

Bear Fax



January, 2009

A monthly publication of Bear Creek United Methodist Church

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Welcoming 2009—Our Discipleship in Action

Most of us start each New Year with fresh goals and big plans. Those thoughts are often geared towards health, spiritual growth, relationships, and/or professional development. I ask that God give me the wisdom and strength to see the ways in which I can be a better steward of all His blessings. I am thankful for so much. How can I show my gratitude?

Acts 4:32 states, "All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared every-

thing they had."

The New Year is a great time to remember that our possessions are not just our own. The gifts that God bestowed upon us include our talents, our time, our financial success, and so much more. We are designed not to keep these to ourselves, but to share them with our community.

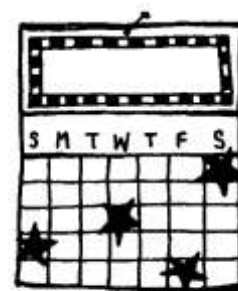
2009 is a challenging time for many and a great opportunity for all of us to use our numerous blessings to help others. Whether it is the time we spend at a food bank, skills we use to

help a friend in need, clothing donations for the poor, or our financial gifts to the church, each is important. Stewardship can take on several different forms!

Lastly, the Stewardship Committee would like to thank everyone who attended the Celebration Luncheon and filled out a commitment card. All had great fun and the food was amazing. If you were unable to attend, we ask that you complete a giving card as soon as possible. Bonnie has extras in the office.

Danielle Walsh

Pastor's Message	2
Worship Opportunities	2
New Wesley Class	3
Human Relations Day	3
Thank You Notes	4
Save the Date	5
CERT	6
Amazing Grace	6
On My Journey	7



DATES TO REMEMBER

Monday, January 5
Honduras Mission Trip Meeting 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, January 7
C.E.R.T./First Aid 6:00 p.m.

Financial Peace University 6:30 pm

Saturday, January 10
Ad Council Retreat

Tuesday, January 27
Craft Group 7:00 p.m.

Explore your gifts and talents

A new course in exploring your gifts and talents will be offered in February.

You'll learn:

- ◆ What your natural, God-given gifts and talents are!
- ◆ How to develop strategies for using your gifts and talents

in your personal life, your church and the world around you.

Watch for more information. Class facilitators will be Ron Large and Tresje Seeley. Please feel free to contact them with your questions or to discuss your experiences.



PASTOR'S MUMBLINGS

Dear Bearcreekians,
It has been an up and down November and December. Many good things are happening and many tough things are happening. **It is just like life, isn't it? Life is an awesome and fearfully made mixture of highs and lows.** What has been constant, and perhaps the only real constant, is the love of God.

Most of the up and down has been with the dying and death of my mom. Living with us as she died, we laughed and cried, sometimes almost simultaneously. Close to the end she told me she

believed in God's unconditional love and that she was not worried about being close to God and going to heaven.

But there was something concerning her and she wanted to **talk. It seems God's unconditional love, as she and I believe, extends to everyone, and so everyone goes to heaven in some way.** The problem she was working on was that there were some **people in heaven she didn't want to see.**

Life is the wonderful mixture of sadness and laughter, of wisdom and foolishness, of wounding

and healing. And in all of it God is with us. I am learning to call what is happening a sad blessing. God has found a way for Mom to be **with those she doesn't want to see** and it will be for the good of all. God will find a way to take every sadness and make it a blessing and, by divine loving presence, fashion in me and you new life—deeper, richer and more mixed than now.

Shalom,
Dave O

WORSHIP

Join us Sundays at 9:30 a.m.

Make worship a regular part of your life of discipleship. Whether the music is loud or soft, the sermon good or bad, our worship of God and with our brother and sister disciples of Jesus will be just right.

January 4—Epiphany Sunday

"The Bar Mitzvah of Jesus"

Jesus creates his own Bar Mitzvah and time of questioning not with his local rabbi, but with the priests of the temple. What is this about?

