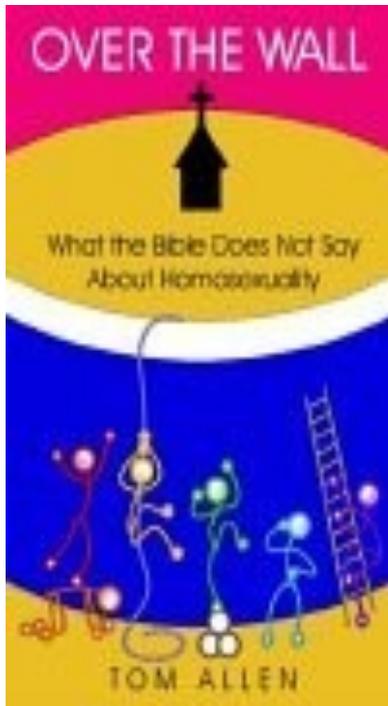


Volume 7 Issue 7

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Announcing a New Church Study

Ever wonder how GLBTQ folks feel about church? Ever wonder how they have navigated their way (or not) through the negative messages, the rejection, and the litany of Bible verses that have been used to tell them they must change and "be made clean"? So get into the mind of a gay man who is writing to other GLBTQ folks about how to recover from the damage and find healing. Reading this book and sharing in the discussion will give you the chance to walk in the shoes of those who have walked that path and found a new way to understand God's message to all.



Although as the saying goes "it does get better" we still have a ways to go. About ten years ago, Longview United Methodist did a study called "Claiming the Promise" that started LUMC on the path of reconciliation. Two other welcoming Longview churches also found their path in making this change. There are now three churches in Longview who openly invite GLBTQ people into their midst. If you would have told me that would be true 10 years ago I would have said you are a dreamer. In fact I would bet that 10 years ago most of you would have never imagined that you could be part of that kind of church. Life can be amazing!

A timely issue for the year of "Marriage Equality," wouldn't you say? So let's take the next step and dig a little deeper into how to talk to others in our community about the rights of GLBTQs and also the way to share the Bible in a reconciling way.

What: A 10-12 weeks Church Study Group of the book:

OVER THE WALL: WHAT THE BIBLE DOES NOT SAY ABOUT HOMOSEXUALITY

When: Sunday at 6 PM, starting September 16, 2012

Where: Gene and Sharon Fosburg's home 2673 42nd Ave. Longview, WA

Who: All are Welcome

Why: To grow in understanding this timely issue and how to talk about it with our neighbors, friends, and acquaintances.

Discussion Leader: Robert Mumford



I have been thinking a lot about how we should be inviting people to church. I know this will probably not come as a surprise to anyone, after all I am a pastor, and we are in a Methodist church, where numbers is still one of the ways we decide how a church or a pastor is doing. Read this great article about a pastor inviting his friends. Here is a short excerpt.

"I thought Sunday morning church services should be places where I could invite my friends who don't believe in Jesus. I don't think that anymore. When the members of our church come together on a Sunday morning, we come together as a community of believers, and we intend to worship God. To anyone who doesn't know God and/or believe in Him, it's awfully strange. We sing songs with words like, "We adore you" and "I want to live my life for you" and "In Christ alone my hope is found." We celebrate preposterous ideas like Jesus rising from the dead. We talk about being sinners and needing salvation. No matter how "contemporary" the service, no matter how casual or formal it feels, no matter how enthusiastically the people in the pews (or chairs) welcome newcomers, worship is awfully strange for an outsider."

What do you all think about that? Is bringing non-Christians (I really don't like this term) into a Sunday school or Worship Service like bringing non-Doctors into a Medical Conference? Would they feel alienated and not understand or comprehend what was going on, and leave at times totally confused, never to return? And if this is true, then how can we reach out into the community to invite them to meet Jesus?

Well, one answer is to know who it is you are inviting. Have they been to church (was it a good experience or bad, how long ago?), do they believe in God, where are they on their spiritual journey (searching etc.), what are their life circumstances at the moment?

