

Grace Notes

Community of Grace Presbyterian Church

November 2008

November Highlights

[Pastor Marty Goes to Washington.](#) Pastor Marty has accepted a call from a church in the state of Washington. The next steps for our church are now under way.

From the Pastor's Desk:

[Open Letter: A Time to Leave](#) Pastor Marty addresses a letter to the congregation as he prepares his move to Bainbridge Island.

Our Church Community

[Session Notes.](#) Here you will find the notes from the October 21 Session meeting.

[September Financial Update.](#) Here is our updated monthly financial picture provided by Tim Fluetsch.

[Presbyterian Links.](#) Here is a listing of helpful links for those who are interested in our denomination's work at the national level, including what Presbyterians believe.

[Church Officers.](#) Here you will find a listing of the current elders and deacons.

Children & Youth

[Grace is free...Faith costs.](#) Lorrie Gaffney gives us an update on last year's confirmands, her upcoming retirement next Spring, and her trip to Israel and the West Bank.

[Fast for Living Waters.](#) A unique fast is being prepared this Christmas, with follow-up for two months following. Money collected will be used to help provide drinking water for the world.

Adult & Family

[62 Days...and counting.](#) Dede reflects on the busy holiday season to come, and what it takes to survive it.

[Crossroads Items of the Month.](#) In November the Crossroads Urban Center is looking for stuffing this month. Their most needed items in the thrift store are bedding supplies, including sheets, pillows and sleeping bags.

Presbyterian Women (PW)

[Program Notes.](#) Plan now for the Christmas Dinner on December 8.

[November Prayer Calendar](#). Prayers from the hearts of our members. *“Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results.” James 5:16*

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with free internet access and a website.**



Pastor Marty Goes to Washington

by Dave Adamson
Elder

On October 21 Pastor Marty informed Session that he has accepted a call to be the pastor of Rolling Bay Presbyterian Church on Bainbridge Island, Washington. A special congregational meeting was called for November 2 to act on this request. There will be a church-wide goodbye party on Sunday, November 16 following the second service. Pastor Marty's last Sunday at COG will be November 23.

Changes like this sometimes seem sudden and dramatic in the Presbyterian Church...but this is not unusual. Because a pastor's relationship with his or her congregation is so close, the sending congregation is informed only after a new call has been extended from the receiving congregation. The average tenure of a senior pastor in the Presbyterian Church is roughly five years. COG has been fortunate to have Marty serving in our church for nine.

Several actions must now be taken in the next few months. Session quickly appointed a search committee to find an interim pastor. Once this interim pastor is in place, the congregation will elect a Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC). The PNC will complete a Church Information Form that describes who we are and where we need to be going. This form is submitted to the Presbytery of Utah and the national offices of the denomination. There it will be made available to pastors from around the country. It is the PNC that will review dossiers, conduct interviews, bring a nomination to the congregation, and request that a call for our new pastor be issued.

In the meantime we will continue to worship and pray and serve the Lord with gladness. The core of our spiritual identity is reaffirmed, the Holy Spirit will continue to guide and inspire us, and we will continue our spiritual journey together as a community of believers.



Off to Washington!

From the Pastor's Desk:

Open Letter: A Time to Leave

by Marty Shelton-Jenck
Pastor

If you were in church last Sunday, you know that I told the congregation in my sermon that I want to leave well. Saying goodbye has many dimensions and many feelings. There are the practical things like knowing who will now purchase the bread for the Lord's Supper, and there are the emotional and spiritual things, like feeling sad at losing a friend and pastor or wondering what God is doing with our wonderful church. With that in mind, I have written a letter. This letter will not be nearly as meaningful or as stimulating as Paul's Letter to the Romans, but I pray it will, nonetheless, help in the journey of saying goodbye well. My belief about leaving is simple: if we say goodbye well, we will be better prepared to say hello to what God is preparing in our future.

Speaking of what God is doing, imagine, if you will, a minister's heart sensing it is time to leave somewhere. Maybe for the first time, her heart is sensing that her work in her present church is complete. Imagine if you will, the mind of a minister who recently attended a conference at Snowbird and wondered if they could ever pastor in this incredible place called the Salt Lake Valley. Somewhere those moments are happening in the hearts and minds of pastors all over this land. One of them will come to COG, and I believe, will lead this congregation with love and strength for many years to come.

