

SHARANTELLA

Our Spiritual Path

In this season of Lent, we hope to see you at worship while
Pastor Melanie speaks on our spiritual paths

Don't miss out on other
activities this month such as:

- Lenten Film Series
- All-Ages Bowling
- Know Your Rights Training
- And MORE...

Shalom

United Church of Christ

March 2026 Newsletter

OFFICE HOURS- TUESDAYS AND THURSDAYS
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March Birthdays

- Finn Sorenson 3rd
- Layla Brodahl 11th
- Connor Nielsen 17th
- Lachlan Noyes 14th
- Michele Pirotte 15th
- Amy Robertshaw 23rd
- Lyn Neely 24th
- Reg Unterseher 30th
- Carol Gurwell 31st

Looking Back

Game Night and Pizza Party

February 14th, Christian Education hosted a game night and pizza party for all ages to join. There were so many activities to choose from and all ages enjoyed congregating and playing together.



Sparks, Spirit & Shalom

GPS for Life

I don't know what I would have done without GPS when Cath and I moved to the Tri-Cities. I do not have a good sense of direction in the first place, and when the ocean is suddenly west of you rather than east of you, it's very disorienting. I remember celebrating the first time I made it from our home in Pasco to Shalom without having to use GPS. My list of places I can find on my own is growing now, but I still use GPS often in these new surroundings.

Having "Maxine" as my automated, pleasant, multilingual tour guide feels light years away from the days of trying to unfold a large paper map and chart my own course. How amazing to have someone plot my travels on a colorful screen, alert me to police or debris on the highway, suggest alternate routes when there is a traffic jam, and give me a half-mile notice for every turn.

Maxine never shames me when I miss a turn or stray from the recommended course. Instead, she patiently recalculates, starting fresh from wherever I messed up, to give me the directions again, from whatever strange place I accidentally ended up. No matter how many times I might go around the same traffic circle, or how frustrated I get, she responds in that same unflappable tone. I sometimes even try to provoke her, but to no avail. This even-keeled character trait of hers can feel in turns maddening and comforting, but makes Maxine a pro at giving directions.

Unfortunately or not, we humans don't come with personal GPS systems implanted in our brains. Numerous points along our journey may leave us clueless about what to do next. In 2026, we are surrounded with uncertainty, a Democracy that has lost its way, widening gaps in our culture, and fake news gone rampant. It is difficult to know which way to turn.

During our Lenten season this year, we are considering spiritual practices that can support and guide us on this difficult life journey. Of course, having faith doesn't make us as even-tempered and self-confident as my automated friend Maxine. We need tools and spiritual practices that can support us and ground us in ways that help us act with kindness and with advocacy for those most oppressed, and to act with care towards Earth and other beings who also inhabit this amazing planet. Spiritual practices are traditionally considered to include prayer, Scripture study, tithing, and worship. But Shalom is looking at a much broader definition of spiritual practices, to include anything that brings you closer to the Sacred. Some of the practices we are examining are mandalas, meditation, forgiveness, music and the arts, and acts of justice and service. These practices help us connect with the Sacred as we navigate self-doubt, dark nights of the soul, and anxiety about tough decisions. Faith practices keep us from getting stuck in a mire of inertia, so we can lurch out on a hunch and a hope—even when we can't see how it will all turn out. Martin Luther King Jr. reminded us that faith means taking the first step, even when we can't see the whole staircase.

Wendell Berry speaks to the challenge of life without the safety net of a GPS: "It may be that when we no longer know what to do, we have come to our real work and that when we no longer know which way to go, we have begun our real journey."

May your Lenten practices offer you calming guidance toward your next steps, the real work of faith.

Shalom, 



Looking Forward

2026 Shalom Lenten Film Series

The films selected came from nominations submitted by congregation members and focus on various aspects of “Relationships”. Each of these award-winning movies will challenge you to think, to explore who you are, to reflect on the health of your relationships, and to inspire questions and discussion. This year’s selections include comedies, dramas, documentaries, and animations.

