

The New Olympian

January 2010

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

by Ken Miller Rieman

Almost every day at work, I hear one of my life's favorite sounds—recess at the elementary school across the street—hundreds of kids having all kinds of fun. Then I hear one of the saddest sounds—the bell that calls them all back to class. Why did we ever let them take recess away from us? I think it's time to bring it back.

Seriously, how much fun was that? Sure, I know there are bullies and fights and not getting picked to be on the team you want, but that stuff happens off the playground too. Drama and trauma aren't the exclusive realm of the playground. But man, there's a lot of fun stuff that never happens unless

you have some regularly set-aside time to play with others.

The other Sunday, a bunch of folks from the church went over to carol at the Northaven Retirement Community. From two years old to over seventy, that group had fun, especially singing to the 80-plus crowd who will always show up to hear a choir.

Honestly we were a somewhat unruly bunch. Not that everyone at Northaven likes to color inside the lines, but we had kids roaming ALL around, wanting to be held, then not, then deciding to go help Harumi play the piano, then deciding not to sing. My favorite was to see several of our youngsters helping Rob direct the singing.

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Some adults get cranky amid such antics, but not our group and not Northaven either. On this day, it was grace abounding. Unless I was missing something, it seemed like every one of us was just enjoying ourselves.



I wish more of my life was like that. I mean, haven't we all wanted to direct the choir and play electric guitar and drums at one time or another—so much that we just acted like we were, even though we didn't really know how to, or didn't have anyone that would actually let us do it for real?

I'm glad that Solomon and Griffin got to direct their hearts

out. Where else will they get to do that? Caroling was beginning to feel like recess, something I've really missed.

I'm not the first to call play a sacred activity. If you want to go all in, try googling 'play theory.' Play is at once both a ritual and a quality of mind. Through play, we explore and experiment with our view of the world. Play engages the imagination and often constructs new patterns of social interaction. Play cultivates creativity and is a common ingredient of instruction in the arts.

It has been said that one of the surest signs of health, in children or in pets is their inclination to play. As intuitively true as this seems, why wouldn't this be equally true for adult humans?

Somewhere along the line, we get taught that playing is childish. We learn that productivity, not creativity is the way to judge the fulfillment of human potential.

In one dimension, that picture of the 'laughing Jesus' is kind of cheesy. But surely Jesus knew how to

laugh like only the son of all humanity could laugh. If laughing is good for nothing else, at least it tends to give us a glimpse of a person's soul. Yes, you can fake a laugh, but one needn't be a genius to detect it. Bottom line, I think you can learn more from playing, laughing, and being creative with others than all the classroom time in the world.



Even when someone is coloring outside the lines, it's hard to complain when you can see how good of a time they are having. To me, that's what Jesus is all about. In Jesus' life we celebrate the divine become flesh. We see the creative impulse find complete expression in human form. The God who longed to be fully known and fully loved and was willing to do anything that humanity would be filled with that love too, came to dwell WITH US.

The ancient world had lots of different ways of looking at life. They had all different kinds of gods and even people who were somewhere in between human and divine. But Yahweh, the one God used Christmas to color outside the lines of humanity's expectations. Our Christ tried out his own hand at conducting the heavenly chorus. And in this, the season of Epiphany, of God's revealing, we have the chance to imagine heaven's realm anew, only now



fulfilled on THIS earth.

To play is to RE-create. The Lord of the sabbath did it. Jesus did it. Within us, Christ can do it still. I think it may be time to put down the books and take a recess.

God's creation shows the way. In the words of Ralph Waldo Emerson, *The noblest ministry of nature is to stand as the apparition of God. It is the organ through which the universal spirit speaks to the individual, and strives to lead back the individual to it.* (Nature)

And he offered a critique: *We can never see Christianity from the catechism*—from the pastures, from a boat in the pond, from amidst the songs of wood-birds, we possibly may.* (Circles)

It's not that I'm anti-school, I just think a lot of our learning happens outside the classroom and I'm with God, Jesus, Emerson, and the children. I think it's time to bring recess back.

* religious instruction



The Young adults had fun dancing with glo-sticks at their Christmas Party.





OV Hosts District Meet-n-Greet With Denominational Leaders Saturday, January 16, 2010



**Annual Conference Moderator
Shawn Flory-Replogle**



**Congregational
Life Ministries
Executive Director
Jonathan Shively**



Olympic View Community Church
Fellowship Hall, 12:00 pm

All members of the Pacific NW District are invited to share a meal with these three leaders of the church.

Come with your appetites and your questions. Enjoy the diet and the dialogue. A Donation of \$5 for the meal is welcomed.

