



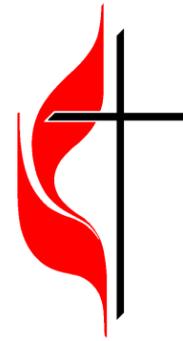
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The Methodist Greeter

AUGUST 2018



"Our mission as a congregation is to strengthen our personal and group relationship with Christ and to reach out to all people through faith in action."

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Pastor's Corner

Pastor Terry Hall

The real test of our faith is not what you may think

Our denomination, and this congregation, is being called toward a very uncertain future; one that holds the potential for new life ... but also for great disruption, discord and dis-sention. Once again, we find ourselves in the midst of great change, a place few of us relish and some of us find nearly intolerable. But – and this is a huge but – the challenge before us that will determine whether our denomination can rightfully continue to call itself “United” and very possibly decide whether our congregation continues with enough strength to do the hard work of presenting Christ to a broken and hurting world is **not** going to be decided by General Conference next February. Nor will it be decided by any vote here in the Pacific Northwest, or even in our beloved community here at Mount Vernon First UMC.

The most dangerous, important, and potentially life-giving decision we are being called, pushed, and given the opportunity to make is not about what our Book of Discipline says about sexuality. It’s not even about how you define your expectations, hopes or demands about the stance of your next pastor on that issue, or any other. **As it has always been, our greatest challenge and opportunity comes down to the question of whether and how we will love one another.**

I know I stirred the waters here a few weeks ago when I outlined the proposals that are being sent to next February’s special General Conference; I confess that was intentional, as I am convinced it is crucial that we are all awake and tuned into the swirl around us. But I want to be very clear that the call we need to hear is not to arm ourselves with what we feel are the best arguments *for* our perspective and *against* all others, nor to fortify our trenches to insure we will not be moved. In fact, the fate of our denomination and this congregation depends not on successfully convincing others, ‘winning’, or insuring we are not swayed. And, what I really want you to know, accept, believe and remember is that I have no intention of trying to lead this congregation to any particular stance on the issues General Conference will be addressing.

What I very much want to do is to help us find and commit to a path forward that is centered on how we deal with one another as we move through this process. I am not concerned about whether the “Church” will survive, because that is in God’s hands, and the Divine Grip is both sure and tender. What is at stake is nothing less than our claim to be Christ-followers, which will come down, as it always has and always must, to how we demonstrate our love for one another. After all, the Church with a big “C” survived the Crusades, the Inquisition, persecution *against* its members and leaders and

(continued next page)

There shall be eternal summer in
the grateful heart.
-Celia Thaxter



You can find this edition of our newsletter and recordings of the Sunday sermon on-line at www.mvfumc.org

(Pastor's Corner continued)

by them, its battle against science, its own greed and divisiveness, and, of course, outrageous sexual misconduct by both priests and a hierarchy that protected them. Yeah, God's Church will survive, though its form will continue to be reshaped as human cultures try to bend God's ways to fit their own and also as our cultures try to catch up and keep up with a God who never stops inviting and challenging us to open ourselves more fully to the movement of the Spirit within and through us. But we are in very real danger – all of us, on every side of these issues – of so thoroughly committing ourselves to our positions that, like the Pharisees, we will not recognize God in our midst.

For that reason, I am hoping, praying and beseeching all of us to commit ourselves now to center ourselves in a process of attending to how we recognize when we are slipping into 'boxes' that distort our view of one another, causing us to stop interacting in a person-to-person fashion. In those moments, we see others as less-than-a-person, and more as obstacles to be overcome, 'things' to be avoided and defended against, opponents in a battle in which we seek allies because we are convinced our 'side' must triumph over and against all others. I know that sounds harsh and few of us think of ourselves as behaving in such a fashion, but when we are really honest and learn how to recognize the signs, we all have to admit we slide into those 'boxes' on a regular basis. It is simply human to do so.

So here's my proposal/request/prayer: let's come together in small groups of about a dozen to study the book *The Anatomy of Peace: Resolving the Heart of Conflict (2nd edition)* from the Arbinger Institute. It is an easy read, and **HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH ARRIVING AT ANY PARTICULAR STANCE ON ANY ISSUE.** Instead, it provides a clear description of how to recognize our mindset in any interaction and change it when our heart is not at peace, allowing us to see and treat one another as humans even when we disagree on an issue. Whether you have been part of this congregation for years or are relatively new; especially if you are part of our official or unofficial leadership; if you care about the folks around you; **if you care about yourself and want to be your best version;** please make a commitment to participate fully in this 6 week study by signing up on the forms outside the office or contact me for more information. I realize that we all have plenty of other things we want and need to do, offering a long list of possible reasons to avoid this. I do not believe I am overstating the matter when I say that the heart, soul, well-being and future of this congregation hinges on us doing this well.

