

SHARANTELLA

Celebrating a New Story of a Patriot of the
American Revolution

Fundraiser for the Emergency Warming/Cooling Shelter

During the January Congregational Meeting, we learned about the need in our community for another Emergency Warming/Cooling Shelter and how Shalom can use our facility to help with this need.

This upcoming Saturday, we will have a fundraising event featuring Arthur Broady, who will bring to life the story of his ancestor, John Broddy — an enslaved African American and patriot who served in the Revolutionary War. Soloist Daphne Jackson will sing an opening song and will also sing a closing song to end the presentation. Arthur Broady will have a Q&A following the event.

Please spread the word to make this a successful event!

Shalom

United Church of Christ

February 2026 Newsletter

OFFICE HOURS- TUESDAYS AND THURSDAYS
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February Birthdays

Paul Hendrickson 5th
Atticus Noyes 11th
Meg Wietsma 14th
Gretchen Patrick 18th
Morgan Diaz 20th
Joyce Bean 27th
Brandon Patton 27th
Barb Loucks 27th

Sparks, Spirit & Shalom

What Now?

"The moment we choose to love we begin to move against domination, against oppression. The moment we choose to love we begin to move towards freedom, to act in ways that liberate ourselves and others." bell hooks

On Jan 22 and 23, I joined a group of 650 clergy and faith leaders from across the country who responded to a request by clergy in Minneapolis. In their invitation to us, these Minnesota clergy (working together as MARCH—Multifaith Anti Racism, Change and Healing) invoked the words of Martin Luther King Jr from 1965 when he called clergy to a march in Alabama:

“In the vicious maltreatment of defenseless citizens of Selma, where old women and young children were gassed and clubbed at random, we have witnessed an eruption of the disease of racism which seeks to destroy all of America. No American is without responsibility. All are involved in the sorrow that rises from Selma to contaminate every crevice of our national life. The people of Selma will struggle on for the soul of the nation, but it is fitting that all America help to bear the burden.”

In some ways it seems we haven't made much progress as a nation. But the people of Minneapolis give me hope. Despite what is now being called an “ethnic cleansing” in Minneapolis by poorly trained and violent ICE agents, and despite Minnesota having been under siege for years (the murder of George Floyd, pipeline resistance, and now ICE), the people are not backing down. They keep showing up, peacefully but forcefully facing down oppressive and repressive tactics by those who wish to destroy our country's fragile democracy.



Since returning from that intense, raw, empowering, transformative couple of days, I have wrestled with “What now?” Part of the reason the MARCH organizers invited us was to assist them. But a secondary reason was to remain “rooted in accountability to impacted communities” while building “the relationships, skills, and commitments needed for sustained action across the country.” What is happening in Minneapolis is not just in Minneapolis. And it didn’t just start these past couple of months. It is threatening the entire nation, and it requires a response from us.



I am not an expert in resistance movements. Cath and I have attended numerous marches, and Cath has participated in civil disobedience in North Carolina that resulted in an arrest. We also worked very publicly for marriage equality in North Carolina. I still have much to learn about community organizing and resistance movements. But one thing I do know is that community organizing and resistance requires lots of tasks, a variety of skill sets, and people offering whatever they have to support the effort. Those who have money give money. Those who have time give time. Those who have other resources offer them. Those who are barely managing to make it from one day to the next focus on their own survival, and ask for help when they need it. This, and love, is what builds community. Love demands justice. Love extends to everyone, even the oppressors. Love believes a better world is possible and is willing to take a stand.

In the coming weeks, Shalom may be asked to take a stand, to live out our faith and our values in new ways as a response to the current crisis. I look forward to further conversations about how we as a community of faith might be willing to live out our beliefs.

We are not alone in this work. We are standing side by side with people in Minnesota, and Portland, and here in the Tri Cities. And we are standing on the shoulders of giants like MLK and bell hooks who are showing us the way. In her book *Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope*, bell hooks tells us: “Dominator culture has tried to keep us all afraid, to make us choose safety instead of risk, sameness instead of diversity. Moving through that fear, finding out what connects us, reveling in our differences; this is the process that brings us closer, that gives us a world of shared values, of meaningful community.”

In the meantime, Cath reminds me that when we feel helpless, we can take Mr. Rogers’ advice and look for “the helpers” who are doing even small thing to assist our vulnerable neighbors. Noticing those radical kindnesses, and even micro-moments of joy and connection, can keep us going through the long hard times.

