

INSIDE  
THIS ISSUE:

Preacher's Column	1
Brown Bag Bible Study for Lent	2
SW Hope	2
Themes and Scriptures	3
Cares Corner	4
2017 VHUMC Directory	4
Worship Schedule	5
February Birthdays	6
Stewardship Features	7-10
Preacher's Public House Chat	10
Using The Labyrinth	11
Thank You	12
SW Community Recycling	12
February Calendar	

## Preacher's Column

Now that the snow and ice are gone, we can once again talk about using our labyrinth. We do have a classic style one painted in the turnaround out front of our buildings. I ran across a paper that does an excellent job of summarizing labyrinths and their purpose. The following comes from "101 Ways to Use a Labyrinth" Labyrinth Society Conference, Dan Johnston, Ph.D. Fayetteville, Arkansas - November, 2000

*Where can you seek healing of the mind, body, and spirit? Where can you go to become centered and strengthened as you confront a chronic disease? How can you emotionally prepare for surgery? Where can you get the strength to support others through illness? How do individuals look deeply into themselves and gain helpful insights? Where can you go to celebrate life? Where can you have a ritual of remembrance? Where can you find a needed peaceful moment? Where can you learn about the journey of life and where you are in the process? The answer is in a labyrinth. The process of mindfully walking a labyrinth can bring aid or answers to all these concerns.*

*A labyrinth is an ancient symbol that represents wholeness. It combines the imagery of the circle and the spiral into a meandering but purposeful path. It looks like a maze but is not. Unlike a maze, a labyrinth has no dead-ends. You cannot get lost. You just follow the path to the center and out again. You walk a labyrinth to learn its lessons. The labyrinth symbolizes a transformative journey to your own center and back out into the world. Labyrinths occur in all cultures and have long been used as tools for meditation, centering, and healing. Labyrinths bring people together on the common path of life.*

*Labyrinths and mazes have often been confused. When most people hear of a labyrinth, they think of a maze. A labyrinth is not a maze. A maze is like a puzzle to be solved. It has twists, turns, and blind alleys. It is a left-brain task that requires logical thinking and analysis to find the correct path. A labyrinth is a right brain task involving intuition, creativity, imagery, and the search for possibility.*

*A labyrinth has only one path. The way in is the way out. You cannot get lost even though you may feel lost. The path leads you on a circuitous route to the center and out again. It slows you down and helps you become centered. With a maze many choices are required and an active mind is necessary. For a labyrinth a receptive mindset is required. There is only one choice to be made. It is to enter or not. The choice is whether or not you will walk an inner path towards healing, health, and wholeness.*

I encourage you to take the time to walk our labyrinth. Come early for a meeting, class, gathering or worship and spend 15-20 minutes making use of this spiritual tool. I firmly believe that once you give it a try and begin to adopt it as a practice you will come to know the benefits it has to offer.

See you around our campus and on the labyrinth!

Pastor Tim



**Brown Bag  
Bible Study**  
March 1 through  
April 5

## **Brown Bag Bible Study Back Again For Lent**

Once again Pastor Tim will offer a Lenten Bible Study on the Wednesdays of Lent (March 1 – April 5). We will use a resource called “Fearless: The Courage to Question.” And we will explore Biblical passages from the Gospel of Matthew (chapters 4, 6 & 27) the Gospel of John (chapter 3, 4, 9 & 11), Genesis 12, Ezekiel 17, Isaiah 40, Romans 5, & Ephesians 5. These are some very familiar passages (the Temptation of Jesus, Jesus’ trial, Jesus and Nicodemus, the woman at the well, healing the man blind from birth, the raising of Lazarus, the call of Abram and Sarai, and what it means to be justified by faith, etc.) and we will try and go deeper into them, addressing your questions and the questions they raise.

We will gather at noon in the Fireside Room. We will eat our brown bag lunches and discuss the passages. Pastor Tim will provide some insights, background, and other information to help us gain courage as we question and work to find answers together. If you have questions talk with pastor Tim (503-246-1213 [vhumcpastor@qwestoffice.net](mailto:vhumcpastor@qwestoffice.net)).



**Fundraiser for SW Hope**  
February 26 to  
April 9

## **SW Hope - Feed the Hungry**

Neighborhood House’s SW Hope - Feed the Hungry drive is just around the corner. The drive runs from February 26 to April 9. The goal is to collect 140,000 pounds or 75 tons. \$1.00 equals four pounds of food.

Empty Bowl Soup Dinner fundraiser at Multnomah Community Center will be held Sunday, April 2, 2017 and the Fun Run fundraiser will be held April 22 at Gabriel Park.

More information on these events to follow soon.

