

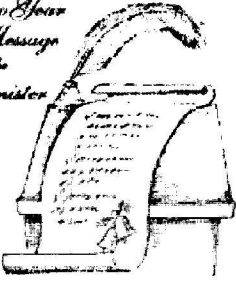
THE OLYMPIC NEWS

The Monthly Newsletter of the Olympic View Community Church of the Brethren
425 NE 95th St., Seattle WA 98115 • tel. 206-525-8900 • www.olympicchurch.org e-mail: info@olympicchurch.org

January 2006

Living the Word by Ken Rieman

*New Year
Message
from the
Minister*



"So the word became flesh, and dwelled among us..."

John 1.14

Friends,
Christmas has come a long way. As our culture debates the politically correct way to greet people of non-Christian background during the Christmas season, Christians do well to remember the spirit of the one who's birth we joyfully proclaim.

Christmas has not always been celebrated as we do today. The earliest Christians, those evangelized by Peter and Paul seemed to know little or nothing about Jesus' birth. Apparently, they found the stories and teachings of this recently executed religious renewal movement leader compelling in their own right. If they could have seen 2000 years into the future, they might have been greatly surprised to see the customs by which we modern Christians mark our sacred days.

But it wasn't long before Christians found that they could recruit folks to celebrate the faith if they scheduled their celebrations during the pagan festivals. And when they allowed people to celebrate Jesus' birth with pagan rituals in-

volving trees and presents and nicely spiced beverages and when they adopted the pagan language about the light that comes in the time of darkness, things went over very well. But lo, not all Christians were comfortable with catering to pagan traditions. The Puritans, those devout folk who came over on the Mayflower, even went around the colonial villages sniffing the cracks under people's doorways to see if families were celebrating Christmas in a pagan way by cooking ham dinners. How far we've come.

Now, it seems we're conflicted again. We Christians have certainly demonstrated exceeding patience with the non-Christian-would-be-corruptors of the faith who have turned the birth of our Savior into an endurance testing, anxiety producing, protocol negotiating, sweet and fatty food producing, tax-deductible charity donating, social positioning, economy boosting, and year-end inventory reducing retail extravaganza.

But we've had enough with the corruption of Christmas! The secularists have assaulted Christmas long enough. Now, we can't even count on the retail check out ushers receiving our Christmas offering to remind us why we give. Happy Holiday? We're not shopping

The Olympic News

Olympic View Community Church
425 NE 95th Street
Seattle, WA 98115

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

January 2006
Newsletter



Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage Paid
Seattle, WA
Permit # 01259

Continuing the work of Jesus. Peacefully. Simply. Together.

because it's a 'holy-day.' We're shopping because it's our Lord Jesus' Holy Day.

So in the spirit of Christmas, We can remind people of the liturgical tradition of our faith. The season of Christmastide begins December 25th, but its 12 days carry us to January 6th, Epiphany. That means the 'revealing' or the 'manifestation' of the divine. It's the day we celebrate the pagan 'magi' coming to see the divine revealed in the baby Jesus. It's the original day that gifts celebrated Christ's birth.

If Epiphany has lost it's meaning in a secular world, perhaps it's helpful to study the Latin roots of the word manifestation. Literally, 'struck by the hand,' the manifestation of God's divine reality in Epiphany can come to us like a slap in the face. With sudden clarity, we are reminded of the real purpose for the season, and the ways that each of us can so easily lose sight of God's holy purpose for this season.

My prayer for our church during this season filled with holy days, is that our spirit may reflect a posture of **openness** to God's coming, to God's incarnation, and to God's manifestation. My friend Shawn Kirchner told about a conversation he had with one of the youth in his church. He had been asked to describe the way he lived out his faith in his daily life. This particular youth talked about how he was able to **listen** to his fellow students at school, even students with very different thoughts or backgrounds than his own. Shawn said,

"It may not seem like a big deal, but I felt joy as I heard him talk. To me, it meant that the Brethren had somehow imparted to yet another generation this absolutely precious way of being in the world. A way of approaching others not with fear, not with judgment, not with an agenda -- but simply with openness. It is no small thing to put aside one's own concerns and opinions and to show genuine interest in another person. It's nothing other than love.

