

Hilltop Highlights

JUNE 2011

Laurie Rudel, Pastor
Jeremiah Oliver, Editor

WOVEN TOGETHER IN LOVE

Dear Friends,

In preparation for a resource group I'll be co-leading at the General Assembly I've been reading *The Art of Powerful Questions* by Eric E. Vogt, Juanita Brown, and David Isaacs. It's not a long article but the concepts keep me awake at night as I try to figure out what makes a question powerful.

It turns out that questions can propel you forward or leave you twiddling your thumbs in a ho-hum kind of fashion—in other words: questions, depending on how they are phrased, can have differing levels of impact.

Less powerful questions usually begin with who, when, which, where, or are questions that can be answered yes/no.

More powerful questions begin with why, how, and what.

With the information you just read, take a look at these questions:

1. What time is it?
2. Did you take a shower?
3. What possibilities exist that we haven't thought of yet?
4. What does it mean to be ethical?

The first two are not very powerful are they? The second two, however, really invite you to ponder, to get creative and play the answers into being.

Over the past year our core values task groups took a rest while we—out of necessity—leaned into the question:

Given the history of generosity in this congregation, how do we grow into that heritage as faithful, hopeful, loving people?

That one question took up most of the summer and the fall. By winter we needed time to lie fallow as a congregation, to rest and recuperate.

This spring the core values task groups are again meeting and we're asking new questions, big questions, that take some time to figure out.

For the *Welcoming Spirit Group* we started by asking:

- How does our website function as a "virtual" welcome mat?
- How do we shape ourselves as hospitable people?
- What makes you feel welcome?

In the *Heart for Children Group* we asked:

- What does it mean to raise spiritually mature children in this day and time?

The *Growing and Deepening Faith Group* will meet on Sunday, June 5, and I can imagine them asking questions like:

- What are the qualities of a church committed to growing in faith?
- What spiritual practices would lead us deeper into the heart of God?

Maybe you feel drawn to one of these questions . . . maybe you even have a glimmer of direction, a leaning toward an answer, or even another, deeper question.

If you do I hope you'll consider joining one these three groups; we would love to have you add your insight into the mix.

It's a "springy" time right now at Queen Anne Christian Church and I can feel the energy building and growing.

Together, who knows what we'll discover!

blessings + peace,



The moment of grace comes to us in the dynamics of any situation we walk into.

It is an opportunity that God sews into the fabric of a routine situation. It is a chance to do something creative, something helpful, something healing, something that makes one unmarked spot in the world better off for having been there.

We catch it if we are people of discernment.

—Lewis B. Smedes
A Pretty Good Person



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DID YOU KNOW?

- This June Kaetlin Humphreys, Valerie Lyson's daughter, graduates from the International Baccalaureate Program at Ingraham High School. In addition to school and a part-time job she also served as editor of the year book. Congratulations, Kaetlin!
- Good news! Ruth Jewell will be doing an internship with QACC beginning this fall. We are delighted to welcome her into this role of teaching, preaching, and leading. We give thanks to God for her presence with us in this new role.
- While attending the General Assembly in Nashville in July, Laurie will co-lead a workshop on behalf of the National Benevolent Association. She is delighted to be working with Rebecca Hale, former Interim Regional Minister for our Northwest Regional Church. Prior to this the event in Nashville, Rebecca and Laurie will lead a pilot project with Disciples clergy from the NW and SW Areas on Thursday, June 9, at First Christian Church in Kent.

JUNE BIRTHDAYS

Wednesday, 1st - Jonah Markell, Toriann Strauss
Friday, 3rd - Emma Pohl
Monday, 6th - Norm Dodge
Thursday, 9th - Michael Tower
Friday, 10th - Norah Dykstra, Lori Olin-Evans,
Nadine Caracciolo
Tuesday, 21st - Cora Drury
Thursday, 23rd - Mollie Marian Evans
Friday, 24th - Maria Drury
Sunday, 26th - Tom Baker, Mary Closson
Wednesday 29th - Kelsey Bowles, Megan Bowles

SOIRÉE

Jeremiah Oliver

*an evening of solo piano and harp:
dance music & original compositions*
Suggested Donation: \$10/\$25 family

Friday & Saturday, June 24th & 25th, 7:30 pm
Queen Anne Christian Church

(Matinée)

Sunday, June 26th, 3:30 pm
Mount Baker Park Presbyterian Church
www.jeremiaholiver.com

