

tidings

Worship at HCCUCC December 2014

Sunday worship services begin at 10:30.

December 7 Second Sunday of Advent
Peace Sunday
Mark 1:1-8

December 14 Third Sunday of Advent
Joy Sunday
Matthew 1:18-24

December 21 Fourth Sunday in Advent
Love Sunday
Luke 1:26-55

December 21 • 7:00 p.m.
Longest Night—A Service of Healing and
Hope on the Longest Night of the Year

December 24 • 11:00 p.m.
Christmas Eve
Festival of Lessons and Carols

December 28
Spontaneous All-Ages
Christmas Pageant

January 4
Epiphany and New Year's Service
Each person in worship this day will
receive a special gift to prepare for the
new year and the coming of the Light.

Tidings is published monthly by Hillsdale Community Church, United Church of Christ. The printed version is produced on recycled paper. An electronic version is available at www.hillsdaleucc.org. Send a request to tidings@hillsdaleucc.org to be added to our email list. *Tidings* is edited and designed by Tim Ditch.

Family and Friends Christmas Auction Welcomes All Ages

Mark your calendar for Friday, December 5, and join family and friends at this annual auction. A kid-friendly meal will be provided. Bring a dessert to share, as well as an unwrapped gift for the auction. Suggestions for items include recycled gifts, toys (new or good condition), artwork, baked goods, jams. Proceeds raised will benefit a local charity.

This is a great chance for young families, middle-agers, and grandparents to share a fun evening together.

Parents Offered a Night Out

The Fellowship Committee is offering the first-ever Parents' Night Out on Saturday, December 6, from 4:00-8:00 p.m.

This is an opportunity for parents or grandparents of small children to have a night out. We will provide a meal for the children, and our child care staff will take care of them! Sign up Sundays in the Narthex. See Paul Gonzales or Theresa Wechsler for more details.

Christmas Eve Service Celebrates Worldwide Tradition

The soft light of candles. The awe-inspiring music of the season—both familiar and new. The shining faces of loved ones around you. Rehearing the old, old story, made fresh and new again each year. It must be Christmas Eve.

Here at Hillsdale, we celebrate Christmas Eve with a traditional Festival of Lessons and Carols, which originated in England in 1880. The Festival of Lessons and Carols is now celebrated in countless congregations worldwide, including our own.



The darkened Sanctuary, candlelight, ten Christmas trees, scores of poinsettias, and more than a thousand tiny lights provide a beautiful setting for the Festival of Lessons and Carols on Christmas Eve.

The Christmas Eve service is a not-to-be-missed time of worship and celebration. Hillsdale's service is patterned after the service at King's College in Cambridge, England—the most famous Christmas Eve service in the world. From the quiet opening strains of the processional hymn, *Once in Royal David's City*, through the final majestic stanza of *O Come, All Ye Faithful*—"Yea, Lord, we greet thee..."—the service recounts the story of God's love and Christ's birth. The lighting of candles by the congregation as we sing *Silent Night* together is a powerful and moving moment that many of us recall with joy all year long. The service concludes at the stroke of midnight as we ring in Christmas Day together!

The service begins at 11:00 p.m. An extended musical prelude precedes the service, beginning at 10:45.

The Longest Night Brings Healing, Hope

Our annual Longest Night service is a quiet, gentle worship service offering healing and hope on the longest night of the year. Music, candlelighting, and time for silent prayer make this service a meaningful respite from the hustle and bustle of the rest of the season. Join us at 7:00 p.m. on Sunday, December 21, in the Sanctuary.

Giving Tree Supports Local Groups

Hillsdale UCC is supporting Raphael House and Animal Aid again this year with a Giving Tree. The tree with gift tags will be in the Narthex as of November 23. Take a tag—or more than one would be wonderful—and place your **unwrapped** gift, with the **tag attached**, under the tree no later than **December 7**. If you have any questions, please talk to Elaine Walser-Clark at 503-901-9311.

