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“The only thing better than
singing is more singing.”
~Ella Fitzgerald

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

The Methodist Greeter

MAY 2017

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

Pastor's Corner

Pastor Terry B. Hall

BIBLE READINGS FOR THE MONTH

May 7

Acts 2:42-47
Psalm 23
I Peter 2:19-25
John 10:1-10

May 14

Acts 7:55-60
Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16
I Peter 2:2-10
John 14:1-14

May 21

Acts 17:22-31
Psalm 66:8-20
I Peter 3:13-22
John 14:15-21

May 28

Acts 1:6-14
Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35
I Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11
John 17:1-11



Thinking through our Easter story



We are officially in our season! Christ-followers sometimes refer to themselves as “Easter people” as a reference to the foundational nature of the resurrection story in our belief systems and lives. But how do you understand this story? When we claim that “Jesus saves,” what are we actually saying about ourselves, God and the relationship between the Creator and Creation? How **exactly** does Jesus save us? Does that redemption/salvation depend entirely upon the sacrifice of his life? Would any form of martyrdom have accomplished God’s plan, or was it necessary that he be brutally beaten, publicly humiliated and executed? And, on an even more basic level, what are we ‘saved’ **from** ... and **for**? Who needs such saving and why?

When many of you invested a couple of hours of your time after worship one Sunday a while back and shared what your hearts, minds and souls long for, a fair number of you mentioned Bible study, a deeper understanding of our stories – including perspectives you may not have encountered previously - and sermons that challenge, promote learning and impact your daily lives. As it turns out, I long for the same things, and during the six-week season of Easter, I want to explore some of the ways the life, teaching, death and resurrection of Jesus has been interpreted across the centuries. I count it as chief among the several privileges of a seminary education that I was afforded contact with the considerations and learned questions of many minds far more brilliant than my own, and the claim that we are – here and now, today and in every age – saved or redeemed by Christ is certainly among the most baffling aspects of our entire belief system. Paul pointed out that placing the cross – an instrument of horrendous torture and brutal terrorism – at the very center of our claim that we can not only know, but claim as “Poppa” a loving, caring, ever-present and rescuing God certainly sounds like pure foolishness, bordering on absurdity, to those who stand outside our faith tradition. Trying to explain how Jesus’ death, or even his resurrection, proves the existence and plans of such a God ranks right up there in difficulty with explaining the concept of a God Who is One while also Three!

I think it may be helpful to begin by saying that several interpretations of God’s plan and intention have been formulated and found considerable support in both academic and local church settings over the years. Just as I used to tell clients in my therapy career that we were not searching for some elusive pathway that contained the answers they sought, so here I will not share the various theories of atonement with the expectation that we will discern the ‘correct’ one that we can all agree on.

(continued next page)

(Pastor's Corner continued)

Rather, my hope is that in providing this minimal exposure to how others have wrestled with this mystery we might open ourselves to deep conversations about our beliefs. Perhaps we might even choose to sit down together for discussions about the various interpretations, the better to explore what each has to offer while also deepening and broadening our relationships. In the end, we might even begin to develop a level of understanding that will allow us to engage others, even relative strangers or those family members with whom we generally avoid such conversations because we feel ill-equipped to have such meaningful conversations.

I look forward to sharing this next portion of our journey together! *Pastor Terry*

FINANCIAL REPORT

March 2017

	Income	Expense
Regular Account	\$17,754.32	\$17,207.74
Special Account	\$ 2,056.00	\$ 4,362.31
Memorials	\$ 170.00	

As you can see we took in slightly more than we spent during the month of March. Thank you so much for your continued support of the ministries of our church.

Women's Brunch - Saturday, May 13th at 10:00 a.m.

The United Methodist Women are inviting all women to join us for brunch. Our theme for our Spring Brunch is gardening. With all of these showers that we have had in April... we should have some wonderful May flowers! We will gather in Sprague Hall for some delicious goodies and wonderful fellowship. Feel free to invite friends, family or neighbors to join you at this event.

