

# C.<sub>o.</sub>

## Channels

The monthly, award-winning publication  
of The Pacific Northwest Conference  
of The United Methodist Church

Issue #66, October 2013



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SO WHY DO I MARCH?  
WHY DID I ATTEND  
THIS CELEBRATORY  
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50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF  
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WASHINGTON?

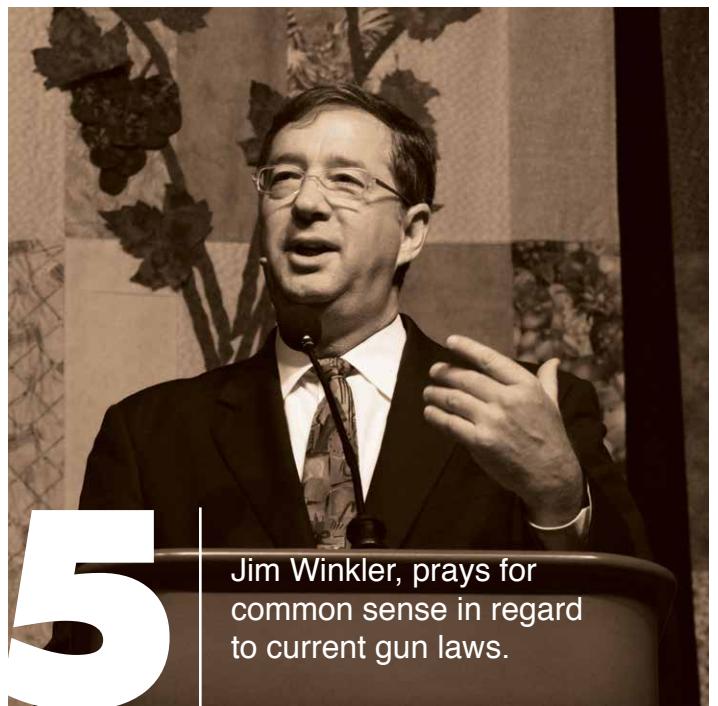
I MARCH BECAUSE WE'VE  
YET TO ARRIVE AT THAT  
JUNCTURE WHERE ALL  
GOD'S CHILDREN ARE  
INDEED FREE.

**The Rev. Steve Baber**  
Pastor, Seattle: Skyway UMC

# Why We Still MARCH!

**Steve Baber** shares some historical insights  
and connections between the **1963 March**  
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still **MUST** march for **freedom**!





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Good Seed Church celebrates its 4th year in serving the Korean Community.

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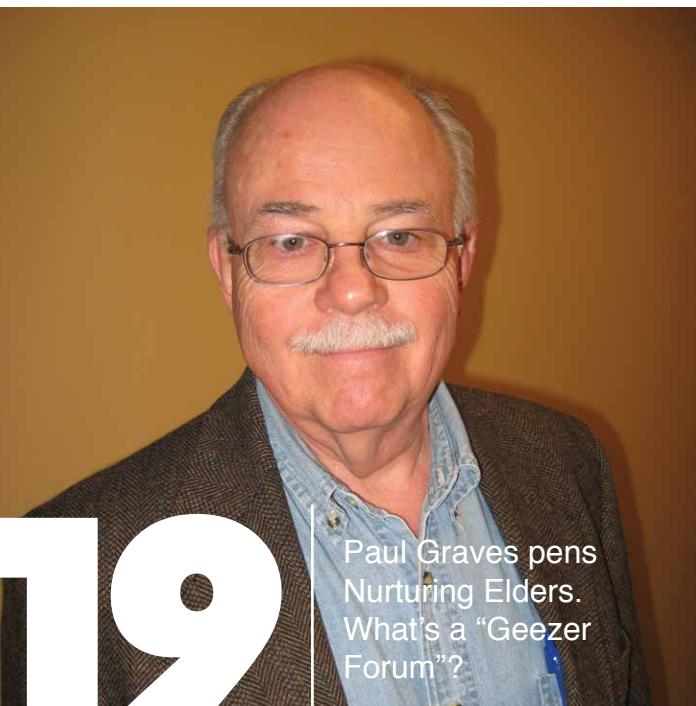
**RESIDENT BISHOP** Grant J. Hagiya **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CONNECTIONAL MINISTRIES** The Rev. David Valera **DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS, YOUNG PEOPLE'S MINISTRIES** Patrick Scriven **OFFICE MANAGER** Anna Conklin **PRINT & PUBLICATIONS MANAGER** Jesse N. Love **COPY EDITORS** Gretchen Engle, et. al. **CONTRIBUTORS** Jim Truitt, Wayne Rhodes, Jim Winkler, Amy Pazan, Joan Hackett, Roman Hofer, the Rev. Steve Baber, the Rev. Robert L. Walker, Diane Han, and the Rev. Paul Graves. **SPECIAL THANKS** The General Board of Church & Society, Good Seed Church and Sunrise United Methodist Church.

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Paul Graves pens Nurturing Elders. What's a "Geezer Forum"?



WordPress  
(The News Blog of The PNWUMC)  
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Whenever you see **The Shelf** icon beside an article in **Channels**, **Regional Media Center Manager** Ellen Johanson has carefully chosen a video that complements the story you are reading in an effort to help further your interest in a particular topic or theme.

# NEWS NOW

Connecting with stories making headlines from the UMC into October

## ERTs requested for recovery effort in Colorado

By **JIM TRUITT**

**T**he Rocky Mountain Conference has officially invited us to send Early Response Teams to Colorado to help with their recovery from the recent floods. They are requesting ERTs from all Jurisdictions as soon as practical.

I encourage you to look at your schedules and prayerfully determine if you can respond. Please let me know as soon as possible what dates you are available.

It will take approximately 2.5 days travel to get to Colorado pulling the trailers. We are considering multiple options:

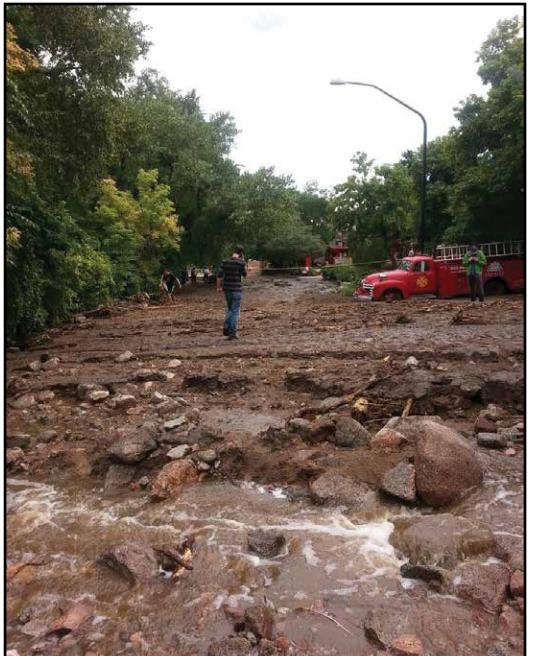
- Use the 3-1-3 approach as we did in Crisfield. That is work 3 days, take one day off and work 3 more days. This would make it a 12-day deployment.
- Send the trailers over early and let the other team members either drive or fly. The team members could choose to work the standard 3 days or the 3-1-3.
- Take the trailers over with the first team, leave them there for subsequent teams to use and arrange for the last team to bring them home.