From the MARCH organizers last week: “The struggle in Minneapolis is for a new America, a new Beloved Community, and a new democracy everywhere in the world.” My hope is that Shalom can find ways to create that Beloved Community, not for ourselves alone, but for everyone within our sphere.

Shalom,

There is a special Feedback on February 1st to discuss Melanie's trip to Minneapolis and today's sermon!

Looking Back

Annual January Congregational Meeting

This year's January Congregational Meeting we had a lot on the agenda. Many committees shared what they have been up to and what they plan to be doing this year. To see the 2025 Annual Report click [HERE](#). We elected the four delegates to attend the Pacific Northwest Annual Meeting. We elected Timothy Lord as Worship Chair, and Joe Andrews as Christian Ed Co-Chair. Ty shared the 2026 Budget that was adopted during the meeting. You can view the budget details [HERE](#). We adopted the WISE Covenant that you can view [HERE](#). We also voted to make changes to Shalom bylaws, including changing the name of the Missions and Social Action Committee to Justice and Social Action, and we changed the definition of the Outreach/Inreach Committee. Both edits you can view [HERE](#). Judi Johannesen gave a presentation on the community's need for an Emergency Warming/Cooling Shelter and Shalom's plan on starting one here at Shalom. Thank you to the many Shalom members (over 50!) and congregants who attended this meeting. Thank you to Church Life who organized the potluck during the meeting.

Looking Forward

Celebrating a New Story of a Patriot of the American Revolution at Shalom on Saturday, Feb 7, 2026, at 5 pm - Fundraiser for the Emergency Warming/Cooling Shelter

Presented by Arthur Broady - Descendant of John Broddy

On our nation's 250th Anniversary, Arthur Broady brings to life the story of his ancestor, John Broddy — an enslaved African American and patriot who served in the Revolutionary War. Arthur has lived in the Tri-Cities for more than 40 years and is an active volunteer in both his community and abroad. For more information about the event presenter, Arthur Broady, use [THIS LINK](#) to his Facebook page.

Event Details

- Date: Saturday, February 7, 2026
- Time: 5:00 pm
- Location: Shalom UCC, 505 McMurray Street, Richland
- Reservations: RSVP [HERE](#)
- Admission price: Recommended \$25, or donation of your choice

Once registered, the donation of your choice may be paid by cash or check at the event, or by using [Tithely](#) and choosing 'Fundraisers' in the drop-down menu. The amount deductible for federal income tax is limited to the amount in excess of the value of goods or services provided by Shalom. Estimated value provided is \$20.00 per attendee.

Event Highlights

- Arthur Broady is a highly regarded spokesperson on the American Revolutionary War and maintains active memberships with two Sons of The American Revolution organizations.
- Arthur is the sixth-generation grandson and descendant of the slave John Broddy, a slave who earned his freedom in 1793, more than fifty years prior to our country's Civil War.
- Soloist Daphne Jackson will sing an opening song and will also sing a closing song to end the presentation. Audiences have enjoyed the addition of Daphne's extraordinary talent in recent presentations provided by Arthur celebrating "The Legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr."
- Once Mr. Broady shares the story of his sixth-generation great grandfather, he will be available for 15 to 20 minutes of questions and answers.

For more information go to [Shalom's event webpage](#). Spread the Word! Help us make this event a success by sharing this announcement with friends, family, and colleagues. We look forward to seeing you there!



**Click [HERE](#)
to Register**

CHOOSE LOVE

This theme for Shalom's front yard message speaks to Valentine's Day, and our desire at Shalom to love everyone. It also draws from Martin Luther King Jr.'s messages of unity. This sign will be posted throughout February in front of Shalom. It's part of Shalom's effort to inspire our congregation, grab outside attention, and bring new people through our doors.



**CHOOSE
LOVE**

ShalomUnitedChurch.org

Peace Village: Coming This Summer

The Christian Education Committee is thrilled to announce Shalom will be hosting this summer's Tri-Cities Peace Village!

This is a day camp, beginning July 27th and continuing through the 31st, where children between the ages of 6 and 13 are invited to disconnect from the world at large and engage with their neighboring communities to create lasting connection.

Through thoughtful, open discussion about the complexities of social media and balanced ecosystems, and the exploration of consistent mindfulness and meditation practices, our children will strengthen imperative life skills, such as emotional self-regulation, critical thinking, and effective conflict resolution.