Get Justice News

by Gary Roberts

Where do you get your news? *The Oregonian*? Google? NPR? I find both traditional and electronic news outlets have their limitations for justice-oriented Christians. If you agree that something is missing from your news feed, let me recommend you add the UCC's Just Peace Action Team to the news you collect. It offers timely notice of current events, issues before Congress, and ways for us to be heard, as well as when it's timely to spend time composing an email as part of our Christian witness. Whether your justice issue is care for the planet, care for the poor, care for the community in which you live, or all of the above, I think you'll learn something from this resource, and be a better informed Christian if you will sign up for this free resource. I also find it useful as part of my prayer

practice. To find more information about the Network or to join, go to www.ucc.org/justice/join-the-network/. And if you'll let me know you've joined, we could begin to be a "Hillsdale Justice Action Network" as well.

From the Pastor

by Jennifer Brownell



On Sunday, November 16, everyone in worship received an envelope with \$10 in it. We had just been talking about the parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14-30, if you want to look it up), and so we decided to try an experiment to see if we could also make our money grow by unburying it. In the sermon that morning, I explained that in our family, we were trying to help break down the walls of secrecy and shame that so often surround money conversations by bringing our own pledged giving into the open to see how it might grow. Here's how I explained our decision in the sermon that day:

After long conversation and prayer, Jeff and I took our December giving out of the bank in a stack of crisp \$10 bills.

Now, the frugal, careful, responsible, SAFE thing to do is to leave this in the bank and wait for the auto-debit to happen. Instead, we are inviting you to join us in entering into the joy of the master because we believe that this money, once unburied, will grow. We believe that this money will circle back around to the church in beautiful ways we cannot even imagine. We believe that our money can double or triple or even more.

We are ALL here to serve Christ. We are inviting you to see how we can invest and increase this gift here in church.

How can we creatively invest this money together? How can we not just bury it, but bring it out into the light so it can grow?

We're taking a risk, stepping in the light and joy of Christ, because we believe that in community we can do more good than individually—because we believe in resurrection, in unburying that which has been buried, in bringing who we are and what we bring—ALL OF IT—into the light.

This is a free gift, up to you what you do with the envelope and the \$10 inside. But this gift comes with an invitation—how can you invest and increase this gift—not bury it but bring it out into the light where it can grow?

Make something and sell it? Pool it with others to create something that can be raffled off? You may want to simply return it to the plate. Or pay it forward. Whatever you choose to do, please add your prayers, your intentions to enter, as did the first two servants in the parable, into the joy of the Master."

By Monday, I had already heard from several of you with plans about how you would be making the money grow. I look forward to hearing more! Please bring whatever you have to offer to worship on December 14—JOY Sunday!—and we will joyfully celebrate the gift of generosity on that day.

See you in Church,
Jennifer

Spontaneous Pageant Offers Something for Everyone

Come one, come all as we celebrate the nativity with an all-congregation retelling of the Christmas story. There are costumes for everyone, and no experience—or rehearsal—is required! Join us Sunday, December 28, for worship at 10:30, and experience the All-Ages Spontaneous Christmas Pageant for yourself!



Be an Advocate for Justice

Want to be an advocate for justice and values in Oregon? How about in the national Capitol? Here are two opportunities for you:

“Raising Diverse Voices of Faith to Strengthen Oregon Communities,” takes place from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. on February 11, 2015, at St. Mark Lutheran Church in Salem. The 2015 Interfaith Advocacy Day will bring together hundreds of people from many religious traditions from throughout Oregon for a day of worship, dialogue, and advocacy. Activities include presentations from faith leaders on the religious roots of concern for the poor, training in advocacy skills, issue briefings, procession to the Capitol Building, and afternoon meetings with elected representatives and senators. Individuals and groups from congregations and community organizations are encouraged to participate. The registration fee is \$20 (includes continental breakfast, lunch, and materials) and \$10 for students with ID. Parking passes are \$15. Online registration will be available by January 2 at www.emoregon.org. There will be a carpool from Hillsdale to Salem this day, and scholarships are available if you would like to attend but can’t afford the fee. See Pastor Jennifer for more information.

But don’t stop in Salem! Maybe you’d like take your justice message, all the way to DC! If so, keep reading!

Come to Washington, DC, April 17-20, for the 13th Annual National Gathering of Ecumenical Advocacy Days for Global Peace with Justice titled, “Breaking the Chains: Mass Incarceration and Systems of Exploitation.”

