

September, 2014



## What is Under the Radar? I have no idea...lol.

That's right. It's like a blank canvas, and all that I know for sure is it will be worship, and it will look different than Sunday morning worship.

You might ask what is worship? Glad you asked.

**Worship** is an act of religious devotion usually directed towards a deity. The word is derived from the Old English *weorþscipe*, meaning worship, honour shown to an object, which has been etymologised as "worthiness or worth-ship"—to give, at its simplest, worth to something.

Worship asserts the reality of its object and defines its meaning by reference to it, an act of worship may be performed individually, in an informal or formal group, or by a designated leader. ([www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org))

There is much confusion in the religious world today concerning worship. There are more than 600 different religious denominational churches, each with different doctrines and beliefs, and styles, who are attempting to worship God in many different ways and settings as there are stars in the heavens.

Jesus says in John 4:24, "God is a Spirit and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

### Typical committee meeting at a typical church...

The worship committee is meeting for the first time. The chairperson of the committee asks the pastor, "What are we supposed to accomplish with this committee?"

The pastor answers, "Our goal is to facilitate good worship for our church."

The chairperson asks, "How will we know when we have done that? The idea of 'good worship' seems a little vague to me."

The pastor suggests, "Let's poll this committee to find out what our expectations of "good worship" might be."

One man responds, "I like worship that uses the old traditional hymns, such as 'Blessed Assurance.'"

Another suggests, "But my teenagers want gospel songs they can clap their hands to! Remember how much they liked the Christian rock music performed by that touring youth choir?"

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A teenager on the committee joins in, "I didn't like that at all! I find it embarrassing when my church tries to do that stuff."

Another teenager says, "I do like it, as long as it helps me and all of us feel the presence of the Holy Spirit."

A woman comments, "I think we should always say the Lord's Prayer."

Another woman asks, "But do we have to say it every Sunday? I like it when the pastor just makes up the prayer."

Someone else suggests, "Isn't worship supposed to give us something to think about?"

The second teenager, "We think all the time. We don't need more thinking. We need more of the presence of God."

The teenager speaks up again, "We can't just think or feel all to ourselves and call ourselves Christians, right? We need worship to get us out there, to focus more on the social issues and people all around us, like hunger, or the homeless man who tries to wash our windshields when we get in our cars."

The man who spoke first comments again, "But let's not forget personal conversion. That's what Christianity is for. We can feed and house people all we want, but that won't save them from hell or get them to heaven."

The chairperson of the committee finally makes a comment. "I think we are headed for trouble here."

We know worship is important, and we want it to be vibrant and vital. Yet, we have many diverse and sometimes incompatible ideas of what "good" worship on Sunday morning should include.

Does this scenario sound familiar in your United Methodist congregation? We know worship is important, and we want it to be vibrant and vital. Yet, we have many diverse and sometimes incompatible ideas of what "good" worship on Sunday morning should include. Some prefer what we call "traditional worship" that gives us a strong sense of continuity with our tradition, using traditional hymns, prayers, and creeds. Others prefer what has been called "contemporary worship," which uses different technologies, leadership and music styles, and seems to appeal more to the experience of God in the now than the people's connection with God across the ages and eternally. Some idealize worship that culminates in a call to conversion or commitment, while still others expect worship primarily to inspire or challenge their thinking.

These differences in expectations turn out not to be simply about style. More fundamentally, they're about what we think we're doing in worship, what we understand the ultimate purposes of worship may be. (Taken from [Worship Matters](#) by L. Edward Phillips with Taylor Burton-Edwards. GBOD)

I believe that worship is giving God the best that God has given us back to God. We are blessed in so many ways, though at times we struggle seeing and believing it. Often being part of a faith community can help us see clearer what is happening in our lives and our relationships with other people and with God. We are called to give back our blessings and gifts.