# Themes and Scriptures For February 2017

*In each issue of the Evangel we run this month's scriptures and themes. We are doing this so you can look ahead and know what's coming and so you can follow along with us if you miss a Sunday.*

## **Sunday February 5, 2017 – Communion**

Theme            Being Salty – Being Faithful  
Scriptures:    Isaiah 58: 1-9a &  
                     Matthew 5: 13-20

## **Sunday February 12, 2017 – Black History Month Celebrated**

Theme            Racism Yes or No? Choose Life Not Death  
Scriptures      Deuteronomy 30: 15-20 &  
                     Matthew 5: 21-26 & 33-37

## **Sunday February 19, 2017**

Theme            The Same Old Song, Are We Listening?  
Scriptures      Leviticus 19: 1-4, 9-18 &  
                     Matthew 5: 38-48

## **Sunday February 26, 2017 – Transfiguration– SW Hope**

Theme            Special Effects  
Scriptures      Exodus 24: 12-18 &  
                     Matthew 17: 1-9

## **Sunday March 5, 2017 – 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent – Communion**

Theme            "How Do We Meet God in the World?"  
Scriptures      Genesis 2: 15-17, 3: 1-7 &  
                     Matthew 4: 1-11



# February Worship Schedule

## **February 5, 2017**

Ushers:     Dori Killion  
Liturgist:  Ruth Bentley  
Coffee Hosts: Jan Espy and Lynn Lind  
Flowers:     Anne Begg

## **February 12, 2017**

Ushers:     Bob Bothman, Tom Benjamin  
Liturgist:    Ben Whiteley  
Coffee Hosts: Jenna and Mark Schofer  
Flowers:     ***Volunteer Needed***

## **February 19, 2017**

Ushers:     Ramona Alsman, Jim Van Nest Pat Crawford, Jeanette Novak  
Liturgist:    Mike Fryer  
Coffee Hosts: Rose and Will Mitchell  
Flowers:     ***Volunteer Needed***

## **February 26, 2017**

Ushers:     Ben Whiteley, John Chilgren  
Liturgist:    John Espy  
Coffee Hosts: Jim and Julie Van Nest  
Flowers:     Grace Holbrook

# Adult Sunday School Class

What does it mean to be a “disciple?” Aren’t disciples those twelve guys that followed Jesus around? What does discipleship have to do with me? As we move deeper into Re-Imaging our church and its purpose in the world we also need to examine what it means to be disciples, followers of, Jesus Christ in our post-modern context. Our vision and mission talk about our being “partners of God and Christ” as we work to transform lives and the world. So, what is involved in this partnering, this being a disciple?



Study  
Qualities of  
Discipleship

Over the course of this study we will look at some of the ways Jesus taught, informed and transformed the original group of disciples, his partners and empowered them to do the work of transforming lives and the world. Subjects to be covered include: faith to take risks, courage, learning and devotion, humility, working together in community and perseverance. We will use the ThoughtfulChristian study *Qualities of Discipleship* and its weekly study participant handouts to form the core of what we will be exploring. As always, Pastor Tim will expand, interpret and sometimes contradict this material. Having read it will be helpful but not necessary for participation in the class.

This study began on Sunday January 29<sup>th</sup> and will continue through March 5<sup>th</sup>. If you are interested, let Pastor Tim know so he can get you the weekly participant handout. Why not join us on Sunday mornings at 9:00am in the Fireside Room at the church for this study. The coffee is always on and the discussion informative, insightful and inspiring with a bit of fun mixed in. For more information or if you have questions contact Pastor Tim (503-246-1213 [vhumcpastor@qwestoffice.net](mailto:vhumcpastor@qwestoffice.net))



Happy Birthday!

## February Birthdays

Tom White	2/03
Al Allen	2/13
Scott Wegner	2/14
Elizabeth Brown	2/23
Anne Begg	2/23
Laura Johnston	2/26
Silvia Molina	2/27

# Stewardship Features

## Inspiring Generosity

...changing the church's culture  
about money.

Cesie Delve Scheuermann



## I'll Have What Wesley's Having

As we were getting ready for our recent trip, a friend forwarded a video we just *had* to watch.

[“I’ll Have What Phil’s Having”](#) (on PBS, naturally) is essentially an eating show. This particular segment focused on Florence and Tuscany...perfecto! Phil, funny and sincere, spoke poetically and rhapsodically about all the food he ate and the wonderful people he met. No surprise, we made our way to Vivoli’s – the gelato place he raved about and known mostly by people who actually live in Florence.

Much like my friend who sent me a link about food, astute reader and social media whiz, Bryn Wittmayer recently sent me a link to a fabulous new stewardship resource. Spoiler alert! There’s no food involved. This new guide is appropriately named, [“Gratefully Generous: Connecting through Giving, United Methodists Change Lives.”](#) Even if you’re not a United Methodist (gasp!) there’s something here for everyone.

