



July/August , 2015

Well my friends here we are, yet another new chapter in the life of Longview United Methodist church. It is not the first chapter, we know it will not be the last chapter. We are somewhere in the middle of our drama. According to Gustav Freytag, a drama is divided into five parts, or acts, which some refer to as a dramatic arc: exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and dénouement or resolution. We find ourselves knee deep in one of those parts, in which one is probably in the eye of the beholder. However what we know for sure is that new beginnings are not new, we have had several here in Longview over the past few decades. We also know that the bible is no stranger to new beginnings. Right of the top of my head in can think of e few. Abraham, Moses, Gideon, Esther, David, Jesus...the list goes on and on and on. I understand this God we are serving to be a God of new beginnings, and Jesus embodied that here on earth. In the Hebrew Bible we find Isaiah talks about new beginnings.



*Isaiah 43:18-20 (MSG)*

*16-21 This is what God says, the God who builds a road right through the ocean, who carves a path through pounding waves... Forget about what's happened; don't keep going over old history. Be alert, be present. I'm about to do something brand-new. It's bursting out! Don't you see it? There it is!*

This God, our God is a Creator, creating is in God's nature. We are part of God's creation. We should not be surprised that things are changing, changing all the time, because change is an essential part of creation. We also understand that change is hard, and that before we get to ride out into that sunset or get to find our resolution, there is that rising action and that climax. Those two parts of our story may not be all that comfortable or fun for us to experience, but are essential in reaching the end.

As we move forward as a church, as one body, there will be many changes we will have to make. Some will be harder than others. Some will be easier for some of us and harder for others. We will not experience pain, fear, loss, excitement or even joy at the same time or at the same level. In a way many of us are grieving, while other are ready to move on and build. We will need to be patient and move at a pace that will allow all of us to stay close enough together not to lose sight of the same vision, or the same goal.

There will be many challenges, but remember what Jeremiah said for God in chapter 29, verse 11. He said: *For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.* Let's together trust in those words...and together we will find that dénouement, find that happy ending, find that Gospel (Good News). That is my prayer...peace, rene'

## **Trustees**

The trustee committee is anxiously awaiting the vote of the membership on how to proceed with repairing and remodeling of the church. We give a big thanks to Ed Hilliard for his hard work on organizing what options we have and our resources. Also active also on this project have been Willis Williams, Sharon Pedersen, Gene Fosburg and others. Thanks to all of you for your long hours and for calling numerous persons to get their opinions and estimates on cost.

The parsonage is ready to be rented. We understand that it has been shown several times and hopefully will be rented soon. The same general grass cutting and yard work have been done by the same faithful and talented people. To each of you, we thank you.

*Editor's note: Of course the vote is in now and the waiting is over.*

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## **United Methodist Women**

Thanks to all who so willingly gave their time, talents and muscle to make our annual rummage sale the success that it was. It was a week of hard work getting everything set up, a weekend of hard work selling over \$1,000 (mostly a quarter at a time), another nearly 2 week getting all the unsold merchandise donated where it would do the most good. We can assure you we will put that money to good use! Unsold books were donated to Friends of the Library for their book sale. Other items were taken for the Habitat resale store and by ARC. The rest was donated to the Red Hat Thrift Store, which supports Hospice and the Emergency Support Shelter and to Goodwill.

Our regular monthly meetings resume Sept. 3rd after taking it easy during the summer—except for the rummage sale. All women of the church are encouraged to be part of this group. If you are not available to meet Thursday mornings we have plenty of other opportunities.

On September 19th some of us will be traveling to Centralia for the District Annual meeting.

Our next big project will be the bazaar. We are waiting to see how it will be different this year. We know at least we will be using different space. Lets all learn what else will be different!

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## **Book Club**

The Longview United Methodist women's book club is planning to meet once a month on the second Wednesday of each month. We select our book several months in advance to give everyone plenty of time to purchase, borrow or get the books on an electronic device. We use a book club guide for discussion. There is plenty of time for each person's opinion with lots of lively discussions. Reading the book in advance is not required. We have a large variety of books and are always looking for recommendations.