Worship can and does happen one on one with God, more often than not this is one of the deepest ways for some people. This might look like quiet meditation, or gardening, or just simply sharing your day with God by taking a walk and enjoying creation. Let it happen throughout the day, let God into your life, let your entire life unfold before God in a deliberate act of worship.

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Worship also happens when people get together in a group. The act will look different for different people and different settings. There isn't a one size or one way fits all. Incredible moments can arise when a bunch of people spend quality time together, giving thanks to God. Because isn't that what worship is fundamentally, about what God is doing, and our response to God's action? Worship is an encounter with God. Not so much about what we like or do not like. But being able to just give ourselves over to the presence of God and connecting with God and with each other uniting us in celebration, growing in faith.

Worship should be at the center of our life of faith. There is God's word, there is bread and wine (juice) and there is prayer and water. Worship nurtures our faith so that we can be sent out into the world. This blessing, this relationship it cannot be locked up, hidden under a bushel, we have to give it away. If I hoard it for myself, it will turn into spiritual dry rot. It must be given back to God so that God can make it a blessing to others.

Having said all that, our first meeting for **Utr** (Under the Radar) will be on 9/11 7:00pm at the church. So let's get together and worship God, let's have some holy conversation about how this might unfold itself over the next year or so. What all we can incorporate, and what differences we can make in our community...see you there...peace rene'

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## Finance

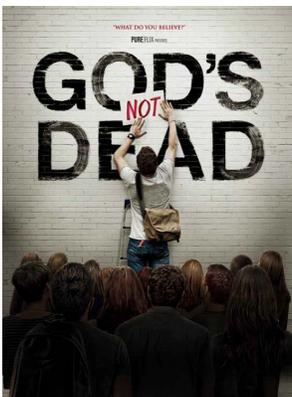
Our special communion offering for the month of September will be in support of the Broadway Community House. This is a place where we can really see the effects of giving to our community. Our special communion Sunday offerings have been substantial this year in support of many local and world-wide charities thanks to your generosity.

The Finance Committee will soon be preparing the 2015 budget for the church and I encourage the committee chairpersons to prepare a request for finances if their committee needs resources from the budget. Please have these to me by the end of September.

An appointed "Stewardship Committee" met August 24, to begin planning our 2015 Pledge Drive to support the work of the church. Pastor Rene will be addressing different areas of stewardship for three Sundays leading up to the pledge Sunday. It is our hope that you will take the time to see where your talents and gifts will best fit into the Longview United Methodist Church.

Cynda Webb, Finance Committee

Here is your stewardship team for this year, feel free to ask them any questions you might have. Byron Held, Kebby Jones, Rich Dillman, Eileen Arnold, Cynda Frank, Sharon Fosburg, and Pastor Rene



Saturday, September 6 at 6:00 p.m.

No Admission Fee

Popcorn and refreshments will be served

Kelso First United Methodist Church - 206 Cowlitz Way

Handicapped Accessible

360.423.7480 – [www.kelsofirstumc.org](http://www.kelsofirstumc.org)

**The adventure begins** on September 21! Come join us as we start a new small group study. This exciting, thought-provoking study is called "SERIOUS ANSWERS TO HARD QUESTIONS" and features ten leading theologians in video presentations. Some questions addressed are religion and science, religions other than Christianity, sins of the church, the resurrection, and others. The video presentations will provide a springboard for discussions where everyone's opinions and ideas are welcomed and accepted without judgment.

Each of us is on a spiritual journey on this earth. In my experience, this journey is so much more exciting and fulfilling when it is shared with others. My greatest spiritual growth over the years has come from participating in small group studies. There is no substitute for open discussion of issues that affect our spiritual journey in an environment of mutual trust and respect.

So, join us on Sunday, September 21 at 6 PM at Gene & Sharon Fosburg's house at 2673 42<sup>nd</sup> Ave., Longview. Let's talk, grow, and have fun together!

