



**The Bridge, Lent 2015**  
**Fox Island**  
**United Church of Christ**  
*an Open & Affirming Congregation*

**Rev. Janet Matthews**  
**Wayne Lackman, Minister of Music**  
**Meredith Shanley, Organist/Pianist**

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*Whoever you are,  
and wherever you are on life's journey...  
YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!*

***Lenten Series 2015***  
***"A Life Full of Grace"***

The winter season leading into Lent offers us time for deep inner reflection and preparation for the upcoming birth of the Light. For a number of years, during Lent, the Deacons have offered a series of classes after Sunday services to help us in this sacred journey.

This year, Diane Larson and Sally Watkins will present our Lenten Series. They will offer us the time and the opportunity to discover the grace that is present in the everyday moments of our lives. We will learn how to live "A Life Full of Grace". By quieting our minds and listening deep within ourselves, we will discover how grace permeates our everyday lives. We will learn to "be still and know God".

The questions, "How do we live our everyday lives with the knowledge that Christ lives within us?" and "How can we learn to use that knowledge to help our world?" will be addressed by taking a journey into what Jesus called, "The Kingdom Within".

You are invited you to give yourself the gift of sacred time this Lenten season and join us for four Sundays after church, beginning on Feb. 22, the first Sunday of Lent, and ending on March 15. We will gather in the Fireside Room each Sunday after service at 11:30 to share a light soup and bread lunch, courtesy of the Fellowship Committee. Then, promptly at noon, we will begin our class and end by 1:15.

Sign-up sheets are on the table in the narthex for those who are willing to help provide soups and breads for the lunches and/or to set up and clean up.

Please join us on a mystical journey of exploration and love as we discover how we can transform our lives and even change the world through the power of living "A Life Full of Grace".

Diane Larson, Chair of Deacons

Janet's



Journal

*"Uncertain as I was as I pushed forward, I felt right in my pushing, as if the effort itself meant something. That perhaps being amidst the undesecrated beauty of the wilderness meant I too could be undesecrated, regardless of the regrettable things I'd done to others or myself or the regrettable things that had been done to me. Of all the things I'd been skeptical about, I didn't feel skeptical about this: the wilderness had a clarity that included me."*

-Cheryl Strayed, "Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail".

One of my great loves is Mount Rainier National Park. Ok, I am really a fan of all the National Parks that I have visited – each one unique and spectacular in its own way. We just happen to be extremely fortunate to live within driving distance of Mt. Rainier. A favorite local past time is noticing when the mountain is out. There is even a portion of the Pacific Crest Trail that runs through the park. When the film Wild, the story of Cheryl Strayed who hiked the trail alone about twenty years ago, was released, it moved to the top of my must see list. Recently I saw this inspiring film. One of the ironies is that she never actually hikes through Washington, so the scenes of the familiar vistas I was looking forward to viewing are not in the film. Many of the scenes take place in the Mohave Desert, a place of isolation and extreme heat, and the start of her often physically, emotionally, and spiritually challenging journey.

This story about Strayed's pilgrimage through the physical desert and the painful desert places of her life make this a helpful Lenten preparation film. Consider that the Gospel reading for the first Sunday in Lent is always a story about Jesus' journey into the desert or wilderness. This year's Gospel focus is Mark.

*"And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him... Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news." Mark 1:12-15.*

