



The New Olympian

July 2009

The Monthly Newsletter of the Olympic View Community Church of the Brethren
tel. 206-525-8900 • www.olympicchurch.org e-mail: info@olympicchurch.org

Living the Word

By Pastor Ken Miller Rieman

When I asked Tom Mullen, one of my favorite seminary professors, to preach the sermon at my ordination service, I expected him to be clever and profound, but when he titled his message, 'Unfit for the Ministry,' I wondered if choosing the faculty comedian had been wise. Was my vocation to be in jeopardy just as it was getting off the ground?

My first pastorate was in Indiana. Out East, when people learn you are a pastor, they tend to smile and commend you for your willingness to serve the church. I knew Seattle would be different, but I didn't know that honestly answering one of people's first questions upon meeting me would end so many conversations before they'd begun.

There's nothing like moving to bring about a crisis of identity. My sisters and I moved a lot. It was a professional hazard of being preachers' kids. It wasn't easy. Aside from the obvious packing and changing homes and schools, moving a lot changed who I am today. I know that we all respond differently to what life throws at us. I think I learned to look for the opportunities that came from moving. I learned to reach out and make friends. I discovered that I could change who I was, that I didn't need to act like the person my classmates had known me to be at my last school, but could learn from the

things I'd done and been that didn't work so well.

Bethany Theological Seminary was the last school I moved to. I started classes in 1994. The seminary itself had just moved to Richmond, Indiana, from Chicago. I soon came to see that moves can be as difficult to make for institutions as for individuals.

So much of who we know ourselves to be is shaped by the relationships we have to those around us. When Bethany, our denomination's only seminary, moved to Richmond, it built right next to the Earlham School of Religion, the only seminary for another small denomination, The Religious Society of Friends (aka Quakers). Both seminaries hoped that their proximity would help their respective communities enrich each other. They planned some jointly taught courses, chapel services, and social events.

Getting in on the 'ground floor' of the move excited me. I knew it would require work at 'community formation' and building a spiritual friendship with a religious tradition that shares so much in common with my own.

I soon found that not everyone shared my excitement. Maybe it was because Earlham (ESR) had never moved, or because the Church of the Brethren was embroiled in deep seated conflict over how scripture spoke to the issues of the

(Continued on page 2)

The New Olympian

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

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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

(Continued from page 1)

day. Maybe it was because both of our denominations were very small and the shared experience of constantly having to describe your church to people who don't know who you are made our institutional proximity a crisis of identity. It was as though some began to fear that doing so much together might confuse us about who we really were and what we really believed.

As it turned out, each of our schools had a tradition of 'common meal,' of getting together once a week for our noon meal. ESR used the dining hall on Tuesdays, Bethany on Wednesdays. I was elected to the committee that planned Bethany's lunch-time programs, short presentations that would lead to conversations. I loved the challenge of finding interesting speakers and compelling topics. When planned well, attendance would soar, conversation would be deep and soul-searching. The community would bond and all would be right with my world.

I soon found common cause with my counterpart at ESR. Tom Mullen, who taught theology and writing, loved the world of ideas. Together we would discuss Dunker and Quaker idiosyncrasies and commonalities. We would brainstorm about how to turn our respective schools' anxieties into a partnership of adventure and opportunity.

Tom's secret weapon in our struggle against institutional angst was humor. He found his source material everywhere. He made fun of how much seniors talk about their diseases and disabilities, almost with a kind of pride, he having plenty to brag about himself. He made fun of how 'passively aggressive' Christians from 'peace churches' can be. And Tom was especially good at poking fun at how seriously religious people take themselves, while all around, the least likely people seem to understand the heart of Jesus' good news.

When he started his sermon at my ordination service, he started quoting scripture and talking about how important ministry was, about the many qualifications and gifts which ministers

must have if they are to really serve Christ. No work is more important!

And then he rightly pointed out that I didn't measure up to Jesus, that I didn't have the same gifts or power that Jesus had, maybe not even some of the apostles.

