-in-law's mother who is not expected to live much longer.

Lindi Moser's sister-in-law who has colon cancer and is in hospice. Prayer of support for her family.

Ernesto and Lita Quilban's two grandsons who are students at Gonzaga and have COVID.

Janell O'Gara's cousin who is battling cancer

Linda Hurley who will be having heart surgery.

The homeless in the Delta Park (which has become a city of homelessness) and the garbage that is everywhere. How do we, as a city, deal with our homeless situation.

Kay Pettygrove's niece who is Chinese and afraid of being killed for her ethnicity, and for all those in the wake of the discrimination of Asian people.

DEATHS

Prayers for members of our congregation who have lost loved ones this month:

Jenny Fosmire's brother, Billy

Kita's cousin's daughter

The family of Jan Swann, a longtime member of the congregation

who sang in the Praise Band and was membership secretary. Our love to her two daughters, Becky Larson and Karen Day, and their extended family.

Update From Cecil Thompson

Cecil Thompson would like everyone to have his temporary address and phone number. He is recovering from surgery and looks forward to gaining his strength back and getting back home with his son John. He always looks forward to cards, letters and phone calls from his beloved RCPUMC family!

Cecil Thompson

Warm Beach Care Center, Room B-11

20420 Marine Drive NW

Stanwood, WA 98292

His direct phone # is 360 652 5571.



Passing of Janiece Marilyn Evey Swann

Becky Larson asked me to send you info on our Mom's passing. If there is something specific you would like, please let me know.

Janiece Marilyn Evey Swann passed away on March 27th, 2021. Her daughters, granddaughters, and great granddaughters took turns by her side in the hospital singing songs, playing her favorite hymns, telling stories and pampering her both in person and on FaceTime.

Jan was born December 15th, 1931 in Los Angeles. Through her gift of music, she sang in the Portland Symphonic Choir, various church choirs, and a choir through her work at U.S. National Bank while employed there in the early 50's. Jan and her family have been a part of Rose City Park United Methodist church for over 50 years. She sang in the choir, Praise Band, and played bells. She volunteered her time in the church office, and enjoyed keeping up with the membership of the church.

Our family would like to thank all of you for your loving thoughts and prayers.

We know heaven has gained another angelic voice in God's glorious symphony!

Interment will be at Willamette National Cemetery at a later date where she will be reunited with her husband, Bob, who preceded her in death in 2013.

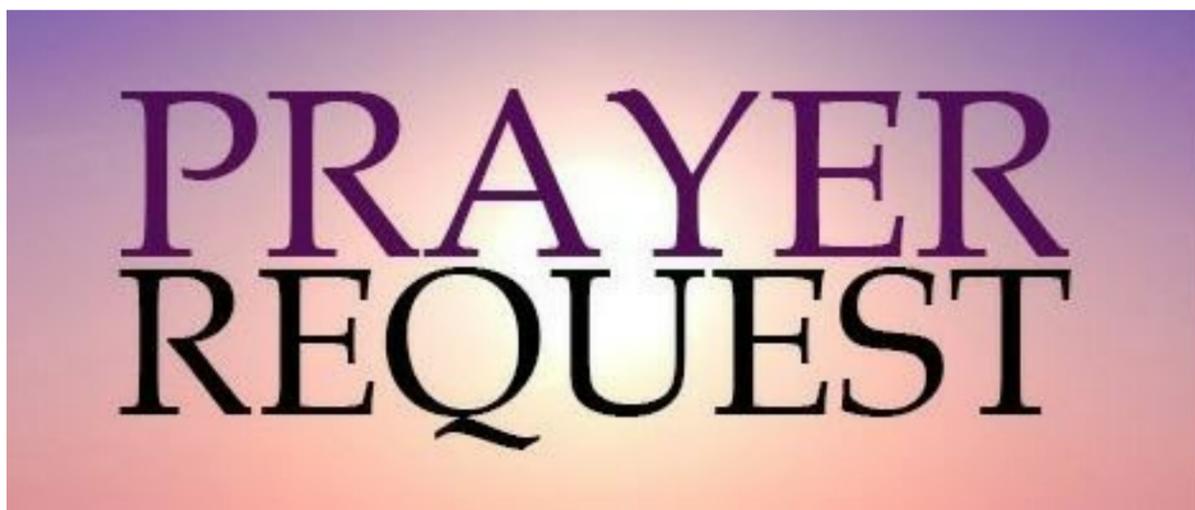
April Showers of Food Donations

Urban Gleaners is a local food rescue organization that provides food to families in need. The staff has been so appreciative of our past contributions. On Saturday, April 24 from 11-noon, I will be in the church parking lot to collect your donations. You can also leave them on my side porch, down the driveway, any time prior to 10:30am on the 24th. Any kind of nut butters, (such as peanut or almond butter), canned beans, tuna, and salmon, and would be appreciated. If you have any questions, please call Patricia Holman, 503-459-3090.

Thank you!

Zoom Link For Service

Please email the office to get added to the email list to receive the Zoom link and the Order of Worship each week Or if you are looking for the link last minute, please contact Pastor Dan at pastor@rosecitypark.org



Just as a reminder, the prayer chain is available to those that would like to request prayers. Also, if someone would like to join the prayer chain all they need to do is send a request to be added to the email address below. rcpumcprayer@gmail.com

Connecting the Community with God's Love

Since the closure, many have not seen our beautiful church or reader board. It's still beautiful and we're still inviting our neighbors to join us in worship.



Rose City Park United Methodist Church

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