

THE OLYMPIC NEWS

The Monthly Newsletter of the Olympic View Community Church of the Brethren
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July 2007

Living the Word

Pastor Ken Miller Rieman

In the few days since the reviews of *Olympic View* and 30 other places of worship were featured in Seattle's *the Stranger*, I've heard many responses from our members and friends.

Some have congratulated us on such a comparatively good review. Compared to some of the area's largest and most rapidly growing churches, we came off pretty well.

Some have observed that few if any of the reviewers seemed to be active church-goers. Undoubtedly, a good percentage of the reviews began with the authors speaking about how difficult the idea of going to a worship service actually was for them.

Personally, I am gratified that the woman who visited with us two weeks ago perceived the warmth of our community as a place where almost anyone could feel comfortable. That conclusion was significant in part because she was Jewish and did not share our beliefs about Jesus. Yet she also clearly approached our worship service with a fear of sticking out, of not knowing the basic rules, and even of the possibility that we'd ask her to confess her sins.

The place where she felt the most awkward came right at the beginning, where we welcome our guests. In this case, as on most Sundays when we have guests who do not appear to be seated with anyone planning to introduce themselves, I made a general invitation that guests feel free to introduce themselves.

Though we did not single her out for not doing so, she could tell that we were a tight group that knew each other well, and just about all of us knew she wasn't a 'regular.'

It would be nice to be able to meet the desires of those who come seeking a place to explore their faith in a more anonymous venue. I understand how vulnerable one can feel when everyone else in the room seems to know each other. I hope we will have conversations about how we can strive, both to deepen the intimacy of our community, and to widen the welcome we extend to those who are not used to being in our kind of church.

I also hope another conversation will emerge from this feature. Overall, the reviews demonstrate that there remains a wide chasm between so many of the religious communities in our region, and a good number of the folks in our

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The Olympic News

Olympic View Community Church of the Brethren
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city. I suspect that some of the churches reviewed will not easily see ways to bridge that chasm. What about us? Are there good reasons why so many people have such a strong distaste for organized religion? Are there other aspects of our civic life that reveal places where we could find more common ground than we do on Sunday mornings? I almost had the feeling that some of the writers were approaching their church visits like they might approach a music concert. Will I like the music? Will I like the message? Will I fit in with the audience? What will I feel while I'm sitting there?

In that respect, maybe their responses aren't coming from such a different place than many of us. I regularly hear people giving me feedback to those very same questions. Of course, the feedback is usually positive, as one might expect, coming from those who regularly attend services. But the orientation is still principally that of a consumer, rather than a participant.

Coming into our church isn't like going to a concert. The depth of meaning and awareness of God's presence doesn't come through pyrotechnic flashes or 'lighters in the air' ballads. Rather, meaning arrives through a sustained and participatory relationship in which each member invests what he or she can in the life and well-being of the whole community. Our lives are transformed by those we spend time with and by those we serve. It might be nice if that transformation could happen more dramatically, or more quickly, or with less commitment. But I think our good news is more credible and more enduring.

Maybe the way to get that word out is to keep the conversation going. *The Stranger* got it started. Now the ball is in our court.

The Landises had a phone call on Father's Day from **Jay Patterson**. He says he is doing well, the weather is very warm, and he spends his days wearing just shorts, a tank top, and flip-flops. He says he is brown as a berry. He had a very promising interview with the school district and hopes to be hired for a school about 20 miles from where he is living.

CELEBRATE IN SCHWARZENAU! 300th ANNIVERSARY CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN 1708 – 2008

On Sunday, August 3, 2008, hundreds of Brethren will stand on the banks of the Eder River in Schwarzenau, Germany to worship God and remember the baptism that took place there 300 years ago. It will be an exciting time – a once-in-a-lifetime event – and a unique opportunity to understand more deeply the spirit and vitality of our forbears. This event will also be a time for us to reconnect with the faith and courage of the founding Brethren, and to recommit ourselves to a renewed vision of the believers' church.

Ed-Ventures, Inc. is a tour company with over 30 years' experience organizing group travel in Europe: they have designed 3 different Brethren Heritage Tours, all of which will meet in Schwarzenau to join the celebration there.

Listed below are the tours scheduled for
July 26 – August 7, 2008:

- Zurich to Amsterdam. Tour Host, Jim Miller
- Berlin to Zurich. Tour Host, Jim Hardenbrook
- Munich to Amsterdam.

Tour Host, Fred Bernhard

For more details you can visit :

www.ed-ventures.com

To get detailed cost and schedule information,
click on the brochure icon.

