

THE CIRCUIT RIDER

Snoqualmie United Methodist Church

JULY/AUGUST 2023

Save the Date:

Wednesdays, 11 am-12 noon –
Grief Group

Saturday, July 22. 1-4pm –
Popsicles at the Parsonage

Friday, August 11, 6pm –
Friday Potluck Dinner, Fall
City Parsonage

PASTOR'S MUSINGS

Friends,

*I've been
thinking...*



About a group of people identified as neurodivergent. Maybe like me, this is a new term for you. Neurodivergent means differing in mental or neurological function from what is considered typical or normal. This is a word frequently used in reference to autistic spectrum disorders, but also includes those with ADHD/ADD. I've been learning more about those that fall within this group and how their needs are impacted by the way those who have a typical brain function. Another issue sometimes presents itself within the neurodivergent

group called "Rejection Sensitive Dysphoria (RSD)." RSJ interferes with a person's ability to regulate their emotional response to feelings of failure and rejection. That's the clinical definition. What does it mean, though? What it comes down to is that some neurodivergent people do not always understand typical social cues, therefore, they do not always catch typical ways of being included. Because of this, those living with RSD find themselves feeling left out or rejected even when that is not the case. What I have learned is that I must adjust my own behavior to accommodate their rejection-sensitive dysphoria. To do this, I make sure that I specifically ask my friends who live with RSD to join me when I want to spend time with them. I clearly state the invitation to them to join me and my other friends for events.

Why am I talking about all this? As I think about how we do things within our congregation I am becoming aware of the small things that keep people out or send the message they are not welcome or invited to join in. To a neurodivergent person, a blanket invitation such as "We're going to my house for dessert" is heard as "Everyone else is going to Pastor Carrie's home, but I wasn't invited." They don't see themselves included in the "we" part. My way of adjusting my behavior is to be more direct and specific. Instead of "We're," I will say, "You are invited" or I'll flat out ask, "Do you want to join us for dessert". As I think about how Jesus interacted with his followers, I realize he did the same thing. It was personal, it was direct, and it was specific to each person. You go and sin no more. You come and follow me. You go out and do like me. We live in a world that is both communal and individual, therefore, we (you and I) must find ways to bring people to the ever-growing table that is Christ's table. How do we make sure that every person we meet knows they are invited into our community to receive and give love, to receive and give grace, to receive and give forgiveness, and to invite more to Christ's table?

As we enter our second year together, I want us (you and I) to begin intentionally inviting people in our neighborhoods to come and experience God's love, grace, compassion, and forgiveness. Let's see what happens over this next year as we radically invite those around us to participate in our life together. Let's see how we can take down barriers to God's family and let the Holy Spirit fly in the Snoqualmie Valley.

Blessings,

Pastor Carrie

AUGUST SERMON SERIES

Beginning Sunday, August 6, 2023, we will have the pleasure of hearing a sermon series brought to you via video form. This is a 5 part sermon series based on the Good Samaritan story. Worship will feel a bit different as we will have time for singing, learning, and discussing what we have heard as a group.

THIS IS US

When we at SUMC are asked what we like about our church, many of us answer, "The people." This column focuses on the individuals that make up "the people."

Wendy Holloway

Wendy chose the question, "Who is Your Hero?"

"This question turned out to be quite complex. I immediately thought of Jesus, then my dad. But the more I thought about it, I realized I'm surrounded by different heroes in almost every aspect of my life - my husband, kids, extended family, church family, neighbors, and friends. Then I thought of healthcare and first responders, government services workers and volunteers, essential and non-essential service workers, and people who volunteer, teach, and/or mentor. The list is endless.



There are several definitions and types of heroes, and they have influenced my life in many ways. Some are courageous, while others are selfless. Some are recognized by tangible deeds while others are recognized by their words. I'm humbled and thankful for these wonderful people and hope they feel it when I greet them with a genuine smile or hug."

Alma Gomez



Alma was born in the state of San Luis Potosi in Eastern Central Mexico. It's a warm and mountainous region known for its natural pools. Growing up, Spanish was her first language, and then English. Her roots trace back to indigenous American and Southern European ancestry, reflecting the migrations and cultural exchanges that occurred throughout history. There are traces of her genetic makeup that reach back to western Europe and West Africa.

Her hero is her dad because he has always shown dedication to helping his community in Mexico. "Despite facing numerous challenges, he immigrated to the US when he was 21, seeking better opportunities for our family. His selflessness and commitment to giving back has inspired me. Additionally, my grandparents are also my heroes for their entrepreneurial spirit. They owned the general store in our town and ran the local grain mill. Their hard work, and resilience also inspire me."

