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Elder's Perspective

By Lorraine Little, Elder

"How Do I Love My Neighbor As Myself?"

While I was reading in Matthew, I was led to ponder the question, "How do I love my neighbor as I love myself?" In Matthew 22:34-40, Jesus was asked, "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" Jesus responded, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it, you shall love your neighbor as yourself." In Luke 10:29-37, the same man asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Jesus then replied by telling the parable of the Good Samaritan. As you may remember a man was robbed and left for dead on the roadside. First, a Priest sees the injured man and walks by. Second, a Levite sees the man and walks by. And third, a Samaritan (remember Jews and Samaritans were not brotherly towards each other) saw the injured man and stopped to care for him. Jesus asked, "which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the robber's hands?" And he said, "The one who showed mercy toward him." Then Jesus said, "Go and do the same."

I remember a time in high school, when I spent each weekday one summer baby-sitting two boys ages 4 and 7. Every day we watched Mr. Rogers and with a song he asked us, "won't you be my neighbor?" Mr. Rogers taught us that a neighbor is anyone you are with at that moment, and that everyone in the world is a neighbor. I Googled and found out that the Greek word for neighbor in the New Testament is plēsion, which means "the one near". The Old Testament word for neighbor is rēa', which means "friend, companion, fellow/associate". Mr. Rogers apparently understood God's definition of neighbor, too.

Who is my neighbor? Everyone is my neighbor. But how do I fulfill God's command, to love my neighbor as I love myself? God's word tells me that the first and greatest commandment is to love the Lord my God with all my heart, and all my soul and all my mind. God has shown me, IF I actively seek to know God's word, to talk with Him in prayer and to worship and praise him daily, THEN God Himself, through the Holy Spirit, enables me to love others as He loves me. (1 John 4:7, 1 John 4:16, 2 Timothy 1:7)

I know God loves me because He created me in his image. (Genesis 1: 27) and He sent His only Son, Jesus Christ to be the sacrifice for my sins (along with all the world's sins), once, for all, forever. (1 John 4:10, Romans 6:10-11, Hebrews 10:10, 1 Peter 3:18). I also know that God loves me because His word tells me so and throughout my life God has provided for all my needs (Psalms 23, Philippians 4:19).

In 1 John 4:19 it says, "We love because He first loved us". I am able to love my neighbor as I love myself because God loves me. First, I will love my neighbor by showing respect, kindness, and compassion because they too are created in God's image, and they are deeply valued and loved by God. I will love my neighbor by telling them that Jesus loves them and that His death on the cross and His resurrection was the final and complete sacrifice to God for the sins of the world. And if they

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Elder Meeting Highlights

Jay Holland opened the January 21 meeting in prayer and then the Elders prayed for the prayer cards from the previous prayer Sunday.

Treasurer Jaime Boaglio was not in attendance but left a detailed summary report of the December financials. Dave referred to Jaime's report and pointed out that December had almost \$96,000 in contributions, resulting in a monthly Net Income of \$37,000, and the YTD Net Income of almost \$96,000!

Jay reported on the status of several Properties projects:

- Interior signs are being printed
- The Chapel basement has had waterproofing done
- The roof on the bell tower will be repaired later when the ground dries out to support the heavy equipment needed
- Library-Next step is making a large donation of books to the public library and removing bookshelves; Lorraine explained that we need to contact the Friends of the Library prior to bringing over donations
- 20th & Beech-Lead abatement and painting will happen in the Spring; four trees have been cut down; a sanctuary window was shattered from the outside, although it's a two-pane window so isn't a critical need to repair
- Tri-HOP purchased two 75 inch monitors for Chapel; Jonathan Thorsvik will install them

Ben West shared that he, Lorraine Little and Rob Buckingham met with the Missions team to work on the revised Missions Policy document, with good discussion and a result that everyone agreed on.

Dave commented that he has recently had at least six people inquiring about membership. He shared a proposed Membership Process, and the Elders voted to approve it. We also need to update our membership list before the Annual Meeting in May.

The Elders debriefed the December symphony concerts and Christmas Eve service. Some of their comments were that the concerts were well attended, everyone fit on the stage even without the additional platforms, audience commented on the space of the remodeled stage, sound was good, singers enjoyed the space because there was room to sit, also felt more engaged with audience because the wall wasn't there, Sunday had more in attendance than Saturday with standing room only. Regarding the Christmas Eve service, they noted that there seemed to be a lot of community visitors, the 4pm time was appreciated by staff, and although it was difficult for some people who had to work, families and seniors liked being able to get home early.

