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CHURCH WOMEN UNITED OF LANE COUNTY

cwulanecounty.org

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UPCOMING EVENTS

MARCH 2024

**MARCH FORUM
WORLD DAY OF PRAYER**

We will meet Saturday, March 2 at St Mark Christian Methodist Episcopal Church and get better acquainted with Pastor DeLeesa Meachintubby. After coffee and fellowship at 10 AM. we will celebrate World Day of Prayer, the service which was written by a group of Palestinian Christian women. They invoke women around the world to reflect on Ephesians 4:1-7, "I beg you to bear with each other in love". An offering will be taken.

If you are able, please bring art, fabric or souvenirs from the Holy Land to display. We want to acknowledge our kinship with the women of Palestine.

St Marks is at 1167 Sam Reynold St. It is out west 11th beyond Bailey Hill Rd and just before you get to Bertelsen. Turn left on Sam Reynold.

Looking forward to seeing you all there!

BREAKFAST AT BRAIL'S

Wednesday, March 6 at 9:00 AM

Corner of 18th and Willamette St.

Join us to discuss our insights

from our March 2

World Day of Prayer Celebration



**Let's Talk with
WDP Palestine**

~A World Day of Prayer Global Conversation~

Save the Date! Friday, April 5

We welcome Reverend Allen Buck of Northeast Portland's Great Spirit United Methodist Church to our April forum on April 5. Please join us at Wesley United Methodist Church, 1385 Oakway Road in Eugene. At our 10 a.m. coffee and conversation time that morning we'll prepare to hear what Rev. Allen has to say about economic and personal challenges facing members of Oregon's Indigenous community. Come ready to meet friends and catch up. And roll up your sleeves. Who needs our help? Let's find out! See you there!

**FEBRUARY FORUM
ECONOMICS THROUGH A BIBLICAL LENS**

By Charlotte Maloney

Our February Forum was held on the 2nd at St. John the Divine Episcopal, Springfield. Fellowship began a little before 10:00 and included many members donating food for the church's Saturday food pantry.



(A woman and her daughter arrived to access food during our forum.)

We enjoyed the deviled eggs, as well as fresh fruit, baked goods, and warm beverages. There were 30 in attendance including Rev. Nancy.



As we remained in fellowship area at Rev. Nancy's request, our President, Mary Sharon Moore, called the meeting to order and introduced our host and speaker, Rev. Nancy Gallagher, who greeted us and led us in prayer.

The land acknowledgement was read by Katharine Hunt, our Secretary. Sarita Lief, Ecumenical Action Chair, read the theme for 2024 forums, "Transformative Justice." Mary Sharon introduced the topic. Questions and answers were addressed when they arose, as Rev. Nancy preferred. She spoke amidst the round tables sometimes seated, sometimes standing and moving around area. She held our attention and had us laughing every few minutes! She is definitely a contender as a stand-up comedian.

In the addition to viewing the PBS segment "Affluenza," Rev. Nancy recommended several books about the topic how to do money differently and economic inequality in the US. Poverty by America by Matthew Desmond. (Mary Sharon Moore reviewed this book in the November edition of The Vine.) Manna and Mercy by Daniel Erlander, the late Lutheran pastor, with illustrations. Drawing On Holy Currencies by Eric and Dave Law.

She invited anyone interested to bring their CLEAN #2, #4, and #5 plastics to her location, as she is a Lane County Community Collector. She encouraged us to do more than recycle. Despite scriptures about money, each person needs to evaluate our intention and align with our values. She gave an example of deciding a recycling issue that needs study, then 2 people studying it then sharing with the membership and one other person.

She encouraged estate planning to avoid destructive dynamics developing in our family in executing wealth distribution in our will. She also encouraged us to give unwanted items to the "Buy Nothing" website, especially items we expected our children to want, but they don't. She described a movement in Sweden called "death clear out" when people downsize and de-clutter in small groups.

She encouraged us to consider including a percentage of our estate to a church or non-profit in our will. She encouraged us to consider instructing an account be opened with a certain amount of money with instructions that the interest would be given annually to one or more nonprofit organizations. Shirley Kingsbury offered to share a booklet, which she obtained from class in writing your own will, at a future forum.

She reminded us that we can't care about everything, so we have to choose what most makes sense to you to address in our life. She encouraged us to discuss how we got our money and who is possibly suffering from that.

We discussed sharing additional ideas and possibly publishing them in future issues of The Vine.

After announcements and saying the Prayer of Least Coin, we concluded our gathering by singing "Let There Be Peace on Earth," again accompanied by our Treasurer, Nancy Vrijmoet, on piano.