Luke 2: 41-52

8:00 p.m. *Vespers* *Matthew 8: 23-27*

January 11—1st Sunday after the Epiphany
Baptism of the Lord

"The Beginning of the Good News: An Adoption"

Unlike Matthew or Luke, Mark only introduces us to Jesus as an adult. And in Mark's Gospel (like Paul's letters), Jesus is adopted by God. Our earliest gospel has its own story to tell about how Jesus became the savior.

Mark 1: 1-11

January 18—2nd Sunday after the Epiphany
Human Relations Day

"The Beginning of Ministry: the Wilderness and Beyond"

The son of God, before he begins teaching and healing, is driven by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness where he lives with the wild beasts, is tempted by Satan, and where the angels care for him. Ever been there? When Jesus comes from the wilderness, he is now ready to serve God in a ministry that will change the world.

Mark 1: 12-15

January 25—3rd Sunday after the Epiphany
Ecumenical Sunday

"The Beginning of a Ministry: Calling Disciples"

After getting his fundamental message (the good news of forgiveness and promise) straight, Jesus now begins the process of making sure the message grows by growing others in the love of God.

Mark 1: 14-20



New class centers on Wesley's teachings

Join us for a new Sunday School offering on Sunday mornings beginning January 5 after worship. January is traditionally a time in our culture to focus anew on the things that make us better.

John Wesley, as the founder of Methodism, was way ahead of his time. He adopted General Rules which profoundly and simply state the basis of Christian living. His rules are: "Do no harm; do good; and stay in love with God."

Further, Wesley anticipated how difficult it might be to do this alone. He challenged people to participate in small groups and be accountable to one another.

The process is simple:

- ◆ Folks gather together on a regular basis to be present for one another through attentiveness and prayer as each person contemplates how they were close to Christ in the past week, what challenges they faced, and what is his/her plan for learning about God and "doing good" in the week to come.

- ◆ We offer it all to God and, in so doing, we will find other believers who are also on this journey. This giving and receiving builds us individually and collectively as The Body.

For now, let's call it, "Keeping up with John Wesley's Rules and Being All the Better For It." I look forward to spending time with you as we listen and pray together on Sundays right after worship.

Agape,
Susan Jackson

Support Human Relations Day on January 18

Human Relations Day is one of the opportunities for United Methodist Churches to celebrate our connectional work. This day of social action and raising awareness aims to heal social ills at the national level. It supports Community Developers, United Methodist Voluntary Service (UMVS), and the Youth Offender Rehabilitation Program. The first two programs are administered through the General Board of Global Ministries.

Human Relations Day this year is Sunday, January 18, the day before the observance of **Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday**. This is not a coincidence. The UM Book of Discipline describes the purpose of Human Relations Day

as a call to "the Church to recognize the right of all God's children in realizing their potential as human beings in relationship with each other."

The Community Developers program is one of the most exciting opportunities through which United Methodist churches assist ministries in racial-ethnic United Methodist Churches and communities throughout the United States. Local congregations initiate the work of a community developer, create effective responses to specific community needs, create a network of community developers that resource each other, and provide training and resources for them. The result is that these congregations

make systemic changes that allow them to provide services in their communities, ranging from education and substance abuse to employment training, affordable housing, at-risk youth programs, HIV/AIDS testing and counseling, and much, much more.

Through the United Methodist Voluntary Service, Global Ministries seeks to be in supportive relationship with grass-roots organizations that work through youth and young adult volunteers to challenge oppression and injustice and to improve the lives and fulfill the potential of those whom Jesus called the "least of these."

P.S. New this year! Donate online at www.umcgiving.org.



Prayer Shawl Ministry

Dear Prayer Shawl Ministry,
Recently, while visiting my daughter, Jana McClain, she presented me a shawl made by you.

