N. MEMOIRS

In this year’s annual conference journal, you will find the memoirs for individuals who passed away from May of 2019 to May of 2020. In the 2022 PNW Annual Conference Journal, we will aspire to provide memoirs for passings from June 2020 through May of 2022.

Remembrances of discontinued churches included in this year’s journal are for those which closed during the 2020-2021 appointment year.

FULL MEMBERS - RETIRED

REV. EDWIN BRADFORD TOWLE ~ was born in New Haven, Connecticut on January 24, 1925, to Alfred Bradford and Mildred Loveland Towle. Ed graduated from Hillhouse High School at 16 and attended Yale College and Yale Divinity School. He completed his undergrad with a BA in Chemistry at 19 and Divinity School at 23. Ed was interested in the world and found his life partner Marian Reisfelder at Yale in a Yale-in-China program. While still a student at Divinity School, Ed and his wife of 70 years, Marian, married. In 1948 the couple boarded a ship to China where they planned to work for two years with the Yale-in-China program. Plans were cut short by the Revolution. They would tell of the hours they were given to pack and leave the mission field they had longed for.

A new mission field awaited the Towles as they moved to the other coast, landing in Washington State. Ed and Marian received an appointment to begin a ministry with the Methodist Church in the Pacific Northwest in 1949. Ed served eight churches during his 40-year career. He served as pastor and mentor to many students while he was serving as Associate pastor at University Temple in Seattle. He was always a scholar and gave sermons that challenged the congregations he served. Wise and thoughtful, folks often underestimated who Ed was, but those who knew him found a loyal and loving friend. As a friend you always knew Ed was cheering you on. Ed and Marian Towle served at Benton City; Goldendale; Lewiston: First; Selah; Seattle University Temple Associate; Spokane: Fowler; Snoqualmie; and Seattle: Crown Hill. After retirement in 1988, Ed served as Conference Secretary for eight years and as a volunteer part time visitation pastor for four years.

Ed enjoyed singing most of his life, beginning as a choir boy in New Haven. He also enjoyed a brief career as a radio actor in high school. During adulthood, Ed enjoyed stamp collecting, vegetable gardening, photography, and travels on four continents. One picture of Ed and Marian during their years at Wesley Homes showed them in a garden eating ice cream.

It was bliss—it was the little blessings which Ed treasured.

Ed was preceded in death by his wife, Marian, and is survived by daughters Jennifer Olson (Dan) of Seattle, Priscilla Ice (Tim) of Spokane, Cynthia DeVore (David) of Portland, Betsy Towle (Bob) of Portland; four grandsons and two great-grandsons.
REV. HAROLD (HAL) ORVIS PERRY, JR. - retired member, died on the morning of June 16, 2019. Son, brother, husband, father, grandfather, and a child of God. Hal was born on May 26, 1936, to Elene A. and Rev. Harold Orvis Perry, Sr. His mother was a high school teacher and father was a Methodist minister at the time of his birth. He had one younger brother Rodney H. Perry.

As a preacher’s kid, he lived where his father’s appointments in the PNW Conference took them: Seattle, Spokane, Tacoma and back to Seattle. Hal attended the University of Puget Sound, class of 1958; Garrett Theological Seminary in Evanston Illinois, class of 1963 and later the University of Washington, receiving his Master’s in Social Work.

Reverend Hal Perry served Bainbridge Island: Seabold and Fall City in 1957-58 when he was a Local Pastor. Hal and Janice Ariel (Stranne) were married on August 12, 1960.

During his tenure at Capitol Hill United Methodist church, Hal was also the founding minister of FOCUS (Fellowship of Christian Urban Service) which served as a drop-in center for teens, a drug clinic for teenagers, a drop-in center for former state hospital patients, and a teenage coffee house (Middle Earth). Hal designed the food delivery system for Neighbors in Need (a joint project with EMM and the Church Council of Greater Seattle).

Jan and Hal Perry were biological and foster parents and fostered multiple kids, which means their own children grew up with different siblings along the way. The family loved to go camping and many fond memories of those times remain. Hal was a gourmet cook, specializing in Chinese and Mexican cuisines as well as Sunday brunches. And every pot and pan in the kitchen was used! He loved coffee and so much of it, that the floor was often covered with whatever fresh grind was the bean of the day! A visit at home with Hal meant freshly ground coffee.

In 1972, Rev. Perry began service with the Casey Family Program of Seattle. While there as the Director of Support Services, he developed a treatment program for young people in long-term foster care to develop the skills necessary to be successful living in a family. In 1985, he moved to the Seattle YMCA as Associate Executive and managed the Youth At Risk and Childcare programs. While there he became the first IT Director as well. In retirement, Rev. Hal Perry served at Seattle: Ravenna United Methodist Church, from 2011 – 2018.

A Memorial Service to celebrate the life, ministries and community service of Reverend Hal O. Perry, Jr. was held at 3pm on July 27, 2019, in the sanctuary of Sand Point Community United Methodist Church, the church his father Rev. Harold Orvis Perry Sr. founded in 1944. The Reverend Rich A. Lang officiated. His beloved spouse Janice Perry, pre-deceased him on February 4, 1999, too early at age 58. Reverend Hal Perry is survived by their children: Steve Perry, Silver Creek, WA; Ann Perry-Moore, Seattle, WA; and Asher Perry, Seattle, WA, and their families. Also surviving Hal is his brother Rodney H. Perry of Seattle, WA.
REV. FRANKLIN ALEXANDER NASH, JR. ~ was born on December 6, 1932, in Vicksburg, Mississippi, the son of Franklin Alexander and Dorothy Heidt Nash. In 1954, Frank was commissioned in the United States Air Force as a pilot trainee. In 1962, he was ordained an elder in the Methodist Church at Millsaps College in Jackson, Mississippi.

He ultimately retired as an elder from the Pacific Northwest Conference of the United Methodist Church. He ministered in churches in Idaho, Washington State, and Mississippi. Franklin also served as the Minister of Congregational Care at St. John United Methodist Church in Hopkinsville, Kentucky for more than 40 years. He also received his Doctor of Philosophy at Washington State University and worked as a psychologist at Pennroyal Mental Health Center (Kentucky) for 25 years. Frank was also a member of the Hopkinsville Athenaeum Society.

Dr. Franklin Alexander Nash, Jr., age 87, of Hopkinsville, Kentucky, passed away on February 17, 2020, at home of natural causes. In addition to his parents, preceding him in death were his wife of 61 years, Laura Annette Nash who died in September 2019 and his three sisters, Ruby Nash, Dorothy Barott, and Mildred Ann Cobb. Survivors include his daughter, Lara Lee Nash Campbell of Hopkinsville, KY; his two grandchildren, Ashlee Campbell, and Alexandria Campbell; his two nephews, Robert C. Barott of West Richland, WA, Tim Cobb of Memphis, TN; and his niece, Ruby Ann Nash Maplesden of Benton City, WA.

REV. BRUCE EDWARD CORNELY ~ was born November 10, 1933, in Portland Oregon to Jacob and Thelma Cornely. He was the youngest of three children. Bruce graduated Franklin High School in Portland Oregon and earned a bachelor’s degree from Cascade College, Portland Oregon, and a Master of Theology from the Garrett Theological Seminary, Chicago Ill. On September 01,1953, he married the love of his life Ellen Harris. They would celebrate 66 years of devotion and ministry.