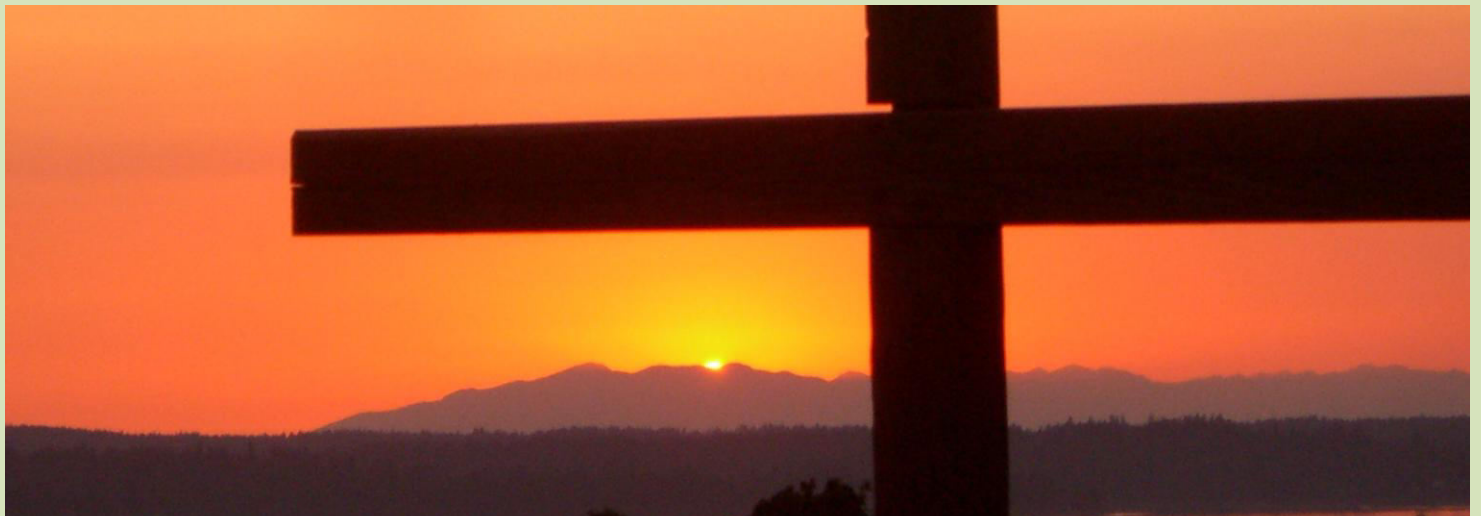
The message of the wilderness brings with it a message of clarity – clarity of vision, purpose, and, in Strayed's words, clarity that no matter what we have done or what has happened to us along life's journey we are as undesecrated as the Wild. Jesus, tempted by Satan, emerges from the wilderness with conviction that the Good News of God's Kingdom is near. Strayed departs the wilderness with a clarity about who she is that she has never before experienced. She finishes her trip seeing herself as redeemed and never really needing redemption – something akin to waking with the realization and knowing that God is always trying to tell us we are beloved.

Each of us is God's wild, undesecrated, already redeemed child. So in our Lenten journeys are the spiritual, emotional, and physical touchstones we need to connect with in order to be permeated by our own clarity. Whether it is through a practice giving something up or taking something on, a stillness practice, a new book, a labyrinth walk, a day of prayer, or long hike, the invitation is to allow God's grace and Christ's witness to lead each of us through the places we try to avoid. That once we cross those difficult thresholds we find ourselves on the hallowed and holy ground where we each genuinely reside.

This Lenten Season we offer an Ash Wednesday service, Predawn Prayer and Yoga practice, the book group on *The Inner Matrix* continues, and Diane Larson and Sally Watkins are leading a Sunday Morning post-worship program, *A Life Full of Grace*. Look for details in this newsletter.

Prayers for the journey,  
Janet

# Lenten Predawn Prayer and Yoga Practice



After His baptism by John the Baptist, Jesus went into the desert for 40 days to fast, pray, and become more intimately connected with His Father. The Christian liturgical season of Lent recalls those 40 days of Jesus as we set aside 40 days. In the Christian tradition, Lent is perhaps the most sacred season of the year. It is a time of preparation, recollection, reconciliation, renewal and transformation. Fox Island United Church of Christ will be offering a very unique practice to support Christians on their spiritual journeys. Many ancient practices of prayer and meditation will be followed. Our intention with these various contemplative practices will be: to consent to God's healing and action within us, to be transformed in the Spirit, to drop beneath our thinking minds so we can touch a real experience of the Divine, and finally to move into Christ Consciousness.

