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

Rev. Janet Matthews Wayne Lackman, Minister of Music Meredith Shanley, Organist/Pianist 726 6th Avenue, P.O. Box 475 Fox Island, WA 98333 253-549-2420 <u>fiuccsec@centurytel.net</u> <u>www.FoxIslandUCC.org</u>

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



Easter Services

10 am	Palm Sunday Procession of Palms L Communion
7 pm	Good Friday Music from New Voice & the Chancel Choir
6:30 am	Easter Sunday Sunrise Service at the Fox Island Fishing Pier
7:30 am 8:30 am 10 am	Coffee & Light Breakfast Full Breakfast Easter Service

Janet's



Journal

"Jesus' resurrection is the beginning of God's new project not to snatch people away from earth to heaven but to colonize earth with the life of heaven. That, after all, is what the Lord's Prayer is about." — N.T. Wright, Surprised by Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church

To colonize earth with the life of heaven is one way of distinguishing our Christian mission and expressing the promise of new life through Christ. With that in mind we can consider the channels where we are transforming lives at Fox Island United Church of Christ and colonizing earth with the life of heaven, God's Kingdom on Earth.

What is taking place in our community that is transformative? Where are Kingdom seeds being planted? Where is Life Born of the Spirit germinating within our daily lives? How are we renewed and restored?

First, I hope that we leave worship more connected to one another and the Living Christ; abundantly so throughout Holy Week and Easter. Palm Sunday we will process with palm fronds as a tribute to Jesus' peaceful entry into Jerusalem. That morning is filled with special readings music and communion, in remembrance of him. The young people will go to Sunday School and we will begin telling the story of the night of Jesus' betrayal prior to his arrest.

There is one service on Good Friday, April 3 at 7 pm with the Chancel Choir and New Voice providing music. Our hope is that by adding elements of the Maundy Thursday service to Palm Sunday and Good Friday we will provide a deep preparation for more people; a registering of the sorrow and loss that took place before the wonder of Easter Sunday; a realization that planting seeds to colonize the Kingdom required courage and sacrifice, including Jesus' own life.

This Lenten Season brought incredible opportunities for preparation and transformation. Sacred Exploration and Holy Discernment permeated Pre-Dawn Lenten Yoga and Meditation. The space was filled with Christ's presence. Diane Larson and Sally Watkins offered beautiful prayers, meditations and time of sharing in the "Life Full of Grace" Lenten series. God's grace was perceived and celebrated through nature, beauty, creativity, and our inner world. We explored the Grace that Jesus came into this world to draw us into: The Kingdom of God. As Diane writes: *Jesus not only taught us the value of the Kingdom Within but also gave us the necessary keys to enter the Kingdom*. Those of us reading the Inner Matrix are finding ways to open our minds, hearts, and beings to Divine Love through meditation and practice.

On March 31 we will host a New Member Orientation inviting folks into the life and mission of FIUCC. The first Sunday after the Resurrection, April 12, we will receive new members. This coming Sunday, Andy is meeting with parents and youth to plan this summer's mission trip to the Nez Perce Reservation in Idaho. The trip is August 2 through August 7, with a possible extra night added on for fun on the way home. These trips are always transformative and spirit-led. We hope to bring new life to our Sunday School program by including more of our adults in the youth program. Plan to hear Andy Sharp share a ministry moment this Sunday and next week March 22 there is an event led by Staci Steiner and Sara Million to share about our curriculum and the ways of Sunday school. The hope is that it will make helping in the Sunday more accessible to a greater number of adults.

Easter Morning we leave the sorrow of Good Friday as we enter the New Life of the Resurrection beginning with the Sunrise Service at the Fox Island Fishing Pier at 6:30 am. Finally, finally our joyful Easter Celebration is at 10:00 am. I pray that our Lenten Season has provided us with a deeper connection to Christ that we continue to live as we colonize the Kingdom with hearts full of joy and promise – the Easter Promise. The Easter Commission.