I do, however, want to give a shout out to the [UM World Service Fund](#) who published the booklet (you can download it [right here](#)). For UMs who wonder where some of your “shared ministry” funds (aka “apportionments”) go – look no further than the “Gratefully Generous” resource. It’s the beauty of the connectional system at work.

There’s a lot of meat (sorry vegetarians) in this 28-page booklet. Interspersed with many “Why I Give” testimonies, are articles that are thought provoking and provide practical tips: *Preaching and Teaching Generosity, Let the Children Give, Knowing who Gives, How Electronic Giving Raises Techno-, Theo-logical Questions.* Good stuff.

Perhaps my favorite article was **“John Wesley on Giving”** by retired Bishop Kenneth L. Carder. As most of you know, [John Wesley](#) said a lot of provocative things

Stewardship continued on Page 8

Stewardship continued from Page 7

about money – and he lived his life like he meant what he said (Wesley once famously said if he died with more than ten pounds – \$20 – in his pocket, he could be called a robber).

According to Bishop Carder, Wesley worried about how one of “**Three Rules for Living**” was being ignored. Apparently Wesley realized that people of his flock (i.e., Methodists) were quite good at living out the first two rules: “**Earn all you can. Save all you can,**” while ignoring rule number three, “**Give all you can.**”

**Wesley said, the first two rules are there in order to make it possible to give follow rule number three. “...in other words, give all you have to God.”** Yikes. That’s hard.

Bishop Carder goes on to say that Wesley observed, “...wealth changes our priorities and our relationships. We begin to assume an unrealistic independence and self-reliance. We forget how to receive and how to give. Wesley believed that true religion never goes from the powerful to the weak, but from the weak to the powerful.”

John Wesley did not call for stewardship to be easy. **He, like Jesus, knew that money could have a strong hold on us and erode our relationship, not only with our Creator but with the community as well.**

It may not be easy reading and it may not go down so easily, but truly – **Wesley’s three rules “Earn, Save, Give” keep us on track to lead whole and joy-filled lives.** Come to think of it, I will have what Wesley’s having.

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*Cesie Delve Scheuermann is a consultant in stewardship, development, and grant writing. Over the past decade, while working as a volunteer and part-time consultant, she helped raise over \$2.5 million dollars for numerous non-profit organizations. She served as the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference Lay Leader from 2008-2012. Her position with the Conference is funded through a generous grant from the Collins Foundation; she is available to consult with churches in Oregon and Idaho. You can reach her at [inspiringgenerosity@gmail.com](mailto:inspiringgenerosity@gmail.com) or on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/inspiringgenerosity>*

Stewardship continued on Page 9

Stewardship continued from Page 8

## Upcoming Events and Volunteer Opportunities

**HELP! We need liturgists –folks who can read scripture, offer prayers and help with the service about once every two months. This is a critical task on Sunday mornings as it shows people who come that lay people are directly involved in the leadership of the church and it shows them that people of all ages, sexes, and abilities are welcome. Pastor Tim provides the prayers and you can even get them early in the week if you want to rehearse them. We need you to be a liturgist. YOU CAN DO IT!**

**Ushers, flowers, etc.:** We need **ushers** – people who can greet folks who come to worship, assist them with locating a seat, getting a blanket, using hearing assistance, collecting the offering, etc. And we need folks who can bring **flowers** and arrange them for display on the altar for Sunday service. To volunteer and steward your gifts of time and talent call the church office (503-246-1213) or email Debbie at [hum-chur@qwestoffice.net](mailto:hum-chur@qwestoffice.net).

**Don't forget the Trustee's Work Parties** – Every month the Trustees host a work party usually on the first Saturday of the month. This is when all the little and big “to do” projects get attention to keep our campus clean, neat and well cared for. Come as you can any time and help is appreciated.

## Financial Update

2016 has ended and the books are closed. And once again your generosity is unbelievable! Without expecting it, we ended the year with a \$5,800 carry over and paid 69% (\$3,077) toward the Askings. That was all in addition to covering all bills, salaries and paying 100% of our Shared Ministry Apportionments. You have humbled the Finance Team with your stewardship and your faith and your willingness to share. All we can say is “Thank You!”

The preliminary budget for 2017 still has a shortfall of about \$5,000. A part of this deficit comes from some small increases in salaries for cost of living and addition of some funds for program expenses but the truth is we have arrived at that place long foretold where resources and expenses are headed in

Stewardship continued on Page 10

Stewardship continued from Page 10

divergent directions. Over the next few months the Finance Team, the Church Council and others will review our financial health and projections, explore what options and alternatives exist, and begin to put a plan in place not only for funding our budget in 2017, but on into the future. What the results and recommendations will be is still unknown but something needs to be done and done not just for the short term of 2017 but for the next 3-4 years as well.

