

# FEDERATED FINDINGS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE WATERVILLE FEDERATED CHURCH

## Ramblings from the Reverend

Summer is here although you might be fooled if you only based that upon the weather here high on the plateau. Summer is an interesting season for ministry. A lot of the buzz and activity around congregational life shifts into another gear, but while some things take a breather, others get ramped up such as Vacation Bible School and Waterville Days.

As a pastor, summers typically have meant working harder to make sure there is leadership and robust attendance at worship, but that is tempered with less programming responsibilities. When I was in Michigan, summer meant my high school coaching was changing focus, but not necessarily the amount of hours I spent coaching, and trying to sneak some vacation in there. Now that I am married to a teacher, vacations get a bit trickier. When school is out during the year, it usually means that the pastor is ramping up activating (Spring Break and Easter, Winter Break and Christmas). When one of us is off (or could be off), the other one is usually in crunch time. However, I am certainly not complaining. We are fortunate to have vacation time and be able to travel—something we both enjoy a great deal.

My family and I will be in Italy for a few weeks as Gemma's parents are generously flying us there so that we can visit them in Milan and tour parts of the country. We will also spend a couple of days visiting friends in Michigan. I will also be in Los Angeles for a week at my seminar for my doctorate, but I will not be missing a Sunday for that this year.

I know it can be a strain when the pastor is gone. People have to pick up the slack in leadership and pastoral services. I am grateful for the wonderful people we have that step into those roles so joyfully and energetically. We are blessed to have strong members who are the salt of the earth in worship and service—whether it is leading from the front or being a joyful leader from your seat in the congregation. We are a strong congregation!

It can be hard to turn up for worship when the pastor isn't around... something the vast majority of pastors don't like. The church isn't the pastor. The church is Christ's community. We will have strong, diverse voices in the pulpit—come here a fresh voice! But more than that, be in worship to be there for one another and for the people that will be visiting. What a robust witness to have a vibrant congregation on a hot summer day! (Remember, we have air conditioning...) Draw on the strength of one another and rejoice that God has seen fit to throw us together!

And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

—Hebrews 10:25

*Pastor Seth*

### Stay in Touch

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## Library Corner

### Over 650 books for you to explore

Come check out the Library in the Adult Sunday School Room! Our church library has recently been inventoried and reorganized. This wall of shelves contains an amazing variety and number (over 650!) of books. These books have been acquired or donated to the library over the history of our church, with the oldest book (a leather-bound Bible compendium) from 1895.

We have something for everyone. There are Bibles in different translations along with commentaries and Bible study guides. We have books of devotions and prayer with different themes (parenting, running). Reference books share the shelf with fun Bible Trivia books. Personal stories of inspiration and Christian journeys sit next to guides to Christian living and family relationships. Fictional renderings of familiar Bible stories help bring these stories to life.

Some thinning of the library was done during the inventory process. These books (duplicate copies, books without religious content, etc.) are free to anyone who would like to adopt them. Check out the boxes of books on the hearth in the Fellowship Hall and take one or more home with you.

- Jill Thompson

## Church Picnic July 16

Join us after worship on July 16 for a picnic along the river at Scott & Dee Shriner's place in Orondo. If you are able, please plan on bringing a dish to share and a comfy chair. We will happily coordinate transportation to their house to and from Waterville—and this will make parking better, too. Look for more information in the Sunday bulletins and in an all-church email.

## Women's Bible Study Monday Mornings

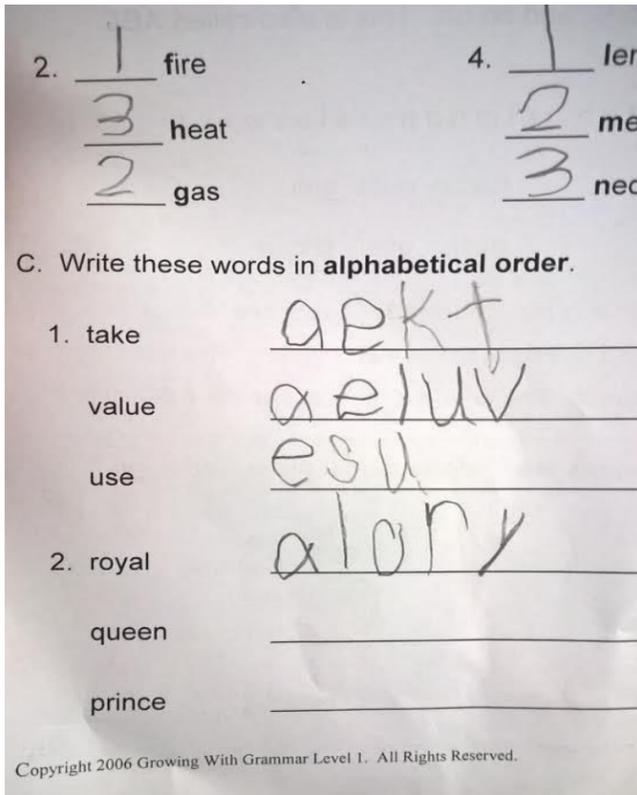
Join a great group of women on Mondays at 10:00am in the Fellowship Hall as they explore the Ten Commandments in conjunction with our Sunday sermon series. Contact Joyce Huber or the office for more information.

