



# The Messenger



Selah United Methodist Church

January 2023

## ***Mark's Remarks***

In our tradition, dating back to the earliest days of the Christian church, we have incorporated and adapted to seasons and festivals in other cultures in order to make the teachings of our faith more accessible to people outside the church. The church, at its best, finds ways to adapt to its setting to communicate its message, while staying true to the timeless truth of the Gospel itself.

The place where I see this adaptation presently underway is in the loosening of the strict observance of Advent Season during the four weeks before Christmas Day. Our tradition says that Christmas is a season of twelve days from December 25 to Epiphany on January 6. More and more churches are adapting their practices to be more in sync with the mindset of our surrounding culture that thinks of Christmas as a season starting the weekend after Thanksgiving and ending on Christmas Day. This conforming to the culture bothers some and comes as a relief to others. It doesn't matter to me one way or the other.

Whether our practice observes the end of Christmas as December 25 or as January 6, we are left with the need to confront an important question: Now that Christmas is over, what are we supposed to do? For an answer I turn to a song by Jim Strathdee that's an old favorite of mine. It's called "I Am the Light of the World." The song speaks of Christ's invitation to follow his life and example. The first verse profoundly states: "When the song of the angels is stilled, when the star in the sky is gone, when the kings and the shepherds have found their way home *the work of Christmas is begun.*"

As we move through January, our celebration of Christmas is past and "the work of Christmas is begun." We follow the example set by the shepherds and the magi, all of whom journeyed from the manger to proclaim and share what God has done. Strathdee describes the work ahead in the remaining verses of the song. Our post-Christmas work is:

To find the lost and lonely one,  
To heal that broken soul with love,  
To feed the hungry children with warmth and good food,  
To feel the earth below, the sky above!



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To free the prisoner from all chains,  
To make the powerful care,  
To rebuild the nations with strength of goodwill,  
To see God's children everywhere!

To bring hope to every task you do,  
To dance at a baby's new birth,  
To make music in an old person's heart,  
And sing to the colors of the earth!

May these words shape our life together and our vision for the coming year as we enter 2023!  
I'll see you in church,

**Mark**

## MISSION OUTREACH

Our Mission Outreach will be the same and continuous for January and February. The cold weather needs, including food, will be posted the same for January and February. Lists are also on the bulletin board. Our congregation, YOU, always contribute generously as you consider the needs of the time. I will list here Wish Lists as they are posted on the internet sites. Thank you, as always, for your generous spirit for our valley neighbors in need. Be sure to check the narthex bulletin board.

## Selah Naches Food Bank



The Selah Naches Food Bank is dependent on everyone in the Selah Naches area (and beyond) for the food and hygiene items that they distribute. Their shelves seem full, but they quickly deplete some of their more popular non-perishable food items so we need to keep helping with whatever we can give each month to the sanctuary grocery basket. They are slowly outgrowing their space at the Civic Center and are anxious to move into the new permanent Selah Naches Food Bank in the Spring. They always need **cereals, boxed meals like Hamburger Helper or Rice a Roni, chili, beans, soups, canned fruit and vegetables, juices, flour, sugar and other baking items**. Also, hygiene items especially including toothbrushes and toothpaste. So, the next two



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months are Your Choice months. Thank you for your always generous donations to our local food bank. The civic center food bank is open Monday and Friday from 9:00 - 11:00 am.

**January and February are Your Choice Months  
See the posted wish list on the bulletin board.**

## **Rod's House**

Rod's House volunteers and meal partners have stayed busy providing warm nourishing meals at two sites, Rods House on Naches Ave, and the Days Inn on N 1st, called their Extreme Weather site. They provide not only meals, but showers, clothing and laundry facilities, counseling, and safety for homeless and at-risk youth ages 13-24. Rods House is also hoping to open a permanent safe home in 2023. Each Wednesday, the volunteers post a Wish List on Facebook for donations. You can donate in the Simonson Room to the bin labeled Rod's House or you can order from the Rod's House Amazon Wishlist and have items shipped directly to Rod's House, 204 S Naches Ave, Yakima. They have a separate donation site to which you can donate directly to the Rod's House volunteers. Donation accepted daily at 314 Cherry Ave, Suite 119, Yakima.