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

Deacons: Cheri Bowles, Ken Bowles, Laura Kitchel

June 5 - The Last Sunday after Easter

Elder: Michael Tower

Coffee Hosts: Tom and Juanita Kirkland,
Tom Baker and Kat Robinson

June 12 - Pentecost Sunday

Elder: Peter Drury

Coffee Hosts: Karen Bonnevie, Michael
and Marietta Tower

June 19 - The First Sunday after Pentecost

Elder: Lori Hutchings

Coffee Hosts: Vera Baumgartner, Edith
Stanwood, Andrea Vaught

June 26 - The Second Sunday after Pentecost

Elder: Devin Kitchel

Coffee Hosts: Martha Dimmers and
Stephen King, Barb Scamman and Laurie
Rudel, Rose Scamman

Coffee Hosts Next Month

July 3: Ken and Cheri Bowles, Lori and
John Hutchings

July 10: Lori Olin-Evans, Laura and Devin
Kitchel

July 17: Alina Rossano, Maria and Peter
Drury

July 24: Juanita and Tom Kirkland, Tom
Baker and Kat Robinson

July 31: Karen Bonnevie, Michael and
Marietta Tower

WORSHIP LEADERS

Would you like to serve as a worship leader?

Each Sunday morning we would like to have a worship leader begin our service through welcoming us, leading the call the worship, offering a prayer, and sometimes reading one of the scripture texts.

It is a wonderful opportunity to prepare for Sunday.

Please let Laurie know if you are interested or have questions. Thank you!

CELEBRATION/RETIREMENT PARTY

Alina Rossano concludes the *Parent! Baby! Toddler! Creative Movement Classes* on Wednesday, June 22.

That morning beginning at 10:30am we'll have a party and potluck lunch for everyone who has been a part of this class or simply wants to come and wish Alina well as she hangs up her dance teacher shoes, but never her dancing shoes.

Alina has led this class in the Fellowship Hall of QACC for over eleven years, and taught creative dance in the Seattle area for over twenty-five years. In the process, she has touched the lives of so many through her caring presence and gentle guidance.

Alina, we thank you, for your generosity and giftedness in creating this sweet community of learning and support.

Congregational Lunch and Meeting

Sunday, June 12, after worship

We'll receive the new budget and nominations for 2011-2012 and learn more about the mission of our congregation as expressed through our core values task groups.

Bring a salad, bread and cheese, fruit, or dessert to share!

THANK YOU!

- The Elders have been hard at work on nominations for the new year.
- Tom Kirkland along with a few others has worked on the new budget.
- Maria Drury contributed lovely flowers for Mother's Day.
- Cheri Bowles and Laura Kitchel helped with teaching The Godly Play class.
- Karen Bonnevie (along with her precious violin, George) offered her beautiful music on Sunday, May 29.
- Vera Baumgartner served as worship leader on May 29.
- Maria Drury and Lori Hutchings, elders from QACC, are serving on the In-Care Committee for seminarian Ruth Jewell.

CHILDREN & YOUTH

End of the church school year notes:

- On Sunday, June 5, we say good-bye to Lizzie Brady. She returns home for the summer and then will be attending Wheaton College in the fall. We give thanks for her presence with us this past year!
- Sunday, June 5, is also our last Sunday for classes. Please take time to thank our teachers: Lizzie Brady, Vera Baumgartner, Peter Drury, Lori Hutchings, and Tom Kirkland.
- We are working to schedule a volunteer morning or afternoon with Food LifeLine for the last week of June. All children ages 6 and up are welcome to join us. We'll let you know soon about the date and time.
- We hope to plan an outing to Jetty Island sometimes this summer. More about that later!



QACC BOOK GROUP

Just the other day, Laurie and I were talking about a book I'm reading by Sara Miles, and it occurred to me that both this book and her first book, Take This Bread, might make wonderful books to discuss with you, our dear friends.

We also thought that it would be great fun to have you come to our home for just this purpose this summer; Thursday, July 7, works for us and we hope that it will also work for you. We will provide goodies (one certainly can't be expected to discuss a good book without chomping on chocolate chip cookies or the like, can one?) and light beverages.

As an added bonus, Queen Anne Books has generously offered us the opportunity to purchase this book by Sara Miles at a 15% discount. Just be sure to mention that you are purchasing this book for the QACC book group.

Please let us know whether or not you will be able to join us from 7-8:30 pm. You can drop me a note at barb.scamman@gmail.com or leave me a message at 206.660.7745. Hope to see you then!

—Barb Scamman

REFLECTION: LISTENING FOR GOD

When Laurie asked me to write something for the newsletter this month, I accepted, although I had no idea what I would write about. Little did I know at the time that within a week I would have a “face to face” encounter with God!

