



# GREAT SPIRIT

[www.greatspiritpdx.com](http://www.greatspiritpdx.com)

Great Spirit Newsletter December-January 2021

Issue 10

## Message to the Community

By Dr. Allen Buck

Osiyo Great Spirit Family,

One good thing about the year 2020... it is almost over. It has been a tough year y'all. This has been one of the strangest, most difficult, trying, and traumatic seasons we've known, so I'm glad to say "So long" (among other things) to 2020. But, we aren't quite done yet...

The skies of the Pacific Northwest have turned their usual grey. The darkness of night comes so

early now. We miss each other. We miss family. The People are hurting. For nine months now, we've been facing many threats while necessarily practicing social distancing. We have lost loved ones and know grief too well. Daily I receive calls of relatives near and far in need. Housing is a very real struggle. The peoples' mental, physical, spiritual health are being impacted. A young man was sleeping at the front doors of the church just last Wednesday. Another person was sleeping in their car out

front. And, this is the season. It isn't over. We're in it.

People mark and ritualize this season in many different ways - Hanukkah, Solstice, Winter, and for Christians, some call it Advent. Advent is the 40 days of preparation before Christmas. The themes traditionally celebrated during Advent are hope, joy, peace, and love. Most ceremonies and celebrations this season, whatever you call them, both acknowledge the difficulties or darkness, while also trusting in light and finding hope in the promises of something new always being

birthed. We prepare. We get ready. It doesn't always feel like hope, joy, love, and peace, but we prepare anyway.

Friends, I'm curious how you prepare. Where do you experience moments of light in a season of darkness? In the birth of Jesus, we celebrate an embodiment of God's promises. Do you find the hope in the possibilities of new beginnings on the other side of this season? Are there spaces, places, times, practices, however small, where you find light or light finds you? I know many

### WORSHIP WITH US

We are putting weekly video check-ins and devotionals on our website, [www.greatspiritpdx.com](http://www.greatspiritpdx.com), under the "News" section and on Facebook. We are also inviting everyone to pause and pray with us at 11:00AM on Sundays. There is a new prayer request form on the front page of the website.

Phone: 405-431-9912

light candles and offer prayers. Where are you encountering the Creator?

Be it a moment or a season, when we encounter those dark nights, we learn from our elders and experience to trust the Spirit. The Spirit sings fourth moments of encouragement and light that break through. Lately, I've been finding glimpses of light in simple acts and practices. Sometimes it is in song, a prayer, a moment of gratitude, opportunities to serve, or a long walk... When I pick up the phone and call to check in on people, I experience the light. This week, while pausing to write a few cards for relatives with Red Lodge, I felt very hopeful. I will also smudge and pray with GS Drum most days. There is light there. And, one of my other favorites is the fire. Most of my fires right now are inside the fireplace of the parsonage, but it always reminds me of our connectedness. For me the fire is a place of healing, warmth, teaching, and light.

How about you?

Christmas is going to be very different this year, but the promises of the Creator remain. The darkness is very real to each in their own way, but the Spirit is everywhere and always. Let's amplify and multiply and focus and share and become light in this season and the next.

Relatives, you're not alone.

Christmas Blessings, Allen

P.S. I invite you to join us this Christmas Eve EVE, Dec. 23, at 7:00PM - For Great Spirit's "Spirit of Christmas" Celebration (Facebook and [www.greatspiritpdx.com](http://www.greatspiritpdx.com)). We will sing, pray, and share the journey there. You're all welcome and wanted. Feel free to pass it on.

### FROM THE SINGLE BOARD

The Single Board, Loretta Milton, Ed Edmo, John Kochanowski, Monica Trujillo, Karrie Young, Helen Stewart, Richard Recht, and Pastor Allen send Christmas greetings! May the true meaning of Christmas fill your life with love and happiness into the New Year!



### Opportunities for Connection

- Pastor Allen has posted sermons on the website and Facebook. Take a few minutes to view the website [www.greatspiritpdx.org](http://www.greatspiritpdx.org)

### TRUSTEES REPORT

Portland Bureau of Transportation has sent notice that portions of the sidewalk around the parking lot need repairs. We have until next April to complete the work.

Routine maintenance is being done around the church, fire extinguishers re-certified, furnace filters replaced, and the sanctuary furnace serviced. Pastor Allen is working with Centurylink to improve the wi-fi/internet in the building.

The conference sent an inspector to survey the status of the parsonage. A 39 page report was given addressing conditions and repairs necessary to the property, exterior and interior. Many of the items needing attention are electrical repairs and other repairs will need to wait until Oregon has a dry season. Repairs will need to be prioritized and completed according to available funds.

Submitted by Helen Stewart

## GREAT SPIRIT T-SHIRTS AVAILABLE

We have T-shirts! Sizes in stock now range from Large to 4XL. They are for sale at \$20 each. All proceeds go to further outreach efforts. If you are interested, please send an email message to Monika. [monikagreatspirit@gmail.com](mailto:monikagreatspirit@gmail.com).



