



The Full Circle

July 8, 2009



From the Pastoral Staff:

Ever since Michael Jackson died, the TV channels have been filled with portions of his music and his videos, snapshots of his court appearance and his purchases, and reports of those who knew him, or who say that they knew him, giving their opinions on his talents and his life.

To some of us, it may seem like a flood, a torrent of Hollywood-type publicity that is capitalizing on a tragic death.

To some of us, it may seem like a choice determined by those who are unwilling or unable to focus on the tougher issues of the day, who would rather skip war or healthcare and instead talk interminably about scandal and human foible.

But it is also an opportunity.

That sounds macabre in itself, doesn't it?

But I don't mean it that way.

As I've been watching the faces in the crowds – the ones who gathered outside the hospital; the ones who stood in the rain in New York outside the Apollo Theater – I've been reminded once again that what one person experiences is never quite the same as someone else. I have looked at the faces in the crowds and seen all kinds of colors and all kinds of grief. And I have wondered: is it just because of his talent? Are all these people so moved because of his success? Or his eccentricities? Or his pain, the physical pain left from accidents or the psychic pain from such an abnormal childhood?

What is it about Michael Jackson that made him so compelling to so many? Especially to so many of color?

It's an important question to ask. In our culture, where there is so much diversity of experience and where we are still trying to unlock the problem of racial discrimination, prejudice and misunderstandings, I need to look at those grieving people and ask: what touched you so deeply, that didn't touch me? Does that say something important about the differences between us? If I could better understand the why of your tears, could I better understand you?

It's so easy to write Mr. Jackson's death off as a media circus or an opportunity for unscrupulous persons to make a fast buck. But we who stand outside that circle of pain: we need to ask why our experience is so different from others'. In that question, in that moment of naming the difference and seeking to understand it, that is where we will learn to meet one another as we are. To see one another whole and begin to value one another as we should. To love one another.

--Pastor Jane



NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL

We are now sending the Full Circle by email. If you signed up to receive it by email and you aren't getting it or you would like to start receiving the Full Circle by email please contact our secretary, Kathryn, at office@fccb.net.

ALL IN THE FAMILY

This section has been sent via email to those that receive the newsletter by email.

If you would like to receive the Full Circle by email please contact the office at 734-3720 or at office@fccb.net and let us know!

ONE BY ONE BY ONE...A FULL CIRCLE

“We are here to open a space that Love can enter and be more known, more apparent, more understood.”

This quote from “The Knowing Heart, A Sufi Path of Transformation,” expresses the nature of stewardship. Building on the work of past stewards, the Stewardship Board has chosen as a theme for 2009, “**One by One by One...A Full Circle**”.

We have chosen a circle to illustrate the nature and necessity of stewardship to sustain our community through active compassion for self and for others. We will illustrate this activity by suspending a large hoop from the ceiling in the Fellowship Hall which will be used to memorialize, with individual markers, active compassion throughout the year.

We are recognizing some of the events that have already occurred this year by making appropriate markers. Staff, church boards, clubs, circles and individual congregants are invited to add markers on the hoop to reflect activities and events throughout the year which are done as the body of Christ. One by one by one we will place them on the hoop and come to see who we are. **Please stop by the rack outside the Social Hall to see the markers created so far and appreciate the creativity, as well as the compassion, encompassed in what we offer! What marker would you add to our circle? What act or event do you want to acknowledge or celebrate?**

By creating a visual display of the ministry of the church throughout the year, we hope members will celebrate the fruit of the current year and anticipate and seed the next, and accept the implication of One by One by One... A Full Circle.

The Board of Stewardship 2009

FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

CENTERING PRAYER: Please join us the **2nd and 4th Thursdays** of each month at **7 p.m.** in the Sanctuary for centering prayer.

