

Wenatchee Brethren Baptist Quarterly Newsletter

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“Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?”³⁷He said to him, “ ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’³⁸This is the greatest and first commandment.³⁹And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’⁴⁰On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.” Matthew 22:36-40

Following Jesus means we have the grace to try to do the right thing, even when we fail.

We’re in a crisis in the United States. Many of our most vulnerable are under direct threat. Crises are not fun. Fear feels big and God can feel distant.

If everything depends on us and we must solve all the problems, the pressure is overwhelming, back-breaking. If nothing depends on us, if we are merely waiting for God to take us up to heaven, then there is no pressure but also, we are not following Jesus.

Jesus calls us to partner in God’s Kingdom. Any understanding of the Gospel of Jesus Christ that absolves us of all responsibility for our neighbors is a false Gospel. And the Apostle Paul has some strong words about false Gospels.

The two central aspects of our relationship are learning God’s love for us and discerning how to love our neighbors. We see this in Jesus’ answer above. Jesus tells his questioner—and all of us— “‘love God with all your heart, soul, and mind’...And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’”

Jesus made very clear that we cannot love God without loving others. The disciple John wrote, “Those who say, ‘I love God,’ and hate a brother or sister are liars, for those who do not love a brother or sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen. The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.” I John 4:20-21

I believe we learn to love God as we come to believe that God loves us. We do not love God by convincing God to love us; we love God by receiving the love and grace God has for us. And then we show our love for God in how we treat others.

I was preaching about this at a local church once when a woman interrupted me—loudly, during the sermon—to tell me, “I love God, it’s these people I can’t stand. If it’s just me and God, I’m fine.” Have you ever felt that way? I suspect many of us have. Jesus tells us the most important thing is to love God—and teaches that we can only love God when we also love ourselves and our neighbor. We can’t separate these.

This brings us to discerning how we love our neighbors. There are 8.2 billion people in the world. We can ask God to bless them all, but we cannot actively love them all. That is not our calling. We follow Jesus by loving *specific* people as Jesus loved. “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.”

I don’t have specific instructions for each of you on how exactly you should love your neighbor today, in this crisis. I am responsible in my relationship with Jesus to discern that for myself, trusting God’s spirit to lead me, and so are you. And I will fail often at this. I *do* fail often at this. God’s grace for me means that I do not have to love others or myself perfectly; God’s grace for me means that *choosing* and *trying* to love others is what matters. We are called to be faithful, not perfect.

As we see our neighbors threatened with violence, deportation, with having their health care taken from them, with losing their jobs, with having their social security taken away, we pray and we ask God to lead us how to love them. Remember, “Justice is what love looks in public.” Cornel West

Pastor Mike

DEACON NEWS

After prayerful consideration, the Deacon co-chairs, Linda and Leanne have decided we can no longer prepare, serve and clean up a Love Feast event. It has been an interesting experience to design a modified service that contains all the traditional Church of the Brethren elements. Spiritual Nurture is going to take over the organizing/planning of the Love Feast and Foot/Hand Washing.

The quarterly Bread and Cup Communion during worship services will continue. The next one is Palm Sunday.

Monthly Support Deacon/Person

Each month the designated Support Deacon or Person sends out cards for Birthdays, Anniversaries, Get Well and Comfort when needed. There are cards and stamps available in the office if needed. If you would like to take a turn at being a Support Deacon or Person, contact Linda Vickery (509.670.3060).



FROM THE DESK OF CO-MODERATORS, LAEL & CONNIE

The church year is well on its way, and everything seems to be going quite well. All the chairman of the various committees are doing a very fine job. We want to thank all the volunteers that carry on the duties of the church as well as those that volunteer for the worship service and reach out to those in the community.

We would like to report that Trinity has blessed us with 2 more years of free rent, so we can continue our gathering as a church family.

God is Good and as Pastor Mike says, "God Loves Everyone."

Lael & Connie

REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Our Shut-ins:

Mary Kintner
Carolyn Storme
Shirley Beck
Darlene Ball
Warren & Evelyn Eikenberry
Jim Hart
Jay Stockwell

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

1st Myla Fletcher
3rd Judi Delabarre
6th Denise Holland
18th Gary Shaw
22nd Merry Kay Shaw
26th Leanne Ford
Linda Vicker

MAY BIRTHDAYS

2nd Mabel Hoffman
9th Paxton Fletcher
21st Robin Shockey
22nd Corin Rumley-Wells
23rd Jan White
26th Don Miller

JUNE BIRTHDAYS

15th Steve Shell

APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

No Anniversaries

MAY ANNIVERSARIES

3rd Chuck & Jo Anne Cox

JUNE ANNIVERSARIES

20th Steve & Jane Shell
24th Gary & Merry Kay Shaw



Happy Birthday to You
(sung to the usual tune)

Happy Birthday to you!
To Jesus stay true!
May all of God's blessings
Rain down upon you!



