

SHALOM

2026

January Congregational Meeting

Shalom has an Annual Congregational Meeting in January, and a Semi-Annual Congregational Meeting in June. During the January Annual Meeting of the congregation there are three items on the agenda:

- The presentation of the annual report for the previous year,
- The election of delegates to the PNC-UCC Annual Meeting, and
- The adoption of annual budgets.

This January the congregational meeting will be held on January 25th in the Fellowship Hall, following the service. We will also be voting to fill two Committee Chair positions, to approve the WISE committee covenant, and two proposed changes to the bylaws. Take a look on page 5 for more details.

While only members of Shalom are able to vote, all congregants are encouraged to attend these informative congregational meetings.

Shalom

United Church of Christ

January 2026 Newsletter

OFFICE HOURS- TUESDAYS AND THURSDAYS

9 AM – 12 AM – (509) 943-3927

505 McMURRAY ST.

RICHLAND, WA 99354

SHALOM@SHALOMUNITEDCHURCH.ORG



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January Birthdays

- Amanda Sinnes 3
- Jim Daughtry 3
- Sabrina Christensen 5
- Cyndy Sharer 7
- Ben Walley 7
- Jaymi Papenfuss 8
- Gerry Jensen 11
- Joe Andrews 15
- Lyn Lang 15
- Jasmine McNabb 21
- Luke Dearing 21
- Sarah Avant 22
- Mary Fraser 22
- Betsaina Hilker 22
- Paul Ethington 30

Looking Back



Christmas Pageant and Happy Birthday Celebration

10 of the Shalom youth participated in this year's Christmas pageant to an audience of 95 people in person and 35 people joining us online. The bell choir then led the congregation singing Christmas carols. We concluded the service by singing Happy Birthday to Jesus and then met in the Narthex for a delicious assortment of cupcakes



including many options to accommodate those with food allergies. The Christmas Pageant and Birthday celebration is successful due to



the many volunteers who help with rehearsals, day of preparations, leading and directing, and baking.

Thank you, Michelle Sinnes, our Christian Education Director for leading another wonderful year.



Longest Night Service

Shalom's Longest Night Service was an intimate affair for those struggling with grief, loss, or sadness during the holidays, offering a space to acknowledge pain, find comfort, and remember loved ones, focusing on hope amidst darkness. Pastor Melanie, with the help of several readers, musicians, and accompaniment by Shalom's pianist and organist, Ben Walley, led the quiet and meditative service.

Congregants had the opportunity for expressing their grief, pain, and heartbreak by laying down stars for those who are in our hearts, and lighting candles.



Shalom Fair-Trade Christmas Sale Results

Thank you to all who purchased gifts that will help small farmers in impoverished areas to survive and thrive. Over \$285 was made which will be sent to Partner Haiti to help "reduce childhood malnutrition in Haiti and provide people in rural areas access to life-saving medical care."

P.S. We serve organic Fair-Trade coffee at Shalom during our coffee hour!



Christmas Eve Service

On Christmas Eve, Shalom congregants joined in the sanctuary for a merry evening of carols and lessons. The Shalom choir conducted by our Music Director, Reg Unterseher, led the attendants in joyful singing. Pre-chosen readers led the nine lessons, and during the musical interlude between the eighth and ninth lesson, Teri Harrop and Melanie Childers performed a Handbell Duet.



The evening concluded with lighting candles and singing *Silent Night*.



Sparks, Spirit & Shalom

Do-overs

One of the ways kids offer wisdom for us grownups is with the concept of a “do-over.” When I was growing up, rousing games of kickball were common in our neighborhood. My family lived on a cul de sac, so we had a perfect spot for ball games and bike rides. Whenever we got a group together for kickball, competition could be intense. If a play was contested in the absence of official referees, there was always the threat of arguments, someone stomping off mad, or the game devolving into anarchy. However, to our credit, and the credit of kids everywhere who figure out how to work and play together, someone would often simply shout “do-over,” and that play would be forgotten as we started fresh.