SUMMER LABYRINTH WALKS: The labyrinth is an ancient spiritual tool, a walking meditation, a path of prayer. People come to the labyrinth to heal, to be spiritually enriched, to seek peace or insight. The labyrinth can be a transformational tool, opening us to change in our spirit, in our minds, in our bodies. You are invited to join Brenda Nicholson, Sharry Nyberg and Bobbi Virta, Certified Labyrinth Facilitators, the first Thursday of each month from **6:30 to 8:00 p.m.** to walk the labyrinth. Upcoming walks and themes include: **August 6** “A Pleasing Relationship,” and **September 3** “Nourished by Prayer.” Please join us, the labyrinth is waiting for you. For more information contact Sharry Nyberg at 734-3720.

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY is taking a break and on hiatus for the summer as we enjoy the warm days of summer. We will gather once again beginning in September.

CREATIVE CONNECTIONS will be taking a break and not meet in July and August. Enjoy the wonderful weather and keep working on those projects!



Stephen Ministry

Stephen Ministers respond to Jesus' great love by showing that love to others who have needs in their lives for compassionate and nonjudgmental listening-care.

To learn more, contact one of our Stephen Leaders: *Donna Romjue* (752-1747) *Libby Weiss* (756-2062) and *Pat Styer* (676-2585).

A BIG THANK YOU from the Church Council

The Church Council wants to recognize and thank the members of the Search and Call Committee and especially those who were in attendance on July 5th. Since many of you were absent on this holiday weekend, I wanted to bring you up to date on what was shared.

On Sunday Rob Olason reported to the congregation that after much deliberation, the Search and Call Committee has decided to reopen the search process and invite new pastoral profiles to be submitted for about the next 10 weeks. The committee will review new pastoral profiles as they arrive and start the process of sorting and getting more information about potentially viable candidates. The committee won't hesitate to take action if some of the candidates appear to really fit our church.

There are many questions we have heard circulating in the last several months relating to this committee's work and here is a sample with answers.

- Q) Have they picked somebody yet? Q) Are they stuck? A) No.*
Q) Are they looking for the perfect pastor? A) No, that isn't their goal.
Q) What's taking soo long? A) They are working diligently to get the job done right!

Here are additional questions I and others have asked (with answers.)

- Q) Are you terribly discouraged or burnt out?*
A) No, we are fine and have lots of energy for the task.
Q) How do you feel about what you are doing?
A) We feel good. It's a lot of work, but very rewarding.
Q) How are you functioning as a group?
A) We are a group that enjoys each other; we have bonded and work well together. We can be honest and disagree with each other and work through it.

One last question.

Q) What can we do to help you?

A) Try to be patient with the Search and Call process and support us. We are very aware how much our church wants our work to be finished. We are working very hard to get there. Selecting the right pastor(s) that will help us reach our vision is our highest priority and though it takes time, we're confident in our ability to do this right.

The Church Council would like to say a BIG THANK YOU to the Search and Call committee. For your tireless work, your enthusiasm and dedication to your task and for your courage to open the search and call process to accept new pastor profiles. We think you are doing a great job.

Here is what we will do for you. Trust you. Pray for you. Help you in any way we can. Please tell us what you need. We will be patient with the Search and Call process and you know it is not easy for us to do that. We will gladly answer those pesky questions and 100 more like it, so you can stay focused on your task instead of worrying about our impatience.

Pete Rittmueller, Moderator, on behalf of the Church Council

CHURCH COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

JUNE 22, 2009

- Committee planning an all-church potluck on Sunday, September 13, at 5:30 p.m. to facilitate paying off the remaining building debt.
- Suggestion to display a board in the narthex with cards of different monetary denominations for people to take as their pledge for retiring the debt. The cards and accompanying money will be received before and at the potluck. They can also be delivered/mailed to the church office or placed in the offering plate during worship.
- Search and Call Committee currently engaged in discernment process for two candidates. Committee considering re-opening Search for Lead Pastor.

Financial Report YTD May 31, 2009

Income YTD	\$227,110.56
Expenses YTD	<u>\$194,046.91</u>
Difference	\$ 33,063.65* Some 2009 pledges prepaid/Search and Call budget awaits significant use.