2 CENTS WORTH OFFERING Sunday, May 25

The 2 Cents Worth Offering is where every person sets aside 2 Cents for every meal every person eats in their home to go toward world hunger and the Heifer Project.



Happy Easter!

LOVE FEAST

During Holy Week we remember the events that led up to the death of Christ and his Resurrection. The last supper Jesus ate with his disciples was on Thursday before Easter; we call this Holy Thursday or Maundy Thursday. The word “Maundy” originated from the Latin word “Mandatum,” which means “commandment.” Jesus commanded us to love one another in humility and service, remembering that he washed the feet of his disciples as a servant would have done.

This year on Holy Thursday, we invite you to gather with us at church from 5:00pm – 6:30pm for a Sedar meal and a time of sharing scripture, communion, songs, and foot or hand washing. Blessings to you this holy season as we celebrate the death and resurrection of our Lord.



THE WASHINGTON UNIT FOR MENNONITE DISASTER SERVICES has committed to working on the interior of eight houses.

This is what has been accomplished in January and February 2025:

The Conklin house is about 90% done. It needs to have the laminate countertops glued on, porches built front and back and a deck and caulking on the outside of the house. The Jackson house is about 75% done. It needs all the above plus inside needs: half of the floor finished, baseboards, doors and trim installed, a ramp outside, appliances installed and some painting.

On-going work: Houses 3 and 4 that are on Bridges Road: the walls have been textured and painted, and the outside has been sided. Everything else inside still needs to be done. Houses 5 and 6 have been electrified and plumbed. Insulation will need to be done in the walls and crawl space. Once the drywall for the ceiling is done, the insulation will need to be blown in. Then the rest of the drywall can be done as well as the rest of the interior work needed.

I am planning on trying to help at least one week in April, May, June, July and August.

–Mary Carter Pringer (a sister in Christ representing the NW Brethren Disaster Service.)



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CARE FOR CREATION ON HOLY WEEK

On Good Friday we confront the ways we have caused suffering in the world. As we remember the death of Jesus, let us acknowledge the suffering we have inflicted upon God’s Creation. In our mourning may we resolve to be healers and helpers. May we participate in the resurrection of our environment.

As a reflection for Earth Day, which comes right after Easter, take time to think about this proverb: “We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors; rather we have borrowed it from our children.”

Creation Care Team



MUTUAL AID BOOK STUDY

WBBC and Sunnyslope are currently having a bi-weekly Zoom book discussion of “Mutual Aid: Building Solidarity During this Crisis”, Dean Spade, 2020. This book is available through the WBBC office or from your local bookstore. Mutual Aid is the rational act of caring for each other while working to change the world. Around the world people are facing a spiraling succession of crisis. As governments fail to respond to or actively engineer such crisis’, ordinary people are finding bold and innovative ways to share resources and help the vulnerable. Survival work, when done alongside social movement demands for transformative change is called mutual aid.

The book talks about communities helping each other and why it is so important, what it looks like, and how to do it. The book is written for those who are new to activism as well those who have been in social movements for a long time. The author, Dean Spade, has years of organizing social movements, transformational leadership and compassionate activism to the challenges of these times. The author is an Associate Professor at Seattle University School of Law.

Contact Pastor Mike or Joe Roy if you would like to join the book study. You can join on Zoom at home or at the church office meeting room. The next meeting is April 1 from 5:00pm – 6:00pm and then every other week for five more meetings.



FROM BREAD FOR THE WORLD

For 50 years Bread for the World, a Christian advocacy organization has urged U.S. decision makers to do all they can to pursue a world without hunger.

Jesus told this parable: *“A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. So he said to the man working in the vineyard, ‘See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still, I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil? He replied, ‘Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it. If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.’”* – Luke 13:6-9 (NRSVUE)

We hold the tension of what is and what we hope can be. We open ourselves to seeing things in new ways, to a change in heart and mind. In times of uncertainty and disappointment, we might hold on to certainty or make decisions that will give us certainty. The landowner decided to cut down the tree that was not bearing fruit because it was wasting resources. But the gardener invited him to change his mind — to let the uncertainty remain as the gardener tended the tree for another year. Our Savior invites us to let our lives be tended by the Gardener for some time so that we can soften our hearts and let go of the certainty we long for.

In working to end hunger, we can’t always see that we are making a difference. And sometimes the goal seems impossible to reach. Our practice this season of Lent is to press on faithfully, to soften our hearts and minds, and let the Gardener tend to them, so that we might be open to change.

Try this breath prayer:

Inhale: I let my life be tended by the Gardener,

Exhale: so that I might be open to change.