Bruce served as Pastor for numerous Evangelical United Brethren and United Methodist churches: Deep Creek, WA; Amboy, WA; Hopewell, OR; Lafayette, OR; Spokane: Manito; Salem: Englewood; Milwaukie, OR; Connell, WA; Kahlotus-Connell, WA; Spokane: Audubon Park; Tacoma District Superintendent; Spokane Valley; and Kent. He also served on the Board of Pensions. He and Ellen retired to Leavenworth Washington in 1999, later moving to Kennewick Washington. Bruce came out of retirement during early 2000 to serve as the interim Okanogan United Methodist District Superintendent for several months while the assigned Superintendent recovered from health issues. He again came out of retirement in 2006 to serve as an Interim District Superintendent for the Seven Rivers District.

He brought a quiet wisdom to the clergy he supervised as well as the churches he served. Even though retired he always lived the life of a dedicated pastor. When he had time off, Bruce loved to fish – especially at Lake Curlew with his brother-in-law, Harry. Ellen wasn’t fond of fishing, so Bruce was the one who caught them, cleaned them, and cooked them. The preparation to go fishing was as much fun as the fishing itself! Pastor Bruce was not only a “fisher of men” but a fisher of fish!
Bruce E. Cornely passed away peacefully in his home on Saturday May 16th, 2020. A Service to celebrate the life of Reverend Bruce E. Cornely was held via Zoom at 2pm Saturday, May 23, 2020, as well as a graveside commitment at Mountain View Cemetery in Connell WA.

He leaves behind to cherish his memory and continue his legacy of faith and love of life, Ellen Cornely; and three children, Julene Janosky, David Cornely, and Brian Cornely; six grandchildren; eight great grandchildren; and a host of nieces, nephews, other relatives, and friends.

SPOUSES OF RETIRED FULL MEMBERS

DORIS (FRIESZ) LANGE - was born a twin to Emil and Mathilda Friesz in Grants Pass, OR, on September 9, 1936. At age two, the family moved to Billings, Montana where Doris and her twin sister, Dorothy, attended schools in Billings. They graduated from Billings High School in 1954. Doris began attending Westmar College in LeMars, Iowa in 1956 where she met her husband, Don Lange. They married on December 19, 1958. They graduated together in the spring of 1959, and Doris graduated with honors.

Don and Doris moved to Naperville, Illinois where Don attended seminary and Doris taught high school. After Don graduated from seminary, they moved to Nebraska where Don was ordained and assigned to a church. At the same time, in 1962, their daughter, Ruth, was born. They were commissioned to serve as missionaries in Ecuador. Prior to going to Ecuador, they attended the Spanish Language Institute in San Jose, Costa Rica and there their second child, Steven was born in 1965. After leaving Ecuador, they were home missionaries in New Mexico for two years. They went on to serve churches in the United Methodist Pacific Northwest Conference for 33 years. In 1975, David, their youngest child, was born at Dayton, WA. Doris chose to be a stay-at-home mother and care for her family. After David was in school, she began substitute teaching. She had a fulltime position at a Christian School in Yakima, Washington, and a full-time position for the public school district in Pasco, WA for 5 years. The last church they served was in Colville, WA where she and Pastor Don served for 6 years. They both retired in 2002.

Doris was a homemaker, teacher, wife, mother, grandmother, and friend to all. She loved nature, hiking, biking, and backpacking. During her lifetime, she had visited all 50 states and enjoyed especially great trips to Alaska and Hawaii. She was very talented, loved arts and crafts, cooking, baking, sewing, quilting and photography. She really enjoyed reading over the last few years, including her Bible and especially the Old Testament. She was active in church life as the Pastor’s wife: she taught Sunday school classes, liked teaching adult bible study, and taught some classes she would call Bible 101 for Beginners. She served on committees, sang in the choir, and generally pitched in wherever there was a need.

After retirement, she enjoyed their log home on Aladdin Road in Colville, where she could plant flowers she didn’t have to leave behind. She was delighted to get rid of all their moving boxes! Doris Lange passed from this life to the next on May 16, 2019. Doris is survived by her husband, Rev. Donald Lange, her children, Ruth Ann Wilson (Ward),
Graham, WA, Steven Lange (Hope), Yakima, WA, David Lange (Alison), Spokane, WA; her grandchildren, Josh Lange (Lexus), Yakima, WA, Kylie Rhodes (Michael), Spokane, WA, and Alek Lange, Spokane, WA. She is also survived by her twin sister, Dorothy Bon-Durant (Wayne), Fort Collins, CO; brother, Fred Friesz (Chris), Polson, MT; sister-in-law, Clara Friesz. She was preceded in death by both parents and brother, Sam.

A good friend of Doris’ described her in this way. “I think of sweet Doris and know that she was the epitome of grace – a gracious, thoughtful, loving, giving lady. I will miss her sweet warm smile.” So will we all.

SUSAN KAY (PATRICK) NORMAN ~ Daughter, sister, wife, mother, grandmother, child of God . . . Susan Kay Patrick Norman returned home on June 20, 2019. She was born into this world on April 3, 1949, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to Peter Bernard Patrick and Hazel Marie Bratty Patrick. Susan grew up in Philadelphia; however, her family also lived in Naples, Italy, and in Connecticut while her father was serving in the U.S. Navy.

She married her childhood friend, Stanley Norman, on June 12, 1971, in Croydon, Pennsylvania. Sue settled and made their home in several states as husband Stan served in the US Coast Guard for 22 years; after which Federal Way, Washington, was home for 12 additional years. The couple re-settled in Sandpoint in 2008 when Stan was appointed pastor of the Sandpoint United Methodist Church. Reverend Stan and Sue Norman served the Pacific Northwest Conference in the following appointments: Willapa and Sandpoint. They retired in 2016.

Sue loved to help people. She was a licensed cosmetologist, worked as a medical secretary, certified nursing assistant, and medical billing assistant. For the last 10 years she was the face of Audiology Research Associates in Sandpoint, greeting and caring for their many clients. Locally she donated her time and talents at The Cottage thrift store, which benefits Panhandle Special Needs clients. Sue also sponsored a child in Haiti through World Vision as a part of the local ministry in which she participated, follow ~ a community.

Along with helping to raise their two sons, Derek and Patrick, Sue loved to craft, garden, and cook. She never passed through a room she didn’t plan to redecorate. She loved wildlife, flowers and the lake. Always close to her heart, over the years, were her dogs.

Sue died on June 20, 2019, in Coeur d’Alene, Idaho. She was preceded in death by her mother and father, and canine family members Loki and Max. Sue is survived by her brother, Peter Kevin Patrick, her husband, Rev. Stanley Norman, sons Derek and Patrick, and grandchildren, David and Katey. Also missing her is Maggie, the wonder dog! A private family celebration of Sue’s life and ministries was held. She is missed by many.