As we work out the details some changes may be needed. Be that as it may, we are so thankful for your giving and your willingness to trust that your gifts to God through this church are used wisely and making a difference. Thank you for committing to funding our church and its ministries and programs. Thank you also for what you are giving and doing this year and your trust in us to take your gifts and make them work for the good of all and glory of God.

## Preacher's Public House Chat



Pastor Tim invites anyone who would like to come together for a no host gathering at the Raccoon Lodge (7424 SW Beaverton-Hillsdale Hwy, Portland, Oregon 97225) at 7:00 pm on Tuesday February 21<sup>st</sup>. We will gather for fellowship and conversation and might chat about this *New York Times* opinion piece by the 14th Dalai Lama and Arthur C. Brooks: Behind Our Anxiety, the Fear of Being Unneeded which can be found by following this link:

[http://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/04/opinion/dalai-lama-behind-our-anxiety-the-fear-of-being-unneeded.html?emc=eta1&\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/04/opinion/dalai-lama-behind-our-anxiety-the-fear-of-being-unneeded.html?emc=eta1&_r=0) that we were going to chat about in January but had to cancel because of the weather. This should be a good conversation so bring a friend and join Pastor Tim and company for another chat. For more information, contact Pastor Tim (503-246-1213, [yhumcpastor@qwestoffice.net](mailto:yhumcpastor@qwestoffice.net)).

Our next Preacher's Public House Chat will be on Tuesday March 21<sup>st</sup>. As always, we will gather at the Raccoon Lodge. Why not plan to join us for this chat as well. If you have a topic to suggest for a chat let Pastor Tim know your idea.

## Using the Labyrinth



Now that we have a labyrinth painted on the turnaround out front of our buildings it is time to start using it. You will find a handout in a box attached to the pillar near the labyrinth that explains what a labyrinth is, how you might use it and it and some helpful hints for enhancing your experience. We are hoping people will begin to use it whenever they come to the church for meetings, worship, classes or events.

More walks will be coming soon but until then you can make use of the labyrinth any time and any day for your own devotions, contemplations and spiritual development.

**Special Note:** We are still collecting special donations for the Labyrinth Fund. The initial \$2,500 will be used for a concept rendering and cost estimates for a permanent labyrinth on the church campus to be used in planning and fundraising efforts. If you would like to give, mark your donation "labyrinth." Thanks to all who have already donated!



## Thank You

Well the holidays and snow have all finally come and gone. Thank you so much for your generosity at Thanksgiving and Christmas. You made the Hayhurst families so happy, especially the children. We also provided turkeys and pies for Thanksgiving and each family received a \$100 Fred Meyer gift card. Everyone was so appreciative.

We also provide funds for Hayhurst's book fair in May, and additional funds for clothing and shoes throughout the year. Since we continue to receive additional funds from you, we will be able to do more.

The backpack program is going very well. We provide 12 children with food for the weekend. We always need more volunteers to help, but please don't feel that it would be a long-term commitment. Thank you all again for your generosity and passion for this loving service for these special children and families.

Children's Task Force

*People were bringing little children to Jesus to have him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these."*

Mark 10: 13-14 NIV

## SW Community Recycling

Recycling for non-curbside items will be held Saturday, February 4th from 9 am to noon. Collection will be at St. John Fisher Parish parking lot. Enter the parking lot from SW 45th Avenue. A \$3.00 freewill donation is requested to offset expenses. Accepted items are posted in the church lobby





Vermont Hills United Methodist Church, as a Reconciling Congregation, believes that all people are children of God and that God's acceptance, grace and love are available to everyone.

We declare ourselves to be a faith community intent upon reconciling all God's people into one community of faith - we are one people - God's people. We declare that our inclusion embraces, gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered persons within every aspect of our life together.

We pray that, by living out our call to love and accept all people, our community will be a blessing to each of its participants and to the wider community and to our world so that we can truly state with conviction that we have Open Hearts, Open Minds and Open Doors.

## **Vermont Hills UMC**

6053 SW 55th Drive

Portland, OR 97221-1602

Office Hours: 9:00 - 2:00 Tues. - Fri.

Sunday Worship Service: 10:30 AM

Sunday School: 9:00 AM

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Pastor: Rev. Tim Overton-Harris

Pastor's Blog: <http://pastortimmusings.blogspot.com/>

Website: [www.vermonthillsumc.org](http://www.vermonthillsumc.org)

**A Congregation of Reconciliation  
Where Our Hearts, Minds, and Doors  
Are Truly Open**

[www.vermonthillsumc.org](http://www.vermonthillsumc.org)