



The Messenger



Selah United Methodist Church

February 2022

Let me start with some housekeeping. For now, I am working from my home in Lakewood on Mondays and Tuesday and driving back over the pass on Wednesdays, I then stay in Selah through Sunday and drive back to Lakewood Sunday afternoon. Anyone who wants to contact me can reach me on my cell phone, 253-229-0340. If it is important, or pertains to life and death, call me anytime. If it is run of the mill church work, please call between 10:00 am and 10:00 pm. My office hours are from 10:00 am till 4:30 or 5 pm. Though we are still social distancing and following Covid guidelines, I am willing to talk to just about anyone as long as we keep the numbers small and wear masks. I am still figuring out how to make this all work. I thank you for your patience.

So much for the nitty gritty stuff. Last week I mentioned that I am an Air Force veteran. I went in in 1970 and got out in 1974 with an honorable discharge. Though I am not technically a Viet Nam vet, I did spend a year in Southeast Asia at Utapao, Thailand from May of '71 till May of '72. From the summer of 1969 until the summer of 1978, I wandered through a mixed and crazy time. I was off and on using and abusing drugs and alcohol, was married and divorced, and went through the death of one of my best friends. It was the loss of my younger brother Tommy when I really began to get my life back together. I did illegal things, things that I should have been incarcerated for, things that were bad for me and for the people around me. I am a 44-year sober drug addict. What really pulled me out was a young adult retreat at Lazy F where I came face to face with God and Jesus and where I met the woman I am still married to. That happened in September of 1979, 42 plus years ago. Some may want to ask why share this stuff. I share it to be transparent. I share it to try to help others. I stumbled and crawled through the valley of the shadow of death and God pulled me out. I share it to let everyone know that stumbles, even face plants, from the past should not define the rest of life. They can help shape the rest of life, but with God anyone can rise above mistakes of the past. Because of people in several churches, because of several pastors, and because of many youth and young adults who ministered to me through the United Methodist Camping program, I am blessed with the good life I have right now. I also share this stuff to let everyone know that just because I am an ordained Elder, I too have struggled with life. This month I have been preaching from Paul's letters and one of the main messages is of radical equality. Paul said that all who are baptized are radically equal but I say,



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everyone, even those unbaptized, those who are outside the church, those who have never been exposed to the infinite love and forgiveness that comes to us through Jesus, are equal to us. Before I truly confirmed the vows made for me at my baptism, long before I recognized God's call, God's Holy Spirit lived in me, knew me, and I firmly believe that God's Holy Spirit is the only reason I am alive today. God didn't do this for me because I am special; God did this for me because I am human, because God loves everyone, because Jesus came to teach us the better way, the way of God's love and forgiveness.

Let me tell you one thing I know for sure. God loves you! And God forgives you! You are a child of God, part of God's incredible creation, and God wants the very best life for you. Even before you begin to know Jesus or the teachings of Christ, God loves and forgives you. That's what God did for me. That's what God does for everyone.

Yours in Christ's Work,
Jim Simpson

Mission Outreach



The Selah Food Bank has had its weather and virus difficulties though January. There were several days of closure because volunteers who live out of town could not travel into town. Other closures were necessary for Covid quarantining. But in recent reports on Facebook, the food bank is again healthy and the shelves are looking good with produce and canned goods and more. NW Harvest and the local community, including SUMC, reliably provide food supplies to the good food bank volunteers who distribute to those who depend on the food bank. The photo is from a recent Facebook post. We can keep up our generosity.

February is Boxed Dinner and Cereal Month or your choice of any non-perishable food item

Our small food pantry continues to be regularly visited by members of our community, who most certainly appreciate having it available on days the Selah Food Bank is closed. Popular items are cereal, boxed dinners (hamburger helper, macaroni and cheese, etc.) and canned pasta meals (spaghetti, ravioli, etc). Thanks to all who have contributed and continue to do so. Rod's House generous severe weather arrangement with Motel 6 continues to be a warm and safe haven for Yakima area young people during the very cold nights.



Camp Hope and Noah's Ark has been able to keep homeless adults and families inside and with warm food. Wesley cooks and bakers provided one of their hearty meals last week with chicken tortilla casserole, refried beans, their favorite coleslaw, brownies and milk. The residents are always so appreciative of so much delicious and hot food. It is hard to know who is most rewarded, the residents or the Wesley and SUMC servers.