Our September meeting is scheduled for 7 P.M. September 9 at the home of Julie Clifton. We have chosen "The Aviator's Wife" by Melanie Benjamin for September. This a novel about Anne Marrow Lindbergh and her life. Please join us and enjoy reading and sharing. Any questions, please call me, Sharon Klump at 423-45487.

## Social Justice



I am so glad that our Social Justice Team has met with new life last month. We are very excited to take on this next step and our new vision for Longview United Methodist church. We are looking forward to expanding our focus and to not only continue to support LGBTQ rights, and to address food needs in our community, but also to take a look at the health of our planet. Health is a basic human right, and without a healthy planet, well, there will be no health for us and definitely not for future generations. We understand that improving the health of our planet requires social and environmental justice, sustainable development, community safety and new economics. These principles include equity, democracy, empowerment of individuals and communities, underpinned by supportive environmental, economic and educational measures and multi-agency partnerships. I truly believe that this new focus will not only bring new energy to our church, but will also unite all of our different faith communities. After all, we have only **ONE** earth, and for the time being this **ONE** earth is our **ONE** home.

So please join us as we learn, plan and implement new relationships with each other, our community and our planet. Your Social Justice Team meets every third Sunday after church, please come, please invite, so that our vision becomes clear...our strength multiplies...our voice is heard...and the goal of a beautiful and healthy planet realized.

On Sunday September 20, after church we will take a look at our very own Methodist Social Principles, and how they challenge us to be good stewards. Hope to see you all there...

Your Social Justice Team.

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## JOIN US FOR AN EXCITING NEW STUDY!

Beginning Sunday, September 13, we will embark on a journey of self-discovery and self-enlightenment. The study will focus on a book by Marcus J. Borg called Convictions: How I Learned What Matters Most. Borg is an internationally respected theologian, teacher and author who most recently was a professor at Oregon State University. As he recounts the memories, conversions, and convictions that have shaped his life, we will talk about what life and Christianity has been for us and where we go from here. "I am convinced that if American Christians knew and embraced what is in this book that it would change American Christianity", Borg says. Might it also change and improve our lives, as well?

See you at 6 PM on Sunday, September 13 at Gene & Sharon Fosburg's house.

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### **SIGN UP FOR COFFEE HOUR AND ALTAR FLOWERS**

Sign up posters for these opportunities can now be found in the fellowship hall, on or near the serving table.



## Scripture and sermon titles through October

**09.06.15 ISAIAH 40:21-26 Chapter 1 - Raw-Awe:**

Religious Experience and the Great Outdoors. God's majestic work as Creator highlighted. Isaiah describes God's power to create, His provision to sustain and His presence to help. Isn't that awesome? That the Sovereign of the Universe cares for us?

**09.13.15 Acts 7:54-60 Chapter 2 - Good, Good and very Good**

Who will speak the truth? Who will speak for God, for God's Creation?

**09.20.15 Matthew 6:25-33 Chapter 3 - For the Bible tells me so**

The New Testament and Nature's Protection. What if God lived here on earth?

**09.27.15 Bringing the message is Chief Roy Wilson - Chapter 4 - Many Faiths, One Earth**

Eco Teachings from the World Religions.

**10.04.15 Genesis 9:8-10, 12-13, 16-17 Chapter 5 -What is in a Word?**

God made a holy covenant connecting humanity with the rest of the web-of-life...

**10.11.15 Genesis 1:9-13 Chapter 6 – The Pale Blue Dot**

A deeper look at creation...

**10.18.15 James 1:23-25, (2:14-17, 2:18) Chapter 7 – A New Green Revolution**

**10.25.15 Mark 1:14-15 Chapter 8 – Our Kairos Moment**

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### All-Church meeting

The vote is done, but the work has just begun. The LUMC congregation has decided to maintain the property that we currently have. For some this is a great relief, for others this is less than desired news. The important thing to remember going forward is that we are family, we are people of faith, and we can accomplish anything. No matter what side of the vote you were on, I hope we all had the best interest of the congregation in mind, and I hope that remains our focus going forward. The challenges ahead of us are not going to be easy, the cost of maintenance and upgrades are going to be a hill that we must overcome. Through these next couple of months, I hope that we can build as a community and that we are able to begin deep and meaningful outreach to a community that needs to hear our positive and affirming message of God's love for all people.

