

The New Olympian

September 2009

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

tel. 206.525.8900 • www.olympicchurch.org • e-mail: ovsecretary@gmail.com

Living the Word

By Pastor Ken Miller Rieman

What if you slept? And what if, in your sleep, you dreamed? And what if, in your dream, you went to heaven and plucked a strange and beautiful flower? And what if, when you awoke, you had the flower in your hand? Ah, what then?

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

I've always been a fan of Candid Camera. My stomach was sore for days from laughing so hard at the episode where the construction site porta-potty was secretly mounted to a fork-lift. Viewers watch worker after worker suffer varying degrees of puzzlement and consternation upon opening the door to a world now 12 feet below them. Of course, the subjects eventually spot the camera and small crowd splitting their guts over their plight and it's smiles all around.

Humor is healing. We've known this intuitively for some time, but it wasn't 'til the 1970's that scientists began to acknowledge a connection between our frame of mind and our bodies ability to heal. Norman Cousins may have triggered the revolution. After being diagnosed with a terminal illness, he checked himself into a hotel and had films of Candid Camera and the Marx Brothers brought in. He literally belly laughed himself back to health. Intrigued by his widely shared story, scientists began studies which later confirmed his conclusion. The new science of psychoneuroimmunology was born!

This much we have known. People of faith took heart. Studies began to demonstrate the power of prayer. What better way to prevent the abandonment of religion by the more modern-minded?

But then the science backfired on the faithful. Studies could show a benefit to

those who prayed for their own healing, and even those who believed in the power of prayer and knew they were being prayed for. But there was no evidence of people benefiting from prayer if they didn't know they were being prayed for. Was God incapable of healing those who didn't know they were prayed for? What were modern minds to conclude?

Many religious people decided that science was an enemy of their faith. And often, their message to those who trust science has been that faith sometimes requires us to suspend our rationality and believe that God operates outside of and even against natural laws. It's not surprising that many who trust in science came to believe that religion was basically about believing in things that didn't make any sense to them. The popularized forms of Christianity that tell



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

people what they want to hear and promise them salvation for \$39.95 a month, and scoff at notions of environmental conservation or social justice for the disadvantaged haven't done the rest of us any favors.

But there's a new twist in the plot. Science is once again curious about spirituality. The newest instruments by which we study the brain are challenging older understandings of the mind and the nature of consciousness.

- New studies, with improved methodology are showing that people's bodies and brains can subconsciously register the prayers of people that they don't know are praying for them.
- Doctors have discovered patients who maintained conscious awareness while undergoing brain procedures in which instruments could detect no brain activity.
- Other doctors have observed a specific location in the brain that registers strong activity among monitored patients who are describing their perception of a divine presence.
- The brains of practitioners of deep meditation who report altered states of consciousness show signs that their meditation causes developmental changes in their brains.
- Now scientists have unprecedented biological observations of forms of religious experience once thought to be delusional or contrived. The remarkable consistency of experiences across faith and cultural backgrounds suggest a reality that transcends doctrine.

So what difference does all of this make for us? A lot.

We know that many of those who resist having anything to do with organized religion describe themselves as spiritual. They believe there is more to life than meets the eye. Many of them are put off by religions which draw doctrinal lines in the sand as if to say that they alone understand the boundaries and nature of the divine.

What's more, those who have found the rigorous methodology and rationality of science to be more trustworthy than the teachings of TV preachers are coming face to face with evidence

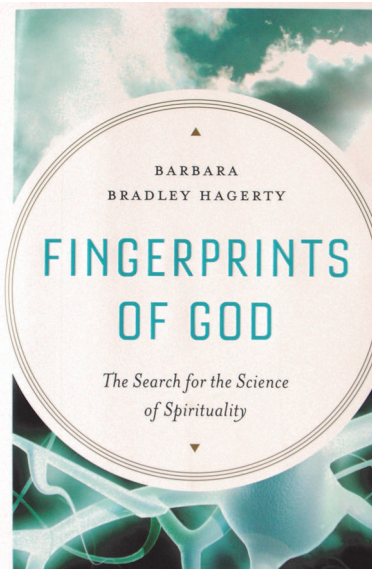
that whole realms of biological structure and activity, heretofore undetected, exist and await our scientific exploration.

The beautiful thing here is that people of faith have been exploring these realms for millenia. Sadly, the discoveries which the great mystics have made have been under constant assault from those use religion as a tool for justifying their privilege or blaming others for their own failings.

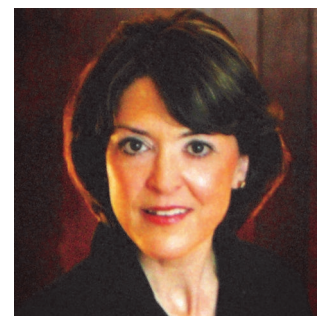
Thus we stand in a very exciting place. A growing number of members of the scientific community are eager to study things which our world has taught belong to the world of faith. People of faith, especially those who've been at a loss for how to talk about their faith around those skeptical of faith's claims are finding uncommonly solid ground upon which to achieve mutual understanding.

