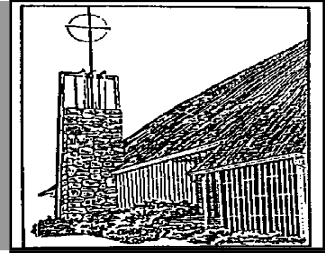


# The Pulse



Volume 38, Issue 7  
July & August 2006

## A "MODERATE" CHANGE

NEWS FROM GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PC(USA);  
REFLECTIONS FROM THE OUT-GOING & IN-COMING  
MODERATORS

This year, the 217<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the PC(USA) met July 15-22 in Birmingham, AL. The Moderator of the 216<sup>th</sup> GA, Rick Ufford-Chase, passed the baton to the newly elected Moderator, Joan Gray.

### "Moderator's 'Top 10 Learnings'"

*From 2005 Annual Report of General Assembly Agencies to the PC(USA)* Rick Ufford-Chase of Tucson AZ was elected moderator at the 216<sup>th</sup> General Assembly (2004). The first moderator ever elected to serve a two-year term provides his top ten list of "Listenings and Learnings" from the Moderator's Journey:

1. Everything we need is in the Biblical tradition. I have been transformed by the unusual opportunity, as an elder, to follow the lectionary in my preaching for the last 18 months. I've been converted, yet again, to the Christian faith.
2. The churches that are most alive, whether they are large or small, rural or urban, conservative or liberal, are the ones that are insisting mission cannot be done by proxy. They are getting out of the pews and into the world.
3. The worship that is most meaningful, whether it is traditional or contemporary, house church or tall steeple, emerging or multicultural, is the worship that is scripturally grounded and is the center of the congregation's life together. It is worship that engages the soul, the spirit, the body, and the mind.
4. The clear role for the national level of the church is to do everything in its power to enable Presbyterians in local congregations to carry out the work of the church in a way that honors the best of our reformed theology. It sounds basic, but congregations do mission, and the role of all other bodies is to connect, encourage, and resource those congregations.
5. God's spirit is trying to break out in new ways in our communities and around the world. The challenge to institutions from the local to the national level is to let go of the tendency toward suspicion about that which is new (which is typical of most institutions). Instead, we must gently blow on the embers of that spirit and breathe new life into God's work all around us.
6. If we genuinely desire new life for the church, we should look first to the edges of the institution. Look among the immigrants and the young people. Check out the churches that have gotten so near their own death that they're willing to follow Jesus to a totally new location. God is at work in surprising places.
7. Mission is going to get messier as more people get involved. That's OK, but it makes our long-term mission personnel even more important as they try to support increasingly complex relationships.

*continued on page 6*

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**CHURCH FAMILY NEWS**

St. James members **Jackie Hellinga** and **Keena Mullen** graduated from Bellingham High School on Friday, June 16.

Jackie will be attending Washington State University this fall, majoring in pre-medicine studies.

Keena will also be attending WSU, majoring in pre-veterinary studies and pharmacology.

Both ladies, members of the Bellingham High orchestra the last four years, hope to be part of the WSU orchestra during their college years. Here at St. James they were both members of the Bell Choir and the Christmas sinfonettas. Hopefully they will continue to share their musical talents with us in years to come. Congratulations, Jackie and Keena!



*If you have news you would like to share with the St. James family, please send it to the church office!*

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**PRAYER VIGIL FOR PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST**

Please join in an ecumenical prayer vigil for the Christian communities in Jerusalem, for all those who are suffering in the Holy Land, for Palestinians and Israelis, and for peace in the Middle East. All are welcome.

**Tuesday, July 18, 5:30 pm**

Garden Street United Methodist  
1326 N. Garden St.  
733-7440



**Friday, August 18, 5:30 pm**

*location to be determined*

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**ST. JAMES PRAYER CHAIN**

If you have a prayer request for the St. James Prayer Chain/E-mail Team call

**Linda Monroe** at

**360-671-6594**

or e-mail her at **Lidale@aol.com**.

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**MONTHLY CHURCH  
WORK PARTY**

Summer has arrived! Please join us for the monthly all-church clean-up landscaping ~ fix-it ~ workday:  
Saturday

**July 8, 9 am – 12 noon.**

**August 12, 9 am – 12 noon**

Bring your favorite tools, and join us in maintaining our lovely church!

