

# THE TIDINGS

Wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

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## The Kids Are Alright... Are We?

*God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them.*

-1 John 4:16b

After spending a week fully immersed in camp ministry, I have come to the conclusion that we are worried about the wrong things when it comes to youth and church. Young people are not giving up on God, on community, on values-centered thinking, on embodiment and tech-free play, on growing in compassion and empathy, or on the power of ritual. All these things were on full display at N-Sid-Sen Camp and Conference Center on Lake Coeur D'Alene in Idaho last month, with high school-aged youth actively co-creating church together. If you don't know, let me tell you: camp is often the churchiest church young people will ever experience, it just doesn't look like what many of us recognize as such.

Church is a word we often use incorrectly; we talk about "a church" when we really mean "where a particular church gathers" or "where a community hosts church" i.e. the building. I realized this when I took a look around the banners of local churches adorning the walls of Stillwater Lodge, the program building at N-Sid-Sen. The majority of local churches chose to center pictures of their buildings, devoid of people or geographic context, as the primary visual cue to the identity

of their community. Church is not the container; church is the contents. We are the church, and church comes into being when we gather, sometimes in those buildings, sometimes on lawns, in homes or parking lots, sometimes in the streets or the steps of city hall, and frequently at camp.

Youth and adult counselors choose to take a week (some counselors took two!) away from their family, school, social, and geographic communities to travel miles (some several hundred) to have church in the woods by the water. They willingly give up their phones and their digital lives to be present with one another, to see one another, and to trust in the eventual emergence of “camp consciousness” (which I find akin to Christ consciousness). Ask any camper, and they will tell you about the set-apartness of camp time. I saw just as many counselors as campers resting and reveling in the container of camp, holding and binding us all together, making us church.

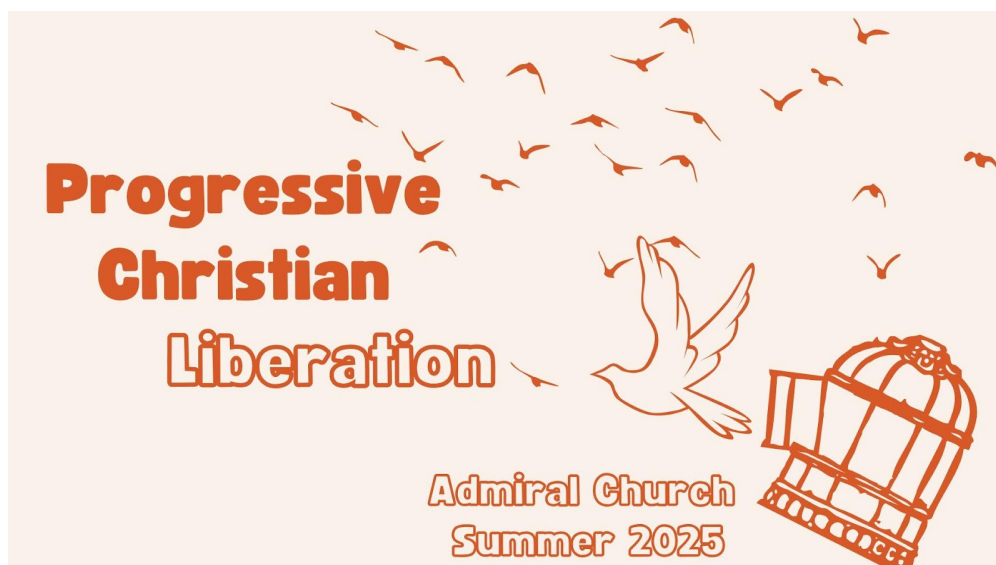


I remember hitting day three and asking myself, “Is this group of young people especially loving, brave, thoughtful, playful, and welcoming? Or is this what young people (and others) are like when they fully arrive into a culture of welcome, trust, vulnerability, and compassion?” I decided it was both, as these youth deserve a great deal of credit for showing up so intentionally, yet I am certain had we met elsewhere, we would never have become so close. Is a week away, isolated and without internet, an important factor? Obviously,

AND, that was what we all consented to, what we came there FOR. The world is noisy, disconnected, and too sure of itself. Church is a vibe.

