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JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2015 NEWSLETTER

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Taking Up Crosses

By Rev. Craig Goodwin, Pastor

Super Bowl Sunday always has a special meaning to me because my ordination service was held on a Super Bowl Sunday 18 years ago in Maple Valley, Washington.

On a side note, this year's Super Bowl not only reminded me of my ordination, but also brought back memories of the heart-crushing experience of rooting for the Seahawks during my childhood years.

On that Sunday, 18 years ago, I took the vows of ordination, which included this question:

Will you in your own life seek to follow the Lord Jesus Christ...?

That was the most important question I answered that morning. It's helpful in understanding my calling as a pastor, but it applies to all of us who trust in Jesus as our Lord and Savior. That is our calling as individuals and as a church. We seek to follow Jesus, not just doing what he said to do, but also living like he lived.

Lent, which starts on February 18, with our Ash Wednesday service, is a great opportunity to reflect on this call to follow Jesus, especially his invitation to take up our crosses and follow him.

In the gospels we see that Jesus not only says he is going to suffer and be crucified on the cross, he tells his disciples, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me." (Matthew 16:24)

On Sunday's we've been learning about "Jesus the Teacher," and as we enter this season of Lent I want to turn our attention to this and other related teachings of Jesus that bring up many questions about this task of following.

Jesus doesn't intend a literal crucifixion for his disciples, so what does it mean to take up one's cross?

What does Jesus mean when he says, "Blessed are the poor in spirit," and "Blessed are those who mourn?"

If we look a little further into these themes in the Bible, we are led to wonder what Paul means when he says God's power is made perfect in weakness, or what James is talking about when he says that we should consider it pure joy when we face hardships of any kind.

These are the questions of Lent, a season dedicated not only to focusing on the cross of Jesus, but also to reflecting on our own suffering, weakness, and cross-bearing ways.

My prayer is that we will all say, "Yes" to the question, "Will you in your own life seek to follow the Lord Jesus Christ?" This isn't a commitment reserved for the ordained, but is an invitation for us all to seek him at the cross and to find ourselves there as well.

(Along with preaching on Sundays I'll lead a four-week Wednesday evening class during Lent starting on March 4 at 6:30 p.m.)

Mark Your Calendars

WORSHIP CONVERSATIONS –

FEBRUARY 22, AT 10:45 A.M. AND 12:15 P.M., FEBRUARY 24, AT 6:30 P.M.

Join us for moderated discussions about new ideas for worship at Millwood Presbyterian.

ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP SERVICE – FEBRUARY 18, AT 7 P.M. IN THE CHAPEL

Join us as we gather to mark the beginning of the season of Lent with the imposition of ashes.

BIBLE BASICS – FEBRUARY 22

Bible Basics for 3rd graders will begin Sunday, February 22. The class is from 9:30–10:30a.m., in room 403 (upstairs past the church office). This is a great class that will lay a solid foundation to help your child read and understand God's word. Call Kim McGiveran at: 924–2350 to register your child.

LENTEN PASTOR'S CLASS – STARTS WEDNESDAY MARCH 4, AT 6:30 P.M. IN THE CHAPEL

Join Pastor Craig for this four-week class on the Cross of Jesus.

MARK THESE DATES FOR VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

June 29 – July 3, 2015, look for more information to come in weekly e-mails, your newsletter and the bulletin in the near future.

Children's Ministry News

By Kim McGiveran

Signs were all around us in December when over 40 children performed in the annual Christmas drama. The kids helped us focus on the true meaning of Christmas through everyday signs. Whether it was "No Vacancy", "Quiet Please!" or "Help Wanted" – there are many signs that remind us of God sending us the gift of His infant son. Highlights and photos are posted in the Children's Wing bulletin board.

Kid's Club has been a great success with good turnout at our once-a-month gatherings. I'm open to feedback about what activities I plan during Kid's Club, specifically whether you'd prefer less fieldtrips that require money (such as bowling, roller skating, tubing) and more free nights where we stay at the gym.

Bible Basics for 3rd graders will begin February 22. I will be teaching this class from 9:30–10:30 a.m. We will meet for four weeks with our final class on March 15. This class is targeted at 3rd grade, though any older child who hasn't yet taken the class can join. We'd love to include neighbors, friends, grandchildren, any 3rd grader you know that would like to learn the basics of the Bible. We will go over key Biblical events including the promise God gave to Abraham, the Exodus, King David and Solomon, the exile and prophecies of a

promised Messiah, which foreshadow the coming of our savior Jesus Christ and the gospel message of salvation. We'll also practice memorizing the books of the Bible. This is a great class that will lay a solid foundation to help your child read and understand God's word. On March 22, the kids will give a brief presentation of their new Bible skills, and receive their new Adventure Bibles from Pastor Craig.



