



The Full Circle

February 10, 2010



Remember what it was like when you were a child to receive a brand new shiny toy? Years ago there was a song about a top that whizzed and made noise and moved all about. It may have been Peter, Paul, and Mary who sang about that magical top. A powerful image formed in my mind of the song's top. I remember a very special top like that one. They sure were fascinating. Whizzing and whirling with lights going on and off and different sounds of bells and whistles and grinds and bangs. It was fun and fascinating, and as a very little child I couldn't wait for my father to make it go again and again. I think he may have gotten so tired of it that it got hidden away for a while.

I watch my daughter have similar experiences. A great big fascination with a toy that she just can't seem to get enough of. It started with bells and whistles and has progressed as she has gotten older. Last Christmas it was a Lego VW bug that was supposed to be for children four or five years older. She dreamed about it, she lobbied Mom and Dad to get it for her, and she started saving her money to buy it for herself.

When Sara finally got the Lego VW, she started to put it together. She got very far in a few hours when, as Lego's have a habit of doing, it fell apart. In frustration she pulled it apart even further and put it away. A couple of weeks later she put it completely together in a few hours.

When the project was completed it went on a shelf. Sara showed it to a few people, usually when proud boastful parents started talking about it, but hasn't really played with it since. The newness and novelty have worn off and now she won't even get it when mom and dad want to show it off.

New things are wonderful and fun. We tend to be proud of our new and "like" new clothes. We want to show them off. But sooner or later the luster wears off. The new becomes common, mundane, everyday, or ordinary. It has lost its special appeal.

That can happen in church life, too. Sometimes the luster of a role wears off, or sometimes we just get tired of the same old thing.

I suppose the trick is to savor the experience as much as possible, and then try a different role. Get to know new people in church. Sit in a different place. Stand or sit in a different area and try to get to know people you think you know in a new way.

Savor the experience of having a new pastor, take your time, take nothing for granted, and appreciate the gifts as they unfold.

Sit back, relax and enjoy.

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Savage

YOUR SEARCH AND CALL COMMITTEE RE-GROUPS!

After a short hiatus, we are at it again. And though we loved our little break, it feels so good to be at our work once again because frankly, we love being together and our work is pretty darn exciting!

Our focus in January was two fold. First, to check in with Kent and set up a protocol to support him as he transitions into his Lead Pastor role with us. And secondly, to begin looking at how we will proceed toward filling the pastor position. One added piece, albeit a sad one for us, was bidding adieu and thanks to Kj Hayes who has ended her work with us as she prepares to re-locate to Kuala Lumpur for two years.

We are currently working to write the job description/ad for our new pastor. We want someone who can support all that is so good here, to take us to new places, to challenge us and to complement Kent and our wonderful staff. As always, if you have ideas, thoughts or input, please share them with a Search and Call Committee member. We appreciate your on-going prayers and support.



MOTHER / DAUGHTER RETREAT AT FCCB February 26-27, 2010: It has become our tradition to gather as grandmothers, mothers, aunts, daughters and sisters for a retreat. All women and girls of our faith community are invited to join us for a time of joy and laughter, wisdom shared and God celebrated. There will be group time, sharing, crafts, worship, singing, and of course manicures as we nurture the sacred bonds of relationship. This year we will again be joined by the women of the United Church of Ferndale. Registration forms are available on the Information Table in the Narthex. Registration fee \$25 for one, \$40 for two, \$55 for three and \$70 for four (please contact Sharry Nyberg for scholarship information). **Deadline February 21.**

MEN'S RETREAT

Join with other men of the PNW Conference UCC and beyond for a weekend of inspiration, music, laughter, interactive creativity, worship, discussion & reflection with resource leader Michael Stern, **February 19 to 21, 2010** at Pilgrim Firs. For registration information, go to www.pnwmen.org.

WOMEN'S RETREAT

Save the date for the Northwest Women's Retreat "Come to the Oasis" on **November 5th, 6th and 7th, 2010** at Kah-Nee-Ta in Warm Springs, Oregon. This is always a wonderful opportunity to connect with other women of the UCC. Watch for more details in an upcoming Full Circle.

