

# OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2022

## Newsletter



## Discerning Mission & Values

In August, we held two "Congregational Conversations," to discuss the mission, vision, and values of Spirit of Grace, and how we want to tell our story moving forward. Thank you to everyone who participated in one (or both!) of these sessions! Your input was invaluable, and the energy and excitement in the room was palpable. From all of the thoughts and insight gathered, it is clear that we are a people passionate about welcome, community engagement, service, relationships, and following the Living Word and Call of God!



The Church Board will be meeting on **October 23rd at 3pm** to attend to the business of the church, as well as continue this important conversation. We hope to put together some draft statements, to be reviewed by the congregation and voted on at our annual meeting in January! Stay tuned for more updates!

## What's Inside?

Discerning Mission & Values

PAGE 1

Pastor's Letter

PAGE 2-3

Special Services

PAGE 4

Lifelong Learning

PAGE 5

Church Updates

PAGE 6

Getting Involved

PAGE 7

Community Updates

PAGE 8-9

Prayers & Reflections

PAGE 10

Ministry Teams

PAGE 11

Church Calendar

PAGE 12-13

# Pastor's Letter

## Beloved Siblings in Christ,

It filled my heart and soul with joy to see how the Season of Creation came alive in our midst this fall! Over the course of five weeks, we centered our worship around our repentance for harm done to God's creation, and our recommitment to living as the caring stewards God made us to be. We filled our Burning Bush with prayers, gathered together to plant seeds of hope (spring bulbs!), practiced thoughtful discernment about how God is calling us to respond to the Climate Crisis.

Below, you'll find a prayer in which our burning bush prayers have been intertwined, summarizing all that we experienced together in this season:



### God of Creation,

You formed the earth and all that lives within it, and you entrusted humanity as stewards of your marvelous work. Yet we have not honored this responsibility, and time and time again we have failed to protect your creation. In a world of abundance, we have created scarcity. In a world of change and renewal, we have dug in our heels and resisted these cycles. In a world built for community and relationality, we have chosen independence and exerted our own superiority. We have hurt instead of healed, hoarded instead of helped, hastened rather than humbled. We acknowledge our failings, and ask for your forgiveness as we recommit ourselves to the responsibility of stewardship you entrusted to us.

# Pastor's Letter

Forgive us for seeing Creation as a commodity to put a price on. Remove our blinders, cure our affluenza, and help us to learn from our indigenous siblings who bear abundant wisdom in their teachings. Help us listen to the voices of Creation as we strive to live into this calling; may we find your voice in the trees, waters, stewards, people, and seeds of your world, who help us to remember that we are one with Creation. May the few and powerful learn to care for the many, and for this world that we share, offering reparations and renewal to those who have been harmed and displaced. We pray for wisdom to protect forest farms and homes in a changing climate. We pray for droughts and fires, floods and storms; for cleansing rains, relief from and an end to the wildfires that rage on throughout our country. We give you thanks for the gift of rain and it's sustaining, cleansing power, offering healing and restoration to a weary world. We give you thanks for the never-ending blessings you bestow on us; for flowers and pets and tiny creatures that show us your love embodied in creation; for workers, rain, crops, sun, and hard-working farmers who tend the soil and provide sustenance for us all.



We rejoice in the fact that it is not yet too late – that the earth can still be saved and we have been given the tools to do so. We rejoice in the opportunity to create a better world for the generations who come after us. We rejoice in the never-ending forgiveness given to us through Jesus Christ, freeing us to recommit ourselves to the care and protection of Creation day after day. **Amen.**

In Peace,  
*Pastor Miranda BG*





# Special Services

## Reformation Sunday October 30th

October 30th is Reformation Sunday – the day we remember and celebrate Martin Luther nailing the 95 Theses to the doors of the church in Wittenberg, sparking the beginning of the Reformation movement! As protestants (Lutherans and Methodists), we belong to a tradition of reformers - those called to help the church continue to re-evaluate and change our ways to better reflect the love and values of our God throughout the ages. In honor of Reformation Sunday, all are invited to **wear red** as a sign of their commitment to the ongoing reformation of our church. We hope you'll come and celebrate with us!

## All Saints Sunday November 6th

November 6th is All Saints Sunday – the day we honor those who have passed away and gone on to join the company of saints in heaven, to rest from their labors in the presence of the Divine. In worship we will have a Remembrance of the Saints, reading the names of loved ones we lost in the last year. **All are invited to submit names of anyone you've lost in the last year to be read during this litany by emailing [office@hoodriverchurch.com](mailto:office@hoodriverchurch.com).**

We will also have a special altar set up for individuals to display photos and mementos of loved ones lost at any point in their lives. We will fill the altar with these tangible memories and light candles to remember that we are all still bound and connected to one another through the presence of God.