## A Moment in Worship

We are very blessed to have a vibrant choir, director, and accompanist who provide us with wonderful music throughout the school year. As they break for summer for a well-earned rest, we look to others to bring various kinds of beauty into our worship.

These moments need to not be musical—although they certainly can be. You could recite a poem, story, or anecdote, whether you wrote it or not. You share a piece of art and how it makes an impact on you. You could tell a joke. The possibilities go on and on.

We encourage you to share of yourself this summer as we all contribute to the rich tapestry that makes worship in God's Kingdom a glorious experience.



## Is It So Wrong?

This is a wonderful piece of work by a young student (not a local student, as far as I know). Instead of putting the three words in each group in alphabetical order on the lines provided, our young friend has written each word itself in alphabetical order. Given the way the worksheet is laid out, this makes even more sense. The student clearly understands the general concept of alphabetical order but perhaps not its purpose. While it clearly takes knowledge and insight to rearrange the letters of each word into alphabetical order, there isn't much utility in doing it. At some point, the student will gain further knowledge and probably not alphabetize lists of words in this manner again.

The student who did this work is intelligent, clever, and diligent—doing it this way seems much harder than alphabetizing the list as intended. While the answers are not strictly correct based on what the worksheet was going for, it is hard to fault the student as totally errant. Nevertheless, we would still correct the student.

I think this offers us insight as we are wrapping up our sermon series, *How Jesus Transforms the Ten Commandments*. I think we have discovered Jesus transforms the Ten Commandments by making them much more of a heart issue (what is going on inside) and not simply a matter of conduct other people can see and judge. Jesus also transforms the commandments by giving us much more grace and mercy in upholding the commandments than we can expect.

When we sin and get it wrong, we might have done so unwittingly or out of good motivation and yet we are wrong. The grace of Jesus covers the penalty for our sin, but that does not mean we shouldn't be corrected. We shouldn't continue in sin because we know grace will cover us or because we messed up in a cute way that others will get a chuckle out of. God loves us but God will still correct us because he wants us to be refined into greater Christ-likeness so that we will fulfill our God-ordained destiny of glorifying the Triune God eternally here and in the world to come. Acknowledge where you are in your life and faith—celebrate where God has led you—but don't remain in that spot, for God has even better plans in store.

For more, check out Romans 6:1-14!

## Amazon Smile

Over the past months, you may have seen announcements on the screen or in the bulletin about Amazon Smile. Here's some more information about it.

### What is Amazon Smile?

It is a program where Amazon donates 0.5% of your eligible purchases to a charity that you select. Otherwise, it works precisely like the regular Amazon website and looks the same. Basically, it is a way to give money to a charity by shopping at Amazon with no extra cost to you.

### How do I use Amazon Smile?

If you are a current Amazon user, go to [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com), you do not need a new account. You may or may not have to sign back in. It will ask you to select a charity and you can search for Waterville Federated Church. Amazon Smile will remember the charity you selected and you may change it at any time.

### How does the church benefit?

We receive 0.5% of the eligible purchases you make on Amazon Smile. That might not sound like a lot, but if everyone does it, it adds up. We have already set up our free account with Amazon Smile and have been receiving contributions for several months.

### Where can I get more information?

Go to this link for more information: <http://amzn.to/1N27MRK>

If you'd like help getting setup, please talk to Pastor Seth

## Church on the Road

Many of us are travelling this summer and enjoying time with family and exploring new places and visiting old haunts. This is an easy time to totally exclude worship from our lives. Check out another church while you are on the road!

We are members of the Church Universal, not just our local congregation, and God calls us into worship with a community—and not just the community that is near your house. Take a risk and experience how different congregations worship. Some things might seem a touch odd, some things might affect you profoundly. You will be better off for having intentionally sought out a group of Jesus followers to share worship with in a different community—and it will send a strong message to your family, friends, and the people of the church you are visiting that worship is important!

A final thought, if you are in the wilderness, there is still opportunity for worship. There might be an opportunity to gather nearby. If not, crack out your bible by the campfire and be illuminated by God's Word. Lift up prayers and say or sing a favorite worship song.

## Financial Snapshot

	<u>Budget Year to Date</u>	<u>Actual YTD (as of 5/31/2017)</u>
Income	\$39,793	\$34,202
Expenses	<u>\$39,793</u>	<u>\$36,477</u>
Difference	\$0	(\$2,276)

Here is the financial snapshot with data through the end of May.

Ministry expenses have continued to exceed offerings and collections. You will see that we are underbudget on our expenses but not enough to make up for how far behind we are on giving—we are more than \$5,500 behind where we should be in our giving.

Please prayerfully consider your level of support for our ministry here in Waterville—it takes local people to make the local church thrive.