I know that being open can be confused with being "wishy washy" and "anything goes".

But I want to say that being open is actually a spiritual condition made possible by the presence of love. It's serious discipleship, and the only way we grow."

Shawn named one of the things that I appreciate about our denomination, and especially about this congregation. At our best, we are people who are open to many points of view. At our best, we have been open to the ways that God has called us to serving the 'least of these.' At our best, we invite and attract others who yearn to be a part of a community of faith characterized not by judgment or condemnation, but by openness, and love. At our best, we are here to grow into the new creatures that the living Christ calls us to become.

The season of sacred purpose is not over. It is just beginning. May it live in each of us.

Men's Breakfast leads worship January 15

An old tradition is restored. Participants in Olympic View's historic Men's Breakfast, which now meets every Thursday at 6:30 at Northaven will lead worship. Hear marine biologist Orlay Johnson preach about our stewardship of creation, and Fred Utter play his cello!



Introducing our new Church Secretary - Matthew Lavagnino

At the December 13, 2005 meeting of the Board of Administration, Matthew Lavagnino was called to the position of Church Secretary. Matt says, "Lavagnino means 'wash the baby' in Italian".

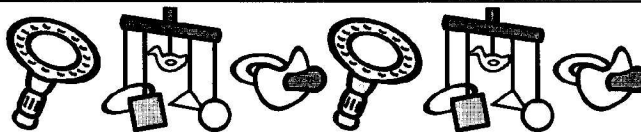
Matt is well qualified for the position. He has 6 years of customer service experience. He has outstanding computer skills and an education and experience in graphic arts. He has excellent communication skills, and an ability to work well with people. Matt is an artist who has created or contributed to a variety of artistic works.

His references spoke highly of him using words like: outgoing, friendly, kind, thoughtful, energetic and capable. Matt says he has a deep relationship with God. He is a Catholic and attends a Church near his home on First Hill. He was recently married and is adjusting to that new role.

Matt is a paraplegic and uses a wheel chair; therefore some accommodations will be made in the church office to ensure his access to the tools and supplies necessary to accomplish his responsibilities.

His office hours will be flexible depending on the project and task deadlines. But his normal schedule will be 12:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Thursday for an 18-hour workweek. His first day is January 2, 2006.

Please come by the office and introduce yourself to Matt.



Bisterfeldt Baby Shower

On February 26th the Fellowship Team will be hosting a baby shower for the Bisterfeldt baby. The expected arrival date is March 23rd. The baby shower will begin following worship. Tim and Aimee have registered at Babies 'R' Us (Alderwood Mall). But a selection of items and the registry can be found at Toy's 'R' Us at Northgate Mall and also on line at www.babiesrus.com. This shower is a co-ed shower so men and women are welcome to attend.

John Irby to Share about trip to Pakistan

Those interested in hearing about John's recent mission trip to Pakistan to assist in Earthquake recovery should plan to attend an all Church Sunday School in the Church Social Hall at 9:30 on January 15th. Pictures will also be presented.

Clearness Committee begins Study in January

Last year, our church agreed to study the use of flags in worship, and the ways that Christians understand the relationship of Church and State. Those interested in helping our congregation find clearness about our own understanding will meet January 29th after worship and a short meal. Participants should bring a donation (\$3 min.) as they are able for Pizza and Salad. They should also notify the office by January 22nd if they plan to attend. Other meetings will follow in future weeks.

OV Book Club

Please join the Olympic View Book Club for this month's meeting. The book for January is: "Little Women" by Louisa May Alcott. The club will meet at 10:30am on January 27th at Lois Thomsen's home.

On Earth Peace thanks supporters of captured peacemakers.

On Earth Peace thanked its Peace Witness Action List yesterday "for your prayers and constant watchfulness" for the four Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) members being held hostage in Iraq--Tom Fox, Norman Kember, James Loney, and Harmeet Singh Sooden.

No word has been received about the hostages since a deadline set by their captors passed on Dec. 10. A group called "Swords of Righteousness Brigade" kidnapped the men on Nov. 26. The brigade said the hostages would be killed Dec. 10 unless all prisoners of the US and the United Kingdom in Iraq are freed.