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**WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION**

**July 25 & August 29**

*No Bible Study!*

**Women's Association Luncheon 12 pm**

Bring a friend and a salad to share! All women are invited for food, fun and fellowship!

*Questions? Please call Phyllis Jones, 734-4504*

**BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES**

**July Birthdays**

\*\*\*

- 1 Milt Schayes
- 1 Jan Templeton
- 2 Jo McLeod
- 3 Parker DeWilde
- 4 Ingrid McGarry
- 4 Carolyn Mullen
- 5 Pat Nelson
- 7 Barbara Chalice
- 7 Inge Thurston
- 8 Helen Hartford
- 10 Bill Butler
- 10 Kari Todd
- 13 Dick Albers
- 14 Maverette Butler
- 15 Vanessa Hellinga
- 16 Karen Rogers
- 17 Mary Jo Case
- 17 Karen Harnden Haggen
- 18 Charlotte Burkland
- 18 Clyde Rice
- 20 Fran Titus
- 21 Gretchen Pfueller
- 21 Linda Raudebaugh
- 21 Jeffrey Law
- 22 Laura Cheifetz
- 23 Dave Bader
- 25 Betsy Freeman
- 25 Ed Simmers
- 26 Bob Monahan
- 26 Jean Richardson
- 27 Steve Bader
- 31 Brian Seater

**July Anniversaries**

\*\*\*

- 9 Jim & Jody DeWilde
- 16 Dave & Pat Nelson
- 20 Gale & Gretchen Pfueller
- 20 Glenn & Fran Titus

**August Birthdays**

\*\*\*

- 5 Ev Bell
- 5 Gary Culbertson
- 6 Susan Snyder
- 7 Sarah Haggen
- 7 Jeanne Uhles
- 8 Bernice Pritchett
- 11 Tony Griffith
- 12 Wilma French
- 12 Ben Templeton
- 14 Jill McLeod
- 16 Megan Pfueller Melrose
- 19 Bill Read
- 23 Keena Mullen
- 24 Rick Seater
- 25 Mary van der Veen
- 26 Wayne Terry
- 27 Shirley Nelson
- 28 Marilyn Monahan

**August Anniversaries**

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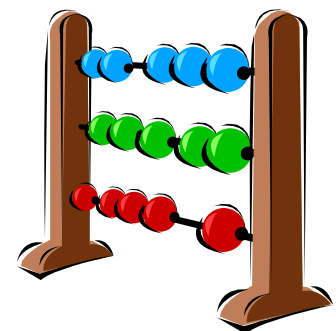
- 2 Richard & Carmen Hellinga
- 4 Kari & Terry Todd
- 6 Tim & Wendy Crandall
- 9 Jeff & Karen Haggen
- 13 Rick & Jean Seater
- 21 Dwayne & Karen Rogers
- 21 Jim & Carolyn Mullen
- 23 Gil & Inge Thurston
- 24 Gragg & Betty Miller
- 26 Mike & Akiko Anderson
- 26 Mark Danielson & Patty Cromarty
- 27 Gus & Nancy Wagar
- 28 Dale & Linda Monroe

**TREASURER'S NOTE**

FROM SALLY ALBERS

The Session approved paying \$2,000 towards Local Benevolence in June, as requested by the Mission & Social Action Committee. St. James has a long history of making financial contributions toward local needs. In addition, many members contribute their time and talents to these organizations, specifically Habitat for Humanity, Interfaith Coalition and the Food Bank. As you may know, if you make contributions to the Whatcom Peace & Justice Center through St. James this year, the Presbyterian Church (USA) will contribute a matching amount to them also.

As summer days bloom, more members may be away from home. If you are able to pay your pledges before you leave, that will help the church budget look good. In any case, enjoy these glorious days. If you lose track of where you are in your pledge, leave a message for me on the church phone (733-1325 x22) and I can mail a statement of your contributions year-to-date when you return.



