

A publication of **Fairwood Community United Methodist Church**
15255 SE Fairwood Blvd
Renton WA 98058

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www.fairwoodumc.org

425-228-4577

The mission of Fairwood Community United Methodist Church is to build community through Christian faith, fellowship, service and social justice where all belong.

**Worship & Christian
Education -
Sunday Schedule**

Sundays at 10:00am
Worship Service in-
person or on YouTube
www.youtbue.com/
@FairwoodUMC

The Epistle is published
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Heather Spates

Lead Pastor:
Rev. Dr. Ferdie Llenado

Assoc. Pastor:
Pastor Cathy Law

Newsletter: China Krismer

Deadline for copy:
25th day of each month for
next month's news.
i.e., June 25 deadline is for
the July issue.



Our Christmas Offering for 2025 will be providing support for our Community Assistance Program.

<https://secure.myvanco.com/L-Z2TE/campaign/C-11X3C>

The need is greater than ever. Your contribution to the Christmas offering will directly reach out into our community and provide needed assistance with housing, food, and utilities.

Thank you in advance for your generous support.





Pastor Cathy Law

Pastor Cathy's Reflection

For the past twelve years I have attended an Interfaith Celebration of Gratitude service sponsored by Associated Ministries (an interfaith organization that inspires and mobilizes communities of faith and goodwill to reduce poverty and homelessness, while centering equity and advocating for system change). Last night's celebration was held at University of Puget Sound's Kilworth Chapel with participation from many different Christian denominations plus the B'hai community, the Jewish Community, the Sikh community, and the Islamic Center of Tacoma. My favorite part of the service every year is to witness the procession of light as members of various traditions bring a lantern forward to be placed on the altar in solidarity with one another as a symbol that each tradition holds truth and light.

With many teachings throughout the service brought forward by various community members, I was particularly intrigued by Dr. Leah Cassorla's brief message. Dr. Cassorla is the Education Director at Temple Beth El in Tacoma. She observed that the Jewish tradition has a blessing for EVERY thing, upon waking until going to sleep at night. Jewish blessings cover many aspects of daily life - from blessing the food we eat, to natural phenomena, and even bodily functions. By practicing these daily blessings throughout the day, gratitude becomes a spiritual practice. She then connected gratitude to brain science. She mentioned that science teaches us that there are six forms of dopamine our bodies use to reward us for "good behavior." Interestingly, it is the same dopamine channel that operates for both anxiety and gratitude. Gratitude can actually reverse the downward spiral of anxiety. We can hijack our dopamine receptors to redirect a downward spiral of anxiety with intentional gratitude that counteracts our anxiety to boost our spirits. She used her hands to talk about how the big fears that cause our anxiety are out there (gesturing away), and if gratitude dwells within (placing her hand on her heart), then courage is the distance between the two.

I love it when scientific evidence catches up to ancient religious practice that we have been taught from scripture and tradition all along. May our spiritual practice of gratitude extend far beyond the Thanksgiving holiday, and make a difference, not only to our own lives, but also to the lives of those around us.



December 2025 Committee/Teams/ Group Report

Here are some brief reports of ministries happening at Fairwood as reported to Church Council for our November 13th meeting.

Community Assistance Program (CAP), contact Lisa Watson: The Church Council agreed that CAP will receive the special offerings from the Christmas Eve services this year. The United Women in Faith have generously donated \$1,000 to CAP.

Missions & Social Justice, contact co-chairs Armando Espinoza or John Melvin: The Asylum Seekers Project is facing the challenges of teaching and training the new asylees the expectations we have of them and an action plan is underway to mitigate those challenges. Information will soon be coming out about the “Vital Conversations on Immigration” class being planned for January. Thanks to everyone for your continued support.

Heart for Others (HfO), contact Dwight Clark: One aspect of cultural awareness is sharing resources. We’d like to offer three book recommendations: *Mad Honey*, by Jennifer Finney Boylan and Jodi Picoult; *Raising Kids Beyond the Binary* by Jamie Bruesehoff; and *The 57 Bus*, by Dashka Slater (a copy is in the church library in the Narthex).

Trustees, contact Don Milo or John Melvin: Note – The Trustees budgeting process revealed 4 areas where costs are increasing. Budget increases are likely linked to the asylee program and include: Electric & Gas +18%, Water & Sewer +99%, Disposal Service +30% and Janitorial Service +14%. This increased the 2026 budget request for these items by \$8,132.

Youth & Children Council, contact co-chairs Kristin Thorsness or Jenny Blake: As you know, we are actively looking for people to help as we rebuild the youth program. Specifically, we’re looking for:

- Substitute Sunday school teachers
 - People to organize future events like Trunk or treat and Easter activities
- An assistant youth leader to help Sam on Sunday evenings.