*Jim Truitt serves as the UMVIM Early Response Team Coordinator for the PNWUMC*

## Faith leaders warn of implications of U.S. shutdown

By **LINDA BLOOM**

**A** group of U.S. faith leaders warned today that the impending shutdown of the U.S. government has "enormous implications," both at home and



*Arapahoe at 1st street on September 13th, 2013. Flood brought debris onto the road and caused serious damage. Photo courtesy of Wikipedia (<http://bit.ly/16aqd33>).*

- Take the trailers over and leave them for other teams to use as we did the Virginia trailers in Crisfield.

I am currently in Colorado working with the Rocky Mountain Conference setting up their volunteer management process. There are still a lot of details to work out but I'd appreciate it if you'd consider how you can support this recovery. The people of Colorado really need help. ☺

abroad, for the poor and those trying to fill in the gaps to support them.

Or, as the Rev. John McCullough, a United Methodist pastor and president of Church World Service, a humanitarian agency, bluntly put it, the "inability" of the U.S. House of Representatives to compromise on a federal budget "is literally taking food away from the mouths of hungry children."

He was part of a telephone news conference of faith leaders hosted by Bread for the World and moderated by the Rev. David Beckmann, Bread's president.

*This story continues online at <http://bit.ly/faith-shutdown>*



Bombed out vehicles Aleppo during the Syrian civil war. Voice of America News: Scott Bobb reports from Aleppo, Syria (<http://bit.ly/15FC0rM>)



United States President Barack Obama and Russian President Vladimir Putin walk to the G8 Summit dinner following their bilateral meeting in Ireland on 17 June 2013. (<http://bit.ly/GzuVhf>)



Doctors and medical staff treating injured rebel fighters and civilians in Aleppo. Photo by Scott Bobb. (<http://bit.ly/Gzy80C>)



Syrian refugees in Lebanon staying in small cramped quarters. Photo courtesy of Voice of America News: Margaret Besheer reports from the northern Lebanese city of Tripoli; "Syrian Refugees Seek Out Smugglers". (<http://bit.ly/Gzy7tH>)

## United Methodist social justice agency condemns chemical weapons use in Syria

By WAYNE RHODES Photos by WIKIPEDIA, ET. AL.

**T**he General Board of Church & Society of The United Methodist Church condemns the use of chemical weapons in Syria. Their use is deplorable. Those responsible for this unconscionable act must be brought to justice.

Our condemnation of this affront to humanity reminds us of the need for the Middle East to be a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction: biological, chemical and nuclear. The United Methodist Church condemns the use of chemical or biological weapons. We urge governments to renounce the use of these particularly inhumane weapons as part of their national policy.

The situation in Syria pains our hearts. It reminds us that God's earth aches for peace and God's people yearn for security. We deplore the impunity with which warring forces have trampled the human rights and welfare of the Syrian people.

God of grace and love, hear our prayers for the people of Syria. We cry and pray for:

- civilians, many children, killed by chemical weapons;

- the more than 100,000 people killed by conventional weapons in the civil war of the past 30 months;
- the 6.8 million Syrians, half of them children, needing humanitarian assistance;
- the 4.25 million internally displaced;
- the 1.78 million people displaced to neighboring countries; and
- the 5,000 people fleeing Syria daily.

The Syrian civil war has brought inescapable violence on its population, spawning massive displacement, causing immeasurable suffering. This violence must stop. The heavy, ever-increasing death toll results from both conventional and non-conventional weapons, particularly the lethal chemical sarin, whose use a U.N. inspection team has confirmed.

We call on all nations in the world to press for an immediate ceasefire and an end to arms shipments to any combatants, and for diplomacy at the United Nations to hasten this rather than hamper the process.

We are pleased that U.S. President Barack Obama and Russian

President Vladimir Putin have moved toward a diplomatic solution to the crisis.

We join with faith leaders and civil society organizations calling for robust diplomatic efforts to stop the bloodshed before Syria is destroyed, further destabilizing the Middle East. These diplomatic efforts for a negotiated political settlement must be multilateral, under the auspices of the United Nations.

Therefore, we oppose military action that contravenes the Charter of the United Nations. We believe a unilateral military strike, even in concert with a coalition of other countries, will only exacerbate the conflict and deepen the crisis.

All peace-loving peoples of the world and their governments have a responsibility to protect their citizens and must support vigorously this diplomatic route toward a negotiated solution.

Convening a peace conference to facilitate a political settlement of the Syrian conflict is in order. The international community must rally around the United Nations to enable it to fulfill its role in ensuring peace, security, human rights and upholding international law. We urge that any settlement ensure the rights of all Syrians, including our Christian brothers and sisters.

Syria's announcement that it will ratify the Chemical Weapons Convention is welcome. Syria must also join the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. The Syrian government also must remove any impediments toward swift, safe removal of chemical weapons, including unhampered access by the U.N. weapons-inspections team to other alleged attack sites.

Adherence to international law lays the foundation for a more peaceful Syria and secure world. The abhorrent chemical attack in Syria must now lead to ratification of the convention by six remaining countries. The attack should also emphasize the need to immediately destroy such stockpiles by countries that have declared their production and possession, including the United States and Russia.

Allowing U.N. inspections is vital to upholding the Chemical Weapons Convention, thus building confidence for a broader ceasefire in Syria, and peace and security in the Middle East.

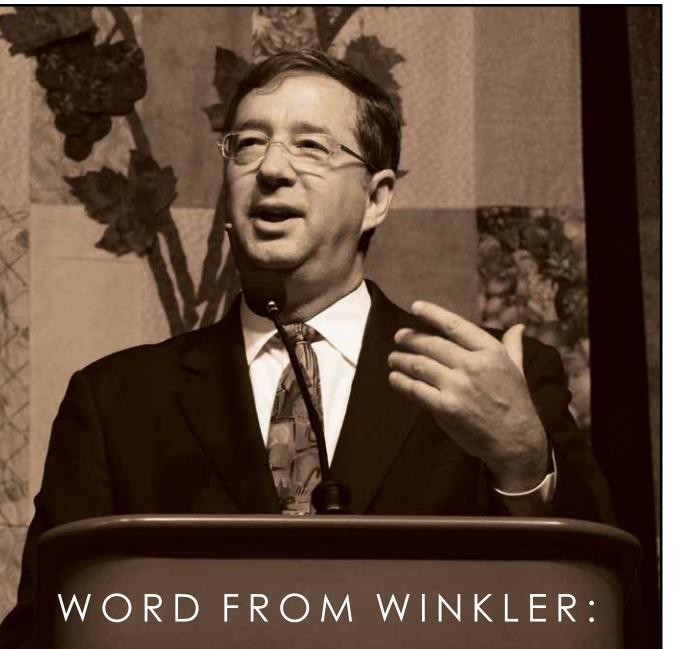
To a great extent, the uprisings across the Middle East are symptoms of a profound gap between the rich and the poor. Rather than punitive military strikes, we call for development and anti-poverty programs. Our United Methodist Social Principles call us to shift military spending to programs addressing human needs. True national security is that which upholds the social, economic, cultural, civil and political rights of peoples and their communities.

As United Methodists, let us keep lifting up our prayers for peace, urging all governments and peoples to stay committed to the long, arduous path of diplomacy, ceasefire and negotiations. This is the only path that leads to durable peace. As we pray for peace, security and stability in Syria and the entire Middle East, may we be reminded of what our United Methodist Council of Bishops said in "God's Renewed Creation: Call to Hope & Action":

We love God and neighbor by practicing compassionate respect. We respect victims of violence by supporting their pursuit of peace...We love God and neighbor by challenging those who harm. We must not only respond to the suffering already created, but also challenge people, companies, and governments that continue to exploit the weak, destroy the earth, perpetuate violence, and generate more weapons. We follow Jesus' example of confronting authorities nonviolently, using the force of love.