2010 PACIFIC NORTHWEST CONFERENCE WOMEN'S RETREAT

"Wholesome Bread: the Sustenance We Need for Life" Good bread is more than tasty- it nourishes the soul. Over and over again, bread appears in our scriptures and stories as a metaphor; a sign of God's love and blessing, found in community. Join other women of the conference **March 5-7** at Pilgrim Firs for a time to take bread, give thanks and share together. Registration fee \$90 (includes 5 meals and 2 nights lodging) Register online at www.pilgrimfirs.org. For more information contact Sharry Nyberg 734-3720.

NEW BOOKS IN THE FCCB LIBRARY

To support our Labyrinth Ministry

Located on the Library Book Cart

Hays, Edward M. **The Lenten Labyrinth: Daily Reflections for the Journey of Lent.** Leavenworth, KS: Forest of Peace Pub, 1994.

Sands, Helen Raphael. **The Healing Labyrinth: Finding Your Path to Inner Peace.** Hauppauge, N.Y.: Barron's Educational Series, 2001

Schaper, Donna, and Carole Ann Camp. **Labyrinths from the Outside in: Walking to Spiritual Insight : a Beginner's Guide.** Woodstock, Vt: SkyLight Paths Pub, 2000.

West, Melissa Gayle. **Exploring the Labyrinth: A Guide for Healing and Spiritual Growth.** New York: Broadway Books, 2000.

WANTED: Ushers and Greeters



Sign up for ushering and greeting in the coming months by going to the sign up sheet in the Narthex. Diaconate members will send reminders and instructions to those who request them. Look for our display!

HIGHLIGHTS OF ANNUAL MEETING

January 24, 2010

MSP to accept Nominating Committee report as recommended by Church Council

MSP to adopt 2010 operating budget as proposed by Budget Committee and recommended by Church Council including recommendation for any further funds collected be added to pastor's compensation package (up to \$3,300), then added to building repair/maintenance fund (up to \$1,000) and any additional funds beyond \$4,300 to OCWM Basic Support. Heather Shepherd and Barbara Storms, co-chairs of the Budget Committee, received a standing ovation for their thoughtful, careful and thorough work.

Pastors and staff recognized for their outstanding work this past year. Pastor Kent thanked us for a "very warm welcome" and said his first six days have been busy with lots of information to absorb. The staff has been "wonderfully helpful and patient" and he looks forward to learning with all of us.

Recognition given to Lad Anderson for organizing the final financial drive to pay off our building debt and for personally delivering the check to Key Bank in a timely manner to avoid additional interest!

Moderator Pete Rittmueller read Resolutions of Appreciation for Ann Whitmyer and Max Legg. For nine years and all three Capital Campaigns, Ann provided follow up letters and record keeping while Max provided essential financial and building loan oversight.

Board of Mission, Justice and Social Concerns requested consideration of name change to "Board of Mission and Justice". Consideration was deemed out of order due to lack of proper prior notification. A re-organization committee is working on church governance structure and all recommendations will be presented at once.

A big TAH DAH to Moderator Pete Rittmueller for his year of service. The "gavel" was passed to our new Moderator, Janet Ott.

Janet extended an invitation to Church Council meetings as they are open to all.

We reflected on this past year together with a Celebration and Remembrance in pictures.

Tim Shepherd led the congregation in Tom Hunter's song "Travelin' People."

We shared Communion.

Pastor Kent gave a benediction and we exited the Sanctuary to enter a bright new church year!

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES

Contemporary Issues meets the third Tuesday of the month in Room 11. We are a dialog group exploring how we live a Christian faith in our everyday lives. Dialog topics are chosen and facilitated by members of the group with the Bible as an anchor. Topics we have explored include reacting to the nightly news as Christians, talking with family and friends who disagree about homosexuality, and dealing with overwhelming national or international tragedy. We have a time to connect with each other, a time to explore the topic and our response, and a time of prayer. **ALL ARE WELCOME!**

Future Topics Include:

February 16	Responding to Overwhelming Tragedy and Suffering
March	No class due to the Lenten Series
April 20	Selling Hate: "Bible-like" Hate Messages on T-shirts
May 19	Greed and Christianity: Investing Your Money
June 16	Picnic and Planning Meeting

Feel free to call Shantell Rapp (647-2165) or Kathy Scodeller (647-1132) if you any have questions. Call Sharon Camblin (715-0933) if you need childcare.

