

JANUARY 2019

THE EVANGEL

THE NEWSLETTER OF  AUDUBON PARK UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



BROKEN

We live in a broken world. It's perhaps easiest to see "out there," in broken families and broken relationships, but when we are honest with ourselves, there is deep brokenness in our own souls as well. Society's brokenness—it's inability to work well—is a reflection of our own disfunction. We have celebrated Jesus' birth, and the songs of Christmas are still ringing in our ears, but even at the heart the Christmas story is brokenness—Mary and Joseph's broken dreams, a murderous king, the holy family driven into exile as refugees in another country. But the biggest part of the story is that Jesus has come into our broken world to bring hope and healing.

A form of Japanese art, Kintsugi, takes broken pottery and restores its wholeness with molten gold holding the pieces together. In brokenness and healing, the pottery is made more beautiful and far more valuable. This is what Jesus does for us. The evidence of our brokenness remains, and by grace our brokenness becomes beautiful ministry. As Henri Nouwen said, we are wounded healers.

A New Worship Series beginning January 13th! Sundays at 9am & 10:30am.

 AUDUBONPARKUMC.ORG



Rev. Geoff Helton
Lead Pastor

geoff@audubonparkumc.org
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FROM THE LEAD PASTOR

Over the last few months, you may or may not have heard about the growing conflict in the United Methodist Church about persons who identify as LGBTQIA (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, asexual/allied) inclusion). A special session of General Conference has been called for February of 2019 to respond to the work of a group called the Commission on the Way Forward. For some of us this upcoming meeting has been interesting, for others it's been painful, for others frustrating, and for still others, it hasn't even come across our screen.

This letter will cover the basics of what's happened with places to find more information if you're interested in learning or reading more. ***As always, as your pastor, I'm happy to meet and talk about anything that concerns or interests you.***

First, a few definitions:

The Council of Bishops: All of the active and retired Bishops from across the global United

Methodist connection function together as the executive branch for the denomination. The Council of Bishops will regularly respond to national and global issues. Specifically, the General Conference of 2016 asked the Council to lead the church when it came to a stalemate relating to LGBT inclusion. As a body, the bishops do not hold power to make legislative decisions.

General Conference: The quadrennial (once every four years) meeting of The United Methodist Church including clergy and laity from each annual conference. The number of delegates is decided much like the House of Representatives (more people = more representatives). The Pacific Northwest Conference is allocated two out of the 864 that will be seated. The General Conference is the ONLY body of the UMC that can change our rules and how we are structured for ministry (The Book of Discipline). In essence, they serve as the main legislative branch of the UMC.

Annual Conference: The body and annual meeting of churches in a particular state/region/"conference". Our Annual Conference is The Pacific Northwest (PNW) and includes Washington and the panhandle of Idaho (with a couple of extra churches in Montana and Canada). Our annual conference meets in June to assign, commission and ordain leaders to service, set a budget, decide policy, and respond to issues that specifically relate to missions and ministry in our conference.

The Commission on the Way Forward (COWF): A group of 32 United Methodists, commissioned by the Council of Bishops, including 2 bishops, clergy, and laity, charged with creating options for how the UMC might move forward on issues that relate to LGBTQIA inclusion, marriage, and ordination. The commission has met various times since the 2016 General Conference and this year submitted a report which included three plans for moving forward.

The Council of Bishops reviewed the recommendations and will allow all three recommendations from the Commission on the Way Forward to come to the special session of General Conference in 2019, with their recommendation being for the "One Church Plan."

In essence, the "One Church Plan" would delete the exclusionary language currently in The Book of Discipline and allow each local church to make their own decision about how they will respond/include LGBT congregants and requests for marriage. So, Church A might openly advertise that the LGBT community is welcome. Church B might encourage and ask for an openly gay pastor, as well as advertise their support of gay marriage, including in their facilities. Church C might not say anything one way or the other. And Church D might be open in their stance that they do not support lesbian or gay relationships, while still relating to each individual as a child of God. Also under the plan, each Annual Conference would have more autonomy in setting standards for the ordination of qualified candidates with regard to their orientation.

The second option presented by the Commission on the Way Forward is called the "Connectional Conference Plan" (formerly named: Multi-branch model). This choice would form "three overlapping 'Connectional Conferences' defined by rules concerning same sex marriage" and would "replace today's five Jurisdictional Conferences." These would be three separate legal entities (501c3) yet all part of the UMC.