Just want you to know how much it has meant to me. This has been a very difficult time. I lost my husband in February and my only sister in June this year. So, on these chilly Indiana evenings, I wrap the shawl around my shoulders and think of the prayers and Christian Love it brings.

Thank you for such a meaningful ministry!

Your kindness is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,
Phyllis McClain

Dear BCUMC,
I received a prayer shawl from my cousin, Dewey Forrester. Please know that most appreciated was the love and prayers that were in the shawl before I ever received it and then the physical warmth it has provided to me since. I have completed 2 surgeries, chemo, and am currently undergoing radiation therapy, and I know that thru it all God has been in control and will completely cleanse me of this disease. Your ministry is a wonderful blessing to those of us who are going thru this phase in our lives.

May God continue to bless each of you and your wonderful ministry!

Sharon Veal
Sandersville, Georgia



The Scholarship Committee +
Bear Creek Family,

Thank you so much for the BCUMC college scholarship. It comes in a time of much need. I will be putting it towards books for next semester. Thanks again!

Sincerely,
Dana Mahan

Dear Scholarship Committee and My Bear Creek Family,
I love receiving mail at school! I cannot tell you how surprised I was to pick it up this week and find an envelope from the church with a scholarship check included! Receiving mail is always an adventure, but this was a fantastic and totally unexpected surprise. I am so excited about receiving the scholarship money and will be using it to buy books for my second semester.

I absolutely love attending college at Linfield and it has turned out to be all that I had hoped for, and more! I am still undecided on a major at this time, but I am sure I will settle on one soon. I have also made some very special friendships and enjoy meeting new people everyday.

Thank you so much again for your generosity!

Love,
Courtney Clark

Dear BCUMC,
Thank you very much for the \$100 scholarship that you sent me! I am so grateful for it. It helped offset my textbook costs, which I really needed. School has been very much fun this year. I am in the school of education here at Pacific Lutheran University. I have been observing a middle school classroom down by my local church, and I am loving it.

Thank you for your prayers, love, and support!

Love in Christ,
Tara Spain

2008 FINANCE REPORT

Amount budgeted for 2008	\$361,717	
2008 Offerings	\$326,077	90.1%
2008 ahead/(behind)	(\$35,640)	-9.9%

It's not too late

to review your giving statement and make sure
your 2008 pledge is up to date.

Don't miss out on that tax deduction!

Save these Dates

C.E.R.T./First Aid Class	Jan. 7-Feb. 11	6:00-9:00 p.m.
Financial Peace University	Jan. 7-April 1	6:30-8:00 p.m.
Ad Council Retreat	January 10	9:00-4:00
Amazing Grace Seminar	February 7	8:30-4:00
Interfaith Choir Festival	February 22	7:00 p.m.
Ash Wednesday Shrove Pancake Supper	February 25	6:00 p.m.
Seder/Lord's Supper Tableau	April 9	6:00 p.m.
Women's Retreat (with Amazing Grace)	April 17-19	
Baccalaureate (Wooden Cross Lutheran)	May 17	7:00 p.m.
Recognition Sunday	June 7	
Vacation Bible School	July 13-17	
Evening Bible School	August 2-6	
Honduras Mission Trip	August 16	

www.bcumc.org

Click on "Calendar" to get up-to-date information and plan your committee's events!

A note from the



WE'VE MOVED!

December 3, 2008

Hello to you all!

John and I have been on a "wild ride" getting to Bend! We sold our home in Monroe and were fortunate to find a home we love in Bend and be able to close on it in nine days! It was touch and go—**didn't know if the moving trucks could unload before Thanksgiving** or we would have to wait until December 1—but many

wonderful people expedited things for us and we were living in boxes inside our new home over Thanksgiving.

We are a bit unpacked although have a LOT more to do. **Both John and I caught a "bug"** and have been ill—I got it first, the headaches, sore throat, raspiness and then loss of voice. John has it much worse and the doctor told him it could last for six weeks! Bill and the kids have also had it. So without a lot of energy, it is going to take us somewhat longer to get settled.