God of grace and love, hear our prayers for the people of Syria. ☩

Wayne Rhodes serves as Director of Communications, General Board of Church & Society.



WORD FROM WINKLER:

## Praying for common sense

By JIM WINKLER Photo by AMY PAZAN



We remain prayerfully hopeful that common-sense gun laws will be adopted. The General Board of Church & Society is headquartered in a city, Washington, D.C., that has just experienced a mass killing. This could have taken place in any other city.

On Monday, Sept. 16, 12 people died at the Navy Yard at the hands of a deeply disturbed individual with a record of arrests and interaction with mental-health officials. And he was easily able to purchase an automatic weapon and to secure Secret-level security clearance.

This could have taken place in any other city.

Panic spread across Washington in the wake of the shooting.

Ironically, because the Capitol was locked down, the U.S. Senate postponed a hearing on "Stand Your Ground" laws, such as that which contributed to the murder of teenager Trayvon Martin in Florida.

Last week, the Washington Post carried a sad headline, "Why gun control laws won't change". The accompanying article said the politics of gun control are likely to remain unchanged.

In spite of mass killings at Columbine High School, Virginia Tech, the Binghamton, N.Y., Immigration Services Center, the movie theater at Aurora, Colo., Sandy Hook Elementary School, Tucson where Congresswoman Gabby Giffords and others were victims, and so many other places, there is little likelihood that new gun laws will be adopted.

This is a matter on which the Church of Jesus Christ must be resolute. This General Board of Church & Society has been and will continue to be at the forefront advocating for common-sense change in the laws that enable such senseless carnage. ☩

Jim Winkler serves as the General Secretary, General Board of Church and Society



# MISSION U

Learning Together for Transformation of the World

By JOAN HACKETT

## WHAT IS MISSION U?

PNW is one of the few Conferences nationwide with a Cooperative Mission u (formerly known as The Cooperative School of Christian Mission). Mission u is produced by an equal partnership of United Methodist Women and the Conference Board of Global Ministries. Studies are planned by the national United Methodist Women. Read what Mission u is about along with comments from our attendees (via evaluations).

## WHO ATTENDS?

- Open to men and women, clergy and youth (ages 12-17)
- As much as 64 churches represented at CWU Ellensburg in 2013 with 150 attendees
- This year, more young women attended Mission u than in the last 20 years.
- "I'd been going to the School of Mission for six years and this year didn't just have a change in name. There were so many youth and young adults that I was able to talk, laugh, and learn with."
- "Some of the best times were when we were not in class. The fellowship with the group was phenomenal."

## WHAT ARE THE STUDIES?

*The Call –Living Sacramentally; Walking Justly (2013)*

- "In the all school study, we explored the sacraments and what they mean in our lives, deconstructing some key sacraments of the church as well as looking at the root causes of injustice in our world, with an emphasis on transforming our minds so that we can change the world's reality."
- "My perspective on both baptism and communion has changed since attending these spiritual growth lessons. I can better understand and accept how these experiences bring one closer to God, rather than just thinking of them as the thing to do."

## One of the 5 Columns of Mission

### The Roma (2013, 2014)

- "I was also unaware of the severity of the plight of the Roma people before this event. I had no idea the extent of the prejudice and persecution dating back to their first migrations into Europe."

### Poverty (2013)

- "This event is all about providing the opportunity to learn and grow in faith and community."
- "It's hard to find religious experiences that stress 'love your neighbor'."

### Youth Study - Migration

- "My elective classes with the youth were all different and exciting. In each class, we learned something new, did something new, and moved to new places around the classroom. This was completely expressing our theme: migration!"
- "It was my pleasure to attend my first session of Mission u this year. The camaraderie, welcoming, and concern for insuring that I did not feel like the "odd person out" was truly comforting and uplifting."

### MISSION U STUDIES COMING IN 2014!

- How is it with your soul?
- The Roma of Europe
- People with Disabilities

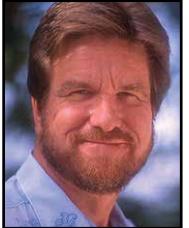
Mark your calendars! Mission u will take place at Central Washington University on July 11-14, 2014. Scholarships will be available, especially for first timers and young people. Make plans to attend! ☺

Joan Hackett serves as the Conference Secretary of Global Ministries for the PNWUMC.

## Meet Paul Jeffrey

*The Rev. Paul Jeffrey, Missionary Photojournalist will be itinerating in October 2013.*

If your church has not yet done so, sign up to begin a Covenant Relationship with photojournalist and missionary, Paul Jeffrey, SOON to ensure a visit this year. Complete form online or in the Funding Ministry and Mission Outreach booklet which each church received from the Conference Office or contact Joan Hackett at [revkeithjoan@hotmail.com](mailto:revkeithjoan@hotmail.com). And send a check for \$5 per member per year to the Conference Treasurer marked CR – Paul Jeffrey 09541Z. ☺



Oct. 4: Friday: Langley UMC  
 Oct. 5: Saturday: Langley photo exhibit at The Braeburn and Art Walk.  
 Oct. 6: Sunday a.m.: Seattle, Bryn Mawr UMC  
 Oct. 6: Sunday 5 p.m. potluck: Seattle, Haller Lake UMC  
 Oct. 7: Monday: Seattle, Trinity UMC  
 Oct. 8: Tuesday: Satsop UMC  
 Oct. 9: Wednesday: 2 p.m. Bay Center UMC  
 Oct. 9: Wednesday 6 p.m.: Ocean Shores UMC  
 Oct. 13: Sunday: Mill Plain UMC  
 Oct. 13: Sunday: Vancouver Heights UMC  
 Oct. 15: Tuesday: Stevenson, 5:30 potluck, 6:30 presentation  
 Oct. 16: Wednesday: Walla Walla, Pioneer UMC  
 Oct. 17: Thursday: Cheney UMC (and university presentation)  
 Oct. 18: Friday: Spokane, Manito UMC  
 Oct. 23: Wednesday: Battle Ground UMC  
 Oct. 24: Thursday: Renton, First UMC, 6:30 p.m. meal, 7 p.m. program

Times not specified are still to be determined.  
 View Paul Jeffrey's photographic work at [www.kairosphotos.com/blog](http://www.kairosphotos.com/blog)



## Give to an Advance project

### GIVING TO AN ADVANCE PROJECT

The new list of Advance projects for this quadrennium –2013-2016 Giving Opportunities through The Advance" was sent to every church earlier this year and copies were also available at Annual Conference. These 739 projects are endorsed by the General Board of Global Ministries Advance Committee, of which I had the honor to be a part of in the last Quadrennium, and so I reviewed all projects.

Please look in the booklet or online at [umcmision.com](http://umcmision.com) and choose one for you or your church to support. Imagine No Malaria # 3021190 is one project to consider supporting.

A brand new opportunity to have your gift matched is coming soon. Individuals can give and so build a column of mission for 2013 by naming their church. Often giving to an Advance project is the overlooked Column for churches.

On December 3, United Methodists are invited to participate in UMC #Giving Tuesday, when every gift made online through The Advance will be matched dollar for dollar. Building on the recent US shopping traditions of Black Friday, Local Business Saturday, and Cyber Monday, UMC

### THE 5 COLUMNS OF MISSION

Attend Mission u in 2013

Support a missionary with a Covenant Relationship

Send an offering for One Great Hour of Sharing

Give to UMCOR in 2013

Support an Advance project (Like, #givingtuesday)

#Giving Tuesday offers an opportunity to start off the holiday season by giving instead of getting through supporting organizations that are transforming the world.