Lenten Series 2015 "A Life Full of Grace"



As members of UCC, we often hear the phrase "God is still speaking". If we believe this, then we all need to listen so that we can hear God's voice and mindfully receive God's Grace. In our busy, noisy, technically and materially oriented world, we need to work extra hard to find ways to slow down and quiet our minds so that we can truly listen. Each of us needs to discover for ourselves what God is asking of us, because it is different for each of us. If we don't slow down to listen for God's voice, ask the necessary questions, and listen for the answers, we will never know what God has to say to us. God alone can lead us to discover the wholeness and completeness possible in our lives as well as teach us how to bring our individual gifts into the world.

This coming Sunday, March 15, Sally Watkins and I will be presenting the last session of our Lenten Series, "A Life Full of

Grace". We have been exploring how God's grace is always available to us in our everyday lives, not only in the outer world of nature, beauty, and creativity, but also in our inner world, in what Jesus calls the Kingdom Within. It is mostly through the Kingdom Within that God speaks to us on an individual basis.

Utilizing the work of John Sanford, Jungian psychology, and modern psychology to help explore the teachings of Jesus, we have been looking at the premise that Jesus not only taught us the value of the Kingdom Within but also gave us the necessary keys to enter the Kingdom. By looking closely at the meaning of Jesus' words, particularly his parables, we can see how they direct us toward the Kingdom. It is by entering the Kingdom Within that we are able to fully connect with what we call our Deepest Self/ Soul/ Christ Consciousness/Inner Light/ Holy Spirit/ True Self/ Divine Self/God's Voice/ God's Grace within us/ or whatever name by which we call our inner world. God is always present, speaking to us, and calling us home to ourselves.

During the last session of the series, on Sunday, March 15, we will be exploring how God's Grace is present in our relationships with others. Through the historical Jesus and the risen Christ, God shows us how God becomes fully human. It is in our search for belonging and in community that we are able to bring the Light of God's loving presence out from the Kingdom Within to share with others in a world that desperately needs our Light. Jesus showed us the way. He reminds us of this in the sacred words we say every Sunday in the prayer he gave us:

"Thy Kingdom come on earth as it is in Heaven."

Sally and I are most grateful to all you brave and dedicated souls who have been participating in our series and who are working with the teachings that we have presented. Big hugs go to my dear husband, Dwight, for helping us with scripture readings and with our technical needs as well as for his patience with me as I worked continuously on our series. We are so grateful to all of you who have made delicious soups and brought wonderful breads to share, and to Sharon Gregory and Clare Bantsari of the Fellowship Committee for organizing our lunches. We give our thanks to Pastor Janet, the FIUCC Council, especially the Board of Deacons, and to all our FIUCC friends for making it possible for us to present this series.

I wish to extend special thanks to Sally Watkins for agreeing so graciously to help me and for bringing her gentle support and inspired creative ideas to our series. She is indeed a blessing!

Diane Larson, Chair of the Board of Deacons

Contemplative Practices at FIUCC



"We may think of prayer as thoughts or feeling expressed in words. But this is only one expression. In the Christian tradition Contemplative Prayer is considered to be the pure gift of God. It is the opening of mind and heart – our whole being -- to God, the Ultimate Mystery, beyond thoughts, words and emotions. Through grace we open our awareness to God whom we know by faith is within us, closer than breathing, closer than thinking, closer than choosing – closer than consciousness itself." -Thomas Keating

The source of all Contemplative Prayer is the indwelling Trinity: the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The focus of Lectio Divina and Centering Prayer is to deepen our relationship with the living Christ. Both practices are a relationship with God and a discipline to foster that relationship. In Lectio Divina we cultivate a friendship with Christ by listening to the word of God in scripture with our open hearts. It is a way of listening to the texts of scripture as if we were in conversation with Christ and He was suggesting the topics of conversation. This daily encounter with Christ and reflection on His Word leads beyond mere acquaintanceship to an attitude of friendship, trust, and love. In Centering Prayer we move beyond conversation with Christ to communion with Him. Daily practice profoundly supports our movement into communion with the Spirit.