PATRICIA “PATTY” LYNN HILL O’DONNELL ~ June 27, 1949 – November 30, 2019. It has been written that life is both gift and miracle. And that life’s adventures are marked with beginnings and endings; mysteries disclosed and undisclosed. The gift
and miracle of Patty Hill O’Donnell’s birth was June 27, 1949, in Yakima, Washington. She would spend her early years there: baptized in the Christian faith, growing up in the Presbyterian Church, graduating from Highland High School in Cowiche, Washington in 1967. Along the way Patty dreamed of teaching children. The University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, Washington would open doors to that dream through a Bachelor of Arts in 1971. Inside her college degree was a major in Elementary Education, a minor in Spanish and a delight in art. Her college time would be highlighted with life in the Alpha Phi Sorority, several life-long friendships and her marriage, April 3, 1971, to Randolph E. O’Donnell whom she met at the end of her freshman year and dated throughout college.

Beyond college Patty would have opportunities to share her teaching skills, offer compassion to those who needed special care, and to dabble in calligraphy, stamping, drawing, card making, and painting with various mediums. She would give birth and be a mom to three children (Julie, Allyson, Paul) and later celebrate the arrival of three grandchildren (Jacob, Chelsy, Aurelia). As spouse to a United Methodist clergy, she became well versed in beginnings and endings moving and living in Washington, D.C.; Clark Fork, Idaho; and in Washington: Richland, Langley (Whidbey Island), Stanwood, Pullman and Mount Vernon.

If you found yourself in her home and sat with Patty over a cup of tea you might discover her love of art and politics (Democrat would be her choice), hear comments about a recent book or receive her candid rating of a movie. On the walls you might notice keepsakes: the time she was leader of her church’s statewide Annual School of Missions, a sketch of a tulip, pictures related to a trip: Spain, Paris, Ireland or the Tuscan region near Florence, Italy. Always you would see pictures of her family and remembrances around times of wedding anniversaries (48 years). As you listened it would be hard to miss her love of family, her heart for justice, her concern for equality, and her compassion toward the poor and displaced. Patty loved cats, the ocean air, the Oscars, a brief stroll after dinner on a warm summer night, the game of baseball and sleeping in. A favorite day was Mother’s Day and the Fourth of July was never complete without her potato salad. During summer vacations, Patty was good to give camping a try but would be quick to tell you it was not her delight. Patty’s heaven on earth was spending time with a good book, in a comfy bed of a cozy hotel. Grace and peace to one of God’s own.

Patty is preceded in death by her parents; Noble & Lois VanMeter Hill, Uncle Howard Hill (Carolyn), Aunt Erma VanMeter Berkley (Don), Aunt Glenna VanMeter Meade (Frank), cousin, Loretta Meade Esko. Patty is survived by: husband, Rev. Rand E. O'Donnell; children: Julie Moore (Cal) of Renton, WA, Allyson Pederson and Paul O’Donnell of Mount Vernon, WA; grandchildren: Jacob and Chelsy Pederson, Aurelia O’Donnell; sister: Judy Henderson (Steve) of Olympia WA (children, Stephanie Stocker (Simon) & their two children, Drew (Lara) & their child; cousins: James Berkley (Debbie) & their two children, Annie Berkley Hutchinson, Gordon Meade (Ellen) & their two children, Byron Esko & his and Loretta’s two children.
VELMA IRENE GARDNER GREEN ~ was born on July 7, 1921, in Ainsworth, Nebraska, daughter of Fred and Sadie Gardner. She graduated from Newport High School where during her senior year she met the love of her life, Floyd Green. She attended and graduated from Wayne State Teacher’s College on May 15, 1942, with a Bachelor of Arts in Education. She and Floyd were married on June 2 of that same year. Floyd had already enlisted in the US Navy. When he was sent to Virginia for basic training Velma was able to be with him. Before he shipped out to the South Pacific, Floyd took Velma home to stay with her folks as she was expecting their first child. On the day Floyd sailed to the South Pacific, Floyd Jr was born. Their first son would meet his father 18 months later.

After the war the young family moved to Bozeman, Montana. There Floyd entered ministry – moving later to Denver to finish his education. They then moved to Washington State where Floyd served as pastor in Methodist Churches. Reverend Floyd Sr. and Velma Green served at the following churches: Vancouver: Mill Plain; Fern Prairie; Aberdeen: First; Seattle: Crown Hill; Seattle: Tibbetts; Kelso: First; and Kennewick: West Highlands. They retired after many years of service in 1986.

During the years Velma’s priority was her family which included four children. Included in the four were Floyd, Jr. and William (Bill) who followed their father into the ordained ministry. Velma was a substitute teacher and helped at the church. She even served as her husband’s secretary for a time. She was indeed a pastor’s wife in the best sense of the term. She taught Sunday School, led women’s groups, playing the piano, she was always there to help when needed. She had a deep love for people – beginning with her children. She shared with them and her grandchildren and great grandchildren, her life values and faith. They all knew that Velma loved them completely and was their biggest fan. Her love reached out beyond her family and friends. She had deep compassion and concern for those in need. For a year she taught preschool at the Tacoma Community House.

When Floyd and Velma retired, they moved to Wandering Creek in Bothell and soon became active in the Bothell United Methodist Church. The two visited many of the members when Floyd became their Minister of Calling. Floyd, her precious partner in life and in faith passed away October 16, 2019. Velma continued to live in her home with eldest son, Floyd. They traveled together – something Velma loved. She continued to be an avid reader and active in UMW and PEO. Velma passed away on October 16, 2019, at the age of 98. She is predeceased by her husband Rev. Floyd Green Sr. and daughter Mickey Christman. She is survived by their three children: retired member Rev. Floyd E. Green, Jr; Juanita Gardner of Redmond, WA; and retired member Rev. William (Bill) Green. She is also survived by her 5 grandchildren and 5 great grandchildren.

A service was held for her on October 19, 2019, at Bothell United Methodist Church led by Pastors Joe Kim, Floyd Green Jr, and Bill Green. The service ended with her and Floyd Sr.’s favorite hymn, Blest Be the Tie That Binds.
BARBARA PATCH SHOWALTER ~ was born in Yakima, Washington on November 19, 1935. She married Leonard Boyd Showalter on August 27, 1954. Together they went to Biola Bible College in 1957 and North American Baptist Seminary in 1971. Leonard learned to be a pastor and Barbara learned the gracious role of pastor’s wife.

Together they served independent churches in Carlsbad and Poway, CA, Chelan, WA, and in Portland, OR as a Baptist. He was ordained as a United Methodist minister in 1971. He then served United Methodist congregations in Inwood, IA; Shueyville, IA; Muscatine, IA; Lakewood, WA; Tacoma, WA; Tieton, WA; Woodinville, WA; and Mt. Vernon, WA.

Barbara passed away on February 17, 2020, at an adult family home in Tacoma, Washington from end-stage dementia. Barbara was preceded in death by her husband, Rev. Leonard Boyd Showalter who passed away in Centralia, Washington in 2006. She is survived by her sons; Mark Showalter of Tacoma, WA, Alan Showalter of New Boston, IL and daughter Andrea Vitzthum of Napavine, WA.

GERALDINE (GERI) ANN PATRICK VANCE ~ was born on July 1, 1922, in Spokane, Washington. Geri married James Vance in 1943, and in 1953, when Jim became a minister in the Evangelical United Brethren (EUB) church, Geri became the dedicated minister’s wife. She served numerous roles within each of the churches that they served in Washington, Oregon, and Idaho, and supported Jim’s ministry 100%.