This is a great opportunity to build awareness and maximize support for a project or missionary that your annual conference is involved with. ☺

Daria Hofer checking the orphan girls names on the list at the Jamaa Letu (CEJAL).

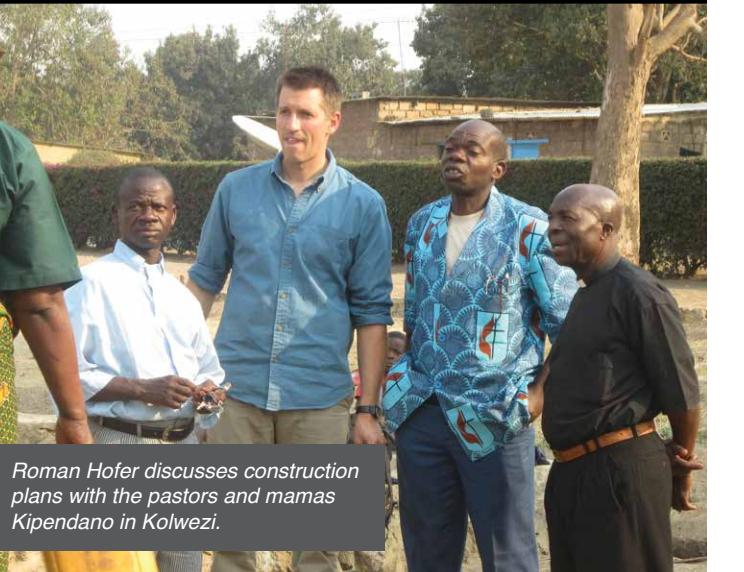


## Methodist Missionaries work to improve quality of life in the Congo

By ROMAN HOFER



Children playing in front of their poorly maintained school building in Lualaba.



Roman Hofer discusses construction plans with the pastors and mamas Kipendano in Kolwezi.

t has now been half a year since we first came to the Democratic Republic of Congo. After about a month of settling in, we had the privilege to visit The Pacific Northwest Conference in April, getting to know the many wonderful people involved in the Bishop's Taskforce Hope for the Children of Africa. It was inspiring to meet so many folks eager to improve some of the lives of the people in the Congo. Thanks again for your great hospitality!

For those who do not know us yet, we are a young family. Our names are Roman and Daria and we have our wonderful daughter Jael, who is eighteen months old. We originally come from Switzerland. I have a Master's degree in Economics and Business Administration and Daria has a Master's degree in African Studies.

We both were exposed to missionary work in some form before. I volunteered for a few months in an income-generating project in Peru while Daria did some volunteering and some University related research in Tanzania and Zambia.

When we met, we were both surprised to see one another having a heart for serving the disadvantaged. And we promised each other that we would go on mission together someday, preferably to Africa. This was seven years ago. As time went by, we became a little bit lazy. We both had good jobs, family and friends we didn't want to leave behind. One day a good friend reminded us: "What about your plans of going to Africa?" That woke us up.

Daria worked at the head office of the Swiss/French United Methodist Mission Board in Switzerland and went for project travel to the Congo. Along the way we learned about the possibility to become local project coordinators, so we applied for the position and were accepted.

Why is it important to us? We both grew up in a Christian home where we learned that there are others who do not have as much as we do. We both wanted to help in one way or the other with the understanding that people who live in less advantageous areas of this world can live better lives. So we both studied something where we felt we can use it for this aim. We believe that God sees every human being as precious and unique. Somehow not everyone believes that, so there is a lot of inequality and we want to contribute in or-

der for people to have more equal opportunities.

We are based in Lubumbashi. That's the second biggest city of the Congo. About 1.5 million people live there. We are closely working together with the local United Methodist Church. I am working as a local project coordinator. This involves supporting the local United Methodist project managers in budget planning and writing reports to the United States and Switzerland. Such projects are the two orphanages Jamaa Letu (CEJAL) and Barbara Tshisola (BART), nutrition and school support for street children, two hospitals in the bush, the local youth group "Jeunesse pour Christ" and the Methodist University in Mulungwishi. Through my experience in business administration I will also train local accountants in bookkeeping and drawing-up financial reports.

Daria is supporting the local United Methodist Health Board. She is assisting the coordinating doctors in writing up a strategic plan in order to write project proposals that in turn should help acquiring funds.

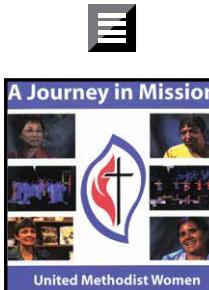
The ministry of the United Methodist Church in South Congo with vulnerable children has been supported by the Pacific-Northwest Conference since 1998. If a child in the Congo loses his parents, there is usually another family member who can take care of them. But many of the girls and boys in the United Methodist orphanages have been neglected or mistreated before they came to the orphanage. Some of them have been accused of witchcraft and of being responsible for their parents' unexpected death. Therefore the extended family refuses to take them on. Others lost their parents because of the war and fled to Lubumbashi in search of means to survive in the big city.

The United Methodist Church in South Congo is an Episcopal Area containing five annual conferences and approximately 500,000 church members. It is the second largest denomination after the Catholic Church. The United Methodist Church has a strong presence in the everyday life of the Congolese people. Beside pastoral services the church also serves the community with health facilities, schools, universities, orphanages, nutrition programs and agricultural development.

In a country where state service delivery is only gradually improving, the work done by churches is indispensable.

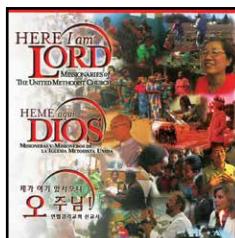
Special thanks to Barbara Dadd Shaffer

*Roman and Daria Hofer are missionaries of The United Methodist Church with a special relationship with The Pacific Northwest Conference. The PNWUMC was involved in the development of missionary positions and their placement in them. Local churches and individuals are encouraged to support their ministry with prayers and finances. Their Advance Special numbers are #3021820 for Daria and #3021821 for Roman. Additional information about their ministry is available on the General Board of Global Ministries website, [www.umcmission.org](http://www.umcmission.org)*



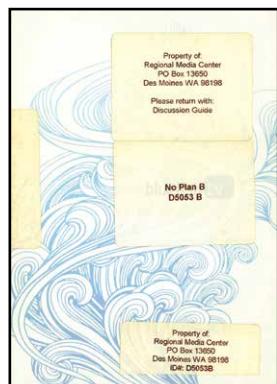
### A Journey in Mission (D5007)

A Journey in Mission is a DVD of mission stories from United Methodist Women. There is a resource CD for programming as well as the DVD stories.



### Here I am Lord: Missionaries of the United Methodist Church (D4441)

This DVD includes stories of missionaries in the Congo.

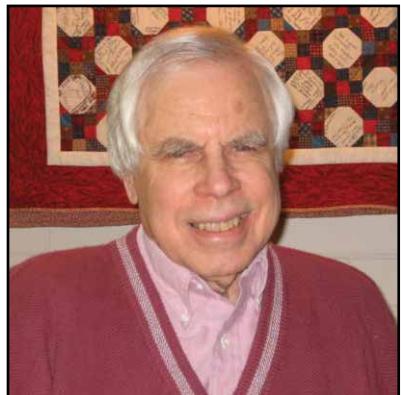


### No Plan B (D5053)

Todd Phillips helps answer the question "How can I help a world in need?" In four sessions, Phillips travels to Rwanda and the Republic of Congo to explore how to make a difference to people looking for hope and help.

E-mail [ejohanson@pnwumc.org](mailto:ejohanson@pnwumc.org) for the availability of these resources!