### Remembering our Members

#### ***Adeline Schull passed away peacefully in her home on August 27th, 2022.***

*Adeline was a longtime member of Spirit of Grace, and prided herself on being one of the oldest members of the Our Redeemer Lutheran prior! She was a wonderful cook and a longtime quilter, who spent many hours gathered with other women pouring their love into quilts for those in need. She was a warm, caring individual, who supported friends in their struggles and abided with them in grief.*

#### ***Kenneth Kliewer passed away peacefully on June 17th, 2022.***

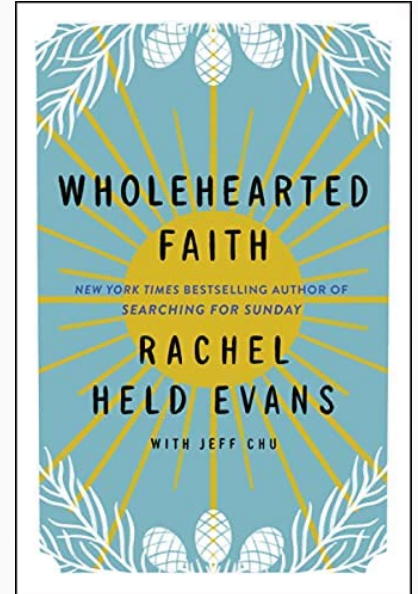
*Ken and his wife Kathleen came to Hood River in the early 2000s, and eventually found a home amongst the welcoming people of Spirit of Grace. Ken had a brilliant mind, with a PhD in physics, and spent his life teaching, researching, and traveling the world. A lover of art and renowned storyteller, he was deeply loved by his family and friends. His singing voice shone through in the congregations, and will be deeply missed by all who knew him.*

# Lifelong Learning

## Book Study Groups - Winter/Spring Session

**-Thursdays at 6:30pm or Sundays at 8:30am-**

The Fall Book Study Groups have gotten off to a wonderful start - thank you to everyone who signed up to dive into The Wild Land Within together! This Fall Session of our book study will wrap up in mid-November, and in January we will prepare to start our Winter/Spring Session book: Wholehearted Faith by Rachel Held Evans & Jeff Chu. We will read this book in two parts, beginning in January, pausing during Lent, and resuming in April to conclude in early June. Look for a sign-up sheet with more information in December - and in the meantime, get excited for this next book!



### **Wholehearted Faith by Rachel Held Evans & Jeff Chu**

*Rachel Held Evans is widely recognized for her theologically astute, profoundly honest, and beautifully personal books, which have guided, instructed, edified, and shaped Christians as they seek to live out a just and loving faith. At the time of her tragic death in 2019, Rachel was working on a new book about wholeheartedness. With the help of her close friend and author Jeff Chu, that work-in-progress has been woven together with some of her other unpublished writings into a rich collection of essays that ask candid questions about the stories we've been told--and the stories we tell--about our faith, our selves, and our world.*

*This book is for the doubter and the dreamer, the seeker and the sojourner, those who long for a sense of spiritual wholeness as well as those who have been hurt by the Church but can't seem to let go of the story of Jesus. Through theological reflection and personal recollection, Rachel wrestles with God's grace and love, looks unsparingly at what the Church is and does, and explores universal human questions about becoming and belonging. An unforgettable, moving, and intimate book.*



## November is Native American Heritage Month

In honor of Native American Heritage Month this November, you are encouraged to spend some time learning about the Indigenous People who call this land their sacred home, and were unjustly evicted by European settlers. The land our church is on was once occupied by the Hood River Wasco people, who stewarded this land and the great Columbia River for generations. Learn more about this history at: [www.wscat.org/community/history](http://www.wscat.org/community/history)

# Church Updates

## FISH Distribution Dates

Our next opportunity to volunteer with FISH distribution will be on **December 19th, 21st, and 23rd!** This will be a much needed time to provide support to our community members in the holiday season. If you are interested in volunteering, contact Bette Lou ([abyenne@gorge.net](mailto:abyenne@gorge.net)) to sign up for a day to serve.



## Advent Midweek Worship

This Advent Season, join us for a midweek meal, discussion, and worship service - in-person this year!