I believe that Love's realm is being perceived in new ways, by people who are becoming new. I am confident that science is becoming a partner to faith in the adventure unfolding. And if we have the courage to join the journey I do not doubt that science, faith, and our society as a whole will be the better for it.

If this conversation intrigues you, I hope you'd consider joining my Sunday School class this fall. Barbara Bradley Hagerty, the Religion Correspondent for National Public Radio has just published 'Fingerprints of God, The Search for the Science of Spirituality'. She has made these questions her pursuit.



Our first class begins Sunday, September 13 at 9:30 am. If you'd like to order a book, or borrow the book on audio CD, just contact the office.



Update from Kate

I would like to express how much I have appreciated the prayers and concern shown by members of Olympic View over the last few years and more recently, too, as I have struggled with some health issues. Many of you have asked me some great questions about ulcerative colitis, and because it is a disease that is not often talked about and about which a lot is still unknown, I am glad to share a little information here that may be helpful or of interest.



Ulcerative colitis (or UC), which is similar in many ways to Crohn's Disease, is today widely accepted to be an auto-immune disorder where the immune system attacks the colon, or large intestine. Unlike Irritable Bowel Syndrome which shares some symptoms with UC, ulcerative colitis actually causes bleeding and ulcers to form on the inner layer of the large intestine. During periods where the disease is active, this inflammation can cause a host of symptoms from mild to disabling. During times of remission, people with UC can have no symptoms at all. For some people, UC is a mild annoyance that causes problems only a few times in their lives, and for others it can be a debilitating illness that is active much of their adult life. Most people are diagnosed in adolescence or early adulthood.

While the cause of UC is still unknown, it is believed that genetic factors may play a part, and that certain types of gastrointestinal infections may serve as a trigger for the disease. People thought for years that diet or a stressful lifestyle caused UC; it is now known that these factors, while they may increase symptoms during a flare, do not actually cause UC. There are many medications to treat ulcerative colitis, ranging from older anti-inflammatory medications like prednisone to newer drugs like Remicade that target specific parts of the immune system that cause inflammation. While these medications cannot cure UC, they can induce remission and relieve symptoms for many people. Unfortunately most of these medications carry with

them some serious side effects. The only cure for UC is surgery to remove the colon.

Because UC is not generally a disease that affects life span but instead the quality of life, not as much research has been done regarding the causes and treatment of UC as for many other illnesses that are similarly prevalent in the U.S. About one million Americans have been diagnosed with either Crohn's Disease or ulcerative colitis.

If you are interested in more information, I am always glad to answer questions and share what I know. I am not embarrassed to talk about UC and hope that in sharing information we can make people more aware of the disease and the find better treatments in the future. The Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of America also has an excellent website at www.ccfa.org.

Thanks again for keeping me in your thoughts and prayers lately as I have been going through a difficult time in the course of my UC. My Olympic View family is a deep source of comfort for which I give daily thanks.

Kate Miller Rieman

Re-imagining Spirituality for a Changing World Sept. 18-19 OV Retreat to be led by local author.

What new challenges confront the church of today?

How do we need to re-imagine spirituality for community for changing times.

How do we re-imagine mission to neighbors near and far?

What will it mean to be a church in 2015? Our church neighbors, Tom and Christine Sine, are co-authors of *The New Conspirators, creating the future one mustard seed at a time*, and *Living on Purpose, finding God's best for your life*. Tom will lead a retreat to help us identify the unique ways that Olympic view has served God's purposes in the past, and help us engage the questions above as we make plans for our ministries in the next year and beyond. More information about the retreat is forthcoming. We hope you'll mark your calendars.



CROP Hunger Walk

What is a CROP Hunger Walk?

CROP = Communities Responding to Overcome Poverty, a program of the Church World Service. CROP is about feeding the hungry. Millions of people worldwide live on the edge of subsistence, at the will of fragile economies, struggling to escape the crushing grip of poverty and powerlessness. Most are hungry - and they need more than a handout. They need a way out.



A CROP Hunger Walk is neighbors walking together to take a stand against hunger in our world. Together we raise awareness and

funds for international relief and development, as well as local hunger-fighting. Rev. Dennis Hartman, Coordinator states, "The CROP Hunger Walk attests to the ecumenism of our faith, a national effort in partnership with our brothers and sisters in 35 denominations. The CROP Hunger Walk reflects the ecumenism of our joint endeavors in the mission field. The 25 percent that is allocated to a grassroots charity is so important and motivating."

A CROP Hunger Walk is also about helping in times of disaster. When disasters strike in this country or overseas, Church World Service is there, providing for immediate emergency needs (food, shelter, medical supplies, etc.). And CWS remains in the community for the long and challenging task of rebuilding lives and communities. One recruiter, Geneva Allen, said this about it, "Mission is the most important work we do at church. Through the CROP Hunger Walk lives are changed. Improving people's lives for the better, it's what we are all about."

