

# UFC WOMEN

UNIVERSITY FELLOWSHIP CHURCH  
JULY 2023

## SUMMER IN THE CITY: NEIGHBORLY LOVE

This summer here at UFC we're focusing on loving our neighbors, and in July, we're hosting learning labs to discuss ways we can do this better. In addition this summer, we hope you are encouraged as you read the stories of other UFCers who have engaged with their neighbors. You'll see Jillian and Sean Ritchie featured in the bulletin this month about how they navigated a particularly tense situation with a neighbor. Here in the newsletter, we're giving you an expanded interview with Jillian as she shares about her volunteer work with the nearby Buena Vista Elementary School.

### What is your role there?

I am on the board of directors. I chair the fundraising committee and help the school raise money for teacher assistants in the classroom. At the school, I lead the Oregon Battle of the Books, which is a reading program to encourage students to read various genres of books. I also help coordinate the school's Reading Olympics, auction, and several other programs.

This past year, we've helped raise \$70,000 which will fund the five teaching assistants, who are from all parts of the world, including Spain, Columbia, and El Salvador. They'll share about their country and the kids will learn Spanish from native speakers. At our school, we also have the opportunity to host these amity teachers.

The money raised will also help fund educational enrichment like field trips and assemblies. I've spent many hours doing what feels like thankless work counting — counting and distributing flyers, counting the number of minutes each student read, or going to the bottle drop, requesting blue bags and distributing them to all the kids. But at the same time, you know it's an act of service, and we're not doing it for the school but for Christ and Christ alone.

### What made you decide to serve at the school?

My two boys both attend the school (2nd and 4th grade), and I was looking to serve and use my marketing skills to benefit the school. I was also looking to connect and build community.

### Have there been obstacles to overcome in giving your time?

I have a 4-year-old and work part time in marketing, so by serving, I had to figure out how to juggle it all. I am still looking to strike a good balance and not overcommit myself. But the work is rewarding to encourage kids to read and raise money that brings more support to the classroom. I've also learned to speak up in social settings which can be more difficult for me and hope to become more bold walking in faith with the Lord.



## UFC LEARNING LABS

### Contextualization &

**Companionship** 6:30–8 p.m.

Sunday, July 9 at Hogue home

**Love for Orphans** 6:30–8 p.m.

Wednesday, July 12 at UFC

**Love Thy Digital Neighbor** 6:30–8

p.m. Wednesday, July 19 at UFC

Sign up under the events tab at

[university-fellowship.com](https://university-fellowship.com).

*Read more with Jillian* →

## How has serving at the school helped you get to know your own neighbors better?

By getting involved, I've been able to build so many friendships with people who don't necessarily share my same beliefs. In the past, I've sort of stayed in my Christian bubble, so this has really challenged me socially to walk with non-believers and be an encouragement to them. It's given me an opportunity to pray for people and talk with people about my faith and invite people into our home. For example, people from the school board have regularly popped by our home for an impromptu meeting or coffee as we've discussed school projects and what's going on in our lives. I hear from so many people hurting and dealing with hard stuff (mental health issues, depression, addiction, physical diagnosis, and the list goes on). I can be a source of encouragement, a good listener, maybe offer prayer, and be a good friend.

In our own neighborhood, it's mainly an older, retired community. We've been tasked with raising money for the school, so making connections with our neighbors, sharing about our lives, and having conversations. The kids have gone around door to door sharing about the school's Reading Olympics and what books they're reading or how many laps they hope to run at the jog-a-thon. Or from time to time, we have a lemonade stand and the neighbors graciously stop by. We've tried to return the kindness with hand-written cards or long talks on bike rides or walks and simply being neighborly.

Jill Briscoe once said, "Your mission field is between your own two feet." That notion has really propelled me to step out of my comfort zone and get more involved. To me that means as followers of Christ we're called to walk like Jesus, being an encourager, comforter, friend to those hurting and lost. Whether it's bringing flowers to a neighbor who lost a loved one, writing a hand-written card, baking cookies, inviting them to coffee, or simply taking the time to pause on the edge of our driveway to chat with a neighbor. I am working to pray and find ways I can be bolder in my faith. It's deeply personal, so if people can hear how having a relationship with the Lord has transformed my life, maybe it's more approachable and relatable to them.

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## CLOTHING CLOSET

**9-11:30 a.m. Saturday, July 8**

For more information, contact Joyce Hart at 541.968.9260.

## KNIT NIGHTS

**6-8 p.m. Tuesday, July 11**

**6-8 p.m. Tuesday, July 18**

For more information, contact Carolyn Rust at 541.743.5342.

## WEEKLY PRAYER

- Sundays 8-8:30 a.m. in the Lodge
- Wednesdays 9:30-11 a.m. in the Lodge

## MEAL TRAINS

We need people to step up and provide the occasional meal to a family in our church who just had a baby or is facing a hardship. We'll have meal trains running this month for several families. Learn more on Sundays at the Connection Counter or contact Pauline Davis at 541.914.0939.

## VBS

**9 a.m.-noon July 31-August 4**

It's time to sign up to help at this year's vacation Bible school, which will be held at UFC. We specifically need age group helpers. Sign up at [university-fellowship.com](http://university-fellowship.com).

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**Jamie Harms** (Director)  
**Joanna Sheppard** (UFC Moms)  
**Brianna Hines** (Bible study)  
**Kathleen Harwood** (Leadership)  
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