(To view "Affluenza" you need to buy the video; we've inquired about charge for arranging a group view Zoom or some other way. Response in April issue of The Vine! A 3 minute clip is available at:

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=pbs+affluenzia

A WORD FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Mary Sharon Moore

We are “lanterns in shadowy times”

I feel grateful for the season of Lent this year, the sobering 40-day stretch when Christians consider what we, and the world we inhabit, do to Love.

My heart has never felt so heavy, as large chunks of humanity fall off like ice bergs calving into an icy sea.

So, I feel especially grateful for sisterhood in Church Women United of Lane County. We *need* each other, especially in fraught times, to give ear, heart, and encouragement to one another as we struggle to make sense of a world in endless turmoil.

And I feel grateful for these encouraging words from Clarissa Pinkola Estés, Jungian analyst and writer with deep insight into the human soul:

My friends, do not lose heart. ... One of the most calming and powerful actions you can do to intervene in a stormy world is to stand up and show your soul. [It] throws sparks, sends up flares, builds signal fires. ... To display the lantern of soul in shadowy times like these, to be fierce and to show mercy toward others, are acts of immense bravery and greatest necessity. ... If you would help to calm the tumult, this is one of the strongest things you can do.

You and I will be called upon, perhaps daily, to shed light on the path and to calm the tumult which those around you may feel.

“Shedding light on the path” is a first work of transformative justice, which is top-of-mind for us now.

This year will be heavy on opinionating and disparaging remarks. Personally? I refuse to participate in these forms of violence. Rather, let’s shed light, point the way to something better, and share with others the invitations which we ourselves receive: to BE hope and possibility in a world that urgently needs both—this world which GOD still so loves.



We Mourn the Loss of Longtime
Church Women United Friend
Maxine Pilon

Federal Way - Maxine Whilma Pilon passed away in her daughter's home on December 10 in [Federal Way, WA](#). She was 96 years old.

A longtime resident of Eugene, Mrs. Pilon was born on November 10, 1927, in [Eagle Butte, S.D.](#), and grew up in [Lynden, WA](#). In 1948, she married Melvin Pilon and the two moved to Eugene.

Maxine was an avid community servant, including decades of involvement with United Methodist Women, the U of O Mothers Club, Church Women United, and in 1999, she received the Lane County Volunteer of the Year Award. She also hosted U of O foreign exchange students for more than 30 years.

She is survived by four children, six grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren.

Services will be announced at a later time.

More information can be found at www.tacomamausoleum.com.

To plant trees in memory, please visit the [Sympathy Store](#).

**STANDING STRONG TO
DEFEND EVERYONE
Your Unit Membership
Spreads Goodness to Many
by Nancy Vrijmoet**

Do you ponder all that you've been given, and compare it to what others have? I do. Exploring tough economic realities faced by our neighbors is what you can expect at Church Women United events throughout the coming year. How does spirituality guide those facing adversity, near and far? Come to World Day of Prayer on March 2. Let's discover, together, how a group of women from Palestine frame their spiritual lives through word, scripture, and song: *"I beg you – bear with one another in love."* Stop in again next month when Reverend Allen Buck of Portland's Great Spirit United Methodist Church meets with us. What are some of the inequalities of opportunity experienced by members of Indigenous communities here in the Pacific Northwest? Rev. Allen plans to answer this question. Clearly, we have much to learn.

The work of this movement called Church Women United continues. Here's a group our unit is passionate about supporting:



Each year we make a modest contribution to ROP in your name. Their goal? To "build and support a shared standard of human dignity: the belief in the equal worth of all communities, and the need for equal access to justice and the right to self-determination" (<http://rop.org/>).

In 2023 ROP collaborated with CALC (Community Alliance of Lane County), going to bat legally for our immigrant neighbors. They claimed the City of Cottage Grove violated Oregon's Sanctuary Promise Act. In February the Lane County Circuit Court agreed. The Cottage Grove Police Department will no longer be allowed to make arrests based on the charge of violation of immigration law. They'll be barred from reporting to Immigration and Customs Enforcement those already in custody, suspected to be in violation. Do you agree that our neighbors' rights should be protected in this way?

Remind yourself of the [details of the 2021 Oregon Sanctuary Promise Act](#) as you sort out your answer. Here's a hotline you can call if you suspect a violation has taken place: 1-844-924-STAY (1-844-924-7829) or the Spanish-language version at 1-844-626-AMPARO (1-844-626-7276).

Send your Church Women United of Lane County unit membership today to P.O. Box 5824, Eugene, Oregon 97405, or to your treasurer's home address, 42091 McKenzie Highway, Springfield, Oregon 97478. Your \$65 yearly membership brings you ten issues of this newsletter, seven intriguing forums, three fulfilling celebrations, and the peace of mind of knowing you have taken part in supporting good work throughout our state, our region and, indeed, the country. Plus an updated 2024 yearbook! What could be more wonderful?