All are invited to the FIUCC's Lenten Predawn Prayer and Yoga Practice. This will be a profound spiritual journey for those who embark on it. The Journey will be filled with discovery and challenge, sustained by God's loving embrace. We believe that all who choose to participate have been called to do so by the Holy Spirit. How else could we explain people being at church for prayer and yoga from 5:00 – 7:00 am every morning for over 40 days?

And why will we be up so early? The predawn hours of the morning are a very sacred time in all major religions: It is when there is said to be a thin veil between this world and the spirit world. According to the Book of Wisdom in the Bible, "When peaceful silence lay over all, and when night had run half way her swift course, down from the heavens from the royal throne, leapt your all-powerful Word." The divine word enters our world in silence and during the nighttime.

Those who wish to attend different parts of the practice may quietly come and leave for the sections they wish to participate in. The schedule will be:

5:00-5:20	Welcome, Chanting, Lectio Divina (meditative scripture reading)
5:20-5:30	Pranayama Yoga Practice
5:30-6:20	Kriya Yoga Practice
6:20-6:30	Guided Relaxation for Expansion and Light
6:30-7:00	Chanting, Centering Prayer, Meditation, and Closing Prayer

The Lenten Predawn Prayer and Yoga Practice will run daily from Ash Wednesday (February 18) to Holy Thursday (April 2), from 5:00 – 7:00 am at FIUCC, 726 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Fox Island. Each morning will follow the same schedule: 1. Welcome, chanting and Lectio Divina, 2. Hatha Yoga, 3. Pranayama Yoga, 4. Chanting and Centering Prayer. The practice will be videotaped each morning and upload daily so participants can do their practice at home if necessary. Check out our trailer on the front page of the website, [foxislanducc.org](http://foxislanducc.org), and follow the links under the "Resources" dropdown menu. Those joining the practice will be able to attend certain parts if they so choose, whether in the church or online. For more information contact Natalia King (253) 278-1805 or Patty Metzger (253) 303-0005.

This is an amazing opportunity in our rushed and wounded world to enter into a sacred space of peace and transformation.

## Church Directory Update

We are currently in the process of updating the church directory. If your contact information has changed recently (within the last year or so), please send your new address/email/telephone number to the church office manager at [fiuccsec@centurytel.net](mailto:fiuccsec@centurytel.net). Thanks for your patience while we sort this all out!

## Coming This Spring!

Anyone interested in doing a play? "All I Really Need to Know I Learned In Kindergarten" the musical version is a fabulous show!

The show is a collection of monologues, scenes and songs based on the book by Robert Fulgham. Although it is a musical, not all parts require singing - there is something for everyone! (Adult cast- not really kindergarteners) Directed by Sharon Gregory, it will be performed in the fabulous venue of Fox Island United Church of Christ. Auditions will be the weekend of Feb 20<sup>th</sup>, with 3-4 rehearsals per week beginning the week of March 3<sup>rd</sup>. Performances April 24<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> with the possibility of adding more if needed. Contact Sharon to set up your audition time!

It's gonna be so much fun! ☺

-Sharon Gregory

## ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

OUR ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE WILL BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18<sup>TH</sup>, AT 7 PM.

## The Bridge Has a New Form!

We're testing out a new idea for the newsletter! Since a lot of stuff seems to happen right *after* the first of the month, which is when the Bridge is normally sent out, we are trying out a seasonal format instead. This issue covers events happening at the church during Lent. Our Easter Bridge will be sent out on March

11<sup>th</sup>

## Crafty Needlers

The meeting time for **Crafty Needlers** has changed again! Meetings are still every second and fourth Tuesday of the month, but at 11 am. Bring your latest project and come get crafty!