Our committee sees this as an incredible opportunity to unify our community and empower our children, but we cannot do it without your help, fellow congregants!

Right now, the Peace Village's Steering Committee is asking for volunteers. We're in need of teachers, assistant teachers, camp counselors; volunteers willing and able to contribute their time to setting up food service, and much, much more. No role is nonessential, and not every role is a full-time commitment!

If you have any questions regarding Peace Village or how you can get involved, please reach out to ChristianEducation@shalomunitedchurch.org

Braver Angels: Family and Politics Workshop

Time: 3 hours* | 12.30 pm - 3.30 pm on Saturday, February 7th, 2026

Location: Richland Public Library, 955 Northgate Dr, Richland, WA 99352

Summary

The Family and Politics workshop teaches participants how to preserve family bonds while staying true to their values and political beliefs. Although the focus is on family relationships, you can use these strategies with any loved one. You'll have some fun in this workshop – it won't be all serious. After all, we all come from quirky families.

Goals

- Insight into why family differences over politics are uniquely challenging
- Recognition of common roles that family members play in political conversations
- Strategies and skills for handling family political differences in a constructive way

Who Can Attend

The Family and Politics workshop is open to everyone who struggles over political differences with a loved one.

What to Expect

You will learn about the family dynamics of political differences, apply them to your family, and learn and practice effective communication skills with difficult family members.

This event is ***FREE***. To learn more and register for this workshop, click [Here](#)

New Member Orientation Sessions

Several new folks have expressed interest in joining our Shalom community! We are scheduling a new member orientation series to begin soon. If you are interested in learning more about Shalom United Church of Christ and/or are considering becoming a member of our fellowship, please join us for this free, no-obligation new member orientation series. Let Pastor Melanie know of your interest (pastor@shalomunitedchurch.org), and we will set up the sessions based on availability of those who would like to participate.

Beginning Meditation Classes ~ January 25 - March 1, 2026

A series of Beginning Meditation classes began on Sunday, January 25, 2026, and will continue for five Sunday afternoons through March 1, 2026, skipping February 8. The classes will be conducted in person at All Saints Episcopal Church, 1322 Kimball Avenue, Richland, in the Parish Hall. There is no charge for the classes; donations are accepted. Registration for the classes is now open.

Please send an email to Chris Murray at insightmeditation.midcol@gmail.com for more information or to register for the classes.

The five classes are intended to work together to provide an introduction to meditation for those new to meditation or serve as a useful "touchstone" for more experienced practitioners. You are welcome to attend any or all of the classes, especially if you've taken one or more of the classes before. Each class can be a standalone class and will focus on a different topic. All classes will be from 1:30-3:00 pm.

The classes will be taught by Chris Murray, guiding teacher of Insight Meditation of the Mid-Columbia, and Fabiola Robinson, a meditation teacher who recently moved to the Tri-Cities and joined the IMMC meditation group.

The dates and topics for the class series are:

January 25 – Introduction to Mindfulness and Mindfulness of the Breath

February 1 – Mindfulness Meditation and the Body

February 15 – Mindfulness of Thoughts and Emotions in Meditation

February 22 – Compassion & Loving Kindness Meditation Practices

March 1 – Insight Meditation and Open Awareness

2026 Shalom Lenten Film Series

As of the end of January, the line-up for the 2026 Shalom Lenten Film Series is being finalized. Shalom members and friends collectively nominated almost 30 favorite films as possible features. The goal is to distill the list down to 5 or 6 films to be shown on Sunday evenings during Lent beginning February 22nd. The committee is previewing selected movies and preparing to discuss the film's relationship to Lent. The films address various challenges along life's journey and will stimulate thoughtful discussions.

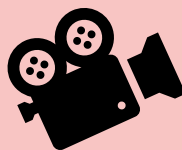
Sunday evening schedule of activities:

5:00 pm - Bread and soup supper

5:30 pm - Introduction to the film and discussion questions

5:45 pm - Screening

7:20 pm (approximately depending on movie length) - Half hour discussion



Take Action- Through Justice and Social Action

Justice and Social Action Committee Meetings are scheduled for the third Thursday at 6:30 pm on Zoom. ALL are welcome and encouraged to attend. JSA is an important part of Shalom. The more people involved, the more we can accomplish in this crucial work! Contact Gretchen H. for the link to join.

