

Mount Vernon First
United Methodist Church

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The Methodist Greeter

FEBRUARY 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

EASTER BEGONIAS

Once again, our congregation has the opportunity to purchase Rieger begonias to be placed in our sanctuary and narthex for Easter. (If you purchase one or more plants, they may be taken home after the Easter Sunday service.) The cost of each plant is \$11.50, including tax. You may use the order blank in the Newsletter or one found on-line, in the church office, or at the "sign-in" table in the narthex.

BEGONIAS FOR EASTER

To order, please fill in an order blank; and, with your check made out to First United Methodist Church and marked "for Easter begonias," place it in the offering plate, or mail/bring it to the church office. Orders MUST be into the church office no later than SUNDAY, **FEBRUARY 25TH**.

Order blank:
Enclosed is \$ _____ in payment for my order for _____ Rieger begonia plant/s for use in the Easter service at First United Methodist Church. The begonia/s should be listed in the bulletin insert as follows:
Your name _____

In memory of _____

In honor of _____

or presented to the glory of God _____



Pastor's Corner

Pastor Terry Hall

BIBLE READINGS FOR THE MONTH

February 4

Matthew 14:13-33

February 11 Transfiguration Sunday

Matthew 16: 24 - 17:8

February 14 Ash Wednesday

Mark 1: 9-14

February 18 First Sunday of Lent

Psalms 5: 3-7

1 Kings 19: 11-12

February 25 Second Sunday of Lent

Psalms 33: 3-6; 20-22

Romans 8: 26-28; 38-39

Looking in and stepping out during Lent

One of the stumbling blocks for many on The (Narrow) Way of Jesus is the whole business of self-examination. As with most things, balance is key: we can get so caught up with the process of questioning our thoughts, motives and intentions that we lose sight of Jesus, seeing only our own failures and successes; at the other end of the spectrum, we can be oblivious of even the reality that we *have* motivations and intentions, either refusing or simply neglecting to look within ourselves. I believe Jesus demonstrates and calls us to a third way, in which we develop practices that open us up to what the AA folks consider the 4th of their 12 steps: a searching and fearless inventory of ourselves, though focused more on the influences of our lives, where they came from and how they are expressed in our fears, hopes and behaviors, than the moral aspects alone. We don't have to be trained in psychological theory to recognize that we are shaped by experiences and important people in our lives, and that we did not consciously evaluate and logically choose all the principles that guide us in decisions large and small.

Jesus – the incarnate, truly human demonstration of our potential – found it essential to pull away from his teaching and healing activities frequently to seek out quiet places. Starting with his sojourn into the wild, desert places immediately following his baptism and continuing throughout his ministry, he went off alone to look inward and listen for and to The Father. We also read that, like us, he had what we commonly refer to as a 'comfort zone' that seemed to change over time. When his mother approached him at that wedding in Cana with the concern that their host was on the verge of being embarrassed in front of his family, friends and neighbors because he either underestimated the thirst of his guests or was unable to fund the quantity and quality of wine that would preserve, or perhaps establish, a positive reputation, Jesus seems to respond at first with an eye-roll and dismissive attitude. "Not my problem" was his starting point, but when his Mom wisely pushed no further but told the servants to follow whatever instructions her son gave them, he looked within and stepped up and out in a big way. As he entered into his ministry, he was frequently hesitant to answer the crowd's incessant call for yet another miracle to prove his power, yet his alignment with The Father's intentions for healing, wholeness and reconciliation led him to spontaneously take action to restore the broken and separated to themselves and community.

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, which this year falls on Valentine's Day. Originally a time of preparation to take the step of publically proclaiming a desire and intention to commit oneself to following The Way of Christ, this roughly six week period offers us a chance each year to pause a bit, looking at our inner lives and how they affect the world around us. I'd like to invite – even encourage – you to take up a particular challenge during this season: to spend a bit of time prayerfully considering the contours of your comfort zone, including both what are some of the attitudes, beliefs and activities inside those boundaries that demonstrate your relationship with Jesus,

(continued on next page)