Join over 1,000 Christian advocates in building a movement to shake the foundations of systems of human exploitation

(Acts 16:16-40), including a prison-industrial system that incarcerates millions of people in the US and abroad. A world that incarcerates so many and allows some to profit from the exploitation of slave, trafficked, and forced labor remains far from the “beloved community” which we are all called to seek.

The United States makes up only five percent of the world’s population, yet holds nearly a quarter of the world’s prisoners. Still, “imprisonment” is a worldwide problem and takes various forms, as everywhere people around the world remain trapped in detention centers, prisons, factories, and drug wars that bind and dehumanize individuals for political or economic profit.

Lamentations asks, “When all the prisoners of the land are crushed under foot, when human rights are perverted in the presence of the Most High, when one’s case is subverted—does the Lord not see it?” (Lam. 3:34-36) Do we?

As people of faith, we denounce the elements in our world that justify such systems of exploitation and mass incarceration. At EAD, we will confess our personal and corporate failure to break the chains of poverty, racism, and greed institutionalized in our laws, economy, and social behaviors that collude to perpetuate such human exploitation and strip civil and human rights.

As people of Hope, we are reminded that Jesus’ radical message was one of liberation for all and restoration of right relationships. Through prayer, worship, advocacy training, networking, and mobilization with other Christians, we will face the reality of mass incarceration and corporate exploitation, and call for national policies that bring liberation both to the prisoner and to a world in need of restoration—all culminating with EAD’s Congressional Lobby Day on Capitol Hill.

The Christmas Fund Benefits UCC Clergy

Our joy at Christmas is a response to God’s promise of new life through the birth of Jesus. It is a joy we are called to share widely, through our witness and gifts, both to loved ones and to distant neighbors.

“It wasn’t easy picking up the telephone to share

with you my present situation. In fact it was one of the most humiliating experiences of my life although it reminded me that grace still happens. Sometimes we as clergy persons lose sight of God’s grace when the negative stuff comes into our lives.”

“...thanks so much for sharing your time and ministry with me. Your most gracious gift is appreciated more than words can say as I continue to live in the ‘meantime.’”

These eloquent words are from a pastor who is the recipient of the caring and concern of those who contribute to the Christmas Fund Offering.



You have the opportunity to be a part of this ministry that cares for the active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ through your participation in this year's Christmas Fund Offering.

Your gift to the Christmas Fund will not only assist pastors like the one above, but also provide for the Supplementation of Small Annuities, Supplementation of Health Premiums, Emergency Grants, and provide Christmas "Thank You" Gift Checks next December to low-income retirees.

Your gifts are needed more than ever to help the growing number of retirees whose low-income annuities make it difficult to meet increasing living costs. This is your opportunity to participate in God's promise of renewal by enabling this ministry of compassion and care.

We will receive Christmas Fund offerings in the morning worship service on December 21.

World AIDS Day Fundraiser Planned

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO) plans its annual fundraising event for their HIV Day Center for December 3, 12:30 to 1:30 p.m., at Concordia University, Hagen Center (second floor), 2811 NE Holman St., Portland. This year, we celebrate 25 years of service as the only HIV drop-in center serving greater Portland's most vulnerable, low-income, HIV-positive individuals. As our guest, there is no charge to attend the lunch (please note that this will be a lunch instead of breakfast, as in previous years); donations will be solicited. All contributions go towards sustaining the HIV Day Center. RSVP to EMO's HIV Day Center by Nov. 26: email hivcenter@emoregon.org or call (503) 460-3822. If you can't attend the event, please consider making a secure online donation (specify HIV Services). Generously sponsored by Concordia University.

Take Care of Yourself

Self-care is the act of taking care of ourselves physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. It can be a challenge in the best of times; however, holidays can be especially challenging. With Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's occurring so close together, this time of the year can be even more difficult.

One point to keep in mind when the holidays approach: this time of the year is difficult for everyone. You are not alone. No matter how cheery your friend, neighbor, or relative may seem, somewhere in the recesses of their being they, too, are dealing with holiday-related memories, thoughts, or feelings that may be difficult.