The kids are alright. They are ready for far more than we usually trust them with. They are ready to question moralism, to engage suffering, to practice forgiveness, to rebuke demons, and to proclaim belovedness over their siblings in Christ. Many of them have not had mature Christians make space for them to struggle with the unknowable God, or to offer them their incomplete witness, their personal “good news”, their salvation stories. They are ready... are we? Do the well-established, building-owning, pastor-hiring churches know how to drop into “camp consciousness”? Do we know how to say yes to play and sharing, dancing and discussion, inappropriate karaoke and cheesy campfire songs? Isaiah, in his description of the work of Messiah, says *“The wolf shall live with the lamb; the leopard shall lie down with the kid; the calf and the lion will feed together, and a little child shall lead them.”* (11:6) In a world full of striving, suffering, and manufactured scarcity, are we ready to follow our youth into the Messianic Age? Are we ready to be transformed by the experience of church, and to share it unapologetically?

In hope, trust, and above all Love,  
Pastor Andrew



## **Aug. Church Events**

Summer Food Drive until Aug. 24  
Tuesdays Tobi's Jazz Hang 5 -7

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- Aug. 2 - Games, Games,  
Games 2-5 (HUB)
- Aug. 3 - 1st Sunday Brunch  
after Worship
- Aug. 8 - Moving Day to SJB
- Aug. 11 - Office set up at SJB
- Aug. 19 - PFLAG Meeting  
7:30 - 9 (HUB)
- Aug. 20 - Q & A at SJB 1 - 2.  
7 - 8 (Transition  
Space at SJB)
- Aug. 24 - Community Concert  
and Picnic 12 - 3 (HUB)
- Aug. 31 - Coffee Hour Open  
House at SJB 11:45  
Come Meet our Friends  
at St. John the Baptist  
and see our new space.

### **Looking Ahead**

- Sundays in September - Anti-racist Theology
- Sept. 6 - Games. Games,  
Games 2-5 (SJB)
- Sept. 7 - First Worship Service  
in our Chapel at SJB,  
First Sunday Potluck

## **Claiming Our Freedom Sermons & Scriptures**

### **Progressive Christian Liberation**

- Aug. 3 - Sermon: Emotions Can  
Liberate  
Scripture:
- Aug. 10 - Guest Preacher Rev. Bruce  
Wilson
- Aug. 17 - Sermon: The Power of  
Vulnerability & Vision-Casting  
Scripture: John 11:5 - 27
- Aug. 24 - Sermon: The Need for  
Community & Accountability  
Scripture: John 21: 15 - 25
- Aug. 31 - **No Worship Service This  
Sunday at Admiral, Come  
Worship at St. John the  
Baptist at 10:30**, Then Join  
us for a Coffee Hour Open  
House to Meet our Neighbors  
at SJB.
- Sept. 7 - First Worship Service in  
Transitional Space at St. John  
the Baptist Episcopal Church,

**Sunday Worship Service in the Sanctuary at 10:30!**  
**Children are welcome to attend church with their parents.**

## **ADMIRAL CHURCH COUNCIL UPDATE**

Historically, Admiral Church has used a year-by-year budget-driven plan of action. This method of planning has become less and less effective in achieving our goals. While we believe we have lived up to the UCC ethos and our Vision, Mission Statement and Core Beliefs and Values over time, we have not given intentional thought beyond our near future..

The leadership of Admiral Church has come to believe that this needs to change. As we work to develop skills and knowledge to create a longer-range Strategic Plan, we have used the Sacred Reckonings Survey Summary (2024) to inform us of the congregation's needs, concerns and hopes. We have met as a Council for a retreat (12/22/24) regarding that summary and to assess the needs of the leadership team as a church moves into our next chapter. We have also hosted a Congregational Retreat with our Conference Minister, Rev. Phil Hodson (4/12/2025), to hear his ideas about planning for our church's future.

To keep you informed of where we are in the Strategic Planning process as of June 27, 2025, we have developed a summary of our process. We hope that you will read it and provide comments, either in agreement or in opposition, to any Council Member. Our church's planning should reflect you and your beliefs.