You can find this edition of our newsletter on-line at www.mvfumc.org

(Pastor's Corner continued)

and what lies outside, then step up and step across your usual boundary in some way. Some of the things that currently feel strange, maybe even a bit threatening, probably arouse only mild responses when we bump up against them, while other may start the old 'fight/flight/freeze' instincts a-tingling even at some distance and feel like they pose real threats to your well-being if they close in on you. I am not talking about snake-handling or skydiving here; what I am hoping we can explore together are one or two things you suspect could open new avenues in your spiritual life - new skillsets or paths of service. These might be things you have considered for some time, maybe even wanted to do, but have been held back from by discomfort. Remembering that balance is the key, this challenge is not about removing the walls that help us feel safe so much as maybe trying to open some windows that can allow the Breath of God to stir that inner space a bit ... maybe even a door that could open the option to step out on occasion while still providing the promise of return access.

I'm going to be talking more about this, and with our Faith in Action Coordinator and others, offering some concrete support, encouragement, and clarifying activities in worship and elsewhere in our shared lives. As always, I welcome your questions, feedback and opportunities to share our experiences.

Pastor Terry

All-Church Potluck and Meeting on Sunday, February 11

Your Church Council invites you to plan on staying a bit longer than usual after the 10:30 worship on Feb. 11 and bringing a favorite dish for a potluck and open discussion about what's being planned and considered by the Council and other Teams. The goal is to keep everyone who is interested informed about decisions and activities they might, or might not, otherwise be aware of, and to provide an opportunity for questions and discussion in both small table groups and the full group.

Special Church Conference on Sunday, February 11

Our District Superintendent, Daniel Foster, has responded to a request from your Church Council by calling a Special Church Conference to consider a single issue and proposal. Everyone is invited to attend, and all members will have a vote in the matter.

As you may know, we have an Endowment Fund, started several decades ago with the proceeds from the sale of property to the north of our current backlot, on which a retirement home was built. The goal of the Fund was to develop and maintain funds that would be available in the event of a large-scale damage to our church building, so we could be assured that even if our insurance proved insufficient to cover the cost of rebuilding, we would be able to fully recover in a timely manner. Over the years since that initial investment, we have received other donations to the Fund, with the explicit regulation that the principal would not be spent, while some portion of the interest and earnings would be available to fund projects deemed necessary to our purposes. An Endowment Committee was established, with the responsibility to oversee the investment of the funds, and to respond to requests for available funds.

However, in recent years, the number of people serving on that Committee, like all our committees, has dwindled. In the past year, the oversight of the investments themselves has been passed on, and those currently involved in that process have expressed that while they are willing to help manage the investments and provide reports on both the total value of the funds and their earnings, they prefer to leave the decision about any expenditure of available funds to others. In the absence of other groups that might carry out that function, the Church Council is willing to be that decision-making body. However, since the early decision was made, appropriately, by a Charge or Church Conference vote, a similar vote is required to authorize this change. Therefore, the special-ly called Church Conference will consider this single concern, with DS Foster presiding.

Ash Wednesday Soup Supper and Worship Service with Ashes

We will acknowledge the beginning of the season of Lent on Feb. 14th with a simple soup supper – a few soups, bread, crackers, and beverages at 6:30 pm, followed at 7 pm by a short (about 30 minute) service in the sanctuary. For all who desire it, there will be an opportunity to be 'marked with ashes.'

Cookies, cookies, and more cookies



The Congregational Care Team will be baking and decorating Valentine cookies starting at 1:30 p.m. on February 12th in the church kitchen and Sprague Hall. The cookies will be delivered on Valentine's Day to church family members who are homebound, in a care facility, or otherwise in need of some special attention. We invite any members of our church family to join us in the baking/decorating and/or delivering. We will be making the cookie dough at our individual homes and bringing the dough to the church to roll out, cut, bake, and decorate. We would also appreciate some dough that is made with diabetics in mind. If you would like to join us please come at 1:30. If you are able to bring dough and/or items for decorating those would be welcomed but not required. **Child care will be provided.** If you have any questions, please contact Kay Martin at 360-770-1701 or kay@mvfumc.org.

Toiletries for Love, Inc.

Thank you to everyone who has donated toiletries for Love, INC. They picked up a full box of items on Thursday, January 18th. Providing toiletries will be an ongoing ministry for MVFUMC. If possible, when you are buying some of these items for yourself, please consider getting an extra item to put in the box, especially when there are buy-one-get one (BOGO) sales. An occasional trip to the Dollar Store is also a great way to get many of these items for \$1.