The third option presented is called the "Traditionalist Plan." This choice would keep the current policy and practice of the UMC for the whole denomination, while adding more enforcement. For some, this means not much would change. One emphasis of this model is that pastors and churches that are "noncompliant" with current policy ("self-avowed and practicing" clergy, allowing for ordination of gay clergy, or performing weddings for LGBT couples) would be pursued in their defiance and charges would be brought (within the church's legal system) against those pastors, clergy, and laity.

**For a summary of the three plans by a member of the Commission, please go here: <https://www.minnesotaumc.org/files/way+forward+umc/summary+of+3+plans.pdf>.

In addition to their recommendation, the Council of Bishops referred all three proposals to the Judicial Council (like the Supreme Court of the UMC) to check for the constitutionality of the plans. The Judicial Council ruled that the "One Church Plan" was "largely constitutional" while the Traditionalist Plan "must be fixed before it can pass muster" with 9 of its 17 petitions having some issue (versus 3 minor changes to the One Church Plan). The Judicial Council did not rule on the Connectional Conference Plan as it includes constitutional changes. For more detailed information, go here: <http://www.advocatesc.org/2018/10/judicial-council-rules-on-two-of-three-way-forward-plans>.

Ultimately, the decision from the Council of Bishops is only a recommendation. It will be the General Conference who will decide which, if any, of these recommendations and, hence, changes to make to The Book of Discipline. As with all decisions relating to our polity, no decision is forever though certainly some of these recommendations have greater policy implications, as well as potential impact for our shared life within the church. Our church laws are subject to change at every General Conference, assuming proper procedure, presentation, and voting on proposed changes.

What does all of this mean for us as a local church? Well, for some it is significant as it is deeply personal and we have much invested in the outcome of these votes. For others, it will likely mean business as usual—attending worship, serving in our ministries and participating in missions—until something more is required of us as a congregation.

For any of the three recommendations from the Commission on the Way Forward, ultimately, it seems each church will need to clearly identify their stance on these issues and how we intend to be in ministry with the LGBT community. To do that effectively, we will need to create a stronger culture of conversation, respect and engagement on all types of issues where we may disagree, and become more clear about our mission and vision as a church.

In the meantime, Bishop Elaine Stanovsky has invited us to read a book titled "The Road is Made by Walking" by Brian McClaren and be in dialogue with one another about how we live into the future together. For more information on this invitation, the book, or the blog being co-authored by clergy and laity in the conference, go here: greaternw.org/crossover.

I'm grateful to Pastor Debbie Sperry from Moscow First UMC who shared the letter she wrote to her congregation with her colleagues who, like myself, are struggling with how to process what's happening and communicate it to our churches. Much of what you've read here I borrowed from her with minor changes and additions.

For today, I would encourage you to pray for our church and our denomination as we seek God's will to be in ministry to all persons and reflect the love of God in how we live our faith.

*Grace & Peace
-Pastor Geoff*

FROM THE CONGREGATIONAL CARE PASTOR



Rev. Dale Cockrum

Associate Pastor of
Congregational Care

dale@audubonparkumc.org

There are few pictures from the Bible more familiar to us than that of the wise men following a star to Bethlehem. Artists from around the world have depicted those ancient travelers peering into the night sky at the point of light guiding their way. As we begin a New Year and celebrate Epiphany on January 6, I want us to think about the gifts of commitment we can bring to God in this new year.

Epiphany means "Revealing." It's a time to celebrate how Jesus is revealed to the world. It's a time to reflect on the ministry and mission of the church as we seek to reveal Jesus in our lives. It's a time to think about our own personal sense of direction, on what's most important, what's central in our lives.

The story of the Wise Men says to me that **two things are central: the first is worship!** The worship of the Living God, revealed in Jesus, present in the power of the Holy Spirit—that's at the center of who we are as Christians, and as the Church of Jesus Christ. Worship was the reason for the journey of the wise men. When they arrived in Jerusalem, they said, "Where is the baby born to be the king of the Jews? We saw his star when it came up in the east, and *we have come to worship him.*"

This was no sight-seeing trip; they weren't out for a good time—they were looking for a way to express their faith and gratitude to One greater than themselves, who laid out the course, and set the direction for their lives.