**The strategic planning process of the church is ongoing, so this summary reflects where we are currently.**

**Time frame for strategic planning:** One outcome of the Congregational Retreat was that our strategic planning time horizon should be relatively short, focusing on 1-3 years with an emphasis on what we want to accomplish in the next year. We need to make progress during the upcoming transition time and look at it as an opportunity to bring in the community on the "ground floor" of the next phase of our church.

**Key focus areas:**



1. Affordable Housing Project. Both executing on this project and finding ways to communicate to the community how this project represents how
2. our church has put its faith into action. Rev. Phil encouraged us to lean hard into this cornerstone project of the church.
3. Plan for Growth. Rev. Phil was clear that in the conference, there are now only two kinds of churches: growing and dying.
4. Community Outreach/Mission. Continue our significant focus on community service but work to be more purposeful and inclusive in choosing and resourcing projects/events (focused on strategic Church goals and essential functions, with staffing needs in mind). Expand educational opportunities (both for congregational and broader consumption).
5. Communication. Develop an effective, efficient communication plan between leadership and congregants to ensure on-going updating and engagement of all congregants. Do more to connect to new people who attend church—create communication plans for visitor follow-up and new member onboarding education. Reach out to the community and congregation for input on events to serve our mission and provide opportunities for service and living out our vision.

### **Key characteristics of our church to emphasize and/or develop:**

#### **Radical Welcome**

- Living out our Opening and Affirming Status by truly embracing people of various sexual orientations
- Meet people wherever they are in their faith journey
- Live the example of genuine love for each other
- Anyone who visits the church is personally and warmly welcomed
- Care for each other and for others, provide opportunities for relationships

#### **Evangelism**

- Communicate our radical welcome effectively

- Become an “attractional church”
- Acknowledging that individual relationships are key in living into our future.
- Evangelize by conversing with people we know and others we meet in places other than church, inviting them to Admiral
- Embrace well-established techniques for connecting with the community (e.g., mailers)
- Be active and visible in the community
- Share the unique experience of being part of Admiral Church that can make life better. Market it to the community!

### **Progressive Christianity**

- Fight hypocrisy and live as the light of the world, redefining Christianity in the modern world
- Be a counterpoint to fear-, intolerance- and exclusion-based Christian messaging
- Show a real, and visible, focus on social justice (both action and education oriented)
- Think about what the gospel could mean to others in the community
- Minister for people as well as minister with people

I realize that there is anxiety about all of the changes happening. Be of good courage. As we move forward into our transition time, we will be refined and strengthened in our ability to meet these challenges. After all, we, as a congregation, have decided to do a new thing! We have already shown courage in this decision and have stuck to our guns. Next we will know and live the story of the Exodus during our transition time. We have not chosen security, but chosen to follow God’s next step for us. We will be open to co-creating this new thing with God as our partner. Using our transition time to reconsider our church identity and purpose within the community, we will show how we are not “the old church”. Through all of the changes we need to continue to be us; to be true to our values and not sacrifice who we are!!! Jesus is the center of our message as we move into the future. We will continue to keep the main thing the main thing. We will not fear but continue to move forward, together.

Peggy Rich, Moderator  
Mike Piraino, Vice-Moderator

## SEARCH COMMITTEE

The hard-working members of the Pastoral Search Committee are Anita Shaffer (Chair), Wes Andersen, Barb Edwards, Ken Kriekenbeck, Mike Piraino, Peggy Rich and James South. We have been working since April in teams of two to draft answers to the 30+ sections of the Church Profile document, then meeting together for an hour and a half every week to review, discuss and edit each other's responses. We're making progress, but it's very demanding work. We've hit a few snags but still believe we will be able to submit Admiral's Profile to the Conference by the end of August, as requested by the congregation at the Annual Meeting in January. When you get a chance, thank an SC member!

What's the Profile like? Well, there are 25 specific questions, there are requests for references and photos, there is a lot of demographic, historical and financial data to be entered. What are the questions like? Here are a couple for example:

"What is a growing edge for your congregation? What do you need to strengthen as a congregation?" In 1,200 characters or less.