The selection committee included Boyce Burdick, Pastor Melanie Childers, Kay Hendrickson, Jim House, Charles Lopresti, Maggi Neilson, Quinn Smith and Chuck Wojnowski. Meals will be coordinated by Teri Harrop, Lauralee Sorrenson, and Cyndy Sharer.

Sunday evening schedule of activities:

5:00 pm – Bread and soup supper

5:30 pm – Introduction to the film and discussion question

5:45 pm – Screening

About 7:20 pm (depending on movie length) – And then a half hour discussion after

2026 Lineup:

2026 Shalom Lenten Film Series		
Date	Film	Length
March 1	My Octopus Teacher	86 minutes
March 8	Eleanor the Great	96 minutes
March 15	Soul	101 minutes
March 22	No Other Land	92 minutes
March 29	The Penguin Lessons	112 minutes

Two new policies approved by Shalom Council

Given rapidly expanding and dangerous activities of the Department of Homeland Security (including ICE and CBP), Shalom’s council has approved two new policies addressing nondiscrimination and distinguishing between public and private spaces in our building. These policies are intended to make clear Shalom’s values of being welcoming to and protective of all who wish to participate in worship and activities of our church.

The nondiscrimination policy spells out what we already believe and seek to implement every day—that we welcome and accept all people who wish to participate in our worship and activities, regardless of racial identity, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, religion, disability, health or mental health condition, marital status, citizenship or immigration status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any status protected by law. You can read the nondiscrimination policy [HERE](#).

The public/private spaces policy designates some areas of the church building and grounds as always private, while other areas are open and public only at certain times of the week, based on events that are being held. You can read that policy [HERE](#). You will also see posted signs designating some offices and rooms as “private.” These are in no way intended to be unwelcoming to our church members and guests ... They are intended to create a modicum of deterrent should ICE or CBP officials enter our building with the intent to target, harass, or detain our Shalom members and friends.

All Ages Bowling Party

Come join us! Bring the family and join us for an afternoon of fun at the lanes!

📍 Atomic Bowl – Richland

📅 Saturday, March 21, 2026

🕒 3:00 PM – 5:00 PM

Whether you're a serious bowler or just coming for laughs and good company, this event is for ALL ages. Come connect, play, and enjoy a great time together!

We hope to see you there — let's roll!



Unhoused on Our Doorstep

As many of you noticed, there have been two unhoused couples residing on Shalom's grounds recently. Their arriving on our doorstep offers Shalom the opportunity to put our faith into action. We have heard concerns about safety, along with people wanting to help. We are taking a balanced approach.

Pastor Melanie met with a small group of Shalom members to come up with a plan. A policy is being drafted to bring to Council in March. In the meantime, when the unhoused show up on our doorstep, we are trying to offer a welcoming bridge to services they may need, and a temporary space while they determine their next best options. We are setting parameters for safe behavior, and limits on the amount of time someone can stay on our property, while also assisting with basic needs like water and hygiene.

This is a new and developing ministry for Shalom. We realize that by making our parking lot available as a temporary living space, with water and compassion, more may come to us. Please reach out if you have suggestions, concerns, or would like to join the organizing group.

Shalom's Unhoused on Our Doorstep Group,

Beverly Wykoff, Judi Johannesen, Jim Pierce, Mike Stipe, Phyllis Baxter, Maggi Nielsen, Pastor Melanie Childers

KINDNESS IS FIRE

Fire is a slang term, meaning something like awesome, amazing, excellent, impressive or really cool. Kindness in today's world is very important, and a way to push back. This sign will be posted throughout March on Shalom's front yard. It's part of Shalom's effort to inspire our congregation, grab outside attention, and bring new people through our doors.