Pastor Terry

**FINANCIAL REPORT
June, 2018**

	Income	Expense
Regular Account	\$16,342.02	\$21,229.79
Special Account	\$ 1,396.51	\$25,724.56
Memorial Account	\$ -0-	\$ -0-

As you can see, we spent more than we took into our Regular Account in June, but we were able to pay all of our bills and our Conference Apportionments. If you would like a printout to see if you are up to date on your pledge, please contact the church office and Lori can print up a statement of giving for the first 6 months of the year. As we are out enjoying the summer sun, remember that we continue to have bills to pay at the church. Thank you for your continued financial support of our church's ministries.

Fall/Winter Schedule will begin September 9th

We will go back to holding an 8:30 a.m. service with weekly Communion , Children's Choir/Sunday School at 9:00 a.m. and a 10:30 a.m. service with Communion on the first Sunday of the month on September 9th.



Volunteers Needed!

Community Action needs volunteers for the Project Homeless Connect event.

Event Details:

Date: Friday August 24th

Time: 9AM-2 PM

Location: Skagit Valley College

Ride FREE all day with Skagit Transit (Commuter Buses not included)

Some positions include Set Up, Tear Down, Food Prep, Guest Greeters, Guiding people around campus, and Intake. We have a **HUGE need for interpreters** that speak Spanish, Mixteco, Triqui, Russian, and Ukrainian. They are also in need of some extra volunteer Dentists, Dental Hygienists, and Dental Assistants to help out with our Dental Clinic as well. For more information or to sign up as a volunteer, visit www.skagitprojecthomelessconnect.org/ volunteer.

Isabela Ordonez

Event & Outreach Specialist

Skagit Volunteer Center, a program of Community Action of Skagit County

360 416-7585x1107 | 2221 Riverside Drive

www.skagitvolunteercenter.org | www.communityactionskagit.org

Sleeping Mat Team

Sleeping Mats for the Homeless Team will be meeting the Second and Fourth Tuesday at 1pm in the Conference room to sort and cut bags and crochet sleeping mats. Mark your calendars now for Tuesday, August 14 and Tuesday, August 28. Contact, Mary Downing, mt.downing@comcast.net, 360-428-8942

Attention: Quilters Wanted!

Our church's quilting group has some exciting news! The room that was formerly known as the Youth Room will now be known as the Quilter's Room! Plans are being made to repaint the room, clean the carpet, and have the room all ready for our first quilting meeting on the first Thursday of September. We have been gifted with a huge supply of beautiful new fabric and shelves to store it on. In addition, the daughter of one of our past members has offered us a large quilting machine, which used to belong to her mother. As you can see, we will have all the supplies in place, and all we need is YOU!! Our quilting group has been meeting steadily for over 20 years and has produced over 1,000 quilts which have been primarily donated to Hospice patients and also residents at Friendship House. It is time well spent on such a meaningful project, and the bonus is that we get to spend this time with a group of quilters that enjoy being together. The Quilters meet at 9:30 a.m. until noon on the first and third Thursdays of each month, and we disband for the summer months. The time you spend doing this can be flexible, as we all have other commitments in our lives. If you are interested in sewing or learning to quilt, we are willing and able to help. Please join us!

Quilt Displays in Sprague Hall

A BIG thank you to all of you who have shared the beautiful quilts you have in your possession for display in Sprague Hall. It has been a joy to read the history behind some of these quilts, with the stories of many reaching back into past generations in the family. Can't you just picture the quilting sessions that took place to create such beautiful works of art, many of which were used for utilitarian purposes.

The present display in Sprague Hall showcases the work of Jackie Aldrich. Jackie mainly attends the early service at church, so many of you may not be acquainted with this delightful lady. All of Jackie's quilting is done by hand, and each quilt has taken not months, but sometimes years to complete. Can you even begin to imagine the number of hours Jackie puts into making such beautiful quilts?

Please take some time to admire the beautiful quilts in Sprague Hall. The quilts are changed quarterly, and if you have quilts you would like to display, please contact Tami Cass.