Vacation Bible School, July 17-21

We will be joining our friends from the Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church for Vacation Bible School again this year. We will be meeting at our church this year from 9:00 am to noon each day during the week of July 17-21. If you know of any young people ages Preschool to entering 6th grade, invite them to join us for this faith-filled week! More info to come... just mark your calendars now!

I will be looking for some wonderful adult and youth helpers! Please prayerfully consider if you can help us for all or part of this week. Thank you!

Calling All Grads...

We are getting ready to celebrate our 2017 Graduates on Sunday June 11th and would love to include all that will be graduating from college, technical programs, certificates, along with our 8th grade and High School grads. Please let Lori Flores know your graduate info: Name, School, Degree, so that we can celebrate these achievements. Thank you!



Family Promise

Our church is hosting Family Promise guests Sunday May 7 through Sunday May 14. If you can help any time during this week, please contact Carolyn Gregg at (360) 424-7453, (360) 391-0288 or cgregg@valleyint.com. We need folks to: stay overnight, provide dinner, socialize from 7 to 9 PM for each night or wash a basket of laundry. Please also keep our guests and those helping in your prayers. In our 2 years of association with Family Promise, the program have settled 20 families in homes.

Bridal Shower

An invitation...Carrie Miller (one of our young people who grew up here in the church) is getting married! Any women who would like to honor Carrie are invited to a Bridal Shower hosted by Julie Miller and Linda Miller on Sunday, May 7th from 2 pm to 4 pm at the North Ridge Estates Club House, 2500 Club Court, Mount Vernon. Carrie and her husband-to-be, Pat, are registered at Target and www.honeyfund.com. Any questions, please see Lori Flores.

New Book on UMW Library Shelves

"Launch Your Encore: Finding Adventure and Purpose Later in Life" by Hans Finzel and Rick Hicks is one of the 2017 UMW Reading Program books. This book "explores ways to continue making an impact later in life. With real-life examples of people who have made the transition from their main careers to mentoring, volunteering, ministry or even second careers, Finzel and Hicks show you how to enter this state of life poised for personal satisfaction and ready to make significant contributions to society". [from UMW Catalog]

Naomi Foote

Several ThankYou Notes

- Thank you to the congregation for their outpouring of prayers, cards and support over the past many months during these difficult times for my family. It has all been greatly appreciated and we feel the support. Thank you. Beth Replier
- I wish to thank my church friends for all the warm expressions of compassion that I have received. Their hugs, their words, and expression on their faces show the genuine concern they have for my medical problem. I just want them to know how deeply I have felt their friendship. If such things could cure cancer, I'd be a very healthy man. Manny Saenz
- A big thanks to all who contributed toward the purchase of stamps for the Card Ministry. It is wonderful to know we have such great support from our church family for this ministry. The Card Ministry
- Thank you so much to all who took home plastic eggs to fill for our Neighborhood Easter Egg Hunt. I am estimating that there were around 300 children there that morning! A wonderful time was had by all! Thank you too to the volunteers who came and helped out the morning of the hunt: Sue Erickson, Deb Haley, Matt Allen, Shauna Flores & Chris Flores
Thanks again!! Lori Flores

Faith in Action

Do you care about others in our congregation? Would you like to help others when they are going through times of difficulty?

The Core Care Team consisting of Pastor Terry, Mary Downing, and Kay Martin have spent several months researching, planning and training to establish a standard of congregational care that aligns with Biblical principles and the mission of our church. We are excited to finally feel ready to reach out to members of the congregation who would be interested in learning more about this ministry and will have an informational meeting at 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 23rd in the church conference room.

Our Guiding Scripture is 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 (NIV). "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God."

Our Congregational Care Ministry Purpose is as follows: "With the compassion of Christ, the Congregational Care Ministry of Mount Vernon First United Methodist Church provides nurture and support to our members and families who are affected by emotionally, physically, and/or spiritually difficult circumstances. If you are experiencing the loss of a loved one, searching for a job, dealing with a health issue, feeling lonely – whatever your current challenge, the Congregational Care Ministry is here for you."

