

Volume 8 Issue 11

December, 2013



Hello everyone, hope this note finds all of you well. I am so excited about what has been happening at church this year. This is such an amazing place to be. I'd like to remind you all real quick...about the new series were in...



Remember to look for our e-mail with prompts about last Sunday's message, pray about it, talk about it, think about it, and bring "IT" to church next Sunday where "IT" will be discussed in depth. Last Sunday's conversation was really amazing...so come and see.

So why am I so excited about church you ask, glad you did. What is not exiting about it? We had 69 in worship last Sunday (Oh so close to breaking 70), so attendance is up, money is up, and Sunday school is up. We are feeding lunch to the Habitat for Humanity House workers this Saturday, making plans for a new sound booth, actually had a sound guy here last weekend. New visitors, new members, adult baptisms, tons of kids running around. Things are feeling so good and safe...people are taking me up on my offer to talk about their faith (keeping the messages out there throughout the week is really working well). There you go, exciting, exhilarating, stimulating that's all I can say, I am so excited to see what this year will bring, and where we will be by the end of 2014. I hope you are all as excited as I am and are sharing with everybody you meet how amazing this church is and how good God is. Boy all this excitement is making me tired, so come to church next Sunday and see for yourselves, peace out, rene'

Why I Love Longview United Methodist Church

Longview United Methodist is very different from any other church I have attended in my life and that is a very good thing! I grew up attending a Conservative Baptist Church in Idaho. I grew to know and love God because of it. There was an active youth group and one of my best friends in the group was a young man that was a few years younger than I. He was very funny and very good looking. We did a lot of things together. After attending a Bible College in Portland I met and married Ed. My friend David married a few years later. Whenever we made it back to Idaho we saw David and his wife and always said to ourselves that if we did not know better we would have sworn he was gay.



Twenty years or so later he told us he was divorced and we were sad. He continued to visit with my parents and tell them what he was doing and where he was attending church. We continued to see him off and on. Two years or so ago he called to tell us that he was gay and that he had just lost his partner. We were very sorry for him and we expressed to him that we loved him. Conservatives truly believe that they have the only truth and anyone that does not agree with them is probably going to hell. We had continued to attend mostly conservative churches throughout our married lives and had discussed off and on just not attending church at all due to our dissatisfaction with the beliefs of the church.

After David told us he was gay and we realized that he would not be welcome in any of the churches we had attended, we decided to either stop attending church or attend what would be called in conservative churches, a liberal church. We were attending the church across the street and decided to see what Longview United Methodist was like. We thought we were aware of your beliefs regarding homosexuality and felt it was a better fit for what we thought of as the truth...and we were right!

We not feel very at home here and have come to love each and every one of you! Thank you for making the decision all those years ago to become a Reconciling Congregation that makes everyone feel welcome!

Beverly Hilliard

Book Club

The February book club meeting will be Wednesday, February 12 at 7 pm at the home of Sharon Klump, 2902 Huntington Pl. Our book is "The Book Thief" by Markus Zusak. For your information, the movie of book is playing now at Regal Cinema in Vancouver. (I and Vern went down today and saw the movie).

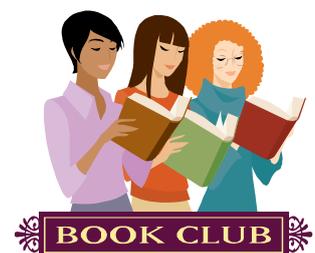
March's book is "letters to a Young Doubter" by William Sloane Coffin.

April's book is "My Beloved World" by Sonia Sotomayor

May's book is "Invisible Girls": A Memoir" by Sarah Thebarger.

June is to be decided.

Sharon Klump



The Four Chaplains

On February 2, 1943 on the USA Dorchester, a U.S. Troop Ship, in the Atlantic Ocean off the coast of Greenland the above ship was torpedoed. Among the 672 servicemen aboard were four chaplains: Rev. George Fox, a Methodist, Rabbi Alexander Goode, Jewish, Rev. Clark Poling, Phd. Reformed Church in America and Father John Washington, a Catholic.

In the course of events the troop was in chaos. The Chaplains assisted the troops that were wounded and scared. They were helping men up to the deck and into the life boats as well as passing out safety vests. When they ran out of vests, the chaplains gave their vests to the troops. The Chaplains were between the ages of 31 and 42. Three were married with children.

Survivors reported that the last sight of the Chaplains they were standing arm in arm. The Rabbi was praying Hebrew and the Priest was praying in Latin for all of the souls that were soon to be dead, and the Protestants were singing religious songs to calm the troops. Ultimately there were nearly 700 souls lost including the Chaplains and 230 survived.

