

# FEDERATED FINDINGS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE WATERVILLE FEDERATED CHURCH

## Ramblings from the Reverend

As we go to press here at the end of February, I am about to sit down and write another lengthy paper for my Doctor of Ministry degree from Fuller Theological Seminary. I am wrapping up year two of three and then will have a dissertation-type paper to write after the year three material is complete.

The paper I am writing at the moment concerns spiritual formation and so it is no coincidence that we have been placing emphasis on our individual and communal spiritual formation. As I said in our "State of the Church" sermon at the end of January, "Individual renewal comes before and leads to corporate renewal." If we want to continue to be faithful to the call of Christ upon our lives as disciples and as His church, then we must be in consistent patterns and rhythms of allowing the Triune God to fashion us into greater Christ-likeness. A vital church that is reaching people for Christ in Waterville will be a church that has a vibrant, contagious, sticky faith in our awesome God!

As I also said in that sermon, we will not be embarking on any big "church visioning" programs or the like for the next 18-24 months (or as the Spirit calls us), but will focus on ensuring that we are cultivating a vibrant love for Christ first with the knowledge that renewed, and consistently renewing, disciples of Jesus see His call upon our lives and church far better and more clearly.

How are we going to go about this? Here is what I can tell you about the initiatives I am personally keeping/undertaking as a person and as your pastor:

- daily prayer and scripture reading
- consistent Sabbath-keeping practices
- a day of personal retreat for renewal each quarter
- maintenance of practices that enhance my physical health
- sermons and sermon series that consistently highlight spiritual formation and personal transformation in Christ
- creating workshops that help guide us in rhythms of personal renewal, formation, and transformation (see the opportunity to the right!)
- forming a new small group ministry opportunity to launch in the fall of 2017
- engaging in new patterns of ministry with younger folks

Perhaps some things come to mind about how you might go about this, too. If not, that's perfectly fantastic! We'll be talking about it for at least the next 18 months! A workshop is on the way for this Fall/Winter on how you can transform your life to engage God more readily and consistently.

Looking forward to the journey with you,



### Stay in Touch

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## Cultivating a Fruitful Prayer Life

One of the consistent questions I, Pastor Seth, have been asked over the course of my ministry is, "How do I pray?" That is a broad question and I often find with a little exploring in conversation that this question comes from a place of feeling inadequate and feeling like we don't know how to pray because we compare ourselves to others or believe in some intriguing myths about prayer.

*If you would like a stronger, more fruitful prayer life, no matter how you feel about your prayer life right now, this workshop is for you.*

I will be leading a four-session workshop this spring addressing some major topics in prayer, including:

- The secrets to praying out loud
- Models for prayer that you can use everyday in every situation
- How to use Scripture in your prayers
- How to setup fruitful prayer times
- Praying without words

The schedule of this workshop will be guided by those who would like to participate and there is the potential that we could hold separate day-time and evening sessions. **We will have a ten minute informational get together immediately following worship in the Adult Sunday School room on March 26.** If you are interested to know more or want to sign-up, please stop by. If you know you can't make it on the 26th but want to be a part of the group, please contact Pastor Seth before the 26th.

## Holy Week Worship

To really engage with what happens on Easter Sunday, it is vital to engage communally with the events that lead up to that glorious morning. This is why we start our preparations for Jesus' resurrection on Ash Wednesday (in 2017, this is March 1). Easter is April 16 this year. That is a lot of preparing! When we prepare we encounter events in a more intentional and meaningful way because our hearts, minds, and spirits of been focusing on the coming event, but perhaps more importantly, doing life in the context of the preparation and waiting for the day.

We continue our preparations for Easter and celebrate Jesus' faithfulness to his call with a worship service that will encapsulate the last 24 hours or so of Jesus' life (what we call Maundy Thursday and Good Friday) with a worship gathering on Thursday, April 13 at 7:00pm.

We will celebrate the disciples gathering with Jesus at table for the Last Supper and mourn as Jesus is nailed to the cross the next day.

On Saturday, April 15 (Holy Saturday), the sanctuary will be open for a time of individual prayer and reflection from 10:00am-3:00pm. There will be prayer/reflection materials available as well as contemplative music playing.

Easter Sunday worship will be at 10:30am on April 16 and will be preceded by breakfast fellowship from 9:30am.

**Mid-week Holy Week worship gathering: Thursday, April 13 at 7:00pm**

**Holy Saturday prayer vigil: Saturday, April 15 from 10:00am-3:00pm**

**Easter Sunday worship gathering: Sunday, April 16 at 10:30am**

## Freedom from Fear

### A sermon series exploring Jesus' words to us to not be afraid

Starting March 5, we will be having a Lenten series focusing on being free from the fears that so often creep into and dominate our lives. Jesus often says, "Do not be afraid," but that seems so much easier said than done. We will look at how Jesus releases us from all fear.