# On My DEAFNESS and BLINDNESS

By THE REV. ROBERT L. WALKER

Early in my life I collected heroes - one of music, the other of poetry and prose. As a child taking piano lessons, I delighted in playing Ludwig van Beethoven's piano music, composed in 18<sup>th</sup> century Germany. As a college student, my fancy was caught by John Milton, a 17<sup>th</sup> century English composer of poetry and other writings.

Why were they my heroes? Beethoven was not deterred by his increasing deafness, and Milton was undeterred by his increasing blindness. Both conditions were my lot - I was born hard of hearing and slowly becoming blind; likewise, I was not to be deterred by either of the two inescapable conditions.

Today, I am privileged to utilize technology that - while it cannot free me from my deafness and blindness - can be a bridge to walk across into artificial hearing and seeing. Without it, I would be helplessly deaf and blind, detaching me from the rest of the world.

Such tools were unimaginable in the ages of Milton and Beethoven. Wonderment fills me in that despite their handicapping conditions, they were not denied the joy in creating their remarkable artisries; however, for one of them—namely John Milton—the limitations of being blind weighed heavily and fearfully, on him. Ultimately, he thrust aside the weight and fear. In Milton's famous Italian-style sonnet titled "On His Blindness", we view his acceptance of his disappearing eyesight that too often led to unwanted inaction; hence, there came his bold assertion in the sonnet's last line that "They also serve who only stand and wait."

This poem is clearly based on the harsh parable found in Matthew 25: 14-30 that is attributed to Jesus; Luke in 19: 12-26 picks up the theme, but in contradiction to Matthew's version. In the sonnet, Milton talks about the darkness surrounding him that probably was a gradual awakening to the reality that began at birth as it did for me, and then engulfed me in 2001.

Milton continued his classical writings that were dictated to his secretary. Perhaps it was that codependency in the midst of his independent spirit that led Milton to challenge the parable's implication that an angry God can attack an inactive person (such as a blind one) if good works aren't forthcoming. Milton cleverly countered that notion with the realization that his need for help in a dark world was itself a service allowing others to meet the requirement of serving others; hence, "They also serve who only stand and wait" for assistance. Let that countering theology be ours whenever anyone of us is providing services for people coping with a disability; that is, they are serving us with that privilege of serving them.

The gifts of modern technology that I need and utilize were not available for Milton or Beethoven; consequently, I am humbly glad that such services are mine. They started when I was 11 years

*Today, I am privileged to utilize technology that - while it cannot free me from my deafness and blindness - can be a bridge to walk across into artificial hearing and seeing. Without it, I would be helplessly deaf and blind, detaching me from the rest of the world.*

old, and after then-known medical concepts surrounding deafness failed, I was then provided with my first hearing aid.

Years later, with the lessening of my eyesight, the Milton darkness closed in on me, but in an age where computers and other aids make my situation tolerable (but not always so). I have been a retired clergyperson since 1995, yet I still care deeply about our Church, its conferences, and every kind of needed ministry. Recently, I learned that on the PNW Conference's website I could download the "The Amen Report" – newsletters that were distributed to conference attendees last June. I went online to acquire the documents, only to surrender to the oddities flouncing around in cyberspace. Try as I might, I could not get the newsletter to be read by my screen-reading software.

After receiving my complaint, a Conference staff person referred me to Jesse N. Love, our Conference's print and publications manager. Success came when he followed my suggestion of formatting the newsletters onto a Word document and pasting it into an e-mail to me. It was a gift of service by Jesse that I finally could listen to the three Amen Reports.

From where I sit as a blind and hard-of-hearing fellow, if we as a Conference and as members of our local churches are serious about being "good and faithful servants" for God, then the many gifts of technology that serve people with disabilities must be employed. As a matter of course, consultation with those of us in need of assistance must be carried out not just by the Conference,

## SPEAKING OUT



GIFTS OF MINISTERING  
UNDETERRED BY DISABILITIES

EDITED BY  
ROBERT L. WALKER



### Speaking Out

Speaking Out, edited by Robert L. Walker, is a compilation of personal stories written by clergy and lay pastors about their ministries as disabled pastors. While some have found the church to be welcoming, helpful and respectful of their different gifts and abilities, many more have experienced sadness and pain caused by how the church responded to them. This book challenges us to do a better job of including all people in the church, especially differently-abled persons in pastoral leadership.

E-mail [ejohanson@pnwumc.org](mailto:ejohanson@pnwumc.org) for the availability of this resource!

NOTE: For those who want to learn more about the Church's ministry with people coping with one or another form of disability, take advantage of the 2014 and 2015 United Methodist Women-Conference Board of Global Ministries Schools of Christian Missions.

Within the three issues to be examined, one of them will be that of the church and people with disabilities with the textbook written by Bishop Peggy A. Johnson from the Philadelphia Area, and the study guide by Lynn Swedberg from the PNW Conference.

Further, the 2012 General Conference ordered each annual conference to select the theme of disabilities for one of its four annual conferences within the current quadrennium. Be on the watch for one of our remaining conference sessions to be focused on the issue of the church and people with disabilities.

There are two books dealing with disabilities that may be of interest for you. One is "Make a Joyful Silence", co-authored by Bishop Johnson and me; the second book is "Speaking Out: Gifts of Ministering Undeterred by Disabilities," edited by me and as one of the 25 contributing authors dealing with the several forms of disabilities. Both books can be bought from some book stores and Amazon.com. Royalties go entirely to The General Board of Global Ministries' standing committee dealing with deaf, late deafened, hard of hearing, deaf-blind people, and to the U.M. Association of Ministers with Disabilities, an official United Methodist Caucus group. ☺

*The Rev. Robert Walker is a retired pastor from the PNW Conference.*

Through the joint service with Sunrise United Methodist Church (Federal Way, Wash.) in celebration of Good Seed Church's fourth anniversary, I was able to get a glimpse into what heaven must be like.

Not to sound cheesy or cliché, but the fact that we were able to worship God under the same roof was a true blessing. In Revelation 7:9, scripture says, "After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the lamb..." Our congregation is multi-generational and multi-cultural; yet, we were all there for the same reason – to honor and glorify our living God. We didn't let our differences limit us, nor did we allow our language barriers to stand in the way of our worship and praise.

This is what heaven must be like. God does not discriminate between our different skin colors, our languages, our pasts, or our socio-economic backgrounds. God isn't limited by these boundaries. Naturally, as disciples of Jesus Christ, we shouldn't be limited by these boundaries either.

The Rev. Jo Dene Romeijn-Stout shared a message titled, "The Lost and Found." Of course it is easy for us to live our day-to-day lives thinking about these parables simply as a blessing – which it is. God does seek us out and God is with us regardless of how much we might run or hide, or how lost we are, and these parables are a testament to our living, loving God.

But, on the other hand, I also felt a bit of shame in my heart while listening to this message. I feel that God was also communicating to us a deeper message. We live comfortable lives, assuring ourselves that we are, indeed, the good sheep. "God, I'm one of the 99," we say. "That one sheep out of the hundred might have strayed, but I go to church every Sunday, I do quiet time every day, and give offering. God, I even serve the Church on Sundays, and I give up extra time to volunteer." I often find myself living a self-satisfying life, and have lost focus of the Father's heart. God says that "it is by Grace you have been saved, through faith – and this is not from yourselves, it is a gift from God – not by works, so that one can boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9). Yet, here I sat, completely content with the way I worshipped, I prayed, I volunteered, I lived. I had been lying to myself, and to God, that I was among the "good sheep," but I was lost – I am lost. I had been living in the dark – working, serving, and "doing



# The FATHER'S Heart

By DIANE HAN

good," not for God, but for my own satisfaction, resume, and agenda. Is this type of lifestyle satisfying to Him?