Aid Africa and Potluck on Sunday, Feb 15

Peter and Irene Keller with Aid Africa will visit Shalom on Sunday, Feb 15. Join us for a potluck and presentation after Sunday's service.

Shalom has supported Aid Africa for many years. Aid Africa continues to increase the number of households who have clean and efficient cooking stoves, affordable drinking water systems, and benefit from vaccination programs. Peter and Irene visited us a year ago and we look forward to learning about all of the successes that have taken place since then.

Let's celebrate Aid Africa accomplishments together on Feb 15!

Indivisible Packing Party - Community safety is built together

Community Whistle Packaging and Training Day.

👉 When many hands come together, we do more than assemble whistle safety kits: We strengthen connections, empower one another, and show that community truly supports community.

💙 Participants will assemble whistle safety packets, learn how to use and distribute them, share tools for awareness and response, and connect with others who care.

💬 They are being used by the Tri Cities Immigrant Coalition.

🌟 These monthly gatherings build momentum, skills, and collective care. Everyone is welcome! No experience needed. Just bring your heart, your hands, and your belief in what we can accomplish together.

The next Packing Party will be February 27th, 10:00 AM – 12:30 PM and will continue monthly through April. Richland Public Library (Gallery), 955 Northgate Dr, Richland.

Stay Alert to ICE - Support a Safe Community

Did you know that there are bilingual cards (Spanish & English) on the Justice & Social Action table? They have been created by the Tri-Cities Immigrant Coalition (TCIC) and are small so that we can keep them in our wallets. The cards have a phone number and a number for texting alerts to the Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network (WAISN), which serves as our state's centralized ICE notification center. Please pick up a card to help you feel prepared.

For your information, the Justice & Social Action (JSA) Committee is planning to schedule a Know Your Rights Training sometime in March. Please talk to a committee member to let us know days of the week and times of day that work best for you. The JSA committee will be coordinating with TCIC representatives to provide this training.



Hanford High School Snack Report

Shalom is very generous in continuing snack support for our local high school students. Thank you!

In December, 315 snacks were delivered; 204 more were dropped off in mid-January. The chips, turkey sticks, apple sauce, Cheez-its, granola bars, goldfish, ravioli cups, fruit snacks, Mac & cheese cups, and more, provide a wonderful array of choices for the teens. Food insecurity is a real thing for too many families. The school district does what it can through free and reduced meal programs. These snacks fill the void between meals where growing kids need something to tide them over. Thank you for the ongoing support for Hanford HS students!

If you have questions or would like to support the snack program in other ways, reach out to Phyllis Baxter or Gretchen Hormel.

Make a difference with the Faith Action Network

The 2026 Washington State Legislative Session is in full swing and will be over on March 12th. As members of the Faith Action Network, we ask you to please sign up for FAN eNews and Advocacy Alerts [HERE](#). These are emailed weekly for two months and provide easy-to-follow instructions on how to take a few minutes to amplify the voice of people across the state, "advocating for policies that protect immigrant and refugee neighbors, preserve access to healthcare and legal aid, resist harmful budget cuts, and invest in housing, climate resilience, and community safety."

You can share and download our 2026 Legislative Agenda [HERE](#). Here are a few of the bills we are asking our legislators to support:

HB 2105/5852 – Immigrant Worker Protection Act. Requires employers to notify workers when federal officials request employment eligibility information and prohibits employers from voluntarily granting immigration agents access to non-public areas of a workplace without a warrant (it's also a Quaker Voice priority bill).

HB 2173/ SB 5855 - Prohibiting Facemasks in Law Enforcement. Would ban state and federal law enforcement officers from wearing face-concealing masks in routine public interactions (it's also a Quaker Voice priority bill).

HB 2489 - Preventing the Criminalization of Homelessness. Prohibits local jurisdictions from criminalizing life-sustaining activities such as sleeping or resting in public when adequate shelter is not available and redirects resources away from punishment toward services and housing solutions.

SB 5982/HB 2245 - Updating provisions for consumer-owned utilities...under the Clean Energy Transformation Act to ensure transparency in reporting. Closes loophole. Addresses the climate impacts of data centers.

Interfaith Advocacy Day in Olympia is February 12th, 2026. FAN is providing policing briefings online. Register [HERE](#)



IFAD 2026
INTERFAITH ADVOCACY DAY

Join our ONLINE IFAD Policy Briefings

Between January 28 and February 10, we will be holding ONLINE policy briefings before IFAD. Let's get ready for IFAD together!

 AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION FOUNDATION		Criminal Justice Reform and Police Accountability With the ACLU and Washington Coalition for Police Accountability on Jan 28 (6:30-7:30 PM) over zoom
 FRONT AND CENTERED	 JUJustice Washington A UU Action Network	Environmental Justice & Indigenous Rights With Front and Centered and JUJustice Washington on February 5 (11:30 -12:30) over zoom
 WASHINGTON IMMIGRANT SOLIDARITY NETWORK		Advancing and Defending Immigrant & Refugee Rights with WAISN, Date TBD, tentatively set for February 2-5 (6-7 PM) over zoom
 WASHINGTON LOW INCOME HOUSING ALLIANCE		Housing and Homelessness with Washington Low Income Housing Alliance on February 10 (6:30-7:30 PM) over zoom

register at <https://fanwa.org/interfaith-advocacy-day/>

 (206) 625-9790  fan@fanwa.org

Shalom Community

Shalom Community Google Group -

The Shalom online community hosted through Google Groups is a free and optional program for Shalom members and friends to engage directly with each other for informal discussions, sharing information about events, and developing connections. Although we can use Google Groups to remind each other of meetings and happenings at Shalom, the focus is on opportunities to support and connect with each other outside the church. For example, you might share a photo of a newborn grandchild, request a ride or assistance, announce a community event, let folks know you have an extra ticket to a ball game or concert, or share something of value you'd like to give away.

To see past posts, click [HERE](#). If you are not a member, you will be unable to read this page. Please read the [Covenant of Participation](#) and contact Shalom United Church of Christ for permission to join. Click [HERE](#) to learn how to use this Google Group after you join.

Ongoing Activities *(youth activities are highlighted in Pink)*

SUNDAY

Sunday Morning Service — Please join us in person or online at 10:00 am. The Worship Service can be accessed directly from our [website](#), Worship Service email, the BoxCast app (on an Amazon Firestick, Roku, or Apple TV device), or our [Facebook page](#).

Ginny's Room/Nursery — From 9:00 am through the end of Feedback (about noon), infants through 2nd graders are invited to stay with our friendly youth staff in the nursery in Ginny's Room.

Learning Community — Children meet in the Learning Community across from the ADA bathrooms following the service. Grab some treats and join the fun. Email Michelle at youth@shalomunitedchurch.org for more information.

Refreshments after Worship — Coffee and tea will be served, alongside treats brought from the congregation, after worship. *Look under "Chances to Volunteer and Serve the Church" if you are interested in bringing in treats.*

Feedback Conversation- 11:15 am – 12:00 pm — Join us after the service in the Fellowship Hall. On the first Sunday of the month there won't be Feedback, to give all a chance for fellowship after the service. For more information or questions email Shalom@shalomunitedchurch.org ***There is a special Feedback session on Feb. 1st***

Deconstructing and Reconstructing Your Faith — This group meets periodically on Sundays in the library. For more information on the next meeting or questions about the group, contact Brenda H. bjhollings@gmail.com

MONDAY

Sacred Text Reflections- 10:00 am — Join the insightful discussions following the lectionary scripture. Contact Kay Hendrickson for details. Kayh428@gmail.com; (509) 531-6449.

Bridge — Join us for a game of Bridge and socialize each Monday from 1-4 pm.

Pub Theology — Pub Theology will meet 6:30 pm-8:00 pm on the fourth Monday of each month at Round Table on G. Way in Richland. Pub Theology is a great time to engage with people in conversation about philosophical perspectives and life experiences. If you would like more information contact Lorinda Ferland, at lorindaferland@yahoo.com.

Monday Evening Bible Study — The bible study meets on Monday evenings from 7:00-8:00 pm. They will not be meeting on the 4th Monday so people can attend Pub Theology. The Bible Study focuses on the narrative lectionary.

TUESDAY

Refuge and Respite – Shalom’s Mindfulness Meditation group will meet on the fourth Tuesday of the month in the Fellowship Hall at 5:30 pm. Contact Lorinda Ferland, lorindaferland@yahoo.com, for more information.