Youth Update

By Brandon Comella

There are many reasons why I like the beginning of the New Year in ministry... I am blessed enough to be able to take a good break over the holidays and get refreshed for the New Year. This usually allows me to clear my mind and get excited about fresh ideas, (like the games I have in store in our new Community Center with the 750 bouncy balls,) and begin again with a wonderful month of January.

Every January, we take a break from normal youth group times and we do events instead. Over the month of January, which this year included activity nights in the Community Center, tubing up at *Bear Creek Lodge* on *Mt. Spokane*, and ice skating. These events allow for a reconnection between the students and the leaders after break. It gives hangout time to ask the students about how their Christmas was and to be honest, I think it shows a lot to the kids that we aren't here to just run a group for them, but that we care for them. *(Continued on page 7.....)*

Welcome New Members

On January 25, we were excited to welcome 16 new members into the life of our church and baptize eight members of those families. Their names and contact information is listed below.

Profession of Faith

Alesha & Mike Horrocks

4912 W. Hoffman Pl., Spokane, WA 99205

Melissa Moreau

2213 N. Vista, Spokane, WA 99212

Matthew Naccarato

4321 S. Chapman Rd., Greenacres, WA 99016

Sarah Thornton

11919 E. Fairview, Spokane, WA 99206

Reaffirmation of Faith

Linda Alexander & Robert Monroe

1929 E. Rodkey Ave., Post Falls, ID 83854

Melissa Moreau

2213 N. Vista, Spokane, WA 99212

Dave & Mary O'Brien

3612 E. Grave Ave., Spokane, WA 99217

Rick Rowbotham

Cheryl White

Certificate of Transfer

Linda Lehman

9920 E. Broadway, Spokane Valley, WA 99206

Jack & Terral Schut

18007 E. 11th Ct., Greenacres, WA 99016

Andy Thornton

11919 E. Fairview, Spokane, WA 99206

The other reasons why I like the New Year is because it is the time where I usually receive a few new leaders from Whitworth's *Foundations* class. This is a class that usually has around 50–70 freshman and sophomores in and it is 100% about helping train them to be a great church or *Young Life* leader.

I am blessed to receive these leaders once a year when I am in need. With our middle school group growing so fast, I am in desperate need for middle school *Wyldlife* leaders. Thankfully we have three new leaders from this year's class who were able to join the other leadership for our Annual Leader Retreat the first week in February. I love getting new leaders before this weekend, because it is such a great time for our team to come together, bond together and get energized, trained and ready for the spring term in youth ministry.

With our second child due in April, I am planning all our youth events a little earlier and getting that schedule ready. So if your child is as excited about our annual *30-hour Famine*, be checking the website as we will be having that a little earlier this year. If you haven't noticed, I have been so much better about updating the youth page on our church website. If you haven't seen our new website, go check it out. It's very nice to have something that is much easier for me to get info out with.

Thanks for your support and if you ever have questions about youth happenings, feel free to call or email me at: brandon@millwoodpc.org or 481-5720.



Children's Ministry Schedule:	
Sundays	
9:30 & 11:00 AM	Nursery 6wks. – 36 months
9:30 AM	K – 5 th Grade Class
9:30 AM	3–4 Year Old Class
11:00 AM	Nursery 6wks. – 36 months
11:00 AM	Children's Church
February 22	
9:30 AM	Bible Basics begins

Worship Conversations

By Rev. Craig Goodwin

Last week the Session asked members and friends of the church to offer input on the possibility of future changes in the Sunday morning worship schedule. If you haven't filled out the survey yet you can fill it out online at <http://www.millwoodpc.org/worship-survey/>.

We received over 170 surveys, which is a huge response when, by most standards, 10% is considered good. We're at over 30% of our membership and over 70% of weekend attendance.

The large response tells me that our experiences in worship are important to us and we want input, especially when it comes to potential changes. The Session recognizes this, which is why we're having this conversation 8 months before any changes, if any, would be put in place. The hope is that we can have space to thoughtfully reflect on our worship life together and listen to where the Spirit is leading. No decisions have been made and, as your pastor, I don't have an agenda I'm pushing other than that I want us to be good listeners and willing to share honestly and respectfully.