As a result of their actions the following honors have been bestowed on the Chaplains. They were posthumously awarded the Purple Heart and Distinguished Service Cross. In 1948 a U.S. postage stamp was issued in their honor. On July 14, 1960 the U.S. Congress issued a new Medal of Honor, the action needs to be in actual combat. Today they are honored by Congress, military organizations and many churches and the public every February 3rd.

Vern Klump

United Methodist Women

- All women of the church are welcome and encouraged to attend
- 1st Thursday of each month 10:30 am

United Methodist Men

- All men of the church are welcome and encouraged to attend
- Third Wednesdays 7:00 pm

Women's Book Group

- Meets 2nd Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. (except July and August) in member's homes.

Sunday School

- Each Sunday Sept through May
9:30 a.m.

Adult studies

- Adult Sunday school class
- "Change the World"
Sunday 9:30 am in the fellowship hall

Music

- The "Unity Crew" rehearses Sundays at 9:00 am and Tuesdays at 7:00 pm

Chaos

Chaos: a state of disorder or confusion. A lack of patterns or predictability of events

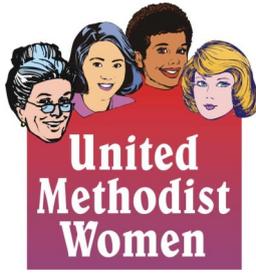
The concepts of chaos versus order, randomness versus determinism and issues of entropy are subjects which can span discussions ranging from the tiniest subatomic particle to the vastness of quantum cosmology. My best guess is that only a few of you want to spend Sunday morning talking about the latest theorem from Stephen Hawking. There is, however a very concrete and palpable side to the issue of chaos. It's the one that gnaws at us when we lie awake at night thinking about the leak in the roof. It's the same one that hits us when we look in the mirror and wonder who that frumpy old person is looking back at us. In fact, in the physical world the issue is an underlying and unrelenting stream that flows through the entire universe.

Even the very practical side of chaos flows from two very basic principles that dictate how our world works. The First Law of Thermodynamics basically says you can't create any new matter or energy you can only change it. So what you see (or don't see) is what you get. The Second Law of Thermodynamics (and most important to this discussion) states that energy will constantly flow from a region of high concentration (disorder) until it reaches a state of equilibrium (maximum disorder). Or more simply, life always runs downhill.

Now these seem pretty simple but both laws have profound implications for our everyday lives. Issues in education, relationships, occupations, finance, housing, health, aging and death are all driven by these rules. Yes we can reverse the disorder. We educate ourselves to order mind. We develop governments to replace the chaos of energy or money, or simply run out of life, yet the stream will still be flowing to chaos.

At this point I think I hear a tiny voice on my left shoulder (it sounds strangely like my wife's voice). It's saying "Don't be so dark and gloomy". Then like any good husband I say "Yes dear, of course you're right." So why isn't life just gloom despair and excessive misery? After all, the world's going on a road trip to oblivion and I'm locked in the trunk. What could be good about that? And then like a bad infomercial I hear the words, "But wait there's more". And, yes there is more.

Yes, we are physical but we're also more than that. We are spiritual creatures as well. Somehow the spiritual part is mysteriously locked in this physical world in a way I cannot begin to fathom. For a time we are limited by this world but not totally bounded by it. Even if just for moments at a time we have the capacity to step outside the world of the physical. We can contemplate and experience the person and nature of God. We can choose to live in a way that honors and emulates what we find there. In a world of deceit and lies we can be the voice of truth. In a world of greed and exclusion we can be the hands that bring love and acceptance. And, even in death which is the final victory of chaos over our person we find a new existence and likely one not limited by laws or thermodynamics. While we may not feel that way while we're patching the roof or lying under the car, we are in face transcendent beings. We have a real living hope both here and in our future. What could be brighter?



It is that time of year again, when we ask you to bring any hygiene kit ingredients you may have been able to collect. For anyone who may not be aware, we prepare hygiene kits to give to the Emergency Support Shelter and to Community House to be given out as needed. We try to make up 100 kits and divide them between the two agencies. Here is a list of items we need.

Hand towels

Wash cloths

Small sample size soap, shampoo, conditioner, emery board, comb.

We have dental hygiene items donated from Kaiser.

If we have new or gently used kitchen and bath items we like to send them along to the Emergency Support Shelter for them to use is running the house. We also collect small journals to be given to the women.

Thanks for your help!