In the meantime, we are blessed to have incredible volunteers; a very loving and competent staff; some great plans for ministry for children, youth, and adults; a healthy and committed group of elders and deacons; and a team of three people elected by Session to find an interim pastor; Kelly Harris, Dede Carpenter, and Debbie Colt. Are you praying for Kelly, Dede, and Debbie daily? Are you asking God to open their hearts and minds to know who to recommend to Session? Are you praying that the Holy Spirit

will generate a wonderful list of potential interims that fit our Core Spiritual Identity? Are you pledging well so that there are enough financial resources available to fully fund all ministries of this church? If you haven't already begun to pray, I encourage you to begin praying today.

In the book, *Ten Commandments for Pastors Leaving A Congregation*, Lawrence Farris, a Presbyterian Pastor, writes that commandment number two for pastors who are leaving is: Thou Shalt Explain Thyself. Since I agree with him, allow me to explain.

I have been the Pastor of Community of Grace Presbyterian for a little over nine years. During that time I have preached at least 950 sermons. Can you believe it? You have listened attentively and graciously to more than 950 sermons. Well actually, only Thom Mansen and maybe a few others have heard that many since he plays music for both services ☺ Most of you, have had the opportunity to hear about 475 sermons, and that's a lot! I feel incredibly blessed that many of you still say to me that the sermons I share actually mean something to you in a personal way. Only my wife and kids have heard me preach more "sermons", and thank God, they have figured out a way to tune me out when I get too preachy!

For me, the time has literally flown by, which I take as a very good sign. The vast majority of time in this congregation has been exceedingly and categorically enjoyable. There have been difficult moments and even difficult weeks, but I am not leaving because of the difficulties I have encountered. I am not leaving because of any particular person or event in the life of our church. I am not leaving because life in Utah is not what I desire; on the contrary, we love it here. I am not leaving because the schools are not good enough. I am not leaving because I am not paid well. I am not leaving because my wife wants to go, nor because my extended family lives in the northwest. I am leaving because my leadership has accomplished what it can accomplish. After nine years of praying, persuading, pushing, pulling, talking, listening, laughing, crying, teaching, caring, drinking, arguing, debating, and only God knows how many meetings!! (maybe 3,285), I have come to the conclusion that my leadership has accomplished what it can. That being the case, I have always believed that when a leader is no longer leading, it is time to move on. To stay would injure the very church I love.

For me, this realization is sad but true. Fortunately, I believe that no matter how sad or happy the truth may be the truth always sets us free. The truth is our church needs another good pastor, both interim and installed, to lead it forward.

This Sunday, I hope I get the chance to see you in worship. I plan on focusing the sermon, on moments of gratitude during these past nine years. With so many moments and events to be grateful for, I promise to preach only 2 hours! ☺ There will also be a congregational meeting called by Session at 12:45pm in order for this congregation to vote to release me from service effective Sunday, November 23.

Blessings, Marty



Our Church Community


Session Notes (*Meeting of October 21, 2008*)

by Dave Adamson
Elder

1. Pastor Marty's letter of resignation was received and discussed by the Session. Rev. Laura Stellmon, Transitional Presbyter, attended this meeting and spoke about the procedures for Sessions to follow in order to make the transition from installed to interim leadership. Most of the meeting was devoted to outlining the steps Session will take to start the transition process.
2. Session approved a number of motions intended to begin the transition process:
 - a) A congregational meeting was called for Sunday, November 2, at 12:45 p.m. to concur with Pastor Marty's request to be released from service at COG, effective Sunday, November 23, 2008.
 - b) A letter to the congregation will be drafted and sent to active members of the congregation by both email and US mail.
 - c) The search for an Interim Pastor will begin with the appointment of an Interim Search Committee consisting of Kelly Harris, Debbie Colt, and Dede Carpenter. Laura Stellmon will meet with this committee for training and advice. This committee will report their progress to Session on November 18.
 - d) Our commitment to our Core Spiritual Identity was reaffirmed and will be used to guide our search for a new pastor.
3. Lorrie and Dede will develop a list of "what ifs" that must be addressed for them to continue to fulfill their areas of responsibility and for the church to continue its programs and services. These will be addressed at the November meeting of Session.
4. Pastor Marty will arrange for pulpit supply from November 30 through February 2009.