WORSHIP TEAM REPORT

The Worship Team met January 13th at 2:00 PM in the Simonson Room. The group discussed feedback on events and worship services since its last meeting. The Team expressed gratitude to both Mark Williams and Jim Simpson for the smooth transition part way through the Advent Season. People expressed appreciation for the diversity of the families that lit the Advent candles at the beginning of each service. The early Christmas Eve service attracted about the same number of people who worship on a typical Sunday, and the "Midnight" service drew about a dozen. Cheryl mentioned at one of the Christmas Eve services they attended had glow sticks for the children instead of lit candles, and we may want to try that in the future.

We discussed virtual worship on Zoom. It was noted that the pictures are grainy and thought it might be caused by the combined use of an iPad and Chromebook. We have been experimenting with trying to include the PowerPoint presentations that have been appearing on the screens in the Sanctuary, but have not been successful so far. A group of our tech people will be meeting with Conference staff to see what hardware and software might be needed to integrate the different elements into the virtual worship services.

As you probably know it was decided due to the meteoric rise of COVID infections to suspend in-person worship at least through the end of January and will decide if it will be safe to gather after that. It was also decided to recommend to the Council that Sunday School be suspended until some point in the future.

We discussed the use of the new "chalice" communion sets and felt that they are much more usable because they are less likely to spurt grape juice when opening, and the bread is much more accessible at the opposite end from the juice.

The church will order Eco-Palms again this year and Jim will explore the possibility of inviting Wesley to order along with us. That way we save some shipping and can divide the number of branches needed more efficiently. It was noted that sunrise on Easter morning is at 6:11 am.

UMCOR Sunday is March 27. In the past we have had presentations from members who had gone to the UMCOR Distribution Center in Salt Lake City and have shared their experiences with the congregation. Now that the Salt Lake Depot has closed, we can no longer do that, but are investigating the possibility of obtaining a video for that service.



The Team will meet next at 2:00 pm on February 10th. At that meeting, the Team will discuss Lenten services, including Ash Wednesday (March 2nd), Palm Sunday (April 10th), Maundy Thursday (April 14th), Good Friday (April 15th) and Easter (April 17th). As always, the meetings are open to anyone to observe or to provide input to the Team.

Kevin Dow



TO BE OR NOT TO BE . . . A RECONCILING CHURCH

Several months ago, the church council made a decision to EXPLORE the feasibility of SUMC becoming a reconciling church.

So what is a reconciling church? Well, within the United Methodist denomination, it's a church which includes within its Mission Statement a welcome statement which affirms, or values, all who desire to worship Jesus Christ.

The wording the reconciling ministry has asked to be used is as follows: "We celebrate God's gift of diversity and value the wholeness made possible in community equally shared and shepherded by all. We welcome and affirm people of every gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation, who are also of every age, race, ethnicity, physical and mental ability, level of education, and family structure, and of every economic, immigration, marital, and social status, and so much more. We acknowledge that we live in a world of profound social, economic, and political inequities. As followers of Jesus, we commit ourselves to the pursuit of justice and pledge to stand in solidarity with all who are marginalized and oppressed."

A frequently asked question is: "We already have a Mission Statement which says we welcome all, why do we need a different statement"? The reason is this: All main stream churches say they are welcoming, but the reality is they often don't appear welcoming to those who are marginalized. This very specific wording tells all who consider themselves marginalized, that they are truly welcome and will be embraced by the church family.

Currently, there is only one affirming church in the entire Yakima Valley. There exists a need in the valley for more affirming congregations and we have the opportunity to become one.



In the weeks ahead, various members of the congregation will be reaching out to you to find out what you feel are the pros and cons of SUMC becoming a reconciling church. Everyone will have input!

Ron Drew



What does the technology future look like for Selah United Methodist Church?

A group of us met via Zoom with two gentlemen for the Conference that are very "tech savvy" to begin the process to find out what we need in order to be able to provide quality worship service

transmission over the internet both when we are not able to worship in person and also to be able to continue the service after in-person worship can resume. We want to be able to provide the ability for people that can't make it to the church building to be able to continue to have a quality worship service at home.

We are going to need HELP. We have a few people that have been doing the "tech" stuff since Noah left and we appreciate their efforts. We need to have more people volunteer to learn the workings of the equipment and commit to being available some Sundays run the system. We hope to get enough people involved that we can have two or three teams of two people to run the system so that it doesn't have to be an overbearing commitment. It would be nice to have enough that you would responsible for one or two Sundays a month.