During her life, Geri also worked as a telegrapher, bookkeeper, bank employee, and professional cake decorator. Jim retired in 1986, and he and Geri moved to Emerald Heights retirement community in Redmond, Washington, in 2001. Geri actively supported numerous community activities at Emerald Heights for many years. Jim passed away in 2010, and Geri continued to live in their two-bedroom apartment. She moved into the Assisted Living section of Emerald Heights in 2013, and then into Skilled Nursing in 2019.

Geraldine (Geri) Ann Vance, 97, passed away April 26, 2020. Her joy, humor, and loving spirit will be missed. Her husband Rev. James H. Vance pre-deceased her on May 22, 2010. She is survived by her sons, Sid and Rod, and 5 grandchildren, 4 great-grandchildren, and 1 great-great-grandchild. At her request, no memorial service was planned. Ironically, as a young girl, Geri contracted Scarlet Fever and the German measles at the same time and had to be quarantined in a hospital for two weeks. Since her passing in April 2020 was in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic, Geri was again in a quarantined status, along with the other residents of the Skilled Nursing section of Emerald Heights.

JACK H. SEVERNS ~ died peacefully on April 7, 2020, in Tacoma, WA surrounded by his children and his wife. A devoted Methodist minister, environmentalist, massage therapist, vocalist, family man, fisherman, and friend, he leaves a legacy of healing and love, that ripples outward to all who knew him.
He was born in Albuquerque, New Mexico on May 25, 1930 and was raised in El Paso, Texas. His parents separated when he was 11 years old, and he did not see his father again until adulthood. His mother supported the family and raised him and his two brothers. A sickly kid with a difficult and financially strained home life, Jack developed a compassionate, gentle, and courageous spirit. His younger brother credits him with supplanting the father who was absent during his youth.

He attended Texas Western College for two years and finished his Bachelor of Science in Fishery Biology at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York. At a campus Methodist fellowship, that he met his first wife, Mary Royce (deceased 2019). They dated long distance because Jack was called up for service at Fort Bliss, Texas shortly before the end of the Korean War. The couple married on December 23, 1954. They moved to Dallas so he could attend Perkins School of Theology at SMU. Their first child, Robin, was born there in 1956. Upon graduation, the couple moved to Belt, Montana where Jack was ordained as a Methodist minister by the Yellowstone Methodist Conference. He had a “4-point charge,” meaning that he was responsible for 4 congregations - Belt, Sand Coulee, Monarch, and Neihart - and held services in each one. Children Jennifer and Tim were born while the couple lived in Belt. In 1961, Jack was assigned to Epworth Methodist Church in Kalispell where, among other activities, the family learned to ski. Five years later, they moved to Grace United Methodist Church in Billings. There the family bought an Army surplus rubber raft and took to the rivers nearby.

Jack advocated for peace most of his adult life and preached that message from the pulpit. Amidst controversy, he left the local church ministry in 1969 and became the chaplain at Montana Deaconess Hospital where he spent the next 20 years. In 1990, he and Mary divorced amicably, and Jack began training in Portland to be a massage therapist.

In 2002, he married an old friend and fellow United Methodist minister, Muriel Miller (deceased 2015). They made their home in Kent, Washington where they advocated strongly for LGBTQ rights both within and outside the church.

In late 2012 they moved into retirement living at Wesley Homes in Des Moines, Washington. Widowed for 3 years, he married Beverly Belcher on May 26, 2018. They comforted and helped each other as he became increasingly frail.

He is survived by his loving partner, Beverly; his children, Robin (Dennis Walker), Jennifer (Craig Eisenbarth), and Tim (Andrea Severns), and six grandchildren; his younger brother, Jim Severns of Alexandria, Virginia; and 5 great nieces and nephews. His older brother, Frank, his first wife, Mary Severns and his second wife, Rev. Muriel Miller, preceded him in death. He is also survived by Muriel’s six living children, Kim, Apryl, Jaimy, Bayley, Kedron and Todd, and their kids, his step-grandchildren, to whom he meant a lot.

ELIZABETH (BETH) HARRISON HANSON ~ was born in Florida on December 12, 1930. She graduated from Bay City High School in Panama City, Florida in 1948. She attended the University of Alabama earning her DA and later the University of Washington receiving her M. Lib. Sci in 1970. On July 23, 1951. Beth married her high
school sweetheart, Coriless V. Hanson. The couple began their life of travel and ministry, following where God called them. They moved to Alabama to begin college, then on to Duke. The young couple served as Methodist missionaries in Angola and Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) from 1958 to 1968. As they prepared for ministry, they began a growing family. Susan Elizabeth was born in Tuscaloosa, Alabama; Karen Marie was born in Lexington, N.C. and son Daniel Craig was born in Lisbon, Portugal.

After theological studies at Duke, the Hansons served two small churches in the Western North Carolina Conference. Upon completion of seminary, the family was appointed as missionaries to Africa, a long-held goal of Beth and Coriless. Coriless worked with African pastors while Beth worked at the Quessus High School. The Hansons remained in Angola during four years of intense political turmoil and were later denied reentry into the country. After a brief furlough, they asked to return to Africa and were assigned to the Rhodesia Annual Conference. They both were appointed as teachers in the Teacher Training Institute in Nyadira. Later they transferred to the border town of Umtali. Beth was the superintendent of the African Girls Hostel. Beth felt that her most significant contribution was running a hostel for women in Umtali, Rhodesia from 1965-1968. Her daughter would add that she felt Beth’s more significant contribution was being an involved and loving grandmother. She was an important part of each child’s life. Beth was intelligent, meticulous, and compassionate. An outstanding servant of God.

In 1968 the Hansons returned to the states, this time in Washington. Beth was the librarian at North Thurston High School until her retirement in 1994. Beth and Coriless spent their retirement years at Panorama. Elizabeth Hanson died May 23, 2020, at her home in the Panorama C & R in Lacey. She was preceded in death by her husband, Rev. Coriless V. Hanson on September 29, 2016. She is survived by her children, Susan, Karen and Craig and their families. Beth was a loving mother, grandmother of three and great-grandmother of four. She will be missed.

JOHN RUSSELL WEIR — was born May 25, 1936, in Bar Harbor, Michigan to John and Elizabeth Weir. He grew up in Pueblo, Colorado. John was in the U.S. Navy during the Korea War and was a member of the Fraternal Order of Eagles, Beach Barons Car Club and the United Methodist Church in Ocean Park, WA. John loved his 1953 Ford pickup and participating in Beach Baron activities.

John married Samantha “Pastor Sam” Klineline-Weir in 1997. Together, they served Ocean Park United Methodist Church and were car enthusiasts on the side. John rebuilt a 1953 Ford F100 truck from the ground up and fondly called it his “Purple People Eater”, as he had painted it a vivid violet purple. Blended, they had four children and many grandchildren.

