



The Messenger



December 2023

Selah United Methodist Church

Mark's Remarks

Advent is the traditional four-week season of preparation preceding the celebration of Christmas. For most of us, gift-giving is an important part of our Christmas observance. I know of many whose Advent emphasis includes planning, shopping and providing meaningful gifts to members of our family, to our friends and to the needs of the poor. Our culture encourages the giving of gifts at Christmastime.

While the Apostle Paul reminds us that it is more blessed to give than to receive, I pray that our Advent journey finds a balance between finding the perfect gift to give and receiving the perfect gifts God offers us.

The four Advent Sundays of worship, marked by the four candles of the Advent wreath, draw attention to the extraordinary gifts bestowed upon us by the birth of Jesus Christ: hope, peace, joy, and love. These gifts, rooted in the profound grace of God, offer comfort and inspiration as we journey through the challenges of life.

The first candle we light symbolizes God's gift of hope, a beacon in the midst of darkness. In a world often shadowed by uncertainty, we find assurance in the promise of a Savior, the fulfillment of God's plan to bring the light of hope to our world, to our lives, and to the world through our lives.

The second candle represents God's gift of peace, a peace that surpasses our understanding. In a world filled with turmoil, we seek the tranquility that comes from resting in the arms of our Prince of Peace. The light of this candle reminds us to embrace the stillness that Christ offers, allowing it to permeate our hearts, our homes, and the relationships we have with others.

God's gift of joy is the theme of the third week of Advent. Joy is a flame that dances with infectious energy. The joy of the Lord is our strength, and in the midst of life's challenges, we rejoice in the knowledge that our Savior has come and continues to be with us.

On the morning of Christmas Eve, the fourth Advent candle symbolizes God's gift of love—the very essence of God's nature. God is love and God's love came down at Christmas. Love is the divine gift that binds us together in unity. The candle of love is a shining invitation to live in God's love, sharing it generously with others.

This Advent season calls us to a deeper understanding of these themes, urging us to reflect on the significance of Christ's birth in our lives. It is a season of preparation, a time to open our hearts to the transformative power of hope, peace, joy, and love.



As we journey through Advent together, may our hearts be attuned to the whispers of the Holy Spirit, guiding us toward a renewed sense of purpose and a profound connection with God and one another.

I'll see you in church,

Pastor Mark

MISSION OUTREACH

Selah Naches Food Bank

Ten of us from SUMC attended the new food bank tour on November 16th. Members of the food bank board of directors were there, graciously and gratefully showing us around and answering questions. Becky Johnson presented our \$2500 Harvest Fest donation proceeds to Gena Franklin, Treasurer, who was very appreciative. The building space and advance planning are quite impressive! When in full operation, the warehouse will hold a lot of food; room temperature, fresh, cold and frozen with optimistic hopes of eventually serving 400 on their usual Monday and Friday schedule which will be one hour longer.



Tentative plans are to open in December. Until then, all the food in their now off-site storage center will be transferred and shelved. The Yakima Tennis Club has offered on November 27th to assist moving food to the new building.

The food bank is anxious to have new volunteers to help on Mondays and Fridays. You may contact Tammy or Dave Ripperger at 509-379-1715 for information if you would like to become a Selah Naches Food Bank volunteer.

Needless to say, the Selah Naches Food Bank will be especially busy in December, but they will continue to serve the community as they always do. They ask for donations that will add to a holiday meal. Your choice for side dishes, desserts, condiments, spices...whatever you add to your own holiday meal would be a good choice.

December is Holiday Meal Month, Your choice



Camp Hope

Camp Hope is full and works hard to keep all their 200 residents safe, warm, fed and with access to healthcare. It has been nice to have our Camp Hope visitors to our worship service. They have each expressed feeling welcomed. That is who we are!

Rod's House

During these cold days and nights, Rod's House on Naches is serving 50 teens and young people each weekday and the Days Inn Extreme Weather shelter is serving about 20 more. That is 70 homeless young people who are needing food, warm clothing and a warm place to spend the nights and mornings. As we tuck into our own warm beds, it is hard to imagine being outside.