The next question to ponder is how much is it going to cost to get the equipment necessary to pull this off. We were extremely fortunate to have Dirk and Noah during the pandemic when we had to be out of the building and then the transition back to in-person worship since they had the computer and camera equipment necessary to get the job done. But that equipment all went to the other Washington area with them. We have been trying operate using a Chromebook and I-pad, but the end product hasn't been great. We are going to need to purchase new equipment including a computer (either laptop or desktop), a camera and a few other pieces to be able to put it all together. We don't know yet what the total package will be, but I am pretty sure we are going to need to ask for some extra giving from the congregation designated for this project. This is just a heads up notification at this point.

If anyone would like to join us for our next zoom meeting to continue the discussion on this project, we would very much appreciate your input. We will meet Tuesday evening, February 1st at 7:00 PM. We will use the Zoom Check-in link:

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

Meeting ID: 669 186 246 Password: 848493

Hope to see some of you at this meeting and hope to have all of you on board with going forward with this project.

Gail Davis



United
Methodist
Women

FAITH • HOPE • LOVE IN ACTION

Selah UMW

January is Human Trafficking Awareness Month. I like to bring our attention to this injustice in February due to the Super Bowl. United Methodist Women in the past have made their presence known outside the Super Bowl Stadium by passing out information cards and holding signs about

Human Trafficking. The Super Bowl. this is one of the biggest events where Traffickers can make a lot of money from sex trafficking to forced labor. Here is the latest information on Human Trafficking.

There are estimated to be more than 24.9 million people — adults and children — subjected to human trafficking around the world, including in the United States. Traffickers often take advantage of instability caused by natural disasters, conflict, or a pandemic to exploit others. During the COVID-19 pandemic, traffickers are continuing to perpetrate the crime, finding ways to innovate and capitalize on the chaos. Between 1.6 and 2.8 million youth run away in a year. While trying to survive on the streets, youth are exposed to countless dangers, with an increased likelihood of substance abuse, depression, posttraumatic stress disorder, and a vulnerability to being trafficked.

Signs of human Trafficking:

- Does the person appear disconnected from family, friends, community organizations, or houses of worship?
- Has a child stopped attending school?
- Has the person had a sudden or dramatic change in behavior?
- Is a juvenile engaged in commercial sex acts?
- Is the person disoriented or confused, or showing signs of mental or physical abuse?
- Does the person have bruises in various stages of healing?
- Is the person fearful, timid, or submissive?
- Does the person show signs of having been denied food, water, sleep, or medical care?
- Is the person often in the company of someone to whom he or she defers? Or someone who seems to be in control of the situation, e.g., where they go or who they talk to?
- Does the person appear to be coached on what to say?
- Is the person living in unsuitable conditions?
- Does the person lack personal possessions and appear not to have a stable living situation?
- Does the person have freedom of movement? Can the person freely leave where they live? Are there unreasonable security measures?
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Not all indicators listed above are present in every human trafficking situation, and the presence or absence of any of the indicators is not necessarily proof of human trafficking. **Tip line from the National Human Trafficking Hotline: 1-888-373-7888** or text **HELP** or **INFO** to: **BeFree (233733)**

Our next meeting is February 15th at 7:00 pm via zoom link Check in

<https://greaternw.zoom.us/j/669186246?pwd=NmsxRGsrNktoaUI1NWdKaUxhbnlNQTO9>

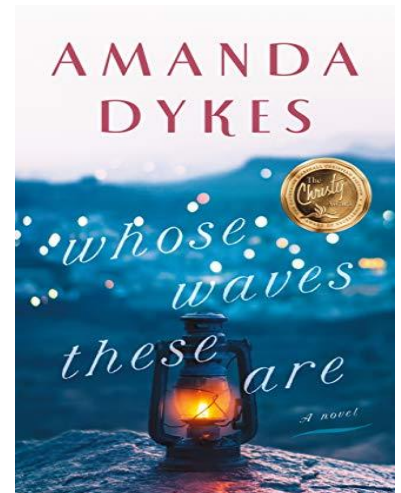
Tressa Cummings, UMW President

BOOK BUNCH TO READ CHRISTY AWARD WINNER

The Selah UMC Book Bunch continues to meet twice monthly on Zoom, usually the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month at 7:00 PM. There's lively discussions about the Christian fiction works we select to read. Participants enjoy relating the stories and characters to their own lives, and to their faith journeys. Of course, there's lots of camaraderie, laughs and occasional in-person gatherings.