The next Elders' business meeting is scheduled for February 18, 2025 at 5pm in the Fireside Room.

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confess with their mouth, and believe in their hearts that Jesus is Lord, then they too will be saved (Romans 10:9-10) and we will stand before God without sin, as children of God, justified by the redemptive blood of Jesus Christ (1 John 1:7, Romans 5:9, Gal 2:16). Finally, I will love my neighbor as I love myself by using the blessings, gifts and talents that God has given me, both physically and spiritually, to feed, to cloth, to nurse, and to befriend my neighbor, so they too will know that God provides. (Matthew 25:34-40, Psalms 55:22, Matthew 6:31 & 33, Psalms 146:7-9)

Let us all strive to love our God with all our heart, our soul and our mind and to love our neighbor as we love ourselves because God loves us.



Children's Ministry

By Sarah Fix, Director of Children's Ministry

Wow! What amazing weather we've had lately! I know it won't stay this way for much longer, but boy, have I been enjoying this sunshine! This past month, Bob Koenig and I have gotten the Lego meet-up at 20th and Beech up and running! Kids are really enjoying having a space to come be creative and connect with loving volunteers. Parents from the neighborhood have commented that they're so glad something is happening in that building as they live very close by, and it makes it so convenient for them and their kids! Please let us know if you'd like to come volunteer as your schedule allows. Thanks to Bob's time and passion, we have the beginning of a great mission to the community as well as his local Lego league meeting there. We also had a great Guys' Nerf Night at the church at the end of this month! This event has been a huge hit for great fellowship time! As always, I am looking for more volunteers to add to the rotation for Community Kids class on Sundays during worship. If you have served in the past, or never have, I encourage you to come talk to me or someone you know already serves about sitting in on a class and observing. The kids are learning a lot! Thanks for reading, and happy love month!



Women's News

The new Women's Events and Retreat team met in January to plan some quarterly Women Together events and start working on the details for the Women's Retreat scheduled for June 27-29 at Falls Creek Retreat Center near Raymond where we were last year.

The theme for the retreat will be "Abiding in the Vine", based on John 15, and will feature a few video speakers with discussion groups as last year, plus our very own Gail Hicks sharing her story of how she learned the meaning of abiding in the vine during her recent cancer journey. The cost of \$200 will include two nights lodging in the Meadows Lodge and five meals. More info and registration will be available in April, but be sure to put in on your calendar now!

There will also be three quarterly events (the Retreat is the fourth event) that will include:

- Bring a Buddy Bunco on Friday, Feb 28 from 6:30-9pm in the Youth Room. Sign ups begin on Feb 2
- Fall Movie Night on Friday, Oct 3 from 6:30-9pm in the Youth Room
- Holiday Crafts on Friday, Nov 21 from 6:30-9pm in the Fellowship Hall

Save the dates! More info to follow!

Walking the Path of Life

By Patty Howland, Editor

This past October I spent a couple days camping in a cabin at my favorite campground, Dash Point State Park, near Tacoma where I grew up. It was a beautiful, sunny but chilly weekend, perfect for walks on the beach and in the woods. As I walked and reflected on the beauty around me, I made note of several parallels between an actual physical walk and our walk through life.

The first morning, I took a walk on the long, flat and mostly sandy beach (one of the reasons I like Dash Point so much!). When one walks along a beach there are at least three viewpoints that are similar to what we encounter in life: the immediate surroundings, the destination, and the horizon. The immediate surroundings often provide distractions or things in the way such as logs or seaweed; but one also finds treasures like seashells, rocks, jellyfish and birds. As we journey through our daily routine, do we get bogged down by the problems and challenges we face? Or do we take time to recognize the small treasures along the way, like a smile or hug from a loved one, the joyful song of a bird, or a rainbow on a cloudy day?

After a while, I noticed an old log that jutted out onto the beach, so I sat down to listen to the waves lapping along the shore and to watch some children busily collecting shells. Sometimes it's easy to get so focused on the destination that we completely miss the details of the journey! We're busy checking off the next item or project on our list, or trying to get to the next stage in our children's lives or our own lives, and because of that we don't take time to just enjoy the beauty of the present moment. It's been said that there is no dress rehearsal for life, so make the most of every day while it is today. Sometimes we need to just take a stop along the way for rest, reflection, and appreciation of the world around us.