"Describe how God is calling you to reach out to address the emerging challenges and opportunities of your community and congregation." In 2,000 characters or less.

How do the SC members approach these questions? Well, of course we consider who and what we are as Admiral United Church of Christ. We consider our own experiences as Admiral members for time spans ranging from two to 30 years. We consider Admiral's Mission and Vision Statements and our Statement of Beliefs and Core Values. (These are all in the Bylaws on our website, if you want to refresh your memories.) We consider what we know of each other and our ethos, information gained in sharing many hours and years of worship, discussion groups, meetings and social events. We consider the results of congregational retreats and surveys, including the "Sacred Reckonings" survey and the all-congregational retreat led by Conference Minister Phil Hodson this past April. We believe it our sacred duty to consider YOU, each and every one of you, who elected us at the Annual Meeting to represent YOU in this pastoral search process.



All this data and all these many responses are entered into an online form supplied by the Conference to Search Committee members. It is not copyable nor shareable, so we will not be able to show the finished Profile to you all. We hope you trust that we will have done our very best to represent the Spirit and Truth of Admiral Church. The Profile will be sent off electronically to Reverend Phil Hodson and the Conference and then put before candidates, from the Pacific Northwest and from around the country, who are seeking pastorates in the United Church of Christ. Then we wait for applicants to contact the Conference, which screens them and passes their information along to the Search Committee.

So that's what's going on with your Admiral Search Committee. If you have ANY questions or concerns, please ask any SC member. Once the Church Profile is sent off and candidates begin applying, however, the activities of the Search Committee become ABSOLUTELY CONFIDENTIAL. But we'll still be hard at work, making sure we're paving the way for the new pastor God, at this very moment, is sending to Admiral Church, YOUR new pastor, to walk in our door!

Anita Shaffer, Pastoral Search Committee Chair

The Vision Statement of Admiral Church (adopted in 12/2008):

*Following in Christ's footsteps,  
we will make a difference:  
inspiring each other to live transformed lives,  
reflecting God's light,  
reaching out to the un-served and the unseen in our community,  
and seeking diversity, peace, and justice in our world,  
with courage to be bold and to take risks,  
trusting in God in the present and the future.*

## **TRUSTEES. PERSONNEL, CONGREGATIONAL CONNECTIONS TEAMS**

### **SPLIT PERSONALITY ADMIRAL'S NEW (TEMPORARY) IDENTITIES**

Trustees Team Leader hat this time. And Personnel Team member hat and and Congregational Connections Team Leader hat. Ouch, they're getting tight... Ha.

Everyone knows Admiral Church is very soon moving its worship and office functions over to transitional rental space at St John the Baptist Episcopal Church. Uta's and Pastor Andrew's offices will be moving on August 11, the worship function of the church after August 24. The move is going quite well, actually, thanks to the incredible planning and organizational talents of our amazing, multi-talented Moderator and Transition Committee Chair, Peggy Rich. Our first service at SJB will be on September 7. There will be a chance for congregants to see and spend some time together in our new worship space on August 20 (see "Worried" article in this Tidings).

What many of you DON'T know is that our current building at 4320 SW Hill St will continue to house the non-worship and non-administrative aspects of Admiral Church until sometime next spring (probably April or so). Our 12-Step and other rental groups will still be there, Metro drivers will still use the bathrooms, Tobi Stone will continue to teach music and hold jam sessions there, space will still be available for rent for concerts and special uses. We even hope to hold our annual Christmas Market in the sanctuary, roof permitting.

The preschool will not be there, of course, they are moving down to Alki Church at the end of August. But the downstairs will have an exciting new identity as a space for engaging the community in artistic and expressive adventures, Passion-Child of Michael Henderson! Not sure exactly what that's going to look like yet, but I can promise it will be AMAZING!!

So, for about seven months, there will be TWO Admiral Church campuses: One at St John's ("Admiral Church") and one at 4320 SW Hill ("Admiral Hub"). When demolition begins prior to construction of the new building, the rental functions of Admiral Hub will be folded into our SJB rental space until we move back into our completed new building, probably in early 2028.