For our Angel Tree this year, we have chosen Rod's House homeless teens to receive our Angel Tree gifts. Find the details here in a separate article. Twenty-five young people, mainly teens, have made a special gift request. **Please choose an Angel on December 3rd from the Angel Tree and return your wrapped gift the following Sunday, December 10th.**

WORSHIP TEAM REPORT

The Worship Team of Selah United Methodist Church met at the church on November 8th at 6:00 pm in the evening. The Team hoped that scheduling the meeting in the evening rather than the afternoon would encourage folks who had jobs that kept them from attending a meeting in the afternoon would be able to attend a meeting in the evening. There were no visitors to the meeting.

The Team had a lengthy discussion about the All-Saints service, specifically about who we were honoring at the service: was it to honor CHURCH MEMBERS who had died during the past year, or was it to include folks who had been active in the life of the church, but who had never joined the church. Church membership was on the minds of many because we were approaching the vote on becoming a "Reconciling Congregation", which would be restricted to members only voting. It was decided to recommend that ACTIVE CONSTITUENTS would be honored in the future. The next task was to decide what qualified someone as being ACTIVE. We finally decided that being in a church directory would qualify an individual or family from being considered active. The team will review this decision a year from now when All-Saints is in the planning stages.

The Team discussed how we wanted to recognize military veterans on Veteran's Day. It was decided we would invite veterans to stand at the end of the worship service, and offer a place at the front of the line at the potluck which followed the worship service on that day. The group discussed decorating the church for Advent/Christmas. It was decided that we would ask for 5-8 trees of varying heights. Some of the trees would be arranged in the Chancel



and the front of the Sanctuary. It was also decided to have an artificial tree in the Narthex that could be used for an "Angel Tree" or any other use. Someone on the Team agreed to provide a pre-lit tree for that purpose. We set a goal of having the trees in place by December 3rd, The first Sunday of Advent. The Advent Wreath will also be ready for that service. Kevin has scripts for the lighting of the Advent candles. The group would like to see groupings of folks this year, including one group of people who live alone, but who could work with others who live alone. We also suggested that some of the people be new to the congregation in the last year or so. Kevin will be asking people if they are willing to volunteer.

An invitation will be offered to the congregation to come to the decorating of the church on Saturday, December 2nd at 9:00 AM. There will be a Longest Night service on December 21st for those who have experienced the death of a loved one. There was also a discussion of whether to have Communion on the early Christmas Eve service, but that decision is up to the Pastor. The next meeting of the Team will be November 29th at Noon. That meeting, like all Team meetings, are open to any one who wishes to attend.

-- Kevin Dow



THANK YOU!! THANK YOU!! The congregation and friends of Selah United Methodist Church are AMAZING!! With God's guidance and answered prayers we have received a miracle this fall. Last summer the air conditioning unit for the Sanctuary failed and we spent the summer worshiping in the Fellowship Hall where it was much cooler. The trustee and finance teams went to work trying to figure out the best course of action to remedy the situation and come up with a plan to fix or replace what we had. A decision was made to replace all the heating and air conditioning units with high efficiency heat-pumps to service the entire original building space. Bids were obtained and the estimate came in at \$75,000. The plan was approved at the Charge Conference held on October 25th. We started the process to raise the funds needed and to apply for a loan with the Faith Foundation to allow us to get started with the replacement. A letter was sent out to all people that are currently attending or that have been touched by SUMC in the past in some way. With the amount of money that has been received and pledged to be given within the next week or two, we have enough to fund the project, **without the need for a loan from Faith Foundation.** We have \$72,007.04 in the bank as of November 28th. Any funds that continue to come in from the appeal that was mailed out will be used to help retire the existing loan with the Foundation we are paying off and to fund the yearly maintenance contract with Campbell and Company. By the time you see this



newsletter, installation of the new system will have begun and if all goes well, by next Sunday should be functioning.

Wouldn't it be wonderful to be able to continue to grow the giving to the Church in order to provide for capital needs/repairs. To have the ability to establish a capital reserves fund in our budget would truly be a gift from God for SUMC made possible by over and above regular giving. Handicap accessible restrooms, easier access to the Chancel area of the sanctuary... what else can you add to the list. God will help us achieve great things, if we just pray and ask.

Again, thank you for the incredible generosity over the past 4 months.