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### *Milton Bartlett*

We mourn the loss of Milton Bartlett, faithful and revered elder, who walked on during the last week of November 2020. Although Milton moved away from Portland more than a year ago, his memory is alive within the Great Spirit Family. For many years, Milton inspired us all, arriving every Sunday morning after a trek from across the river in Vancouver - bearing his home cooking to share at potluck. His life is forever entwined with ours as we remember the taste of his carrot souffle', his buffalo-tater tot casserole, or his award-winning chili. Milton's belief in service was evident as he would volunteer to help with events and provide a reassuring presence in times of need. We honor his kindness, his caring, his military service and his service to the broader community. We miss Milton, but know he is in Creator's presence.

~by Loretta Milton

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## Happy Birthday!

- December 4 Claudia Long
- December 11 Nicholas Wickliff
- December 13 LeeAnn Wermey
- December 13 Mandy Marple
- December 15 Ed Wermey
- December 16 Laura Campos
- December 21 Le Ann Wermey, Jr.
- December 25 Carol Edmo
- December 30 Hasani Milton
- January 25 Darlene Fields

To add your name to the Birthday list, please let Helen Stewart know the important date. Anniversaries are important too!

- January 18 Aaron and Haley Morrison

## BOTTLES AND CANS LADY (Helen Iles)

Hurrah for Helen Iles!!!

Helen continues to collect bottles and cans for recycling. Since March when we first closed the doors at Great Spirit, Helen has turned in \$3,000 toward our shared giving apportionment. That means she has sorted and delivered to the recycling station 30,000 bottles or cans. Bottles and cans for recycling can be left at the church, preferably at the ramp door to the Sanctuary. If you would prefer, Helen will pick up bottles and cans from your location.

Please give her a call at 503-252-0026.

## UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

The OR/ID Conference UMW held its annual meeting by Zoom on Oct. 17, 2020. Participants from Idaho to Oregon were treated to a very inspiring time of connecting.

Among the highlights:

1. Awarding the Boyd Crane Scholarship to a deserving student, pursuing a degree in a church-related field.



2. Presenting the Racial Justice Award to JoAnne Stewart for her work with the Oregon Black Pioneers.
3. Hearing from Carol Barton of the National UMW who gave a summary of the work being done to advocate for those suffering from the pandemic, systemic racism, food insecurity, or climate events.
4. Listening to the Rev. Christina Thompson offer up ways to keep a peaceful spirit in this time of discomfort....using strategies from "Finding Peace in an Anxious World" by Erin James-Brown.
5. Receiving an update on where our donated funds are helping people - from Kentucky to Nome, Alaska.

Praying together and singing hymns such as "Be Thou My Vision" and "We Are Called" made it almost feel like being in church. A big thank you to all who made this event possible.

From our own Great Spirit UMW, A BIG SHOUT OUT to the sewing circle for creating so many quilts and blankets for the Blankets For Kids project. At least 36 of these are ready to be donated/gifted to kids/youth in our community. We need ideas for where and how this can happen. Also, to our UMW community, since we cannot meet in person for our usual Thank Offering, you are encouraged



to mail any UMW donations to the church in honor of blessings we have encountered despite a difficult year.

Respectfully Submitted, Loretta Milton

## FINANCE NEWS

This is the beginning of Advent, a time to celebrate with anticipation the birth of Jesus. With the many limits put on our activities, we have been given time to reflect on our Blessings. The needs of the Great Spirit Community are great, help as you are able.

Your Christmas Offering can be mailed to Great Spirit UMC at 3917 NE Shaver St. Portland, OR 97212.

Submitted by Helen Stewart, Financial Secretary

## MISSION AND OUTREACH

Monika Trujillo is leading the Outreach program at Great Spirit. She has met with a group of people interested in developing the program. They will determine the avenues to take to increase socialization, determine the best way to check-in with people, provide Eldercare, and ascertain the best way to meet individual needs. Contact Monika if you would like to be a part of Outreach at Great

Spirit.

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

## HISTORIAN NEWS

Helen Iles and Monika Trujillo celebrated Halloween by passing out bags of candy. They followed social distancing guidelines with the aid of "mechanical grabbers". Over forty children stopped by the church porch. Even Helen's dog, "Dust Mop" participated. This year Helen dressed as a zebra and Dust Mop wore his Bumble Bee outfit. Helen has pictures from previous years in the archived scrapbooks.

## OUR CORE VALUES

LOVE – Love is the way.

CONNECTION – All of creation is connected by Spirit. That spark of the Divine connects with all humanity and the rest of creation.

SPIRITUALITY – Without cultivation of the spiritual life, we become unbalanced. Active participation in the development of one's spirituality is critical for a whole life. We believe this happens best in community.

TRADITION – Those who have gone on before us leave legacies of the old ways and wisdom with those who become elders. We encourage, value, and listen to them, so our tradition(s) may continue to help shape and guide us, informing who we are and what we will become.

We seek to become and embody these values every single day.

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