This is such a great group of kids and we're excited to continue providing opportunities for them to grow their faith through fellowship and fun.

Blue Christmas Advent Service of Candlelight December 21, Sunday Afternoon, at 4:00

Fairwood Community United Methodist Church
15255 SE Fairwood Blvd., Renton, WA 98058



Come! Join us!

The Blue Christmas Worship Service is an addition to the Christmas Season, centering around the longest night of the year when the days are growing shorter and light diminishes. Blue Christmas takes place during Advent, when we are preparing and waiting. We wait for **HOPE**. We wait for the one who brings us light.

Are you struggling with loss, anxiety, depression, loneliness,
longing, grief, pain, heartbreak, stress?
Is someone you care about feeling loss?

Are you feeling overwhelmed?
Is the "news" getting you "down?"

Are you wanting a more quiet and contemplative service?

The Blue Christmas worship service focuses on the promise of **HOPE**.



Gracias!

Your continued support of our Asylum Seekers Mission Project is greatly appreciated.

Some important things to know:

- We received a \$10,000 grant from the General Commission on Religion and Race that funds us through August of 2026. We also received a \$7,000 grant from the Lilly Foundation.
- We are currently housing 16 individuals including one pregnant woman due in January. There are three school-age children and one toddler. Many of our current community are working. The current community is coming to us from other states that have increased ICE and National Guard activity. We are not seeing people that are new to the country. Some people stay just a few nights and move on and others work to establish themselves here.
- English classes continue for the children. Legal support also is ongoing. We continue to provide a safe place to spend the night and two meals daily, breakfast and dinner.
- We are in partnership with El Dios Viviente and Renton UMCs. Our community goes to Renton UMC during the day where they have an opportunity to shower.
- We provide support through the grant for transportation needs, food, hygiene items, bedding and cleaning supplies.
- We appreciate the in-kind support of increased utility expenses and shared space.
- Additionally, we are providing accompaniment to court and ICE check-ins.

If you would like more information, want to join in the daily operations or help in other ways, contact Armando Espinoza armandoespinoza74@gmail.com , Cathy Russell cathyrussell@comcast.net or Vanessa Smith vanessamsmith@hotmail.com. We will find a place for you.

Joyful Hearts Preschool Joyful News!!!



Joyful Hearts Preschool has been busy preparing for our Holiday Party, Performance and Dessert Potluck Friday, December 12th from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. The children will be performing first followed by a time for desserts and fellowship.



Allayna's West Bank Expedition

Plan to join us after worship on Sunday, January 4th, for a presentation from Allayna Farmer, one of our former youth, now working on her Master of Social Work in Philadelphia.

Allayna traveled to the West Bank with the Sabeel delegation to meet with people, communities, and organizations who specifically want international visitors. (Sabeel is a Christian-based organization working towards religious liberation for Palestinians.) They planned to create a bridge between Americans and Palestinians and to develop effective advocacy work upon return to the United States. Allayna will share what she learned in a Zoom presentation, so you can join in-person or on Zoom. Watch for more information in the weekly newsletter emails!



It's Advent Concert Season!
Come share in the joy and music of the season - everyone is invited!

Check out the details and link below to join the celebration.

Solo Recital of Sid Samberg

When: December 1

Time: 8:00 pm

Where: Good Shepherd Center - 4659 Sunnyside Ave N. Seattle, WA 98103

More info click: [Wayward Music Series Sid Samberg - Wayward Music Series | December 1, 2025](#)

Rainier Chorale Christmas Concert

When: December 6 & 7

Where: Kent Methodist Church

More Info click: [Rainier Chorale](#)

Bells of the Sound

When: December 19

Where: Fairwood Community UMC

More info click: [https: Concerts - Bells of the Sound](https://www.fairwoodumc.org/concerts-bells-of-the-sound)





**Thank you for your generous Thanksgiving Donations
to the Salvation Army Food Bank.**

We collected 302 lbs of food and collected \$1375 for Turkeys and food.
Your loving donations are bringing thankful smiles to many.

Joe Meyers, who volunteers at the Renton SA Food Bank, reported that in October there were 1763 clients served. The Food Bank is averaging about 80-100 people per day, opposed to the normal 35 to 50 a day a year ago.



HOW CAN WE HELP OUR VISITORS FEEL WELCOME?



As we move into the Advent season when we typically see more visitors than the rest of the year, we are praying for these guests and considering what the congregation can do to be welcoming and ready to receive them. **If you are able**, perhaps you can park in the back lot to leave more spaces in the front of the church. You might also sit in the front rows or move to the middle of the rows to make space for our guests. Thank you for helping us to build community!

GREEN TEAM NEWS

Sharon Kenyon,
H# 425-271-2080 / C# 425-306-7089
kenyonjs@comcast.net



Again, thank you to our fall leaf workers!
May their Thanksgiving blessing be- no more fall leaves.