**DIRECTORY UPDATES**

**Gary and Ann Culbertson** are finally in their Condo: phone number is 360-656-6613. Address is 255 W Bakerview Road , #402 , Bellingham WA 98226

**PASTOR MARY ON SABBATICAL!****Some excerpts from Pastor Mary's blog:**

"It could possibly be the most important find of the entire excavation."...

"My jaw almost dropped when I saw that!"...

"It was while we were climbing the trail up to the cliff with the rock carvings that the cell phone rang."...

"There is a possibility that it was sunk in a vicious "battle at sea" between Romans and Jewish rebels in the first century."

Sound interesting? Check out her blog online at:

<http://stjmary.blogspot.com/>

The contents of the blog have also been printed out, and posted on the bulletin board in the office hallway. New entries will be posted when they arrive. There are also printed copies available in the Horizon Room (provided by the church office.)

**SPECIAL MUSIC FOR SUMMER**

Music Director Carolyn Mullen is looking for volunteers to provide Special Music for our summer worship services. All musicians are welcome regardless of age, instrument, or experience! PLEASE call Carolyn @ 595-0934 to reserve your preferred Sunday for performance. We can arrange for an accompanist if needed. Thank you.

**BOUNTIFUL HARVEST TABLE**

The "Bountiful Harvest Table" will be re-opening for business this summer. If you have extra fruits, vegetables or flowers from your garden, donate them to the table in the Horizon Room. Items will be available for everyone on Sunday mornings, donations gladly accepted. The Harvest Table is a St. James tradition every summer; for the last two years, over \$100 each year was collected and donated to a local mission.

**THANK YOU, VOLUNTEERS!**

Thanks to Peter van der Veen & Gale Pfueller for keeping the church yard and flower gardens so beautiful!

**SUNDAY MORNING PARKING**

Four reserved (handicapped) parking spaces are designated in our front, 14th Street parking area. In addition to these designated spaces, we would like to save all of the 14th Street parking on Sunday mornings during the



Worship Service for those who need level access and our first-time visitors. If you

have no difficulty climbing stairs, please use the lower parking area or the Lowell playground lot. The Lowell lot is accessed off of Taylor between 14th and 15th. There is a stairway down to 14th at the south end of the area.

**YOUTH NEWS**

MEGAN STAMPFLI, YOUTH DIRECTOR

July is a busy month for the Youth Group! Starting on July 1<sup>st</sup> we have a work day, which we had donated to the Habitat auction. We will meet at the church at 1:00 pm, travel to the site, and afterward from 6:30- 8:30 we will have a barbecue and go swimming. If you haven't let me know if you're coming yet, please do so, and if you can drive and help also let me know. We will not be having youth group on Sunday the 2<sup>nd</sup> because of Saturday's events. Nor will we be having youth group on the 9<sup>th</sup>. July 10-15 we will be doing our local mission project with Habitat (2 days) and Interfaith (3 days). We will be scraping, painting, landscaping, and other general labor. Our work days will start at 9:00 am and go until 2:00 pm. Again, if you have not told me you would like to attend, let me know, and if you are a parent planning on helping, let me know which days you are able. If you would like to donate money to our mission, please put a check in the offering plate marked "Youth Mission." The 16<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup>, and 30<sup>th</sup> we will be having youth group from 4:30-6:00 pm. The 30<sup>th</sup> is my last Sunday working for St. James, so there will not be Youth Group in August. Youth Group will begin again in September. Have a great summer!

**WORSHIP TAPES AVAILABLE FOR LOAN**

Our morning worship service is audio-taped each Sunday. If you know of anyone who would like a copy of any recent service, please check one out in the church library.

**CHRISTIAN EDUCATION: “CHILDREN AND THE COMMON GOOD”**

(CARE OF CHILDREN AS A RELIGIOUS DISCIPLINE AND COMMUNITY PRACTICE)

A BOOK REVIEW BY MARGARET VANZANTEN, CHRISTIAN EDUCATION DIRECTOR

My favorite book from “The Families and Faith Series” added last spring to our church library is Let the Children Come, Reimagining Childhood from a Christian Perspective, written by the professor of pastoral theology and counseling at Vanderbilt University Divinity School, Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore.

Dr. Miller-McLemore is intent on retrieving “a largely lost Christian understanding of children and adult responsibilities for their care, creating a bridge between historical and contemporary theological understanding.”

