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January 2010 Newsletter

Volume 21, Issue 1

A Publication of Millwood Community Presbyterian Church



MILLWOOD PRESS

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Today Is the Day

By Rev. Craig Goodwin, Pastor

Anne Lamott in her book "Bird by Bird" tells writers that one of the keys to writing is short assignments and small picture frames. Instead of setting out on some grand scheme to write the next Brothers Karamazov or War and Peace, the thing to do is just pick one short assignment, one picture that fits into a small one inch frame, and go to work writing about it, describing it and fleshing it out.

She quotes E.L. Doctorow who says that "writing...is like driving a car at night. You can see only as far as your headlights but you can make the whole trip that way." I agree with her that "this is right up there with the best advice about writing, or life," and I would add that it's a wonderful way to think about the Christian journey. So much of the challenge of following Christ in the world is to pay attention to the people and events and circumstances that are right in front of us.

Jesus put it this way in his Sermon on the Mount as recorded in the book of Matthew, *"Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life...Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life? So do not worry...But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."* (Matthew 6:25-34)

In other words, Jesus says that life is best lived one day at a time, and while every morning we will awake to a new set of challenges and "troubles" we

also awake to a world in which God's grace is sufficient for whatever may come. As an alternative to our habit of making new year's resolutions, Jesus invites us into a daily practice of making a new day's resolution.

It's not that we don't have long term goals and trajectories that we embrace and work toward. It's just that we need to recognize that the journey to fulfilling these goals happens one day at a time, a small accumulation each day of grace gifts and faithful living that slowly but surely get's us where we're going.

As we make the turn as a church community into a new decade and a new year I want to invite us into this practice of paying attention one day at a time to the Spirit of God at work among us. The wisdom of the church through the centuries is that there are certain essential resources available to help us on this daily journey; scripture, prayer and community.

My challenge to myself and our congregation is to take stock of these essential resources and how they fit into our daily rhythms. Let's take time in the morning and evening to read a small portion of the Bible. Let's take some moments away from the urgencies that are so much a part of our lives and find a quiet place to pray. Let's make the journey together by sharing life through worship and community groups.

Today is the day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it!

Mark Your Calendar

January 21& 28

Women's Choir Practice in the Choir Room from 7 - 7:30 pm.

January 24

Deacon Cookie Box names and addresses are due by January 24.

January 26

Session Meeting in the Reception Hall.

January 31

Presbyterian Women Sunday at both Services.

January 31

Music In Millwood Concert at 4 pm, in the Sanctuary.

Youth News

By Brandon Comella

We had a last minute change in schedule around our Sr. High Retreat. We were originally going to head up to Camp Spalding with the rest of the Presbyterian Churches in our region, but that was before West Valley Football team decided to go 13-0 and make it to the State Championship Game in Tacoma, WA. They hadn't won a playoff game in twenty-three years, so this was a major feat. Because of this, most of our high school students wanted to head west for the game rather than go to the retreat.

So December 4, another leader I drove five high school guys over to Tacoma where we met up with many other students from our group and watched the game together. It was a bummer that we ended up losing, but overall was still a great year. We ended up staying the whole weekend and made our retreat over in Tacoma. Thankfully Kenny, the other leader who went, has parents who live in Tacoma. So we stayed there and truly had a great time with so many different opportunities to bond and get closer with the five guys who went along.

We finished out our final week of youth group with our annual high school and middle school Christmas parties. We had two very energy filled nights with fun games, hot chocolate, and everyone's favorite game; "White Elephant gift exchange." We then had a great high school service event where many of us got together with Spokane Valley Partners Community Center to help with their annual toy drive for families in the Valley who couldn't afford to buy gifts for their kids. What a great experience!

This fall has gone by so fast, but now it is time for a small break before we get right back into things after the Holidays with upcoming

events such as; 30-hour famine, meetings for our summer trip to Mexico, the youth auction, and many others. Keep posted to see specifics regarding upcoming events and have a wonderful and blessed Christmas.

If you have any questions about the youth ministry or would like to get involved in any way, please feel free to call me at: 481-5720 or email me at: Brandon@millwoodpc.org.

Mae's Kids

By Mae Johnson

I wanted to thank all of you who bought and wrapped gifts for the kids on my caseload. I have the pleasure of delivering big bags containing all of those brightly wrapped presents and see the kids eyes light up when they realize the gifts are for them. Then after Christmas when I visit their family the kids are excited to show me what they got. You have no idea what one small gift does and means to these kids but I do. All of the laundry detergent and dish soap is appreciated too. I tried to remember how many years we have been doing this and think it has been at least 17 years. Way to go MCPC!

