

PASTOR'S REFLECTION

by Rev. Jonny Finlayson



Joseph In January

It's a new year! And a new year brings the promise of new things. But it's only a few weeks into the new year and most of us have already been reminded that the new things brought by the flip of the calendar are mostly just repackaged old things. Such is life.

If you come to worship with us at 11:00am on a Sunday morning this January (or February, or March, and probably April) you'll discover one such repackaged old thing. And that is that we're spending a number of weeks on

one single extended chunk of the bible in our sermon time together. We're focusing on the life of Joseph, whose story can be found in Genesis 37-50. Many details of the story will be lost on us, because we are removed from his culture and context by large oceans and many centuries. But still, his is filled with very human experiences, joys and sorrows that all of us can understand.

The first few chapters of his story have followed the same story-arc of a new year; initial promise, followed quickly by eerily familiar disappointments and sorrows. And I know that some of us haven't started the new year exactly the way we would have liked or planned. But Joseph's life will remind us that even if this is true for you, God can still work in your life to bring about surprising and beautiful things. Here's to a good long journey to that end! I hope that you can come in person or online to join us. And please reach out to let us know how we can pray or support you as a church.

In Christ, Pastor Jonny



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PLACE
STAMP
HERE

The New Olympian
Olympic View Community Church of the Brethren
P.O. Box 75032
Seattle WA 98175

Highlights from Year End Congregational Meeting for 2025

by Roger Edmark

On November 23, 2025 we had our year end General Assembly meeting in the Harbor Room of Northaven. Our General Assembly meetings are also on Zoom, as permitted by our Constitution and Bylaws. At this meeting we affirmed those who will provide Leadership and established our 2026 budget.

Leadership for 2026 – These individuals were all affirmed by the General Assembly

Moderator	Roger Edmark (3-year term – 2025, 2026, 2027)
Church Clerk	Sylvia Hershberger (2-year term – 2025, 2026)
Leadership Chair	Jana Helmuth (2-year term – 2025, 2026)

The Treasurer position is a 1-year term, but there is no term limit

Treasurer	Kelly McAvoy (1-year term – 2026)
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Annual Conference Delegate – Conference is in Fort Wayne, Indiana in 2026

Per our Constitution and Bylaws, a delegate to Annual Conference can serve two consecutive terms as a delegate, thus Gretchen Zience has been asked to serve a second year.

Jubilee Fund Trustee

The Jubilee Fund per its operating rules, is administered by three trustees. Trustees are confirmed for 3-year terms with a two-term limit. These positions are also staggered, so only one position needs to be affirmed each year. Gretchen Zience and Tim Cochran's terms are ongoing, but Bill Hershberger has come to the end of his second term, thus he will be replaced by John Russell.

Ongoing Trustee	Gretchen Zience (2026 will be the third year of their 1st term)
Ongoing Trustee	Tim Cochran (2026 will be the second year of their 1st term)
New Trustee	John Russell (2026 will be the first year of their 1st term)

2026 Budget

The church establishes a budget at the end of one year to estimate expenses for the following year. Budget line items are established for projected income and for expenses such as a) Office; b) Pastoral; c) General (Utilities, insurance, Conference fees, etc.); d) Outreach; e) Fellowship; f) Worship and Nurture.

The General Assembly approved a budget for 2026 of \$158,268.

God Loves a Cheerful Giver

by Roger Edmark

The Church of the Brethren believes in something they call "The Priesthood of All Believers". You might wonder, "what does that mean?" It does not mean that we are all called to be preachers. What it does mean is that God has given all of us gifts (various abilities) which we are called to use to serve the spiritual, emotional, physical and social needs of those we come in contact with. Whatever it is that God has given to you, it is to be used to serve the needs of others.

Sometimes, we are on the receiving end of that care. Hopefully we are thankful and helped by the graciousness of others. The rest of the time, we are the givers! But what kind of givers are we asked to be? I remember a kid's song that goes: "God loves a cheerful giver, so give it all you got" which is inspired by 2 Corinthians 9:7 "Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." It matters the spirit by which you give, just as much as the act of giving!