How can you practice good self-care during this (or any) holiday time? Here are a few suggestions; many more can be found by doing a search on the Web or talking to friends about how they stay healthy during the holidays.

Practice good physical self-care by: 1) eating a balanced diet, 2) drink plenty of water, 3) get the right amount of sleep for you, 4) get regular activity, such as walking, jogging, or riding an exercise bike, and 5) don't overindulge in eating or drinking. This can create many problems for you that will take away from the joy of the season. Regular activity isn't just about toning your body or improving your cardiovascular health. It also is important in combatting unhealthy stress and depression by producing chemicals in your brain to counter these negative feelings. Take 15-30 minutes daily to do something physical and improve your overall body function.

Mental and emotional self-care helps you combat swings in mood, forgetfulness, stress, anxiety, and other unhealthy mental and emotional states. Ways to help and maintain good mental and emotional self-care include a good support system, including friends, family, or even a professional counselor; taking time (even 10 minutes a day) just for you. If you live with people, let them know that this time is your time. Go to a quiet place (one friend with a very large family actually went in the bathroom and locked the door!), sit, and take a deep breath. Clear your mind of the clutter, and think of something or someone that make you smile. It is amazing what a difference those 10 minutes can make. If keeping a diary or journal help you sort things out and keep things straight, then take time to do that on a regular basis. Even if you only write one or two lines, it can help your mental and emotional state.

Even though we are getting ready for Christmas, we can become sidetracked and forget why we are doing the things we are doing! Give yourself permission (and time) to read one small thing, either the Bible, an author that provides spiritual insights, or take time each day for a brief prayer to help nurture your spiritual self. Spiritual strength is an important foundation for our very being.

Lastly, it is easy during this holiday season to feel the sadness and grief created by the absence of those we love. This may be due to a person's death, but it also can happen when someone is unable to join you for the holidays. Know that this is to be expected. Feel your feelings, and acknowledge to yourself that you feel as you do. But try to balance the sadness and grief by also thinking of the good times, the joyous times that you experienced with that person or those persons. Remember their specialness and the positive ways in which they impacted your life. Celebrate their lives. Think of everything they contributed to you and those around them. And give thanks to God for creating them in all of their uniqueness.

Many factors impact our well-being at all times, but especially at the holidays. Take the time to intentionally do those things that help you maintain a healthy self in order to enjoy and celebrate this Christmas season.

**IN BRIEF:
YOU ARE
INVITED**

WHAT:

- **Introductory Meeting for K-1 parents for Our Whole Lives Sexuality Education for Grades K-1**

WHO:

- **All parents of K-1st grade children**

WHEN:

- **December 7, 2014, Hillsdale U.C.C. at 12:00 pm to 1:30 pm**

FACILITATED BY:

**Jana McKeown
Alexis Hamilton**

RVSP:

**Hillsdale
U.C.C. Office
at**

503-246-5474

Our Whole Lives

Hillsdale U.C.C. is offering Our Whole Lives Sexuality Education for Grades K-1

Hillsdale U.C.C. is offering *Our Whole Lives Sexuality Education for Grades K-1*. *Our Whole Lives for Grades K-1* is a nine-session curriculum for five to seven-year-old children in kindergarten and first grade, based on the philosophy that parents, religious communities, community organizations and schools—can form a meaningful partnership for positive and responsible sexuality education.

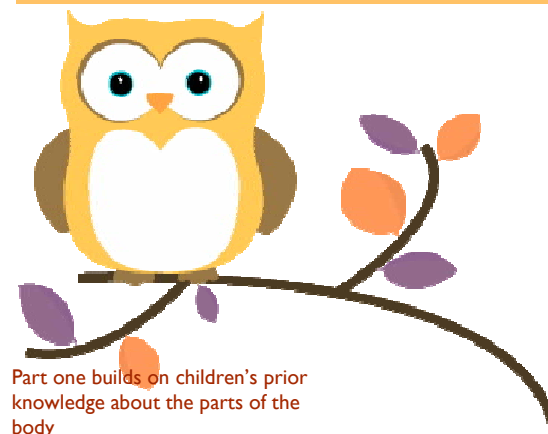
Our Whole Lives is a positive, comprehensive and age-appropriate educational program that promotes sexual health and is informed by the guidelines of the Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS). The curriculum is based on four primary goals: to provide accurate, developmentally appropriate information; to increase self-esteem and understand relationships with and

responsibilities toward others; to develop interpersonal skills, including communication, decision making, and problem solving; and to teach responsibility for personal health and safety.