A do-over isn't a replay where you repeat exactly what happened previously, because that would put you right back into the same predicament. It's also not intended to privilege one team over the other. It's simply a way to discard a play when there was no other means to resolve who won the round or whether someone was safe or out. As I look back on this, I'm amazed it worked as well and as often as it did. It was like the kids had this internal barometer of justice. If someone got hit in the head with a ball, for example, we learned it was both respectful and advantageous to call a do-over. Otherwise the kid who got hit might run home crying, which would make us short a player, and might make the kid's parents think we were doing something too dangerous out there. Plus, it's not pleasant getting hit in the head with a ball.



Do-overs are harder for adults, but not impossible. Although I can't take back something unkind that I've said, I can acknowledge it came out harshly, and ask for a redo by restating my snarky response more kindly, or softening a criticism. I can also ask for a redo by circling back to a difficult conversation where we share more vulnerably about our feelings and needs rather than casting blame. On a larger scale, might we on some occasions avert taking someone to court, or reporting them to authorities, if we could resolve disputes between ourselves? Of course, both parties must be willing for such a thing to occur. But it might be possible in more scenarios than we imagine.

Our faith specializes in do-overs. When we screw something up, the world tells us we are irredeemable losers. But our faith tells us that no person is irredeemable. Many times there are opportunities to make wrong situations right again. But even when these opportunities are not available, we can still make amends, ask forgiveness, and commit ourselves to doing better in the future.

When we look to the new year, I often think of the opportunity for a do-over. Of course we can't wipe out the past or pretend bad things didn't happen. But we do get to start fresh on a partially-clean slate. It is a new year, and we have a chance to try again this year to live into the person we want to be. Whether or not you are an advocate of New Year's Resolutions, may your new year be a do-over, filled with justice, kindness, hope, and possibility.



Shalom,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Melanie', located at the end of the letter.

Looking Forward

January Annual Congregational Meeting

The January 25th meeting and potluck will take place in the Fellowship Hall following the service and will be available on Zoom. In the coming weeks, look out for the potluck sign-up to add the dish you would like to bring.

There are 8 items on the agenda: the presentation of the 2025 Annual Report; the election of delegates chosen by the Nominating Committee to attend the PNC-UCC Annual Meeting; the adoption of the 2026 annual budget; the election to fill the open chair position on the Worship Committee; the election to add a co-chair position on the Christian Education Committee; the adoption of the WISE Committee Covenant (Click [HERE](#) to read the covenant.), the proposed change of the name of the Missions and Social Action Committee in the bylaws (See [Proposed Change of Committee Name](#) for more information); and the proposed revision of the definition of the Outreach/Inreach Committee (see [Proposed Revision to the Bylaws Description of Outreach/Inreach](#) below).

Proposed Revision to the Bylaws Description of Outreach/Inreach

The Outreach/Inreach has proposed revising the description of the Outreach/Inreach Committee to properly describe the real need and work they have been doing.

Existing:

OUTREACH / INREACH COMMITTEE: The Outreach/Inreach Committee shall be responsible for the evangelistic outreach of the church. The Committee shall seek to make the total membership of the church aware of their responsibilities toward evangelism. The Committee shall be responsible for the welcome and follow-up of all visitors, including membership matters and integration into the life of the church. The Committee is also responsible for informing the wider community of the activities of Shalom Church through the media, such as social media, newspapers, television, radio, and the church newsletter.

Proposed Revision:

OUTREACH / INREACH COMMITTEE: The Outreach/Inreach Committee shall be responsible for coordinating the care and support of visitors and members of Shalom UCC. The Committee shall ensure a warm welcome and follow-up of all visitors and newcomers, helping them feel comfortable integrating into the life of the church. In addition, the Committee shall track needs and concerns of members and visitors, providing follow-up and organizing a response to care needs as appropriate. The Committee is also responsible for Shalom's promotional activities, including advertising, social media presence, and communications—tasks which may be delegated to a subgroup as needed.



WE-aving the community of Shalom, Stewardship for 2026

Thank you for your generous financial support! As of December 28th, Shalom families have made 53 pledge commitments for a total of \$219,000 for Shalom in 2026.

