



First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

True Community + Deep Spirituality + Passion for Justice

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We are an Open and Affirming congregation, rooted in Jesus' great commandment to love our neighbors as we do ourselves. We welcome all into the full life and ministry of our church, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, race, marital status, physical ability, mental ability, economic status or faith background.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 1/4/22

Rick Staggenborg, MD
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Albany First Christian joins the movement for universal health care

ALBANY – First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Albany became the first congregation in Albany to join Health Care for All Oregon. This coalition is leading the effort to create a healthcare system that would cover every resident of Oregon through a publicly funded system.

"The congregational vote to support health care for every Oregonian is an outgrowth of our faith which recognizes everyone is created in the image of God and is our neighbor," said Rev. Tim Graves, Senior Pastor of the church. After over a year of opportunities to learn about health care, the congregation voted to join HCAO on Oct. 31.

"Every other developed nation has some form of universal health care for its citizens," said Dr. Rick Staggenborg, a member of the church's Healthcare Justice Ministry. "Publicly funded systems are the least expensive, averaging about half the cost of care in the U.S., where 30 million are left without care. What is particularly galling is that while there is a safety net for many of the poorest, it is the working poor who are most likely to go without."

Health Care for All Oregon is a 501.c3 that lists 144 member and endorsing organizations, including Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon and 23 other congregations and faith groups. The number of congregations has been growing since HCAO established a faith caucus in July 2020 that is reaching out around the state to interfaith groups and congregations of various faiths.

Part of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) denomination, the Albany church is one of half a million congregations in the United States and Canada. They are non-dogmatic and value freedom of opinion as they strive to live into their values of "true community, a deep spirituality, and a passion for justice."

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