But then he turned it. None of us measures well against such a benchmark, and ministry is not about measuring up. Its about stepping up.

I was worried about how his sermon would reflect on me, and Tom used it to remind those present that all of us are called into ministry, not by virtue of our extraordinary gifts, but because of the extraordinary need for each of us to do what we can.

This last week, I learned that Tom had a stroke. He was taken to the very hospital and ward where my own father fought for his life just a year ago. Tom did not win his fight to survive his stroke, but he and I shared a good struggle during our years together in Richmond and I will never forget the combination of confidence and humility that he wielded in the fight to turn anxiety into adventure, and brokenness into life.

Tom leaves a wife, children, countless friends, students, parishioners, readers, audiences, and two denominations, so dear to him, to carry on his legacy. May his spirit enliven us all.



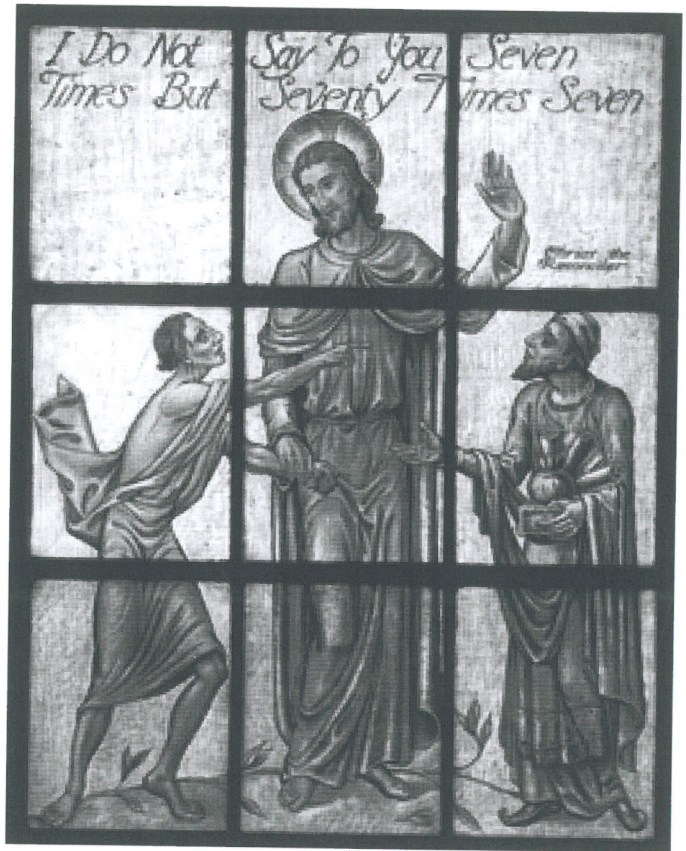
Outreach Focus for July: Bethany Theological Seminary

Training Church Leaders

This month we have a special opportunity to honor and support an institution as influential to Olympic View's future as it has been to its past.

Bethany Theological Seminary has a long tradition of preparing graduate students for Christian Ministry with the beliefs, heritage, and practices of the Church of the Brethren for its foundation. Bethany students take many paths through the world as witnesses to the Gospel, ministers, educators of youth and adults, and peacemakers.

In addition to young professionals, Bethany also hosts a robust Continuing Education program for ongoing pastoral development. Our Pastor Ken Miller Rieman is not only an alumnus of Bethany's Divinity School: he also currently participates in a Bethany Seminary Vital Pastor Training cohort, or small discussion group.



Relationships and community thrive at Bethany because academics are only half of the story:

We also are a community of faith and learning whose members create a common life, build significant relationships, contribute to mutual growth, celebrate joys, share concerns (sound familiar yet?), worship and pray together and hold one another accountable to shared goals and values. About Bethany, bethanyseminary.edu

Because our world is rife with conflict, fractured more often than reinforced by questions of politics, faith, and morality, wouldn't an investment in Bethany provide the perfect opportunity to show some faith in Faith? Throughout the month of July, please mark any contributions "Bethany" that you would like to have directed to Bethany Theological Seminary.