LIVING THE QUESTIONS

LIVING THE QUESTIONS: This on-going class **meets from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday evenings** of each month in Room 11. Each class session relates to one of a series of 21 Christian faith issues. Each session consists of (after a pre-reading at home of 2-3 pages) a 20 minute CD presentation of commentary on the designated issue by 6 or 7 out of 16 well respected religious scholars, including several UCC persons, followed by a class discussion relating to the commentaries and sharing of personal viewpoints.

As each class session is complete within itself, it does not require an interested person to attend each and every session. For this reason, the class wishes to welcome any interested newcomers.

For additional information and/or copies of the pre-session reading material, contact Bob or Pat Styer at 676-2585.

HEALTH CARE PROGRAM

February 28th there will be a program, after worship in the Sanctuary, which will focus on health care. Dr. Harry Herdman and Marguerite Shepherd will discuss the following issues:

The American Health Care System, what it is not.

The Canadian Health Care System, what it is.

Dr. Herdman, is a local physician and church member and has been providing health care in his private practice for decades. Marguerite Shepherd is a physical therapist and a Canadian citizen. She worked in the Canadian system for years and owned and operated her own health care practice in Whatcom County for years.

It should come as no surprise that neither intend to talk about the good or bad points of the various bills that have not yet been passed and/or placed into law. The discussion will likely focus on the differences in the current systems, which have operated side by side for decades within a few miles of each other.

Please plan on attending.

AROUND THE CHURCH

ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE is February 17th at 7 p.m. Join us for a contemplative and intentional way to enter into the season of Lent.

THE OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED on Monday, February 15th for the Holiday.



BOARD MEMBER BINDERS: If you have just ended your term on a Board, please return your binder, with contents please!, to the office. Then we can pass it on to new Board members. If you are staying on your board please keep your binder and we will pass out any new information you need. Thank you!

WEAR YOUR NAME TAG: In an effort to help Pastor Kent and Robert get to know people of this church, please make a conscious effort to wear your name tag at Sunday services and all events at the church. This will also help us all learn each other's names!



INTERFAITH NOTES

CELEBRATE THE FIRST OF SPRING AT INTERFAITH AUCTION: Tickets are on sale now for "A Burst of Spring in the Garden of Hope," Interfaith Coalition's auction on the first day of spring, **March 20, 2010**. Cost is \$40 each and includes a sit-down dinner. Always a fun, community-building event, the auction begins at **5:30 p.m.** at the Lakeway Inn & Conference Center. Proceeds support programs that provide housing to homeless families and health care for all in need. Conveniently, if you wish to purchase tickets or donate an auction item, you may contact our congregation member Therese Holm, who serves on the Interfaith Coalition board of directors, or you may call the Interfaith office at 734-3983.

YOU'RE INVITED TO THE INTERFAITH COALITION CHOIR FEST: Our church choir will be performing with ten other choirs in an Interfaith Coalition Choir Fest on **Saturday, February 20 at 1:00 p.m.** Individual performances by each choir will culminate in the performance of two compositions by a combined choir of more than 275 voices. This wonderful concert of inspirational music will be held at Assumption Catholic Church, 2116 Cornwall Avenue, in Bellingham. An offering to support the coalition's programs, which assist local people in need, will be accepted gratefully.

CHURCH SCHOOL NEWS

VACATION CHURCH SCHOOL 2010: Save the date and plan to join us for an incredible week of VCS. **June 21-25, 2010.** Registration is limited to 135 children (age 4 years to those entering the sixth grade). **Registration begins April 18.**

DO YOU HAVE EXTRA PERSONAL HYGIENE SUPPLIES? The youth are seeking donations of shampoo, soap, combs, razors, toothbrushes, toothpaste and feminine hygiene products for Project Homeless Connect. If you have small shampoos and soap from your hotel stays, please consider donating them. You can drop off your donations at the church office until **February 21.** See the last Full Circle for more info!

YOUTH NEWS

February 14: No youth group. Have a great Valentine's Day!