Sleeping Mat Team

All are welcome:

Sleeping mat team will be meeting on Tuesday, February 13 and Tuesday, February 27 from 1 to 3pm.

Volunteer Cleaning team will be meeting on Wednesday, 2/7, Tuesday, 2/14, Wednesday, 2/21 and Tuesday, 2/27 starting at 9:30am.

Dinners for Eight

Here is an opportunity to get better acquainted with members of the congregation. The host family provides the main dish. Guests bring salad, vegetable or dessert. You do not need to be a host to participate. There is a sign-up sheet posted in the Narthex. The deadline for signing up to participate is Feb. 11th. We would like to get our dinner groups formed by mid-February so that they can start meeting. Call Barbara del Bosque at 360-424-6494, if you have any questions or requests.

Welcome Baby Belle Neidzwski

On Sunday, February 18th, our church has an opportunity to welcome Nick and Elizabeth Neidzwski's baby girl. We will have a salad potluck in the Rees Room following the 10:30 worship service. Beverages and dessert will be provided. Since Belle joins big brother, Mack, she is not registered at any store, but could use baby girl items 6 months and larger. Nick has blessed our church with his trumpet playing, and now we get the chance to bless their family and welcome this new little one into our church! Anne Thompson, Sue Rindal and Barbara del Bosque will be hosting, so if you have any questions, please give them a call. Mark February 18th on your calendar, and come join us for this special event.

A New Lenten Study

Are you sick and tired of the nightly news and the newspaper reports of government dysfunction and political squabbling? Do you wonder if this is the way it has to be nowadays? Even the church can't seem to escape the turmoil. Let's turn to one of our favorite authors to see what he has to say about this timely and frustrating problem. Seeing Gray in a World of Black and White is a book by Adam Hamilton that we will be reading during Lent starting the week of February 18th. There will be two classes offered each week: One on Sunday morning at 9:15 a.m., and the same class will again be offered at 1:30 p.m. on Monday afternoons. You are free to switch between the two classes to accommodate your schedule.

Here is what the promotional material says about this study:

"Everyone agrees that America is polarized, with ever-hardening positions held by people less and less willing to listen to one another. No one agrees on what to do about it. One solution that hasn't yet been tried, says Adam Hamilton, is for thinking persons of faith to model for the rest of the country a richer, more thoughtful (way)."

Classes also provide an opportunity for fellowship and accountability as we share our faith journeys. A Lenten study can add a meaningful component to this special time of year for Christians. So plan on joining us either Sunday mornings or Monday afternoons for this new study.

MUSIC SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE!



The Music Scholarship Committee is pleased to offer music scholarships to those in our congregation who are taking private instrumental, vocal and dance lessons. These scholarships may be used for music instruction and music camps. There are three levels of scholarships, with the music instructor determining the skill level. They are: beginning student, up to \$250/year; intermediate student, up to \$500/year; advanced student, up to \$750/year. The criteria for applicants are as follows:

Regular attendance at worship services is expected.

Periodic sharing of your musical talent in our worship services is encouraged but not mandatory.

Communication between you, the music scholarship coordinator, and your music teacher to monitor your progress.

Please note that those who received a music scholarship last year are encouraged to apply again. This is an ongoing project of the Music Scholarship Committee, and donations to the Music Scholarship Fund/Memorials would be most welcome at any time. Scholarship applications are available in the church office. For more information, please contact Jung Jang at 206-437-4762 or tenorjang@gmail.com, Music Scholarship Coordinator.

Portable Keyboards Needed



Our Director of Music Ministry, Jung Jang, wants to start a youth piano class for the young people in our church family. He is looking for the donation of tabletop keyboards or long-term loan of keyboards. If you have a working one sitting around the house collecting dust, please contact him at 206-407-4762 or tenorjang@gmail.com.

Lenten Devotional Materials

Be sure to check the table in the Narthex on Sunday, Feb. 11th for some devotional materials to use during the season of Lent. Often we hear of people giving up something during the Lenten season... how about adding something to your life? Add some extra time each day in prayer, Bible and devotional reading this year during Lent!