While the 4320 building still exists, John Alvis will continue to be our custodian there. And a new temporary part-time position of Caretaker has been created, which will be filled by Mike Henderson. He will maintain the exterior appearance of our building and grounds, keep an eye on roof leaks and structural issues and serve as liaison to the groups still meeting there. Thanks, Mike, very exciting!

And there you have it! More news as it develops, Friends.

Anita Shaffer for Trustees, Personnel and Congregational Connections Teams

## **OUTREACH TEAM**

### 2025 SUMMER FOOD DRIVE

Thanks for your contributions to date to our annual Summer Food Drive. White Center Food Bank staff have already picked up one load of food. But they report they are very low on food, as do other nearby food banks.

You probably have heard that the current presidential administration has drastically reduced federal contributions of excess food – produced by our farmers – to food banks across the country. At the same times, the administration is laying off large numbers of federal employees and cutting grants and contracts – all of which also impact the local workforce.

Many of us and our neighbors are struggling, but – if you can – please consider donating more non-perishable food or cash to our 2025 Summer Food Drive.

Thank you !!!

## **CONGREGATIONAL CONNECTIONS**

### **WORRIED ABOUT ADMIRAL CHURCH AFTER PASTOR ANDREW? PLEASE READ THIS!**

**“Don’t you know it’s gonna be all right?”** The Beatles

**“Don’t worry about the birds.”** Olga Shaffer (Anita’s Mom)

Hi. It’s me, Anita. And hello also from your Congregational Connections Team! It has come to my attention that some of us are worried about what will happen when Andrew moves on from his pastorate here at Admiral in about another two years or so. Well, I should say “a lot of us”. We don't want him to go, we're afraid of losing the light, the spark he has brought to our congregation, we're afraid no new pastor could ever be as good, that things will change, that we'll go under...

I get it. Been there. When I first came to Admiral Church some 20 years ago, fleeing from a church experience that had been crushing me, it was love at first sight. “God loves you”. Yes. “Wherever you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here.” YES! I’d never been so happy in a church. I wanted it to go on forever. Terry Teigen was pastor then. After I had been at Admiral for 2-1/2 years, he announced his departure. I was stunned and SO anxious, sure that HE was the source of the joy and growth I had been experiencing, that I would lose that and never get it back. I joined the Pastoral Search Committee then, wanting to have a hand in ensuring that the new pastor would be a Pastor Terry clone. Well, of course he wasn’t. But you know, things turned out fine. And that was true for the next pastor, too. And the next. I came to understand that what had felt so spiritually refreshing to me was the United Church of Christ, in its manifestation as Admiral Church. I became comfortable with the phrase “The church is the people.”

Those of us who have been here for many years have come to see and believe that. Ask Peggy, ask Kathy, ask Joanne. Many of you have never known another UCC pastor other than Pastor Andrew. Yes, he’s amazing!

But there are other amazing pastors out there. And the Search Committee WILL find the right one for Admiral Church!. Please trust the process. “It’s gonna be all right.”

And not only are we worried about transition to a new pastor, we wonder how we will keep Admiral Church together for two years in rented space in another church. And we can't quite imagine what it will be like to come back to a totally new church in an affordable housing complex. It's a lot. We need to talk, Friends. **Your Congregational Connections Team and Transition Committee invite you to join one of two informal gatherings to be held on August 20 (one at 1:00 pm and one at 7:00 pm) in our St John's space**, to see where we'll be for the next couple of years and to talk about how the pastoral search process is proceeding and what you can expect. And to listen to each other and share our concerns and anxieties. Please try to come. It really IS “gonna be all right”.

I have to explain the second quote. When my mother was a Sunday school teacher many years ago, she was talking to her class of kindergarteners about the same Luke text Andrew chose for the June 22 worship service, Jesus' teaching about the “birds of the air and the lilies of the field”. When she asked her little students what Jesus meant by this, one five year old girl piped up: “Don't worry about the birds.” Ever after that, in all of my and my siblings' lives, through anxious childhood and teenage years, whenever we questioned whether things would be okay, Mom would always say: “Don't worry about the birds.”