Music in Millwood Concert January 31

Music in Millwood Concert Series presents a free viola and piano concert Sunday, January 31, at 4 pm. Spokane Symphony violist Tom Bandar and pianist Rachelle Ventura will perform works by Mendelssohn, Vaughan Williams, Hindemith, Rebecca Clarke and Granados. The concert will be held in the Sanctuary at Millwood Community Presbyterian Church at 3223 North Marguerite Rd. Donations of non-perishable food items for the Deacon Food Bank will be gratefully accepted. For more information, please call 533-1907.

Entryway Renovation FAQ

(Frequently Asked Questions)

Plans for the Renovation of the MCPC entryway are coming together quickly and the session wants to make sure the congregation has all the information it needs. We plan on starting the project the week after Easter and having it completed before Vacation Bible School. Here are some questions members of session have heard. If you don't see your question addressed, please email it or drop it off to Christy in the church office and the session team that is spearheading communication for the entryway project will get back to you.

How are we paying for such a big project?

The entryway renovation is for the most part outside of the scope of the With Open Arms Capital Campaign (WOA) so no donations to the WOA fund will be used for the entryway renovation. The session has designated \$104,000 from a combination of the estate of Clyde and Elaine Clark and designated donations from members of the church for this project. The session believes it is a wonderful use of the generous bequest from the Clark's given Clyde's history of caring for the church facilities and Elaine's experience for many years of getting around the entryway of the church in a wheelchair. The much improved access to the sanctuary, reception hall and bathrooms will be a fitting part of their legacy at MCPC. Along with the session designated funds, there is a special designated gift from a member of the church to cover 2/3 of the total cost of the project, which will likely be around \$300,000.

Why not wait until the new Christian Education Building is completed before we tackle the entryway?

The funds are available now for the entryway project, but we are still in the process of gathering funds through donations and the sale of properties to fund the new multi-purpose building. Moving forward with the entryway now does not impact the timeline for the other building.

Why do we need such a major renovation of the entryway of the church?

The current arrangement of stairs and ramps makes it very difficult for someone with a mobility impairment to get to the Sanctuary, Reception Hall and bathrooms. The ramps were added several years ago to help the situation but there is not enough room inside to give them the proper grade needed to make for a safe and comfortable trip up and down. Moving the stairs outside will give us the room we need for very gradual safe ramps. We will also be adding a double set of doors to keep heat in and cold out during the winter. Eliminating the stairs, ramps and one set of doors in the entryway area will also make the entryway a more welcoming and friendly place.

If the stairs and ramp are outside, what will we do about snow and ice in the winter?

The current plans call for the ramp to be heated to keep ice and snow from accumulating. The stairs also include many handrails.

Who is in charge of the design of the entryway?

Who should I talk to about concerns or ideas?

The same design team that oversaw the design of the first phase of renovations is working with the architect on the design of the entryway. In the next couple of weeks, look for a display of drawings for the project in the Reception Hall. All questions and ideas are welcome but they need to be put in writing and dropped off at the church office or emailed to christy@millwoodpc.org.

I'd like to help out. Is that possible?

We will be looking for volunteers for certain parts of the project and we will have regular updates in the Sunday bulletin. So stay tuned for opportunities to pitch in.

How will we get in and out of church during construction?

We will be using alternative entrances and exits when needed. We'll need to be ready for some disruptions and adjustments along the way.

Year End Financial Update

Budgeted Pledges & Regular Gifts:	\$400,000
Actual Pledges & Regular Gifts:	\$404,491
Budgeted Total Income:	\$447,000
Actual Total Income:	\$452,154
Budgeted Expenses:	\$467,727
Actual Expenses:	\$460,110
Budgeted Operating Profit/(Deficit)	(\$20,627)
Actual Operating Profit/(Deficit)	(\$7,955)
With Open Arms Capital Fund Balance:	\$168,263
With Open Arms Donations So Far:	\$213,882
Entryway Renovation Fund Balance:	\$169,430
Entryway Renovation Donations:	\$176,830

2009 Financial Overview

In January of last year the session looked over the budget numbers and for the first time in recent memory set a deficit budget. The unusual combination of the economic downturn and the launch of the capital campaign made it difficult to know what to expect for the operating budget. As the numbers to the left highlight, it has been a remarkable year of faithful stewardship at Millwood Presbyterian. Thanks to a surge of year end donations we were able to close the gap on the deficit to a very manageable \$8,000. We are happy to report that based on the pledges received for 2010 we go into this year with a balanced budget and on firm financial footing for our core mission and ministry.

You can also see that at the one year mark of the three year With Open Arms Capital Campaign we are right at around 1/3 of the pledged donations with a total of \$213,882 received. The first phase of renovations is complete and paid for with cash and we are ready now to start planning for the new Christian Education multi-purpose building with a growing of \$168,000 already available to be used for that project.