Observing Quiet Reflection Time in the Sanctuary Before Worship

Our beautiful narthex is an ideal place for greeting friends, meeting new folks, and sharing fellowship and conversation before and after worship. For several reasons, it is important to enjoy conversations in the Narthex and quiet reflection in the sanctuary prior to worship. First of all, the time prior to worship in the sanctuary is designed to assist worshippers in settling into a reverent and reflective space. Our keyboardist helps set this tone with beautiful music, and a quiet atmosphere also contributes. Another reason for keeping our conversations in the narthex is that once our broadcast begins, any sound in the sanctuary is picked up on the broadcast and can also be heard in the narthex. So any conversations in the sanctuary at this time will not be private. Thank you for helping us set a contemplative tone for our worship each Sunday with a quiet sanctuary. If you have any questions or want to discuss these matters, please feel free to reach out to Pastor Melanie, Moderator Phyllis Baxter, or others on the church council.

It Takes a VILLAGE to Create Peace Village

Shalom needs your help to offer Peace Village Day Camp this summer, Aug 3-7. This five-day, 9am to 5pm event, will offer invaluable life skills to children ages 6-13: conflict resolution, mindful movement, media literacy, and connection to nature. Plus, it will be loads of fun and a great opportunity for Shalom to reach out to our neighbors. This event is being hosted by and will be held at Shalom, coordinated through our Christian Education Committee, with help from the Shalom congregation and other community partners. This event is a pivot from the intergenerational summer series we conducted last year.

Why Peace Village?

- Peace Village offers a unique curriculum not being taught elsewhere that can help kids develop crucial skills for dealing with life's challenges. (This is NOT Vacation Bible School.)
- Peace Village offers affordable, safe summer opportunities for children of working families in our church's neighborhood (and beyond).
- New families whose values align with a more progressive theology will be introduced to Shalom's amazing congregation through Peace Village

In order to make Peace Village a success, we need YOUR help. We are expecting 50 children to join us this year, which means we need all hands on deck to provide an amazing experience for these kids. Even if you don't consider yourself a kid person, or you aren't an expert at mindful movement or conflict resolution, we need you!

Here's what we need:

1. Save the Date: August 3-7, 2026, 9-5.
 - a. All Shalom families with kids 6-13, be prepared to register early, before we reach our capacity. Registration opens April 13.
 - b. Everyone else save the date for volunteering as you are able.
2. Be thinking about your skill-set and roles you might be able to fill in support of Peace Village. Some roles will need a five-day commitment, but even some of those could be just morning or just afternoon. Other roles could be shared, just for two days of the week.
3. Some of the roles we will need to fill:
 - a. Camp counselors (responsible for a small group of kids divided into age groups)
 - b. Assistant counselors (high school students or adults who work with the counselors in taking responsibility for the small groups of children)
 - c. Teachers for core classes, teaching conflict resolution, media literacy, connecting with nature, and mindful movement (curriculum provided).
 - d. Additional leaders in art, theater, music, service projects, hikes, storytellers, and other special programs
 - e. Food prep/cleanup
 - f. Greeters and registration assistants
 - g. Camp nurse or medic
 - h. Volunteer coordinator
4. If you aren't able to volunteer but would like to support the effort with financial contributions, we certainly welcome those.
5. If you have ideas, questions, or suggestions, we welcome those as well.

Please consider ways you can support this new and important outreach and teaching ministry of Shalom. It takes a village to create Peace Village!

Pastor Melanie Childers

Judi Johannesen, co-director

Take Action- Through Justice and Social Action

Indivisible Tri-Cities Representative Scheduled to Speak at Justice & Social Action Committee Meeting

Chuck Wood with Indivisible Tri-Cities will be the guest speaker at this month's Justice & Social Action committee meeting. Chuck Wood will share information about the organization and let you know how you can volunteer. His presentation will also include information about the No Kings III rally that is scheduled on Saturday, March 28.

Justice & Social Action committee meetings are held on Zoom the third Thursday each month and begin at 6:30 pm. Chuck Wood will begin his presentation at 6:35 on Thursday, March 19. He will speak for approximately 20 minutes and then be available to answer questions for about 10 minutes.

If you are interested in learning more about Indivisible Tri-Cities, please contact Gretchen Hormel at ghormel@outlook.com and she will share the meeting's Zoom link with you.