We have partnered with CareMinistry (visit their website at www.careministry.com) to help us provide direction and training in nine different aspects of providing congregational care to any interested persons. This training can be accomplished either online or here at the church.

There are many ways to provide care for our congregation and we encourage care team members to choose the level and time commitment that is comfortable for them.

Please join us on May 23rd to learn more about this ministry.

ATTENTION All Leaders!

Coming to First UMC May 8th, 9am to 5pm **Lead Meetings that Build Community By Design** is a workshop sponsored by Skagit Cohousing. This workshop is for anyone who leads meetings intended to foster teamwork, creativity, community building and motivation. Participants will practice tools for building relationships during meetings, learn the theory behind the practice, and take home strategies for making every meeting effective, efficient, and enriching. It will be led by Karen Gimnig, Professional Imago Facilitator. Karen has worked with cohousing communities, nonprofit organizations and faith communities to achieve their goals through better meetings.

There is no charge for this workshop, but a \$10 donation is appreciated to cover the cost of lunch and snacks. Register with Lynnette Gerhard, 360-422-5739, or skagitcohousing@gmail.com Space is limited

FIVE WISHES Coming in May

On Sunday, May 21st, you will have the opportunity to take part in a modified FIVE WISHES workshop. FIVE WISHES is program developed by the Aging with Dignity organization. The purpose of the workshop is to help people start to think about what they want at the end of their life. It assists you in starting conversations, making plans, and informing the people who most matter to you what your wishes are. Here are some of the topics we will cover:

- the person I want to make care decisions for me when I can't
- the kind of medical treatment I want or don't want
- how comfortable I want to be
- how I want people to treat me
- what I want my loved ones to know

If you wish to have a memorial service at our church, there will also be an opportunity to let the church know some of your wishes regarding scripture, hymns, etc.

We plan on having a representative from Ameriprise Financial here to talk about decisions regarding your finances, a lawyer to discuss legal issues, and possibly someone with information on medical decisions. These speakers will be providing you with general information and answering questions. You will be supplied the FIVE WISHES booklet to take home to enable you to continue making decisions and having the important (but sometimes difficult) conversations.

Everyone is encouraged to attend. This meeting will take the place of our regularly scheduled Senior Ministry meeting. Following the 10:30 worship service, there will be a potluck lunch. Baked potatoes and toppings will be provided as well as beverages. You are asked to bring a salad, bread, or dessert item to share. Following our meal together, we will participate in the workshop. This is a modified version, so it should only last about an hour to an hour and a half. Since we need to know how many of the booklets to order, we will have a sign up sheet available in May to get a rough idea how many plan to attend.

If you have attended the full FIVE WISHES workshop, this would be an excellent review. If you have never been introduced to this material, you will find it invaluable. Questions? Call Barbara del Bosque at 424-6494.

May Sleeping Mat Workshops

Wednesday, May 3, 2017 @ 6:30pm	St. Charles Catholic Church	Burlington
Tuesday, May 9, 2017 @ 1pm	First United Methodist Church	Mount Vernon
Wednesday, May 17, 2017 @ 6:30pm	St. Charles Catholic Church	Burlington
Tuesday, May 23, 2017 @ 1pm	First United Methodist Church	Mount Vernon

Puget Sound District Laity Retreat "Living Into Call: God's Plan for Me"

Saturday, May 20th, 9:00 am to 4:00 pm at Warm Beach Camp in Stanwood
All lay people of the Puget Sound District are invited to join us for a Spring retreat at wonderful Warm Beach Camp. This event is intended for the laity of our churches, members and leaders alike. With the leadership of Rev. Steve Ross, we will be discussing that to be fruitful we need to be faithful in aligning an outward calling from the church with an inward calling of God. Events of the day include time for Bible study, sessions under Steve's leadership, personal reflection time, a delicious lunch and a closing worship with communion led by our District Superintendent Daniel Foster. All this for only \$20.00! See the bulletin board in the Narthex for registration information, or talk with Lori Flores.