FINANCIAL REPORT

December 2017

	Income	Expense
Regular Account	\$24,073.21	\$20,304.67
Special Account	\$ 3,886.45	\$ 6,397.81
Memorials	\$ -0-	-0-

We finished our month taking in more than we spent in December and were able to pay all of our bills and conference apportionments. This helps us as we start out the year since we have a major expense with our insurance bill that we receive in February. Thank you for your continued support of the ministries of our church.

From your Finance Team:

Back in the December newsletter we listed the different accounts that the church has: General, Special, & Memorial (which all go into one bank account), the Endowment Fund, & the United Methodist Women, each of which has their own bank account. The General Account is what you received a copy of with the letter from the Pastor when we did our 2018 fund drive. That is the account where we budget for the upcoming year and many of make pledges to support. It includes most salaries, the administrative costs of running the church, some of the work areas of the church (like Education, Worship, etc.) and our Conference Apportionments. Some folks may look at our General Budget & think "where are the mission & outreach of our church?"

Well, that's where the Special Account comes in. There are over 40 line items in the Special Account, & some of them change from year to year. Some of them are for money "in & out". Examples of this would be Easter begonias, Christmas poinsettias, or books for Bible study. Some of them are for the special offerings we take for the Conference. Examples would be One Great Hour of Sharing, Peace with Justice Sunday, or World Communion Sunday. Some of them are for specific groups or projects in our church, like Quilters, Youth Activities, UMW, wedding or memorial service fees. Perhaps the most significant ones are for the many areas where your generous giving is reaching out into a hurting world. Examples of this would be Christmas Giving Tree, Neighbors in Need, Friendship House, Oasis Teen Shelter, Mawingu Project, CROP Walk, Hispanic Ministries, and of course, our Samaritan Fund. In 2017 we took in approximately \$45,253.00 and sent out \$66,373.38 from our special accounts.

It would take a long time to list all of the areas covered by the Special Account. The bottom line is that every dollar that is taken in must be assigned somewhere if it is not simply for the General Budget. Lori Flores does a marvelous job of tracking all of this & sending out checks to the various funds or places in a timely fashion. If you are interested in a list of all the line items in the Special Account, please feel free to ask any of your Finance Team members (Pastor Terry Hall, Treasurer Lori Flores, Barbara del Bosque, Doreen Nystrom, and Wylie Keeler). We want to be as open as possible without confusing you or overwhelming you with too much information.

Blessings,

Barbara del Bosque

Lenten Worship-related Book Study

Pastor Terry will be leading a study of Parker Palmer's book, *Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation*, which will relate to the worship series - "Listen" - that begins on Ash Wednesday. According to a bio found on the internet at <http://www.couragerenewal.org/parker/#bio>, "Parker J. Palmer, Founder and Senior Partner Emeritus of the Center for Courage & Renewal, is a world-renowned writer, speaker and activist who focuses on issues in education, community, leadership, spirituality and social change." The book is available in both Kindle and hardback versions from Amazon for under \$10 - if you'd like to participate but that cost is an obstacle, please talk to Pastor Terry. The group will meet on Tuesdays in the Bride's Room from 1:30-2:30, beginning on Feb. 13. If 3 or more people prefer an evening meeting and are willing to commit to the 6 weekly gatherings, a 2nd session will meet on Tuesday evenings at a mutually agreed upon time.