In-Person Know Your Rights workshop scheduled at Shalom

The date for the Know Your Rights workshop at Shalom is confirmed 😊! Friday, March 27th, 2:30 to 5:00 pm. Workshop co-facilitators include Mickey Beary, Gretchen Hormel, and Donna Kary. All are welcome to join.

Faith Action Network Advocacy for the 2026 Washington Legislative Session

Faith Action Network (FAN) is a statewide, multifaith partnership striving for justice through advocacy and public action. "One way we believe our actions can make the most difference is through advocacy—using our moral convictions and voices to call for change in public policies." Policies that will ensure basic needs are met for food, housing and healthcare, and policies that defend immigrant and refugee rights and protect our environment. "When people of faith show up—organized, informed, and united—we shift the conversation."

Shalom is a member of the Faith Action Network and has used FAN's guidance for advocacy during the 2026 legislative session. Many at Shalom have been receiving and responding to FAN's weekly action alerts. The JSA committee has also been providing information to help with advocacy on Sunday mornings.

The 2026 Legislative Session ends March 12, so there is very little time to help make positive changes for our state. Please look for the half sheet action guides in the Narthex on March 2 and 8. The remaining effort will be on matters that affect state revenue. This includes passing SB 6346 The Millionaire's Tax.

FAN reports that Washington continues to have one of the most regressive tax codes in the nation. Washington's lowest-income households pay three times more of their income in state and local taxes than the wealthiest households. Meanwhile, our state faces serious budget challenges.

ESSB 6346 would apply a 9.9% tax only to income above \$1 million per year. About 20,000 of the wealthiest Washingtonians — less than 1% of residents — would contribute. This is expected to raise nearly \$3.7 billion annually for education and critical human services. Without it, lawmakers will be forced to balance the budget through cuts that harm children, seniors, and working families. As people of faith and conscience, we are called to build a more just Washington, one where everyone contributes and everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

Next month there will be a report on our successes in the Sharantella and posted on the Spirt of Shalom wall in the narthex. Thank you to everyone who has used their "moral convictions and voices to call for change"!

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.

You are also welcome to register for the following WAISN Zoom Trainings:

- Rapid Response – Friday, March 6, 6 – 8 pm
- Know Your Rights – Wednesday, March 11, 6-8 pm
- Click this link to view the website that lists events and trainings:

<https://waisn.org/events/>

And Shalom's Justice & Social Action Committee is working with TCIC representatives to provide an in-person Know Your Rights training at Shalom on Friday, March 27th, 2:30 to 5:00 pm.



Hanford High School Snack Report

Keep those snacks coming! The students are grateful for the food support and extra calories. Can you imagine sitting in class trying to concentrate while your stomach grumbles? Along with other food supports provided by the school district, snacks help get some kids through the day. The snacks Shalom provides are a reminder that people in our community care about them. In February, Shalom shared the love with 419 snacks delivered to Hanford High School. Please, keep it coming! For some kids, this is a huge deal.

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

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 Green)*

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.

SUNDAY continued...

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 in the Fellowship Hall after the service. 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 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 SECOND AND FOURTH Tuesday of the month in the Fellowship Hall at 5:30 pm. Contact Lorinda Ferland, Haley Ann Mead, or Cath Hopkins 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.

**Refuge and Respite
Meditation will now be
meeting on the second
and fourth Tuesday of
each month**

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 at Shalom.

Grief Support Group— 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 March 20th to discuss “Mad Honey”, a novel by Jennifer Finney-Boylan and Jodi Picault. This is a riveting novel of suspense, an unforgettable love story, and a moving and powerful exploration of the secrets we keep and the risks we take in order to become ourselves. 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.

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.

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.

February Council Meeting Summary

COUNCIL MEETING — February 12th, 2026

OLD BUSINESS: The John Broddy Presentation/Fundraiser was a success, \$1900 was raised. Arthur is willing to come back again next year. **Peace Village** date has been moved to Aug. 3rd-7th, 2026. Upcoming Sharantellas will have more information as to the nature of volunteer help that will be needed.

NEW BUSINESS: Non-Discrimination Policy was introduced and approved by council. **A Printer for misc. pictures** was discussed to update the photo wall on a regular basis.