Middle School Youth Group – Postponed for now

Stitchery Social Group- 7:00 pm — Would you like to socialize with friends while engaging in activities like knitting, sewing, weaving, or crocheting? A gathering of like-minded individuals takes place at Shalom in the Library every Tuesday from 7:00 to 8:30 pm. Bring your projects and join us. Call Mary Fraser for more information.

WEDNESDAY

Deadline for submissions to updates — Click [HERE](#) to use the Google Form to submit information for the update by noon on Wednesdays.

High School Youth Group — the High School Youth Group meets weekly on Wednesdays from 6:30-8:30 pm. Contact Michelle Sinnes, youth@shalomunitedchurch.org, for more information.

Shalom Choir Rehearsal— The choir meets on Wednesdays from 7:00-8:30 pm in the Sanctuary.

THURSDAY

Weekly Update — is delivered in the morning by email. To be added to the email list, contact the office.

Shalom Handbells Rehearsal— The group meets on Thursdays at 1:00 pm in the sanctuary.

Grief Support Group NEW DAY AND TIME — The group now meets on Thursdays at 2 pm at Shalom. All who are dealing with the death of a loved one or another serious loss are invited to attend. Contact pastor@shalomunitedchurch.org with questions and the meeting location.

Psychic Exploration — The group meets on the second Thursday of the month. For more information contact Pastor Melanie at Pastor@shalomunitedchurch.org.

FRIDAY

Third Friday Book Group — The Shalom Third Friday Book Group will meet in the Shalom library at noon on February 20th to discuss the book originally scheduled for January: Marianne Cronin’s novel, “100 Years of Lenni and Margot”. It is a heartwarming and funny story of 17-year-old Lenni and 83-year-old Margot, who meet at an art class in the terminal ward of a Glasgow hospital. They decide to create 100 paintings that tell the stories of their combined 100 years. Bring your lunch and join the conversation. For more information, contact Brenda Dau at brenda@bdaumail.com.

SATURDAY

Saturday Morning Mystics- learning, self-discovery & fellowship 11:30 am— Please call or text Dana Sprenkle MID for more information and the link to join.

Join a Committee

SERVE ON A COMMITTEE!

Shalom’s committees are bustling with activity, continuously relying on the dedication of volunteers to drive their efforts forward. Each committee is eager to welcome new members, excited for the fresh ideas, new perspectives, and the enthusiasm they’ll bring. There are numerous opportunities to make a meaningful impact, both in significant and subtle ways. If you’re unsure where your talents might shine brightest, consider attending multiple meetings. Feel the welcoming atmosphere, engage in lively discussions, and discover where your contributions can truly flourish. Your involvement could be the spark that lights the way for new initiatives and enduring friendships.

See the next page for committee meetings

Christian Education - The CE Committee meets monthly on the first Tuesday of each month at 4:00 pm in the Learning Community at Shalom.

Church Life - Church Life meets on the first Sunday following the service in the library. ***The Feb meeting has been postponed due to a special Feedback session on Feb. 1st***

Justice and Social Action - The JSA meets online on the third Thursday of each month at 6:30 pm. To get the Zoom link, contact Gretchen H. GHormel@outlook.com

Outreach/Inreach - The Outreach/Inreach Committee meets online on Wednesdays at 10 am. To get the Zoom link, contact Diane V. dianevanderburg@gmail.com

Property - Property meets on the first Sunday following the service in the Fellowship Hall. ***The Feb meeting has been postponed due to a special Feedback session on Feb. 1st. The committee will meet on Zoom on Tuesday, February 3rd from 11:30 am-12:00 pm.***

Worship – The Worship Committee meets at Shalom and online on the 2nd Thursday of the month at noon in the library. To get the Zoom link, contact Tim, tjmklord@gmail.com. ***The Feb meeting has been moved to Feb 5th***

W.I.S.E. - The WISE (Welcoming-Inclusive-Supportive-Engaged) Task Force meets at Shalom on the 3rd Friday of each month at 3:00 pm in the library.

Shalom Council – While you must be voted on by the congregation to be on council, everyone is welcome to attend the meetings. Shalom’s council meets on the 2nd Thursday of the month at Shalom and online at 6:30 pm. To join on Zoom, contact the Shalom office shalom@shalomunitedchurch.org

Chances to Volunteer or Serve the Church

SUNDAY MORNING REFRESHMENTS!