Gail Davis

The Angel Tree



A month ago, Rod's House sent out a request for the community to help give Christmas gifts to their young people. After contacting, Enya, the delightful person in charge, we have 25 names, all teenagers ages 13 - 17, with their Christmas requests. You will see that it will be a little different than in years passed. Rod's House staff asked that there be a limit of \$50 while at the same time saying that **no gift** needs to be valued as high as \$50. Some of the gift requests are for items far less \$50 in value. One young girl requested a journal and pens and pencils. Choose the gift that pleases you, but spend only what you can. A gift card toward the item you chose is perfectly acceptable if choose to not buy the specific item but instead a gift card that can be used toward purchase of the item. For example, if a teen requests a pair of boots, and you want to only spend \$25, buy a gift card to be used towards the purchase of the boots. Another option is to partner with someone and split the cost to buy the one item. If the requested item cannot be purchased for \$50, (too expensive) a gift card is perfectly within the guidelines. It may sound a little confusing here, but it should be clear when you see the angels. We have 25 angels and probably that many or more who would like to buy a Christmas gift. If you want to contribute, a restaurant gift card or Walmart, Target or other gift card can be added to smaller gifts such as the journal request or given to Rod's House to gift to others who did not complete a request card. Please keep in mind the \$50 limit.

Please choose an angel on Sunday, December 3rd and return your wrapped gift with the angel attached and a Christmas label with the name of your teen. Thank you, everyone.

You are the best!



Community Invited to Nativity Open House Dec. 17



SUMC will continue its tradition of sharing the beauty and wonder of nativity sets with the community during a church open house Sunday, December 17, 1:30 - 4 p.m. You are invited to bring your nativity set(s) to the church December 10-14 for display during the open house. Please include your name, and anything special about the origin of the set.

BAKE SALE: As part of the open house, the United Women in Faith will be hosting a bake sale. Donations of Christmas goodies and baked goods are welcome in support of this sale.

Nativity scenes in all their various form are a wonderful way to share the story of Christ's birth. Invite your family, friends, neighbors and community organizations to join you for this open house. Refreshments will be served. For more information, contact Lisa Williams.

SUMC to Host December Blood Drive

SUMC will host the Selah Red Cross Blood Drive, December 14, 1-6 p.m., at the Selah Civic Center. Our duties include staffing the registration table and the refreshment station. As a gift to the community, we'd like to provide homemade holiday cookies for this drive.

If you are available to volunteer for a 2-hour shift and/or donate cookies, please contact Lisa Williams (509-539-6083). There also will be a sign-up sheet in the narthex. If you are eligible to donate blood, please consider participating in the December 14 drive. To sign up, visit redcrossblood.org and enter zip code 98942. Give the gift of life...donate blood.

Remember to follow SUMC on Facebook and Instagram...share with friends.



Selah United Women in Faith

There is an organization called Voices for Children that had so many children that needed shoes!

Cheryl and Chuck Natland and Tressa Cummings took the donations we collected this summer to Voices for Children. We asked them what they needed. Always underwear, but also shoes. They can be gently used tennis shoes or brand-new shoes. Any size shoes. they serve infants - 18 yrs. Selah United Women in Faith will be collecting tennis shoes through December. So, if you have children, grandchildren, neighbor kids, friends with



kids , maybe you have a pair of tennis or you would like to buy a pair of shoes for a foster child, there will be a collection bin in the Narthex next to the table where you pick up your worship bulletin.





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We are working with Voices for Children to come talk about their program at one of our potlucks. There will be no December Meeting.

Don't forget Sunday, December 17th is our Breakfast Breads and other goodies Bake Sale. Let us help you with your last-minute holiday baking.

-Tressa Cummings, Selah UWF President

Cookie Sign Up List

I'm needing a little help with cookies for Sunday Coffee Time. There is a sign up sheet in the Narthex. You can sign up for yourself or with a friend and share the baking. Or, on Sunday drop off a dozen or two and leave for me in the Simonson Room and I'll add to what we have. We go through about 5 dozen per week.

Thank you so much.

Donna Ruud



READ ON

"You can never get a cup of tea large enough or a book long enough to suit me." — C.S. Lewis.

Book Bunch Gathers virtually on Tuesday, December 12, 7:00 PM, to talk about *Christmas at Carnton*, a novella by Tamera Alexander. We'll linger for social time with our favorite Christmas mugs, sweaters and baubles.

The Bunch has an outing to Treveri Cellars in Wapato, Monday, December 4, 4:30 - 7 PM. We'll enjoy Christmas fellowship, just as the characters do in our December novella. If you'd like to participate, contact Glennis Wilson or Lee Hamilton.