As I continued my walk along the beach, I tried to see the islands and hills in the distance but a dense fog prevented me from seeing that far ahead. It's often the same way in life. The future is sometimes not clear, but we can still make goals toward a destination and continue along the journey toward those goals, knowing that eventually the fog will clear and the future will be revealed. And yes, the fog did eventually lift to reveal the beautiful scenery I was anticipating!

The following day the parallels continued as I walked on a loop trail through the woods. After walking for a while down a straight path through the center of the woods, I came to a place where the trail had more turns and the bushes and ground cover were so dense I could barely see around the next corner! I had to pay close attention to each step so I wouldn't stumble over roots and rocks. Unlike the distant fog on the beach, my current circumstances were so overwhelming that I almost gave up. But I saw occasional encouraging glimpses of sunlight streaming through the branches, giving illumination and hope. I could also feel secure in the knowledge that others had walked the path before me, and I knew if I kept plowing through I would eventually come out into the open again. And so it sometimes is in life. A scary medical diagnosis, the illness or death of a loved one, the loss of a job can all be very overwhelming and make us want to give up. Yet God calls us to walk "through the valley of the shadow of death", sometimes on our own but often with the help and support of others, in order to come out again on the other side into the beckoning light and warmth. I can't help but think of the lines from *The Wizard of Oz*, "You're out of the woods, you're out of the dark, you're out of the night. Step into the sun. Step into the light!"

Occasionally I would encounter random wet places and needed to make a slight course correction, but still keeping the destination in sight ahead. One time, however, I was following along what I thought was the right path only to run into a complete dead end! My choice was to retrace my steps back to the beginning and not complete the loop, or take out my trusty phone with a trail map and GPS to see that I had somehow stepped off the path and simply needed to turn left instead of right to find the path again. How often do we think we're heading in the right direction only to realize we completely missed the mark? We might need to turn back to the Creator of our path for guidance and re-alignment with the path He has set before us in order to continue successfully to our final destination.

No matter where you are on the path of your life, I hope you will be encouraged to keep going when the way is uncertain and difficult, take time to enjoy the journey, learn from your mistakes and the experiences of others, and keep aligned with the One who created the path!

This and That

There will be a quarterly Women Together Event in February! Join us on Friday, February 28 from 6:30-9pm for **Bring a Buddy Bunco** in the Youth Room. Bunco is lots of fun and easy to learn. This is a great time to connect with other women from our church and to invite a friend or neighbor. Please bring a snack to share and Bring a Buddy! Sign up in the Lobby or use the link in the digital announcements.

The Senior Adult Ministries (SAM) will be hosting a **Pizza and BINGO** day on Thursday, February 27 from 1-3pm in the Fellowship Hall. Pizza, salad and beverages will be provided, but donations are welcomed. Sign ups will begin Feb 9 in the Lobby. Please bring a wrapped “white elephant” gift to be used as a prize.

The “winter blues” is a common occurrence in the Northwest! Did you know that LvCC has a free adult counseling service available? The **Lay Counseling Service** is staffed by a team of counselors trained and supervised by Stephen Meharg, a clinical psychologist. Contact the Administrator, Elaine Theriault at 360-431-5640 for more info and to schedule an appointment, or pick up a brochure at the Welcome counter in the Lobby.

Some of the exterior church doors, especially those for the Sanctuary, sometimes have a tendency to stick and not fully close. If you are one of the last people to leave, please be mindful when exiting the building to **verify that the door closes** and latches behind you. Thank you!

If you haven’t yet created a profile in our private **Online Directory** to share your contact info with others in our congregation and to be able to view theirs, please consider doing so. Contact the Church Office to receive an emailed invitation to the Directory.

If you are interested in helping with a **local mission opportunity** with Habitat for Humanity, please contact Shannon Inman at 360-747-3633 for more information.

DECEMBER FINANCIALS	
YTD CONTRIBUTIONS:	\$ 557,158
YTD OTHER INCOME	\$ 69,200
YTD EXPENSE:	\$ 530,451
YTD NET INCOME:	\$ 95,907

Upcoming Memorial Services:
John Irwin: Feb 8, 11 am at Lake Grove Presbyterian Church, 4040 Sunset Dr in Lake Oswego, OR, with a reception following.
Barbara Huntington: Feb 15, 11am at LvCC with a reception following.