Together, we are grateful for all kinds of support for our congregation — stewardship of time, talent, and money — allowing our church to thrive.

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](#) or QR code:



Fundraiser - Celebrating a New Story of a Patriot of the American Revolution

Save the date -- Saturday, Feb 7, 2026, at 5 pm
Presented by Arthur Broady - Descendant of John Broddy

Arthur Broady brings to life the story of his ancestor, John Broddy — an enslaved African American and patriot who served in the Revolutionary War. Mr. Broady was born and raised in southwest Virginia, a hotbed of American Revolution history. He graduated from Emory & Henry University and is recognized as the first African American man to enroll at the university in 1966 as a full-time student and athlete. He was inducted into the university's Sports Hall of Fame in 2000. A resident of Tri-Cities for more than 40 years, Mr. Broady is an active volunteer in both his community and abroad.

Event Details

- Date: Saturday, February 7, 2026
- Time: 5:00 pm
- Location: Shalom UCC, 505 McMurray Street, Richland
- Reservations: RSVP at <https://tithe.ly/event-registration/#/10713608>
- Admission price: Recommended \$25, or donation of your choice

Once registered, the amount of your choice may be paid HERE, using Tithely and choosing 'Fundraisers' in the drop-down menu, or at the event by cash or check payable to Shalom UCC.

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.
- 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.

Mark your calendars and don't miss out! For more information and updates, please visit our website or contact the event organizer at [Contact Information].

Safety Guidelines & Accommodations

Your safety is our priority. If you feel unwell, we kindly ask that you stay home and join us next time. If you need accommodations, please let us know by no later than Monday evening, February 1, 2026, by emailing Shalom@shalomunitedchurch.org.

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!

Celebration of Life for Judy Westerberg

There will be a Celebration of Life service on January 10th at 11 am, followed by refreshments for our beloved member, Judy May Westerberg. Judy and her husband Bruce have been members of Shalom since 2014. Judy was known for her compassion, wisdom, and warmth in her career and personal life.



Take Action- Through Missions and Social Action

Missions and Social Action Committee Meetings are scheduled for the third Thursday at 6:30 pm on Zoom. ALL are welcome and encouraged to attend. MSA 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.

2025 Jefferson Giving Tree Support

Shouting out in gratitude to the many Shalom Angels who supported the Jefferson Giving Tree. Thank you! The kids were thrilled to see Santa pull up to their homes with the abundance of beautifully wrapped gifts. One family provided a plate of chocolate chip cookies, Santa's favorite, for him and his three elves! Thank you! Fifteen kids and their families are feeling your love. Thank you! Parents are breathing a sigh of relief and tearing up with appreciation that their kids get to open gifts on Christmas Day. They thank you! Special kudos and appreciation to Gretchen Hormel, Katie Cort, and Rebekah Conley for their elf duties. And thanks to all of you for letting me coordinate this community support each year.

With grace, Phyllis

Proposed Change of Committee Name - from Missions & Social Action to Justice & Social Action

In preparation for Shalom's Business Meeting scheduled on Jan 25, 2026, membership is asked to be prepared to vote on whether the Missions & Social Action Committee can change the committee's name to Justice & Social Action.

Only one section of Shalom's constitution and bylaws will need to be updated to accommodate this change -- Article 4/Committees, Section 3/Committee Duties. The word "missions" will be replaced with "justice", if approved by membership on Jan 25, 2026. The revised section would read as follows, if approved:

Justice and Social Action Committee: The Justice and Social Action Committee shall be responsible for representing, within the Shalom family, the need for social action in the community at large. The committee shall be responsible for recommending how the church's justice and social action budget will be distributed. The committee shall advocate, with the approval of the Church Council, specific social actions by church members as individuals or by the membership as a whole.

Explanation for this proposed change:

Many revere Jesus because the Bible provides many examples of Jesus advocating for justice. Justice is a term used frequently in the Bible and justice is a major component of this group's focus, as we work alongside Faith Action Network Washington (FAN) and UCC National.