Red Hatters: Summer Events

by JoAnn Shoemaker

- July 14th is **Red Hat Race Day** at Emerald Downs. Cost is \$18.00 - includes lunch. RSVP by June 3rd with money for tickets.
- August 23rd—ride the Duckmobile!
- August 25th—wear your Red Hat attire to the Bowers' BBQ.
- September: have lunch on Camano Island and shop the outlet stores.

Youth News

by Roger Edmark

*Jr. High National Youth Conference
June 15th—17th, 2007*

Between June 15th and 17th six OVCCoB youth and two advisors traveled to Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania for the first-ever National Youth Conference for Jr. High-age youth. Our youth were Molly Helmuth, Jullian Haley, Lilly Ghebrai, Michal Ghebrai, Stephanie Kissinger, and Eskender Eyob.

The advisors were Roger Edmark and Jana Helmuth. We started off by taking the "red-eye" flight from Seattle to Philadelphia late Thursday night and arriving in PA on Friday morning. We then traveled by rented mini-van to get to Elizabethtown by way of Amish country near Lancaster. We had fun taking a horse-drawn buggy ride to tour the area, learn more about the Amish people, and see their farms.

After we checking out an old covered bridge we stopped at the home of Glen and Sheryl Faus in Manheim, PA. My daughter Aimee spent one year in the Faus home while she was in BVS. Sheryl fixed us lunch and supplied us with bedding and sleeping bags for the conference. Then it was off to Hershey, PA to Chocolate World. From there we traveled to the conference where we stayed until noon Sunday.

The theme of the conference was "The Amazing Race - Continuing the Work of Jesus." The scripture reference was "...If any want to become my followers, let them take up their cross daily and follow me." Luke 9:23.

The conference was "Amazing." Ken Medema, a gifted musician and songwriter, led the music all weekend and gave the closing message for Sunday worship. On Friday night Tony Compolo, a dynamic speaker and author of many books, encouraged the youth to make efforts "to spend the rest of their lives serving people in the name of Jesus." On Saturday morning, David Radcliff told the youth to "spread the good news

of God's love for all of creation and for all peoples." There were get-acquainted groups, workshops, and recreation offerings as well as plenty of good food and snacks. After the conference, we were invited to a picnic lunch and swimming pool party at the home of the Sollenbergers. After the youth swam and played on the trampoline, it was time to drive back to the airport for the flight home. It was a very long weekend, but one of the most well-worth-it weekends of all of our lives.

Sr. High Workcamp - July 16th - 22nd

On July 16th, four of our youth, Amy Helmuth, Xuny Haley, Kelati Andemichael, and Misghana Andemichael, and one advisor, Ken Rieman, will go to Camp Myrtlewood in Oregon for a Workcamp.

The Workcamp will be comprised of about a dozen youth and a few advisors learning to be careful stewards of the environment. With its strong program in eco-forestry, Camp Myrtlewood offers a variety of ways to learn about the challenges of creating a sustainable resource-based economy.

As they work to assure a natural and healthy ecosystem, they will learn ways to protect and support the beauty that surrounds all of us. In addition, Family Camp will be taking place during the same weekend, so there will be a whole week of activities and camp fires and music as well.

Olympic View Book Club

Time: the club will meet at 10:30 am

Date: Friday, July 27, 2007

Place: Carol Landis' house

Book: *The Unfastened Heart*,
by Lane Von Herzen



Living Peace Church News & Notes

Focusing on the
peace & reconciliation
ministries of the church.
Greetings from On Earth Peace!

Making Meetings Go Better Part II: Handling Difficult Discussions

Chances are that meetings which are well-planned and start smoothly will be successful. However, obstacles can come up in discussion during any meeting. Here is how you, as facilitator, can make sure those discussions go well:

- 1) Make sure everyone has a chance to be heard. Seek input from the quieter members of the group. If someone is dominating, thank them for their contribution and politely ask them to withhold future remarks until all have a chance to speak. If the discussion is getting off track, steer the conversation by again thanking contributors and firmly reminding everyone of the topic at hand.
- 2) When a genuine concern comes up that is off topic, capture the idea on a piece of chart paper called the "parking lot." Reserve time at the end of the meeting for the group to look at the parking lot and decide when concerns will be addressed.
- 3) If things get tense, slow the discussion down by asking each speaker to summarize the previous speaker's remarks before replying. This keeps the discussion focused and centered.
- 4) You, as leader, can help a difficult situation with your skill and your calm and encouraging demeanor. In a heated moment, take a mini-break and encourage everyone to breathe deeply and pray silently. Name any common ground that is apparent. Note verbally when progress is being made.
- 5) If things are at an impasse and there is no time for solutions, briefly summarize the discussion and solicit ideas for further steps in addressing the situation. Strongly consider bringing in a skilled outside facilitator for deeply conflicted situations.