At Olympic View Community Church, we want to be generous cheerful givers. For some, their heart tells them to give towards the ministries of our congregation. We are thankful for that. But the Christian church is much larger than one congregation. Thus, we encourage support for other ministries helping people in ways that our congregation could not do alone. Each month we highlight a ministry doing great things in service to others.

You will see in the Odds and Ends part of this Newsletter our focus for January, "New Community Project" and the coming focus for February, Church of the Brethren ministries through "One Great Hour of Sharing".

How ever your heart leads you, be a cheerful giver. It makes a difference to you and others!

Odds and Ends

by the Leadership Team

Church Building

- The renovation of the building we bought next to Northaven has been slow at times, but the good news is that most of the remaining items may be done by the end of the 1st quarter of 2026 now that we received the building permits for the interior stair remodel and the street side porch and ramp. A lovely garden and pathway to the rear entry will also soon be in work by our landscaper. And the remodel of the basement from a car repair parts storage room to a worship space is nearing completion. Yeah!

Outreach

- Outreach - Every month we support two food initiatives at Northaven. First, we bring food items on the first Sunday of each month for the Northaven Pantry; Second, we encourage financial support for the Northaven Market Place which distributes fresh food and other items to residents once a month. If you want to contribute, bring individual food items to church; or designate a financial gift to Olympic View Community Church for "Northaven Market Place".
- New Community Project (NCP) - a special January outreach focus is on NCP. NCP is involved with "Earth Care", "Experiential Learning" and "Peace through Justice" through many initiatives and programs that really make a difference in people's lives all over the world. Read more about NCP here: Environmental Sustainability | New Community Project <https://www.newcommunityproject.info/>
- Great Hour of Sharing - Our Special February Outreach focus will be on the ministries of the Church of the Brethren. Brethren Volunteer Service - BVS (where Kathy E., Roger E., Frosty W, And our friend Mike Stern have all served), and Children's Disaster Services - CDS (Where Gretchen Z. And Tim C. are currently serving) are just two of the many ministries supported when we give to "One Great Hour of Sharing" which we will do in February.

Camp Koinonia Update

- Camp Koinonia near Cle Elum has a new Executive Director, Scott Webb. Scott was hired midway through 2025 when Kevin Eichhorn and his family moved to the mid-west to be closer to family. After setting camp records for campers and revenue in 2025, the camp is looking forward to an even better year in 2026. Melissa (Edmark) Hinton is the Human Resources (HR) person at Camp K, and Roger E., Frosty W., and Tim C. Are all on the board.

Gratitude

- "It is with thankfulness to God, and to all of you, that we report that 2025 was a strong financial year for us. Even with purchasing a building, doing various repairs and updates on it, on top of our normal ministries, we managed to come in **under budget**. There are many reasons to account for this. The big one is that as a church we continued to give faithfully to our church in 2025. But we also need to thank all of you who volunteered many hours or found other ways to save the church money in big and small ways. Of course, we thank God who preserved us and provided above what we needed."



Taushie gets a workout

CALENDAR FOR FEBRUARY

Sun. Feb. 1

Bring food for Northaven Pantry to worship service

Wed. Feb. 4

Bible Study on Zoom at 8pm

Sun. Feb. 8

Donate to Church Brethren Ministries through "One Great Hour of Sharing"

Tues. Feb. 10

Leadership Meeting at 8pm on Zoom

Thurs. Feb. 12

Bible Study on Zoom at 8pm

Sun. Feb. 15

Mike Stern will be our guest speaker and musician while Jonny is away.

Fri - Sun. Feb. 20-22

PNW District Men's Retreat at Camp Myrtlewood in Oregon - connect with either Roger Edmark or Frosty Wilkinson for more info. or if you want to Carpool.