Make a difference with the Faith Action Network

Work with others across the state "to build more just, compassionate, and sustainable communities". The 2026 WA Legislative session begins January 12 and soon FAN will be sending weekly Advocacy Alerts. This makes it quick and easy to participate. Sign up at: <https://fanwa.ourpowerbase.net/civicrm/profile/create?gid=22&reset=1>
If you have any questions ask Lora or Gretchen with the MSA committee. You can also learn more by attending one of these online FAN trainings:

Tues, January 6, 6:00-7:00 pm [Advocacy as a Spiritual Practice](#) (Zoom)

Weds, January 7, 6:00-7:00 pm [LD Leads Training](#) (Zoom)

Tues, January 13, 6:30-7:30 pm [Housing and Homelessness Working Group](#) (Zoom)

Weds, January 14, 6:00-7:30 pm [Advocacy 101 Workshop](#) (Zoom)

FAN Spokane Winter Gathering

Whether you're new to FAN or along-time advocate, we invite you to join us as we connect across faith communities locally to build and renew relationships and imagine what action we would like to take together this legislative session.

[Register Now](#)

Thursday, January 8, 2026, 5:30 - 7:00 pm

**Westminster Congregational United Church of Christ
411 S Washington St., Spokane, WA 99204**

During this time, we will:

- Connect locally across faith communities to deepen our local relationship and reflect on our personal and faith community engagement in advocacy this year
- Begin to plan for how we can act and build power together for justice, compassion, and sustainability in the months ahead as we prepare for the next legislative session and the many challenges facing our communities

Pizza and beverages will be provided.

If you have any questions, please contact our Eastern Washington Regional Organizer, Brianna, at dilts@fanwa.org



Shalom Youth and Family Events

Take a look at Ongoing Activities for information on regular youth activities such as youth groups and Sunday Learning Community.

2026 Plans

Following a great year filled with events for children of all ages, The Christian Education Committee is working hard on plans for the 2026 year. Stay tuned for fun events including the weeklong Peace Village Summer Camp happening at Shalom.

Camp News

Men's Retreat at Pilgrim Firs Jan. 29th or 30th-Feb. 1st, 2026

Join the men from throughout the Pacific Northwest Conference United Church of Christ for a weekend of deepening connection, exploring faith, fellowship, and fun. This retreat is open to all men and men-identifying folks comfortable in a space that centers on the experience of men. The retreat is from 5 pm on Friday until 11 am on Sunday. There is also the option of a Silent Retreat that starts at 7PM on Thursday until the rest of folks arrive Friday evening. Click [HERE](#) for more information and to register.

Midwinter Youth Camp at Pilgrim Firs - February 6th -8th, 2026

Youth in grades 6th-12th are welcome to attend this fun retreat to reconnect with self, community, and spirit. Whether it's your first time coming to camp or a longstanding tradition, this is a weekend to make new friends, deepen your faith, and experience the joy of being fully yourself in a supportive, welcoming community. Click [HERE](#) for more information and to register.

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 Gold)*

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

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 of 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 – The Middle School Youth Group meets weekly on Tuesdays from 4:30-6:00 pm at Shalom. Contact Michelle Sinnes, youth@shalomunitedchurch.org, for more information.

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.

Grief Support Group — The group meets on Wednesdays at 4 pm. All who are dealing with the death of a loved one or another serious loss are invited to attend. Pastor Melanie will be facilitating; contact pastor@shalomunitedchurch.org with questions and the meeting location.

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.

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 January 16th to discuss Marianne Cronin’s novel, “100 Years of Lenni and Margot”, a heartwarming and deceptively funny story of the unlikely friendship between 17-year old Lenni and 83-year old Margot, who are both terminal patients who meet in an art class in a Glasgow hospital. Realizing their ages total 100 years, they embark on a project to create 100 paintings depicting stories from their lives. 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.

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.

Missions and Social Action - The MSA 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.

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.

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.

December Meeting Summaries

COUNCIL MEETING — December 11th, 2025

OLD BUSINESS: The **WISE committee draft covenant** will be considered for approval at the Annual Congregational meeting. The **Emergency Team fire drill** on November 23rd was successful.