If you look at the big picture of the numbers to the left you'll see that in the worst economy in a generation we have seen a small increase in pledges and regular gifts from 2008 and have taken in an additional \$390,000 in donations for capital projects, almost doubling the giving to mission and ministry at Millwood Presbyterian.

Thank you for your faithful giving and sacrifice in 2009. The session and staff are excited to see how God leads us in our life of stewardship in 2010.

Dale Rd. House for Sale

The Property Committee is facilitating the sale of the house on the southwest corner of Dale Rd and Euclid. The ground work has been laid to potentially subdivide the property and sell it in on the open market as a listed Real Estate property, but before the committee proceeds with that they want to explore the possibility of a direct sale to a member or friend of the church.

It is a small one bedroom home with a full unfinished basement. It needs some updating and has a large corner lot. The committee is proposing a price in the \$107,500 range. If you are interested or know someone that might be interested, please contact the church office and let us know.

If a direct sale does not work out we plan on subdividing the land and selling the house and property separately.

Children's Ministry

By Kim McGiveran

December was such a great month with everything that was going on within Children's Ministry. All the children who were actors and actresses in our *Special Delivery* Christmas Performance did such a fabulous job! Thank you so much to all the parents for helping your children prepare and again BIG thanks to the team of mothers who came along side me and helped direct this play. It is awesome to see God's Spirit at work here in our church, as the number of children participating in Children's Ministry continues to grow.

I would like to call your attention to area of opportunity and need within Children's Ministry. The number of children attending Sunday School is growing. We would like to have more Sunday School teachers during the 9:30 am service to enable us to split into two groups - an upper and lower Elementary group. This would mean having 2 more teachers available each week to divide the group. If you would be able to lead or assist in this class, please talk with Kim. Most teachers teach once a month, with all prep work done and ready for them in the class. Teachers just look over the lesson and be prepared to teach and discuss the Bible story. Please consider this opportunity and let me know if that's something you feel God calling you to serve in.

January is the start to new workshop series in the Elementary classes. During our first service, the children in We Believe will be learning about David before he became king. The series focuses on 1 Samuel 16 and 17 that presents three images of the boy David: a shepherd, a musician, and God's champion. The scripture memory verse will be 1 Samuel 16:7 "the Lord does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart".

The 11:00 Elementary class will begin their unit on Jonah. Children will learn that they can't hide from God - even in a whale! They will discover that Jonah ran away from God because he didn't "get" God's message of Compassion, Mercy, and Grace for everyone who repents. Each week the children will fish for the "catch of the day", with an important message from God for living each day.

Endowment Trust

Living Legacy

By Gary Sardam, Endowment Trust Treasurer

Three friends from MCPC were asked "When you are in your casket and friends and congregation members are mourning over you, what would like them to say about you?"

Gary piped up, "I would like them to say I was a wonderful husband, a fine spiritual leader, and a great family man."

Gene commented, "I would like them to say I was a wonderful teacher and servant of God who made a huge difference in people's lives."

Ralph, not to be out done said, "I would like them to say; LOOK HE'S MOVING!" **

As we enter the New Year and Tax season, please remember MCPC and Endowment Trust in your long range planning. In this manner future members can indeed say "Look the Legacy is still moving"

** (note: These are fictional characters, and no reference to past or current MCPC members is intended.)

*When I leave this world . . .
Will I have made a difference?*

Deacon Food Basket Update

The Deacons want to thank all the generous givers at MCPC. Through your donations of food, time and money we were able to provide 50 food baskets for Thanksgiving and 35 Christmas food baskets.

Cookie Boxes

The Deacons are preparing cookie boxes for our college students and friends in serving in the military. If you have a college student or a person serving in the military who would be blessed by a cookie box, the Deacons would like to have the name and address of that person. Please call the church office at 924-2350 with names and addresses by January 24, 2010.

STRETCH & FLEX

HAPPY NEW YEAR! It's that time again! Time to get together and spend a fun hour laughing while fine-tuning our mind and body. Join Sandy as she combines Body Conditioning, Pilates, Yoga, Light Cardio, and Basic Stretching in the next session of STRETCH & FLEX. We focus on body awareness, flexibility, range of motion, core strength, balance, and stability while improving overall muscle tone. We do a complete stretching and stability workout, ending with a relaxation exercise. Shavasana!

STRETCH & FLEX begins January 11 and ends February 19, meets 3 times a week, M/W/F from 9 am-10 am in the Reception Hall, here at MCPC. The cost is \$54, that's 18 classes at \$3 each. Drop-in cost will be \$5 per class. If you are new to STRETCH & FLEX or on the fence, come and join us January 11 and check it out. No obligation... but you'll be hooked! See you on the 11th!

