World Community Day, with the theme “The Time is Now! Resolved To Love”, is scheduled for our next gathering. Our guest speaker, Linda Carrine, is from the “Choose Kindness” campaign. We’ve seen the ‘Choose Kindness’ signs around town. Come hear about them and the power of those words.

As with our other celebrations, we meet one day and one hour later than our usual times. Please come and bring a friend. Saturday, Nov. 2, 10am to 12:15 at St. Mary’s Episcopal, 13th and Pearl.

The offering will support the work of the National Church Women United.

LOOKING AHEAD TO DECEMBER
On Friday, December 6, we will meet at Friends Meeting for our Annual Meeting. This is where the Board reports to the membership regarding our past year including financial status, programs, and activism. We also have a little Christmas celebration. We hope you will join us.
A WORD FROM OUR PRESIDENT
Anne O’Brien

I am off on a trip for most of October so I am just going to share 2 prayers that were offered by Pope Francis while visiting with Jewish and Palestinian leaders in 2018. I read the first one at our October forum which featured Angie, our Muslim neighbor. The second one is a nice lead-in to our November Celebration which features lessons about peace.

Lord God of peace, hear our prayer! We have tried so many times and over so many years to resolve our conflicts by our own powers and by the force of our arms. How many moments of hostility and darkness have we experienced; how much blood has been shed; how many lives have been shattered; how many hopes have been buried... But our efforts have been in vain. Now, Lord, come to our aid! Grant us peace, teach us peace; guide our steps in the way of peace. Open our eyes and our hearts, and give us the courage to say: "Never again war!"; "With war everything is lost". Instill in our hearts the courage to take concrete steps to achieve peace.

Lord, God of Abraham, God of the Prophets, God of Love, you created us and you call us to live as brothers and sisters. Give us the strength daily to be instruments of peace; enable us to see everyone who crosses our path as our brother or sister. Make us sensitive to the plea of our citizens who entreat us to turn our weapons of war into implements of peace, our trepidation into confident trust, and our quarreling into forgiveness. Keep alive within us the flame of hope, so that with patience and perseverance we may opt for dialogue and reconciliation. In this way may peace triumph at last, and may the words "division", "hatred" and "war" be banished from the heart of every man and woman. Lord, defuse the violence of our tongues and our hands. Renew our hearts and minds, so that the word which always brings us together will be "brother", and our way of life will always be that of: Shalom, Peace, Salaam! Amen.

A LOOK AT OUR OCTOBER FORUM
Cindy Kokis

"Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and right doing there is a field. I’ll meet you there.” These words of Rumi, Sufi Muslim mystic (died 1273) are echoed in the life of St. Francis. (1182-1226) Francis went on Crusade to convert. He visited the Sultan, listened and shared. They agreed that both paths contain truth, exchanged gifts, and parted.

This October we heard a mystical sharing from a Muslim woman. Raised here in Lane County. Angie Leis- ter was taken to the Mormon Church by her grandmother. At age twelve she determined that this was wrong for her. Her father, an atheist, gave her ideas from Joseph Campbell and other leaders. For over a decade she found no path.

At the university, she researched the religious base for art, paying tuition with farm work at a local estate. Impressed by the disclaimers in Buddhist texts, she saw “religion as a car - get out of the vehicle to get to God.”

Seeing her culture as an obstacle, she joined the Peace Corps. Sent to Niger to a small Muslim village in the Sahara desert, the first white person ever met, Angie was seen as "a simple minded ghost" who had to learn to carry a water jug on her head. She spent three years there, praying five times a day, in a religion where it is a major transgression to force belief on others.

Returning to Lane County, Angie found herself "all alone and surrounded by people." The Mosque became her village. When there were terrorist attacks, neighbors surrounded the Mosque to protect them at prayer. Questioned about the position of women, about jihad violence in the name of Islam, her answer was that these are not part of the Muslim faith. As Wendell Barry said, "Those who say Islam is a warlike religion must ask if Christianity has been as well."

Some wisdom from a youth at a church coffee hour: "Separate the faith from the failings of the people who practice it".

(Hunter Slawosky, theology student, U of O)
A LOOK AT THE ISSUES
Cindy Kokis

STATEWIDE RENTAL ASSISTANCE
A statewide rental assistance program is being proposed by the Oregon Center for Public Policy (OCPP). Rental assistance is also endorsed by the Eugene Springfield Solidarity Network (ESSN).

With rental assistance, lower income people would not risk eviction and homelessness. More able to feed and care for their household, this population would not join the unhoused. Stories told at the Eugene Mission women’s unit show how easily a person can move to the hopeless situation of searching for affordable housing where little exists.

“We must stop buying the con that ‘diversity of types’ and density without affordable mandates will create affordable housing... and $15 per hour will not fix what ails us when it takes $19.85 to pay for a two bed rental.” (Diane Bilovsky, RG, 9/15/19)

THE ANTI-SEMITIC ISSUE
In June 1939 the MS St. Louis departed Hamburg with 937 passengers, mostly German Jews. Denied entry in the United States they returned to Europe. More than 200 of the passengers were killed in the Holocaust.