And, while you prayerfully consider whether you'll apply the sliding scale to your contribution, remember what Jesus had to say about the significance of small amounts. As recounted by Luke (chapter 13, verse 20), "To what shall I compare the kingdom of God? It is like leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till it was all leavened."

Let your desire to help others guide you. One by one, each giving just a little or doing small things, we can make great things happen. Your love and commitment counts. Thank you for taking part in our movement. May God shower many blessings on you today and always.



**AGREED TO DIFFER
RESOLVED TO LOVE
UNITED TO SERVE
That is us!!!**

ISSUE UPDATES

by Charlotte Maloney

FOLLOW-UP TO CLOSURE OF EUGENE'S ONLY EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT

The Eugene Emergency Care Coalition continues to meet to explore short term and long term measures to address the lack of an Emergency Department in Eugene.

Several local representatives are working on 2 bills this short session to address the problems created by the closure. Here is part of the 2/16/24 The Register-Guard report about one of the bills, "... House Bill 4136, sponsored by Rep. Nancy Nathanson, D-Eugene, and backed by five other lawmakers with ties to the area, includes money to fund an extra Eugene-Springfield ambulance crew, a new path for out-of-state nurses to get temporary licenses, and an "innovation fund" to help Lane County pay for pilot programs meant to reduce the area's reliance on hospitals and emergency medical services.

Members of the Oregon House Behavioral Health and Health Care Committee voted unanimously to advance the bill to the house floor and to the Ways and Means (budget) committee, with a committee recommendation in favor of passing.

Following the hospital closure, **Eugene-Springfield Fire added an extra ambulance unit** to help make up for the increased transport distance. HB 4136 would give Eugene a one-time \$1.3 million expenditure from the state to keep that crew funded through 2025. "

Other components of the bill: 1/ a ride-source program to provide medical transport to people who don't need an ambulance. "So if you need a ride to a clinic, a ride to urgent care or a ride to the emergency room that doesn't require an ambulance, (if this bill passes) you can get to and from, 2/ a two-person squad "staffed by people who would do a similar job of navigating people towards aspects of the health care system besides the emergency room," 3/ nurse advice line, also called nurse navigation, would let a 911 dispatcher forward a call to a nurse-staffed call center, where the nurse can help the caller find a non-hospital health resource that might be more appropriate to their situation.

Full article at: <https://www.registerguard.com/story/news/politics/state/2024/02/16/oregon-house-bill-4136-help-eugene-university-district-hospital-closure/72245019007/> (You will need to copy link and paste into your web browser.)

HEALTH CARE FOR ALL OREGON BILLS

Here are the bills supported by HCAO. The next issue of The Vine will be written after the session conclusion, so it will contain update on each bill.

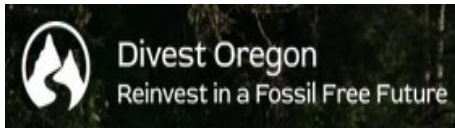
HB 4130- Corporate Practice of Medicine- had hearing; scheduled for work session. "Prohibits a shareholder, director or officer of a professional corporation organized for the purpose of practicing medicine" to hold 100% ownership of physician practices and health facilities. No local legislators are sponsors. Call or email yours and tell them you support the bill and tell them why keeping profit-driven corporations out of your healthcare is important to you. More information in 2/14/24 Oregon Capitol Chronicle article: <https://oregoncapitalchronicle.com/2024/02/14/lawmakers-former-health-care-leaders-want-to-prevent-private-investor-control-of-medical-practices/?emci=f8727d8c-d9ca-ee11-85f9-002248223794&emdi=85cffe8-49cb-ee11-85f9-002248223794&ceid=435969> (You will need to copy link and paste into your web browser.)

HB 4149- Pharmacy Benefits Managers Transparency bill- would require PBMs to be licensed by the Consumer and Business Affairs beginning January 1, 2025. No local legislators are sponsors. Call or email yours and tell them you support the bill and tell them that regulating profit-driven "middle men" would lower your prescription out-of-pocket costs, sharing your personal experience.

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HB 4070- School Based Health Centers- Directs the Oregon Health Authority to modify the amounts of grants for school-based health centers for inflation, so centers can maintain and increase services. Includes mental health services, which is currently underfunded. Representatives Conrad and Lively co-sponsoring: call or email and thank them. If you have other representative, let them know you support this bill.

Oregon Universal Health Care Governance Board
The board members, nominated by Gov. Kotek, have been confirmed by the Senate and sworn in. The link to the list of board members and their bios will be in the March The Vine, if the state website is updated.



