



Volume 78 Issue 6

June, 2013



What an amazing celebration we had here at Longview UMC last month. 10 years of reconciling ministry, wow. Again I would like to tell you how grateful Jennifer and I are to be serving you here in Longview. It is such an honor to stand side by side with you. When Amory talked about Mark Williams she really made me think about the courage it took for Mark to come out and take a stand. To share with the entire world a truth that Mark knew some of the world would rather not hear and deal with and another part of the world would do anything in their power to change. For Longview UMC to stand with Mark on this issue took courage as well. You were 10 years ago, and still are taking a risk today. After all we are not located in Seattle or Portland, but in Longview WA, and unfortunately that still does make a difference.

So I was thinking about risk. What would we be like if we had never taken any risks? It seems like every time we go out and eat we take a risk. Going on a job interview, taking a test, falling in love, having a baby, getting married - all of these wonderful life experiences involve some level of risk. I believe there is a reward when we risk, even if we fail at the task itself in some way. There is still personal growth, and we learn to trust, to not give up, and even how to step out in faith. There are many risk takers in the Bible; in fact the Bible is full of them. Jesus took risks, the disciples took risks, and many Christians over the years have taken risks as well. Is there something in the risk taking that brings us closer to God, closer to each other? Is it maybe a part of the equation, part of the living in the Kingdom of God here on earth? Can we truly be what God intended for us to be without taking any risks for Him? One thing is for sure, God also rewards those who are willing to take risks for Him. This reward might look differently for each of us, but be assured it will come, and it will be amazing.

Lots of questions, not too many answers (welcome to my brain, haha). So let me ask you a question now: Are you taking any risks for God? Are you stepping out personally to take a stand for what Jesus would take a stand for? My challenge to you this coming month is to take some new risks, and I would love to hear about them. Maybe you will even share during church. See you there Sunday.

Peace, rene

What's a Life Group?

Early in May we had our first meeting of a new ministry called Life Groups. We will be meeting at our home next to the church every other week. The concept of Life Groups is born out of a belief that God wants more for us than just a Sunday morning experience. Long ago, before it became a mainstream political/social organization, the church was primarily small groups of individuals meeting in homes. The experience was less about dogma and ritual and more about living in community with each other. We would like to revive that concept and build a safe place to share and live our lives together. Someone (I don't know who) coined this nice saying, "A place to know and be known, to love and be loved".

Now, if this all sound a little scary to some of you I'll share a secret with you. It scares me too. I learned to mask it pretty well but I suffer from a fairly serious social anxiety disorder. So why would I do the very thing that makes me feel most awkward and fearful? Because, I believe so strongly that this is the very core of our Christian experience and relationship with God, to live in community with one another. A Life Group is a place to learn, to grow, to laugh, to cry, to serve and live together. If you are interested in finding out more, or if you are looking for a small group to belong to, please talk to me or my wife Beverly or Rene', and we will make sure that you will get all of your questions answered.

Ed Hilliard



Terrance, Stephanie &



Carter Campbell Simon

Born April 12, 2013

7 lbs 15 oz 21 inches



Born to Skyler and Amber



Lily Katherine Dillman

Born April 27, 2013

6lbs 15 oz, 19-1/2 inches

Book Club

June 12, 2013 we will have book club at the home of Julie Clifton. Our book is, "The Fallingwater Cookbook" by our very own Suzanne Martinson with Jane Citron and Robert Sendall. Suzanne has traveled the country to book-signing parties and you can get the cookbook from her. This is not only a great cookbook, it comes with a story of the famous Fallingwater home with recipes and memories of the cook, Elsie Henderson. This is no ordinary book but a warm and funny story about Elsie. Please do not miss this book club meeting. Please let Julie know if you will be attending, (360-636-5336)



Sharon Klump

United Methodist Women

We are going to give ourselves a bit of a break this summer, but not before we host Camp Sunday on June 9th. Willis and Gale Williams will be with us, for the last time representing United Methodist Church Ocean Park Retreat Center and Camp. As you probably know, they will be retiring at the end of October, 2013. The really great news is that they will be returning to Longview and to our church! But first we'll do this fundraiser for our sponsorship of the Sandcastle (recreation hall) building at the camp. Willis will talk to us during worship June 9th and a taco bar lunch will be served by UMW following the service. Bring your appetite and a free will donation for lunch. We need to raise \$360 for our sponsorship. You may donate at the regular offering time and your donation will be recorded with your other giving, and/or you may donate for your lunch. It would be great if we are able to raise more than the \$360 and the rest would go into our own campership fund to help children connected to our congregation go to camp this summer.

Our only other project this summer will be August 9th & 10th when we hold our annual rummage sale. You may begin bringing your donations for the sale and place them in the choir room. Please speak to one of us about bringing furniture or large items. It would be ideal if those could be brought just before the sale. This is one of the main fundraising projects we do during the year and your support is greatly appreciated.