On Wednesday evenings in Advent, we will gather in the Fellowship room for a simple soup supper and scripture discussion, followed by an evening worship service. For the study and discussion, we will be doing a close reading of the psalms of Advent, learning and understanding how psalms have been used throughout history as a form of prayer and way of drawing closer to the Divine.

### Schedule

5pm

*Set up + Gathering*

5:15pm

*Soup Supper Served*

5:30pm

*Scripture Discussion*

6:15pm

*Evening Worship*

### Dates

*November 30th*

*December 7th*

*December 14th*

*December 21st*

# Getting Involved

## Leadership Team Opportunities

In the coming months, we will be looking for new volunteers willing to be nominated to a position on one of our Leadership Teams as other faithful servants complete their term of service.

The Leadership Team is made up of the **Board of Directors, Staff Parish Relations Committee, and Finance Committee**. Those who serve on these teams are vital to the health of our congregation, and work with Pastor Miranda to build up and support the ministry of the church. A Nominating Committee will be formed at the end of October, but if you are interested in learning more about what serving on the Leadership Team would entail, please reach out to Pastor Miranda to learn more.



## Worship Volunteers Needed

*We are looking for more volunteers to help with Sunday morning worship!*

We are in need of a **few more ushers** willing to be included in the rotation and serve once every month or so.

Ushers need to arrive a little early before service to greet people, and stay a little after to count offerings, and attend to some other minor responsibilities during worship.



We will also be training volunteers to **run the new live stream set up!** Jenni has been hard at work streamlining this process to make it as simple as possible, and relatively easy to manage in conjunction with the soundboard and PowerPoint.

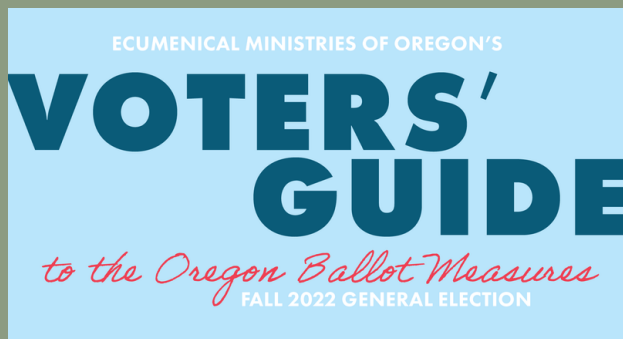
**If you are willing to volunteer as an usher or be trained to run A/V, please email [officde@hoodriverchurch.com](mailto:officde@hoodriverchurch.com) to let us know!**

# Community Updates

## Election Day: November 8th

### EMO Voters' Guide

Election season is upon us again, and if you are looking for advice on how to vote faithfully, Eccumenical Ministries of Oregon has released their annual **Voters' Guide to the 2022 Oregon Ballot Measures**.



Take some time to read through this thoughtful guidance given to people of faith and goodwill to help connect current ballot initiatives to deeper values: [www.emoregon.org/advocacy-action/](http://www.emoregon.org/advocacy-action/)

*If you're wondering how to go about talking politics in a healthy and productive way, consider registering to participate in this month's ELCA*

*Advocacy Cafe:*

**Can Talking Politics Be Healthy?**



### Advocacy Cafe

Last Tuesday of month  
1 p.m. ET or 8 p.m. ET

OCTOBER 25 -

**CAN TALKING  
POLITICS BE  
HEALTHY?**

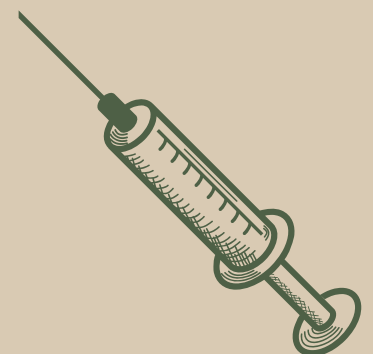
REGISTER FROM:  
<https://blogs.elca.org/advocacy/advocacy-cafe/>

Bringing people together for exchange on important issues with faith-based advocacy leaders. Grab a cup and join us!



### Flu Shots & Booster Shots

*Cold and Flu season is fast approaching - don't forget to make a plan to get your Flu Vaccine and the latest COVID-19 booster shot. These vaccines are a small step we can take as individuals to keep the vulnerable in our community safe this winter!*





# Community Updates

## GEM Monthly Meetings Return



GEM is returning to our rhythm of regular monthly meetings, in which members of our interfaith organizations and communities gather together to learn, share, and engage in discussion with one another.

