

THE CIRCUIT RIDER

Snoqualmie United Methodist Church

JANUARY/FEBRAURY 2024

PASTOR'S MUSINGS



Save the Date:

Saturday January 13th: Worship
Committee Meeting 9:00 –
12:00

Sunday January 14th: 11:00 am
Epiphany Sunday – Gifts for
Trail Youth, SV Food Bank and
Reclaim Stability

Wednesday January 17th
Intentional Drumming

Saturday January 20th: 9:00 a.m.
– 2:00 p.m. SUMC & FCUMC
Leadership Training & potluck

Sunday January 21st: 12:00 pm
Pat Cokewell's birthday
reception followed by Carol
Peterson on Spiritual Gifts

Sunday January 28th: Carol P. on
Spiritual Gifts, continued

Wednesday February 14th: Ash
Wednesday

Friends,

I've been thinking...

About the stack of books, I want to read. It seems to be getting longer and longer. When I answered my call to the ministry I did not even for one moment think it would entail a lot of reading. But I've found that every book I hear about or see is something I want to read. Some deep theological books take me a long time to wade through, while others are quick reads but hit deep in my heart. Sometimes, I'm reading poetry, while other times, I'm reading a fiction book that causes me to think about heaven and hell in a new light. Other times, I read children's books because someone suggested them to me. I read 2-3 books a month this past year and still haven't made a dent in my list.

My mentor suggested I read, "Consider the Birds" by Debbie Blue. It's a guide to the birds of the bible. I wasn't expecting to learn so much about birds. Honestly, I didn't really know what to expect, but now I look at pigeons and doves in a completely different light. I never really thought a Pelican was all that beautiful, but the way Debbie talks about pelicans and sacrifice and gift has me looking at the pelicans I get to see in Florida with new eyes, with eyes of love and curiosity.

As I'm on this journey with my father towards death, I have been reading, "The Cure for Sorrow: a book of blessings for times of grief" by Jan Richardson. No, it doesn't take the grief away, but I can feel what she has written in my aching soul. Each blessing finds a way to bring me hope in a time that feels confusing and hopeless. I used many of the blessings during our Blue Christmas service as they spoke to what I thought needed to be heard.

The board of ordained ministry (the people who interview me to become ordained), suggested I read this book, "Good Goats: Healing our Image of God" by Dennis Linn, Matthew Linn, and Shelia Fabricant Linn. It seems like a book written for children, yet it grapples with topics that adults have to deal with, usually because of the way theology of God has been taught in the past. The process of ordination may be long and sometimes hard, but what I love is that people have helped me grow in my faith, and one of those areas has been to tackle the negative and harmful teachings about God from my past. This book affirmed all the work I've done, and pushed me in areas I didn't even know I needed a little more work in.

I wonder what you've been reading. I wonder if the books you have read bring you hope, push you to see something in a new way, or affirm your faith. I want to know what you have been reading and what you are looking to read. Let's share our virtual bookshelves with one another this next year.

Blessings, Pastor Carrie

EPIPHANY SUNDAY

Sunday January 14th

On Epiphany Sunday we will be celebrating by bringing our gifts to a manger just as the Wise Men did.

We have chosen three local missions to support with items from their biggest needs list. Like the Wise Persons of old, bring a gift to assist those who live closest to us.

The Food Bank

Coffee & teas

Canned goods-meat, fish, vegetables

Nut butters-all types

The Homeless Shelter (now called Reclaim)

Canned goods/soups, rice & beans

Hand warmers

Adult men's and women's underwear

Trail Youth

Small travel size toiletries

Tampons

Small tissue packs



SPIRITUAL GIFTS SEMINAR

Sunday January 21st and Sunday January 28th

What are spiritual gifts? Are they the same as the fruits of the spirit? No, they are not. Spiritual gifts are the skills that the Holy Spirit has given to each of us so that we are capable of doing the work God intends for us to do. We are all called to make disciples for Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world, and to do so, we need specialized gifts.

We are not all given the same gift because God believes in diversity, but we don't need all teachers or preachers. Sometimes, we need people who are gifted in organizing or inviting. If you do not know what your gift is, please join us after worship on January 21st to take the assessment and learn more about the difference between Spiritual Gifts and Gifts of the Spirit. We will then gather again on Sunday, January 28th, for our results and to discuss how we can best use our gifts for the work of the church. Carol Peterson will preach on Sunday, January 21st, and then, after worship, will lead our entire congregation in a seminar on Spiritual Gifts. Through this activity we will learn what spiritual gifts are, which ones we individually have, and how to use them in our personal life and our congregational life.



