

The Newsletter of the Olympic View Community Church of the Brethren
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LEMONADE WORSHIP

by Moderator - Roger Edmark Olympic View Community Church



There is an old proverb with a snippet of advice “When you are dealt Lemons, make Lemonade”. To all of us, it was hard to say goodbye to Jonny Finlayson, our interim pastor, after spending over two years getting to know him. It was a joy to spend time in worship with him and we wondered with some trepidations, what might be next? We are always wondering how God is going to make lemonade out of a situation that seems like a lemon. But God does that time and time again.

Over the last seven weeks we have had the opportunity to hear from a wide range of speakers as they filled our pulpit on Sunday mornings.

Since May 14, we have heard from Ryan Taylor (twice), Sacia Vik, Kathryn Smith Derksen, Carol Mason (twice) and John Braun. Each were more than willing to spend a Sunday morning in worship with us and we have been blessed by their messages.

We will continue filing the pulpit each week as we worship together In the next few weeks, we will hear from Carol, Sacia and John again, as well as many others.

In addition, the Pastoral Search Committee is vetting candidates for our set pastor and/or interim positions, so we have not lost sight of that goal as well.

As John Braun told us of seven practices to enhance our prayer life during his sermon on June 21, I realized how each speaker has provided a different perspective into their life and their walk with God. Wow, what a gift! That is really sweet Lemonade!



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PLACE
STAMP
HERE

Getting to Know Annie Center

“Annie Center has been our pianist for about 15 years at Olympic View. She will tell you all about her connections with the church as she shares her answers to three questions we asked her.”

1. What year did you first connect with OVCC, and how did it happen?

I am not certain of the exact year, but I believe it was around 2011. OVCC’s previous pianist, Harumi Jacobson, was preparing to move away and asked if I would consider taking her place.

At the time, I had not played music for more than eight years due to injuries. I had changed careers and did not believe I would ever be able to perform again, so I declined. Harumi was persistent. She invited me to attend one of the choir rehearsals and encouraged me to give playing another try.

I did, and it was a difficult beginning. I almost walked away again, but Harumi was unable to find a replacement and continued to encourage me. Despite the challenges, I decided to keep trying.

With the physical changes in my hands, I could no longer rely on muscle memory. If I did, I would hit all the wrong keys. What followed was the slow process of retraining myself—one note at a time—learning how to play with what felt like a completely different body. Years later, I am still here, playing every Sunday. I will always be grateful that serving as OVCC’s pianist was what brought me back to music.

2. Your story

I was born in Taiwan and came to the United States when I was thirteen, along with my sister, who was fourteen at the time. We arrived without our parents and lived on our own in San Francisco. We attended a local high school while also studying in the Preparatory Division of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and performing with the San Francisco Youth Symphony.

Coming to this country opened doors that my sister and I would not otherwise have had. In her late twenties, not long

after being hired as the youngest professor at the prestigious Peabody Conservatory of Johns Hopkins University, my sister was diagnosed with Stage IV cancer. Doctors told her she had only two weeks to live.

My brave sister beat the odds. She had such a bright future ahead of her and a strong desire to live. She fought fiercely for another two and a half years. Those were among the most meaningful years of my life, and I cherished every moment we had together.

During that same period, I was also diagnosed with cancer. Fortunately, mine was detected early and successfully treated with surgery, allowing me to continue caring for my sister until the final day of her life.

Music has been a central part of my life since childhood. I began performing for foreign dignitaries in Taiwan when I was six years old and remained on a professional musical path until injuries ended my career as a full-time symphony musician after more than a decade.

When I stopped playing, I was given an unexpected opportunity to work as an event coordinator, graphic designer, and video editor for a nonprofit organization based in Philadelphia. The organization used the performing arts as a platform to bring together people from cultures in conflict.

Through that work, I witnessed how shared human experiences expressed through the arts can bring people together, break down fear, open dialogue, and foster understanding and appreciation across cultural differences. Those years profoundly shaped my outlook on life.

Conflict often creates suffering that is passed from one generation to the next. I met many remarkable people who were forced to flee their homes because of war. Those experiences eventually led me to volunteer with the International Rescue Committee, an organization I have been involved with for more than ten years.