One of Alma's proudest moments was in 2017 when she obtained my citizenship the day before moving to Washington. On that day, she requested a rushed certificate, and to her surprise, they granted it to her. This experience served as a reminder of the blessings that come when we take bold steps towards our dreams.

Alma's favorite movie is "What Dreams May Come" with Robin Williams. It reminds us to embrace the mysteries of life and find hope in the beauty that awaits us beyond our physical existence.

Moments with Alma's wife make her laugh, and their cherished moments that create a warm and joyful atmosphere, reminding her that happiness that comes from embracing life's lighter side.

Ekaterina Gomez

Ekaterina was adopted from a small city in Russia called Pskov, located near Estonia and Latvia. Six other children were all adopted by her mother and father, Lisa and Peter Boucher. Between 1980 and 2002, her mother and father went back and forth from the U.S. to Russia. Although not much is known of her ancestry, her parents recorded much of their journey, and, once in a while, they like to gather around the TV to watch these videos and see what it was like for her parents.

Her heroes would be her grandparents. "I learned several valuable lessons from the few years we had together while I was growing up. They were both selfless individuals who never expected anything in return. I always enjoyed spending the night at their house when I could because that meant I could have as much ice cream as I wanted. Those times eating ice cream with them are some of the moments I cherish most."

Her favorite movie is *Mary Poppins*. She says, "Whenever I spent the night at my grandparents, this was the movie of choice every time. My grandma always chimed in to watch as I would be on my feet learning the choreography for *Jolly Holiday* or *A Spoonful of Sugar*." Ekaterina is currently reading a book by Julie Andrews called *Homework*, which talks about Julie's time in Hollywood, and she says, "It has been an actual spoonful of sugar."

One of her proudest accomplishments is finally getting her driver's license. As an adoptee from Russia, the process was complicated as the laws had changed over time. It made obtaining such documents difficult--a real battle.

Quite a few things make her laugh, but nothing beats a classic *America's Funniest Home Video*.



Greg Downs



Greg was born a house elf, but earned his freedom when someone threw away a sock he had custody of. As a child actor in the 70s, he's still recognized from a commercial as the kid who found the middle of the Tootsie Roll Pop. His hobbies include suckin' on chili dogs outside the Tastee Freeze; blessing the rains down in Africa; and sweating it out on the streets of a runaway American dream. He also enjoys making miniature furniture out of broccoli stems.

His hero is his wife, because "she knows everything AND is also always right."

*Editorial note: Greg did not provide answers to the questionnaire in time for publication, so gave the editor permission to create a profile as she saw fit. Certain details in this profile may have been embellished.

FINANCE REPORT

After the first half of 2023, our tithes and offerings are approximately \$1500 shy of our total expenses for January through June. Our total income was \$51,382 and our expenses were \$52,892. We greatly appreciate your loyal giving and all gifts that you are able to offer.

SUMC Financial Committee



I AM ENOUGH (SESSION 2)

If you missed out on the first session, I am inviting you to join session 2. This study incorporates meditation, art, and guided journaling around the topic of self-care. It is a 5-week study that focuses on knowing who you are, how Jesus took care of himself, caring for your body, caring for your mind, and caring for your heart. Those who took the first session will be there to walk beside those who take it during the second session. The class will begin the week of August 7th. Once we know who is in the class, we'll pick either Monday or Wednesday to hold the class. Signups will begin July 16, 2023.

- Pastor Carrie

GRIEF GROUP

This newly formed group is working on how to live life while grieving. If you have experienced loss (spouse, child, pets, jobs...), you are invited to join this group. We meet Wednesdays from 11 AM - 12 PM. Please feel free to spread the word.

POPSICLES AT THE PARSONAGE

It's summer, and there's nothing better on a hot day than eating a popsicle in the shade while chatting with your friends. Come on over to Pastor Carrie's home for a popsicle on Saturday, July 22, 2023, from 1-4 pm.

FRIDAY NIGHT POTLUCK

You are invited to participate in our annual August weekly potluck dinners on Friday nights! The first one will be held on August 11, 2023, at 6 pm. As was last year, there will be different themes each week and you'll need to bring something food-wise to share, lawn chairs, and something to drink if you don't want iced tea or water. This year we'll hold the potlucks in our front yard for ease of movement and set up/clean up. Plan to join us, and if you are daring, bring a friend to introduce to the community! Maybe some of our guitarists & music leaders will lead songs!