Sun. Feb. 22

Communion Sunday

Thurs. Feb 26

Bible Study on Zoom at 8pm

Memorial Funds

Olympic View Community Church receives funds given in the name of friends and members of the church that have passed away. When those funds are received, they go into a separate Memorial Fund account. Memorial funds are not used for budget expenses, but instead for special items and needs of the church that are not included in the budget. When a memorial service is held at the church, expenses come out of this account as well.

Sometimes the funds are used for a special item, such as the stained-glass window at the entry of the old church building or a new piano or a candelabra. Other times the items are practical items which enhance the church or meet a specific need like computers or furniture.

Memorials in Remembrance

When we use the funds set aside as Memorial Funds, we honor the legacy and the lives of faithful friends and family member that came before us. In looking through the records from the last 20 years of memorial fund donations, these are the names noted in those records. Some gifts given do not specify the names, so this is not an exhaustive list.

- 2006** Reah Whiteside, Phoebe Smith, Vi Lauridsen,
- 2007** Evy Berg, Ronald Russell, Al Pride, Keith White
- 2008** Elaine Rankin, Hazel Charland, Disk Nash, Ernie Ricketts. Margaret James, Lucile Newman
- 2009** Audrey Taylor, Philip and Louise Rieman, Jane Penny, Jean Ulery, Christine Pride
- 2011** Chuck Cochran, Maurice Carlson, Bob Landis, Joyce Mays, Harold Lawrence
- 2012** Jeanne Horsey, Nancy Louise Wilkinson, Elsie Clayton, Bill Case
- 2013** Geraldine Campbell, Alan Nedrow, George Jorgenson, James Crider, Max Hadley
- 2014** Janet Schmid, Albert "Les" Albright
- 2015** Dorothy Rhodes, Jean Ericksen, Jerry Vierthaler, Alice Dalryple, Jery Rodeffer, Dorothy Bollinger, Jean Albright
- 2016** Hal Lauridsen, Dorothy Johnson
- 2017** Barbara Anderson
- 2018** Stephanie Herkelrath, Dorsey Harris, Lois Thomson
- 2019** Phyllis Harris, Jimmy Barnes, Peggy Cochran
- 2020** Grace Edmark
- 2024** Lorraine Harris
- 2025** Patti Berg

Deep Listening with Barbara Daté

by Harriet Koscho

McPherson College has a series of workshops called "Ventures" which provides pastors with ways to earn their CEU's as part of their accreditation. In January I was honored to support my mentor, Dr. Barbara Daté, in leading a two-week seminar along with Joe Vecchio (PSWD) and Enten Eller. It was called "Building Bridges Between Brethren", and it was an opportunity to learn and use deep listening skills. Barbara has spent her life developing practices for healing community divisions in various ways - for example resolving a teachers strike. She combines modern psychology with indigenous healing circles in a unique process that allows participants to begin working together with a common understanding of the divide, whatever that may be. A mutual understanding builds mutual respect, but it needs to be facilitated with transparency and even-handedness.

Facilitating is much harder than it looks. And in our case, we were using Zoom teleconferencing to do something that has only been done in person until now. After considerable effort we managed to plan an engaging and meaningful event. We wanted the participants to process feelings about what the Church of the Brethren denomination is doing with either "I am heartened by..." or "I am disheartened by..." At the time of this writing, we are in-between the two sessions. Last week we introduced listening skills and practiced them. Tomorrow, in the second session, we will go deeper and use deep-listening skills to allow this collection of pastors to communicate their hopes and heal their hurts. If there is interest, I will follow up with a summary of the complete workshop in the February newsletter.

Recognizing Barbara Daté - On Earth Peace

https://www.onearthpeace.org/recognizing_barbara_date

ZOOM BIBLE STUDY

Meets via Zoom on Thursday's at 8pm.

ZOOM COFFEE HOUR

Meets via Zoom every
1st & 3rd Saturday at 3pm

Look for the email
invitations in your mailbox.