All treats, fruit, veggies, and finger food for Sunday refreshments after the service are donated by the congregation. Church Life Committee will provide coffee, tea, and hot chocolate. Sunday morning refreshments during the fellowship hour after the service are a beloved part of Sunday mornings and we want to thank all of you who have donated finger food. Cash donations in the basket on the table go towards the coffee, teas, and creamer. If you have questions, call Mary Fraser at (509) 539-9807.

WE NEED YOU! CONSIDER JOINING THE VIDEO AND SOUND CREW

We have a fun and exciting opportunity for you to help with Sunday services. Not only do Sound and Video techs make services available online but also those who are watching from the Narthex. This is a great behind-the-scenes task, perfect for anyone who doesn’t necessarily enjoy the spotlight. Contact the office to schedule your training.

SUNDAY WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS

Thank you to everyone who has already agreed to serve this month. Please consider helping in this way. Sign up using Sign-Up Genius, and you will receive a reminder before that Sunday. ([Click HERE- to sign up](#)). Also online are descriptions of the responsibilities ([Click HERE for descriptions](#)). Grab a fridge magnet from the front table in the Narthex that has the QR code to the sign-up, so you can easily sign up right from your phone.

January Meeting Summaries

2026 ANNUAL JANUARY CONGEGATIONAL MEETING — January 25th, 2026

Meeting was called to order by our moderator, Phyllis Baxter. There were nine items on the agenda

See next page for details about the meeting

The presentation of the 2025 Annual Report by Committees: The Worship Committee, Christian Education Committee, Justice and Social Action Committee, and Stewardship Committee, presented highlights from their committees and goals for this next year.

The adoption of the 2026 annual budget: Ty Beaver/Treasurer gave an overview of 2025 and gave details about the proposed 2026 Annual Budget. A motion to accept the budget was made, seconded, and passed.

The election of delegates chosen by the Nominating Committee to attend the PNC-UCC Annual Meeting: Tabitha Andrews, Joe Andrews, Haley Ann Mead, and Hunter Wallace (Hunter is younger than 26 and fulfills the requirements for a youth delegate) were the nominees chosen by the Nominating Committee. A motion was made to elect these 4 delegates to attend the 2026 PNC-UCC Annual Meeting. The motion was seconded and passed.

The election to fill the open chair position on the Worship Committee: Timothy Lord was chosen by the Nominating Committee to fill the chair position of the Worship Committee. A motion was made to elect him, seconded, and passed.

The election to add a co-chair position on the Christian Education Committee: Joe Andrews was chosen by the Nominating Committee to be co-chair of the Christian Education Committee. A motion was made to elect him, seconded, and passed.

The adoption of the WISE Committee Covenant: Marilyn Lord (co-chair of the WISE Committee) reported on what the committee has done, and she presented the covenant to the congregation. A motion was made to adopt the WISE covenant, seconded, and passed.

The proposed change of the name of the 'Missions and Social Action Committee' to 'Justice and Social Action Committee' in the bylaws: A motion was made to change the name of the Missions and Social Action Committee to Justice and Social Action. The motion was seconded and passed.

The proposed revision of the definition of the Outreach/Inreach: A motion was made to change the definition of the Outreach/Inreach Committee in the bylaws. The motion was seconded and passed.

Presentation of Shalom's Emergency Warming/Cooling Shelter by Judi Johannesen: Judi Johannesen gave report on the need in the community for more access to Emergency Warming Shelters based on statistics in the Tri-Cities and specifically Richland. She highlighted what All Saints Episcopal church has done with their Emergency Warming Shelter, how they have met and exceeded capacity in the past few years and spoke about what Shalom can do to help meet this need, including the Art Broady presentation fundraiser on February 7th.

COUNCIL MEETING — January 8th, 2026

OLD BUSINESS: The Annual January Congregational Meeting agenda was discussed, and the presentation for the Emergency Warming/Cooling Shelter was added. **The Nametag Holder** was discussed. *(Sandy Westin was later able to take this problem to The Trophy Shop, where they will be replacing all plastic nametags free of charge. If your new nametag is plastic, please let the office know so we can replace it.)*

NEW BUSINESS: The PNC-UCC Annual Meeting registration deadline was shared along with the deadline to receive a discounted hotel room.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Thanks to the generosity of the Shalom congregation and the budget consciousness of Shalom's staff and committees, we ended the year needing to only use roughly \$5,000 of the surplus built up from recent years. This is a remarkable achievement given the \$63,000 in anticipated additional revenue or cost savings that needed to be realized after the updated budget was adopted in June as well as an increasingly fraught economic climate locally and nationally. This again provides Shalom with a substantial financial cushion going into 2026 when many new and increasing expenses are being anticipated.