DIVEST OREGON

The Divest Oregon coalition of over 100 organizations continues to meet monthly by Zoom. The many work groups continue to meet more frequently. The focus this short legislative session is passing the COAL Act, Clean Oregon Assets Legislation Act 2024, HB 4083. The bill "Directs the Oregon Investment Council and the State Treasurer to make efforts to eliminate certain investments in thermal coal companies. It provides that divestments must be accomplished without monetary loss to the investment funds. Provides that investments may be retained in a thermal coal company that is transitioning to clean energy. Requires an annual report to the Legislative Assembly on actions taken pursuant to this Act."

The bill was assigned to the House Committee On Emergency Management, General Government, and Veterans. It had a public hearing on February 8th and the work session on the 15th resulted in it passing to the House floor on partisan vote. Local sponsors are Fahey and Holvey. At the writing of this article, a date for the vote isn't set. If you have another representative, please write your Oregon state representative, as well as your senator urging them to support the bill. You can use this template: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ZftS9F602jc9ynXNd8hWtCjrVZChBvot-uGvl0ujQsU/edit#heading=h.jcelxcd8729s>

If clicking any of the links in this article doesn't work, you'll need to copy and paste the link in your browser tab.

Another important divestiture event: On February 6, 2024, Oregon Treasurer Read released "A Pathway To Net Zero: Positioning The Oregon Public Employees Retirement Fund For A Net Zero Carbon Future." Read the plan here: <https://www.oregon.gov/treasury/invested-for-oregon/pages/oregon-investment-council.aspx>

The Divest Oregon Coalition sent the Treasurer a response to the plan, which says in part, "But this is just the beginning: the success of this de-carbonization effort requires Treasury's commitment to transparent reporting, a sense of urgency, and responsive policy-making as the effects of climate change on investment portfolios are increasingly understood." The full response: <https://www.divestoregon.org/divest-oregon-responds-to-treasurer-read-s-net-zero-plan>

At the February meeting of the Oregon Investment Council, five coalitions members presented testimony. These included representatives from the American Federation of Teachers-Oregon, the Oregon Education Association, and Private Equity Stakeholder Project. They each spoke in support of Treasurer's Net Zero Plan. Both labor unions will be part of a new Beneficiaries' Advisory Committee that the Treasurer will convene starting this year to provide feedback about the Net-Zero Plan. Several non-speaking members also attended meeting as usual.

You can always find more information at the website: www.divestoregon.org

THE SEASON OF LENT



Shaft of morning light (detail), McKenzie River Trail, Mary Sharon

To Love as GOD Loves

Mary Sharon Moore

Looming large on my calendar is the start of Lent, a season that looms large on the soul.

I think I should prepare, establish a rhythm or some practice to give me entry into this time of reflection and conversion of heart.

And a phrase comes to me, which feels more like an assignment. I push back some, but the phrase remains: *Sit inside the sin of the world.*

Instinctively I know what this phrase means. And yet, I have no idea what will be asked of me.

Sitting inside the sin of the world reminds me of the words of Moses, in Deuteronomy, about God's people, who roamed "in a wasteland of howling desert."

In 2024 we too sit inside "a wasteland of howling desert." We sit inside a world that has lost its way. Daily we witness tragedies of human brokenness, and we sit powerless to stop the madness and make things different.

So, I turn to Wikipedia, and print the images of the world's powerful ones who hold the options of Life and Death over millions of people. These images, on my prayer table, seem like baseball trading cards, except drenched in vitriol, venom, and blood.

My heart breaks as the core of our shared Humanity corrodes and falls away.

I would not be the first to sit inside the sin of the world: not the first to *not* turn away, to *not* run away, but to intercede *from within* the dark spaces of barbarity. .

Sacrificial Love has opened the door already, and led the way, in the person of Jesus, crucified Lord and risen Christ. He shows me how Sacrificial Love is done: Absorb the violence, breathe out Forgiveness, breathe out Love, for Humanity in all of its tragic brokenness.

This is not the Lenten theme I had in mind. But here it is. It claims me. I am impelled to be utterly honest in my prayer, and I'm pretty sure my heart will be utterly broken.

This Lent I will carry the world's burden of grief, and lean hard into my only hope, which is the power that flows from Jesus' resurrection, a power that penetrates into the most hidden and needful places.

Shall we, together, carry the burden and lean hard into hope? I welcome your thoughts.

What is Lent?

asked by Phyllis

What is Lent?

What is it for?

40 days of giving up something?

Isn't there something more?

Well, I guess it's a preparation

For both death and new life.

So I'll give up something

But can I do it without strife?

So Glenda will give up dessert

And I'll try for worry.

May be easy for her

But will sure make me scurry.

But I'll give it a try.

It will take some loving care.

But I have Len

And I know God's Spirit is there.

So surrounded by their Love

I will face each day.

It's in walking together

That we find the way.

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