Don't worry about the birds, Friends. It's gonna be all right. See you soon at one of the Congregational Connections Team August 20 gatherings!

Anita Shaffer, Congregational Connections Team Leader

**Q & A at our Chapel at St. John the Baptist  
Episcopal Church on August 20th  
Afternoon 1:00. Evening 7:00  
3050 California Ave. SW, Enter on 42nd**



## **NEXT FIRST SUNDAY POTLUCK IS AUGUST 3rd**

***AUGUST 3RD WILL BE OUR LAST FIRST SUNDAY POTLUCK IN THIS BUILDING TO PUT IT ON YOUR CALENDAR, COME AND ENJOY!***

We will be continuing our “First Sunday” Potluck tradition into our St John space, beginning with our first service there on September 7! So, save those favorite recipes!

(WE WILL ALSO BE SHARING ONE COFFEE HOUR A MONTH TOGETHER WITH THE ST. JOHN’S FOLKS TO GET TO KNOW OUR ROOMIES!)

## **TRANSITION COMMITTEE**



**MOVING DAY IS COMING**

**AUGUST 8th!**

**Yes, it seems to be scheduled early but take a look at our schedule and you will see that we have a lot to do before our firsts service on September 7th.**

### **July 19th - Final Work Party**

Everything that we aren't using currently is packed up.

### **Week of July 20th - Finish Up Getting Ready**

Order and receive items for SJB Sanctuary and Office  
Finish Labeling bins, items to have movers take to SJB  
Approval of the two location names

Do Justice

Love Mercy

Walk Humbly

Creation of banners for the two locations, order.  
Create New A-Frame Posters for SJB location  
Create direction signs from West Seattle High School Parking Lot to Admiral Entrances.

**Week of July 27th**

Gather up the things that we have been using, box and label  
Take purchases to SJB on August 1st  
St. John the Baptist Safe Church Group Lessons and Pizza for those Council , Staff and Worship Team Members on July 30

**Week of August 3rd**

Put shelves and room dividers together in preparation for sanctuary and office storage of items for two years  
Movers come to move items to SJB, August 8th

**Week of August 10th**

Get Admiral Church Office up and running on August 11th  
Organize items brought to the Sanctuary and Office Spaces  
Put up signs, banners at SJB for Admiral Church (entrances on 42nd and Red Office Door)  
Get SJB keys for Council Members and Members of the Worship Team

**Week of August 17th**

Prepare Sanctuary for **Q & A at SJB**  
Wednesday Aug. 20th, Q & A at SJB Afternoon 1 - 2,  
Evening 7 - 8

**Week of August 24th**

Put up signs at the New Admiral HUB  
Prepare New Church Pamphlets  
Prepare Admiral Hub Pamphlets

**Week of August 31st**

Final touches  
September 6th - Games, Games, Games at SJB

**September 7th**

First Worship Service at SJB, Communion Sunday, First Sunday  
Potluck and Book Study led by Mike Piraino and Pastor Andrew