Today CPT issued a call for letters to the editor about human rights for Iraqis and the four peacemakers. "The media is eager to keep focusing on the 'human interest' story and are delving into the lives of the four CPTers," CPT said. "Our team in Iraq urges us to keep telling the 'human rights' story--lifting up the suffering of Iraqis in detention and living under occupation." For more information go to www.cpt.org.

On Earth Peace also called attention to a report on www.aljazeera.net on Dec. 13 "about the inundation their office has received of appeals on the hostages' behalf." The article, "Calls grow to free Iraq hostages," reported on the peacemakers' many supporters and well-wishers around the globe including Muslim groups such as the Iraq Islamic Party and Palestinian leaders.



Broadway Bound Musical: Anything Goes

Amy and Molly will be performing in the Children's Theatre production of Anything Goes on Sat. Jan. 21, 3 pm at the Broadway Performance Hall. Contact Jana Helmuth to reserve tickets. Adults \$12, Children under 18 \$8. Meet in back parking lot at 2:15 to arrange carpools. Refreshments at Helmuth's afterwards.



Living Peace Church News & Notes

Greetings from On Earth Peace!
This is a column focusing on the peace & reconciliation ministries of the church.

So... what are your plans for the summer?

We know that this question is the bane of every college student's existence. There's a lot of pressure to make the most of your summer, and to have a great time, too. That's a tall order, but we have a suggestion for you...

Apply for the Youth Peace Travel Team (YPTT). A joint project of On Earth Peace, the General Board, and Outdoor Ministries Association, the team travels to Brethren camps, Annual Conference, and National Youth Conference. The YPTT leads workshops, games, songs, and worship which encourage campers to think about Christian living in the context of peace and social justice. We are looking for dynamic leaders, ages 18-22, who are interested in a summer of outdoor ministry.

You'd get a chance to hone your leadership skills, teach about living consciously, and spend a lot of time outside with new friends. Are you ready to...

A) lead a campfire, hang on a high ropes course, and sleep in a cabin, all the while planting seeds of peace and discipleship?

B) engage NYCers in conversations about conscientious objection, dealing with conflicts at home and school, and how faith and peacemaking connect?

C) go on that inter-state bus trip you've always wanted to take... weekly?

D) do all of the above — and more?



If you answered "D", you are ready to apply for the Youth Peace Travel Team! Applications are due **FEBRUARY 4, 2006** (downloadable at www.brethren.org/genbd/witness/YPTT.htm), which is right around the corner!

Questions? Contact Susanna Farahat, On Earth Peace Coordinator for Peace Education (sfarahat_oepe@brethren.org or 410-635-8706).

On Earth Peace: An agency of the Church of the Brethren helping people discern the things that make for peace

P. O. Box 188, New Windsor, MD 21776
410-635-8704 • www.brethren.org/oepe
oepe_oepe@brethren.org

**New Adult Sunday School Class for
January and February**
**Bible 201: An Introduction to
The Gospel According to Mark**
Taught by Pastor Ken Rieman

Is one of your New Year's resolutions to study the Bible more regularly? If so, we want to help you get started.

During Epiphany (January and February) Pastor Ken will teach a class for those seeking an introduction to The Gospel According to Mark. The 9 week unit will help students learn about Mark's unique approach to the story of Jesus' life and purpose. Lessons will focus on 'Gospel' as a literary genre, the historical context of the audience and author, the major characters, and literary themes and devices found in the work, and Mark's influence on other writings and on the Christian faith. Students will learn to use Bible-study tools, and research techniques used in scripture interpretation.

The Gospel According to Mark will be a frequent feature of scripture lessons used in worship throughout the coming year. The class is designed to give the curious a 'head start' in engaging the earliest written gospel found in the Christian New Testament.

The '200 level' class will be a 'teaching class.' Students will receive reading assignments, and may encounter terms or ideas in the reading which will require or inspire other research. A take-home syllabus and glossary of terms, and a reference section in the church library will be made available. Nevertheless, those unable to complete the reading, or attend each of the lessons can still expect to find class teaching and lesson-oriented discussion that will be of value to their own study of the Bible.