Mark your calendar and plan to join us for **lunch on the 3rd Thursday of each month, hosted by a different GEM Member/Faith Community**, beginning this October at Riverside Community Church!

### GEM October Meeting

*Brown Bag Lunch and Program*

**11:30 am - 1:00 pm Thursday, October 20th**

*Riverside Community Church Riverview Room  
317 State Street Hood River*

Clergy and lay members of GEM are invited to go "back to the future" this month by reconnecting with GEM friends with fellowship beginning at 11:30, with a program beginning at noon.

Celebrate the skillful navigation of the past two years to keep your community healthy!

Share how you are recharging and re-engaging your faith community after two years of unexpected changes and pivots. Return to your community with new ideas and energy!

## EMO Collins Summit

As a church that strives to welcome all people, we have an obligation to learn more about the harm that the greater church has caused in the past (that we have been complicit to), in order to better understand religious trauma and support the healing process.

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon has highlighted this important topic in their 2022 Collins Summit, which will be held Thursday, November 10th at 7:30 pm. Learn more and register for this event (in-person and online) here:

[www.emoregon.org/event/collins-2022/](http://www.emoregon.org/event/collins-2022/)

Save the date for EMO's 2022 Collins Summit

### Religious Trauma

Understanding the harm  
& supporting healing

**November 10**  
In person & online

**Featuring**  
Connie Baker, MA LPC

**Learn more**  
[emoregon.org/event/collins-2022](http://emoregon.org/event/collins-2022)

# Prayer & Reflection

## Weekly Reflections



### **October 9th – Luke 17:17-19**

*God's grace and forgiveness through Christ is a gift freely given to all of humanity — the way we respond to that gift is up to us as individuals. How are you called to respond to the healing and forgiveness of Christ in your life?*

### **October 16th – Genesis 32:26**

*Jacob shows us what it is like to wrestle with the Divine and demand a blessing—not out of entitlement, but out of steadfast devotion to a life of faith. Have you wrestled with God? Did you find a blessing in the wrestling?*

### **October 23rd – Luke 18:13**

*"O God, have mercy on me, a sinner." When considering our faults and failings, how can you embrace a mindset of humility, rather than shame, in your prayer life?*

### **October 30th – John 8:31-32**

*How do you understand the Truth that Jesus Christ imparts to his disciples? How does that Truth change the way you live?*

### **November 6th – Ephesians 1:22-23**

*In Christ, we enter into a relationship of mutuality; as Christ fills us, we in turn fill Christ by being his body on earth. How do you feel the fullness of Christ in your heart? How does that love show up in the world?*

### **November 13th – Luke 21:5-6**

*All earthly things are fleeting when viewed through God's eyes. What are some earthly things we cling to that may be holding us back from embracing God's more expansive plan for us and all creation?*

### **November 20th – Psalm 46:1-2**

*When so much in our world feels chaotic and uncertain, God is our source of refuge and strength. How do you find ways to lean on God when feeling nervous, anxious, or fearful?*



If you have prayer requests that you would like to be lifted up by our prayer chain and in Sunday morning worship, please email Carol Kyger (cckkyger@gmail.com), who will pass your request along to our prayer chain.

If you are interested in being a part of our prayer chain that receives prayer request emails as they come in, please email Carol Kyger to be added to that list.

If you have a prayer request that you would like to be kept **confidential**, please email Pastor Miranda. These prayer needs will not be shared publicly unless expressly mentioned.

# Ministry Teams

*Are you interested in getting involved with the ministry of Spirit of Grace?  
Consider popping into one of our Ministry Team Meetings!  
These ministries are sustained by the following team members, but meetings  
are open to anyone interested in participating:*