Coming on Labor Day -- Our annual Choir Potluck Picnic

All Chancel and Bell Choir members and their families are invited to the annual choir potluck picnic on Monday, September 3rd. If you are considering joining the choir and would like to get acquainted, please come with your family. If you are a past member thinking of returning, join us! We will gather at the Gerhard's home beginning at 12:30. Please bring a dish to share. Beverages will be provided. Come prepared for an afternoon of fun, food, and fellowship. Please RSVP to Lynnette at 360-422-5739 or by email lynnetteg6244@gmail.com

Chancel Choir's first rehearsal will be **September 5th** at 7:00 pm. Anyone who likes to raise their voice in praise is welcome! Contact Jung Jang, tenorjang@gmail.com or 206-437-4762.

Children's Choir Returns!

Calling all children in grades K through 6! The Choir will meet at 9:00 a.m. during Sunday School beginning September 9th. Registration is open throughout the school year with no auditions or fees.

The purpose of the choir is to encourage musical abilities and reinforce Gospel truths using voices and instruments to "make His praise glorious". The students will learn fundamentals of choral singing and prepare a variety of songs, some of which will be shared in Sunday 10:30 a.m. worship. To register or for more info, contact the church office 360-424-3628, or Music Director, Jung Jang 206-437-4762 or tenorjang@gmail.com.

Community Group Piano Class Resumes September 5th

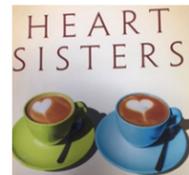
The community group piano class is taking a break the month of August and will resume Wednesday, September 5 at 6:00 pm.



Back to School Needs: There are several families in our congregation who could use some help with back-to-school clothes and supplies for their children. Most are single mothers struggling to make ends meet. Many of the children are involved in our church – children's choir, music lessons, Sunday School, etc. If you would be willing to make a donation toward gift cards to help the families purchase the clothing and supplies they need, please make a check out to MVFUMC and put "School" on the "for" line of the check or put cash in an envelope and label it "School". Thank you in advance for your generosity.



Tamales: Did you enjoy the delicious tamales at the Thank You Potluck Sunday? They were made by one of the ladies in Zulma's Hispanic Ministries. She also makes tamales to sell and charges \$15 for a dozen. If you are interested in ordering some tamales from her, please let Zulma Tifre or Kay Martin know.



Sisters of the Heart

The ladies' Tuesday morning group has been meeting for several weeks now and it has been a blessing to all who have attended. We decided to do a Bible study titled Becoming Heart Sisters once a month on the first Tuesday of the month and will be taking lunches to the Care-A-Vanners at the Skagit Habitat for Humanity build site on August 7th. We met for lunch at the Waterfront Café in LaConner and had 12 ladies attend. This group is informal with no time or monetary commitment and no specific program other than to enjoy each other's company, be supportive of each other, and plan some fun, educational, and/or outreach activities. We invite any woman who is interested to join us on Tuesday mornings at 10:00 a.m. in the church conference room. If you have any questions, please contact Kay Martin.

Thoughts on Our Finances

The good news is that mid-year we are current with our bills and our apportionments. Even with summer activities and travel, most folks are remaining current with their giving. Your response to a number of special giving opportunities has been (as usual) generous. Your finance team remains grateful for the wonderful support you continue to show to this church and its many avenues of outreach. Thank You!

However, we have a growing concern. In the last few months we have relied heavily on the Endowment Fund for a number of special projects (the new building, work on the sanctuary skylights, etc.) as well as paying for two staff positions (the Faith in Action Coordinator and the Music Director). We are so blessed to have monies available from the Endowment Fund so that we don't have to do a special fund drive every time there is a new need. The last major fund drive we had was in 2000 to 2003 for Building to Serve, when we did a major remodel of the church! Do you realize how rare (and lucky) that is for a church! We have also been blessed (lucky) that the market has been extremely positive in the last few years.

Unfortunately, history tells us that won't last forever. Predictions are that the stock market may very well slow down soon. We do not want to cut into the fund too heavily, as we then risk losing its income producing ability in the future. While our Endowment Fund currently remains healthy, we cannot take it for granted. We cannot continue to raid it, especially for regular staff salaries that were originally intended to only be funded by the Endowment Fund for a limited time.

Also, there is a deeper spiritual side to this. Over and over again, Jesus challenged his followers to give sacrificially, not just what they were comfortable giving. Because we have not really had to challenge ourselves, have we become too comfortable? We encourage the congregation to begin thinking about working to step up our giving so that we can begin to fund the two staff positions from our regular giving. Meeting this challenge may be more spiritually rewarding than we can imagine!

Again, thank you for your support. If **YOU** have any questions or concerns, please feel free to talk to any of the Finance Team members (Pastor Terry Hall, Barbara del Bosque, Lori Flores, Doreen Nystrom or Wylie Keeler).

