



# GREAT SPIRIT

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

Great Spirit Newsletter Dec-Jan 2025

Issue 34

## Greetings Great Spirit Relatives

By Rev. Allen Buck

Dew is on the ground, mixing with the colorful leaves that need to be raked. You can see your breath early in the morning. Winter is coming! Fall is my favorite season. I start thinking of all the things we need to do to get ready. There is always firewood to be cut. Our family usually gets some eggnog and hot chocolate in rotation. Soon we will be on the hunt for a Christmas Tree. I'm making my list as I type this...

How do you prepare?

Today (December 1) is the first Sunday of Advent, too. Advent is a four-week season just before Christmas. Like Fall, every season really, it is enjoyed for itself, but also time to pray and prepare for the coming season, in this case - Christmas.

People get ready for Christmas differently. Some rush so quickly; they skip right over Advent. We need the seasons to help us. During Advent, each week, we will focus on a theme –

hope, peace, love, and joy.

I invite you to join us in prayer always, but especially on Sundays. Let's get ready for Christmas together. Come in person, join on Facebook live through our page, or watch/pray with us at [www.greatspiritpdx.com](http://www.greatspiritpdx.com). We will also be having important conversations during the potluck meal. Come help Great Spirit prepare for our next seasons together.

Definitely mark your calendars for Dec. 23, 6:30PM. It is Christmas Eve EVE. We will be praying, singing some Christmas favorites, lighting candles, and launching into Christmas together.

All are welcome. Pass it on. See you.

Advent Blessings,  
Allen

*( Pastor Allen has posted sermons and "Pause and Pray" on the website and Facebook. Watch at 11:00 am on Sundays at: [www.greatspiritpdx.org](http://www.greatspiritpdx.org) or on Facebook at Great Spirit Native American )*

### WORSHIP WITH US

Worship services are held each Sunday at 11:00 am at 3917 NE Shaver ST 97212. Masks are optional. Worship includes smudging, drumming, and Native American prayer.

Services can be viewed on Facebook or on our website [www.greatspiritpdx.com](http://www.greatspiritpdx.com)

There is a prayer request form on the front page of the website.



## Opportunities for Connection

- Volunteers Needed for Sunday Potluck, Hospitality, Children and Youth Ministry
- Pi Nee Waus Elders meet Tuesday Nights, 5-7pm, 4610 SE Belmont St. Portland
- Talking Circle, Monday evenings with Quacinda (Jodyne)
- Portland American Indian Elders meeting at NAYA Elder's Room, TBD
- December 8<sup>th</sup> 11 am, Ministry Conference with District Superintendent Rev. Karen Hernandez during potluck meal. Mark Charles will be speaking at our service at 11am and on "Decolonizing Health" at 6-8pm in the evening
- December 23<sup>rd</sup> 7PM Christmas Eve-Eve Celebration, Candlelight Service, Christmas Songs, holiday refreshments
- December 31<sup>st</sup> 6PM, New Year's Eve Sobriety Powwow Oregon Convention Center

## HISTORIAN NEWS

October's Book of the Year showcased the year 2015. A lot has changed at our church since then, including the Pastor and the name. Wilshire United Methodist Native American Fellowship became Great Spirit after discussion and discernment. Place your selection of a particular year in the box, it may be chosen next!

## TALKING CIRCLE

Quacinda (Jodyne) Kolln would like to facilitate a traditional style Talking Circle. If you are interested in participating in a small group at the church, please get in touch with Jodyne at [qjt283@gmail.com](mailto:qjt283@gmail.com) or 707-815-6064.

## PACIFIC NORTHWEST COUNCIL OF WATER PROTECTORS

PNWCWP is having a Christmas celebration at Great Spirit UMC on December 21st.

Rose Linda Looking is gathering names of children to receive toys at that celebration. Call Rose at 1-360-843-8916 for more information.

## BOTTLES AND CANS LADY (Helen Iles)

At the end of October Helen's total for the year was \$3,200 of Bottle and Can receipts. The money collected is designated for our Shared Giving apportioned by the United Methodist Church. Shared Giving supports missions, disaster relief, and other programs of the greater church.

Helen will gladly pick up bottles and cans at your home or business. Give her a call at 503-252-0026.

## MISSION

Helen Iles delivered 16 pounds of Food and clothing to Mainspring in October. The colder weather increases the needs for warm clothing, blankets, and bedding for Portlanders, especially the homeless. Leave your gently used clothing and household donations in the bin at the entry to the Fellowship Hall. Mainspring also accepts personal care items and non-perishable in-date food.

## FROM THE SINGLE BOARD

Welcome the Season of Advent!

It will be a time of anticipation, excitement, and fellowship leading up to Christmas.

December 8th is our Annual Charge Conference. Mark Charles will be delivering the morning message. District Superintendent Reverend Karen Hernandez will preside over a discussion of M.I.L.E. during our potluck meal. M.I.L.E. stands for Ministry, Itinerary (location), Lay ministry, and Elimination of Racism. Everyone is invited to add their perspective on how it relates to activity at Great Spirit UMC. The Single Board will have a meeting with the District Superintendent earlier in the morning to review required church reports for 2024.

Mark Charles will be speaking at Great Spirit UMC December 8th from 6pm-8pm on "Decolonizing Health". Check with Pastor Allen for more information.