NEW BUSINESS: **Shalom's 2026 Proposed Budget** was discussed and will be presented for approval at the Annual Congregational meeting on January 25, 2026, as will **changes to the Outreach/Inreach Committee Bylaws. Delegates to PNC-UCC Annual meeting** in March need to be identified and approved at Shalom's January Annual meeting. **Annual Reports** are due before the Council meeting.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Shalom's budget is on steady footing. Through generous more-than-budgeted giving from the congregation and lower-than-budgeted expenses, Shalom has needed to use less than anticipated from its surplus, continuing to provide a fiscal cushion for 2026. Thank you church staff, committees and everyone in the congregation for helping to keep Shalom solvent and able to support the community and its mission.

PASTOR'S REPORT: Pastor Melanie continues to lead worship each Sunday. She supported the Stewardship theme and introduced a special advent series that featured "Hanging of the Greens" on Nov. 30. She has visited one-on-one with 26 Shalom members, made hospital and rehab visits, and offered pastoral counseling in addition to attending community-wide events. Six new members have joined the church recently.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE: Activities continue during the week for middle and high school youth, and younger children on Sunday. The Hanging of the Greens service was well attended by families. CE committee will now be meeting on the first Tuesday of every month at 4 PM. The committee is considering a Peace Village Day Camp for youth.

CHURCH LIFE COMMITTEE: In November, Church Life joined with the Stewardship Committee to celebrate Stewardship Sunday with a potluck following the worship service. Thanks to everyone who provides treats for coffee hour or helps out in any way to encourage people to stay after worship to enjoy fellowship! The birthday party for Jesus will follow the pageant on December 14.

FINANCE COMMITTEE: The offering was faithfully counted and deposited.

MISSIONS & SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE: The Missions and Social Action Committee (MSA) plans to change its name to Justice and Social Action (JSA) and the revision to Shalom's bylaws was published in the Dec. 2025 Sharantella. During the committee's Nov. 20, 2025 meeting, those in attendance approved our final expenditures/community donations for the calendar year -- \$600 each for All Saints church and Union Gospel Mission Women's shelter for emergency warming shelter work this winter. 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.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE: Tim Lord has accepted the nomination to begin chairing the Worship Committee in January 2026. Haley Ann Mead has asked for support to chair the Christian Education Committee. Joe Andrews has offered to co-chair with Haley Ann, and the Nominations Committee will reach out in preparation for the January 2026 Business Meeting.

OUTREACH/INREACH COMMITTEE: The committee is looking at ways to advertise the Art Broady presentation in February and is looking for someone to widen the slots on the name tag board to fit thicker name tags.

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: This year the theme was WE-aving the community of Shalom, and the Stewardship moments rocked the mic, posters were made, postcards were designed, weaving materials were assembled, letters were mailed, a scrumptious potluck was held – and hopefully we helped inspire our church to dig in and strengthen our community and commitment to each other! As of December 7, Shalom has received 99% of the total commitments received last year by the first week of December.

WORSHIP COMMITTEE: The meeting time was changed to the 2nd Thursday of the month at noon. The first Sunday of Advent was November 30th and included “Hanging of the Greens” during the service. Each Sunday readers will celebrate the lighting of the wreath and the HOPE, PEACE, JOY, and LOVE Candles of the Advent Season. A Longest Night Service will be Sunday, December 21st, at 5pm. The Christmas Eve Candlelit Service is Dec. 24 at 6pm. Rev. Frankie Powers will deliver the message on December 28th.

The next Hybrid Council meeting will be on Thursday, January 8th 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/

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

Options for giving include:

- ✓ Shalom’s 2026 General Fund to support Shalom’s programs for all ages
- ✓ Remembering a loved one with a gift to Shalom’s Memorial Fund
- ✓ Major Maintenance / Improvements, a restricted fund to save for Shalom’s facility needs

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

- 2026 General Fund
- Shalom Memorial Fund
- Major Maintenance / Improvements (MMI)

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

*The newsletter was created by Lauralee Sorenson and edited by Lora Rathbone and Rachel Reeder
Thank you to all who contributed information and pictures.*