Blessings, Barbara del Bosque

Back to School Blessings

We hope that all young people and teachers that will be heading back to school this fall will join us on August 26th for the 10:00 a.m. worship service. We will have a blessing for you that day (as well as a small gift) Hope that you can join us!

Family Promise

Our church will again offer shelter and food to homeless children and their parents August 12 through 19. We need prayers, funds, and especially volunteers to socialize, prepare food and stay overnight. Please contact Carolyn Gregg for more information about volunteering: (360) 424 7453; (360) 391 0288; or cgregg@valleyint.com. Thank you



THANK YOU from the Rolling River Rampage!

Thanks so much to all of the volunteers that supported VBS! It takes a real dedicated crew to put on this program for 80+ kids! We once again worked with our friends from Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church to reach out to the young people of our community. Thank you to all who prayed for us and all who provided snacks. A special "Thank You" to these volunteers from our church!!
Pastor Terry Hall, Dennie Sherman, Sharon Minor, Winnie Bradford, Katie Olson, Kathleen Wilkes-Pierce, Ellen Anderson, Bret Turner, Shauna Flores, Isabel Neblett, Megan Perez, Hannah Perez, Owen Smith, Ryan Minor, Ava Walker and Sue Erickson!

AUGUST

BIRTHDAYS

- 8/2 Bonnie Spitler
- 8/4 Jon Turnbull
Sue Erickson
- 8/6 Dale Rutan
- 8/8 Phil Smoots
Barbara Christensen
- 8/11 Faye Martin
- 8/12 Chris Neblett
- 8/13 Roger Mandery
Andrew Latulippe
- 8/14 Susan Edwards
- 8/17 Alex Perez
- 8/18 Gracie Ermi
- 8/20 Janice Lisherness
Myron Ayers
- 8/21 Amanda Grant
- 8/23 Donna Thompson
- 8/24 Jim Collins
- 8/25 Max Barber
- 8/26 Roger Martin
- 8/27 Becky Stout
- 8/30 Kent Turner
- 8/31 Jess del Bosque
Annaleigh Newall
Erica Turnbull

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 1:00 pm Staff Meeting	2 8:30 am Men's Morning Ministry	3	4
5 9:00 am Hispanic Ministry 10:00 am Worship 11:00 am Coffee Hour	6	7 10:00 am Sisters of the Heart 12:00 pm Lunch to Habitat Care-A-Vanners 1:00 pm Brian McLaren book study	8 1:00 pm Staff Meeting 7:00 pm Finance Meeting	9 8:30 am Men's Morning Ministry	10	11
12 Family Promise 9:00 am Hispanic Ministry 10:00 am Worship 11:00 am Coffee Hour	13 Family Promise 1:00 pm Hugo's Accordi- on Band	14 Family Promise 10:00 am Sisters of the Heart 1:00 pm Sleeping Mat Team	15 Family Promise 1:00 pm Staff Meeting	16 Family Promise 8:30 am Men's Morning Ministry 2:30 pm Trustees Meeting	17 Family Promise	18 Family Promise
19 Dedication of Build- ing 9:00 am Hispanic Ministry 10:00 am Worship 11:00 am Coffee Hour 12:00 pm Open House Meet the Neighbors	20 Newsletter Articles due to office for Sept. newsletter 10:00 am UMW Executive Board Meeting	21 10:00 am Sisters of the Heart	22 Office Closed – Going to Ballgame	23 8:30 am Men's Morning Ministry	24 Project Homeless Connect at Skagit Valley College	25
26 Back to School Blessing Day 9:00 am Hispanic Ministry 10:00 am Worship 11:00 am Coffee Hour 2:00 pm FAE Board Meeting	27 9:00 am Newsletter Mail- ing Day 1:00 pm Hugo's Accordion Band	28 10:00 am MOPS Steering Committee 10:00 am Sisters of the Heart 1:00 pm Sleeping Mat Team	29 1:00 pm Staff Meeting	30 8:30 am Men's Morning Ministry	31	

ANNIVERSARIES

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

- 8/4 Brandon & Donna
Thompson
- 8/5 Harlan & Shirley Mayer
- 8/10 Bruce & Janielle Coghill
- 8/11 Donald & Margaret Semrau
Terry Hall & Dennie
Sherman
- 8/14 Nick and Elizabeth Nei-
dzwski
- 8/20 Dan & Denise Breznau
- 8/21 Craig & Debbie Bloodgood
- 8/23 Bob & Bettyjean Seabury
- 8/26 Brent & Betsey Thompson
- 8/28 Bob & Eula Olsen
Ron & Sue Erickson
- 8/31 Eric & Debbie Grant