John Weir, 83, died June 19, 2019, at Community Hospice Center in Longview, Wash., after suffering from health issues for several years. He was a good man, who will be missed.
Survivors include his sister, Janie Collins from Terrell, Texas and a brother, James Weir from Ocean Park, Wash.; children, April Brice of Fresno, Calif., and Larry Weir of Ocean Park; as well as many grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces and nephews. His wife, Rev. Samantha Weir; daughter, Tammi Henderson and sister, Margaret Anne preceded him in death.

He was a good man, who will be missed.

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Clergy Memoirs contributed by
Rev. Joyce O'Connor Magee

**LAITY IN THE LIFE OF THE CONFERENCE WHO HAVE DIED**

**MAY 2021 - MAY 2020**

**JAN (JANET)(PAULSEN) KAISER ~** was born in St. Paul, Minnesota in 1952 and grew up in Hutchinson, MN. Her parents were Phyllis and James Paulsen. After high school, she graduated as a registered nurse from the Methodist Hospital School of Nursing in Minnesota. Jan married Kurt Kaiser March 3, 1973.

At the beginning of their lives together, Jan and Kurt moved to Idaho in 1978 and achieved their dream of living in the mountains in a log home they built together. Jan fulfilled another passion, her excitement of travel. She started Love to Travel and began making other people’s travel dreams come true. Having a travel agency made it possible for Jan and Kurt to travel to all seven continents, everywhere from Antarctica to the Arctic Circle and many places in between. Jan especially loved cruising, with Disney Cruise Line being her favorite.

Her degree in nursing played an important part in the mission work in which she and Kurt became immersed. Kurt, an electrical contractor and Jan, an RN and travel agent, began their mission work in the Rwandan refugee camps in 1994 through UMCOR. From that experience, they refocused their lives to educate and cultivate their PNW Conference churches about the mission needs around the globe, nurturing congregations to look outside their doors for ways to be in service.

They held the role of Conference Secretary of Global Ministries for six years; were chairpersons for the Bishop’s Task Force for Hope for the Children of Africa for eight years developing a partnership with the South Congo Conference, sat on the national boards of directors for United Methodist Fellowship of Health Care Volunteers for six years; and led numerous UMVIM teams to Bosnia, Kosovo, Russia, China, Nepal, Honduras, Mexico and locations in Africa, among others.

She was the Pacific Northwest Conference chair of Hope for the Children of Africa, and with her leadership, spearheaded the building of Jamaa Letu Orphanage in the Dem-
ocratic Republic of the Congo. She also started a feeding program for malnourished children in the remote western part of the DRC. Kurt and Jan served as the UMVIM Coordinators for the Western Jurisdiction at one time. There were many medical mission trips, which were very important to the African people but also heartbreaking and emotional for the mission teams providing the needed aid. Jan organized, and she and Kurt completed, numerous mission trips. She was devoted to helping the children of Africa. They both received the Bishop’s Award from Bishop Elias G. Galvan in 2003.

Janet Kaiser, 68, died Jan. 30, 2020, at her home near Sandpoint, ID. Her memorial service was held at 2 p.m. March 7, 2020, at the Sandpoint United Methodist Church. Jan is survived by Kurt, her husband of 46 years; daughter Jennifer Shrestha (Pradeep); two granddaughters, Asia and Raina; her mother Phyllis Paulsen; and siblings, Stephen Paulsen (Carol), Jeanne Palmer (Rick), John Paulsen (Patricia) and Richard Paulsen (Robyn). Jan was preceded in death by her father, James Paulsen. Well done, good and faithful servant!

CONNIE MCBRIDE ~ passed away of natural causes at her home in Colfax, Washington on November 5, 2019. Connie was born October 2, 1942, in Colfax to Fred and Josephine (Parvin) Largent. She grew up on a cattle and wheat farm north of Potlatch, Idaho, and graduated from high school in 1960. She attended the University of Idaho and graduated in 1964 with a degree in home economics. She later earned a master’s degree in education leadership from Gonzaga University, Spokane, Washington. Connie and her future husband, Ed McBride, were classmates from the first grade on, and started dating in high school. They were married on December 22, 1963, in their final semester of college. They moved to Yakima, Washington, where she taught junior high home economics, and where she discovered her deep love for teaching. In 1966 Ed was drafted into the Army and after his training he was assigned to Fort Knox, Kentucky and she quickly landed a teaching position in a nearby school in Brandenburg, Kentucky.

Upon Ed’s discharge they returned to the Palouse and Connie taught a variety of subjects at Garfield Jr./Sr. High School while Ed attended law school at the University of Idaho. Upon his graduation they moved to Colfax, and she chose to “retire” from teaching to raise a family. It wasn’t long before she took on teaching a night school class twice a week for developmentally challenged adults. Those students came to love her deeply and she loved them back with equal devotion. In 1986 she answered the call to go back to teaching at Garfield Jr. High, and later in the Garfield/Palouse High School. During that term she led the gifted program “Odyssey of the Mind”, earning numerous awards at state and regional tournaments. In 1992 she started teaching in Jennings Elementary School (mostly third grade) in Colfax, retiring in 2013. That last day of school was a sad one for her, but she knew that, at age 70, she needed to put away her whiteboard markers and rulers and workbooks, and gracefully exit that most rewarding career, having loved every minute of it.

From a very young age Connie had a personal relationship with her Lord Jesus. When she and Ed moved to Colfax, she soon became an active member of the Colfax United
Methodist Church, serving in virtually every leadership role. She was an ever-ready participant in church projects, especially if it involved the kitchen. She also served for several years as lay leader both at the local church level and for the Inland District. She was a member of the Lay Leaders Council of the Pacific Northwest Conference for eight years, and greatly enjoyed attending the annual meetings for more than a decade. At the time of her death, she was president of the Colfax church’s United Methodist Women. Connie was a Cub Scout den mother for several years, and a 4-H cooking and sewing leader for even longer. If it had to do with kids, she was always ready and willing to be a part of the action. She was a member of the Colfax School Board from 1980–85, serving a year as chair, as well as a member of the Athenaeum and PEO clubs of Colfax, and a life member of Beta Sigma Phi. As an exceptionally loving, devoted, and proud mother of their three children, Shannon, Steve and Shelby, she set the bar high for anything they took on, and they knew it! One of the saddest days of her life was the loss of their beloved daughter, Shannon, in August 1986 at age 19. It was that same month that she was invited to get back into teaching, and she always felt that it was in God’s plan to give her this diversion to help in the grieving process.

Connie is survived by Ed, her husband of 56 years, their son, Steve, and his wife, Juhi (Bhatia) and daughters Rubi and Rani of Puyallup, Washington; and by her daughter, Shelby and husband Jeff Munnoch, and their children, Nathan and Alexis of Burien, Washington. Her older brother, John Largent and wife Lois of Moscow, Idaho survive her. She is also survived by numerous nieces and nephews, grandnieces and nephews and great-grandnieces and nephews. Very special friends now in Texas and are Greg and Barb Bow, whose children, Emily, Maddie and Andrew Ed and Connie “grandparented” when they were young. Another special person in her life was a third grader named Jasmine, and that close relationship has remained strong through the years. And Connie is survived by wonderful, loving friends. Her legacy will surely live on in the hearts and minds of the many students she inspired over the years. A memorial service was held at 11:00 AM Wednesday, November 13 at the First Baptist Church, 200 N. Mill St., followed by a graveside service and a lunch provided by the Colfax United Methodist Women. Well done, good and faithful servant!