## **Community Outreach - 6pm, Second Tuesday of the Month**

Debby Chenoweth | Lee Huckins | Phill Scott  
*(seeking more team members!)*

## **Hospitality & Events - 11:15am, Second Sunday of the Month (every other month)**

Dottie Gilbertson | Pat Moore | Marlene Lahti | Sharon Poynter

## **Building & Grounds - Meeting Schedule TBD**

Scott Fitch | Bette Lou & Allan Yenne | Ty Sibley | Rick McBee

## **Worship - 9am, Tuesdays**

*(as needed based on worship seasons)*

Linda Borris | Dottie Gilbertson | Marlene Lahti | Bette Lou Yenne

## **Prayer & Visitation - 10am, First Wednesday of the Month**

Donna Fitch | Carol Kyger | Jan Dutton

## **Lifelong Learning - 5pm, Tuesdays, Quarterly**

Cindy Murahashi | Sharon Poynter  
*(seeking more team members!)*



# Church Calendar



## 2022 OCTOBER

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1 9am Women's Spirituality Group
2 <b>Communion</b> 8:30am Book Study 10am Worship First Sunday Fellowship	3 10am Women's Coffee Hour	4 10am Men's Coffee Hour	5 9am Quilting 7pm Bell Choir	6 6:30 Book Study	7	8
9 8:30am Book Study 10am Worship 2pm Welcoming Team Meeting	10 10am Women's Coffee Hour	11 10am Men's Coffee Hour	12 12pm "Together" Book Discussion 7pm Bell Choir	13 6:30 Book Study	14	15
16 <b>Communion</b> 8:30am Book Study 10am Worship	17 10am Women's Coffee Hour	18 10am Men's Coffee Hour	19 9am Quilting 7pm Bell Choir	20 11:30am GEM General Meeting 6:30 Book Study	21	22 IRF Meeting
23 8:30am Book Study 10am Worship 11:15 am Welcoming Team Meeting 3pm Board Meeting	24 10am Women's Coffee Hour	25 10am Men's Coffee Hour 2pm Women's Bible Study	26 7pm Bell Choir	27 6:30 Book Study	28	29
30 8:30am Book Study 10am Worship 11:15am SPRC Meeting	31 10am Women's Coffee Hour					

© BlankCalendarPages.com





# Church Calendar



## 2022 NOVEMBER

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	3 6:30 Book Study	4	5 9am Women's Spirituality Group
6 <b>Communion</b> 8:30am Book Study 10am Worship First Sunday Fellowship	7 10am Women's Coffee Hour	8 10am Men's Coffee Hour	9 9am Quilting 7pm Bell Choir	10 6:30 Book Study	11	12
13 8:30am Book Study 10am Worship 2pm Welcoming Team Meeting	14 10am Women's Coffee Hour	15 10am Men's Coffee Hour	16 7pm Bell Choir	17 11:30am GEM General Meeting 6:30 Book Study	18	19
20 <b>Communion</b> 8:30am Book Study 10am Worship	21 10am Women's Coffee Hour	22 10am Men's Coffee Hour 2pm Women's Bible Study	23 9am Quilting	24 <b>Thanksgiving Day</b>	25	26
27 8:30am Book Study 10am Worship 11:15 am Welcoming Team Meeting	28 10am Women's Coffee Hour	29 10am Men's Coffee Hour	30 5pm Advent Midweek Worship			

© BlankCalendarPages.com



# Contact & Connect

## Sunday Worship

10:00 am

In-Person & Online

[hoodriverchurch.com](http://hoodriverchurch.com)

## Church Office Hours

9am - 1pm

Monday - Thursday

## Staff

**Pastor Miranda Bermes-Goller**

[spiritofgracepastor@gmail.com](mailto:spiritofgracepastor@gmail.com)

Available during office hours or by appointment

**Linda Boris, Pastoral Assistant**

Available Tuesdays, 10am - 1pm



Spirit of Grace  
Lutheran-Methodist Church

1140 Tucker Road

Hood River, OR 97031

**541-386-3993**

[office@hoodriverchurch.com](mailto:office@hoodriverchurch.com)

## Leadership Team Members

### Board of Directors

*Meets every other month*

Pastor Miranda Bermes-Goller

Tom Hart, Treasurer (*end of term, 2024*)

Sharon Poynter, Secretary (*end of term, 2024*)

Shelley Oates, Chair (*end of term, 2023*)

Gordon Leigh (*end of term, 2023*)

Michelle Sibley (*end of term, 2022*)

Cindy Murahashi (*end of term, 2022*)

### Finance Committee

*Meets quarterly*

Pastor Miranda Bermes-Goller

Debby Chenoweth (*end of term, 2022*)

Dottie Gilbertson (*end of term, 2022*)

Tom Hart, Treasurer (*Treasurer & Payroll*)

Jennifer Fowler (*Financial Secretary*)

### Staff Parish Relations Committee

*Meets quarterly*

Sharon Pantley (*end of term, 2024*)

Pat Moore (*end of term, 2024*)

Jill McBee, Chair (*end of term, 2022*)

Ty Sibley (*end of term, 2022*)

## Connect with us online!

Scan the QR codes with  
your phone's camera  
app, or click on the links



Follow us on  
Facebook for  
Weekly Updates +  
Inspiration



Give Online  
to Support  
Our Ministry.



Watch Sunday Worship  
+ Learn More  
on Our Website