In our new year at Audubon Park church, I invite you to make worship central in 2019. Make your commitment that of the wise men: "We have come to worship." Come to worship with the same sense of joy the wise men did: "On their way, they saw the same star they had seen in the East. When they saw it, how happy they were, what joy was theirs! It went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. They went into the house, and when they saw the child with his mother Mary, they knelt down and worshiped him!"

In the second half of verse 11 is **our 2nd priority for 2019:** "They brought out their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, and presented them to him." The key words are "They brought out their gifts...and presented them to him."

I see the wise men bringing out their gifts from where they were hiding them. What are the gifts and talents we've been hiding, that we might bring forth and present in service to God this new year? Each of us has skills and talents and spiritual gifts that are needed, either in existing areas of service or in meeting needs not now being met. The Nominating Committee didn't have to track down the wise men. The pastors didn't need to come calling. The wise men volunteered. They were willing to keep asking directions and looking up until they found the place where they could make their commitments and offer their gifts. You have something incredibly beautiful, and important, to "bring out" that will be a blessing to others, that will reveal Jesus in 2019.

Another way to make our commitment tangible—one more gift we can bring forth and present to our Lord—and that's our commitment for **personal growth** in 2019. We can make a commitment to be more of a praying church in 2019; we can make a commitment to keep growing, to stay flexible and move toward the potential God sees in us. It will take time; it will take looking for resources to get us unstuck and growing. It may mean becoming a part of a Grow Night class or a Bible study, open to the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit.

We have a great year ahead of us as individuals and as a church. It's time to look up and see the light that will guide us. It's time to center ourselves in worship, and commit to bring forth our gifts and present them before the one whose coming and caring changes everything!

*Shalom,
- Pastor Dale*

FROM THE NEW CHURCH START PASTOR

Over the last several months, as Creators' Table has deepened our partnership across denominational lines, I've fielded questions about the differences between Methodists and Episcopalians. There's very little difference in theology. The Episcopalian denomination in the United States is part of the global Anglican Communion, otherwise known as the Church of England. John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist movement, was an Anglican priest. He never intended for Methodism to be an independent church; his dream was for Methodism to be a revival movement within the Church of England. For a number of historical reasons, including the American revolution, the Methodists eventually split off to be their own church, but our biggest differences with the Episcopalians aren't so much in theology as they are in style. Episcopal liturgies tend to be more formal and feel more "high church" with more readings, more kneeling, more incense-burning.

What we do at Creators' Table is not strictly Episcopal or strictly Methodist in style: we mix and match elements of both traditions with our own unique spin. We do Communion every week with a full Eucharistic prayer (very Episcopal). We have a moment of testimony in which someone from the congregation speaks to how the theme of the season has unfolded in their life (very Methodist). We sing (very Methodist) sometimes even secular music (very much our own twist). We begin each service with a poem and take a fifteen minute break in the middle for quiet, contemplative, multi-sensory prayer (very Creators' Table).

Our upcoming calendar follows our usual blend of traditions. For our last liturgy of 2018 we'll gather for a Watch Night liturgy, an old Methodist custom of

reflecting on the graces of the old year and recommitting to God in the new year. Episcopalians mark Epiphany as the season between Christmas and Lent, and we'll be exploring themes of light and water in this time of focusing on the manifestations of Christ's divinity. I'm particularly excited about an eastern orthodox tradition in which the congregation processes to the local body of water to bless it and carry back water for the baptismal font. We'll be walking from our beloved little chapel in West Central, through our neighborhood, down to the Spokane River on January 13th. And we'll probably be singing some weird contemporary song about rivers while we do it. Join us.

*Grace & Peace,
Pastor Katy*



Pastor Katy Shedlock

Associate Pastor of
the New Church Start
audubonparkumc.org

UPCOMING LITURGIES

Sundays at 5pm

1832 W Dean

December 24

late night liturgy at 11:00 pm

December 25

Christmas Day liturgy at
10:30am

December 30

Watch Night at 5pm

January 6

Epiphany at 5pm

January 13:

Great Blessing of the Waters
3pm, followed by Baptism of
the Lord at 5 pm

January 20

Wedding at Cana at 5pm

January 27

Jesus reads from Isaiah at
5pm



Youth Ministry Upcoming Events

Our youth group usually meets at the church on Sundays from 6-7:30pm. Contact our Youth Director Drew Homchick for more info: drew@audubonparkumc.org.