December 23rd is our Annual Christmas Eve-Eve Candlelight Service, at 7PM. There will be music, singing of Christmas Carols, and ending with Silent Night and the lighting of candles. Refreshments and conversation afterward.

Great Spirit has applied for a Food Grant to assist with the expenses of providing a meal on Sundays and Thursday evenings. Plates, utensils, to-go containers all are additional expenses to providing a meal. Great Spirit will continue to provide the main entrée and drinks on Sundays. Bring a side dish or something to share if you are able.

In November savings were used to pay the property taxes of \$8,500 for the parsonage. Knowing that increased heat and light expenses will occur in the next few months we encourage everyone to be as generous as possible.

Great Spirit UMC continues to schedule multiple groups each month for meetings and events. Check out the calendar posted at the main entrance. Also, check out the Opportunities for Connection listed below. Visit the website [www.greatspiritpdx.com](http://www.greatspiritpdx.com) for Past Sunday Services, Calendar events and Resources.

Wishing everyone many blessings in the New Year! Happy 2025!

Submitted, Helen Stewart

## OCTOBER EVENTS

Future Generations Collaborative and Portland Indigenous Marketplace sponsored the annual Indigenous Peoples' Day celebration at Barbie's Village in Northeast Portland. Attendees were treated to a meal of salmon, potatoes and salad. There were vendors, a powwow for children and a message given by Sarah Augustine.

Sarah co-hosts the Dismantling the Doctrine of Discovery podcast. Great Spirit UMC encouraged people to make prayer ties at our table and held a silent auction for two Native American prints.

Halloween Hospitality: Over 85 children and costumed adults received bags of candy on Halloween evening. Many enjoyed hot apple cider. The costumes worn showed a lot of creativity and variety including a small dragon that had moveable wings and lights and a 6 ft tall jellyfish!

Helen Iles dressed as a Hawaiian dancer and Bobbie Edwards dressed as a witch along with Richard Recht were ready with the candy bags.

*(In photo, left to right: Richard Recht, Helen Iles, Bobbie Edwards.)*







November 27, 2024

Dear Great Spirit UMC,

I am looking forward to meeting you on December 8! In order for us to make good use of our time for worship, work, fellowship, and relationship building, I want to offer you some very basic information prior to being together in person.

The Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference has had four districts and four District Superintendents (DSs) for well over a decade. (You are in the Columbia District.) We still have four districts, but since July 1, 2024, we've had only two District Superintendents—Rev. Wendy Woodworth and myself, who serve two districts each. We recognized from the start that no DS could simply double their workload. Instead, it's necessary to do the job differently now that there are just two of us. We're working together with the Oregon-Idaho cabinet and Bishop Cedrick to be strategic about how we do this, and we're also realistic about this first year including many challenges and a great deal of learning.

I've been the Sage District Superintendent (DS) since July 2018. The Sage district includes our UMCs between LaGrande, OR and the Wyoming state line. I've lived in Idaho throughout my 16 years of ministry in this Annual Conference. Adding the Columbia District to my responsibilities means that I now continue west from LaGrande through Portland and serve some of the Portland suburbs. Thanks to some extravagant generosity from a retired clergyperson, I have access to a furnished condo in Portland this year. This allows me to be in Portland more while traveling back and forth less. (That is a big help in making this sustainable in terms of finances and personal wellbeing.)

This shift to two DSs is a budget neutral change

because we have also added new staff. The goal is to reduce our administrative staff (DSs) and increase the conference staff that can resource and support church, which congregations have been requesting for some time.

Those new staff positions include...

- Rev. Tim Overton-Harris (your previous DS) as Special Assistant to the Bishop for Transition. (Tim is working to establish some self-sustaining systems that will fill in gaps that two DSs simply can't cover.)

## Happy Birthday!

### DECEMBER Birthdays

- December 4 Claudia Long
- December 7 Thor Griffin
- December 11 Nicholas Wickliff
- December 13 LeeAnn Wermey
- December 13 Mandy Marple
- December 15 Ed Wermey
- December 16 Laura Campos
- December 19 Ricky Bealer-Casias
- December 20 Robert Trimble
- December 21 LeeAnn Wermey, Jr.
- December 25 Carol Edmo
- December 30 Hasani Milton
- December 30 Leann Abraham

### JANUARY Birthdays

- January 18 Sonya Owens
- January 25 Darlene Fields

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

- Rev. Brett Pinder is a new full-time staff member in the Office of Connectional Ministries. Brett focuses on helping churches with partnerships and projects that extend beyond our local churches.
- Rev. Dylan Hyun is half-time staff in the Office of Connectional Ministries. (He also serves half-time at Portland First UMC.) Dylan's specialty is supporting churches with training and resourcing needs that are internal to our UMCs.

If your congregation needs support, currently the best way to access the conference staff is by contacting your District Administrator, Jennifer Fowler, or me.

If you have questions about this or any other technical kinds of things with the Annual Conference, I'll be happy to talk with you during my upcoming visit. We'll definitely talk about the MILE (the acronym for Bishop Cedrick's vision for the Greater Northwest Area). I am eager to hear about your ministries, your connections to others in your community, what makes you Great Spirit UMC.

Blessings in these early days of Advent, and I'll see you soon.

Peace of Christ,

*Rev. Karen Hernandez*

Rev. Karen Hernandez



## 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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