The organization has faced significant challenges in recent years, particularly in the current political climate. Yet despite

reduced staffing and resources, its dedicated team continues to do everything possible to support those in need. It has been deeply inspiring to work alongside people who give so selflessly to help others during the most difficult times of their lives.

3. Anything else you would like to share about your relationship with the church?

OVCC is a community that I hold close to my heart. Over the years, I have cherished being with everyone each Sunday—listening to sermons, sharing in one another’s joys and concerns, and feeling welcomed, cared for, and loved.

During some of the most difficult periods of my life, members of this community extended kindness, encouragement, and support when I needed it most. Those acts of compassion have meant more to me than words can express.

It has been a privilege to serve as OVCC’s pianist for more than a decade. I am deeply grateful for the friendships, faith, and sense of belonging I have found here. Thank you to each and every one of you for being part of this journey.

CALENDAR FOR JULY

Sat. July 4

Velda Braun Birthday 2-4pm

Sun. July 5

Bring food for the Northaven Pantry

Sat. July. 11

Zoom Coffee Hour 3pm

Tues. July 14

Leadership Meeting at 7pm on Zoom

Sun. July 19

Communion Sunday. 11 am

Sat. July 25

Zoom Coffee Hour 3pm

Tues. July 28

Book Club 3:30pm

Sat. Aug. 1

Zoom Coffee Hour 3pm

Note: No Bible Study in July

Olympic View Community Church

Investing in Our Future

Introduction

On Sunday afternoon, June 14, 2026, the congregation had a well-attended General Assembly meeting (congregational business meeting). We have two 'regular' General Assembly meetings each year. One mid-year, and the other towards the end of the year (usually in November).

As we considered a recommendation from the Leadership Committee meeting to invest funds from the sale of the old church building with Eder Financial [A], the investment agency of the Church of the Brethren, there were some very good questions from the congregation. Those questions were noted, and a short reply was provided at the time. I think it is important that a little more detail is provided to answer those questions more completely.

Question # 1: We have a lot of money. Why don't we just use it to help the poor and homeless?

Question # 2: Is there a detailed plan written out that explains how this money can be used?

Question # 3: Eder Financial is being absorbed by Everence Financial. How will that affect us?

Question # 4: What is the plan for getting a new pastor?

You may wonder how these four questions are related. I will try to explain that through this discussion.

Background

Olympic View, like many churches has steadily declined in attendance over the last 40 years. It was gradual most years, but was accelerated by a split of the church in 1995 and by the pandemic of 2020-2021. When you have fewer people in the church, the church offerings decrease, making it more of a challenge to meet church budget

expenses and pay the pastor. Our solution 10 years ago was to increase our income by leasing our building to other non-profit organizations. Eventually, we had a Mandarin language pre-school and four congregations using the space on a regular basis. Because of this new income, we were able to maintain a budget large enough to pay a full-time pastor.

But as the church continued to get smaller through the Covid pandemic, and a few volunteers were spending a lot of time managing the user groups, it became apparent that it was time to re-imagine the church. That process brought us to the decision that we needed to make a change.

In 2022 we decided to sell the old church building and start a 'new' Olympic View Church. We would worship in the Harbor Room of Northaven where we had been warmly invited. But there was one big issue we needed to address: "when we sold the old church building, we were no longer going to have income from our user groups to use for our budget - how could we afford a full-time pastor?" Our solution was that we would invest a portion of the proceeds from the sale of the building and use the interest as income for the budget. In 2022 we estimated that we would need the interest income from an investment of about 1.4 million dollars to make sure we could hire a full-time pastor to help the 'new' church grow. Ever since, that has been our goal.

Olympic View Today

Our invested funds will provide enough income in our budget, along with tithes and offerings, to enable us to hire a full-time pastor. Without the income from that investment, we could not.

Thus, it is important that we hold

back funds from the sale of the old church building to meet today's budget needs. It is also important that we understand that these funds cannot be used any other way in the near future, unless we can find another source of income for our budget. If we spent all our remaining funds on outreach to the poor and homeless, a very real need in the world today, we as a church would no longer be a financially viable organization; we would not be able to afford a pastor; and we would cease to exist in a very short time. We do acknowledge the importance of outreach and set a goal of donating 10% of our budget each year to meet needs in the community, nation and world.