Jana McKeown and Alexis Hamilton, both members of the Hillsdale U.C.C. congregation have taken the *Our Whole Lives* Teacher Training for the K-1 and 4th-6th grade levels and will be offering the program through Hillsdale U.C.C. for nine sessions starting

February 1 and ending March 29, 2015. The first session is a mandatory Parent/Child Orientation.

Those interested in the course should plan on attending an informational meeting on December 7, 2014 from 12:00 to 1:30 pm. Childcare will be provided.



What is covered?

Our Whole Lives is guided by the following two principles: parents have primary responsibility for sexuality education with their children; and sexuality education begins at home and continues through open and honest communication between parents and children.

Sessions: Parent/Child Orientation: Overview of program **MANDATORY ATTENDANCE**

Session 2: Our Wonderful Bodies

Part one builds on children's prior knowledge about the parts of the body

Session 3: Our Wonderful Bodies part 2, extends the discussion to naming the female and male genital parts and exploring gender roles.

Session 4: Healthy Bodies, Safe Bodies: helps children consider ways to keep their bodies healthy and learn about appropriate and inappropriate touching

Session 5: Families invites children to learn about many different family groupings and arrive at a definition of "family."

Session 6: Families and Feelings

looks at family feelings, especially

the mixed emotions that children may experience when their families change.

Session 7: Babies and Families explores how families nurture babies and how babies arrive in families through birth or adoption

Session 8: Birth of a Baby teachers about conception and birth in the context of starting new life and expressing human love.

Session 9: Celebrations! Affirms the many ways that families celebrate joyous occasions throughout their lives.



6948 SW Capitol Hwy
Portland, Oregon 97219
Phone: 503-246-5474

www.hillsdaleucc.org

Join Us Sundays at 10:30am

Hillsdale Community Church, United Church of Christ is offering *Our Whole Lives Sexuality Education for K-1st grades* weekly from February 1 through March 29, 2015. We invite parents of Kindergarteners and First graders to join us for an introductory meeting on December 7, 2014 from Noon to 1:30 pm to meet the teachers, discuss the program and the importance of sexuality education for people of all ages and decide how Hillsdale can best serve you and your child.

Please RSVP for this meeting by calling the Church Office at 503-246-5474.

Our Whole Lives Philosophy and Goals

The OWL program nurtures and supports the three Rs of early childhood sexuality education—*Respect, Relationships, and Responsibility*—by helping children increase self-respect and respect for others, build relationships with members of both genders and with many kinds of families, and understand their responsibilities regarding their own health and that of others. The messages that children receive through touch, talk, and behavior affect their future attitudes, values, and behavior. This curriculum helps children integrate the values of the program with their own system of values within and open, affirming and anti-bias environment and a community of trust and authenticity. The goals of *Our Whole Lives for Grades K-1* are:

- To strengthen and support each

child's sense of self and self-esteem.

- To help children understand the place of sexuality in human life and loving.
- To help children recognize and appreciate their bodies as good and beautiful, private and special.
- To help children gain understanding and accurate information about human sexuality, reproduction and gender identification.
- To help children prepare for the normal changes they will experience as they grow and develop.
- To help children develop effective communication skills.
- To help children learn to make

decisions that respect themselves and others and that anticipate possible consequences.

- To engage families with the *Our Whole Lives* program in open communication about all life questions.
- To strengthen parents' roles as their children's most important sexuality educators.