MYRNA LEE (PIERSON) OVERSTREET ~ of Everett, WA, passed away on August 19, 2019, at the age of 82. She lived a vibrant and most meaningful life, one full of great service, great faith, great experiences, hard work and many wonderful memories for her family to treasure. Born in Klamath Falls, Oregon on April 4, 1937, to Rello and Viola Pierson, they moved to Everett in 1946. During her freshman year at Washington State College, Myrna met the love of her life, Robert Bruce Overstreet, to whom she would be married for 58 years until his passing. Myrna was active in high school, serving in the Everett High School’s SeaGals and as Vice President of the Senior Class of 1954. At WSC, Myrna was a member of the Gamma Phi Beta sorority and graduated in 1958. She and Bob married that summer and upon completion of a military assignment, they moved to Snohomish County where they spent the rest of their lives.
An educator at various schools early in her career, Myrna eventually ended up teaching sewing for 18 years at Everett Junior College. She was a strong advocate for early childhood development, playing an instrumental role in starting and supporting for many years an educational co-op program in Marysville, along with teaching Early Childhood classes at EJC. Service to the community was always one of Myrna's hallmarks. She served as a member of various boards: Providence, Campfire (Lou Denny Award recipient), Everett High's Blue & Gold Club, Children's Museum, Zonta, United Way (President), Deaconess Children's Services (President), Assistance League, Community Health Center, Music4Life, Little Red Schoolhouse, Everett Symphony, and Marysville United Methodist Church (Worship Chair).

Myrna taught this writer (as a 4th grader) to happily sew one summer, in the educational co-op program in Marysville, leaving a lasting impression as a vivacious, laughing, ultra-supportive teacher. As the Worship Chairperson at Marysville United Methodist Church, this writer remembers how the fabrics and altar cloth’s textures and colors began to lift worship into another realm. The worship space became a feast for the eyes, bringing us as close to heaven on earth as I felt I ever was…. Myrna had so many gifts. This local church was blessed in those years to have her leadership. It was in June 1993 that Myrna was awarded The Bishop's Award by Bishop Calvin D. McConnell for her work developing the church-related agency: Deaconess Children’s Services in Everett, WA, during her years as President on their Board of Directors. It was in 1998 that Myrna and husband Bob Overstreet joined and sang with the Jubilate Choir on a trip to Africa, and Myrna won the Golden Flute award after taking a recorder class during their travels.

Her vision of what the Everett community needed resulted in such signature mainstays as Providence’s Festival of Trees, the Evergreen Community Orchestra, and the Imagine Children’s Museum. She also was a stalwart in the philanthropic Everett Book Club for over 40 years. It is fair to say that between Myrna and her husband, they worked tirelessly to improve the local community. While civic commitment was important to Myrna, spending time with her family brought her the greatest joy. She was a regular spectator at her grandchildren’s activities, took her children and grandchildren on various excursions, and hosted countless family gatherings.

Myrna is survived by her children, Jill (Gil) McKinnie, Bruce Overstreet, Amy (Bill) Burton, and Jeff (Tammy) Overstreet; grandchildren, Shane (Stephanie) McKinnie, Jaclyn (Todd) Christianson, Katie McKinnie, Mattson Overstreet, Evan Overstreet, Caroline Overstreet, Maggie (Matt) Merluzzi, Molly Burton, Billy Burton, Jake Burton, and Logan Overstreet; great grandchildren Connor, Maggie, Carson, and Howard. She is also survived by her sister, Janice (Bill) Rucker, numerous nieces and nephews and Jenny Overstreet. A Celebration of Life Service was held at 3:30 pm on Monday, August 26, 2019, at Imagine Children's Museum (1502 Wall Street, Everett, Washington). Well done, good and faithful servant!
LEROY ARTHUR (PETE) SCHOOT ~ was born March 9, 1939, in St. Paul, Minnesota, to Arthur Schoot and Edna Borseth. He passed peacefully from a sudden illness on Dec. 27, 2019, in Seattle at the age of 80. He and his wife Carol Roney Schoot were married 59 years ago in Westfield, Wisconsin. Their life was spent in Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Portland, OR before retiring to Goldendale, Washington.

After graduating from Tony High School in northern Wisconsin, he attended University of Wisconsin Eau Claire and Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. His major employment was in Process Controls Sales, Honeywell Inc., and other companies in Minnesota. He was CEO of his own corporation, Lascom Inc. In retirement he worked part time in the northwest wine industry.

His latest service was on the District Level Committee on Ordained Ministry, and he also became a Certified Lay Minister for the Goldendale United Methodist Church, where he was a member. Church and community ministries brought him great joy.

Hobbies included rose and general gardening, John Deere tractor and Volvo restoration, original poetry writing, and sermons and church columns. In Minnesota with his young family, 4-H rabbitry was a fun activity. All his life, he was a musician and enjoyed classical music. Near the end of his life, he sang as a member of the Goldendale United Methodist Church choir. In earlier years, he sang with the University of Portland Choral Union.

He is survived by wife Carol; son Peter (Suzanne) Renton, Washington; son David (Stacy) Woodbury, Minnesota; son Steven (Susan) Zimmerman, Minnesota; daughter Lori in Lynnwood, Washington; six grandchildren; one great-granddaughter; sister Ruth in Fort Collins, Colorado; brother Jim (Linda) Tomah, Wisconsin; and many dear cousins and nieces and nephews. He loved his family and many friends.

A memorial service was held at the Goldendale United Methodist Church on Saturday, Jan. 11, 2020. Well done, good and faithful servant!

RUTH LOUDIN STEACH ~ died on November 29, 2019, at her home in the Village at Canyon Lakes in Kennewick, WA surrounded by loving family. She was born on July 10, 1923, at Buckhannon, WV to Elizabeth Hartley and John Jackson Loudin. She graduated from West Virginia Wesleyan College and taught in New Mexico. After coming to Richland, WA in 1951 she worked in the plant library until 1956.

Ruth gave herself in service to the PNW Conference of The United Methodist Church at the local, district and Conference levels. We know her as the original RUTH behind the annual Ruth Award that is presented every year since 1983, at Annual Conference. She was the first recipient and inspiration for the Ruth Award for outstanding women in the conference. She sang in the chancel choir at Central United Protestant Church in Richland for 35 years and served on the building committee for 25 years and held many other offices.

She was member of the Pacific Northwest Conference of The United Methodist Church for over 25 years and chaired the Conference United Methodist Women. She was pre-
sented with the Bishop’s Medal in 1983 by resident Bishop Melvin G. Talbert, to affirm her devotion and her witness to Christ both in the local church and the church at large. Ruth became a lay minister and served on other bodies. She was elected twice to the General Conference of the United Methodist Church and served 8 years on a national commission. She taught Bible classed from 1986 until 2015. In 1984, Ruth and Bob pioneered and were visionaries in forming the Ben Franklin Village Association, a group that worked 10 years to create The Village at Canyon Lakes, a full-service retirement facility. Her music box collection was a delight. Genealogy was of great interest to Ruth, who provided searches for family and friends. Ruth shared her needlework skills with others as a 4H Leader.