PAT COKEWELL'S FAMILY INVITES US TO CELEBRATE HER!

Nancy Lane writes that **Sunday Jan 21st** is her mother's (Pat Cokewell) 93rd birthday. Nancy's brother David and his wife Cathey from Florida, and her sister Jeannie will be joining us to celebrate at church that Sunday. The family will be placing flowers on the altar and providing a birthday cake and treats for the social time in her honor. We are all invited to a reception right after the service.



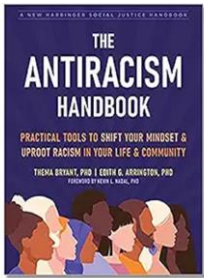
ANTIRACISM CLASS

Beginning on February 8th, Thursday's from 6:30 PM – 8:00 PM (12-week study)

Why take a class on Antiracism? I'm not racist; I'm kind, I'm loving, I see everyone the same, and I welcome everyone. I have no doubt that is what you were thinking, and it is true. It took me a long time to understand that talking about race and acknowledging that racism did happen and that I could make changes even within myself did not mean that I am not a kind, loving, accepting person who sees value in everyone I meet.

As a Christian, I am called to love my neighbor. That means knowing their wounds, working to help heal them, and finding ways to ensure it doesn't happen again. As we learned through the Good Samaritan story, the Samaritan had to get down into the ditch with the wounded man to know what was truly wrong. We, too, must get down in the ditch to fully experience the wounds of our Black, Brown, Indigenous, Siblings of color. Unless we are willing to examine our understanding of racism, we cannot fully see from our neighbor's perspective how it is hurting them.

I am asking you to step into your learning zone, that place that is known yet different and makes you a bit uncomfortable and yet able to learn. I'm asking you to join this 12-week study in which we will lay the foundation for antiracism, address barriers and shifting perspectives, and liberate our minds, take action to cultivate an antiracist life, and last, refill our well for the work ahead.



Pastor Carrie will lead this weekly class and we will use the book *“The Antiracism Handbook: Practical Tools to shift your mindset & uproot racism in your life & community”* by Thema Bryant & Edith G. Arrington. This class will be offered to our community as a way for us to work together and grow our understanding of this work. If you are interested in this class, please order your book now so it will be in your hands for the first class.

KAROLANN IS INVITING YOU TO READ THROUGH THE BIBLE WITH HER THIS YEAR

Karolann Whetsell is inviting you to read through the Bible this year with her. The daily readings are on your phone or other device. Reading others' comments or writing your own are a part of each day. Karolann says: “It's so encouraging to have this component in the daily. I know I am not alone, and everyone who sees differently teaches me.” Contact her, and she will send you the link to click on. Join the group at karolannw@gmail.com.

WORSHIP COMMITTEE'S UPCOMING EVENTS

Worship Committee Meeting Saturday January 13 at 9:00 a.m.

- Bring snacks if you want.
- Marcia will be prepared with clear tubs for us to load up Christmas decorations and carry them upstairs. Please stay and help if you can. I think we will be finished with everything before noon.
- Please let me know if you cannot be there. 918-978-3274

Excerpts from Karolann’s letter to the Worship Committee recently expanded in 2023:

Thank you for sticking with me in these quarterly meetings. I need all of your input – the history as well as new ideas and that is why I want to include all of you: *music people, technology people, worship enhancements, coordinators of greeters, liturgists, ushers, musicians, children, and lay leaders.*

My personal goal as chair is to celebrate “Connection.” We as United Methodist have gone through a divorce of sorts, and now we move into a new year. I hope we can show in worship how we are making a difference with our global missions and be proud of our Connection. We experience our Connectional missions with two offerings during this quarter. The most critical to me is “One Great Hour of Sharing” which raises the total support for UMCOR, which responds to disasters throughout the world as well as the USA. Our new Bishop calls us to the common mission goals of M.I.L.E. The other offering is for Human Relations Day which is associated with the “E” (Eliminate Racism). Marcia is enthusiastic about representing our church with a statewide UMC group to come up with “E” possibilities for us.