Here is the most recent Wish List Wednesday list:

- **Toothbrushes and toothpaste**
- **Shampoo and conditioner, full and travel size**
- **Brushes and combs**
- **NEW underwear, men and women**
- **Sweatshirts and sweatpants**
- **Blankets and sleeping bags**
- **Hand and foot warmers**

## **Camp Hope**

Camp Hope tents and temporary shelters are full to the max. At one point, they were sheltering 250 homeless people. Wesley cooks and bakers provide a delicious hot meal every 4th Tuesday. Selah congregation helps as they are able with some food items and always with delivery and serving. It is cold, but the hungry residents come bundled with grateful smiles for the dinner that they know will fuel their cold hunger. The Camp Hope website also has a long wish list if you want to donate directly to the

Camp Hope entrance at 2300 E. Birch Street, Yakima behind the U-Haul trailer center. The long list is posted on the narthex bulletin board.



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Top of their list are **hand and foot warmers and warm clothes.**

Their shortened wish list of food and kitchen items includes:

- **Bottled water**
- **Pancake mix and syrup**
- **Instant Oatmeal**
- **Ground coffee and powdered fixings**
- **Pre-packaged snacks**
- **Large cans of chili, and Campbell soups**
- **Napkins**
- **Paper towels**
- **Paper Plates and bowls - Plastic utensils (forks, knives and spoons)**
- **Large black garbage bags**
- **Food service gloves, disposable gloves**

Additionally, they always need undergarments for men and women and children, bed supplies, personal hygiene items, pet items and money for gasoline for their minivan and vehicles.

Please know that some of our members have generously given of their time to transport members to and from Sunday worship. Some are braving the very cold temperatures in the evening to pass out handwarmers to residents who are warming, as they can, by bonfires outside at Camp Hope. Many of the residents are beginning to recognize familiar faces from Selah United Methodist Church as well as our loving mission outreach.

## **Parsonage open house**

Pastor Mark and Lisa Williams are opening the parsonage for a Christmas Open House from 6:30-8:30 p.m. on January 6. Mark and Lisa are excited to share their home with church members and friends. They hope everyone will stop by for light refreshment and fellowship in appreciation of the blessings they have received since moving to Selah. Mark is the sixth pastor to live in the church-owned parsonage since the house was built in 1996. He and Lisa have been with us since July. The address is 1404 W Orchard Ave, Selah.

COME ON IN

**OPEN  
HOUSE**



WELCOME

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## BOOK BUNCH INVITE

Book Bunch will start the new year with a new, award-winning novel, *The Edge of Belonging* (2020) by Amanda Cox. This novel is the 2021 Christy Award winner for best novel of the year, and for best first novel. What the book is about:

*When Ivy Rose returns to her hometown to oversee an estate sale, she soon discovers that her grandmother left behind more than trinkets ...--she provided a path to the truth behind Ivy's adoption. ...Ivy seeks clues to her past, but a key piece to the mystery is missing. Twenty-four years earlier, Harvey James finds an abandoned newborn... . His desire to care for the baby runs up against the stark fact that he is homeless. When he becomes entwined with two people seeking to help him find his way, Harvey knows he must keep the baby a secret or risk losing the only person he's ever loved. <https://www.parable.com/product/9780800737405>*

We're a dedicated group of readers who like to read--- and talk! We hope others will join in as we turn pages of Christian inspired fiction. You can attend anytime, perhaps for discussion of a particular book. We typically cover a novel in 2 or 3 sessions. Gatherings are held via the Zoom church meeting link, the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month at 7:00 PM.

Find out more from Lee Hamilton, or simply tune in.

## Selah United Women in Faith



Happy New Year! As United Women in Faith we have impacted and changed the lives of those in mission. We want to thank our congregation for supporting our mission projects. Our Bake and collections of pillows will help serve those that find themselves in circumstances out of their control. January is Human Trafficking Awareness Month. Let us not forget that people in our own neighborhoods or communities are being trafficked. Washington is one of the top states for Human Trafficking.