Ruth and Robert Henry Steach, son of Margaret Blansett and Charles H. Steach of Stoytown, PA married on September 21, 1946, in Carrizozo, NM. She was preceded in death by Robert (1996) and her sister, Mary VanCompernolle. Ruth is survived by the families of their four children: Catherine S., W. Daniel, and Christopher R. Morris (Star) of Kennewick; Steven G., Anna Lopez and Kristen (Steven) Nunez of Torrance, CA; James R., Misti Townsend and Jamie Le, Trenton and Megan Steach of Pasco, WA; and John C., Heather Reiland and Holly Ruth and Peter John Steach of Vancouver, WA. She is also survived by one brother, J. Frank Loudin of Eastsound, WA. Well done, good and faithful servant!

BURL BRYSON WYCKOFF ~ was born in Luray, Kansas on February 10, 1923, and died in Prescott Valley, Arizona on October 29, 2019. In 1933, Burl moved with his family to Nyssa, Oregon, where he graduated from high school and was active in the Methodist Church. He attended college in Caldwell, Idaho, until joining the Navy in 1943. Before shipping out, Burl married Aloha Maw, also from Nyssa. After discharge from the service, Burl finished his degree in agricultural husbandry at Oregon State College. He spent most of his career in Washington State working with farmers as a manager at farm cooperatives.

A lifelong member of The United Methodist Church, Burl served his church as a choir member, trustee, and lay leader, including a term as the Pacific Northwest Conference Lay Leader. Over the years, he and Aloha helped build or repair churches in Washington State, Arizona, Mexico, and Chile.

In 1981, Burl and Aloha undertook a mission to Zambia. Over the next four years, he transformed 100 acres of dry African scrub country into irrigated fields of corn. The land supported the Kafue Secondary School and was owned jointly by the government of Zambia and the Church of Christ. The land was along the Kafue River and covered by thousands of trees and brush, so it was long arduous labor to clear it. The resulting crops were needed in part to support and feed the students at the High School, as government funding became less and less each year. They left a farm manager in place when they took their leave. In 1985, he and Aloha moved to Arizona, where Burl enjoyed golfing year around and seasonal hunting. In the following years, they traveled to every continent except Antarctica, especially enjoying trips with family and friends.
“Burl was one of the finest gentlemen I have ever known. His remarkable 96 years were filled with dedication to his church, in whatever town they lived. Seattle: Queen Anne, Moses Lake United Methodist Church, Seattle: Trinity, Richland: Central United Protestant and finally Prescott Valley United Methodist Church, AZ. He served as a missionary in Zambia, Africa with his late wife Aloha. He was part of the team that built the Prescott Valley United Methodist Church and was chairman of the Board of Trustees. He sang for many years in the PVUMC choir and supported many church charities. He was a dear friend and will be greatly missed.” Prescott Valley, AZ – friend.

Aloha, his wife of 62 years, preceded him in death in 2008. He is survived by his brother J.B. Wyckoff (Stella), his sister, Barbara Sorenson (Gary), and his stepsister Elaine Stein (Warner); daughters Christine Cordes (John Adams) and Cynthia Wyckoff (Paul Meisneheimer); grandson Wyle Cordes (Velvet) and step-grandson Greg Adams (Amber); and many loving relatives and friends throughout the world and especially in Prescott Valley. A Celebration of Life was held in February 2020 in Prescott Valley. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that contributions be made in Burl’s memory to Habitat for Humanity or the United Methodist Church World Service.

Well done, good and faithful servant!

~ ~ ~ ~

Beloved Laity Memoirs
contributed by Cathy Lang
DISCONTINUED CHURCHES

CLARK FORK UNITED METHODIST CHURCH (1904-2020) ~ Lots were deeded to the Methodist Episcopal Church in Clark Fork, Idaho in 1904, and the original buildings were completed in 1905. For years the church was on a circuit with Hope, Idaho, where Methodism began in 1907 with seven charter members. They began their Sunday school with seven members, and by 1911 they had 42 people. The congregation peaked in the 1960’s with 48 members and 91 in their Sunday school.

For many years, this was the only PNW congregation that was in a multi-point charge with two churches in Montana (Noxon and Heron UMCs), while the parsonage was located in Clark Fork. The churches were able to have three worship services on Sunday mornings in a timely manner due to the time zone change between Clark Fork and Heron. A new parsonage was constructed in the last few decades. The Clark Fork congregation was very proud of their clothing closet ministry which provided a needed service to the community.

The evolution in the Clark Fork Valley continues. With only three active members over the past year or two, we began exploring conversations about their future. These last few members were unable to make a decision about their legacy and how to end their ministry, so unfortunately their district superintendent (along with the bishop and cabinet) have helped them to make that decision this appointment year. It has been a trying time full of grief and consternation about their future. The remaining members will all transfer their membership to Heron UMC in Heron, MT, with great hope that the influx of new people will help that church’s vitality.

KENDRICK UNITED METHODIST CHURCH (1890-2020) ~ A Methodist presence was in Kendrick, Idaho by 1890 as evidenced by apportioned giving which began that year. By 1891, there were 78 members and 148 in three Sunday schools. Their first two church buildings were worth $2,000. In 1895, Rev. C.B. Bell (the pastor) built the parsonage. They experienced fluctuations in membership and participation in a robust education program with the high point coming in the 1960’s with 117 members and 139 in Sunday school.

Since that high point (and especially over the past decade, while accelerating over the past few years) the congregation dwindled to a handful of faithful servants. More recently they have had issues with a hillside behind the church collapsing and damaging the foundation. In order to not have to deal with the headaches of seeking a legal settlement...
from the City of Kendrick and a previous contractor’s insurance they voted last fall to deed their building over to the PNW Conference Board of Trustees, and they have continued to meet in Kendrick.

COVID-19 was also very trying for this small band of faithful disciples. They have decided to close their United Methodist Charter and become a “fellowship group” that regularly will meet in Kendrick, while their membership will officially transfer to Orchards United Methodist Church in Lewiston, Idaho. They declined to have a de-consecration worship service since they are still gathering as a group.

MALOTT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH (1935-2021) ~ The Methodist church in Malott, Washington, originated with three pioneering women in 1910, when Mrs. Everett, Mrs. Burdett, and Mrs. Malott started a Sunday School. Mrs. McIntosh joined them in 1913 and became the Community Sunday School Superintendent and teacher, serving for 26 years. For many years, Sunday School was held in the schoolhouse. Traveling preachers and ministers from neighboring towns of various denominations would hold occasional services.

In 1935, a Methodist pastor named Rev. Taylor began holding regular meetings in Malott, and interested people in forming a church and erecting a building for worship. At the end of the year, an organizational meeting was held at the Malott School House and the Malott Community Methodist Episcopal Church officially began. It wasn’t until the end of 1937 that work began on the little church building, but all that they had done was washed away in April 1938 when the Wagner Mill Dam gave way and the center of the small community of Malott was washed away. Finally, in time for Christmas services in 1939, the community had built the church.