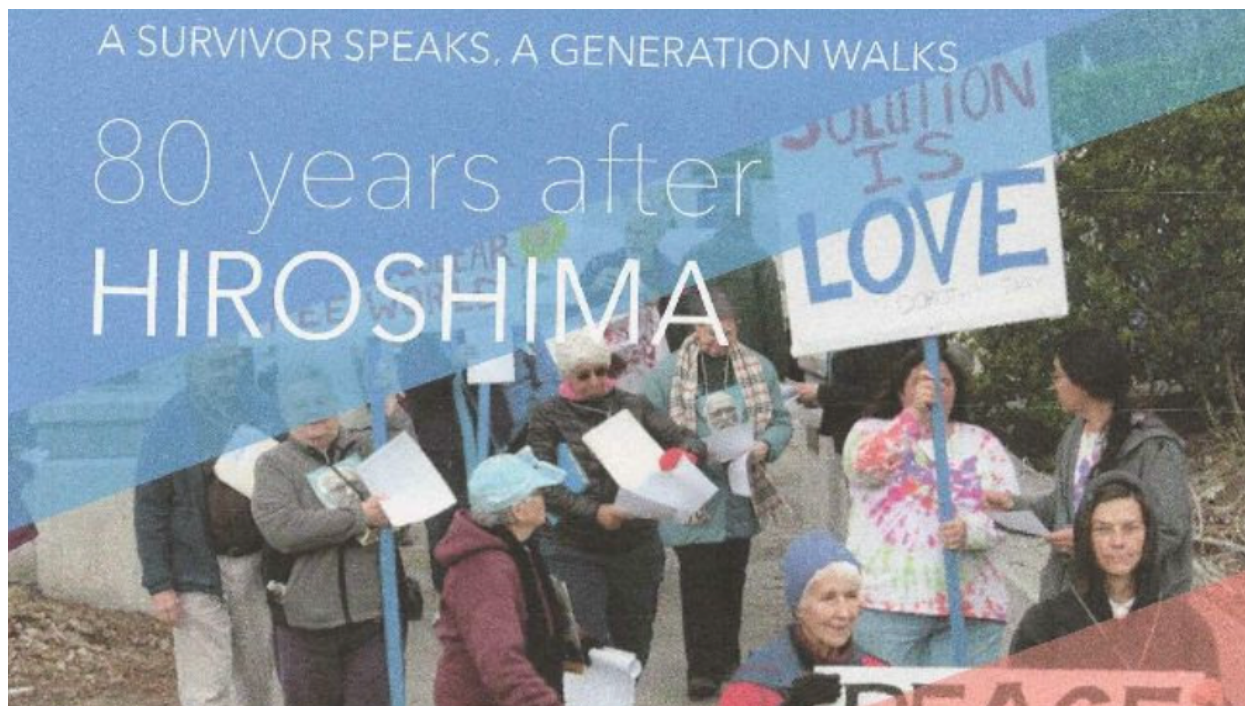
**WOW! If you would like to help at any point, just text me at (206)460-3021) and I'll tell you where and when you can lend a hand**

during August. We need folks who are good at ordering food for the Safe Church Lessons on July 30 and snacks for the Q & A at SLB on Aug. 20th. Folks who like to put shelves and room dividers together on August 4th and 5th. Folks who like to follow a diagram and set things up on August 11 (Office) and Sanctuary. Any help is appreciated!

Join University Congregational  
United Church of Christ  
4515 16th AVE. NE  
For  
**80 YEARS AFTER HIROSHIMA**

Come hear Norimitsu Tosu, a Hiroshima survivor as well as young adults from the Fierce Nonviolence Pilgrimage share their stories.

**August 3 @ 7:30pm**  
**For detail contact [fierceonviolence.org](http://fierceonviolence.org)**





## MUSIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

### **JAZZ CONCERT AND SUMMER PICNIC! SUNDAY AUGUST 24, 12-2:00 PM ON THE ADMIRAL CHURCH LAWN**

Remember last year's fantastic community jazz concert and picnic? Well, mark your calendars, because IT'S BAAA-AACK!

First, join us for worship in Admiral Church Sanctuary on Sunday August 24, the last worship service we will ever have in our current configuration; our next worship will be September 7 at St John the Baptist Episcopal Church. Let's celebrate and say one more goodbye.

After worship, we'll proceed to the church lawn to say another goodbye, this time to our outdoor space. At noon we'll have an old-fashioned church picnic, hot dogs with all the trimmings! Maybe we'll even have sack races. Or maybe not. Don't want any broken hips right before our big move. Ha. Croquet, maybe...

At 1:00, time for the BIG EVENT! Tobi Stone and her awesome musical colleagues will give another of their terrific outdoor concerts! We'll hear Ann Reynolds on keyboard, Steve Kim on bass, Susan Palmer on guitar, Jean Lenke on vocals, Chris Icasiano on drums and Tobi Stone on sax. Can't wait!

See you there! YAY!