Next Worship Committee Meeting will be Saturday, April 23, 2024

Bless you all for “who you are” and “what you bring” to make our worship a time of blessing to ALL who participate as we gather as the Body of Christ. Love, Karolann

FROM SHELLEY HUESTIS -- WHERE’S THE HEDGE?

In the last several weeks, with thumbs up from Pastor Carrie, SUMC’s tall, thick, high-maintenance hedge was taken down to the ground through the combined efforts of Robert Allen, Gary Daubert, Greg Downs, Bruce Fritz, and Shelley Huestis.



Bruce Fritz then spent many hours pressure washing SUMC’s siding, the now fully accessible sidewalk/asphalt pathway, the parking barrier, and the parking lot asphalt on the other side of the barriers. Then, on Sunday, 12/31, after church, Gary Daubert spent the entire afternoon edging the pathway. Each inch of its width is now exposed for easier and safer access to our church building doors.

Cutting down the hedge to stumps occurred in stages, and at each stage, the cut plants displayed new growth. When each of the plants starts growing again, they can be pruned to stay low. As a result, the walkway can stay easily accessible for use by small children and others, like this article’s author, who have balance challenges and want to get out of the parking lot ASAP when it is slippery due to snow and ice.



The additional HUGE benefit of the project is that, now, when Pastor Carrie exits church at night in the dark (since the parking lot door light refuses to work), she no longer worries that someone with ill intentions might be hiding behind the hedge.

It’s a huge visual change that hopefully will increase safety and accessibility on multiple levels, kind of working as a cool metaphor for all the great things happening at SUMC and the UMC overall!

FROM PASTOR CARRIE -- NEW LEADERS IN 2024:

For those who have been part of the United Methodist system for a long time, this list below might look very odd to you. That is because it is a new system that allows us to streamline the number of volunteers in administrative roles, freeing up people to use their gifts from the Holy Spirit in other ways. Our old system required at least 9 people per committee, meaning 27 people in administrative roles. We do not have enough congregation members to fill all those roles and still do

the missional work we are called to do. To fulfill our Book of Discipline requirements, we have 3 people who will specialize in each area while the other 6 will fill in the remaining “nine” spots.

Not only did we streamline the number of people on the committees, but we are also streamlining the meeting times. Rather than meeting monthly for one hour, we will meet quarterly for a few hours and then check in on tasks as needed between meetings. This allows us to get right to business and move more efficiently when a new missional opportunity arises. Now, we can readily support new missions without waiting to hear separately from each board.

ELECTED LEADERS: SNOQUALMIE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Trustees

John Grimstad	2024
Shelley Huestis	2025
Robert Allen	2026

Finance

Cristen Heuser	2024
Richard Whetsell	2025
Carol Lawrence	2026

Staff Pastor Parish Relations (SPPR)

Patsy Kilpatrick	2026
Ron Summers	2025
_____	2026

Membership Secretary _____

Lay Leaders Linda & Tom Boord

Member to Annual Conference Marcia Bennet-Reinert

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING



...OUR ADVENT, CONTINUED...



Special thanks to Greg Downs for our refurbished creche and thank you for our beautiful outdoor lights to Craig Hauser and his company Window Works.



Photos by Wendy Holloway, Toddie Downs, and Reri MacLean



Special music and fellowship...



BLUE CHRISTMAS AND CHRISTMAS EVE



*Photos courtesy of Karolann Whetsell,
Toddie Downs and Reri MacLean*



REFLECTIONS FOR THE NEW YEAR

The beginning of a New Year is spiritually significant for a variety of reasons. The New Year symbolizes death and rebirth; the death of the old year and a birth of a new one. For those on a spiritual path it is a time of reflection and asking important spiritual questions regarding this next phase of our Soul's journey. Not questions about our outer world of doing or self-improvement but questions pertaining to our inner spiritual growth and well Being. Here are few examples of this kind of spiritual inquiry:

- What would I like to experience and express more of this year?
- What daily practice will increase my conscious experience of my True Self?
- What distractions, habitual thoughts, beliefs, or old programs no longer serve me?
- What do I need to let go of or release to make space for new growth to happen?

~with our thanks to a fellow Methodist and friend of the Whetsell's



COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

If you have any suggestions or ideas for me for future issues, please let me know!

Thanks, Reri MacLean (rerimaclean@gmail.com)

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