Legacy

It is important to remember, that the generous gifts and commitment of the people that built and sustained the old church are still at work in our new church building and through the investment fund. By using the funds from the sale of the building wisely, you can see on our balance sheet that their sacrifice and investment in the life of the church - their legacy, is still intact and actually growing [B]. As we remodel the new church building, it is growing in value. As we invest a portion of our funds, we will see the investment portfolio increasing in value too.

As we look for a pastor for the 'new' church, it should be comforting to you that, through our offerings and investment income, we have enough funds to call a full-time pastor.

Roger Edmark
Olympic View Community
Church Moderator

[A] The Church of the Brethren agency called 'Eder Financial' is transitioning during 2026 and 2027 to Everence Financial. Everence, known as Mennonite Mutual Aid (MMA) before 2010, is a faith-based, nonprofit financial services organization originating from Mennonite and Anabaptist traditions. Like with Eder, Olympic View will be able to

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CHURCH BUILDING UPDATE

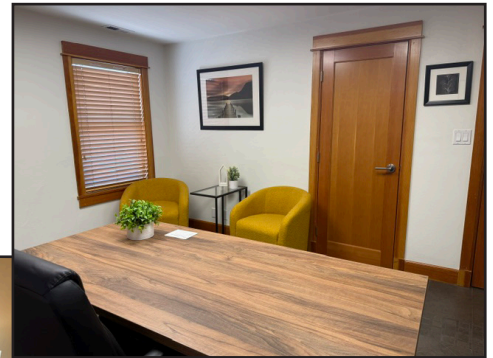
After an excruciatingly slow amount of progress on the church building over the last year, the flood gates of activity have been opened up and everything is happening all at once. By the time you read this, most of a new garden and pathway to the back door will be completed, the front porch and ramp will be painted and the inside of the church will be furnished. The new stairs inside are already being used to connect the four levels of the building and are wonderful.



That is all really good news, but the list of small items to do and fix sometimes still feels endless. Jana keeps a tally and assures us that they are being checked off faster than new ones are being added.



New low fencing and gates around the property is on the way. Signage out front has been envisioned. Plants and trees are in planning. Planters for Northaven residents at the edges of our west and south sides are still being thought through. New gravel for grading of the parking area will be done soon too to name just a few items you will see change.



It is all really exciting. We will start worshipping in the building when it is finished enough, but we are boldly setting a date for a “soft” opening for the church in July and an open house to coincide with the Northaven picnic in August.

Roger, Jana and Sylvia

ZOOM COFFEE HOUR

Meets via Zoom every
1st & 3rd Saturday
3-4pm

Meeting ID: 852 3609 1295
Passcode: 601582

Look for the email
invitations in your mailbox.

BOOK GROUP

Booklist 2026-2027

The Hiding Place by Corrie ten Boom

https://books.google.com/books/about/The_Hiding_Place.html?id=RfSsXCi9FxoC

The Finder of Forgotten Things by Sarah Loudin Thomas

<https://sarahloudinthomas.com/the-finder-of-forgotten-things/>

Stride Towards Freedom by Martin Luther King, Jr.

https://www.google.com/books/edition/Stride_Toward_Freedom/vnJ1NY5mbXEC

Ordinary Grace by William Kent Kreuger

<https://williamkentkreuger.com/standalone/ordinary-grace/>

Before the Coffee Gets Cold by Toshikazu Kawaguchi

<https://www.panmacmillan.com/blogs/literary/before-the-coffee-gets-cold-guide>

<https://olympicchurch.org/2026/03/25/book-group-2026/>

Meets every 4th Tuesday 3:30 - 5 pm

Meeting ID: 857 2403 5342

Passcode: 309318

Investing - Continued from page 3

invest in portfolios with Everence in accordance with our values.

[B] We yielded 3.1 million dollars with the sale of the old building and then tithed 10% (\$310,000) to other ministries we wanted to support, leaving a balance of 2.79 million dollars. We bought the ‘green’ building and are transforming it into our ‘new’ church and we have been investing the remainder of the funds. The May 31, 2026 balance sheet for the church shows the value of our property and investment fund is at about 2.8 million dollars.