For more information about Bethany Theological Seminary's mission, educational values, course offerings, admissions, or work around the world, please visit: bethanyseminary.edu



Bethany Theological Seminary . . .an educational experience for the *mind, heart, soul, and spirit.*

Oberammergau's Passion Play & Travel Information

Sunday, July 12, 2009, Rachel Gruenwald from Collette Tours will give a slide presentation at Olympic View after church from 11:30 am to 12:00 pm regarding ten itineraries in conjunction with seating for Oberammergau's passion play in Germany. Yvonne Vierthaler has reserved space for the 12 day trip beginning September 8, 2010 that includes Croatia because of the outstandingly unique UNESCO Heritage sites.

You may book space between May and September 2010 and have choices of many combined European destinations. Land prices start at \$1,999.00 for 8 days. The number of days vary according to the itinerary. The most expensive is 12 days with Italy for \$3,899. Air could be separate or you can take advantage of Collette's group air pricing. Some of the itineraries have sold out already.

Please come to hear about exciting options for viewing the play and traveling Europe.

Itinerary details on newsletter insert.



Sharing Together in Prayer In Our Community:

- For **Jean Ulery**, undergoing tests to confirm a possible lymphoma and to determine a course of treatment.
- For **June Grandison's** family, mourning the death of her mother in Jamaica.
- Thanks for the safe return of **Dan, Kathryn, John Clair, and Jacob Smith-Derksen** from mission work in Chad.
- Thanks for **Dan Smith-Derksen's** willingness to become our church secretary in July!
- For **Sharon Haley's** sister-in-law, seeking treatment for a brain lesion.
- For **Goldie Barnes' sister Cheryl** who is seriously ill.
- For **Edmarks' granddaughter, Amber**, needs more info
- Thanks for **Kathy Edmark's** successful surgery and hope for her quick recovery.
- For **Dan Fredrickson**, recovering from a hip replacement.

Ongoing Prayer Requests:

Lowell Geiver; Jimmy Barnes; Geraldine Campbell; Chris Pride; Peggy Cochran; Eunice Jarboe;
Bill Case's daughter, **Carol Kamada;**
Lew Fortin's nephew, **Michael Rogers;**
Richard Shoemaker, Bill Shoemaker's brother;
Sharon Haley's siblings: **Mark, Paul Andrews, and Ruth; Gene & Donna Harnden;**
Pauline Danzer's son-in-law, **Eric Emmer;**
Tim Bisterfeldt's Aunt **Diane Peters;**
Ed Enzi; Patti Berg; Evelyn Merritt;
Elsie Clayton; Eileen Birky's mother,
Vera Gastfield Wolfe

Our Nation, State, and World:

- For those suffering the physical, psychological, and spiritual wounds of war.
- For all who have been affected by rising unemployment and economic challenges, including all of our locally situated family and friends impacted by layoffs.
- For the victims and their families impacted by the DC subway collision.
- For peace in Iraq and all countries.
- For a de-escalation of international tension with Iran and North Korea.

More Than Enough

By James L. Benedict from *Fresh From the Word*

Reading: Hebrews 7:27-28

Unlike the other high priests, he has no need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for those of the people; this he did once for all when he offered himself (Heb. 7:27).

Meditation: During this month, millions of young people - including my youngest child - will walk across a stage in cap and gown, take in hand well-earned diplomas, and step forth from childhood into young adulthood. And millions of parents, looking on with pride and relief, will ask themselves, "Have I done enough?"

It is a nagging question we encounter in many areas of life: Have I studied enough to pass this test? Have I worked hard enough to get the promotion? Have I saved enough for my retirement? Many people even live with a sense of "not enough" when it comes to their relationship with God. They think they haven't been good enough, faithful enough, forgiving enough, or generous enough to deserve God's favor.

And it is true for all of us - we haven't done enough. But the good news of the gospel is that our relationship with God is not based on whether or not we do enough. It is based on Jesus, who did more than enough, once and for all, when he offered himself up on the cross.