Our Churches have become too comfortable within the Church walls. Another answer is that on Sunday mornings we really need to do a good job of explaining what it is we are doing (blood of Christ, yucky), offering, lighting of the candles, etc. Also use language that can be understood by everyone, even someone in the church for the first time. Make sure we don't point them out. Embarrassing someone is a sure way they won't come back (unless they want to be introduced - some do).

Yet another answer is that we need to reach out to these people through non-Church activities and introduce them to Jesus and His teachings first. If they get it and want more, then we should invite them to Church. If not, we give them the time they need. So what are some of the entry points we already have that are safe for people to be introduced to our church? What are some new ways you all can think up? Please feel free to stop me, visit in the office, take me out for coffee (yes thank you, lol) e-mail, or call me with your thoughts and ideas about this subject. It is something we really need to look at? If this subject is close to your heart, it revs you up, it interests you, then I have just the place for you. We are planning on putting together our Inviting and Welcoming team. At the moment it is non-existing, but we are about to breathe some life into it. So let me know if you'd like to serve there.

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Please be in prayer for our church, all those people in our community who are searching for something that is waiting for them right here. That we may be that beacon of hope here in Longview, and that we may be bold enough, yet sensitive enough to invite people and to accept them just where they are at the moment.

Thank you all for having Jen and Ryan and me here at Longview with you. It has been a great first (almost two) month. And even though we had some serious losses during the exchange of pastors, our numbers both in the pews and in the bank account have stayed afloat, and that is a definite testament to your commitment to this church and to God. Well done good and faithful servants. We just love being here with you. You are all so kind and open, and caring, and I have a feeling it is only going to get better. May the peace of Jesus surround each and every one of you, and may the dirt of his sandals be splattered on your faces. See you Sunday.

rene'

I am hearing good comments about our music at church. Hope you are feeling the Spirit and getting in tune with your own singing so that the services are more meaningful. John Wesley says we should sing "lustfully" --- that means whether you can carry a tune or not you need to jump in and just let it take over your soul.

I am so appreciative of all the singers and those helping with instruments that are giving their best do invite you to do just that.

I also hope you have noticed we are beginning to use a new songbook called "The Faith We Sing." The words for these songs are always on the screen, but if you are musically inclined find a black "Faith We Sing" book in one of the pew holders and help us with the notes!

I am looking at doing choir for Christmas. Let me know if you want to participate. I have a great Christmas Cantata selected (although it is a bit longer than ones we have done in the past). I would like to begin practices in the middle of October and we hopefully can decide on a practice time.

Okay "That's all folks!!"

Robert



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
- 2nd Wednesday of each month 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 at 6:00 pm at Fosburgs.
- Watch for information about a new study beginning this fall

Praise team

- The "Unity Crew" rehearses Thursdays at 7:00 pm. New voices and instruments are welcome!

Did you know that the Longview UMC joined the Reconciling Ministry Network nine years ago to work for full inclusion of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered folks in the life of the church, including allowing openly gay pastors to serve in the church? The RMN movement also provides support and nurturing to LGBT members and clergy while working for change.

The RMN group met last weekend to plan activities for the coming year -- which includes joining with other churches statewide for support for marriage equality, develop teams to visit and provide resources to congregations which are contemplating whether to become a reconciling congregation and planning the annual Gathering which will be held March 9 (a Saturday afternoon) in Tacoma with the emphasis on youth telling their stories.

It was great to hear that Battleground UMC has joined the Reconciling Ministry Network and that 25 churches now are members in the Pacific Northwest Conference. Jim and Nancy Davis are speaking at Bremerton UMC on Sept. 23 after worship regarding doing marriage ceremonies after Referendum 74 passes. Ret. Bishop Jack Tuell has stated he will perform marriages -- *in the spirit of Biblical obedience, some may be called to ecclesiastical disobedience* -- which was discussed at the Jurisdictional Conference in July in response to General Conference's lack of progress on this issue. We came back energized and with ideas, more of which we will share at the Diversity Task Force meeting.