September Financial Update

by Tim Fleutch

2008 Income & Expenses	 Financial Update	Current to 9-30-08
	Year To Date	Budget Year To Date
<u>Income</u>		
Pledges	\$270,614	\$291,204
Other	\$39,958	\$39,600
Total Income	\$310,572	\$330,804
<u>Expenses</u>		
Personnel	\$172,917	\$172,207
Outreach & Mission	\$45,545	\$46,560
Operations	\$89,742	\$92,075
Children & Youth	\$7,409	\$10,725
Adult & Family	\$4,668	\$4,538
Worship	\$3,213	\$2,625
Total Expenses	\$323,493	\$328,730
Surplus (Deficit)	(\$12,920)	\$2,074

Presbyterian Links

Here are some helpful links for those who are interested in our denomination's work at the national level:

Home Page, PCUSA (www.pcusa.org)

Presbyterian 101 [Facts about Presbyterians] (www.pcusa.org/101)

Expressing Our Faith: National and International Service

(www.pcusa.org/navigation/mission.htm)

What Presbyterians Believe (www.pcusa.org/catech/studycat.htm)

Church Officers

Board of Deacons

Deacons Moderator: Lisa Wiscomb

Class of 2009

Randy Carter
Dave Fry
Barb Gentry
Lori Packard
Sharon Riley
Wes Starkenburg

Class of 2010

Cynthia Alex
Debbie Bybee
Denise Harris
Brooke Holyoak
Tom Keene
Bonnie Sackett

Class of 2011

Kim Beaslin
Elaine Nordberg
Linda Page
Marianne Wedertz
Lisa Wiscomb

Session

Session Moderator: Pastor Marty Shelton-Jenck

Clerk: Jane Cooper

Class of 2009

Tim Fluetsch
Dave Adamson

Class of 2010

Pat Holmes
Chuck Stolfa

Class of 2011

Kelly Harris
Debbie Colt

Children & Youth

Grace is free...Faith costs

by Lorrie Gaffney

Director of Children and Youth

At this time of stewardship - looking at how we give to others as an expression of faith – I would like you to look at a group of Confirmed Sr. High youth who have agreed to give back as mentors to our 5th/6th graders as part of a Youth Leadership Team. On a Friday night about 20 people gathered to set up for the Senior Luncheon. Four out of the five youth leaders chose to keep the commitment to this group when they were invited to a close friend's birthday party, the fifth youth was attending on her own birthday! These youth gave their best joyfully and with grace. Tough choices, costly choices are all a part of a life lived to love others as yourself. These kind of choices are often not seen at all, or quickly forgotten by others, but they do make a difference and today I thank the Youth Leadership Team of: Audrey Marshall, Bradley Marshall, Eryn Gorang, Jessica Gaffney, Nicole Moody and adult leaders Tina Moody and JoAnn Maxwell for inspiring me with your expression of stewardship.

The Children and Youth Leaders I work with all received a letter sharing my sense of God's direction for me shifting. In fact all members of the church are part of the Children and Youth leadership through pledging and prayer support that allows so many wonderful things to take place and so that [letter is attached here.](#)

Finally, as you read this I am like in Israel or the West Bank with a wonderful group called **Compassionate Listening Program**. This program is in line with my passion for all of us to see the image of God each of us holds – regardless of outer appearance, success, or even behavior - and as we see holiness to act in a way that

honors that reality. The Dalai Lama said, "If you see yourself in others, who can you harm?". I would change that to say, "If you see Christ in others... who can you harm? We believe that all people are created in the image of God. We often don't act like it. Sin is real and separates us from experiencing that reality or honoring others as the very Christ in our midst. One of the groups our delegation will be visiting with is called **Combatants for Peace**, Israeli and Palestinians who engaged in violence against each other and now are committed to finding another way.

<http://www.combatantsforpeace.org/> Another visit will be to the **Hope Flowers School**, founded by a Palestinian, who was removed from his home and placed in a refugee camp, decided that the answer was not found in returning evil with evil, but in educating a new generation to believe in peace, democracy, and respect, while learning the skills needed to manage tough situations of conflict. Thank you for your donations which will be hand delivered to the school and greatly appreciated. Secure donations can always be made on-line at their website: <http://www.hopeflowersschool.org/>

Another site that you may want to go to if you dare...

<http://www.blondi.co.il/bwt2008/index.html> Yossi Zu, father of Asaf (nickname Blondi) created this site. We will be meeting him and two other parents who lost teens in a suicide bus bombing. He invites YOU to take his son around the world and bring some ray of hope out of this tragedy.



Fast for Living Waters

by Lorrie Gaffney

Director of Children and Youth

Community of Grace will have a wonderful challenge to honor the image of Christ in people of need and put faith into action. Children through adults will be encouraged to give Jesus something that we believe he would want for HIS BIRTHDAY! For three months, December, January and February, you will be encouraged to participate in a different kind of "Fast" each month. At the end, we hope to have funds to give the gift of at least one filtration system and send two enthusiastic COG members to *Clean Water U* in Tennessee to learn how to build, and train others, so that we can partner with Living Waters for the World to offer Living Water to people in need! If you have a passion for learning about and helping others learn about making a difference in world water needs, please contact Dede or Lorrie to be a part of this fun planning team

that will begin meeting in November. To learn more about this PC(USA) mission ministry go to <http://www.livingwatersfortheworld.org/index.php> and check out the video!