TREASURER'S REPORT: January's income was high as many prepaid pledges came through early. The projector was paid fully and the expense on Shalom's books will be distributed between Major Maintenance, Shalom Memorial Fund, and the Eriksen Bequest funds.

PASTOR'S REPORT: Melanie led weekly worship services throughout January, focused on the theme "Gifts of the Darkness." In addition, Melanie has provided pastoral care, officiated at a memorial service, continued facilitating the grief group, and met with individuals for "get to know your pastor" visits. Melanie represented Shalom in the clergy "day of witness and resistance" in Minneapolis and is networking with community groups in the Tri-Cities to strengthen interfaith presence and organize Peace Village day camp.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE: Planning of Peace Village is continuing. A game night is planned for Valentine's Day. A parent's check in is planned for Friday Feb 20th evening and Sunday 22nd following the service.

CHURCH LIFE COMMITTEE: The committee helped with Judi Westerberg's service, set up the annual Congregational Meeting Potluck, and will set up for Aid Africa potluck, and upcoming Ash Wednesday service.

FINANCE COMMITTEE: The offering was faithfully counted and deposited.

JUSTICE & SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE: The committee is thrilled that membership approved of our new name, Justice and Social Action (JSA) Committee! We are dedicated to justice and compassion work at Shalom by raising awareness of current issues, providing opportunities to respond as a congregation, and connecting the congregation with broader networks working for a common good. 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 changed the sign to Choose Love for February.

PROPERTY COMMITTEE: Regular maintenance took place including replacing one of the women's toilet seats and gluing down a carpet square that was pulling up. The loaner projector worked great and we look forward to the new projector (same make and model of the loaner) getting here. Bruce Kerr moved furniture back into place after the Art Broddy Presentation.

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE: Anna shared a brief, pithy reminder message of how to support the church for the Congregational Annual Meeting. The committee will highlight the One Great Hour of Sharing on March 15th. (see *article below*)

WORSHIP COMMITTEE: Worship planned for themes for Lent and Easter as well as the Ash Wednesday Service, Maundy Thursday, Palm Sunday, and Easter. Palms have been ordered and will arrive a few days before Palm Sunday. The committee is continually looking at how to bring in volunteers and how to better prepare them with informational guides sent to the liturgist with the announcements ahead of time.

The next Hybrid Council meeting will be on Thursday, March 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/

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

Upcoming Special Offering: One Great Hour of Sharing 2026: Our Love Offering to the World

One Great Hour of Sharing® is one of four special mission offerings of the United Church of Christ. This Lenten offering supports partners worldwide with ministries that fund health, education and agricultural development, emergency relief, refugee ministries, and both international and domestic disaster response.

"We cannot be in all of the places where our love offering will eventually go, but our gifts will bless the world far beyond what we can imagine. OGHS is your, our, love offering to and for the world. Let us share generously and cheerfully." - Rev. Barbara Essex and Rev. Derrek Belase

We will collect this special offering on Sunday, March 15th, but donations are welcome at any time. To give:

- By check payable to Shalom UCC: Please write "OGHS" in the memo line.
- Online: Donate electronically at [this link](#) and select "One Great Hour of Sharing" from the dropdown menu.

To see the impact of your generosity, watch this short video [HERE](#).

Thank you for all the ways you support our church community—both locally and throughout the world.

Anna King
Shalom Stewardship Chair

Options for giving include:

- ✓ Shalom's 2026 General Fund to support Shalom's programs for all ages
- ✓ One Great Hour of Sharing — Lenten special offering through the wider United Church of Christ (UCC) that supports the disaster, refugee, and development ministries of the UCC
- ✓ 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:"	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● 2026 General Fund● OGHS● Shalom Memorial Fund● Major Maintenance / Improvements (MMI)	With your check payable to Shalom UCC, add an appropriate memo.
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*The newsletter was created by Lauralee Sorenson and edited by Rachel Reeder and Lora Rathbone.
Thank you to all who contributed information and pictures.*