Bend is a wonderful place with wonderful people like all of you! We have been welcomed by **Shelly's expanded family**, neighbors and people almost everywhere we go. You know—the typical errands—lamp shades, car service, groceries, Costco for latte freezes—everywhere. Even the gas station attendant welcomed me to Bend (he noticed my Washington plates).

Haven't yet visited churches

as neither of us have felt well enough—and **didn't want to give** our malady to anyone sitting close by. We will probably start this Sunday if John is feeling better.

For those of you who want to have it, our new address is:

19243 Dutchman Court
Bend, Oregon 97702

Home phone: 541-647-2538
FAX: 541-647-2569

John's cell: 206-953-7525
Marcie's cell: 206-369-2016

We are truly hoping that many of you will stop and stay with us when you come through or when coming to ski at Mt. Bachelor. Our home is about 15 miles from the ski area. In any event, please keep in touch and let us know what is happening in your lives. It has been very difficult to leave so many wonderful friends!

Love,
Marcie

*Woodinville Fire & Life Safety District's
Community Emergency
Response Team TRAINING*

WEDNESDAY EVENINGS

January 7 - February 11

6:00 – 9:00 p.m.

WFLSD CERT exists to mitigate the effects of disaster on our
COMMUNITY AND TO AID OUR
COMMUNITY'S EMERGENCY RESPONDERS.

The Community Emergency Response Team is a program developed as a means of preparing for the aftermath of earthquakes and expanded to include preparation for a variety of hazards. Immediately following a disaster, the number and scope of incidents can quickly overwhelm professional emergency services. CERT teams are trained to provide first aid and disaster mitigation until professional emergency responders are available.

The CERT course teaches community members how to:

- Manage utilities and put out small fires.
- Treat the three medical killers by opening airways, controlling bleeding, and treating for shock,
- Provide basic medical aid.
- Search for and rescue victims safely.
- Organize themselves and spontaneous volunteers to be effective.
- Collect disaster intelligence to support first-responder efforts.

This 7-week class is provided to the community through special funding via Bear Creek United Methodist Church. **There is no fee to participate and all equipment and materials are provided to trainees.**

Call to register; space is limited! **425-788-2953**

*For the grace
of God
that bringeth
salvation
hath appeared
to all.*

Titus 2:11



Amazing Grace Seminar
Saturday,
February 7

The next Amazing Grace Seminar will be held on Saturday, February 7, from 8:30 a.m. -4:00 p.m.

This class is the foundation study on being a United Methodist. We begin with God Is Love and end with a healing process as taught by Christ and supported by the Holy Spirit. This class is designed for the curious (who have no desire to join the church as this time), regular attendees and current members. It is also one of the first steps for those seeking membership into BCUMC.

A continental breakfast, lunch and childcare (as requested) are provided. Mark your interest on your Sunday Presence Slip or contact the church office to sign up.



Did you know that the Pastor Dave's sermons are now available via iTunes on www.bcumc.org? You can also read the printed version, get the latest calendar dates, and lots more! Check it out today!

On My Journey

by Terri Stewart

This monthly article chronicles the journey that I am taking through Seattle University's Master's of Divinity program and the ordination process. Since Bear Creek is the community that is making this possible, I feel that all of you are journeying with me! Please join me in this very simple way on this journey.

This quarter at SU has been a blessing. My classes were Contemporary Christian Spirituality and Ministerial Theological Integration (MTI). Both classes were outstanding and I thoroughly enjoyed my learnings. MTI is my internship and the accompanying class that we take to ensure that we are integrating our experiences in a theological way. It is an intense experience as we travel through one year with a small group exploring theology in an ecumenical setting.

Last quarter we focused on where we see the really big theological questions within our internships. The biggest question is simply: Where do you see God? By investigating God, we can develop a theology of community, a theology of prayer, a theology of questions—everything can have a theology! That is a wonderful blessing and a great irritation at times! I have been working on my theology of prayer all quarter and I would like to share with you some ideas that I have had.