On Tuesday, January 9, 7:00 PM, Bunch will return to *Bad Girls of the Bible* (our November selection). The expectation is to finish discussion of the book at this meeting. We'll preview the next novel which the group will choose in December.

Meetings are generally held on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month. However, some regular attendees have scheduling conflicts, so a second January meeting hasn't yet been set. That said...

...We'll **read on**, as usual, through May or June before a summer hiatus. There's a running list of past books read and future suggested titles. If you'd like to check out the list or get information, contact Lee Hamilton. Come read Christian-inspired novels and share your personal perspectives with a lively group.

Lee Hamilton



Ladies Circle

Ladies Circle will be meeting Thursday December 7th at 1:00PM in the Simonson Room. Circle donated \$1,500 to the HVAC fund. The donation was made possible by all of you supporting our fund raisers. It is what makes these kind of donations happen, and we thank you for supporting us.

Sadly, Circle has again lost two of our dear members. Both of their families were able to utilize our church for services in November. LaVerne Nelson and Dorothy Justice were members for many years and helped with projects in so many ways. We thank them for their support, friendship and love. We miss them very much.

All gals are invited to come to our meeting December 7th. Gail & Karen Davis are hosting.

Donna Ruud, President

Newsletter Article Due Date Change

Because of travel plans I have at the end of December, I need to change the date for submitting newsletter articles for the January 2024 newsletter. Articles are due to me on December 23. I am leaving town on December 27, so if I do not have your article by December 26, it will not be in the newsletter. Sorry for such a short turn around, but it is necessary if we are to have a January newsletter. We have had so much going on that I suspect that will continue in January so a newsletter is an important way to keep our church family informed.

Becky Johnson

First Kids Fun Day a Success

On November 26 the first kids fun day after church was held. Twelve kid ages 6 to 14 participated with a pizza lunch and then craft time. The kids made advent wreaths and Christmas tree ornaments, some of which will be on the tree in the Narthex. The kids had a great time, as did the adults who were supervising. Thank you Lisa Williams for organizing the activity and Tereica Kaumheimer, Debbie Jespersion, Margaret Antanaitis, and Becky Johnson for working with the kids.





S.O.A.P. BIBLE STUDY NOVEMBER

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Rom. 5-8 | 17. 2 Pet. 1-3; John 1 |
| 2. Rom. 9-12 | 18. John 2-4 |
| 3. Rom. 13-16 | 19. John 5-6 |
| 4. Eph. 1-4 | 20. John 7-8 |
| 5. Eph. 5-6; Ps. 119; 1-80 | 21. John 9-11 |
| 6. Phil. 1-4 | 22. John 12-14 |
| 7. Col. 1-4 | 23. John 15-18 |
| 8. 1 Tim. 1-4 | 24. John 19-21 |
| 9. 1 Tim. 5-6; Titus 1-3 | 25. 1 John 1-5 |
| 10. 2 Tim. 1-4 | 26. Ps. 117, 119:81-176; 2 Jn.; 3 Jn. |
| 11. Philemon; Heb. 1-4 | 27. Rev. 1-4 |
| 12. Heb. 5-8 | 28. Rev. 5-9 |
| 13. Heb. 9-11 | 29. Rev. 10-14 |
| 14. Heb. 12-13; Jude | 30. Rev. 15-18 |
| 15. James 1-5 | 31. Rev. 19-22 |
| 16. 1 Pet. 1-5 | |

The S.O.A.P. Journal Method

Scripture – Read the passage & copy a verse, a work or a phrase that captures your attention.

Observation – Write a brief summary of what speaks to you from the passage.

Application – Write down how this Bible passage applies to you right now.

Pray – Complete your study time by writing a prayer based on your reading.

FINANCE REPORT

Giving was down in September. Below is how our giving the last two months compared to our expenses:

	September	October	Year to Date
Income	\$8,008.48	\$11,569.66	\$101,224.96
Expenses	\$10,387.50	\$11,048.95	\$112,077.37
Plus/Minus	(\$2,379.02)	\$ 520.71	(\$10,852.41)



December Celebrations

Birthdays

- 6 Cyndi Appelhof
- 8 Elaine Dow
- 9 Donna Davis Morales
- 10 Sally Warren
- 17 Jason Hoselton
- 17 Cindy Parkey
- 18 Tressa Cummings
- 25 Holly Campbell
- 27 Teresa Nelson
- 28 Benjamin Antanaitis III
- 28 Judie Brown

Anniversaries

No anniversaries this month



If you are relatively new to the church (began attending in last couple years) or have not seen your birthday or anniversary listed, please let Becky know your birthday and anniversary so we can celebrate with you. You can email her at bjoh461@fairpoint.net or call 509-969-7565

ZOOM LINKS

SUMC Sunday Service Time: 10:30 a.m.