The church building, commonly known as the Malott Community Church, not only sits in the middle of the small town but has often been the center and heart of the community. Next door is the Malott Improvement Club, which has shared its well water with the church since the beginning. Built in 1924, “the MIC had goals of improving community spirit and promoting moral temperance in young people. We’re still basically doing the same thing.” (Malott Improvement Club Facebook page) There has been a close partnership between the two institutions, composed of many of the same people, throughout the years. Together, they have served the community well, one from a perspective of faith, the other from civil responsibility, both with the same aim of creating a good place to live, worship and work.

The church primarily shared its pastor with the nearby Okanogan Methodist Church
and was an active part of the Greater Okanogan Group Ministry, which began in 1966 and lasted over 20 years. They were active in the life of Boy Scout Troop 57. Their Ladies Aid held programs and raised money that they donated to the church, the community and missions near and afar. If there were funerals or weddings in the community, they were held at the Malott Community Church. The church participated in conference and denominational activities and fund drives, such as the Urgent Needs Appeal and the Christian Responsibility Fund in the late 1960s. They continued to improve their church building over the many years.

While devastating wildfires have ripped through the area over the years, burning homes of members, the church itself has not been touched. Today, the quaint little church stands in the midst of a beautiful lawn and towering oak trees. It is with great sadness, but having come to a faith-ful completion, that it closes its doors as the Malott Community United Methodist Church.

MILTON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH (1905-2021) ~ During the early 1890’s, a mill was constructed amidst towering evergreens on a hill overlooking the Puyallup Valley. The first settlement, known as Mill Town, was made up of a handful of homesteaders and the lumber camp workers who furnished timber to feed the mill. The name became Milton only after the U.S. Postal service rejected the two-word Mill Town moniker. Residents were actually quite pleased with the change, as the town was then named after the renowned poet, John Milton.

In the early 1900’s, the Methodist Church worked with prominent Milton citizen, E.T. Short, and built a small wooden building on the property next to his home, establishing a church to provide for the spiritual nurture and enrichment for this new and growing community. Milton Methodist Church’s first services were held in 1905, with William O. Pflaum its first pastor. The small but vital church community was able to dedicate its first building on Easter Sunday in 1907.

In a historical memoir, Kay Johnson remembers a large bell being rung each Sunday – that could be heard throughout the town – that announced that the worshipping community was gathering. For many years, the local school is did not have a large hall for special school functions, and so Milton Church allowed the school to use its building for a large gathering space.

In a true Wesleyan circuit rider tradition – Milton Methodist Church had 21 pastoral leaders in its first 25 year, with the longest service being 2 years. The first pastor who stayed longer than 2 years was a woman, Louella M. Wilhelm, who pastored at Milton Methodist Church from 1929-1939. Its striking brick sanctuary was constructed in 1953, and Milton United Methodist Church celebrated their centennial in 2005.
Throughout its history, Milton United Methodist Church has sought to be a warm and welcoming church for all, and actively engage in ministries that have nurtured the spirit, through worship and prayer, study and fellowship - but also sought to serve the needs of the neighborhood and community as well, perhaps an imprint from its early DNA in working with its community school and the lumber camp workers and families. Milton United Methodist Church most recently extended this legacy through a community food pantry, “Food is Free”, its extensive recovery group ministry, and a Day Care Program that has served the needs of young working families. The final worship service of Milton United Methodist Church was led by Pastor Terri Stewart, on Sunday, January 31, 2021.

And glory be to God, the spirit and legacy of Milton United Methodist Church will be extended into the future, as they have graciously given their building for sacred worship and ministry, and community outreach, to Good Seed United Methodist Church, a ministry whose mission is to serve the growing Korean community in the area. Praise God from whom all blessings flow!

SKAMOKAWA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH (1890-2021) ~ Methodist presence in Skamokawa began in 1890 along the Columbia River at the Colwell Mill. The first church was constructed in 1893 and established in 1894 on land donated by the owners of the mill. Rev. John Flinn was the first pastor. Because the original church was accessible only by boat, it was known in the community as the Island Church. The original church was destroyed by fire in January 1954 and a new building was consecrated in April 1956 in its current local.

Skamokawa United Methodist Church was served by numerous ordained and lay ministers throughout the years and most recently became a lay-led congregation in 2018, after the death of long time certified lay minister, Beryl Curtis. Throughout its history, the church has taken pride in their worship services, ministry to children in the community and their women’s ministries (Ladies Aid and United Methodist Church). Remaining church members remember the multiple ways they sup-
ported the community – through the annual Hosanna musical on Palm Sunday, which, for decades, raised money for the day care center in a nearby town; the Terrific Tuesdays afterschool program for children in Skamokawa; singing at local nursing homes and care facilities before Sunday worship; and the Soup-in dinners raising money for the food bank.

Most of all, Skamokawa United Methodist Church was a church family, a tangible place of hope for people in the community, and a place to fulfill Christ’s call to be the hands and feet of Christ and to create a healthier community.

**TOPPENISH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH (1899-2020)** - In 1884, the Northern Pacific Railroad was built across the Yakima Nation Reservation, with a depot erected at what would eventually become the town of Toppenish. In 1896, Rev. and Mrs. Zenas Bolton were appointed to this small settlement, consisting of the red frame depot, a small store, a blacksmith shop and a few small homes. The Boltons began their housekeeping in a barn, and the first worship services and Sunday School were held first in the store, then in the depot. A small church was soon built to also be used as the public school until a schoolhouse could be provided.

The Toppenish Methodist Episcopal Church was incorporated in June of 1899. The church building was moved to its current location at the corner of Chehalis Avenue and North Beech Street in 1909. In 1923, a larger church in the same location was built to accommodate the growing congregation.

Over the years, a succession of clergy were appointed to the church, and the congregation flourished. Finances were tight during the Great Depression, causing the pastor (Rev. Paul Campbell) to become the church custodian and maintenance man, and take on a part-time mechanic job to augment his church salary (which was often paid in produce and chickens)! During these years, the church building once again became a week-day schoolhouse, until Garfield Elementary School could be rebuilt after a fire destroyed its building.

In 1950 the church partially burned, but was rebuilt (thanks to good insurance money) in eight months. The new entrance addition was completed in the 1970’s and an elevator to the 2nd floor Sanctuary was installed in the 1980’s. In 1979, the Buena Methodist Church closed and the members united with Toppenish United Methodist Church. With this merge came the Buena Quilters, who continued to support their new church with the sale of their beautiful quilts.

In 2010, **Rev. Derel Olson** was appointed to help begin a Hispanic congregation, which
he did with the leadership Rev. Gerardo Martinez and his wife Brenda. Some years later, when Rev. Olson left, this ministry was taken over by their son and daughter-in-law, Revs. Eli and Sarahi Martinez, who became the co-pastors of Toppenish United Methodist Church and the vitality project New Harvest Fellowship. As the older, white congregation dwindled, the NHF grew and included a bilingual worship service and an active youth and children's ministry. In 2020, the Martinezes chose to leave The United Methodist Church due to theological differences, and the remaining congregation voted to close after 121 years of faithful ministry.

Toppenish United Methodist Church has served its community in many critical and vital ways throughout the years and nurtured in faith many community leaders and citizens of the city and area. Its presence will be missed. We give thanks to the generations of Methodists who followed Christ by living out the gospel as part of this church.