Barbara Vining

Bereavement Support Group

The Spiritual Care Department of St. John Medical Center is sponsoring an upcoming Bereavement Support Group. The group is open to all adults and will be held on:

- Thursdays from 6:00 - 8:00 pm beginning 9/6/2012 for 4 weeks in Conference Room A/B
- There is a suggested donation of \$10.00 for the experience - some scholarships are available.
- Call 360-414-7575 to register and more information.

Vancouver District Academy

The mission of Jesus Christ has never changed. From the beginning, he sought to have us embody the love of God fully in our lives, offering grace to the unforgiven, healing to the broken, hope to the hopeless. And Jesus declared that it would be through the church that God's mission would be fulfilled (Matt 16:18). The local church matters to God, and we must do all we can to build her up.

This year's Vancouver District Academy is focused on church revitalization. For many years our church has talked about growth and revitalization; however, the conversation has gotten more urgent recently. It has become clear that we need to do ministry in a different way. We need to be out in the community, engaging our mission field with a Christ-like intentionality.

As keynote speaker Bishop Grant Hagiya will outline the state of culture and religion and what our churches can do to engage. Following, we will have laity responses from newly elected PNW Conference Lay Leader Joan Holms, Vancouver District Lay Leader Terry Neal, and PNW Director of Youth and Young Adults Patrick Scriven.

We will then have clergy responses from Rev. David Tinney of Vancouver First UMC and Rev. Kathy Neary of Orchards UMC. Following the short administrative meeting, the clergy will participate in a leadership intensive with Bishop Hagiya and the laity will continue with Joan, Terry and Patrick. This is an important event as we will attempt to uncover how both as laity and clergy we might begin to tackle this issue of revitalization. The clergy/lay relationship is a partnership of the highest sort. God has called us to work together to forge God's way of grace, peace, justice, and hope. May this event help to launch your ministries toward that endeavor.

The Academy will be on September 29, 2012 at Centralia UMC.

Diversity Task Force

I love a parade! And that's a good thing because members of the Diversity Task Force have had the opportunity to march in several of them this year. There is a level of excitement before the start as we decorate the cars, make last minute spelling corrections on signs and put our rainbow colors on. Then the vehicles start moving and the moment I fear creeps up. Will they yell at us, or for us? Will they throw eggs in our way or confetti? Once we get walking I find that the people lining the streets are just like us. They smile and wave and thank us for being in the parade. They don't all agree with our message, but it's a gentle rebuke- a small thumbs down or a look away. Not too different from the reactions I got when I came out – mostly support, but some negatives. I choose to accept the support and help educate the "nay-sayers".

So I am ready for the next parade – Kelso's Highland Festival. The parade is Saturday September 8. I hope that you will join us as we march in support of Marriage Equality. The best part of the parade is seeing the smiling faces of the folks, who appreciate our efforts; who appreciate us putting our hopes out there for all to read- The folks who love a parade. I hope you'll join us in Kelso.

Eileen Arnold

Diversity Task Force



United Methodist Women

We have just finished one of our two big fundraising projects for the year. Thanks to all for your help with the rummage sale. It was a great success, raising just over \$1,000. We will be able to do a lot of good in our community, our church and around the world with that money. Even more important than the money raised was the great participation from the congregation. I counted at least 19 people involved in the sale, and that doesn't include all who donated merchandise or who shopped the sale! Thanks again everyone.

October 19 – 21 we will be having our annual retreat at Ocean Park Camp. You should see more information on the retreat, including registration forms, very soon. I want to stress that all women of the church are welcome and encouraged to attend the retreat. You do not need to have participated in the UMW to be welcomed.

Rev. Ruth Mathis will be our spiritual leader again this year and Sharon Dietel will be on hand to lead us in singing. Mark your calendars and watch for a registration form! The cost is just \$100 for 2 nights and 4 meals and limited scholarship funds are available.