This time of year is the craziest for me, as it is for many parents of school age children. School is wrapping up, so there is a sudden surge of field trips, school activities, and academic assessments to keep track of. Additionally my children have started their daily summer swim team practices, while still doing their other sports of course—soccer twice a week for Jacob, gymnastics twice a week for Hannah, and softball three times a week for Meghan. What this means is that every afternoon, I have to take my children to at least two different activities in addition to making dinner and helping with homework, with the occasional orthodontist checkup thrown in for good measure. And did I mention that my husband Michael has been traveling often for work? So I am juggling all of these schedules solo (I can hear Michael in my head as I write this saying “you bring this on yourself!” which is a topic for a different meditation).

As I lay in bed at the end of these hectic days I often find myself praying for strength and for peace so that I can wake renewed the next day. As my faith has grown over the last several years I’ve found that I have become very good at connecting with God in this quiet time. I lay in stillness and actually feel His loving arms embracing me and giving me comfort. Feeling God’s presence in the midst of my harried days is another story! So on Thursday morning of last week while walking my dog, I spent some time pondering how to get through this challenging time of year, meeting of all my obligations while staying truly present and emotionally available to my family and connected to God at the same time. All I could come up with was that I needed to accept I wouldn’t always be able to get everything I wanted to accomplish each day done (a difficult but necessary thing for a goal driven perfectionist like myself to accept), when something told me to look at the book Pastor Laurie had given me last summer when I wrapped up my term as Elder: *An Altar in the World* by Barbara Brown Taylor. I hate to admit this, but I had not even opened the book yet although I had full intentions of doing so, keeping it on my nightstand for the last ten months. I went home and immediately opened the book

and was astounded to see that it provided the exact answer I was looking for as to how to balance my busy life and my relationship with God. On the book jacket it says in part “From simple practices such as walking, working, and getting lost to deep meditations on topics like prayer and pronouncing blessings, Taylor reveals concrete ways to discover the sacred in the small things we do and see... Under Taylor’s expert guidance, we come to question conventional distinctions between the sacred and the secular, learning that no physical act is too earthbound or too humble to become a path to the divine. As we incorporate these practices into our daily lives, we begin to discover altars everywhere we go, in nearly everything we do.” I got chills as I realized that there was no way I could have known that what I was searching for was in that book, but that I had to have been led there. God had actually spoken to me!

I must say that I always thought if God spoke to me that it would be with a booming James Earl Jones type voice in my head directing me to go do something, such as “Marietta... the answer you seek is in the book Laurie gave you last year”. But instead it wasn’t with words at all; it was as if the thought was just planted in my mind, but it was God speaking to me nonetheless. This has now led me to think back over the rest of my life to try and identify other times when God may have spoken to me, but I just took the ideas as my own creation. One time that I can identify for sure is when I decided to be an Elder, an experience that deepened my faith and made me grow as a person, changing me profoundly. It was something I didn’t really want to do but for some reason I just felt like I should, and so I volunteered. I see now that it was actually God talking to me, telling me to do it.

The reason that I am sharing this with you is that if God is talking to me, I know He is talking to all of you as well! This is good and exciting news! I thought God only spoke to saints and to people who change the world in grand and self sacrificing ways, but I realize now He must be talking to all of us all the time... we just don’t hear Him (or give Him credit). My next challenge is going to be to learn to discern what ideas are of my own creation versus what ideas are from God, but I am excited to venture down this new path of discovery.

—Marietta Tower

REFLECTIONS ON THE JOURNEY

And Who Is My Neighbor?

These words call to mind the familiar parable recorded in the gospel of Luke; the parable of the Good Samaritan. It begins with a questioner of Jesus: what are the most important things; the greatest commandments? Jesus replies, “It’s simple: love God, love your neighbor.” The questioner, seeking to justify himself, wants more definition. “Who is my neighbor?” Jesus answers the question, as he so often does, with a story. You can read the rest in Luke 10:25-37, but here’s the spoiler alert! Jesus doesn’t answer the question of “who?” Instead, he answers “how?” Being a neighbor is about being a critical presence to those in need within the community in which you live, move, and minister.

Still, the question of “who is my neighbor?” continues to resonate, particularly among those within the Missional Church movement. This is new language to many of us, but essentially, a missional church is one that understands church not as a community within a neighborhood, but a people engaged in and serving in their neighborhood. Missional church understands the purpose of church being not about bringing people into the building, but about sending people out into the world. In fact, church isn’t the 14 building at all, but the community of people engaged with the world. Wherever people are being prayed with, fed, sheltered, demonstrating and receiving compassion, hearing God’s good news both spoken and lived out, there is the church.