Grog & Sardines

Sunday, January 13th | 6:00pm - 7:30pm

If you like hide and seek and flashlight tag, you will not want to miss a couple of our youth group's favorite games ... Grog and Sardines.

Souper Bowl of Caring

Sunday, January 20th | 12:00pm - 3:00pm

We will meet downstairs in the youth room then head out into the neighborhood and collect non-perishable food items to help feed the less fortunate in our local area. Please dress warm!

Ice Skating

Sunday, January 27th | 1:00pm - 3:00pm

Come join us as we travel to The Skate Ribbon at Riverfront Park and enjoy an afternoon of ice skating and festivities. We hope to see you there!



Congratulations to Anessa! She was the winner of the paper airplane throwing contest at our Biannual Youth All Nighter.



Are you in your twenties or thirties (maybe early forties)? We've got a young adult fellowship group for you! Join us for fellowship and fun with other young(ish) adults from the church!

Email Pastor Geoff for more info: geoff@audubonparkumc.org

Youth Group Dinner & Auction Sunday, March 10, 5-7pm



Mark your calendars as we will be hosting the Annual Youth Group Dinner & Auction on Sunday, March 10th from 5pm - 7pm in the church parlor. Last year we had a great turnout and fundraiser which allowed our kids travel to Wellpinit, WA and work closely with the Spokane Indian Tribe and local residents on house repairs through the Sierra Service Project.

We hope to build on the success of last year and raise additional funds for our mission trip this year to Seattle, WA through an organization called L.A.S.T. (Learning and Service Together).

Our youth will be collecting items from local businesses for our auction, but we will also be graciously asking for any items YOU may be willing to donate to help our cause. Thank you so much in advance for your continued appreciation and support of our kids!



APUMC UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

What a beautiful way to start the Christmas season and New Year, giving to others!

2 CORINTHIANS 9-7 - "Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."

Here, the women of Audubon Park are filling the handbags donated for the Women's Hearth of Spokane. We received enough handbags to fill 24, and several extra left over for the Hearth to use throughout the new year. Thank you all for your generous spirit.



A Thank You from the Women's Hearth...

We would like to thank the women of Audubon Park UMC for the wonderful gift of handbags for our clients. The love you have shown will long be remembered by our women.

May God bless you all.

As we begin the New Year, let us be ever mindful of the many blessings we have, and the

U.M.W. - Thank you to everyone that came to our "cookie day". Your help was greatly appreciated. We made about 18 trays for our church families and had some left to share with the food bank.

Also, a big thank you to Santa for coming all the way from the North Pole to visit us.

~Connie Hickman



January 2019

Tuesday, 1/1

Free Breakfast & Produce 8:30-10:00 am
Quilters (Room 303) 9:30 am

Wednesday, 1/2

Overeaters Anonymous (Room 103) 10:00 am
Needlework (Parlor) 10:00 am
Stephen's Ministry (Parlor) 5:00 pm
Boy Scouts (Outside Activity) 6:30 pm
Choir Rehearsal (Room 105) 7:00 pm
AA (Parlor) 7:30 pm

Sunday, 1/6

Modern Worship 9:00 am
Traditional Worship 10:30 am
Creators' Table Liturgy 5pm - 1832 W. Dean
BellaCristo Practice 6pm

Monday, 1/7

Bible Study Group (Parlor) 11:30 am
UMW Exec. Meeting (C.R.) 1:30pm
AA Meeting (C.R.) 7:30 pm

Tuesday, 1/8

Free Breakfast & Produce 8:30-10:00 am
Audubon Park Food Bank 9:30 am
Quilters (Room 303) 9:30 am

Wednesday, 1/9

Overeaters Anonymous (Room 103) 10:00 am
Needlework Group (Parlor) 10:00 am
Boy Scouts (Fellowship Hall) 6:30 pm
Choir Rehearsal (Room 105) 7:00 pm
AA (Parlor) 7:30 pm

Saturday, 1/12

Men's Breakfast (Parlor) 9am

Sunday, 12/13

Modern Worship 9:00 am
Traditional worship 10:30 am
Creators' Table Liturgy 5pm - 1832 W. Dean
Bellacristo Rehearsal 6pm

Monday, 1/14

Art Class (C.R.) 9:00 am
Bible Study Group (Parlor) 11:30
AA Meeting (C.R.) 7:30 pm

Tuesday, 1/15

Free Breakfast & Produce 8:30 - 10:00 am
Quilters 9:30 am (Room 303)