Did you know...lack of clean water is the leading cause of death in under resourced countries. In fact, *3,900 a children die a day*. Here's a potentially encouraging statistic:

\$10 billion will solve the water problem once and for all.

Not bad considering

Americans spent \$450 billion on Christmas last year.

Please pray about what Jesus is asking you to give him this Christmas.



Adult & Family

Faith in Action

62 Days...and counting

by Dede Carpenter
Director of Adult & Family

Get ready...the next 62 days will test your mental, emotional and physical stamina!

We're heading into a season when time accelerates and holidays approach at warp speed and there isn't enough Halloween candy in the world to provide the energy boost needed to manage **this expected onslaught**, now partnered with political and economic uncertainties.

Where will you find your strength?

Where will you find safe moments in the midst of all the noise and distractions?

Where will you find peace and calm in the lists of expectations and hectic schedules?

What is your plan?

What will guide and sustain you during the next 62 days... and into 2009?

Faith in Action resonates a truth when we're facing an immediate crisis...but, do we truly embrace it in our day-to-day lives? Is it our guide for every decision and action? Unfortunately it's probably not. Yet, what if you chose for the next 62 days to prioritize activating your faith? What if you chose to put Faith in Action at the top of your Christmas list?

What if you turned your thoughts and actions into outwardly living your faith, offering the gift of being present and opening your heart to others could bring some amazing results; comfort and peace of mind to senior and disabled citizens who can't rake the leaves in

their yards...holiday turkeys for people in need... meals and winter clothing for the homeless...smiles and warmed hearts!

Just think... a smile and the presence of God's love might be all you need to make it thru 62 days...



Surviving 62 days

Crossroads Items of the Month for November

Food Pantry: stuffing

Thrift Store: bedding, especially sheets, pillows, and sleeping bags

Presbyterian Women

by Sue Bennett

Presbyterian Women

Christmas Dinner December 8. Come and join us for delicious food and fun! Be sure to bring a friend or two. A presentation will be given by Barb Guy from the Salt Lake Tribune.

COST: \$17 per person
THEME: God will do wonders among you
SOCIAL: 6:00 p.m.
DINNER: 6:30 p.m.
SPEAKER: 7:45 p.m. Barb Guy, Salt Lake Tribune

PW Christmas

Dinner 12/8



November Prayer Calendar

by Millie Nielsen

Prayer Coordinator

1. God, give me ears that really hear what you are saying.

2. May worship this morning ignite my spirit to shine outward so that others will see your love through me.
3. Bless the servant work of our deacons as they support the members of our congregation.
4. Lord, give your wisdom to voters today and servant hearts to all elected.
5. Give me a loving heart that tries to understand how other people feel.
6. Lord, open my eyes to the beauty you have given us in the world.
7. Cultivate in me a holy expectancy for you, oh God.
8. Father God, help me give you thanks for growth, humility, patience, and courage in the midst of suffering.
9. Today may I focus my thoughts and actions on serving others.
10. Lord, help me to be your loving presence in the world today
11. Help me appreciate the sacrifices that veterans have made for their country...
12. I give thanks for the respect Pastor Marty, Dede, and Lorrie have for each other as they work together.
13. I pray for comfort for people living with illness, loneliness and infirmities of old age.
14. Give strength, courage, and steadfast faithfulness to our sister church, the Immanuel church, Kiraro, in Kenya.
15. Lord, may the seed of your word being planted by New Beginnings Church grow and bear fruit.
16. Thank you, Lord, for the music in today's worship service and bless all of the musicians.
17. Lord, show me how happiness comes more from giving than from having lots of things.
18. Thank you for the faithful work of our session members as they lead our congregation.
19. Today help me see reminders of your grace.
20. I pray for safety and peace for people in countries devastated by war.
21. Lord, ground my spiritual life in the trustworthiness of God.
22. Oh God, help me to understand other people and not be too upset when they do not understand me.
23. Open our hearts to hear your word in worship today.
24. Loving God, teach me so that I can choose to be happy.
25. Lord, help me to love my enemies and to pray for them.
26. Help me to love other people and to leave them their freedom to be different.
27. On this Thanksgiving Day help me to be thankful for all my blessings and especially for your wondrous love and grace.
28. Father God, show me the things that really matter and help me use my energy in the best possible way.
29. Lord, I pray for wisdom for world leaders and also for ordinary people in their joys and sorrows.
30. On this first Sunday of Advent, help me to live more fully in the joy of your coming.



PRAYER

CALENDAR