SNOQUALMIE CHURCH FAMILY RECOMMENDS

Jeannie Mandas Huling recommends the following:

The Wisdom of Insecurity, by Alan Watts

The Wisdom of the Native Americans, by Kent Nerbern

Herbs You Can Master: A Primer for Herbal Enthusiasts, by Carol Peterson

Jeannie is also listening to:

Native American Flute music (many videos are available on YouTube)

Emmylou Harris and Neil Young – *Old King* (Live version)

Neil Young – *Harvest Moon*

NEWS OF THE CHURCH



Photos by Reri MacLean



IN MEMORIAM



Lewis Williams, 1968-2023

Six years ago at SUMC I met Lewis, a homeless man. I had never gotten to know anyone who was homeless. I had given money to homeless people for years because it made me feel good. And I was proud that my church housed and supported homeless people. And Lewis seemed like a good man, and easy to pass the Peace to. And he seemed private, which was fine with me.

Then, about three years ago Pastor Lee asked me to help Lewis with some bureaucratic stuff he was struggling with. I had two resources that Lewis had little of: easy access to the physical and digital worlds, and money. I felt like I was helping this poor man.

As he and I walked through the Social Security maze together, something unexpected happened: Lewis stopped being Homeless Lewis, became just Lewis, and he didn't fit my idea of poor. I liked him and it became clear that he liked me. That started a bromance that kept growing for the rest of our time together. We said, "I love you," from then on. It's the last thing we said to each other.

He came to trust me, though our life experiences told vastly different stories and our current stories were radically different: Rich man, poor man. Family man, man disconnected from family. Ordinary middle-class stories told too often, dramatic stories mostly untold. But he treated me like a spiritual equal. I've come to believe he was wrong about that. He was the teacher. And here are just a few examples of The Wisdom of Lewis:

"I have everything I need."

"I've been rich and I've been poor. Poor is easier."

"I'll take all the love and prayers I can get."

"I know I'm forgiven."

"God has been there with me, even when I was in Hell."

"I know you love me."

"Thank you." Said simply.

"I have no idea what it will be like after I die"

AND "I'll see Jesus face to face."

His faith was as deep as any I've been blessed to touch.

How Lewis came from his early life through the chaos of disconnection in his middle years to his final years as a beloved friend, not just to me, but to so many in this valley and especially to the Shelter community and Snoqualmie United Methodist Church is a mystery to me. I believe it is a mystery of Grace.

Lewis Albert Williams, born October 25, 1968--died June 24, 2023. This homeless man was at home in God's Kingdom long before he died. His Spirit is now joined with Christ's Holy Spirit forever. I will carry what he taught me for the rest of my life. Thanks, Lewis. Thanks, God.

- Ed Morrison

Cathy Brumbaugh

Cathy passed away suddenly April 26, 2023. Some of the choir members and congregation share their memories of her:



I can hear her saying, “That’s Cathy with a C.” She grew up in Renton, except during WWII, when she lived on east coast while her dad was employed there. She attended Central Washington College (now University), where she met Harley. “He fell in love with her beautiful voice.” She worked for several years at a music store in Issaquah. She was a prolific crocheter, and always participated in the greening of the church. She is survived by her son and daughter Blaine and Heidi and her two granddaughters and one grandson. – *Carol and Fred Lawrence*

When I think of Cathy, I think of her smile and how genuine it was, and how much she loved God, Harley, and SUMC. – *Ed Morrison*

I always tried to stand next to Cathy in choir because she always had the right note. My favorite memory is that she and Harley would sometimes reach for each other during the service and hold hands. I so admired her talent and appreciated her gentle, sweet spirit. – *Carol Morrison*

I remember Harley would ask Cathy questions about choir like where a song might be, and she always knew. She was kind of the backbone of the choir. She was just such a sweetheart, beautiful voice, very encouraging, very loving, and it extended to everyone in the choir. She was so proud of Harley and her kids. – *Linda Boord*

Cathy was beyond selfless. Anytime Harley did well, it was a reflection on Cathy, because she was such a constant support and cheerleader of everything he did. She was a thorough librarian, and had the most beautiful soprano voice. She led that section with her angelic voice. – *Rachel Combs*

Cathy was so good with me, because I hadn’t sung in a choir in a long time. I sat right behind her in choir, and she gave me such good advice after I asked her how I might be better. She was so helpful in guiding us, and so understanding. If I didn’t understand what Harley was saying, she would take the effort to put it in a way I could understand. I really miss both of them. – *Pat Warner*



COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

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

Thanks, Toddie Downs (toddiedowns@yahoo.com)

Contact Us

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