Sharon Fosburg, President, UMW

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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
- Next meeting: June 12th 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

- Sundays 6:00 pm at Fosburgs 2673 42nd Ave. Watch for a new study to begin
- Coming soon! High Five class.
Sundays in August at 9:30 am

Music

- The "Unity Crew" rehearses Tuesdays at 7:00 pm

United Methodist Men

Well it has been a little slow with the mowers working and being short on funds, we didn't have a lot to do. We did do a deck power wash and then some of us spent time at Ocean Park Camp. Frank, Dave, Stag (my son in law) and I worked on the big toy at the camp on Thursday. Stag, Rich, Terry and I worked again on Friday. We got three sides of the deck screwed down and made it all water tight so it should last a long time. A big thanks to all.

Our next big project is parking for the Terry Taylor sale. Then get ready for the ba-
zaar.

UMM Pres.

Gene



Dave & Frank work on the "big toy" as a deer grazes on the athletic field

To our church family at Longview UMC;

May 19th marks the second anniversary of my stem cell transplant. Since the first day of this sometimes bumpy adventure, I have stood in our sanctuary and asked for your prayers and support. I have told you how powerful a place this is, and each one of you have proven it true. You have lifted Suzanne and me, and carried us, through the grace and love of Jesus Christ. Our love to each of you

Bob & Suzanne Martinson

Small Churches, Belonging, and the Harley-Davidson Funeral

by Steve Willis

There is much confusion among churches today resulting from the painful reality that much of our sense of belonging was dependent upon the status and influence the church used to enjoy. We are now challenged to think and act in different ways. The small church offers us one option among others in this new situation. Here in this peripheral setting we see that belonging to God is given flesh in relationships with others.

Belonging and hospitality are two sides of the same coin. The love of Jesus Christ is felt deeply in both receiving and giving this grace. Healthy churches of all sizes participate in this grace. Yet the healthy small church that is open to these gifts has a unique advantage in that the newcomer can be a part of the whole. In this small, intimate community, it is possible to know and be known by each member. Over time, this intimacy creates strong attachments and deep commitments that make the small church strong and tenacious. In a season when the mainline church is losing many of the old cultural props, feelings of belonging and gifts of hospitality may be the small church's greatest gifts.

One of the most emotional experiences I have had was with a friend named Buck during the last year of his life, his sixtieth, the only year of his life that I knew him. He wanted me around as he was succumbing to cancer. He was an independent western soul. He built his two-story A-frame home himself. And he would have died no other way than in this place. He shared the last part of his journey with family, friends, and neighbors as people came and went from his home.

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His long, white beard and the fiery red and orange Harley-Davidson shirt reminded everyone what a passionate character he was. Buck entertained friends and family with tales of travels to different parts of the world before coming home to Ferry County, Washington. But what he really wanted to tell was his own faith story. The part of the story that the whole church knew was how, years before, he had wanted to come to the church where his wife had grown up. But he worried about whether he would be welcome. He worried about whether he was acceptable enough to go.

When folks in the congregation heard that Buck wanted to attend worship, they went out of their way to let him know how happy they would be to have him there. So he started to come. Later he eventually got involved in an AA support group. The church's acceptance and welcome was a life-changing experience for Buck. It was the most important experience for him in his rekindled faith and his understanding of God. He became a one-man hospitality crew, sitting on the back pew in his little mountain church. He made sure any new face received a warm and genuine welcome. You could count on any child in the church being greeted and made to feel special by Buck.

I had seen that part of Buck's life each Sunday. I saw more when I conducted his funeral, the wildest ride of a funeral I have ever experienced. The coffin was painted jet black with red, yellow, and orange Harley-Davidson flames running down the sides. Buck was buried in his Harley-Davidson shirt. The crowd filled the sanctuary and spilled over into the fellowship hall with some standing outside the church listening through open windows. Many in the enormous crowd were clearly out of their element in a church sanctuary. The procession to the cemetery was led by ten Harley-Davidson motorcycles and five stock cars. At the graveside people again shared their stories about Buck and gave thanks to God. He had embraced them and had spoken of God's love for them. That afternoon I experienced the wild hospitality and welcome of the kingdom in ways I will never forget.

Afterwards, I took the ferry route home. Only I and one other traveler were on the ferry. He was a biker who had been at the funeral. When he came up to me in his black leather jacket and pants, he was already teary-eyed. He struggled to tell me about how Buck had befriended him and saved his life by helping him get into recovery. He described how this experience had restored a faith that had been absent since his childhood. Then he concluded by saying that he and I might live in different worlds but that we both *belonged* to the same God. We shook hands and then awkwardly hugged and watched the lake roll by until we arrived on the other side.

In the coming years and decades, as the mainline church wanders through a new wilderness, it is impossible to know what lies ahead. Yet the love and resiliency that I have witnessed in small communities of faith convinces me that they will continue to persevere. Their ability to attend to the whole person — heart, soul, will, and mind — makes them resilient. They will continue to pass on the good news of Christian faith through the intimate, feeling relationships that congregants share with one another and the hospitality they share with neighbors and strangers. The life of these small churches reminds us all that we belong to the God of Jesus Christ.

LONGVIEW UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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**Check out our brand new
website!**

www.umclongview.com

Camp Sunday

June 9, 2013

**We'll hear from Willis Williams
about what is happening at
Ocean Park Retreat Center and
Camp**

**Taco bar lunch will be provided for
a donation to the sponsorship of
"Sandcastle"**