A survey indicates that nearly a fifth of young Americans have never heard of the Holocaust. Attacks against Jews have increased by 60% since 2016. White nationalists with Nazi symbols marched in Charlottesville. In 2018, there was a massacre at a synagogue in Pittsburgh.

“It is possible to both support Palestinians and to pay attention to anti-Semitism embedded in thousands of years of Christian culture and theology. ... Progressive Christians are coming to terms with the fact that racism permeates our culture and each one of us. And too we must recognize that anti-Semitism is pervasive.”

(Lisa Schirch, 3/20/19 article)

CARRY IT FORWARD:
SUPPORT THE UNHOUSED
Nancy Vrijmoet

Winter is coming, and we all know how challenging the chill can be.

On November 2, you will have the opportunity to make a difference for those in the Eugene/Springfield area facing cold weather without the benefit of secure housing. At our World Community Day celebration, we will be collecting items to be given to the local nonprofit organization, ‘Carry it Forward’. They will distribute the items to our area’s unhoused population.

Items distributed through “Carry it Forward” will make life easier for our disadvantaged neighbors. Right now. When they are so desperately needed.

So select from the following list:
SOCKS: thick ones, such as merino wool, with a suggestion being the 3-pack available at Costco
STOCKING CAPS: plain design, brown or black preferred
GLOVES: water-repellent are the most useful
FEMININE HYGIENE PRODUCTS: any kind
HAND WARMERS: the disposable kind, available at Bi-Mart – upon activation they give off heat
CASH DONATIONS: to be used by Carry It Forward for buying tarps, sleeping bags, etc.

“Carry It Forward” began in 2015 when founder Arwen Maas-Despain partnered with others to bring carloads of goods to folks living unsheltered in our area. Other projects this nonprofit carries out include the laundry project, supported by a grant from the Mills Davis Foundation, and the camp clean-up project.

Learn more about what you can do to get involved at their website, carryitforward.net.
Katharine Hunt represented CWU in a “Community Impact Kickoff” held October 10-11 in Cottage Grove.

It was organized by Lane County Human Services Division. This planning summit brought together diverse stakeholders to help shape how the county will reduce homelessness and its impact on the whole community.

Lane County and the City of Eugene are slowly moving forward on a public shelter and improvement of services and additional housing for the growing numbers of unhoused here. This summit was to develop “community consensus” to implement the Shelter Feasibility Study (TAC) Recommendations. (For more information about the study and recommendations, visit www.LaneCounty.org/ShelterStudy.)

Katharine was one of several faith community leaders joining many service providers, some business representatives and elected officials, county and city staff, grassroots groups representatives, and perhaps most important, a number of community members with “lived experience” — unhoused and under-housed.

Several of those with lived experience did a great job of “holding feet to the fire” in this unusual setting. Their voices seemed to be appreciated, and I for one appreciate that they/we were invited and included.

Bob Cerince, the county’s new Homeless and Supportive Housing Services supervisor, was the force behind this community summit. Bob is a recent transplant from Long Beach, CA, where he worked on these issues as a church minister. CWU can look forward to connecting further with Bob in the coming year.

So far community collaboration has been missing, and this kickoff event was meant to begin to address that. As Bob said, everyone present was part of the “choir” understanding the problem; now we need to organize the choir, the harmony of the parts.

The final session was action-oriented, divided into 10 groups on different topics. Katharine was part of the Outreach group, discussing with people mostly from different agencies how they could coordinate and work together.

One suggestion was to have "a" training session for all the Outreach people from all the agencies. That way people would get to know each other and use the same protocol. It would also be more cost effective.

Katharine’s conclusion: “I came away with a feeling that there is a lot of work to be done to make sure all people are housed and receiving the services needed. I think it can be done if the faith communities, other organizations, and the service agencies as well as the different levels of government really work together.”

A video focusing on the numerous presentations will be available on Todd Boyle's YouTube channel, and linked at the county website.

(Contact me if you need help finding it. majeska@efn.org 541-344-1643)
The 2020 Church Women United forums are in good hands. Here are some of your CWU sisters who met to finalize the programs.

Olive Street Boutiques
A Unique Bazaar
First United Methodist Church, 1376 Olive Street, Eugene

Thur, Nov. 7, 3:30-6:30 p.m.
Early shopping opportunity
Admission: $5.00
(Includes a goodie & a beverage)

Free Admission
Friday Nov 8, 9-2 p.m.
Refreshments Available
Saturday, Nov. 9, 9 a.m.–2 p.m.
Salad Luncheon
11 a.m. – 1 p.m. $10

Our Bazaar is open Thursday!

New and gently used items for the discriminating shopper:
Antiques & Collectibles
Holiday Décor
Country Kitchen
Fabulous Fashions

Booktique
Jewelry
Kitchen Collectibles
Toys, Games & Puzzles

Silent Auction