Anita Shaffer for Music Advisory Committee and Congregational Connections Team



**PFLAG**  
**MEETING AUGUST 19th 7:30-9:00**

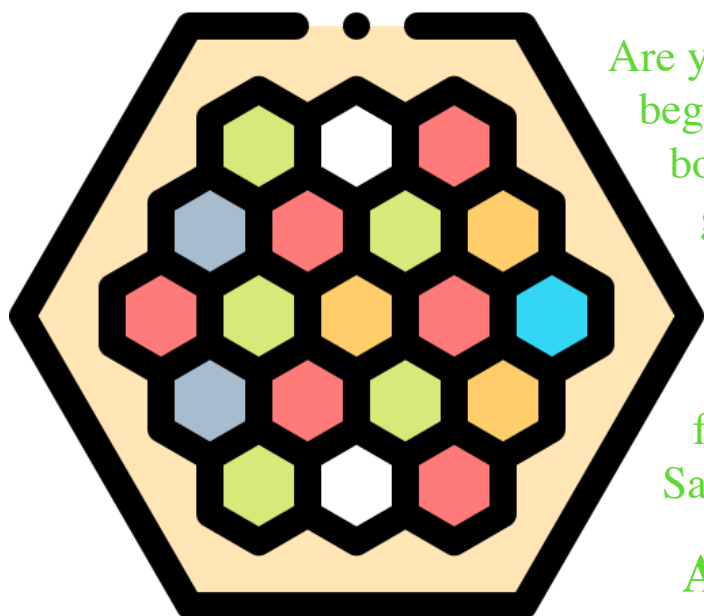


Please join us for our next PFLAG meeting on Tuesday, Aug. 19th @7:30 PM. For more than 50 years, PFLAG has been providing peer-to-peer support, publications, toolkits, and other resources to make sure that the family members of people who are LGBTQ+ get the support they need.



## CONGREGATIONAL CONNECTIONS TEAM

### GAMES, GAMES, GAMES



Are you an old-fashioned gamer? Expert or beginners are welcome. Hands on boardgames, traditional games, new games, card games, whatever type of game you like to play - this is your chance to show us what you've got! Come share a fun time with church friends and their friends on the first Saturday of each month!

**Aug. 2, from 2:00 - 5:00 in the Admiral HUB.**

## **TOBI'S JAZZ HANG**

**WHERE "CREATIVES" GET TOGETHER**

**AT THE ADMIRAL HUB**

**Tuesdays 5 - 7**

Tobi Stone holds a weekly jazz improv jam for all ages in the Sanctuary. Jazz standards and rare swing tunes- easy sight reading, fun jamming! Beginners learn from advanced students, and advanced players get a chance to play with others. Call Tobi with questions at 206.412.0145. All are welcome, so dust off that clarinet, saxophone or piccolo and join Tobi for a relaxing, fun evening. Listeners are welcome.

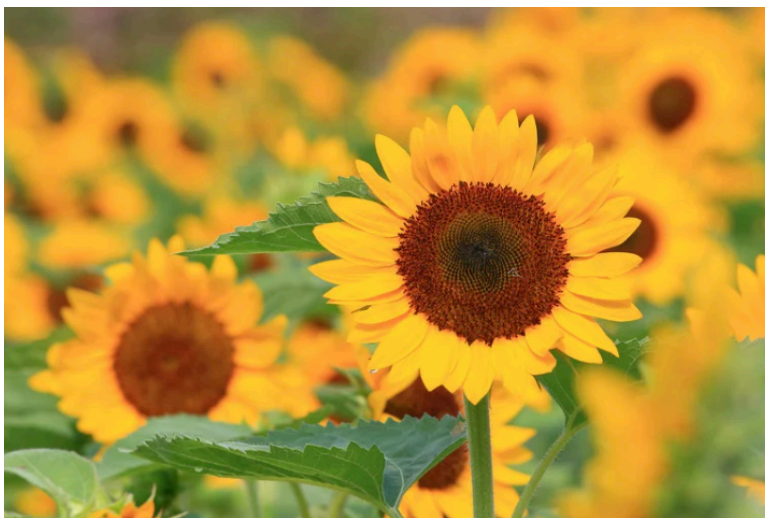


Do Justice

Love Mercy

Walk Humbly

**Worship Service  
every Sunday @ 10:30  
[www.admiralchurch.org](http://www.admiralchurch.org)**



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