May you all be at peace and find joy in the journey we have ahead of us.

Blessings,

Garrett Harrison

## **Our Social Creed**

We believe in God, Creator of the world; and in Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of creation. We believe in the Holy Spirit, through whom we acknowledge God's gifts, and we repent of our sin in misusing these gifts to idolatrous ends.

We affirm the natural world as God's handiwork and dedicate ourselves to its preservation, enhancement, and faithful use by humankind.

We joyfully receive for ourselves and others the blessings of community, sexuality, marriage, and the family.

We commit ourselves to the rights of men, women, children, youth, young adults, the aging, and people with disabilities; to improvement of the quality of life; and to the rights and dignity of all persons.

We believe in the right and duty of persons to work for the glory of God and the good of themselves and others and in the protection of their welfare in so doing; in the rights to property as a trust from God, collective bargaining, and responsible consumption; and in the elimination of economic and social distress.

We dedicate ourselves to peace throughout the world, to the rule of justice and law among nations, and to individual freedom for all people of the world.

We believe in the present and final triumph of God's Word in human affairs and gladly accept our commission to manifest the life of the gospel in the world. Amen.

*Does this sound like some great beliefs that you can really stand behind? No wonder you are already a United Methodist! This is included in the Social Principles of the United Methodist Church. Every United Methodist should be familiar with this and the rest of the booklet. If you need a "refresher" or haven't studied the principles before you are in luck! A study will take place at the upcoming Social Justice meeting after worship on September 20th. A few booklets are available at a cost of \$5.00, or see if someone else is willing to share their copy! Either way, be sure to attend this study!*

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Love Overwhelming needs these food items on a continuing basis.

Oatmeal in a Cup

Mac & Chees in a Cup

Cup of Soup

Breakfast/Protein bars

# Five Characteristics of Effective Ministry Teams

By Ann A. Michel



If your congregation relies on leadership teams to make ministry happen, the vitality of your church depends on these groups working well. Strong ministry teams generally display the following characteristics.

**Shared vision.** A good team understands what it needs to accomplish and how its work connects to the overall vision of the church. Ministry teams only give it their all when they feel something real is at stake. Strong teams coalesce around significant challenges.

**Distinct roles.** Teams function most effectively when each and every member has a unique and vital role to play. On a baseball team, for example, the pitcher and the catcher do different jobs, but neither can do their job without the other. Motivation, buy-in, and accountability are enhanced when each team member knows the group's success depends on their efforts. When you launch a team, think carefully about what different roles are essential. In a group that's worked together for some time, pause occasionally to ask what needs to be done and who should be doing it.

**Constructive engagement.** Teams achieve good outcomes when they get all the relevant issues on the table and fully evaluate their options before making decisions. So team members must feel free to express their opinions honestly and even risk disagreeing with one another. This type of open and honest engagement only occurs in an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect. Strong teams are deliberate in building this type of decision-making climate.

**Size.** Effective teams tend to remain lean. The group must be small enough for each person's participation to really matter. In larger groups, the style of communication often shifts from inquiry to advocacy, making it more likely that a few voices will dominate the conversation and less likely that all participants will engage openly.

**Leadership.** In strong ministry teams, every member provides leadership. But someone needs to take responsibility for making sure the team itself functions well. Good teams have a "captain" who maintains the focus on the vision, attends to the climate of the team, facilitates the group's processes, and keeps communication flowing.

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**Check out our website!**  
**[www.umclongview.com](http://www.umclongview.com)**

## **OUR MISSION STATEMENT**

Longview United Methodist Church—A welcoming sanctuary with the mission to live, learn and share God's love for all creation.