Call Sandy for more info at: 927-8187 or Nancy at: 924-2350.

Women's Weekly Bible Study

We are excited to introduce the study for the New Year: *Galatians: Living in Line With the Truth of the Gospel*. This 13-week study by Tim Keller will include a teaching, sharing and practical application component as well as questions for personal study and reflection at home. What a wonderful opportunity to grow in God's word with a great group of women! We will meet in the new Library area with two different days and times available: Wednesdays at 6:30 pm (no childcare is available) and on Thursdays at 9:30 am (childcare will be available). The study materials will cost only \$5.00! Wednesday's study begins January 20 and Thursday's study begins January 21. For more information, call Nancy Goodwin at: 924-7328. To register, please call the Church Office at: 924-2350.

Fall Bazaar was a Success!

By Norma Osterback

The Handcrafters had another successful Fall Bazaar sale in the amount of \$3354. During the past year our craft monies have supported various local missions including Mission Community Presbyterian, Union Gospel Mission, Transitions, Spokane Valley Partners and Liberty Park Day Care as well as gifts to the Deacon Fund, Camp White, Open Arms Campaign and scholarships to Camp Spalding.

A very special thanks to Mary Lou Weidman for contributing many beautiful quilted pieces to our sale. Mary has requested that the proceeds of her quilts be divided equally between Union Gospel Mission and Camp White.

Our thanks to everyone for the support and contributions that has made these donations possible.

Missions Monthly Update

By Bronwyn Worthington

Thanks to all who supported Operation Christmas Child at MCPC this year! We surpassed our record with a whopping 70 boxes! On November 22, I had the joy of watching my children help load these carefully packed boxes into Cliff and Maureen Schneider's car. A few days later, the boxes were on their way to Denver where Samaritan's Purse will ship them to children on all corners of the earth. The Mission Committee would love to hear from any of you who receive thank you letters from the children who receive your boxes. E-mail Bronwyn at bronwor@gmail.com.

Interfaith Hospitality was in full swing at MCPC during January 3-10. Please contact the Church Office if you are able to serve as an overnight host, van driver, or meal host. Serving with other friends in this capacity is always a rewarding experience. Our next opportunity to host will be in the spring.

Millwood Farmers Market continues on Wednesday afternoons from 2-6 pm. Located indoors at The Crossing Youth Center on Euclid Avenue, you can purchase fresh produce, grain-fed beef and chicken, as well as plenty of other goodies. Aside from enjoying your local purchases, you have a great opportunity to connect with others in Millwood. Make it a part of your week and I guarantee you'll be blessed as you bless others!

Thanks to your support of Treat of the Month, MCPC is preparing to add another foreign scholarship recipient. Please continue to purchase our yummy cookies, knowing your money goes towards helping others learn and grow in their faith.

You may have watched MCPC on the news last month! KREM news reported on our December 11th food distribution in which we partnered with 2nd Harvest to provide 8,000 pounds of food for 692 people. Your partnership in this very important ministry is greatly needed. Please continue to watch for our monthly opportunity to serve.

Young Lives Update

By Shauna Edwards

We had the west central club on December 3, and in the decked out YFC building. The girls started pouring in at 5:30 pm and kept on coming! We've only had 10 girls at this club since we started it and 18 girls (4 new) showed up and 1 dad!

One week later on December 10, we were at The Crossing in the valley for round two of Christmas club. I heard that several dads were coming so I bought some manly items and made dad gift bags for the guys. I honestly thought we'd have less girls than the week before since so many came to the west central club and some have been at the valley last month...but then the girls started pouring in, and they kept coming and coming and we ended up with 19 girls (6 new and 7 dads) We had mommy, baby, daddy pictures, ate lasagna- yes 3 Costco pans demolished, and heard the story of Mary's choice with Jesus... then on to gift wrapping, cookies, and cookie jars. At the end of the night we gave the gift bags away again and the girls and guys were so excited! I've been getting texts and phone calls from the girls thanking me!

As we get closer to Christmas these girls are constantly on my heart and in my prayers, for many this is the worst time of the year! some of their parents get laid off in winter and so Christmas is nothing more than some days off of school. Many are cold because heat costs money, and money isn't there. When I think about Christmas I think about family and getting the tree, and lights, and cookies, and eating lots of food, and Christmas music, and being with friends, giving gifts, and Jesus. When I asked some girls what they think about Christmas they told me this list; parents fighting, stress, waiting in line @ Christmas Bureau, cold, no tree, no lights, shelter for Christmas dinner, calling *Toys for Tots*, no school, and the list goes on. Please keep these girls and their babies in your prayers!