STAFF & OFFICE SCHEDULES

SHARRY will be out of the office **July 2-10**.

DENISE will be on vacation from **July 11th to July 27th**. Her last day for processing checks will be Friday July 10th. She will be returning to work on Tuesday, July 28th.

KATHRYN will be on vacation from **July 25 to August 1st**. She will be back in the office **August 3rd**.

ONE PERSON'S GIFT

One person can make such a difference! That person is Marie Kegley. Marie and her sister, Alice Johnson, were such faithful members of our church, always at worship, always here with a pleasant smile. In a pre-settlement distribution Marie's estate gave \$136,800.00 to our church to be applied to our **building loan**. What a generous gift! Now that her estate has been settled, another \$61,225.40 has come to our church to be applied to our **building loan**. With that additional gift our building loan balance on June 30, 2009 was \$196,963.82. We have been accumulating money in our loan account from CCIII pledges amounting to \$169,551.00. It is the Church Council's aim to seek additional gifts from the congregation to enable us to **fully pay off** our building loan by the September 13 **All-Church Pot-Luck Celebration**. Marie Kegley was one person who has made a difference. Each one of us can make a difference with a Pay Off Our Loan gift. Details will be forthcoming.

ENDOWMENT FUND GIFTS

Our church has a number of ways to receive and apply gifts. Marie Kegley's estate provided gifts to our Building Loan Fund. Her estate also provided gifts to two of our Endowment Funds – the **Elizabeth Diehl Fund**, and the **Carl Calhoun Fund**. In two installments the Kegley estate has given \$24,753.18 to each of these Funds. The **Elizabeth Diehl Fund** provides annual income for our **Mission, Justice, and Social Concerns** Board to apply to projects in our community, and around the world.

The **Carl Calhoun Fund** is our permanent endowment fund that provides annual income to augment and expand our yearly budget. We express our gratitude to Marie's family for directing money to these funds. Gifts to these funds are most welcome and can be made at any time. For further information, contact a Trustee.

YOUTH COORDINATOR NEEDED

Do you like working with middle and high school youth? We currently have an opening for a youth coordinator beginning August 1. This person will plan and lead activities with both the middle and high school youth groups, as a part of supporting the youth as they explore their faith questions. They will also lead the youth on their annual summer mission trip and coordinate fund-raising efforts with the youth and their families for the trip. The job is salaried at 20 hours per week and is a one year commitment. A strong, supportive and fun staff along with a welcoming church community will help guide this experience. This position requires someone with skills in the areas of leadership, decision making, organization, and human relations, combined with a love for young people. If interested in finding out more about this position, please contact Sharry Nyberg at 734-3720 or sharry@fccb.net or Thirza Zage-low at 734-4977.

WHAT ABOUT MY STUFF?

Last April, I shared some thoughts about stuff: what we have that we don't want and why we keep it; how we pare down; all kinds of issues raised by the objects we own.

As several of us are working through how to "down size" or how to work with a parent or family member who needs to "down size" or how to handle the conflicts that may arise over inherited items, I thought: why not join together and share our concerns, our ideas, our "victories" and our challenges?

If you would like to talk about this issue, please join me on **Wednesday, July 15 at 6:30 p.m.** here at the church. The first meeting will be a class to discuss methods, emotions and strategies for dealing with our stuff. What future meetings will cover is up to those who come, or who express an interest in coming. Please contact me, Pastor Jane, at 734-3720 or jane@fccb.net, if you would like to be a part of such a group but can't make that July 15 date.