Furthermore, the message also reminded me of the Father's heart and had me questioning whether my own heart was a reflection of his. Luke 15 reads, "Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn't he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it?" What? Having grown up in a Christian family, I had read these parables – the parable of the lost sheep, the parable of the lost coin, the parable of the prodigal son – a multitude of times. Yet, for the first time I was taken aback by the wording of the passage. Jesus makes it seem like it is so obvious to go after the one lost sheep or to put everything down in search of the one lost coin, but to be honest, I sat there shaking my head. Why would you risk the 99 to go after the one? The answer was given to me. Our pastors remind-

ed us today that the answer is simple: this is the core of the Father's heart.

Just in Washington State, just on my own college campus, and just in my own household, there are people who are in dire need of the love of God. Beyond the borders of the U.S., there are even more unreached nations – completely unaware of God's sacrifice, his only son, for us. I couldn't help but to repent for how I had been living my life. God isn't necessarily calling me to drop everything I have in life right now and go ship myself off to a rural town in the depths of Africa. But He is calling me to take a look into His heart.

I looked back at my own life and at my own heart and saw that I had put up this mask of a perfect Christian and have been living so comfortably behind it. Not only had I completely convinced myself that I was in a good place, but God continued to love me during all of my dry seasons and

In September, Good Seed Church celebrated its fourth year in ministry serving the growing Korean community in partnership with Sunrise UMC in Federal Way, Wash. Writer Diane Han shares her thoughts on the messages shared during the joint Church celebration.

Members of Good Seed Church present a musical offering during the 4th Anniversary Joint Service with Sunrise UMC in Federal Way, Wash.

Beyond the borders of the U.S., there are even more unreached nations – completely unaware of God's sacrifice, his only son, for us. I couldn't help but to repent for how I had been living my life. God isn't necessarily calling me to drop everything I have in life right now and go ship myself off to a rural town in the depths of Africa. But He is calling me to take a look into His heart.

I will go Lord, if you lead me. It can't be about me anymore. I can't get lost in the deeds and the works and lie to myself that I have strong faith, when behind the mask I am broken. As I continue to grow, I know that I will be able to truly pray to feel the Father's heart. It's tough stuff – God feels pain for the lost, he feels urgency for those who don't know him, and he hears the cries of those in need. I pray that I will finally come out of hiding behind my façade, accept my flaws, and share the love of God with those around me. I pray for the same for all of you as well. ☺



Diane Han is a student at the University of Washington and a member of Good Seed Church (Federal Way, Wash.).

have been thinking a lot about love, lately - the romantic, lovey-dovey kind. Much of my thoughts presented here are just from different corners of my heart and mind, but to the tune of scripture. Enjoy my humble musings.

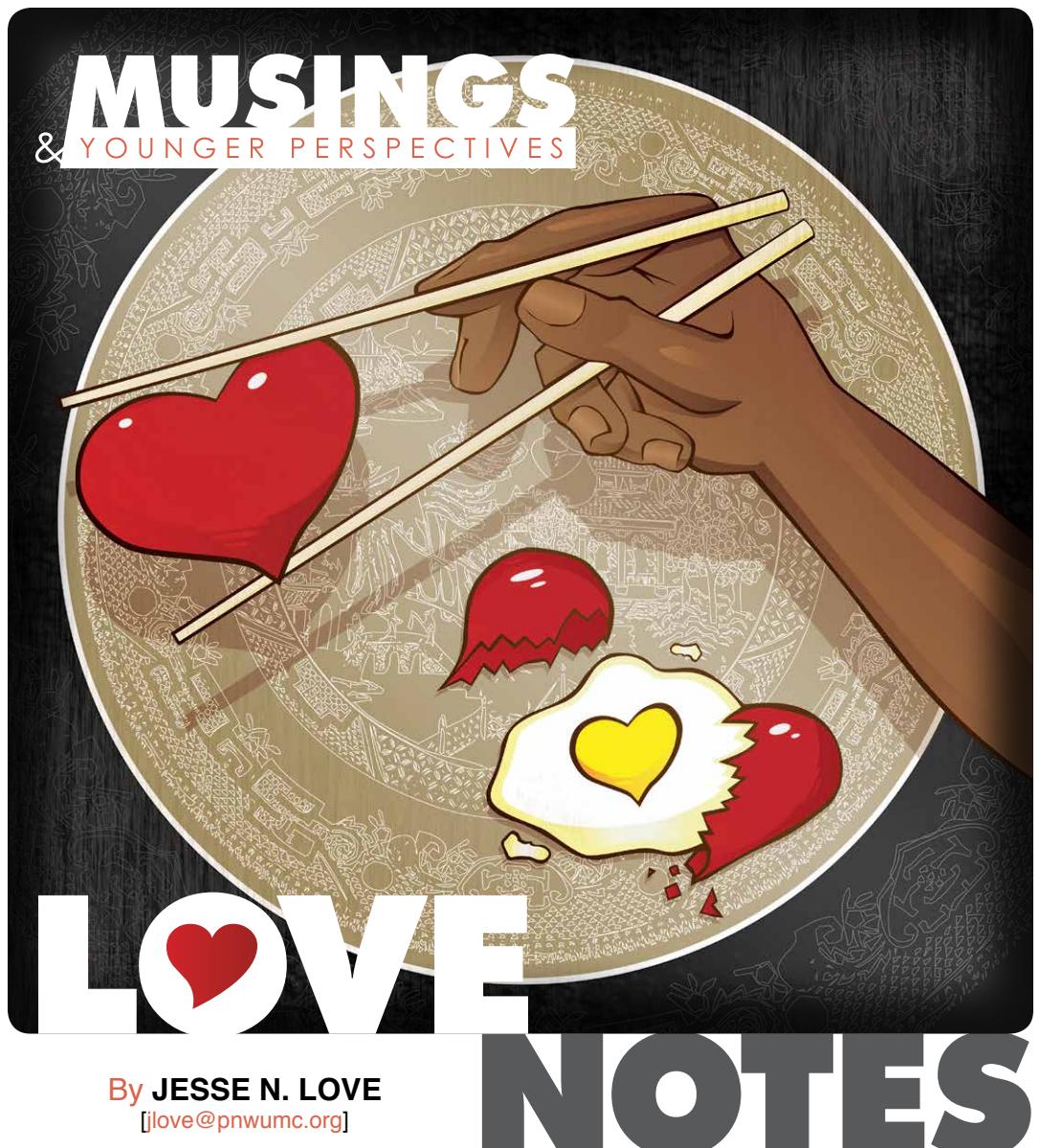
#### I: LOVE LOOKS EASY, BUT IS VERY DIFFICULT

Last month, I travelled back to Northern California to witness the wedding of my cousin Melissa and my new cousin-in-law, Ming. It was a wonderful ceremony and I was even invited to take part as a coin bearer – yes, me, a 35 year-old coin bearer. I enjoy going back home to see family and friends I love.

The Rev. Geoff Baraan shared the good news during the ceremony. He featured some interesting metaphors centered on love and marriage.

- He likened marriage to using a pair of chopsticks. He pulled out a pair of chopsticks from under his sleeve and shared "It may look easy, but for some, it can be difficult."
- He also went on to share how marriage is like a dollar bill. If ripped in half, its value isn't the same than it staying whole.
- Baraan then shared that loving someone has its challenges: "You must love them, IN SPITE OF \_\_\_\_\_ (fill in the blank: i.e. their constant snoring, their taste in music, the way they smell...you get the point.)"