MAY

BIRTHDAYS

ANNIVERSARIES

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
5/3 Jill Eliason Chuck Cass		1 5:30 pm Overeaters Anonymous	2 9:30 am MOPS 1:30 pm Bell Trio Rehearsal	3 1:00 pm Staff Meeting 7:00 pm Chancel Choir	4 8:30 am Men's Morning Ministry 9:30 am Quilters 4:00 pm G S Troop 44345 6:30 pm Bell Choir	5 6:00 pm Women's AA meeting	6 4:00 pm Hispanic Children's Party
5/4 David Rubio Sterling Johnson							
5/5 Al Steiner							
5/7 Susan Krienen							
5/9 Dennis Wright	7 Family Promise 8:30 am Early Worship 9:00 am Hispanic Ministry	8 Family Promise 9:00 am Skagit Cohousing 1:00 pm Hugo's Accordion Band	9 Family Promise 1:30 pm Bell Trio Rehearsal 6:30 pm NAMI	10 Family Promise 1:00 pm Staff Meeting 7:00 pm Chancel Choir	11 Family Promise 8:30 am Men's Morning Ministry 6:30 pm Bell Choir 6:30 pm G S Troop 44129	12 Family Promise 6:00 pm Women's AA meeting	13 Family Promise 10:00 am UMW Brunch
5/11 Alisa Sands	9:00 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship	5:30 pm Overeaters Anonymous		7:00 pm Finance Meeting			
5/13 Eric Grant Julie Miller	11:40 am Coffee Hour 5:00 pm All-Church Potluck						
5/15 Ron Erickson							
5/19 Mary Ann Mercer Betty Saenz	14 Mother's Day Festival of the Christian Home	15 10:00 am UMW Executive Board Meeting 1:30 pm Wesleyan Circle 5:30 pm Overeaters Anonymous	16 9:30 am MOPS 1:30 pm Bell Trio Rehearsal	17 1:00 pm Staff Meeting 6:00 pm G S Troop 42444 7:00 pm Chancel Choir	18 8:30 am Men's Morning Ministry 10:00 am Quilters 2:30 pm Trustees Meeting 4:00 pm G S Troop 44345 6:30 pm Bell Choir	19 6:00 pm Women's AA meeting	20 8:30 am Church Council 9 am – 3:30 pm Puget Sound District Laity Day Away Retreat at Warm Beach Camp
5/20 Laura Morris Scott Thomas	8:30 am Early Worship 9:00 am Hispanic Ministry 9:00 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship 11:40 am Coffee Hour						
5/21 Lynne Almvig							
5/22 Mary Beth Rubio							
5/24 Vicki Johnson	21 8:30 am Early Worship 9:00 am Hispanic Ministry 9:00 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship 11:40 am Coffee Hour 12:00 pm All-church 5 Wishes and Potluck	22 9:00 am Newsletter Mailing Day 1:00 pm Hugo's Accordion Band 5:30 pm Overeaters Anonymous	23 1:30 pm Bell Trio Rehearsal	24 10:00 am Worship Support Team 1:00 pm Staff Meeting 7:00 pm Chancel Choir	25 8:30 am Men's Morning Ministry 6:30 pm G S Troop 44129	26 6:00 pm Women's AA meeting	27
5/26 Carmelia Thompson							
5/27 Allie Almvig							
5/28 Betty Currington							
	28 8:30 am Early Worship 9:00 am Hispanic Ministry 9:00 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship 11:40 am Coffee Hour	29 Memorial Day Office closed 5:30 pm Overeaters Anonymous	30 1:30 pm Bell Trio Rehearsal	31 1:00 pm Staff Meeting 7:00 pm Chancel Choir			

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

5/2 Lorence & Donna Freiman
Randy and Lynn Rabenstein

5/17 Jim and Annette Mentzer

5/28 Chris and Lori Flores

5/30 Tim and Linda Miller