<https://greaternw.zoom.us/j/692949701?pwd=LzlNSWYyT1BGUzNhVHc0ME9ydnBLQT09>

Meeting ID: 692 949 701 Password: 021416

One tap mobile: +12532158782,,692949701#,,1#,021416# US (Tacoma)

ONLINE MEETING LINK

<https://greaternw.zoom.us/j/669186246?pwd=NmsxRGsrNktoaUI1NWdKaUxhbnlNQOT09>

Meeting ID: 669 186 246 Password: 848493

One tap mobile: +12532158782,,669186246#,,1#,848493# US (Tacoma)



DECEMBER CALENDAR

- 2 Decorate the Church @ 9:00 a.m.
- 3 UMM Men's Breakfast @ 8:00 a.m. in Fellowship Hall
Sunday Worship @ 10:30 a.m. in Sanctuary and via Zoom; Use link on prior page
Holy Communion First Sunday of Advent
Choose Rod's House Angel from the Angel Tree
Spiritual Gifts Class @ 7:00 p.m. in Upper Room at church
- 6 Pinochle Group @ 1:00 p.m. in Simonson Room; continuing every Wednesday
- 7 Pub Theology @ 6:00 p.m. at Daniel's Restaurant, Selah
- 10 Sunday Worship @ 10:30 a.m. in Sanctuary and via Zoom; use link on prior page
2nd Sunday of Advent
Potluck following worship in Fellowship Hall
Bring wrapped Angel Tree gifts to church
Spiritual Gifts Class @ 7:00 p.m. in Upper Room at church
- 12 Book Bunch @ 7:00 p.m. via Zoom. Use meeting link on prior page
- 13 Pinochle Group @ 1:00 p.m. in Simonson Room; continuing every Wednesday
- 14 American Red Cross Blood Drive 1:00 to 6:00 pm Hosted by SUMC
Pub Theology @ 6:00 p.m. at Daniel's Restaurant, Selah
- 17 Sunday Worship @ 10:30 a.m. in Sanctuary and via Zoom; use link on prior page
3rd Sunday of Advent
United Women in Faith Breakfast Bread Bake Sale following worship
Nativity Display Open House @1:30 to 4:00 p.m.
Spiritual Gifts Class @ 7:00 p.m. in Upper Room at church
- 20 Pinochle Group @ 1:00 p.m. in Simonson Room; continuing every Wednesday
- 21 Longest Night Service @ 6:00 p.m. in Sanctuary; First Day of Winter
- 22 4th Friday Fun Night @ 6:00 p.m.; Fellowship Hall – decorating miniature gingerbread houses
- 23 **Newsletter Articles Due**
- 24 Sunday Worship @ 10:30 a.m. in Sanctuary and via Zoom; use link on prior page
4th Sunday of Advent; Christmas Eve
Children's Service @ 4:00 p.m.
Family Service @ 7:00 p.m.
Late Service @ 11:00 p.m.
- 25 **Christmas Day**
- 26 Camp Hope Dinner organized and prepared by Wesley UMC and SUMC
- 27 Pinochle Group @ 1:00 p.m. in Simonson Room
- 28 Pub Theology @ 6:00 p.m. at Daniel's Restaurant, Selah
- 31 Sunday Worship @ 10:30 a.m. in Sanctuary and via Zoom; use link on prior page
1st Sunday after Christmas Day – Flannel Sunday

Selah United Methodist Church

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Growing Into the Image of Christ

Pastor Mark Williams Contact Information:

Cell phone: (509)628-6405

Email: aha.experience@icloud.com

Newsletter articles for the
January newsletter are due

December 23

Articles can be emailed to

bjoh461@fairpoint.net

Mission Statement

“As a sacred body that worships God, we feed the soul of our communities, serve the needs around us, and open our hearts in respectful acceptance of all.”

Vision Statement

“To be an energized faith community.”