The next **Friday Fellowship** potluck dinner group will be meeting on the 3rd Friday in order that we may feature slides from visiting missionaries from India, "Joseph and Lynne". This special evening on February 21 from 6-8:30pm will be open to families, with childcare provided during the slideshow for grades 3 and younger! Please bring an entrée, side dish, salad, bread or dessert from India and join us in the Fellowship Hall for a fun evening of interesting cultural food, friends, and fellowship! This season we are viewing slides or digital photos from various attendees. If you have travel photos you would like to share, please contact the Church Office.

LvCC’s policy regarding snow/ice closures during the week is the same as LV School District- if the schools are closed, meetings and events at the church and at 20th & Beech will be cancelled. If we decide to close on a Sunday, we will do our best to communicate that by 8am on Sunday via email to the Weekly Announcements list, and by posting on our website and Facebook page. Even if the church is not closed but you are not comfortable driving, please be safe and stay home and watch the service online!

Medical Equipment Available If you or someone you knows needs medical equipment, i.e. walker, wheelchair, commode, etc, please contact Roberta Baird at 360-430-8402.

90+ Birthdays This Month

To honor our most senior members and attenders, we will be listing their birthdays each month using the records in our database. If you or someone you know is 90+ years of age and has an upcoming birthday, please contact the Church Office by the 20th of the prior month so we may be sure to include it!

Feb 9 Marilyn Cranston 92

Longview Community Church

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February 2025

For the most current information and updates, see the online calendar in the Calendar tab of our website
Zoom=online Zoom meeting;
all other meetings are onsite
unless indicated

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
2 Communion 8:45a Discipleship Time 10a Worship 11:15a Fellowship Time 4p MS Youth Gathering 5:30p HS Youth Gathering	3 10a Staff Meeting 2:30p Mary Martha Circle 4:30p Deacons Meeting 5p Monday Outreach 6p TRIHOP Prayer 6:30p Young Adult Study	4 7a Men's Grp-Zoom 9a MomCo 6p TRIHOP Prayer 6:30p Leadership Meeting	5 6:30p Worship Team Rel	6 7a Men's Group 9a Mommy & Me Class 9:30a Women's Bible Study 10:15a Pilates Class 6p TRIHOP Prayer	7 5p TRIHOP Prayer Bunn	8 6a TriHop Prayer Bunn 10a Cast Your Cares Group
9 8:45a Discipleship Time 10a Worship 11:15a Fellowship Time 4p MS Youth Gathering 5:30p HS Youth Gathering	10 10a Staff Meeting 1p Ruth Circle-offsite 5p Monday Outreach 5:30p Lay Counsel Super 6p TRIHOP Prayer 6:30p Young Adult Study	11 7a Men's Grp-Zoom 9a MomCo Leader Team 10a SAM Meeting 4:30p Personnel Meeting 6p Fireside Folks Group 6p TRIHOP Prayer	12 6:30p Worship Team Rel	13 7a Men's Group 9a Mommy & Me Class 9:30a Women's Bible Study 10:15a Pilates Class 3p Properties Meeting 6p TRIHOP Prayer	14	15 11a Barbara Huntington Celebration of Life
16 8:45a Discipleship Time 10a Worship 11:15a Fellowship Time 4p MS Youth Gathering 5:30p HS Youth Gathering	17 10a Staff Meeting 5p Monday Outreach 6p TRIHOP Prayer 6:30p Young Adult Study	18 7a Men's Grp-Zoom 9a MomCo 10a History Team Mtg 5p Elders Meeting 6p TRIHOP Prayer	19 6:30p Worship Team Rel	20 Newsletter Due 7a Men's Group 9a Mommy & Me Class 9:30a Women's Bible Study 10:15a Pilates Class 6p TRIHOP Prayer 6:30p Missions Meeting	21 6p Friday Fellowship Dinner	22 10a Cast Your Cares Group
23 8:45a Discipleship Time 10a Worship/Testimonies 11:15a Fellowship Time 4p MS Youth Gathering 5:30p HS Youth Gathering	24 10a Staff Meeting 5p Monday Outreach 5:30p Lay Counsel Super 6p TRIHOP Prayer 6:30p Young Adult Study	25 7a Men's Grp-Zoom 6p Fireside Folks Group 6p TRIHOP Prayer	26 6:30p Worship Team Rel	27 7a Men's Group 9a Mommy & Me Class 9:30a Women's Bible Study 10:15a Pilates Class 1p SAM Pizza & BINGO 6p TRIHOP Prayer 6:30p Women's Team Mtg	28 6:30p Women's Bring a Buddy Bunco	