REPORT FROM GENERAL SYNOD IN MICHIGAN

The biennial meeting of the UCC General Synod concluded on July 1. During the meeting time, delegates:

- voted for a new General Minister and President. Geoffrey Black for the last 10 years has been the New York Conference Minister. (Outgoing GM and President John Thomas, after a well-deserved break, will take up his new position as Assistant to the President of the Chicago Theological Seminary.)
- requested that the Executive Council and the Covenanted Ministry Boards of the UCC bring forward in 2011 a proposal to condense the national structure (currently five different boards) into a single governance board.
- approved a resolution encouraging each UCC national ministry, Conference, Association and local church to become an "Economic Justice Church."
- approved a resolution calling for support of HR 676 – Single Payer National Health Care Reform.
- approved a resolution affirming the Accra Confession, an ecumenical document calling for more equitable and just economic systems.
- expressed its solidarity with the people of the state of Michigan and throughout the country who are struggling in these economic times.

For further details, please check out the website ucc.org.

ENDOWMENT Q & A

QUESTION: *Can I make a gift to the church that will continue my annual pledge after my death?*

ANSWER: Yes you can. Please check with the Trustees for details.

QUESTION: *I understand that the church owns a number of Endowment Funds. How can I find out about them?*

ANSWER: Call the church office and request that you be sent the Endowment Fund Booklet. If you have additional questions, please check with Trustees.

CHURCH SCHOOL NEWS

A BIG THANK YOU to all the children who participated and the volunteers who helped as tribal leaders and with music, story and craft during Vacation Church School 2009 "Rooted In Faith". A wonderful week was had by all!

SUMMER VOLUNTEERS are needed to assist Erin Schick (our Nursery Attendant) in the Nursery/Toddler room on Sunday mornings during the summer. This is a wonderful opportunity to spend quality time with the babies and toddlers in our congregation. Please sign up for a Sunday outside Room 33.

CHURCH SCHOOL TEACHERS NEEDED: The Board of Christian Education is currently recruiting teachers for the 2009-10 church school year. Opportunities are available to teach and share your gifts with the children and youth of our congregation as a church school team teacher: in the **Pre School class, Second/Third grade class, or Fourth/Fifth grade class.** The board invites you to explore the ways you are called to be involved in the exciting year to come. For more information contact Sharry Nyberg at 734-3720.

YOUTH NEWS

HIGH SCHOOL

Sunday, July 12: 6 p.m.-8 p.m.—

Faithfully Understanding Poverty

What is poverty, and why does God let poverty be in the world? Marie Marchand, Executive Director of the Whatcom Peace and Justice center will lead a workshop to help us understand poverty better and possibly look at it a little differently. All youth attending the mission trip are required to attend.

Sunday, July 26: 6p.m.-8 p.m.—Worship Planning

The youth will be leading worship on August 2nd. We will spend this time forming and planning worship.

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Sunday, July 26: 4 p.m.-6 p.m.—Worship Planning

The youth will be leading worship on August 2nd. We will spend this time forming and planning worship.

2009 MISSION TRIP

Four of our High School Youth are getting ready to go to San Francisco for our 2009 Mission trip. The youth attending are Jane Clark, Phillip Kaltenbach, Paul Olason and Katya Gayda. The chaperones are Jen Dickenson and Cynthia Pottle. In San Francisco, the youth will be volunteering at Glide Memorial, a dynamic church that is very involved in their community. The youth will be serving the community meal at Glide to hungry people in San Francisco. The youth will also serve for a day with Habitat for Humanity, a non-profit that builds homes for people in need. In addition to these mission offerings, the youth and adults will be exploring their faith in new and exciting ways; experiencing a different culture, places and ways of expressing faith. The youth and chaperones would like to express their gratitude in supporting us in our mission both financially and spiritually. We would also like to invite you to worship on **August 2nd**, where we will share our experiences.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR GRADUATES!!!

Emma McConnell, Florence Northrop's granddaughter, graduated from Houghton College with Bachelor of Music with Honors, Summa Cum Laude, on May 9.

Michael M. Schmidt graduated from Oregon State University with a bachelor of science degree in Construction Engineering Management.

Racquel Nicholson graduated from Western Washington University with a BA in Accounting

Kari Vanderbilt graduated with honors from Occidental College in Los Angeles and will be serving with Teach for America teaching US history on the Navajo Reservation for the next 2 years.