**Church of the Brethren
General Secretary
Stan Noffsinger**

Facing Our Fears

by Julie Garber

Readings: Psalm 23; Luke 2:8-14

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows (Ps. 23:5)

Meditation: For generations we have used the 23rd Psalm as an amulet to ward off bad luck. It swings from rearview mirrors, printed on cardboard air fresheners. It's been written on little shards of paper and stuffed into a million wallets. Soldiers murmur it in the movies before they head into battle. The condemned ask for the psalm to shepherd them to the next world. It shows up on bookmarks, funeral home fans, coasters, plaques, and needlework, ever ready to soothe us and remind us God is near. We cannot go where it is not! It's true.

The 23rd Psalm has been a great comfort for the world, but it's really courage the psalm is trying to impart, not safety. The Good Shepherd doesn't shelter us in the protective confines of the church. God leads us out into the world, which is both beautiful with its still waters and dangerous with its

wolves in sheep's clothing, but the best grass is always in the beautiful dangerous pasture.

That's the right path. God doesn't give us a detour around death. We have to walk right into the valley of the shadow of death. God doesn't shield us from our enemies. God makes us sit right down at the table and break bread with them. God anoints us, perhaps for death, but also for courage as God anointed David the king. And only when we have faced our fears can we be restored to wholeness and grace. Only then does our cup overflow with fulfillment and peace.

For the day: Read the 23rd Psalm today and screw up your courage to confront an injustice, apologize to someone, write a letter to the editor, or tell the truth. See whether you do not feel restored.

Prayer: Shepherd, give us the courage we lack on our own to walk in the right path. Another path might be easier, but we know the right path leads to the peace that comes when we have done your will. Amen.

2010 Oregon/ Washington Snow Camp at Camp Koinonia

Friday, January 29 to Sunday January 31



All ages are welcome to our retreat in the Cascade foothills outside sunny Cle Elum, Washington.

Relax around the fireplace.

Play in the snow.

Hike the new trails around the camp. Head to 'The Brick' in Roslyn to play table shuffleboard and remember your favorite times on Northern Exposure.

Bring your cross-country ski's, snow shoes, board games or other hobbies and don't forget your camera.



Adults: (13+)
Full event: **\$70.50**
Break down:
Soup & snacks \$5.00
Breakfast \$6.75
Lunch \$6.75
Dinner \$7.75
Lodging \$18.75

Juniors: (9-12)
Full event: **\$46.00**
Break down:
Soup & snacks \$4.00
Breakfast \$4.25
Lunch \$4.25
Dinner \$4.25
Lodging \$13.00

Quiet time, social time, indoors or out, it's all for you to choose.

The full retreat runs from Friday night through Saturday Breakfast.

Friday night will include a light supper of soup and snacks, available whenever you roll in.



Registrations are due January 20.
After that, please add \$10 to your check.

To register, simply contact the office of the Olympic View Community Church of the Brethren. Please include your full contact information so we can send you confirmation.



E-mail: ovsecretary@gmail.com Tel. 206.525.8900

Registration fees are due upon arrival at the retreat. Some scholarships are available. Check with your church office.

The registration costs are itemized below. Customize the cost according to your schedule.

If you'd like a sack lunch on Sunday, just add another lunch to your registration.

Children: (3-8)
Full event: **\$38.00**
Break down:
Soup & snacks \$3.00
Breakfast \$3.25
Lunch \$3.50
Dinner \$4.00
Lodging \$11.00



Sharing Together in Prayer

In Our Community:

For **Barbara Anderson** recovering from a fall

For **Geraldine Campbell**, recently hospitalized at Virginia Mason as she fights her Leukemia.

For **Willy Mooyman**, healing a fractured hip.

Thanks for **Harold Lawrence**, who has recovered from an infection!

For **Maurice Carlson** at Park Ridge Nursing Home in Shoreline

Ongoing Prayer Requests:

Lowell Geiver

Gene & Donna Harnden

Jimmy Barnes

Eunice Jarboe

Peggy Cochran

Ed Enzi

Gloria Sherwood

Adam Ford

Nancy Louise Wilkinson

Dan Fredrickson

Vera Gastfield Wolfe

Eileen Birky's mother, **Elsie Clayton**

Bill Case & daughter **Carol Kamada**

Lew Fortin's nephew, **Michael Rogers**

Sharon Haley's siblings:

Mark, Ruth and Paul Andrews

Happy New Year 2010

The Most Wonderful Time of the Year

Thursday, December 21 the office staff had a surprise visit.

Bill and Sharon Sutter dropped in to see the church, one of their stops commemorating their 45th wedding anniversary. It was this date, also a Thursday, in 1964 that Bill and Sharon celebrated their union right here in the Olympic View sanctuary. Today, after various serious health issues, they were exuberant to be together on this trip down memory lane. Sharon is Roy and Geraldine Good's daughter. Dewey Rowe officiated at the couple's wedding



Sharon & Bill Sutter



Stephanie Herkelrath's Care Circle members share a meal together .