The large response to the survey also tells me that the timing is right, not only to talk about the possibility of having one worship service on Sunday mornings, but to strengthen our overall vision for worship. I'm hopeful that this can be a creative and generative season that we'll look back on and recognize as a time when our worship life was reinvigorated, a time when we lived into the words of the Psalmist, "Worship the Lord with gladness...." (*Psalm 100*).

To help keep the conversation going we will gather on Sunday, February 22 after both services and on Tuesday, February 24 at 6:30 p.m. I hope you'll consider attending one of these and lending your voice to the conversation.



Thank You!

By Andrea Naccarato

Words cannot express our appreciation for the generous donations in Marilyn McIntosh's (affectionately known as Grandma Jo) name for *North Idaho Wyldlife* and *Millwood Young Life*. Your gifts will allow many middle and high school students to attend camp and hear the good news of Jesus Christ. Thank you for supporting this important ministry and for allowing the legacy of my grandmother to live on in the lives that will be touched through Young Life.

Navigator's Lunch February 20

The Navigators will be meeting at 12:00 p.m. on February 20, at the *Hong Kong Buffet*. The cost of the meal is \$7.82 each person plus tax. Davy and Maxine Adamson will be our hosts, Kay and Sylvia Barney will be the Skippers. Our program will be presented by *The Four Notes Barber Shop Quartet*. Please call the Adamson's at: 590-3096 or the Barney's at: 891-1045, if you need more information or directions to the restaurant.

International Service Spotlight

By Kate VanSlike

169 Mission co-workers
73 Young adult volunteers
100+ Nations on 5 continents

These numbers tell just a part of the story of the Presbyterian Mission Agency. Greater numbers can be envisioned as we—right here in Millwood—determine how we will support global mission efforts ourselves.

Last year, the church contributed to my trip to Guatemala where I helped to install clean-burning cook stoves in a rural Mayan village. Upon my return, several Millwood church members were eager to come aboard and be involved in another mission of this kind. To all of you who are wondering: YES, we are planning to offer an international service opportunity and everyone can be a part, whether through direct participation, fundraising or other support.

To make that happen, we've evaluated some options, looking at different agencies, their costs, their ability to handle a team of 12-15 people, their "fit" with our vision and mission here at MCPC. Currently, we're researching the potential of *Plant With Purpose*, an organization where Pastor Craig serves as a board member.



Our intention is to make recommendations for Session to review early this year and begin developing our team by summer for a trip early in 2016.

If participating in an international mission project sounds interesting to you, feel free to email kate.vanskike@gmail.com to stay up-to-date on plans and progress.

And if traveling to a foreign land doesn't ring your bell, we hope you will take interest in what Presbyterian (and other) missionaries are doing and commit to praying for them. Once a month, a Minute for Mission during our worship services will spotlight some new form of overseas mission work that will inspire your faith and impact your worldview. You can count on it!

Deacons – Serving God's People

By Mae Greenwood

The Deacons minister to their flocks in times of joy and sorrow. While praises are uplifting, providing comfort during a time of need can also be rewarding. Here, at our church, the Deacons provide receptions following funerals and memorial services. The friends and relatives of the one who has passed away find a warm and welcoming place where they can feed the body and the spirit. Sharing memories, reconnecting with friends or relatives and meeting new people is easier with a cup of coffee and a cookie.

The Deacons provide this service, but we are always in need of assistance during these receptions. If you would like to help in any way, set up, clean up, serving coffee or punch, or keeping the food and drinks replenished, please contact Christy in the church office at: 924-2350. This is a wonderful way to serve our congregation, our community and our God.

Community Center Update

There are many exciting developments with the Millwood Community Center.

The Community Kitchen plans have been mostly finalized and we are now working on securing our permit with *Spokane County Regional Health District*. Once that permits are in hand, we will proceed with installing the equipment and making the necessary modifications.

Because the kitchen is moving forward we are able to turn our attention to develop the programs that will be featured in the new facility. These plans are in preliminary stages but they are starting to take shape.

We met with folks from *Second Harvest* to talk about how we can collaborate with them on their new commercial kitchen project, located at their warehouse near *Gonzaga*. We have a unique opportunity to be a satellite location for the programs and curriculum they are developing. To help with this expansion of our partnership with *Second Harvest* we are excited to have Joy Weadick, a *Whitworth* health sciences student, as an intern for the summer through Whitworth's new Office of Church Engagement.