A few weeks ago I had the opportunity to attend the Inhabit Conference, held at Mars Hill Graduate School in Seattle, and sponsored, in part, by HOPE Partnership, a joint ministry of Church Extension, Disciples Home Mission, and Higher Education and Leadership Ministries. The name “Inhabit” came from their subtitle: Practice, Presence, Place. The conference focused largely around the idea of the church as intimately connected to the neighborhood; not as ministry to, but ministry with our neighbors.

One of the first questions asked was: “What is the neighborhood in which you do ministry?” As Regional Pastor, I found that question challenging to answer. It is of course the neighborhood in which I live. But it is also the Regional Community that includes all of us. It is the neighborhood of our pastors as they seek encouragement and support from me and each other. It is the neighborhood of our congregations as they wrestle with the unique challenges of their own neighborhoods. It is the neighborhood of individuals, not tied to any particular church, but deeply connected to our shared regional

ministry. It is the neighborhood within our regional borders including those who don’t have a clue as to who the Disciples are. And it is our neighborhood beyond our geographical borders and indeed, to the ends of the earth. I realized that I am a part of many neighborhoods and found myself asking, “How am I engaged in ministry in each one of these?” I suspect that each of us are similarly engaged in multiple neighborhoods and communities; each one offering unique opportunities to embody Jesus and to be God’s Good News.

I’m grateful for the chance to attend part of that event, and grateful for the questions it continues to spark in me. How are we, as Northwest Regional Christian Church, engaging our neighbors? Who is our neighbor?

Blessings, Sandy Messick, *Regional Minister*

YAKAMA MISSION: OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE

The response has been strong to the tornados that recently cut ugly scars across the south and the floods that now threaten there. The impulse to jump into action and do something is wonderful. The challenge is holding on to that desire until the time is right to act. People are asking, “What can I do now?” My answer: go to Yakama.

Much of the immediate response after a disaster is done by local residents and neighbors of affected communities. Out of town mission groups are most needed for the long term recovery, which takes time to come together. The immediate response includes meeting basic needs, clearing downed trees, tarping roofs, and mucking out flood-damaged properties in order to secure homes and buildings. Then there is a transition period where people assess needs and resources and make decisions about what they would like to do. At the same time, local residents work with faith-based and non-profit recovery organizations to determine a process and infrastructure for directing the recovery. After a large disaster, it typically takes three months or longer before a community is ready to receive out-of-town mission groups and begin rebuilding or tackling major rehab projects. Which brings us back to Yakama.

Three months ago, wildfires and windstorms swept across parts of Washington. More than 20 homes were destroyed and many more were severely damaged. The people of Yakama and the surrounding communities have been assessing and planning and they are now ready to move forward—but they need help. In a few months, mission teams will be needed across the south to aid in the tornado and flood recovery work. The people of Yakama need help right now. The Yakama Christian Mission is participating in the recovery. Mission teams are needed now to begin the hands on work of rebuilding homes. Email Josh Baird or call (985) 778-6915 for more information. —Josh Baird, *Disciples Home Missions*



Expanding the Table

PENTECOST OFFERING 2011

Disciples Church Partners:
On behalf of a grateful church

I want to thank you in advance for your support of the new church movement. More than 12 years ago, Rev. Richard Hamm wrote in his book *20/20 Vision*, that he envisioned the creation of more than 1,000 new Disciples churches between 2001 and 2020. Many thought that this was an unachievable objective.

At Pentecost in 2011, we Disciples stand just beyond the halfway point towards our 2020 goal. I am pleased to report that the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has started more than 692 new congregations since 2001, reaching more than 42,000 new Disciples.

One of the most recent church plants is in Prosper, Texas, where the North Texas Area of the Southwest Region has called Doug Kriz, along with his wife Meredith and two small children, to Prosper to gather a yet-to-be named community of faith. We ask your church to pray for the Kriz family and all of our new church planters as they live out their mission to help bring people in relationship with Christ.

The Pentecost Offering is evenly divided between the region where the offering was taken and New Church Ministry. The offering is used to directly support starting new congregations and funds the recruitment, assessment, training and coaching of our new church planters in the first two years of their new plant. We invite you to join us in expanding the new church movement by supporting these courageous leaders through prayer and financial assistance.

Shalom,
—Charlie Wallace
Minister, Church Extension

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Peace is not something
you must hope for
in the future.
Rather, it is a deepening
of the present, and
unless you look for it
in the present
you will never find it.

—Thomas Merton

We gather for worship
on Sunday at 10am.