Let us know if you can help this winter. Are there any youth who need a service project?

Have a beautiful Green Christmas with some green ideas!



Consider stuffing the stockings with a gift card saying:

- ❄ *A donation of a cow, goats, fish, bees, etc. has been made.*
- ❄ *A donation of planting trees has been made.*
- ❄ *A donation to (an organization they might like) has been made.*
- ❄ *A family trip to snow, zoo, botanical garden, aquarium, etc.*



2026 Calendar and Extra Christmas Cards Collection -

We have already delivered many to the Salvation Army Food Bank.

Joe M. will continue to deliver them weekly, as he volunteers there.

Look for the Calendar box in the shopping cart or by front door.



STYROFOAM COLLECTING AFTER CHRISTMAS

Save any of your Christmas present styrofoam and other styrofoam and we will deliver it in January.

Look for the styrofoam collection box after Christmas!





United Women in Faith

Please join the United Women in Faith Thursday, **December 11, from 5 - 7 pm**, for our Christmas Potluck. We will be meeting in M-2.

There will be a signup sheet in the narthex so you can bring your favorite holiday dish .



We will also **be collecting canned goods** for the local food bank. Please join us for good company and good food as we welcome in the Christmas season.





We are celebrating ~~D~~*December* birthdays! If yours is not shown, that means we don't have that information for you. Please notify the office at office@fairwoodumc.org so we can update our records.



Happy Birthday to:

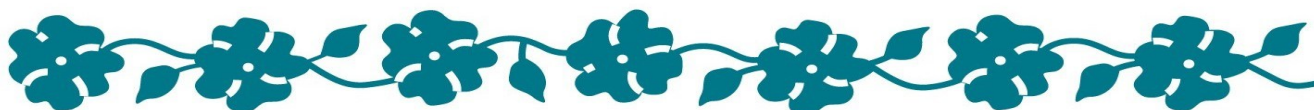
Cathy Russell

Isobel Sturges

Robert Sturges

Dale Theisen

If you prefer to not have your birthday on our list, please notify the office at office@fairwoodumc.org in the two weeks before the Epistle is due to come out.



Single Ladies Luncheon

When: December 8

Where: Aloha Grill

210 SW 43rd St Renton, WA

Time: 11:30 am

Please RSVP to Irene Monson at:

imonson@comcast.com

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Pastor Ferdie Super-intendent Duties 12:45pm - 3:15pm Game Group - Parlor 7:00pm - 8:30pm BSA Troop 455/8455 - M7, Sanctuary, Narthex	2 Pastor Ferdie Super-intendent Duties 6:00pm - 7:00pm Community Fitness Program 7:00pm - 8:00pm El Dios Viviente - Sanctuary	3 10:00am - 12:00pm Quilt Group - BH2 7:00pm - 8:30pm Chancel Choir Practice - Sanctuary	4 10:00am - 11:30am UWF Team Mtg - via zoom 7:00pm - 8:30pm Book Club - BH2 / Zoom (usage 6:30 pm - 9:00 pm)	5 Pastor Cathy's Day Off 1:00pm - 3:00pm Mary Thayer's Memorial Service - Sanctuary & BH	6 Pastor Ferdie's Day Off 12:00pm - 4:00pm Link Renewal of Vows - Sanctuary BH & Kitchen (usage 11am - 4pm)
7 Communion Sunday 10:00am - 11:00am Worship Service (in-person, YouTube youtube.com/@FairwoodUMC) 10:15am - 11:00am Sunday School (Children grades 5-6 / usage 8:30am - 11:30) - BH-5 10:15am - 11:00am Sunday School (Children grades K-4 / usage 8:30am - 11:30) - BH-2 11:15am - 11:50pm Youth Choir - Choir Room 11:40am - 12:40pm Trustees - M7 4:00pm - 6:00pm Youth Group - BH / MPR	8 Pastor Ferdie Super-intendent Duties 11:30am Single Ladies Luncheon 7:00pm - 8:30pm BSA Troop 455/8455 - M7, Sanctuary, Narthex	9 Pastor Ferdie Super-intendent Duties 6:00pm - 7:00pm Community Fitness Program 6:30pm - 8:00pm Finance Committee - Zoom 7:00pm - 8:00pm El Dios Viviente - Sanctuary	10 10:00am - 12:00pm Quilt Group - BH2 7:00pm - 8:30pm Chancel Choir Practice - Sanctuary	11 5:30pm - 7:30pm UWF Christmas Potluck - M2 (usage 5pm-8pm) 6:30pm - 8:00pm SPRC - BH2	12 Pastor Cathy's Day Off 5:00pm - 8:00pm Joyful Hearts Holiday Party - Sanctuary & Narthex (usage 4pm-8pm)	13 Pastor Ferdie's Day Off 9:00am - 12:00pm Scout Santa Photo - Sanctuary, Narthex and Main Kitchen (usage 7:45am - 1:00pm)
14 10:00am - 11:00am Worship Service (in-person, YouTube youtube.com/@FairwoodUMC) 10:15am - 11:00am Sunday School (Children grades 5-6 / usage 8:30am - 11:30) - BH-5 10:15am - 11:00am Sunday School (Children grades K-4 / usage 8:30am - 11:30) - BH-2 11:15am - 11:50pm Youth Choir - Choir Room 11:30am - 1:30pm Membership Orientation - BH2 11:30am - 3:00pm Yarn Arts Group - M2 3:30pm - 6:10pm Youth Group - BH / MPR 6:30pm - 7:30pm Guitar Ensemble - Sanctuary 6:30pm - 8:30pm Worship Committee - BH2 (usage 6:00pm-9:00pm)	15 Pastor Ferdie Super-intendent Duties 12:45pm - 3:15pm Game Group - Parlor 7:00pm - 8:30pm BSA Troop 455/8455 - M7, Sanctuary, Narthex 7:00pm - 8:30pm Saints & Sinners Family History small group - Zoom	16 Pastor Ferdie Super-intendent Duties 6:00pm - 7:00pm Community Fitness Program 7:00pm - 8:00pm El Dios Viviente - Sanctuary 7:00pm - 8:30pm Membership & Evangelism - Zoom	17 Epistle Deadline 10:00am - 12:00pm Quilt Group - BH2 11:00am - 12:00pm Missions & Social Justice - Zoom Mtg 7:00pm - 8:30pm Chancel Choir Practice - Sanctuary	18 6:30pm - 8:00pm Church Council - BH2	19 Pastor Cathy's Day Off 7:30pm - 9:30pm Bells of the Sound Concert - Sanctuary, M2, Office Supply room (usage 4pm - 10pm)	20 Pastor Ferdie's Day Off
21 10:00am - 11:00am Worship Service (in-person, YouTube youtube.com/@FairwoodUMC) 10:15am - 11:00am Sunday School (Children grades 5-6 / usage 8:30am - 11:30) - BH-5 10:15am - 11:00am Sunday School (Children grades K-4 / usage 8:30am - 11:30) - BH-2 11:15am - 11:50pm Youth Choir - Choir Room 11:30am - 1:00pm Heart for Others - BH2 (usage 11:30am - 1:30pm) 4:00pm - 5:00pm Blue Christmas - Sanctuary & Narthex (usage 3-6pm)	22 Pastor Ferdie Super-intendent Duties 7:00pm - 8:30pm BSA Troop 455/8455 - M7, Sanctuary, Narthex	23 Pastor Ferdie Super-intendent Duties 6:00pm - 7:00pm Community Fitness Program 7:00pm - 8:30pm BSA Troop meetings - Sanctuary, Narthex 7:00pm - 8:00pm El Dios Viviente - Sanctuary	24 10:00am - 12:00pm Quilt Group - BH2 4:00pm - 5:00pm Christmas Eve Worship - Sanctuary (usage 10:00am - 10:00pm) 7:00pm - 8:30pm Chancel Choir Practice - Sanctuary 7:00pm - 8:00pm Christmas Eve Worship - Sanctuary (usage 2:30pm - 10:00pm)	25 Christmas Day Office Closed - Winter Break	26 Office Closed - Winter Break Pastor Cathy's Day Off	27 Pastor Ferdie's Day Off
28 10:00am - 11:00am Worship Service (in-person, YouTube youtube.com/@FairwoodUMC) 10:15am - 11:00am Sunday School (Children grades 5-6 / usage 8:30am - 11:30) - BH-5 10:15am - 11:00am Sunday School (Children grades K-4 / usage 8:30am - 11:30) - BH-2 11:15am - 11:50pm Youth Choir - Choir Room 11:30am - 3:00pm Yarn Arts Group - M2	29 Office Closed - Winter Break Pastor Ferdie Super-intendent Duties 7:00pm - 8:30pm BSA Troop 455/8455 - M7, Sanctuary, Narthex	30 Office Closed - Winter Break Pastor Ferdie Super-intendent Duties 6:00pm - 7:00pm Community Fitness Program 7:00pm - 8:00pm El Dios Viviente - Sanctuary	31 Office Closed - Winter Break 10:00am - 12:00pm Quilt Group - BH2 7:00pm - 8:30pm Chancel Choir Practice - Sanctuary	Every Tues AA Meeting @ M7 & Nursery Every Thurs AA Meeting @ M7 7pm-8pm Every Sunday: Guitar Ensemble @ Choir Room 6:30pm-7:30pm Daily: Asylee Mission: Kitchen, MPR & Parlor 7:00 pm- - 9:00 am		