### What is Human Trafficking?

Human trafficking involves the use of force, fraud, or coercion to obtain some type of labor or commercial sex act. Every year, millions of men, women, and children are trafficked worldwide – including right here in the United States.



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In the United States, some of the most vulnerable populations include American Indian/Alaska Native communities, lesbian-gay-bisexual-transgender-questioning individuals, individuals with disabilities, undocumented immigrants, runaway and homeless youth, and low-income individuals. These victims are deceived by false promises of love, a good job, or a stable life and are lured or forced into situations where they are made to work under deplorable conditions with little or no pay.

Victims can be found in legal and illegal labor industries, including child care, elder care, the drug trade, massage parlors, hair salons, restaurants, hotels, factories, and farms. In some cases, victims are hidden behind doors in domestic servitude in a home. Others are in plain view, interact with people on a daily basis, and are forced to work under extreme circumstances in exotic dance clubs, construction, health and beauty services, or restaurants. In 2021, 10,359 situations of human trafficking were reported to the U.S. National Human Trafficking Hotline involving 16,554 individual victims. Shocking as these numbers are, they are likely only a fraction of the actual problem. If you suspect someone is being trafficked, call the national hotline 1-888-373-7888, Text "Be Free" 233733 or live chat [humantraffickinghotline.org](https://humantraffickinghotline.org)

We meet January 17<sup>th</sup> via Zoom church link. February 13<sup>th</sup> the United Women in Faith will be hosting the church potluck with a "Valentine's Day Theme".



## **INCLIMENTAL WEATHER CANCELLATIONS**

If the weather outside is frightful, and you have a meeting scheduled at Selah UMC, be sure to check our Facebook members page or the church webpage @ [selahumc.org](https://selahumc.org) for current cancellations. If you do not use a computer, feel free to call the leader of the meeting you are scheduled to attend. We will attempt to follow the Selah Schools closure announcements as a guideline.

## **New Year's Sunday**

New Year's Day falls on a Sunday this year. Our worship and Holy Communion service will center around the story of the Magi and the gifts they bring to Bethlehem. The liturgy will include John Wesley's covenant service, a distinctly United Methodist service renewing our commitment to follow Jesus Christ in the coming year



## S.O.A.P. Daily Scripture Reading

As the new year approaches, I continue to receive questions about Bible reading as a daily exercise. Back in October I invited the congregation to read a daily chapter from the Gospel of Mark. As Halloween approached, some of you asked, “What’s next?” So we read the Gospel of John and the letter of 1 John. For Advent I assigned the Gospel of Matthew, which ended on Christmas Day. Paul’s Letter to the Galatians took us to the end of the year.

This week, I was again asked: “What’s next?” As a New Year’s resolution, I suggest using the Life Journal Reading Plan, which I have followed since 2009. Those wanting to stick with one chapter per day can read the daily New Testament assignment and complete a reading of the New Testament before the end of August. Those who wish to up their game and follow the entire schedule of readings for each day will read through the entire Old Testament once and the New Testament twice by the end of the year.

The plan is designed for us to read, reflect, pray and journal as part of our regular devotional routine. In my reading over the years, I have learned that if I miss a day or two, the key to success is not to resume where I left off and try catch up. The key is to follow the assigned readings for the day I decide to resume my reading. I can always go back and catch up when I find the time. By following the schedule for each day, the backlog does not seem as important as the progress. That way the daily practice is more likely to be a gift, rather than a burden.