FEBRUARY

		Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
2/1	Marlene Lang Ben Steiner					1 Family Promise 8:30 am Men's Morning Ministry 9:30 am Quilters 2:30 pm Trustees Meeting 7:00 pm Bell Choir	2 Family Promise	3 Family Promise
2/2	Eugenia Hennessey Kathy Lawliss Kevin Turnbull Joyce Sward							
2/3	Mitchell Grant Sue Kelder Zulma Tifre	4 Scout Sunday 8:30 am Service with Communion 9:00 am Hispanic Ministries 9:00 am Children's Choir & Sunday School 10:30 am Worship 11:40 am Coffee Hour	5 1:00 pm NAMI Peer to Peer 5:30 pm Overeaters Anonymous	6 9:30 am MOPS 6:00 pm Boy Scouts Den 6:00 pm NAMI Board Meeting	7 1:00 pm Staff Meeting 2:15 pm Worship Design Team 7:00 pm Chancel Choir 7:00 pm Finance Meeting	8 8:30 am Men's Morning Ministry 1:00 pm NAMI Peer to Peer 3:30 pm GS Troop 44345 6:30 pm GS Troop 44129 7:00 pm Bell Choir	9	10
2/4	Bailey Hodges							
2/5	Edie Diver Karl Stout Leila Wright Seoyoung Han							
2/6	Clay Cook Lynn Rabenstein Kasey Thomas Sarah Jang	11 8:30 am Service with Communion 9:00 am Hispanic Ministries 9:00 am Children's Choir & Sunday School 10:30 am Worship 11:40 am All Church Potluck and Meeting	12 1:00 pm Hugo's Accordion Band 1:00 pm NAMI Peer to Peer 1:30 pm Care Team Cookie Baking 5:30 pm Overeaters Anonymous	13 1:00 pm Sleeping Mat Team 1:30 pm Pastor Terry's Lenten Book Study 6:00 pm Boy Scouts Leadership 6:30 pm NAMI Education	14 Ash Wednesday 1:00 pm Staff Meeting 6:00 pm GS Troop #45063 6:30 pm Ash Wednesday Soup Supper & Worshp 7:30 pm Chancel Choir	15 8:30 am Men's Morning Ministry 9:30 am Quilters 1:00 pm NAMI Peer to Peer 2:30 pm Trustees Meeting 7:00 pm Bell Choir	16	17
2/8	Marti Wall							
2/9	Tim Newall							
2/10	Logan Eastman							
2/11	Suzanne Eiceman							
2/13	Madeline Stewart							
2/14	Bettyjean Seabury							
2/15	Carol Bratz Margaret Semrau							
2/18	Gene Wiggins							
2/21	Dennis Cooley Lois Haley							
2/23	Doreen Nystrom Jordan Romanelli Blair Hoey							
2/25	Nick Neidzowski							
		18 8:30 am Service with Communion 9:00 am Hispanic Ministries 9:00 am Children's Choir & Sunday School 9:15 am Lenten Study with Barbara del Bosque 10:30 am Worship 11:40 am Coffee Hour 12:00 pm Baby Shower for Belle Neidzowski	19 10:00 am UMW Executive Board Meeting 1:00 pm NAMI Peer to Peer 1:30 pm Lenten Study with Barbara delBosque 1:30 pm Wesleyan Circle 5:30 pm Overeaters Anonymous	20 9:30 am MOPS 1:30 pm Pastor Terry's Lenten Book Study 6:00 pm Boy Scouts Den 6:30 pm Girl Scouts of WW (leaders)	21 12:00 pm UMW Luncheon and Meeting 1:00 pm Staff Meeting 2:15 pm Worship Design Team 7:00 pm Chancel Choir	22 8:30 am Men's Morning Ministry 1:00 pm NAMI Peer to Peer 3:30 pm GS Troop 44345 6:30 pm GS Troop 44129 7:00 pm Bell Choir	23 Blue and Gold Set up	24 Boy Scout Blue and Gold Banquet 9:00 am Roots & Wings @ Marysville UMC
		25 8:30 am Service with Communion 9:00 am Hispanic Ministries 9:00 am Children's Choir & Sunday School 9:15 am Lenten Study with Barbara del Bosque 10:30 am Worship 11:40 am Coffee Hour	26 9:00 am Newsletter Mailing Day 1:00 pm Hugo's Accordion Band 1:00 pm NAMI Peer to Peer 1:30 pm Lenten Study with Barbara delBosque 5:30 pm Overeaters Anonymous	27 1:00 pm Sleeping Mat Team 1:30 pm Pastor Terry's Lenten Book Study 6:00 pm Boy Scouts Pack at Renee's shop 7:00 pm NAMI Support Group	28 10:00 am Worship Support Team 1:00 pm Staff Meeting 6:30 pm GS Troop #45063 7:00 pm Chancel Choir			

ANNIVERSARIES

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

- 2/7 Bob and Lois Yale
- 2/9 Jeff and Roxy Romanelli
- 2/12 Wylie and Kerry Keeler
- 2/14 Al and Joyce Sward
- 2/21 Jason and Brandy Bloodgood
- 2/29 Emily and James Stewart