What happens when prayer is not answered?

Essentially, I believe that all prayer is answered. It just is not answered in the way that we think it will be answered. Paul, when writing to the church in Corinth said: ¹⁸Three times I appealed to

the Lord about this, that it would leave me, ⁹but he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness." Paul's appeals to have his obstacle removed were not answered. The answer was that he must sometimes be weak. I do not know that I would have responded as graciously as Paul did if I received that answer. This raises questions of grace: what is grace?

What is the point of prayer?

The point of prayer is to communicate with God. We often get stuck in the idea that God knows our thoughts and our lives before we do. If that is true, why do we need to take our joys and concerns to God? At a fundamental level, we need to talk *and listen* to God because God has asked us to.

More deeply, the only way to be *in* relationship is to develop that relationship. In order for me to know God, I need to spend time with God—listening and talking. That time should be spent in a balance of ways in which prayer is one way. A refinement of the idea that prayer is for communication is that prayer is to develop relationship with God.

Can prayer be somehow incorporated into our everyday activities?

I honestly believe that prayer can be incorporated into our everyday activities—some people pray while walking—but I also believe that we need to carve out time to work on our relationship with God intentionally. I have a friend that says she is constantly praying to God but she never spends more than one minute at a

time in prayer. This is not a two-way conversation! This is a quick popcorn of need, desire, or want with no corresponding listening. There is no simply being with God and participating in the life energy that God brings in this pattern.

What is grace?

To a Methodist, this is not a simple answer. John Wesley went to great pains to articulate the graces as prevenient grace, justifying grace, sanctifying grace, and perfecting grace. I prefer to think of them as faces of grace that we all encounter. Prevenient grace prepares the way, justifying grace occurs when we respond, sanctifying grace is with us daily as we continue to decide to live with God, and perfection allows us to become all that we were created to be.

Wesley's chief means of grace are *prayer*, searching the scripture, sacraments (communion/baptism), and spiritual conferencing (small groups). James tells us that ¹⁷Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from **the Father of lights.** That is grace! Everywhere I look, I see grace. I see grace in the faces of the youths at the detention center and in the faces of the congregation at BCUMC. That is where the energy comes for my journey.

Thank you for helping me along this journey. May your journey be blessed and peaceful.

In Peace,
Terri Stewart

Peace, Paix, Paz, Pace, Frieden, Vrede, Мир, Mír, Rauha, Béke, Fred, Friður, Barış, Pokój, Heddwch, Ειρήνη,

Udo, Shalom

nh, Alaafia,

¹The Holy Bible : NRSV. Nashville : Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1989, S. 2 Co 12:8-9

²Scott J. Jones, *United Methodist Doctrine*, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2002, p. 244.

³The Holy Bible : *New Revised Standard Version*. Nashville : Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1989, S. Jas 1:17

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*A family place of
belonging*

**We're on the
Web!**

www.bcumc.org



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On the Horizon



Saturday, February 7
Amazing Grace Seminar 8-4

Sunday, February 22
Interfaith Choir Festival 7:00 p.m.
(LDS Bothell Stake)

Wednesday, February 25
Shrove Pancake Supper 6:00 p.m.

Tuesday, March 3
Community Blood Drive 1-7 p.m.

Thursday, April 9
Seder/Lord's Supper Tableau

Friday, April 10
Good Friday Tenebrae Service

April 17-19
Women's Retreat at Indianola with
Amazing Grace Seminar

Sunday Worship
9:30 a.m.

Sunday School
11:00 a.m.

Sunday Vespers
8:00 p.m.
(first Sunday)

All are welcome!

Office hours
9:00-3:00
Monday-Thursday
Closed Fridays

*The mission of Bear Creek United Methodist Church is to create a diverse family
place of belonging for all people and to reach out and make disciples of Christ.*