For the day: Let God's "more than enough" love in Jesus Christ quiet your every fear. Discover in God's grace the peace that nothing else can give or take away.

Prayer: Lord, your love is sufficient for all our needs. Remove our fear and replace it with faith. Then let our gratitude be revealed in worship and service. Amen.



Living Peace Church News & Notes

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

A Peaceable Summer with the Kids at Home!



Your school-age children are probably really excited about their change of pace for the summer. Summer can be a stressful time in family relationships with high expectations for relaxation, fun, and quality time together. Here's a suggestion for a family project using a "discovery web" as a planning tool. You will need a large piece of paper for this activity. Be sure to involve the children at every step!

1. Decide on a project focus, based on your children's interests and strengths. Draw the center of your "web" as a circle with your focus printed inside. Let's use "bridges" as an example.
2. On spokes going out from the center circle write questions about your focus, such as, "How many kinds of bridges are there?," "What bridges are the most famous?," "How are bridges built?"
3. Include some questions that center on issues of peace, justice, and faith, such as, "What does it mean to build bridges between people?," "What happens when bridges break, like in storms, and people can't get to what they need?," and "What does Jesus tell us about building bridges?"
4. On additional lines growing out from the spokes, put ideas about how to find information and implement ideas, such as looking for books with pictures of bridges, walking around your town to look at different bridges, planning how to build a model bridge, thinking together how to build bridges with people in your community.

Enjoy a creative and meaningful summer as a family, sharing the love and peace of Christ; a little time and attention can make a big difference!

~ Kathy Fry-Miller, Beacon Heights Church of the Brethren, Fort Wayne, Indiana

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
410-835-8704 - www.brethren.org/oepea
oepea_oepea@brethren.org

Reminders:

Please remember to complete the two forms currently in the church office:

- 1) 2009 Time and Talent Interest Finder
- 2) I.C.E. (in case of emergency)

Each form is available on the counter in the church office and may be left in the secretary's in-box after you have filled it out.

Thanks for taking the time to do this for your church and yourself.

Thanks for Supporting North Helpline and Lake City Foodbank

You received a lovely "thank you" letter from Amy Besunder of North Helpline this month for your donation of 9lbs of groceries in May.

The letter also lets us know that its organization is making progress on its new home, "McDermott Place," across from Fred Meyer on 130th Street N.E., and is ahead of schedule. This will be the new home of North Helpline, providing its staff with additional room to serve clients.

To have a look at the letter, please see the bulletin board in the upper church lobby overlooking the courtyard.

Thanks for your contributions to your church and community!



OV Book Club Update and Meeting Date Change

In response to a request from Seattle Public Libraries, all Olympic View Book Club meetings, beginning in July, will be held on the 3rd Friday of each month. This means that OV's Book Club will meet on July 17 at 10:30 am.

For July, the Book Club will be reading Mornings on Horseback, by David McCullough, a biography of young Teddy Roosevelt.

Thanks to Carol Landis for this information.

Greetings From Camp!

NWBAG (N.W. Brethren Arts & Gifts) will be held here at camp from 8/7-8/9/09. NWBAG is in its third year now and is building into a fun opportunity for Brethren of all ages to gather and share their gifts, be they music or crafts.

The Brethren Camps will run from 8/9-8/15. Brochures are in the Olympic View office. Our camps have been sources of inspiration and development for Brethren campers since this camp was founded over fifty years ago. Such qualities remain the core of what Koinonia is all about.

We are excited to be hosting **District Conference here at camp once again this year. The dates for District Conference will be 9/25-9/27.**

We look forward to seeing all of you at one or all of these events. Peace, Mike O'Cain

The New Olympian is published monthly by the Olympic View Community Church of the Brethren

425 NE 95th Street, Seattle, WA 98115

Phone: 206.525.8900

www.olympicchurch.org

e-mail: info@olympicchurch.org

We welcome you to our services.