Willis

## **Trustees**

Trustees have been busy with the usual maintaining of the church and yard. A big thanks to all who help with mowing, weed eating and pulling of weeds and watering the beautiful red roses. Mary Brink has been faithful in cleaning of the church. Thanks also to all who host the coffee hour for your good efforts on cleaning up after.

Some of the projects we are currently working on is replacing the big cross which was removed for us by the PUD crew that been using our parking lot for several weeks. The cross was badly rotted and Gene Fosburg got rid of it for us after saving all the hardware that kept it in place. We are hoping that a boy scout will take replacing this as an Eagle Scout project.

Also we hope to explore a few ways to pay for repairing and resealing the parking lot, as it has been 14 years since it was put there and is beginning to break up.

The NA/scout room needs to be painted. If you are willing to help, we hope to complete this project in one day if we have enough help. Please call me, Sharon K at 423-4587 to help.

Sharon Klump, Trustee Chair

## **Book Club**

Hi everyone who loves to read and share your opinions about books. The church book club is meeting September 10th (Wednesday) at the home of Sharon Klump, 2902 Huntington Pl, Longview (423-4587). We are reading, "And the Mountains Echoed" by Khaled Hosseini. The author explores the many ways in which families nurture, betray, honor; and sacrifice for one another. This is a well written books with many characters and you may want to make a list of them to keep them straight.

October book is "Doc" by Mary Doria Russell.

November book is "The Invention of Wings" by Sue Mon Kid.

December book is, "Boys in the Boat" by Daniel James about the 1936 Olympics.

**Join us September 10th!**

## **A call to good stewardship...**

I love 2 Corinthians 9:6-7: *The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.*

It is so straightforward, so to the point and so true. I can see it so clearly now looking back at my own life. I did not grow up cheerful giver, the truth is I am still working on being one every day. I on the other hand was more of a cheerful taker, always looking out for myself, seeing what I can get out of any and every situation. Heck, when I was 9 and 10 my neighbors would come and knock on my door to talk to my grandma about my trading habits with the other kids in the building, it seems I was somewhat of a shark, trading my cheap toys for their expensive toys. Apparently that type of business sense was not appreciated at that time. I was like that most my life, but it never really got me to a place where I was happy or satisfied with what I had (still working on that every once in a while, lol). Even when I began coming to church I thought giving a couple bucks as the buckets were passed was more than enough, little did I know.

But something changed inside of me about 5 years ago. I began seeing the influence that God was having in my life, not just in a spiritual sense but also in a physical sense. My life was so much better, I was so much happier with what I had, and thankful to God because I began to understand that God was responsible for me having it. Giving is a joyful experience because I am joyful that I can give, I am not ruled by the voices of the world that tell me I don't have enough or to be afraid that I might lose it all. I am instead ruled by my heart which is thankful to give and by my head which understands that I should give because there are needs, in the church as well as outside of the church. Don't get me wrong, I still miss the mark here again and again, after all my Christmas village is still growing, and I do feel guilty at times...I know I have so much more than I need or I deserve, but I am getting better all the time, finding more and more joy in giving every day.

The bottom line is this. I give without strings attached and joyfully when I am thankful. Thankful for the blessings and gifts which God has freely given me. Thankful for the presence and the difference the church has made in my life, it is a blessing and a joy that I need to give the next generation an opportunity to feel as well. I feel guilty not because others talk about money or ask me to give, but because I know I can do better. It is a matter of the heart and of the brain, they have to work together here, it is also a matter of prayer. It is not a matter of how much I give, there are seasons in my life when a couple a bucks a week was all I could muster, when that wasn't the case anymore and I still only gave a couple bucks, and I felt guilty, well changes had to be made.

So dig deep, not into your pocketbooks but into your hearts because it is that time of the year again. Pledge time. We are wanting to spend 4 weeks on this stewardship campaign. No high pressure, no guilt. You know where you are with your finances, you know what the needs are. Please be in prayer for what God is calling you to give for this next year. Here are the dates.09.14.14 Stewardship – In God we trust.