We also have had meetings in recent weeks with *Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Spokane and Goodwill Good Guides*. These are both mentoring programs that are potential partners for developing site-based afterschool programs in the Millwood Community Center.

We plan to pursue grant-funding to hire staff to coordinate these kinds of programs and a key to success in that will be strong partnerships. Given these early conversations we are well positioned to launch program in the fall of 2015.

Finance Update

Thanks to the generous donations of members and friends of MCPC, we were able to finish 2014 with small \$1,200 deficit out of an overall budget of \$460,000.

Along with that, there were many year-end donations to the Open Doors Capital Campaign. As a result we have paid off the \$16,000 short-term loan to the Endowment Trust and we are in a strong position to handle our first year of long-term loan payments. That will give us time to develop our plans to create enough income from renting the new building to cover a majority of our annual debt obligations.

Pastor Craig and the Session challenged the congregation in November to increase giving to the Operating Fund and you responded with an increase in pledges of \$16,000 over what was received in 2014. Because of this, the Session has set a budget for 2015 that allows us to maintain our mission commitments, covers increasing maintenance expenses and gives cost-of-living and performance increases for staff.

Thank you for your generous support of Millwood Presbyterian.

Per Capita 2015

Every year a large part of our mission giving goes to the Presbytery of the Inland Northwest, the regional body of 48 Presbyterian churches, with a much smaller amount going to the national denominational body. A "Per Capita" or per-member dollar amount is used to determine this amount, which in 2015 is \$37/member or \$18,500 in MCPC's budget. If you would like to donate your individual or family Per Capita amount, you can use an envelope from the pew and indicate "Per Capita" on the memo field. If you have questions please call Lesa 924-2350 or email her at lesa@millwoodpc.org.

Your Church In Action: Ministry To Shut-Ins

By Jim Kujala

In January, 1980, Pastor Lou Prues, assisted by Pastor Ray Blackstone, implemented a plan for a new group of people, selected from the Millwood Community Presbyterian Church (MCPC) Board of Deacons (including the in-coming inductees), that would be trained in visitation to visit members of the Congregation experiencing personal situations that rendered them unable to receive church attention outside of normal avenues. This would include those in hospitals, nursing or retirement homes or even confined to their own residence. Duties would be more specific than those routinely assigned to Deacons spelled out in the *Book of Order*, but less than those assigned to ordained Clergy. Hence, Lay Ministry/Ministers. (LM)

During the middle to late 70's, a resurgence of the idea and calling of Lay Ministers resulted in many publications offering "How To" training and opened the doors for a class atmosphere.

A group of seven people who volunteered from the Board of Deacons embarked on a weekly schedule for eight months; after which, the training really began with the on the job training-serious now!

The number of those visited (referred collectively as "Shut-Ins") varied from 50 to 60, while the LM group varied from five to ten with each LM visiting at least once a month more than ten people. The Shut Ins were considered, as with the Deacons, a flock although the flock was fluid; as personal situations changed. Activities changed also.

After the initial training was completed, LM had their own monthly meetings, held on the first Tuesday, separate from the Board of Deacons so, annually, one person from either group would be

assigned as Liaison to keep continuity between both.

An annual reunion day was established to bring all those being visited together. The first day resulted in many friends commenting: "I haven't seen her in 40 ears." This get-together transformed into a weekly "Senior Day" with food from *Meals on Wheels* and usually a card game of Pinochle, Bridge or Canasta-remember those? These activities ceased after the average age of the Congregation lowered and the flock size diminished.

The church organizational make-up was modified in 1984 and the LM and Board of Deacons became part of the Ministry and Mission of MCPC.

The original group functioned together for three years, but lives and people change and it was obvious that continued training for in-coming members was necessary with the best resource right at hand from those with the experiences gained from serving. A guide was drawn up garnered from those experiences and condensed into five pages of what, where, when and how to advise; printed in a handy pamphlet completed in 1984. It contained the information just as apropos today as then.

Nearly 100 volunteers have served and for some special occasions, the Congregation has stepped up to provide additional help. Pastoral Staff has assisted with the visitation, Communion and training throughout the years.

Celebrating Lay Ministry

On Sunday, February 22 at both services we will celebrate over three decades of caring for homebound and shut-ins through Lay Ministry. If you are interested in learning more about being a part of this, please contact the church office at christy@millwoodpc.org or 509-924-2350.