AROUND THE CHURCH

LIBRARY ORIENTATION: We invite you to explore the Biblical literature available in your FCCB library. The Library Committee will provide a series of orientations that will highlight the resources available that offer an analytical approach to understanding the Bible. We will offer three sessions. They will be on **July 12, August 9th and September 13th at 11:30 a.m.** following church services. Please sign up on the sign-up sheet posted on the Bulletin Board on Committees.

CALLING ALL KEYS! If you have an outdoor or inside key for the church and are no longer using it please return it to the office. Thank you!

WORSHIP IN THE PARK HELP: Adult Ministries is seeking help/volunteers for Worship in the Park, **August 23rd**, at Cornwall Park. If you would like to help there are sign up sheets in the Narthex; cooking; tables; clean up; set-up; and/or games and activities.

FAMILY CAMPOUT on Friday August 14th at the group site at Larrabee State Park. Come for overnight, come for s'mores on Friday night. Coffee will be delivered Saturday morning! Sign up at church or just come—5 p.m. Friday to 11 a.m. Saturday. For more information contact Amelia Bacon at 319-6111.

AROUND THE COMMUNITY

PRAYER VIGIL FOR PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST: The next prayer vigil is **July 18 at 5:30 p.m.** at Beltingham Unitarian Fellowship (1708 I Street.)

NAIFA GOLF TOURNEY - It's time for the 11th Annual NAIFA (*National Association of Insurance & Financial Advisors*) Golf Tournament benefiting Habitat for Humanity in Whatcom County! **Friday, August 28, 2009**, Avalon Golf Course, Burlington, 4 Person Scramble, 7:00am Check-in, 8:00am Shotgun Start, Putting contest to follow. For more information contact Neal Kloke @ 360.815.4170, kloken@hotmail.com.

INTERFAITH COALITION SEEKS PART-TIME PROGRAM ASSISTANT: Interfaith Coalition is seeking a part-time program assistant for its Friendly Visitors program, which provides outreach to isolated seniors through weekly visits from compassionate volunteers. The program supports these matches and provides participants with ongoing training and connection to community resources.

The program assistant serves as office manager for Friendly Visitors and assists the program coordinator in enrollments and matches. The successful candidate will have experience working with volunteers and the elderly, a desire to put your faith in action serving the community, and exceptional computer and administrative skills. The position is 8 to 10 hours per week. For a complete job description, please email friendlyvisitors@interfaith-coalition.org.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

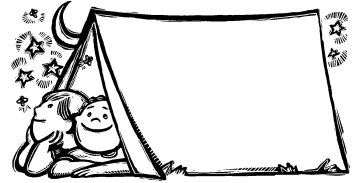
Here are a few events the church will be participating in over the summer. We hope to see you all there! Check upcoming Full Circles for detailed information on these events!

Church Camp Out at Larabee State Park on August 14!

Worship in the Park – at Cornwall Park – on August 23!

Celebration Potluck on September 13th at 5:30 p.m.!

Bellingham CROP Walk is the afternoon of October 4!



CHURCH CALENDAR

July 13

9:00 AM *Shalom Circle*
5:00 PM *Exercise Group*
7:00 PM *Board Meetings*

July 15

5:00 PM *Exercise Group*

July 16

7:00 PM *Jesus Seminar*

July 17

10:00 AM *In Stitches*
5:00 PM *Exercise Group*

July 19

10:00 AM *Worship/Summer Church School*

July 20

9:00 AM *Shalom Circle*
5:00 PM *Exercise Group*

July 22

5:00 PM *Exercise Group*

July 23

7:00 PM *Centering Prayer*

July 24

10:00 AM *In Stitches*
5:00 PM *Exercise Group*

July 26

10:00 AM *Worship/ Summer Church School*
4:00 PM *Middle School—Worship Planning*
6:00 PM *High School—Worship Planning*