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09.21.14 Stewardship – Living out our faith.

09.28.14 Stewardship – what the Bible says about giving

10.05.14 Harvest Sunday = Turning in of Pledges

10.05.14 is also Feast of St Francis of Assisi – Blessing of the Animals that afternoon

## Why I Love This Church

by Vernetta Deckman

I was born in Felida, WA, a spot in the road about 7 miles N.W. of Vancouver. My grandfather, a pioneer, settled on a donation land claim and built a country store and post office, named the community "Felida" and was appointed postmaster by President William Henry Harrison.

Felida had a country store, on Odd Fellows lodge building, an elementary school and two churches: the Church of God and The Methodist Episcopal church, as it was known then.

I often wondered why my grandfather didn't name the area McIrvinville since a good share of our relatives settled there and raised Italian prunes. Those trees are now gone – replaced by wall-to-wall houses.

I was baptized in the Felida M.E. church, grew up attending the Sunday school, youth group (known as the Epworth League back then) and joined the church.

When WWII started I moved to Vancouver and went to work for the government in the Army personnel office. During those years I seldom attended church, partly because of transportation (gas rationing). Not a very good excuse as I recall it now.

After the war I moved to Portland to work for the Army Corps of Engineers.

I met my husband, Bernie, on a blind date arranged by mutual friends. We married in the Felida Methodist Church and shortly after moved to Longview where Bernie accepted a job with Weyerhaeuser Pulp in the engineering department. I continued to work for the U.S. Corps of Engineers in Clatskanie, Oregon at the Beaver Ammunition Storage Depot, commuting every day.

There was no Methodist church in Longview so we decided to go to Kelso. We were very disappointed. The service was fine but no one spoke to us or greeted us. We decided not to go back. I tried attending other churches in Longview but being a "Methodist: it was not the same.

When the Conference decided to build a church in Longview I was happy. My friend and I attended the first worship service, which was held in the old Columbia Valley School auditorium and I became a charter member almost 60 years ago. Shortly after Bernie also joined. Bernie was a pillar of this church and active in building Wesley Hall and the present building. He held many offices until his untimely death in 1980.

We raised our five children in this church, taking them to Sunday school and church until they went off to college. When they were small they sat quietly, filling in all the o's in the church bulletin. I often wondered as they grew up, how much they absorbed from the service. I shouldn't have been concerned since they all are active in their own churches and I am fortunate to have daughter Lynne sitting next to me most every Sunday.

Three of our children were married in this church. One of them said their vows with both the Methodist pastor and the Catholic priest officiating. How ecumenical is that?

I have held many offices and served on most committees over the years. One of the most fun things was being wedding hostess and coordinator for about 40 years, helping many brides plan their wedding day. I have also been active in United Methodist Women, holding most offices, sometimes more than once and still find it very important to our church.

I have seen many changes in this church. I've seen people come and go – sometimes unhappy for many reasons. I've seen changes in ministers more times than I care to remember.

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When we became a reconciling congregation our attendance grew quickly. We welcomed everyone and I have met some wonderful people. There was a time when we were lucky to have 25 people in attendance. Now we have new babies and children for story time again. How great is that?

God works in mysterious ways and I've experienced it in more ways than I can say, especially in the last few months when I wasn't sure what life had in store for me. With lots of prayers I survived serious surgery and am getting better every day.

I thank God for my church family who supported me with their prayers and helping hands just as they did when I lost my husband. They were here then and I believe they will be here for me as long as I am here.

Prayer is a powerful thing – this I believe. I believe God has a plan for our church and I believe that it is all good.

I seldom miss a Sunday. When I do, the day is not the same. I miss the fellowship. I miss the music. I miss the message.

This is "my church" and I love it!

Vernette Deckman





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**Check out our website!**

**[www.umclongview.com](http://www.umclongview.com)**