PASTOR'S REPORT: Melanie led weekly worship services throughout Advent, focused on the theme "Out of the Blue." She also introduced "Star Sunday" as part of the Epiphany celebration Jan. 4. In addition, Melanie has provided pastoral care in hospitals, rehab centers, and clinics, and continued meeting with individuals for "get to know your pastor" visits. Finally, Melanie participated in community events including the Festival of Choirs, Hospice's Open House, and interfaith leadership planning sessions.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE: CE recommended to the Nominating Committee a co-chair. A new date and time for committee meetings was made. Attendance to events and regular activities was monitored and ways to advertise based off of the successes of last year were identified. A Parent's Meetup will be set up soon.

CHURCH LIFE COMMITTEE: In December Church Life provided coffee and teas for the fellowship hour with delicious goodies that generous members of the congregation brought, including cupcakes for the birthday party for Jesus and finger foods for the Longest Night service. We gratefully thank everyone who brought treats and healthy alternatives to share! Looking forward to January, Church Life will assist as needed with Judy Westerberg's celebration of life, Interfaith potluck, and Shalom's annual meeting

FINANCE COMMITTEE: The offering was faithfully counted and deposited.

JUSTICE & SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE: The Missions and Social Action (MSA) Committee plans to change its name to Justice and Social Action (JSA) and the revision to Shalom's bylaws was published in the December 2025 and January 2026 Sharantellas. The committee remains connected with the Tri-City Immigrant Coalition (TCIC) and a representative attends their monthly meetings. The committee meets on Zoom on the third Thursday of the month at 6:30 pm. If you are interested in attending, contact Gretchen Hormel.

OUTREACH/INREACH COMMITTEE: O/I continued to meet weekly to discuss concerns and needs of the congregation. The advertising taskforce met and decided on upcoming yard signs for the next few months.

PROPERTY COMMITTEE: Met on Dec. 7th following the service. The fire extinguishers were serviced, and the hot water heaters were inspected this month. Pastor Melanie has a new monitor for her office, and blinds to block out the sun in the afternoons. A good deal on the right projector for the Sanctuary is being pursued. Problems with the lights in the sanctuary are being addressed.

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE: Stewardship is eyeing the special giving opportunity coming up in the Spring and looking for more ways to urge people to make pledges.

WORSHIP COMMITTEE: Worship discussed the successful special services (Hanging of the Greens, Advent, Longest Night, and Christmas Eve), attendance, the 2026 budget, and thanked Pastor Frankie Powers for sharing at the pulpit on Dec. 28th.

The next Hybrid Council meeting will be on Thursday, February 12th at 6:30 pm in the Shalom Library and on Zoom.

Ongoing Opportunities to Give

DISASTER RELIEF:

Help others in need across our nation and throughout the world, by donating to the UCC Disaster Ministries by selecting "Emergency USA" or "International Emergency" at: www.ucc.org/giving/donate-now/general-donation/

Options for giving include:

- ✓ Shalom's 2026 General Fund to support Shalom's programs for all ages
- ✓ February 7th Fundraiser — John Broddy presentation (suggested donation \$25)*
- ✓ Remembering a loved one with a gift to Shalom's Memorial Fund

In Tithely, choose from the menu of options under "Give to:"

- 2026 General Fund
- Fundraisers
- Shalom Memorial Fund

With your check payable to Shalom UCC, add an appropriate memo.

**For fundraisers, the amount deductible for federal income tax purposes is limited to the amount in excess of the value of goods or services provided by Shalom. The estimated value provided by the February 7th Fundraiser is \$20 per attendee.*

Thank You for Your Support



Click here to use Tithely

<https://give.tithe.ly/?formId=515ecc7c-6865-11ee-90fc-1260ab546d11>

Checks can be sent to 505 McMurray Street, Richland, WA 99354



If you haven't yet provided your stewardship response for 2026, please consider your family's ability to add your financial commitment and return your pledge card by putting it in the Sunday offering, mailing it to the church, or completing the form on the secure Breeze website using the following [THIS LINK](#).

The newsletter was created by Lauralee Sorenson and edited by Rachel Reeder.

Thank you to all who contributed information and pictures.