

Interim Co-Pastor Jerri Handy

First Christian Church, Eugene is on a journey. It has been a joy to accompany you on this part of your journey. I give thanks to God for this church and for being called to serve in this interim time. I thank the board for extending my time with you.

This 1st Quarter report began with our entry into a time of questioning, “Who are We Becoming”. Transition team was formulating questions for a Congregational Survey, and then, a series of 3 sessions were held to report what we learned and listen to your responses.

The liturgical calendar shifted towards Lent. Our focus was on deepening the reserves and practices of being what we are called to be in this time. What do we need to let go of? What is a part of our identity? What do we need to revitalize or just let it be? Wendel Berry poetry lead us through this season.

Things began to shift and move. Worship, CMT. Transition team all called for change. While you will hear specifics coming from each of these, feeling the vibrations of movement is wonderful and exciting. There are good things happening in the life of the church and the ministries which we hold dear.

Easter Sunday afternoon from 2-3pm in the north lawn of the church we continued the life-giving tradition of flowering the cross. We shared communion, greeted church family and friends. It was remarkable.

As we move into the 2nd Quarter our focus continues to change. We are looking forward to Pentecost and the life sustaining power of Spirit! There are new things in our near future. A New Transition team whose mission is to complete the search and call process will be in place. Both Pastor April and Pastor Jerri will be helping support the grief work we need to do. Pastor April will lead a series of *Grief Rituals* and I will lead *Grief support groups*. Together these groups will help us through lamenting what once was but is not more. This is incredibly freeing work. God *will* be with us.

COVID restrictions, state and local mandates, building limitations all are keeping us as safe as possible. CRRT meets regularly to review and find ways to make entry into the building possible.

Planning reopening will continue to take steps forward. There is much to prepare for and most of it will fall into two categories. First, *when* is it safe to reopen? This is a moving target. Getting more people vaccinated, ventilation work complete, update staffing for cleaning are all parts of the *when*. Second, is the *how*. It is important to build our game plan for opening the building. We all want this to happen. Careful attention to the *how* we reopen will help to ensure we can stay open and not have to shut down again. You will be hearing more from CRRT as we move forward in this process.

May our efforts as a congregation keep us moving forward. Pentecost is on its way and with it will be a reawakening of spiritual empowerment. More time for prayer together in many different settings. Prayer Pods are being reactivated, other Spiritual Formation events will be offered, Dining for dollar parties is a 2 for 1 boot. We pay to join parties and get the benefit of deepening relationships with others in the church, and it is a fund-raising opportunity for the church. 2 wins for each event!!

Life in the church is beginning to break forth Hallelujah!