Our pattern of having a daily devotional that focuses on the message from the previous Sunday will continue. If you are looking for a way to abide in God's Word all week, take the Sunday bulletin/devotional with you!

Join us each Sunday and invite your family, friends, and neighbors! You never know who is quietly waiting for a friendly voice to reach out and invite them to experience the love and grace of Jesus Christ!

#### Freedom from the fear of...

**March 5**                      **Luke 5:1-11**                      **Inadequacy**

Simon is fearful that he is inadequate and unworthy so he tells Jesus to go away because he is too sinful and doesn't deserve to be in Jesus' presence. Jesus tells Simon—and us—two things in response. Come hear those two fear relievers this Sunday.

**March 12**                      **Mark 4:35-41**                      **Circumstances**

The disciples are freaked out because of the circumstances they find themselves in on the stormy water. They are fearful because even though Jesus is right there with them, their circumstances seem overwhelming. Hear how the disciples are transformed.

**March 19**                      **Mark 5:35-43**                      **Death**

Anecdotal evidence might suggest that people are more afraid of public speaking than death, but if someone came to you and said, "Give a five minute speech or die," I feel like you'd give the speech. Jesus doesn't promise no death in this age but he does release us from the fear of the death.

**March 26**                      **Matthew 17:1-9**                      **Unexplainable**

We live in an age where our ability to explain the things that go on around us has increased at a rate. This makes the things that are unexplainable all the more frustrating. The unexplainable gets scarier. Jesus frees us from having to understand everything we experience.

**April 2**                      **Luke 12:1-7**                      **Hell**

The simplest, but not entirely effective, way to not be afraid of something is to deny that it exists. This is the most common way of dealing with Hell. Jesus doesn't deny Hell but he says something very intriguing about how we should relate to it. Come find out!

**April 9**                      **John 12:12-16**                      **Conquest**

This is Palm Sunday. Jesus rides into town. How does Jesus' appearance on a young donkey on the week that he will be executed relate to the fear we have of being conquered—as a country by a foreign power or as an individual by fears or addictions? We'll find out.

**April 16**                      **Matthew 28:1-10**                      **Unknown**

Today is Easter Sunday! The women who encounter the resurrected Jesus are mighty fearful—and for good reason! But Jesus replaces their fear with something important and lasting which transforms their fear of the unknown.

**April 23**                      **Special Guests Leading Worship!**

As of this printing, the plan is to have a college ministry group from Central Washington University lead us in all aspects of worship. We invite you to come and engage with our younger brothers and sisters in Christ as they share the love of Jesus and His powerful message.

## Spiritual Musings

A new group is forming at Waterville Federated Church!

*Spiritual Musings* is a new writing group for people to express their personal journey and/or creativity in faith through writing reflections, short stories, poems, lyrics, or any other form of writing. No experience required or expected!

Let's get together to share with and inspire each other—this is a great way to know others better and have them get to know you better!

**Our first meeting will be Tuesday, March 7 at 7:00pm at church.**

Contact Marie (509.860.2233) or Gemma (810.624.6090) for more information.

## Nacho Libre Kids Night

Join the gang for Nacho Libre Night on Saturday, March 4 from 4:00pm-6:00pm at the Nifty Theatre. There will be Bible study, prayer, nacho bar dinner, movie concessions, and the screening of "Nacho Libre"!

Please contact Jenna Dixon to RSVP at 509.681.4316.

## Sing with the Choir

We have wonderful music sung for us throughout the year by our faithful and faith-filled choir and we would invite you to join in the singing. A willing spirit is much more important than a stellar voice! Chat with someone you see up there singing or contact the office for more information.

## Financial Snapshot

	<u>Budget Year to Date</u>	<u>Actual YTD (as of 1/31/2017)</u>
Income	\$7,958	\$7,605
Expenses	<u>\$7,958</u>	<u>\$8,651</u>
Difference	\$0	(\$1,046)

Here is the financial snapshot for how we have begun the year financially in 2017 as this report reflects totals for January. Our monetary giving was slightly off-target and expenses were a little over the mark. The increased expenses primarily owing to appliance updates in the parsonage. The stove was replaced in January meaning that the parsonage now has a stove that doesn't catch on fire. The water heater in the parsonage was also replaced as its operation began faltering in January.

Please continue to pray for the spread of the Good News of Jesus Christ in Waterville and throughout the world and how your time, talents, and resources can be used to further God's Kingdom work.