February 21: *Interfaith Hygiene Supply Drive.* Decorate bags and help organize the hygiene supplies for Project Homeless. Middle School meets **4:30-6:00 p.m.**, High School meets **6:30-8:00 p.m.**

February 28: *Games and Discussion.* Meet in the Youth Room for some games and a conversation about cliques. There will be snacks. Middle School meets **4:30-6:00 p.m.**, High School meets **6:30-8:00 p.m.**

ANGELA'S NEW OFFICE HOURS: Angela will be in the office on **Tuesdays from 9-1p.m.**, **Thursdays from 4-6:30 p.m.**, and **Fridays from 8-12 p.m.**

LENTEN SOUP SUPPER AND PROGRAM

God in Our Midst: How is God Working Within Us

This year's series allows us time to pause and reflect how we experience God's presence in the life of our church and on the Christian practices that enable us to live joyfully in ways that enrich our lives and the lives of others.

We are trying a new format this year that incorporates a short worship service followed by a topical presentation and small group discussion.

- 6:00 p.m.** Fellowship supper
- 7:00 p.m.** Worship
- 7:15 p.m.** Topical Presentation
- 7:40 p.m.** Break-out Discussion and Experiential groups
- 8:30 p.m.** Adjourn

In **Weeks 1 and 2**, we'll explore how God works *within us* through practices like prayer, worship, discernment and study to strengthen our faith. In **Weeks 3 and 4**, we'll explore how God works *through us* to bring social justice, hospitality, and community ministries.

This Lenten Season, you are invited to seek ways that you can conduct your daily life and live in ways that answer questions about Christian values, grow your faith, and commit to creating a just and peaceful world.

Childcare will be provided for children 5 and under. An experiential class for school age children will be offered based on the theme of the evening.

HELP NEEDED: Help is needed to prepare and bring homemade soup and to help set up in the kitchen beginning at **5:00 P.M.** Please contact Bette Keller at bttkeller@earthlink.net.

March 3 – Worship

Presenter, Rev. Kent French

March 10 – Spirituality

Presenter, Rev. Paul Jensen

March 17 – Community

Presenter, Carol Nicolay

March 24 -- Social Justice

Presenter, Doug Shepherd

CHICKEN TORTILLA SOUP

From Julia Couchman

4 - 6 boneless, skinless chicken breasts or 10 thighs or mixture of each. Brush chicken with oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper or fajita seasonings and bake at a 400°F oven for 35 minutes or until juices run clear. Cool until able to touch, then cut into bite size pieces. You could also buy a roasted chicken and debone it.

Additional Ingredients:

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| 1 medium onion, chopped | 2 cartons of chicken stock |
| 2 cloves garlic, minced | 1 pkg. Taco seasoning |
| 1 can (15 oz) kidney or pinto beans, rinsed | 1 tsp. Ground cumin |
| 1 can (15 oz) black beans, rinsed | 1 or 2 small zucchini (optional) |
| 1 can (15 oz) tomatoes or Rotiel tomatoes | 6 corn tortillas (6 inch size) |
| 1 - 3 fresh jalapenos (depending on size, heat and personal preference) | |

Sauté onion, garlic and chopped and seeded jalapenos in small amount of olive or vegetable oil. Add chicken and remaining ingredients, except zucchini and tortillas. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer for about 30 minutes. Cut tortillas into thin strips and add to soup. This thickens the soup. Lastly, add diced zucchini to soup and cook just long enough that they are tender crisp. If soup is too thick, add water. Usually there is enough salt in the taco seasoning and tomatoes that I don't have to add any additional salt, but taste it for yourself.

Serves 10-15.

Added Ingredients if you like:

I like to add fresh or frozen corn (about 1-½ cups). This is done the same time you would add the zucchini. Sometimes I add a can of hominy instead. Add this with the beans. I like to add 1/4 to 1/3 cup chopped fresh cilantro and squeeze 1 lime's worth of juice in just before serving.

Serve with a dollop of sour cream or grated jack cheese or chopped avocados, or all of the above!

If you use the Rotiel tomatoes, you might not want to add the jalapenos. As you can see, I don't make this soup the same way each time. But it's always good no matter how I make it.