December 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 7:30a Men's Breakfast GT 10:30a Bible Study MH	3 10:00a Loaves and Fishes MC 1:30p Tai Chi FH	4 9:00a Walking Group UL 7:00p Choir Rehearsal CR	5 6:00p Family and Friends Christmas Dinner and Auction FH	6 4:00p Parents' Night Out R1 6:00p Boomer Auction FJ
7 9:00a Adult Study Group MH 10:30a Communion Worship Service SA 10:45a Children's Sunday School R1 11:30a Women's Retreat Planning Meeting MR 11:30a OWL Introduction MH	8 Transition Projects/Hoyt St Meal BC 6:30p Post-Sabbath Bible Study (PSBS) MH	9 7:30a Men's Breakfast GT 10:30a Bible Study MH 7:00p Consistory Meeting MH	10 1:00p Memoir Writing Group MD 1:30p Tai Chi FH	11 9:00a Walking Group UL 7:00p Choir Rehearsal CR	12	13 10:00a Choir Rehearsal FH
14 9:00a Adult Study Group MH 10:30a Worship Service SA 10:45a Children's Sunday School R1 6:30p Welcome Christmas Dessert Concert FH	15	16 7:30a Men's Breakfast GT 10:00a Tidings Deadline 10:30a Bible Study MH	17 1:30p Tai Chi FH	18 9:00a Walking Group UL 7:00p Choir Rehearsal CR	19	20
21 9:00a Adult Study Group MH 10:30a Worship Service SA 10:45a Children's Sunday School R1 7:00p Longest Night Service SANC	22	23 7:30a Men's Breakfast GT 10:30a Bible Study MH	24 11:00p Christmas Eve Festival of Lessons and Carols SANC	25 Christmas Day	26	27
Church Office Closed						
28 9:00a Adult Study Group MH 10:30a All-Ages Spontaneous Christmas Pageant SA	29	30 7:30a Men's Breakfast GT	31	January 1 New Year's Day	2	3
Church Office Closed						

BC=Bud Clark Commons (655 NW Hoyt St) CR=Choir Room FH=Fellowship Hall FJ=Fred and Joan Raz Home (7121 SW 25th Ave) GT=Golden Touch (SW Barbur at 19th) MH=Mt Hood Room MR=Maple Room MD=Maria Dunlop's Home (12146 SW 29th Ave) MC=Multnomah Center (7688 SW Capitol Hwy) R1=Room 1, Education Wing R4=Room 4, Education Wing SA=Sanctuary UL=Upper Parking Lot



Poinsettias to Embellish Sanctuary

Each December, we decorate the Sanctuary with poinsettias in memory or in honor of our loved ones. Giving is easy. Place a \$7 donation for each poinsettia desired in the special offering envelope found in the pews, write on the outside of the envelope the name or names of the loved one you wish to honor, and return it to the church by Wednesday, December 17. Acknowledgments will be listed in the Christmas Eve worship bulletin.



WELCOME
Christmas

Tenth Annual
Christmas Dessert Concert
Sunday, December 14 • 6:30 p.m.
featuring spectacular music,
scrumptious dessert, and fun for all ages

Hillsdale Community Church
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

6948 SW Capitol Hwy • Portland • ☎ 503-246-5474
tickets \$7 adults • \$4 children • includes dessert

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503-246-5474 • www.hillsdaleucc.org

Pastor **Rev. Jennifer Brownell** (jennifer@hillsdaleucc.org) Director of Music/Administrator **Tim Ditch** (tim@hillsdaleucc.org)
Office Assistant **Kathy Schneller** (kathy@hillsdaleucc.org) Child Care Providers **Sam Hinerfeld, Julia Miller, Mary Sontag**
Custodian **Terry Cornell** (terry@hillsdaleucc.org) Minister for Congregational Life **Rev. Martha Barstow** (martha@hillsdaleucc.org)

2014 Consistory Members: Bob Brandon, President (503-313-0056 - Bob.Brandon@tfc.com); Carl Wamser, Vice-President (503-504-4296 - wamserc@pdx.edu); Erica Johnson, Past President, Share Christ's Word (503-341-7821 - ericaljohnson@gmail.com); Drake Mitchell, Treasurer (240-672-1738 - drakem@pdx.edu); Nayan Fleenor, At-Large, Make a Difference (503-645-6132 - nayan@mindspring.com); Ruthanne Rusnak, At-Large, Fellowship (503-701-2462 - xiiicatsold@yahoo.com); Cathy Thomas, At-Large, Worship (503-246-9509 - elefun@aol.com)

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.