If you stop by the church, I’ll provide you with a S.O.A.P. bookmark listing the daily schedule of readings for the months of January and February. I’ll also see if I can figure out how to post the entire year’s schedule on the Members’ Face Book Page. In the meantime, here’s the January schedule of readings:

### January

1. Gen. 1-2; Luke 1
2. Gen. 3-5; Luke 2
3. Gen. 6-8; Luke 3b
4. Gen. 9-11; Luke 4
5. Gen. 12-14; Luke 5
6. Gen. 15-17; Luke 6
7. Gen. 18-19; Ps. 3; Luke 7
8. Gen. 20-22; Luke 8
9. Gen. 23-24; Luke 9
10. Gen. 25-26; Ps. 6; Luke 10
11. Gen. 27-28; Ps. 4; Luke 11
12. Gen. 29-30; Luke 12
13. Gen. 31-33; Luke 13
14. Gen. 34-36; Luke 14
15. Gen. 37-38; Ps. 7; Luke 15
16. Gen. 39-41; Luke 16
17. Gen. 42-43; Ps. 5; Luke 17
18. Gen. 44-46; Luke 18
19. Gen. 47-48; Ps. 10; Luke 19



- 20 .Gen. 49-50; Ps. 8; Luke 20
- 21. Ex. 1-2; Ps. 88; Luke 21
- 22. Ex. 3-5; Luke 22
- 23. Ex. 6-8; Luke 23
- 24. Ex. 9-11; Luke 24
- 25. Ex. 12-13; Ps. 21; Acts 1
- 26. Ex. 14-16; Acts 2
- 27. Ex. 17-20; Acts 3
- 28. Ex. 21-22; Ps. 12; Acts 4
- 29. Ex. 23-24; Ps. 14; Acts 5
- 30. Ex. 25-27; Acts 6
- 31. Ex. 28-29; Acts 7

## TO BE OR NOT TO BE A RECONCILING CHURCH



At Selah United Methodist Church we claim to be:

- Welcoming (friendly, accessible – “the door is always open”)
- Kind and caring (gracious, loving – “neighborly”)
- Open and accepting to all (handy, unrestricted, reachable)
- Even those who are different than we are.

I think we would all agree on this spirit and attitude of our church.

And I also think that most would agree that there is more we can do, to share this culture with folks who are unsure if it is safe for them to walk into our doors.

We’ve used the word marginalized when referring to the Reconciling Church, and I looked up the meaning. The word marginalized means: “Placed in a position of little or no importance, influence or power.” Wow . . .that’s a tough definition.

We know there is work to do, but as we studied the “Angels of Christmas” during this advent season it opened our eyes to the angels all around us. Let us **BE** those angels to our neighbors – any and all, but especially the marginalized population around us.

Debbie Jespersion

### A Personal Story on becoming a Reconciling Church:

Our brother, Marty, came out to our family as gay about 10 years ago. At the time, Marty was married and had two sons, ages 9 and 12. His announcement was a shock; however, every member of our family supported him and did all we could to help him and his family through the difficulties that resulted.

Sometimes, we can love someone unconditionally and think that is enough to help them overcome adversity, but for some, it takes much more. As Christians, our faith in God takes over to guide us on those journeys. Marty was raised in the Catholic Church and made sure his sons were confirmed and baptized; his faith was important to him. Once he came out as gay, he lamented the fact that he felt the church was not accepting of him any longer; that he didn’t belong.





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Outwardly, Marty seemed ok in his new life. He moved to Seattle to be closer to his sons, had a successful career and a supportive, loving circle of friends and colleagues. Sadly, over time, he spiraled into depression and alcoholism. In November 2019, Marty took his own life. He was found unconscious, and was taken to the University of Washington Medical Center where heroic measures were taken to save him. He lived on for a week. After he regained consciousness, we took turns sitting at his bedside throughout that week, trying to say the right thing to get him to want to continue to live . . . to get him to see how much he was loved and how much he had to live for. Laurie begged him to let a priest visit and talk with him, but he angrily argued that the Church had not been there for him in the past and had turned its back on him as he was. The spiritual support he needed was not be there when he needed it most.

During this season of Advent and Christmas, we especially treasure the warm and welcoming environment of Selah UMC, and find ourselves often thinking of Marty. What if he would have known of faith communities where he would have been welcomed and accepted for who he was? Would it have made a difference for him to want to choose life?

