



East Central Ministries 2022 **Christmas** Newsletter



In the close of this year, I find myself contemplating our global community and what I consider to be the beauty and strength of our diversity. I celebrate living and working in a neighborhood called the International District where diversity is reflected on every street, and where ECM itself reflects a bilingual and multicultural community. While differences of language and customs can be hard and create plenty of misunderstandings, we strive to be curious and learn from each other. Connection to our neighbors near and far offers us an invitation to be more open and accepting. This is what loving God and loving my neighbor means.

This fall, Morgan and I had the joy of walking across northern Spain on the Camino de Santiago (The Way of St. James). We encountered people from Spain, France, Taiwan, South Africa, Columbia, Hungary, and the Netherlands, to name just a few of the places people called home. For 47 days, we laced up our boots, put on our packs, and walked. As busy lifestyle was replaced with the simplicity of walking, I was in awe of treading on the very same stones that millions of other pilgrims who had come before us also stepped on. Since the 9th century, Camino pilgrims have been connected in a common pursuit: seeking deeper meaning, understanding, and love for our neighbors. In this beautiful season of reflection and joy, I offer you, also a Global Pilgrim, the common Camino greeting and blessing: “Buen Camino!” along with my **“Merry Christmas.”**



Many thanks to Judy Wolf, who for the past three years has been ECM’s Development Director and was also ECM’s Acting Executive Director while I was in Spain. Now, after much planning with ECM’s board and staff, I am happy to share that Judy and I will be Co-Executive Directors of ECM! Judy is skilled with internal organizational leadership and has contributed to our growth and health these past years. This shared leadership model allows me to focus my talents and time on ECM’s community partners, donors, and our future work together. Judy has over 25 years of non-profit experience in administration, case management, homelessness, and community advocacy, and also lived and worked together with her family in Sudan and Egypt for 12 years. **Welcome aboard, Judy!**

—John Bulten, Founder and Co-Executive Director



Thank you all for your incredible support throughout 2022. We could not love on our community without you! May this Christmas season be a time of joy and rest and best wishes for the New Year.
Judy, Co-Executive Director

Muchas gracias por toda su ayuda! Feliz Navidad y prospero Año Nuevo!

Claudia, Case Manager



I would like to thank you for all your support throughout this year. May you have wonderful blessings this coming year!

Kierstyn, Case Manager

May we see and learn from nature- the animals and plants that surround us- how to slow down this winter season. May this holiday season be one of reflection and intention as we gather and celebrate together.

Morgan, Growing Awareness Urban Farm





We wish you a wonderful Christmas and happy New Year from kids' club, and thank you for thinking of us. May God keep blessing you all. Feliz Navidad!!

Itzel, Youth Program

Merry Christmas from the staff and volunteers at One Hope! Thank you so much to everyone who makes our clinic able to serve our community!

Danielle, One Hope Centro de Vida Health Center



Loving and helping others is a blessing, thank you!

Adriana, Case Manager

Merry Christmas from all of us at the Common Good! We're thankful for your support of donations, volunteer hours, and shopping time. Looking forward to seeing you in the store in the New Year!

Susan, The Common Good Thrift Store



Perspectives from 2 ½ feet

Notice how you are seeing only the “before” and not the “after” photo? Huh? Like, did they *really* think they were going to get a hat on me? Without any bloodshed? I mean, I will give credit where credit is due...they managed to get another news-letter out (much to my dismay), but, however flush with success they may feel, did they actually think they were going to get that thing on my head? With a pompom, no less? Sheesh. I cannot wait for Christmas. Four glorious days alone...I can finally get this ship in shape. And in shape it must be...because they are going crazy right now. I know it is the season of “giving,” but for reals, you will not believe this, they just

rehomed a chicken here. Here. At ECM. Next to my home. A *chicken*. Last time it was kittens (which, from a feline perspective is slightly more acceptable) but this time it was a chicken??? Anyway, hats off (har har har) to Christmas and the New Year. I’m looking forward to a great chicken dinner myself...



Visit the Website:
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