Sharon Fosburg

UMW President



Social Justice

For those of you who have heard the call to take action in our local community or beyond to help those in need or are hearing the call to become educated and act for change in our community/nation/world around issues of injustice, please join Niis and Barb for listening, discussing and prayerfully discerning ways we can act on Micah's admonition to do what the Lord requires -- To seek justice, love kindness and walk humbly with God. There are concrete ways we serve others through our church that come under the umbrella of Social Justice/Mission, including providing Tide Me Over bags, recycling, Angels at Christmas, and serving Community House which need our continued activism and nurturing. If you would like to be involved, please join us.

There is also passion about having a church home for special needs kids to be accepted and to be spiritually nurtured while their parents can attend worship.

We may also want to adopt a study/action project for the year. For instance, several attended the School for Mission this summer and learned about immigration and how it affects Washingtonians, including the presence of a federal detention center in Tacoma. So, bring your passion, your ideas and join us! First Monday of each month!

BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT:

Announcing the arrival of Grace Evelyn Williams, great granddaughter of Peggy Mueggler. Born August 14, 2012 weighing 6 pounds 4 ounces and measuring 19 ½ inches long.

UMW Book Club

The book club meets for our first fall session Wednesday September 12th at 7:00 pm at Julie Clifton's home. Here is a summary of the book to be discussed.

Starvation Heights: A True Story of Murder and Malice in the Woods of the Pacific Northwest

Greg Olsen, author

In 1911 two wealthy British heiresses, Claire and Dora Williamson, came to a sanatorium in the forests of the Pacific Northwest to undergo the revolutionary "fasting treatment" of Dr. Linda Burfield Hazzard. It was supposed to be a holiday for the two sisters. But within a month of arriving at what the locals called Starvation Heights, the women were emaciated shadows of their former selves, waiting for death. They were not the first victims of Linda Hazzard, a quack doctor of extraordinary evil and greed who would stop at nothing short of murder to achieve her ambitions. As their jewelry disappeared and forged bank drafts began transferring their wealth to Hazzard's accounts, Dora Williamson sent a last desperate plea to a friend in Australia, begging her to save them from the brutal treatments and lonely isolation of Starvation Heights.

In this true story—a haunting saga of medical murder set in an era of steamships and gaslights—Greg Olsen reveals one of the most unusual and disturbing criminal cases in American history.



United Methodist Men

All is going well with the men. We are getting ready for the bazaar by building all kinds of wooden things. We've built planters, spice racks, hot pads, coaster holders and wine glass holders. Our regular meeting night is the second Wednesday of the month but my shop is open if you want to come by any Wednesday night or other time. Give me a call at 430-6881.

Thanks to Gary and Robert for their help with parking cars for the Terry/Taylor garage sales. Over \$360 was donated. Gene



To our church family

Thank you! All our years of faith building, friendship making and laughter together helped so much during Roy's courageous passing over. We felt your love and thanked God for this.

Thank you for the well wishes, cookies and prayers. To Pastor Rene, I again am grateful for your thoughtful prayer.

Julie Clifton

Angel Fund

The Angel Fund (formerly known as the "Love Fund") is nearly depleted. This fund exists to try to meet some needs of people in our community who need assistance with utility bills and basic needs. The need is great in our area. Rare are the days that a call doesn't come into the office asking for assistance. This help is given at the Pastor's discretion and is paid directly to the utility company or, in some cases, a gift card is given. People are never given cash or checks directly. This fund is available to members of the congregation who find themselves in need of help as well as to those who call the church office with requests. While the Pastor is the one who approves requests, he is not authorized to sign on the account. Every attempt is made to be sure your gifts are distributed wisely and carefully.

There is now less than \$100 in the Angel Fund account. I have been regretfully informing callers requesting help that we are not able to help at this time. You have always been so very generous in the past when you know there is a need. I am hoping you will be able to respond this time as well. You may mail donations to the church or place them in the offering plate on Sunday mornings. Just indicate on the check or envelope that the donation is for the "Angel Fund".



LONGVIEW UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

2851—30th Ave.

Phone: 360-425-4927

Email: lumcoffice@cni.net



**Check out our brand new
website!**

www.umclongview.com

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

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

All are welcome - invite a friend

**Hear from United Methodist
missionary Guy Kasanka and
his experiences in Congo.**

Potluck supper

6:30 pm

September 14, 2012