Here in Seattle, we also have the opportunity to participate in taking on these local and global challenges by taking part in a CROP Hunger Walk. This year, the regional event will take

place **October 4**, starting at the Alki Congregational United Church of Christ, 6115 SW Hinds St., West Seattle.

The walk will move along beautiful Alki Beach. Come join in to help FIGHT HUNGER HERE AND AROUND THE WORLD.

If you have any questions or need directions and/or a ride, email **ovsecretary@gmail.com** or call **206.525.8900**.



Greetings from Salt Lake City

Aug 7, 2009

Dear Ken and Olympic View,

My apologies it has taken a few weeks to thank you all for the lovely and generous parting gift you gave me when I left. It meant a great deal to me and made the transition to a new environment nicer and easier. Thank you!



While I'm not great with change, big or small, the move itself and the expectation and preparation for a new career have been growing experiences for me. Settling into such a new environment will take a while. School will provide me with a helpful structure and an avenue for making friends.

Thank you for being such a loving and outstanding group. My time among you all has enlarged and strengthened my understanding of compassion and ideas about Christianity. I pray for the safety, well-being and happiness of everyone at Olympic View and keep you in my heart as friends.

With much love and friendship,

Kim Thomas

P.S. It is hot in SLC!



OR/WA District Conference Is Coming Up Fast !!

Make plans now to attend the COB District Conference at Camp Koinonia, September 25-27. Lodging will be in various cabins; RV and tent sites are available as well. Meals will be in the dining hall.

This year's focus is Renewal/Revitalization. Activities will include: Worship, Business Meeting, Disaster Relief Auction, Workshops, Fellowship, and Talent Show. Ken & Elsie Holderread from the COB Western Plains District will be leading a workshop on Saturday, September 26.

Anyone is welcome and encouraged to attend District Conference. If you don't want to come for all of the conference you may come for only the part that interests you. Check with the church office for more information and registration forms which will be available soon.

Betty Radke, Administrative Assistant COB OR/WA District, PO Box 5440, Wenatchee WA 98807 509.662.3211 or 509.662.3681 (to reach me)



Sharing Together in Prayer In Our Community:

- For **Jean Ulery**, recovering from pneumonia at Foss Home
- For the family and friends mourning the death of **Walter Kugler**, brother of **Alice Dalrymple** .
- For the family and friends mourning the loss of **Jane Penny** who died in August.
- For **Adam Ford** who is having difficulty with his kidney treatment.
- For **Gloria Sherwood** adjusting to a new residence and managing medications and recovering from heat stroke.
- For **Sharon Haley's** sister-in-law, seeking treatment for a brain lesion.
- For **Goldie Barnes'** sister **Cheryl** who is seriously ill.
- For **Percy Dawson**, church custodian, recovering from arthroscopic knee surgery.
- For **Dan Fredrickson**, recovering from a hip replacement.

Ongoing Prayer Requests:

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

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.



**District Conference
 September 25-27, 2009
 at Camp Koinonia**



International Day of Prayer for Peace— September 21, 2009

Purpose: "To encourage worldwide, 24-hour spiritual observations for peace and non-violence on the International Day of Peace, 21 Sep-

tember, in every house of worship and place of spiritual practice, by all individuals; all men, women and children who seek peace in the world."

On 21 September, churches and communities throughout the world are committing to the International Day of Peace through prayer, meditation and other forms of spiritual observance. For 2009, the WCC office for the Decade to Overcome Violence (DOV) proposes prayers and liturgical resources related to this year's DOV focus on the Caribbean and its theme "One Love: Building a Peaceful Caribbean".

The International Day of Prayer for Peace was proposed at a 2004 meeting between WCC general secretary Rev. Dr Samuel Kobia and UN secretary general Kofi Annan. The WCC's invitation to pray for peace on 21 September, or the Sunday preceding it, coincides with a United Nations' initiative that encourages "global 24-hour spiritual observation for peace", which "is meant to demonstrate the power of prayer and other spiritual practices in promoting peace and preventing violent conflict".

New E-mail Address for Secretary

In the interest of simplifying office procedures, a new email account has been created for the Olympic View Community Church secretary.

ovsecretary@gmail.com replaces dan@olympicchurch.org and info@olympicchurch.org.

Jubilee Endowment Fund Recovering

At the April General Assembly we reported on the status of the Jubilee Fund. With markets somewhat recovering, Trustees would like to report the following as of July 31, 2009:

Total contributions:	\$ 74,780.67
Earnings since inception:	\$ 21,499.82
General Assembly approved expenditures since inception:	\$ 12,690.27
Administrative fees since inception:	\$ 7,371.19
Earnings to expend in the future:	\$ 1,438.36
Fair market value:	\$81,847.52

Earnings from the Jubilee Fund through September will be available for distribution in December. The Church Board will recommend a special ministry use or to roll them over to the next year at the November General Assembly meeting.

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

olympicchurch.org e-mail: ovsecretary@gmail.com

We welcome you to our services.