Participants are encouraged to bring their own study-Bible (which can be written in) to class. For those wishing to purchase a study-Bible, the teacher recommends Oxford's annotated NRSV. The first class will meet January 1st at 9:30am.

Monthly Shared Prayer Requests

In our community...

For **Rhea Whiteside**, recovering from a stroke last week at the Life Care Center of Bothell.

For **Dennis Remple** who is in an area of the Congo where there is trouble, we pray for his safety.

For **Ernie Ricketts** who is recovering from Pneumonia @ Ida Culver House and would appreciate cards, calls, or visits. Ida Culver House, 12505 Greenwood Ave. N. Seattle WA, 98133.

For **Nole Ann Horsey** who has begun radiation therapy.

For Bollinger grandson **Shay**, who was injured in a paratrooper training jump.

For Keith & Olive White's granddaughter **Kimberly**, who is serving as a missionary in Uganda.

For **Lenore Unger**, who is recovering from hip replacement surgery.

Ongoing Prayer Requests: Henry Jones, Sharon Haley's brother, Mark; Xuny Haley; Lowell Geiver; Melissa Hinton; Violet Lauridsen; Adam Ford; Juanita Pollard; Russell Jarboe; Susanna Remple; Ryan Halifax; Oberg family; Marie McKimens; Family of Sandra Russell; Nole Ann Horsey; Alvida Fite; Michael Rogers, Lew Fortin's Nephew; Chris Pride; Eileen Birky's mother; Ron Russell and Keith & Sandra's Son-in-law Tom Twigg.



In our state, nation & world...

For the **four Christian Peacemaker Team** members who were kidnapped in Iraq, that they may be released unharmed, and for other **CPT workers** in Iraq and in conflict areas around the world.

Those **people living in the areas affected by Hurricane's Katrina, Rita & Wilma, and the Earthquake in South Asia** and for those who are traveling into the disaster areas to bring aid.

Thanks for **John Irby's** recent safe and successful trip to raise emergency shelters in Pakistan.

For **peace in Iraq, recovery** from the trauma of war and ongoing violence, and **wisdom** for the country's new leadership.

Church of the Brethren General Board Prayer Calendar

January prayer focus: Justice

Week of January 8: Pray for economic justice through a livable minimum wage. Ask God to guide our communities of faith as we seek to support those who face economic crisis.

Week of January 15: Meditate on Galatians 3:28: "There is no longer Jew nor Greek, there is no longer slave nor free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus" (NRSV). May the Holy Spirit shape our hearts minds, and institutions in a way that excludes all forms of discrimination.

Week of January 22: Rejoice for the teachers, counselors, principals, and parents who cooperate to educate our children. Thank God for the educational justice in our country, and consider ways such justice can be expanded.

Week of January 29: Remember that the responsibility to care for our natural was given to us by the Creator. Through prayer, seek a deeper understanding of the way your choices about using resources reflect Christ to the world



Holiday Bazaar Thank You

The Olympic View Holiday Bazaar was well represented with original art and photography, handmade bags and cards, Avon, jewelry, decorations, and more. There was an Espresso cart, yummy food, used books and other flea market items. \$500 will be sent to support our Heifer outreach project and over \$300 will be set aside for youth activities. Thanks to all who attended, were vendors and donated items to sell. —Jana

G.U.I.L.D.

Give Up Inactivity & Live w/ Dignity

Olympic View Women's Breakfast Group has grown and will meet again this month with breakfast.. This months meeting is on January 18th in the Northaven I dining room from 7:00am-8am. The cost is \$2.00 for breakfast . Breakfast will be followed by a 20 min. program. You are cordially invited to attend. Please let Grace Edmark know if you will be able to attend one week prior to meeting so that she can let the cook know how much to prepare. We hope to see you there.

The Olympic News is published monthly by Olympic View Community Church of the Brethren
425 NE 95th Street, Seattle, WA 98115
Phone: 206-525-8900 Fax: 206-525-1574
Web: www.olympicchurch.org
Email: info@olympicchurch.org

We welcome you to our services.

Sunday School	9:30 a.m.
Worship Service	11:00 a.m.
Children's Church	11:00 a.m.