The author is a devoted mother of three adding credibility to her major thesis about family life when children are involved:

“The issue is not simply what the wider community owes parents and children but also what families owe the wider community. Children, in other words, are not an extension of the parent’s self; instead, they extend the family toward greater commitment to the common good of which children are a crucial part. The prevailing ethic is that one should look after one’s own skin (literally) regardless of the good of the other.

The prevailing spirituality is that people determine their own destiny. A Christian ethic of children, by contrast, asserts that one’s own good is inextricably linked to the common good, the good of others, the good of the whole. A Christian spirituality reminds adults that, in the end, people do not determine their own destiny or that of their children. Life’s value is not measured in tangible terms, by whom or what our children know or what they accomplish. The good lies in the reign of God and the love of neighbor.” (Epilogue, p. 168-168).

McLemore’s development of what sacrificial love means in the context of care of children purges “unconditional sacrifice, often equated with love as agape,” from the highest of Christian ideals. She argues instead for “Caritas, a mutuality or equal regard that include but does not idealize sacrifice:

“Moments of self-diminishment, the moment of sacrifice on the cross, are, in her words, just that—moments in a process designed to end in mutual love. The cross is not a good in itself or a sacrifice to be initiated. Jesus’ suffering came as a consequence of his radical efforts to create just and loving communities aimed at bringing people into such relationship with others and God.” (p. 125-127).

**A NOTE FROM AN ELDER, SALLY ALBERS**

In last month’s Pulse, I especially enjoyed the article titled We have this ministry quoted from the Seasons of the Spirit. It expanded the use of the term “stewardship” to include caring for people, things and responsibilities. The Session has been grappling with how to be better stewards in this sense, and I would like to share some ways you can contribute.

- 1) Scott Wenger (Buildings & Grounds) hosts a work party on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of every month. It is on your St James Events calendar as from 9-12. Scott says some people feel guilty for not being able to there the whole time, but he is not judging anyone! If you have 15 minutes or half an hour to spare, come join in!
- 2) Sometimes members of the congregation have minor complaints that they are reluctant to bring up to Pastor Mary or to Carla, as clerk of Session. You can speak to any Elder; they’re listed on the bulletin every Sunday.

Don’t just grumble to your neighbor, who can’t do anything to correct the situation.

- 3) It is human to want to talk about some urgent issue when you see our secretary, Renee Meyer, at church on Sundays. Please stifle yourself! She is available in the church office during working hours. Sunday is her day of worship. You can leave a message in her mailbox at the office, or on the church phone instead. Also try to leave the Pastor alone before Sunday services; we all need time for quiet contemplation.
- 4) Get involved in one of the committees. The elders are not experts; the church as a whole will benefit if you come to share your ideas. All the committees are listed on the Sunday bulletin, along with the elders involved in each. Speak to them and say you’d like to attend the next meeting. They’ll appreciate it.

**A “MODERATE” CHANGE** *CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1*

8. It's good to build the church by inviting people into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. It's wonderful to do justice in the world. The art form is looking for the moment when one can no longer distinguish between the two.
9. We should be raising the bar on what it takes to profess faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Too many of our churches try to make it easier, not harder, to be a Christian. There is much about our culture that is antithetical to the teachings of Jesus.
10. We have a Christian obligation to treat one another with dignity and respect, even when we disagree. The level of rancor and hatred only grows when we abandon that fundamental obligation. I'm heartened by a sea change that I sense across the church as we reclaim the practice of being kind to one another.

**A Letter from Joan S. Gray, Moderator, and Clifton Kirkpatrick, Stated Clerk, of the 217<sup>th</sup> General Assembly**

Office of the General Assembly  
 Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)  
 June 25, 2006

To Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) congregations

Grace and peace to you in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The Lectionary Psalm for today is Psalm 133: How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!

As the 217th General Assembly met together in Birmingham, it was remarkable to see Presbyterians from north, south, east, and west gathered together to discern the mind of Christ for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). We witnessed the work of the Spirit in and through the assembly, giving us a glimpse of our visible oneness in Jesus Christ. We give thanks that the assembly theme, “So Great a Cloud of Witnesses” (Heb. 12:1) permeated the community of faith within the convention center.