In March, we're going to begin reading a popular book: *Whose Waves These Are* (2019) by Amanda Dykes. This book, set in a little town on the coast of Maine, is the winner of 2020 Christy Award Book of the Year.** It is available as an e-book on Amazon Kindle for \$1.99 (limited time offer), and is widely available in print, new and used. See a summary and reviews of the book here:

<https://www.goodreads.com/en/book/show/42196507-whose-waves-these-are>



Book Bunch might appeal to you if you're interested in light, Christian-oriented fiction and would enjoy fellowship with other readers. Participants are welcome to attend at any time. For more info, get in touch with Lee Hamilton at 509-907-9074 [cell]; leehamilton88@gmail.com

**Since 1999, the Christy Awards have honored Christian novels of excellence, imagination, and creativity.

Lee Hamilton



FEBRUARY Celebrations

Birthdays

- 1 Cody Natland
- 3 Ron Johnson
Lynn Hoselton
Tereica Kaumheimer
- 9 Brandy Voight
- 10 Brianna Smith
- 12 Curtis Natland
- 14 Linda Drew
Dorothy Justice
- 15 Destiny Baynes
- 17 Debbie Jespersen
Noah Zalewski
- 26 Garrett Brown
Dillon Hulse

Anniversaries

No one in our group tied the knot in February



Finance Update

Although this past year had its own sets of challenges for the church, we ended the year in a good place financially. Our income last year exceeded our expenses, we had all of our apportionments paid by the middle of December and are starting the new year with money in the bank. Unfortunately, a major contributor to our financial stability was Dirk leaving the end of August, and our temporary pulpit supply costs being substantially less than what a full-time pastor would be paid. Please keep this mind as you determine how you are able to help support the finances of the church. Look forward to financial updates periodically as the year progresses.

Becky Johnson

ZOOM LINKS

SUMC Sunday Service

Time: 10:30 a.m.

Join Zoom Meeting

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

Meeting ID: 692 949 701 Password: 021416

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



THURSDAY CHECK-IN

10:00 am THURSDAY check-in. Join Zoom:

<https://greaternw.zoom.us/j/669186246?pwd=NmsxRGsrNktoaUI1NWdKaUxhbmlNQOT09>

Meeting ID: 669 186 246 Password: 848493

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

FEBRUARY CALENDAR

- 1 First Day of Black History Month
Coffee Hour @ 9:30 am via Zoom; Continuing every Tuesday
Use weekly check-in link on this page to join
- 2 Ground Hog Day
Church Tech meeting @ 7:00 pm via Zoom; use check-in link
- 3 Weekly Check-in @ 10:00 am via Zoom; Continuing every Thursday
Use link on this page to join Zoom
Pub Theology @ 6:00 pm via Zoom; use weekly check-in link
- 6 UMM Breakfast Cancelled this month due to COVID protocols
Sunday Worship @ 10:30 am via Zoom
Holy Communion; 5th Sunday After Epiphany
See link on prior page to join via Zoom
- 8 Book Bunch @ 7:00 pm via Zoom; use check-in link on this page to join
- 10 Worship Team Meeting @ 2:00 pm via Zoom
- 13 Sunday Worship @ 10:30 am via Zoom
6th Sunday After Epiphany
See link on prior page to join via Zoom
- 14 Valentines Day
- 15 UMW Meeting @ 7:00 pm via Zoom, use check-in link on this page
- 16 Church Council @ 6:30 pm, via Zoom,
- 20 Sunday Worship @ 10:30 am via Zoom
7th Sunday After Epiphany
See link on prior page to join via Zoom
- 21 President's Day (Office Closed)
- 22 Book Bunch @ 7:00 pm via Zoom; use check-in link on this page to join
Camp Hope Dinner, prepared and delivered by Wesley with help from SUMC
- 25 Newsletter Articles Due
- 27 Sunday Worship @ 10:30 am, via Zoom
Transfiguration Sunday
See link on prior page to join via Zoom

Selah United Methodist Church

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Growing Into the Image of Christ

Pastor Jim Simpson Contact Information:

Cell phone: (253) 229-0340

Email: grampajim2014@gmail.com

Newsletter articles for the
February newsletter are due
January 25

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.”