The service began, of course, with a reading of The Gift of Love from Paul in the book of I Corinthians 13: 4-7 (NRSV):  
*Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love*



By JESSE N. LOVE

[jlove@pnwumc.org]

*bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.*

*prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end.*

Paul's words speak of how we are to all love each other. They are very beautiful in their simplicity. Patience. Kindness. No arrogance. No rudeness. But as human beings, it's very easy to be impatient, be unkind, and to be rude to one another. Despite this, Paul reminds us that the love we have for one another must persevere.

#### II: MANY THINGS END, EXCEPT FOR LOVE

From I Corinthians 13: 8-10  
*Love never ends. But as for*

Love never ends, but relationships do. In the last few years, I've had to bear the news of relationships ending in my family/friend/professional circles. It's sad hearing people close to you – people who've promised themselves to each other, are no longer together. Some are my peers who started out in whirlwind friendships

and eventually ended their relationships; others were family members in long-lasting romances - but with irreconcilable differences that couldn't be resolved through church or other counseling. It is difficult work in maintaining a loving relationship - even if one DOES have the right partner.

For me, post-relationship time was a hazy period. After uncoupling from a six-year relationship with my then girlfriend, I spent three years being single - deflating, backtracking, and contemplating.

During this time, it was my relationship with God that mattered the most. On one of my

darker nights, I remember lying in bed asking, "God, what do you want me to do?" What eventually came to me was the message, "Forgive our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us." This simple nudge - of forgiving myself and my ex for the pain we put each other through - help put me back on track in finding peace.

Friendships can end, but in our brokenness, pain and sadness will end as well once we have dialog with God. Never ending is God's love for us as we seek to find peace in life, with or without someone to share in the journey.

#### III: AN END TO CHILDISH WAYS

From I Corinthians 13: 11  
*When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways.*

When I was younger, being in love was so exciting! When love is new, you begin 'clicking' with love songs on iTunes, sunshine can be seen during downpours, and you begin irrationally wishing there were 28 hours in a day to spend talking, walking, or being close with that special someone. See, young people have it good. They have more opportunities to meet different people because they are constantly on the move – from class-to-class, school-to-school, from one social event to the next.

As a young person emeritus, love for me is still exciting and fun. Thanks to the benefit of age, I'm able to make slightly better decisions in the love department. I'm less impulsive and my definition of beauty has matured. Through a combination of experiences, a person learns more about his or herself and what they like in terms of finding companionship. For me, spiritual awareness, cultural understanding, overall personality and intelligence are pretty important qualities I have come to appreciate in my mature, adult ways.

Love is a great thing to have and to share. It is also a challenge to maintain. One day, I would like to do as my parents have done: find love, have love endure, and have a future that is filled with blessings from God through loving relationships.

To my younger friends who may be reading this, in the spirit of Paul, I too hope for you to continue being faithful in your journey as you gain wisdom in finding peace and love. ☺

people are available to mingle with.

Even though values change from being a young person to an adult, growing up and having the right person beside you can be a wonderful and satisfying thing in your spiritual journey.

#### IV: FAITH, HOPE, and LOVE

I Corinthians 13: 12-13

*For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.*

In life, it's a blessing to have role models – mentors you know who are doing something, or living life in a certain way that sets an example for what you want to do or how you want to be.

When I think of a long-lasting relationship, my first thought is of my parents, Arthur & Irma Love. My folks have been married for about 38 years. \*applause\* For me they are the epitome of 'for richer or poorer, until death do us part'. For sure, my parents have been rich, been poor, and with a near fatal accident involving my father and with my mom being a cancer survivor, my parents are still together – faith tested, hopeful for the future, loving each other, and encouraging family life for me.

Occasionally, I would get a glimpse of why they have stayed together. Despite minor differences, both of my parents have similar values – they care deeply about family, our ethnic heritage, and spiritual wellness. And, they laugh a lot, not making a big deal out of the small stuff in life. For sure, it is God who has blessed them with a great marriage, patience to raise two adult sons, and the liveliness to travel wherever they wish.

Love is a great thing to have and to share. It is also a challenge to maintain. One day, I would like to do as my parents have done: find love, have love endure, and have a future that is filled with blessings from God through loving relationships.

To my younger friends who may be reading this, in the spirit of Paul, I too hope for you to continue being faithful in your journey as you gain wisdom in finding peace and love. ☺

#### NOOMA: Flame (D4182)

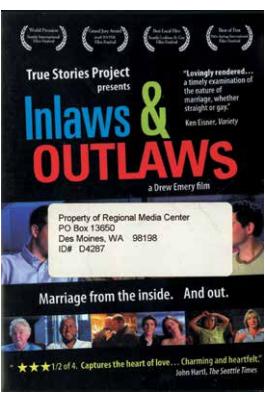
This DVD explores love as a sacred, beautiful, mysterious gift of God. Using texts from Song of Songs to explore the complexity of love gives us a deeper, more profound perspective on this unique human emotion. Love is compared to a flame made up of three parts: companionship, commitment, and sexuality with all three parts burning together more brightly than one burning



separately. Ultimately, love is profoundly spiritual. God is Love. God is the big flame.

#### Inlaws and Outlaws (D4287)

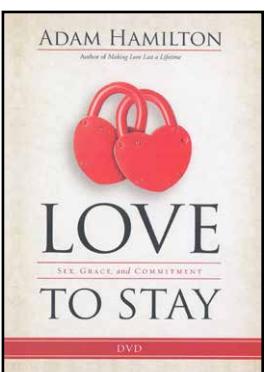
A captivating look at the nature of love, relationships, and marriage from diverse perspectives, this video weaves together the true stories of couples and singles--both straight and gay--into a collective narrative that is humorous, heart-breaking, and inspiring. With candor, great music and real heart this film explores what ev-



eryone has in common--a need and desire to love and be loved.

#### Love To Stay (D2032)

New from Adam Hamilton, this video focuses on building marriages that last. It is designed for group use and may be used in conjunction with Hamilton's book, Love to Stay. The DVD presents six videos, each about 10 minutes long that cover aspects of intimate relationships such as love, sex, marriage, abuse and forgiveness.



E-mail [ejohanson@pnwumc.org](mailto:ejohanson@pnwumc.org) for the availability of these resources!

Special thanks to Kendra Behn-Smith and Karen Yokota. Jesse N. Love serves as the print & publication manager for the PNWUMC.

## OUR CHURCHES ARE LIVING ORGANISMS

By BISHOP GRANT J. HAGIYA

Recently, our Western Jurisdiction College of Bishops and Directors of Connectional Ministries met in Honolulu for our semi-annual meeting (I know...I know, it was a tough assignment, but someone had to do it!). We try to visit each of the major ministry locations throughout the Jurisdiction, and we hadn't been to Hawaii in quite some time.

After our official meetings, Jan came over to join me for a short vacation. During this time, one of my teeth started to hurt and it kept getting worse. With that typical macho attitude, I decided to tough it out, and made an appointment with my own dentist upon returning. At its height the tooth was so bad I couldn't eat anything, which is a crime in Hawaii where the food is so good. I never experienced childbirth, but a toothache might come in second in terms of sheer pain. I know childbirth has no equivalent (which makes me glad I have never experienced it!).

As I flew home, the tooth started to get a little bit better, as the intense waves of pain were subsiding. It still hurt, but not as severely, and I was optimistic that maybe it wasn't going to be so bad. Unfortunately, that wasn't the case: my dentist confirmed that I had an abscess and needed a root canal ASAP. He said it was REALLY bad, and I had to take care of it right now. I was put on antibiotics and pain medication, referred to a great endodontist, and he took care of the tooth.