Sharon Fosburg

Worship Committee

I love to sing, perhaps some of you have noticed. I love being able to sing on the worship team and I love singing in the choir when we have one. In order to be heard singing or performing you have to have a sound system that magnifies both the voices and instruments so that those in the back can hear as well as those in the front.

We have a sound system, but it needs to be upgraded. That is where those of you reading this come in because of course all upgrades cost money. The box in the back where the sound system is located needs to be replaced with a sound booth. This will make it easier to adjust the sound so that you can hear what is going on up front. We do not want to take the money out of funds that we have because that money may be needed for something more important than a sound booth. I am proposing that all of you prayerfully consider making a donation towards a sound booth. This money would be over and above what you already give to the church. Gene, Frank and others of the church that the booth can be completed if we have about \$500.00 to spend on wood and other materials. Please place your donation in an envelope and mark it "sound booth". We already have \$100.00, so an additional \$400 is all that is needed.

Thank you for your generosity to our church. I will be announcing our progress on Sundays.

Beverly Hilliard, Worship Committee leader

Baptism

Sisters Nina Halk Phillips and Jenna Gregg celebrated their baptism with us during worship January 19th. Nina was baptized and Jenna renewed her baptism. On January 1st Nina married John Phillips in this church. It is so very special for all of us to be able to participate in these life changing events!

Welcome to our family in Christ Nina and Jenna!



United Methodist Outdoor Ministry

Registration is open for Summer Camp 2014! This year, we will see the new things God is doing in our lives through the theme "All Things New". And, take a look at the Adult and Family retreats and camps that Twinlow, Lazy F, Indianola, and Ocean Park have to offer!

Online Registration is Open!

This summer, campers will experience "All Things New" through God's creation at our camps. Information about each camp can be found on the [Camping and Retreat Ministries Website](#). Here you can find dates, prices, ages, and more information about the camp sessions going on at Twinlow Camp, Camp Indianola, Lazy F Camp, and Ocean Park Retreat Center!

You can find the 2014 Camp catalog in the magazine rack next to the church office door. Now is the time to plan to attend camp this summer. There are opportunities for children from first grade through high school as well as many family camp options. Check it out!

United Methodist Women rock.

Twice in the 10+ years I've been involved with our church I've been told by former parishioners that UMW doesn't do anything. Each time, my jaw dropped, though I caught it in time to avoid injury.

We want to ensure that the word gets out, especially with so many new people here who might want to know about us and perhaps join in some of our activities. So, here goes:

Fundraising proceeds allow us to contribute, for example, to local missions, which include Community House, Salvation Army, Community Health Partners and Emergency Support Shelter.

We make up personal hygiene packets for the women's support shelter and for community house.

In the fall, we collect stamps, journals and writing supplies for the support shelter.

Sometimes, we go international. For example, on a Sunday in February or March we sponsor "Blanket Sunday" in which people can donate to the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) by buying blankets that sell for \$15 each. The proceeds go to disaster areas here and abroad.

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We host Camp Sunday with a taco dinner (free will offering) to raise money for camping scholarships for our church kids who want to enjoy Ocean Park Camp and Retreat.

We throw two breakfasts, Fat Tuesday and Easter. This year the Praise Band will be sponsoring the Easter breakfast. Sometimes, we host bridal and baby showers.

We're available to serve for weddings, memorial services, and other events as requested.

Keeping the kitchen stocked and clean is another of our projects, so we put out a basket for small contributions during coffee hours.

Our main fundraisers are a yearly holiday bazaar and a rummage sale. Unsold items go to any place that can use these.

We are part of the Vancouver District, along with the whole church. Last year we hosted district UMW leadership training and a district officer meeting.

There is no way we can do all of this without lots of support, financial and volunteer, from our church and for this we wholeheartedly thank each of you.

Following is part of our budget from last year.

- \$713 Vancouver District missions
- 800 Church utilities
- 400 Pastor's Angel Fund
- 300 Camperships
- 100 Office computer
- 100 Miscellaneous projects
- 250 Local missions
- 80 Tide Me Over (from Edith Allen Circle)
- 95 Memorials

Niis Bue



10 THINGS YOU CAN'T SAY WHILE FOLLOWING JESUS



by Mark Sandlin

If any list has been overdone in the Christian blogging world, it's this list.

Just about every Christian blogger has done one and if they haven't, they've thought about it and then thought better of it – because just about every Christian blogger has done one. (See what I did there?)

And yet, here we are.