~ Annie Clark
Coordinator of Ministry of Reconciliation

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

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7.07

Evaluating Congregational Ministries

Twenty-five responses to the 2007 Evaluation of Olympic View's Ministries have been received. Respondents were invited to share how often our ministries compare favorably to those of the healthiest possible church. A summary of these responses follows:

(Rating Scale: 1 = almost never; 2 = rarely; 3 = sometimes; 4 = usually; 5 = almost always)

Category/Average Rating

1. Worship
4.1
2. Care Giving
4.0
3. Witness
3.6
4. Leadership & Communications
4.2
5. Stewardship
4.1
6. Charitable Giving (Not rated)
n/a
7. Appropriate & Helpful Questions
4.2

The data from the 25 people who turned in their survey forms indicates that we are doing well in most categories of ministry, yet we have room for growth. In particular, the Witness responses show a need for improvement. Those who have not yet completed an evaluation are still welcome to pick one up in the office.

Within each topic were a wide range of responses, yet the topic averages are encouraging. A detailed report summary, other comments and the Charitable Giving section will be reviewed by the Executive Board and the Board of Administration. Look for more details in future newsletters.

Respectively submitted by
Carol Bowers - Reviewer
Jerry Bowers - Number Cruncher

Shared Prayer Requests

In our community...

For Kathy Edmark's brother, **Don Boulton**,
being treated for Multiple Sclerosis.

For Ernie Rickett's son-in-law,
and Linda Brindle's husband, **Tony Brindle**,
who is being treated for advanced liver cancer.

For a speedy recovery
from shingles for **Barbara Anderson**.

For Kate Miller Rieman's family grieving the loss of her
grandfather, **Jim Miller**, of Goshen, IN.

Ongoing prayer requests:

Keith and Olive White;

Elaine Rankin; Mike Titus;

Amber Compton; Russell Jarboe;

Jeff Keuss Sr.; Dick Nash;

Bill Case's daughter, Carol Kamada;

Richard Shoemaker, Bill Shoemaker's brother;

Gene Harnden; Charles Walker;

Frosty Wilkinson; Tom Snyder;

Eileen Birkey's mother; Ernie Ricketts;

Tim Bisterfeldt's aunt, Diane Peters;

Lew Fortin's nephew, Michael Rogers;

Mike Helmuth's father, Bill,

and nephew, Ryan Halifax; Alvida Fite;

Sharon Haley's brother, Mark; Adam Ford

In our state, nation & world...

- For an end to inter-factional fighting in the Gaza Strip.
- That we offer a vision of justice, peace, and healing-
which will form the basis of a bi-partisan commitment
in our nation to work together for the common good.
- For an end to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan; and
for the safety and return of all combatants, and for the
difficulties which their families face in their absence.
- For a revitalization of our District churches and a
deepening sense of our unity in Christ.
- For the agreement allowing UN Peacekeeping forces
into Darfur, Sudan.
- For the Smith-Derksen family, now working with
MCC in Chad.
- For the people of Zimbabwe seeking democratic
change in their government.

Vacation Bible School

THE GREAT BIBLE REEF

Dive Deep Into God's Word!

August 5—9, 2007

6:00 pm - 8:30 pm

Now is the time to think about plans for the
summer, including Vacation Bible School. "The
Great Bible Reef: Dive Deep into God's Word!"
is a fun-filled, underwater Vacation Bible School
program kids will love! Every day is packed
with activities designed to help children experi-
ence the importance of discipleship. Each day
at the Great Bible Reef, kids will be engaged
with:

- Lively worship
- Kid-friendly Bible stories
- Videos, coral crafts, dramatic activities and
reef rhythms
- A meaningful mission project
- Seawater science
- Kitchen food preparation and snacks
- Loads of laughs and lots of friends

The 5-day program will begin Sunday afternoon
August 5 with a visit to Seattle Aquarium fol-
lowed by the opening program at 6 p.m. in the
social hall of the church. The mascots for the
week will be a seahorse, dolphin, angelfish, oc-
topus, and crab.

Ways you can participate:

- Contribute money or material resources.
- Help decorate or paint the mural.
- Come one or more evenings to help in the
kitchen, crafts area, or story area.
- Volunteer to be a leader.
- Contribute Aquarium passes.
- Tell or bring children in your family or your
neighborhood.

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