In this meeting, we saw commissioners and advisory delegates living out in word and deed their deep commitment to the gospel of Jesus Christ, their passion to be living expressions of Christ's love to the world, and their eagerness to be a part of the future God intends for the PC(USA). We experienced the Presbyterian process of doing things at its best. We observed people working fairly and treating each other graciously.

This assembly dealt with hundreds of items, and a few made headlines across the country. Most likely, you have read or will read about the assembly's actions from a number of sources over the next many days and weeks, but we want you to hear about this important gathering directly from the General Assembly. That is why we are writing this letter to you.

We know of three particular decisions that made immediate headlines. Here is what the assembly did with each of them:

--Israel/Palestine issues: This General Assembly acknowledged that the actions of the 2004 assembly caused hurt and misunderstanding among some Presbyterians and our Jewish neighbors. However, this assembly did not rescind the previous action on divestment. Divestment is still an option, but not the goal. Instead, this assembly broadened the focus to corporate engagement to ensure that the church's financial investments do not support violence of any kind in the region.

--Report of the Theological Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church: With the approval of this report, the assembly did not alter our historic standards for ordination. However, it did make clear that more responsibility is to be exercised by sessions and presbyteries regarding the examination of candidates for ordination. By an overwhelming majority, the assembly also affirmed our covenantal partnership, our common theological roots, and the need for prayer in Christian communities as we make decisions.

--The Trinity: The assembly received a paper that affirms “Father, Son, and Holy Spirit” as the church's primary language for the Trinity. The paper also lifts up other biblical images of the Trinity for study and use in worship.

We hope, over the months ahead, you will hear about the other items that did not make headlines: new

church development, Christian education, evangelism, older adult ministries, homelessness, globalization, international mission, multicultural issues, disability awareness, and military chaplains, to name a few.

It was obvious to us that this assembly, like the church, had deep differences on a number of issues. But, the longer we were together, the more we realized how much we have in common in Jesus Christ and the more we realized we need one another.

The unity we seek for the church and the unity we experienced at the assembly is not just about coming to an agreement. It is also about being with each other in the healthy struggle to discern God's will. It was that healthy struggle we witnessed at the assembly, and in that struggle we were blessed. God's Spirit was with us. Not everyone will like what the commissioners did, but the spirit coming out of the assembly was something we think will be a blessing to the whole church.

Indeed, we are convinced that God has a future for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). We invite you to join us as we move with renewed enthusiasm to doing God's work in the world.

Yours in Christ,

The Reverend Joan S. Gray

Moderator of the 217th General Assembly (2006) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

The Reverend Clifton Kirkpatrick

Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

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#### **ST. JAMES PICNIC ~ JULY 23, 11:00 AM**

Please come to the annual picnic at the Fairhaven Park Pavilion after worship on Sunday, July 23! Deacons will provide hot dogs, beverages, and ice cream sundaes (yum). Bring your favorite potluck dish to share! If you like to sit outside, don't forget your camp chair. There are new additions being made to some parts of the park, but the parking lot to the right of the entry will be open as usual, as well as our picnic area (building to the left of the entry). *(drawing by Mark Danielson)*

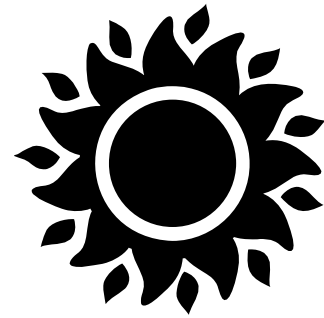
*Thanks to  
the Pulse  
Mailing  
Crew*

Maverette Butler  
Margaret de Maine  
Marion Dobbie  
Dottie Hager  
Pat Nelson  
Mel Reasoner  
Margaret Rice  
Inge Thurston

**The Pulse is published once per month, with the exception of the combined July/August issue.** Articles and announcements for the next issue must be **received** in the church office no later than Wednesday, **August 23 2005.** That issue will be mailed Thursday, **August 31.** If you have something that you would like considered for publication, call the church office at 360-733-1325, e-mail stjpres@msn.com, put it in *The Pulse* box near the church office or mail it to:  
St. James Presbyterian Church,  
910 14th Street Bellingham,  
WA 98225

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