FIUCC supports and welcomes all to participate in Lectio Divina and Centering Prayer every Monday evening from 7:00 – 8:00pm. Also throughout lent we have a daily Lenten Predawn Prayer and Yoga
Practice that offers a profound spiritual experience for all who participate. The Lenten Practice includes
Lectio Divina, Yoga and Centering Prayer. You can do practice with Patty Metzger and Natalia King in the sanctuary every morning from 5:00 – 7:00am or watch the videos that George Metzger creates and uploads everyday from your computer. Just go to www.foxislanducc.org, click on "Resources" and then Lenten Predawn Prayer and Yoga Practice. It will transform you!

Patty Metzger

YOUTH MISSION TRIP 2015

The time has come to get a final head count for the mission trip, which is happening this year August 1 - 8. We are heading to the Nez Perce Reservation in Idaho. I am very excited to be leading this trip this year. The time for commitment from those kids who want to go is fast upon us.

On March 15 after church Andy Sharp will be holding an informational meeting for parents and kids who are interested in learning more about the

trip. A commitment is required by the end of March. For more details and sign up join us in the youth room after church.

New Member Dinner & Service

We will be holding a service right after Easter to admit new members to our church!

Orientation Meal: M

March 31, 5pm

New Member Service: April 12

Please contact Diane Larson or Pastor Janet with questions!

Hey folks! We would love to have more people sign up to host coffee hour!! You can find the signup sheet on the wall right next to the kitchen window.

All Church Work Party

Please join us for an All Church Work Party on Saturday, March 21 from 9AM to Noon. We need to spruce up our church grounds prior to Easter, and need lots of volunteers! Please contact John Mikkelborg with any questions at

Death Café

Announcing upcoming Death Café meetings on 3/23, 4/20, 5/11, and 6/22 from 3-4:30 at the Gig Harbor Library. At a Death Café people, often strangers, gather to eat cake, drink tea and discuss death.

Our objective is 'to increase awareness of death with a view to helping people make the most of their (finite) lives'.

A Death Cafe is a group directed discussion of death led by Dr. Kriss Kevorkian with no agenda, objectives or themes. It is a discussion group rather than a grief support or counseling session.

Sunday School Q&A

On March 22, Staci and Sara will introduce the Sunday school curriculum to all those interested in helping out. It will be a time to ask questions and learn what takes place in Sunday school every week. Please come!



Date Change: Special Offering March 29th, 2015

March 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
8 Third Sunday in Lent 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
15 Fourth Sunday in Lent 10a Sunday Service Lenten Series #4 11:30a Lunch 12p Presentation 11:30a Youth Mission Trip Meeting	16 5-7a Lenten Practice 9:30-11a Yoga & Meditation 7p Centering Prayer	17 St. Patrick's Day 5-7a Lenten Practice	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 9-noon All Church Work Party
22 Fifth Sunday in Lent 10a Sunday Service 11:30a Sunday School training	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 12p Women's Birthday Lunch	26 5-7a Lenten Practice 9:30-11a Yoga & Meditation 7p Choir Rehearsal	27 5-7a Lenten Practice	28 5-7a Lenten Practice
29 Palm Sunday 10a Sunday Service One Great Hour of Shar- ing Offering	30 5-7a Lenten Practice 9:30-11a Yoga & Meditation 7p Centering Prayer	31 5-7a Lenten Practice 9:30-11a Yoga & Meditation 1-3p WFFTS Book Group	1 5-7a Lenten Practice	2 Maundy Thursday 5-7a Lenten Practice 9:30-11a Yoga & Meditation 7p Choir Rehearsal	3 Good Friday 5-7a Lenten Practice 7:30p Good Friday Service	4 Holy Saturday 5-7a Lenten Practice
5 Easter 6:30a Sunrise Service 7:30a Easter Breakfast 10a Easter Service	6 9:30-11a Yoga & Meditation 7p Centering Prayer	7 9:30-11a Yoga & Meditation 1-3p WFFTS Book Group 5:30p Deacon's Mtg	8	9 9:30-11a Yoga & Meditation 12p Women's Fellowship 7p Choir Rehearsal	10	11