Our views on the Reconciling Church discussion are greatly influenced by the loss of our brother. If there is the slightest chance that there is someone in our community who is marginalized, or loves differently, or is homeless, or looks different; someone who is seeking the acceptance that can be found through a Reconciling Church, shouldn't we be shouting from the rooftops "HERE WE ARE"?

Jim & Laurie Knebusch  
Cindy & Jeff Parkey

I have read the testimonials in the newsletter over the past several months and agree with the spirit and message contained in those articles. I have one thing that I would like to add to what has already been said. As many, including Debbie in the above article, say we are welcoming and accepting, which I think we are. But how would anyone who has not attended one of our services know that? For me one of the reasons for becoming a reconciling church is to be included on their web site as one where those seeking a church know they will be welcomed and accepted. We could make a difference in someone's life by letting them know they are welcome in our church. Let's not be afraid to do that.

Becky Johnson



# JANUARY Celebrations

## Birthdays

- 1 Connie Schramm
- 1 Dorothy Munroe
- 1 Rex Van Beek
- 4 Susan Eisenhower
- 6 Tommy Helms
- 6 Jesus Gonzales
- 7 Haley Coburn
- 11 Jean Hobbs
- 12 Sandra Shelton
- 12 Lisa Holyfield
- 16 Steven Schramm
- 18 Rhonda Gonzales
- 24 Miella Miller
- 26 Carol Williams
- 28 Dirk Robinson
- 31 Lisa Rene Schramm Schilperoort

## Anniversaries

- 7 Charles & Jean Cummings
- 18 Jim & Melissa Harp
- 27 Mark & Lisa Williams
- 29 Matthew & Kathryn Mead



## 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=NmsxRGsrNktoaUI1NWdKaUxhbnlNQ09>

Meeting ID: 669 186 246 Password: 848493

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



## ***JANUARY CALENDAR***

- 1 Sunday Worship @ 10:30 am in Sanctuary and via Zoom  
Holy Communion – Epiphany Sunday and Wesley Covenant Service  
See link on prior page to join via Zoom
- 5 Afternoon Circle @ 1:00 pm in Simonson Room  
Pub Theology @ 6:00 pm at Selah Springs Brewery; Continuing every Thursday
- 6 **Epiphany of the Lord**  
Open House at Parsonage, 6:30 to 8:30 pm 1404 W Orchard Ave, Selah
- 7 Undecorating the church @ 9:30 a.m.
- 8 Sunday Worship @ 10:30 am in Sanctuary and via Zoom  
Baptism of the Lord; See link on prior page to join via Zoom  
**Potluck in Fellowship Hall After Church**
- 10 Book Bunch @ 7:00 pm via Zoom Use meeting link on prior page
- 11 Worship Team Meeting @10:30 a.m. in Simonson Room
- 15 Sunday Worship @ 10:30 am in Sanctuary and via Zoom  
2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Epiphany; See link on prior page to join via Zoom
- 16 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- 17 United Women of Faith meeting via Zoom @ 7:00 pm use meeting link on prior page
- 18 Church Council Meeting, @6:00 pm Simonson Room
- 22 Sunday Worship @ 10:30 am in Sanctuary and via Zoom  
3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after Epiphany; See link on prior page to join via Zoom
- 24 Camp Hope Dinner, prepared with help by Wesley UMC delivered by SUMC  
Book Bunch @ 7:00 pm via Zoom Use meeting link on prior page
- 25 Newsletter Articles Due
- 29 Sunday Worship @ 10:30 am in Sanctuary and via Zoom  
4<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Epiphany; See link on prior page to join via Zoom

## Selah United Methodist Church

1061 Selah Loop Road  
PO Box 545  
Selah WA 98942

Phone: 509-697-7504  
Email: [selahumc@gmail.com](mailto:selahumc@gmail.com)

Growing Into the Image of Christ

### Pastor Mark Williams Contact Information:

Cell phone: (509)628-6405

Email: [aha.experience@icloud.com](mailto:aha.experience@icloud.com)

Newsletter articles for the  
February newsletter are due  
January 25

Articles can be emailed to  
[bjoh461@fairpoint.net](mailto: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.”