I was puzzled by the fact that as bad as the tooth was, the pain started to subside before I saw the dentists. My own dentist explained: Even though the tooth was infected and had to be cleaned out, sometimes the body marshals its immune forces and fights the best it can. The healthier the body is, the better it is able to put up a good fight, but in this case the root was long dead, and there was nothing they could do to save it.

It started me thinking about how nice and relaxing Hawaii was after

*Thus, when the church body is healthy, it can fight off major problems and continue to thrive. The healthy DNA of the church creates an effective protective barrier, and the church can withstand major pressures.*

our meetings, and maybe my body was getting healthier in paradise, and this led to the pain getting better.

It also started me thinking by analogy that our churches are living organisms, and when the body is healthy the church can thrive and fight off problems and crises, but when the body is not healthy, the church succumbs to both external and internal pressures. Thus, when the church body is healthy, it can fight off major problems and continue to thrive. The healthy DNA of the church creates an effective protective barrier, and the church can withstand major pressures.

But the body analogy extends one step further in that some problems can be better handled by a skilled professional, and in fact has to eventually be cured by such professionals. In our Greater Northwest Area, we are trying to create such healthy churches so they can thrive, even when the external situations are not ideal, even hostile toward our mission and purpose. We are also trying to build our professional capacities so that trained professionals can help when the situation gets too hard for any individual church to handle. Our new Bishop

Be the Hope,

Bishop Grant J. Hagiya serves The Greater Northwest Area of The United Methodist Church (Alaska, Pacific Northwest, Oregon-Idaho).

By THE REV. PAUL GRAVES [elderadvocates@nctv.com]



o what is your agenda, Paul?" The woman and I never met before she asked me that question. "My agenda is whatever you want to talk about, Betty." That's how the first Geezer Forum got started in Sandpoint in January 2012.

Is your local church trying to think of ways to reach out to your community and involve older adults at the same time? The Geezer Forum is something I've invested myself in since that January afternoon. So I wanted to share it with you as a possible model that could easily be adapted to your own setting.

Our forum has become a wonderful ministry and a source of helpful information about various topics of concern to older adults. A moment of full disclosure: The Geezer Forum I host in Sandpoint, Idaho is not a ministry of the Sandpoint United Methodist Church. Rather, it is part of my consulting ministry, Elder Advocates, Inc.

Some members of our congregations are regular participants in the Geezer Forum, but it is open to persons in our general community. Yet it takes on the tone of a caring community – which is one reason the Church is in business.

The Geezer Forum grew almost naturally out of the "Dear Geezer" column I've been writing in our local daily newspaper since January 2009. But I wanted to invite folks into a more personal conversation about aging issues than is possible in a newspaper column.

"The Geezer Forum" seemed the right vehicle. It still seems that way. We meet on the second and fourth Wednesday afternoons of each month in a "community room" at one of our local banks.

Our first forums were no-agenda gatherings. When folks started asking to deal with topics we identified together, I began to invite "resource persons" who had some experience and expertise on those topics.

On September 24 of this year, for instance, we asked the question: "What Do I Need to Know about Medicare and the Affordable Health Care Act?" Two local health care insurance agents were our resource persons. (A year ago, we looked at the Medicare Enrollment process, again with an insurance agent.) Both times, agents were with us to share information, not to sell insurance.

We don't always deal with issues that begin "out there" in the community. Sometimes we will focus on what is going on in our inner lives. We've asked these kinds of questions: "What is like for you to be old?" "How do we challenge the stereotypes of older



## Geezer Forums helpful for information and connections

women / older men?"

We've had participatory Geezer Forums on the benefits of yoga, massage therapy, and physical fitness for balance and strength. A local health club even started a "60+ Fitness" class after their fitness director led one of our forums.

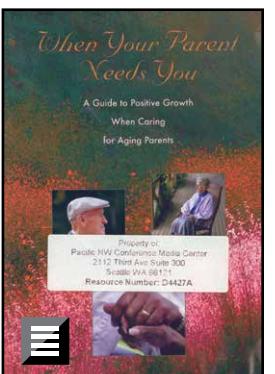
We have looked at all kinds of community resources that older adults already use, or will possibly use in the future – like nursing homes, assisted living facilities—or services like home health and home care agencies. Our topics are limited only by our curiosity and imaginations.

We try to be sensitive to what is happening in our community as it relates to aging and older adults. When folks started asking to deal with topics we identified together, I began to invite "resource persons" who had some experience and expertise on those topics.

On September 24 of this year, for instance, we asked the question: "What Do I Need to Know about Medicare and the Affordable Health Care Act?" Two local health care insurance agents were our resource persons. (A year ago, we looked at the Medicare Enrollment process, again with an insurance agent.) Both times, agents were with us to share information, not to sell insurance.

Some participants attend based on whether they like the topic being discussed. Those who are more regular in attending have developed new friendships and found new people to care about. I count that as solid ministry.

What is your church doing to reach out to older adults with no church-strings attached? You might consider offering accurate aging-related information and authentic caring to the general community. From where I stand, it really works! ☺



### When Your Parent Needs You (D4427)

Caring for an aging parent affects every aspect of our lives. This video focuses on becoming your parents' caregiver, experiencing life changes, and dealing with stress while focusing on the positive aspects of caregiving.

E-mail ejohanson@pnwumc.org for the availability of this resource!

The Rev. Paul Graves serves as the chair for the Commission on Older Adult Ministries for the PNWUMC.

# CALENDAR

**Note:** Events on this calendar may have been added or removed from the time of publication. For an updated calendar, including local church events, visit [www.pnwumc.org](http://www.pnwumc.org) and click "Events" > "Calendar Layout". For questions or details about events on this calendar, e-mail [channels@pnwumc.org](mailto:channels@pnwumc.org).

OCTOBER 2013						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29	30	1	2	3	4	5
			• Board of Church & Society @ Wesley Homes Terrace			• Vancouver District Academy and Annual Business Meeting @ Longview UMC • Discipleship Seminar @ Seattle Pacific University • Young Adult Planning Team @ PNWUMC
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
• Annual Conference Planning Team @ PNWUMC	• Board of Congregational Development @ PNWUMC	• Tacoma District Spiritual Day Apart @ Brunett Retreat Center	• Hope for the Children of Africa	• Connectional Table @ PNWUMC		
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
		• Seattle District Clergy Retreat @ Daybreak Star Center	• Board of Discipleship @PNWUMC		• Coaching Conversations @ Spokane: Covenant UMC	• Board of Pensions • Advanced Lay Servant Class @ Salmon Creek UMC
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
			• Greater Northwest Area Cabinet @ Portland: First UMC	24		• Early Response Team Training @ Bellevue: First UMC • Board of Laity @ PNWUMC • Level Up Middle School Retreat @ Twinlow Camp
27	28	29	30	31		
• Level Up Middle School Retreat @ Twinlow Camp			• Halloween	31		

*Jack O'Lantern image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons. For more info on this image, <http://bit.ly/1bGzNhJ>*

November 2013						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27	28	29	30	31	1	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fort Flagler Sr. High Retreat @ Fort Flagler State Park</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board of Congregational Development @ PNWUMC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board of Ordained Ministry @ Bothell UMC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board of Discipleship</li> <li>• Camping Board of Stewards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thanksgiving (Conference Office Closed)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conference Office Closed</li> </ul>	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early Response Team Training @ Salmon Creek UMC</li> </ul>						
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
						
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
						
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

*Turkey image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons. For more info on this image, <http://bit.ly/15tXnXP>*