# WILL YOU GIVE TO



**One Great Hour**  
OF SHARING

2 Corinthians 8:13-15

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

God is still speaking,  
**UNITED CHURCH**  
OF CHRIST



## Special Offering March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015

# February 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 10a Sunday Service/ Communion	2 9:30-11a Yoga & Meditation  7p Centering Prayer	3 5:30p Deacons Mtg	4	5 9:30-11a Yoga & Meditation  12p Women's Fellow- ship  7p Choir Rehearsal	6	7   4:30p Harbor Winds Concert
8 10a Sunday Service  11:15a Trustees Mtg	9 9:30-11a Yoga & Meditation  7p Centering Prayer	10 11a Crafty Needlers	11	12 9:30-11a Yoga & Meditation  7p Choir Rehearsal	13	14   5:30p Valentine's Day Dinner & Auction
15 10a Sunday Service	16   7p Centering Prayer	17 <b>Mardi Gras</b>  1-3p WFFTS Book Group	18 <b>Ash Wednesday</b> 5-7a Lenten Predawn Prayer & Yoga Practice begins (Mon-Sat through 4/2)  7p Ash Wednesday Service	19 5-7a Lenten Practice  7p Choir Rehearsal	20 5-7a Lenten Practice	21 5-7a Lenten Practice
22 <b>First Sunday in Lent</b> 10a Sunday Service  Lenten Series #1 11:30a Lunch 12p Presentation	23 End of Winter Feast 5-7a Lenten Practice  9:30-11a Yoga & Meditation  7p Centering Prayer	24 5-7a Lenten Practice 11a Crafty Needlers  1-3p WFFTS Book Group 6:30p Church Council Mtg	25 5-7a Lenten Practice	26 5-7a Lenten Practice  9:30-11a Yoga & Meditation  7p Choir Rehearsal	27 5-7a Lenten Practice	28 5-7a Lenten Practice

# March 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>1 Second Sunday in Lent</b> 10a Sunday Service/ Communion Lenten Series #2 11:30a Lunch 12p Presentation	2 5-7a Lenten Practice 9:30-11a Yoga & Meditation 7p Centering Prayer	3 5-7a Lenten Practice 1-3p WFFTS Book Group 5:30p Deacons Mtg	4 5-7a Lenten Practice	5 5-7a Lenten Practice 9:30-11a Yoga & Meditation 7p Choir Rehearsal	6 5-7a Lenten Practice	7 5-7a Lenten Practice
<b>8 Third Sunday in Lent</b> 10a Sunday Service Lenten Series #3 11:30a Lunch 12p Presentation	9 5-7a Lenten Practice 9:30-11a Yoga & Meditation 7p Centering Prayer	10 5-7a Lenten Practice 11a Crafty Needlers 1-3p WFFTS Book Group	11 5-7a Lenten Practice	12 5-7a Lenten Practice 9:30-11a Yoga & Meditation 7p Choir Rehearsal	13 5-7a Lenten Practice	14 5-7a Lenten Practice
<b>15 Fourth Sunday in Lent</b> 10a Sunday Service <i>One Great Hour of Sharing Offering</i> Lenten Series #4 11:30a Lunch 12p Presentation	16 5-7a Lenten Practice 9:30-11a Yoga & Meditation 7p Centering Prayer	<b>17 St. Patrick's Day</b> 5-7a Lenten Practice 1-3p WFFTS Book Group	18 5-7a Lenten Practice	19 5-7a Lenten Practice 9:30-11a Yoga & Meditation 7p Choir Rehearsal	20 5-7a Lenten Practice	21 5-7a Lenten Practice
<b>22 Fifth Sunday in Lent</b> 10a Sunday Service	23 5-7a Lenten Practice 9:30-11a Yoga & Meditation 7p Centering Prayer	24 5-7a Lenten Practice 11a Crafty Needlers 1-3p WFFTS Book Group	25 5-7a Lenten Practice	26 5-7a Lenten Practice 9:30-11a Yoga & Meditation 7p Choir Rehearsal	27 5-7a Lenten Practice	28 5-7a Lenten Practice
<b>29 Palm Sunday</b> 10a Sunday Service	30 5-7a Lenten Practice 9:30-11a Yoga & Meditation 7p Centering Prayer	31 5-7a Lenten Practice 1-3p WFFTS Book Group				