Wednesday, 1/16 - Newsletter Article Due Today

Overeaters Anonymous (Room 103) 10:00 am
Needlework Group (Parlor) 10:00 am
Stephen Ministry (Parlor) 5:00 pm
Boy Scouts (Fellowship Hall) 6:30 pm
Choir Rehearsal (Room 105) 7:00 pm
AA (Parlor) 7:30 pm

Thursday, 1/17

Bell Rehearsal 5:30 pm
Finance Meeting 7 pm

Sunday, 1/20

Modern Worship 9:00 am
Traditional worship 10:30 am
Bell Rehearsal 10:45 am
Creators' Table Liturgy 5pm - 1832 W. Dean
BellaCristo Rehearsal 6:00 pm

Monday, 1/21

Art Class (C.R.) 9:00 am
Bible Study Group (Parlor) 11:30
UMW - Circle Meeting (Parlor) 1:30 pm
AA Meeting (C.R.) 7:30 pm

Tuesday, 1/22

Free Breakfast & Produce 8:30 - 10:00 am
Quilters 9:30 am (Room 303)

Wednesday, 1/23

Overeaters Anonymous (Room 103) 10:00 am
Needlework Group (Parlor) 10:00 am
Boy Scouts (Fellowship Hall) 6:30 pm
Choir Rehearsal (Room 105) 7pm
AA Meeting (C.R.) 7:30 pm

Thursday, 1/24

Bell Rehearsal 5:30 pm

Sunday, 1/27

Modern Worship 9:00 am
Traditional Worship 10:30 am
Creators' Table Liturgy 5pm - 1832 W. Dean
BellaCristo Practice 6pm

Monday, 1/28

Bible Study Group (Parlor) 11:30
 AA Meeting (C.R.) 7:30 pm
CORE Leadership Meeting (Parlor) 7pm

Tuesday, 1/29

Free Breakfast & Produce 8:30-10:00 am
 Audubon Park Food Bank 9:30 am
 Quilters (Room 303) 9:30 am

Wednesday, 1/30

Evangel Newsletter Prep and Fold (C.R.) 9:30am
 Overeaters Anonymous (Room 103) 10:00 am
 Needlework Group (Parlor) 10:00 am
 Boy Scouts (Fellowship Hall) 6:30 pm
 Choir Rehearsal (Room 105) 7pm
 AA Meeting (C.R.) 7:30 pm

Birthdays

| | |
|------|---------------------------------|
| 2nd | Claudia Boswell |
| 6th | Fyrne Bemiller |
| 7th | Vi Nagley |
| 8th | Cole Stolberg |
| 9th | Aeryn Ostrander, Brent Smith |
| 10th | Bob Kem |
| 12th | Chris Moreau, Delores Nettleton |
| 16th | Kathy Cottrell |
| 17th | Justin Burns, Marge Mero |
| 21st | Retta Nickell |
| 24th | Ben Boswell, David Payne |
| 25th | Rebecca Stolberg |
| 26th | Cary Andres |
| 28th | George Hartman |

Anniversaries

| | |
|-----|----------------------|
| 1st | Joe & Brenda Vasquez |
| 5th | Gene & Kate Raynaud |



MEN'S BREAKFAST
 SATURDAY, JANUARY 12TH
 9:00 AM
 AUDUBON PARK PARLOR
 COME FOR THE FOOD - STAY FOR THE FELLOWSHIP



PIZZA WITH THE PASTORS

SUNDAY, FEB. 3RD - NOON

If you are new to Audubon Park Church, please join us for lunch with our pastors. We'll have pizza and talk about who we are. We'll share a little bit about what our church believes, our mission and vision and you'll learn about all of the exciting ministries and programs that help us love God, one another and our neighbor. You'll discover what it means to be a



AUDUBON PARK CHURCH

Monday, Jan. 28th, 2019 | 7:00PM

The CORE Leadership Team Meeting will be held in the Parlor. All are welcome to attend this meeting

Want to know what happened at the meeting? Copies of the CLT Meeting minutes are available through the church office.

 **Audubon Park**
United Methodist Church
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THE EVANGEL - VOLUME 65 ISSUE 1— JANUARY 2019



ALL IS CALM
all is bright

A CANDLE LIGHT CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE
DECEMBER 24 at 5PM & 8PM

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF  AUDUBON PARK UNITED METHODIST CHURCH