You. Me. And my list of things Christians shouldn't say. Hmmmm – must be God's will. (And I just realized this list should have had 11 things on it. Oh, well. I have no doubt that it's on one of the lists out there!)

Before starting my list, the editors in my head need me to say a few things, i.e. the requisite disclaimers. I do not consider this to be an exhaustive list. It's just the list of sayings I most want to talk about right now. Also, as I've explained in other posts, in this "10 Things You Can't Do While Following Jesus" series, I'm not saying that people who follow Jesus *don't do* these things; I'm saying that you can't say you are following Jesus' example when you do them. Finally, specific to this list, I think people who say these things are mostly *trying to be kind*, grateful and even humble when they say some of them. But if we really do *want to be kind*, grateful and humble we need to think about these sayings a little more – **and then stop saying them.**

10) Everything happens for a reason.

Implied in this is a very specific understanding of how God interacts with the world. Specifically, it says God directs all things. So, mass murders? God had a reason for that senseless act of violence. Stubbing your toe on the door frame? I guess God wanted to smite your toe.

This way of seeing God turns us all into puppets. God's little play things who really have no freewill. Do you truly think a god needs toys? If so, do you really think we're the best toys God could make to play with?

9) God needed another angel.

God loves you. God loves your loved ones. God is coming for your loved ones.

You think it hurt when God smote your toe? Just wait 'til God rips out your heart. But it's OK. They needed another angel in heaven. See? All better!

Really? No, of course not. Now that you understand what you are saying, can we just stop it?

8) God never gives us more than we can handle.

Ever tried saying this to a person contemplating suicide? No? Well, of course not.

Why? Because it is just wrong.

It's wrong for the reason that #10 is wrong and it's wrong because factual circumstances of living prove that sometimes this life does bring with it more than we can handle.

7) But for the grace of God, there go I.

Think about that for just a minute.

How about walking in the shoes you're grateful not to be in for just a minute? Are they where they are because they lack the grace of God that others receive?

Does God pick and choose whom grace lands upon, intentionally withholding it from some people?

I know that people who say this don't mean it that way, but that is what they are saying – even if indirectly. Feel free to be thankful for where you are but let's stop heaping coals on other people's shoulders – even if unintentionally.

6) I must be living right.

Have you ever been riding in a car when the driver pulls into a parking space right in front of the store and proclaims, "I must be living right!"?

Sure, they are half joking but keep in mind it's only *half* joking. Statements like this have their roots in that nasty "everything happens for a reason" thinking.

These are the same folks who ask God to help them win sporting events. I hate to burst the bubble but God doesn't care which team wins or how close to the store entrance you get to park your car.

Plus, go back to #7. When you say things like this, what are you saying about the folks who had to park in that very last spot next to the shopping cart return where the car doors get all dinged up? and for that matter, if you are "living right," why didn't *you* take that spot and leave the one up front for someone else?

5) Love the sinner, hate the sin.

The problem I have with this one is the comma. It should be a period.

After further thought, I have a problem with the comma, everything that comes after it and "the sinner."

Who am I (and who are you) to be deciding for someone else what is getting between them and God? I'm all for doing it in regard to our own lives but in someone else's life? Hands off. Who do we think we are? God?

Now that I think about it, the problem I have with this one is that there's not a period after love.

Love. Period.

4) It's okay to judge.

Recently, there has been a rash of Christian bloggers defending their right to judge. I guess it's a thing. All the cool bloggers are doing it.

I love being cool. And apparently it's cool to judge others. So, let me judge them for trying to justify judging others. Don't worry though – I'm loving the sinner, hating the sin when I do it. So, it's OK. Right?

Oh, give me just a minute though. It turns out I've got a log in my eye. I'll need to take care of that first.

3) Because the Bible tells me so (or "it's in the Bible").

The King James Bible tells me there are unicorns – 9 times.

I'm sorry, I got distracted. What was it you were telling me about using the Bible to prove a fact?

2) Have you heard about Jesus?

Seriously?

1) There are no atheists in a foxhole.

Really? There are atheists in church and you honestly think there are no atheists in foxholes?

Look, I get that the point is supposed to be that when faced with death we all turn to God. However, not only is that simply not true for everyone when faced with death, it is really bad logic.

Let me demonstrate.

When faced with death in a foxhole – grenade flying overhead and limbs being blown off the person next to me – am likely to soil my britches. It does not follow that I should *always* soil my britches.

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Check out our website!
www.umclongview.com

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Longview United Methodist Church is a beacon of diversity in our community. We encourage each individual in their spiritual journey as they become a disciple for Jesus Christ