God is still speaking,

LUMMI ISLAND CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

From the Pastor

Dear Friends,

We all want church to be a safe place – a place where we are known and accepted no matter who we are or where we are on life's journey. Sometimes this causes us to smile politely and refrain from saying too much, avoiding conflict at any cost. This is true in all churches, particularly in churches like ours, which have gone through the pain of a split in their recent history. Yet there is no way we view the world the same or have the same reaction to things around us. We come from different places, we have different experiences, different insights. This brings a richness of diversity to our community of faith, if we have the courage to share our stories. As we go through a discernment process to determine if we are called by God to be Open and Affirming of our gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered brothers and sisters, I believe for many of us our fear of conflict can seriously impede this process. Yet the journey to transformation always includes some chaos. My prayer is that we each are able to speak our truth – not in anger or abstract – rather telling the stories of our lives which have led us to our understandings. As each one tells their story, the rest of us practice being receptive, listening with respect as we hold each other in a space where the soul feels safe enough to speak its own truth. We will not all agree – but we already know this. Truthful speaking, receptive listening, prayerful consideration can deepen the trust which will enrich our church as we grow in understanding and love. May God guide us on our journey.

Peace,

Cindy

Mission 1:

Feed the Hungry: For the first 11 days of November (1-1-11 to 1-11-11) we join with our United Church of Christ sisters and brothers to feed the hungry. We are invited to bring non-perishable food items to church. These will be used by our Parish Nurses for Family Holiday Baskets and to restock their emergency food, with the remainder going to local food banks. We are also encouraged to write to Congress asking our government to reform foreign food assistance to more effectively help the hungry world wide. We often focus on our differences – feeding the hungry is something we can all agree on.

Five Wishes

Five Wishes is the first living will that talks about your personal, emotional and spiritual needs as well as your medical wishes. Experts agree that if people don't make their wishes clear in advance, they could well end up at the mercy of our health care system.

The Parish Nurses are sponsoring this free interactive Five Wishes seminar on Sunday, November 13th, from noon until 2 pm in the Fellowship Hall. Jane Phillips, Parish Nurse & Hospice Nurse, will be leading the process, accompanied by Health Minister, Megan Crouse. No need to register in advance or pay for Five Wishes booklets. All are welcome! If you have questions, please call Nancy Wong, Parish Nurse, at 201-9063.

Thanksgiving Dinner

All Islanders are invited to join together for Thanksgiving Dinner starting at 4 pm. This is the third year that a delicious turkey dinner (with all the fixins) has been provided to Islanders (singles, couples, families) who want to get together with other Islanders on this special day of thankfulness. We encourage those who would like to come for dinner to sign up at the church or the Islander, or call (758-2060) and leave a message. (This just helps the planners know how much food to prepare.) If you don't get a chance to sign-up and would like to come – please come! Questions? Call the church during office hours (Tuesdays, 1-4; Wednesdays, noon – 3; Thursdays, 10-3)

Open and Affirming Educational Event

11-6

Sexuality Educator

We continue our Open and Affirming (ONA) discernment process with a workshop format session and time for questions about heterosexuality, homosexuality, bisexuality and transexuality.

Sunday, November 6 11:45 am, following worship

Lummi Island Congregational Church, United Church of Christ

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Email: lummichurch@netzero.net

Pastor: Cindy at 360.303.1941 or email: cindy@bauleke.com

Newsletter contact;
Jackie Granger 360.758.7171 or email: jtgranger@email.com

Office Hours
Nancy: Tuesday: 1-4p
Thursday: 10a-3p

Cindy: Wednesday, call for an appointment or drop in and take your chances.

We're on the web:
www.lummichurch.com and on Facebook

Why Are We Doing This?

"Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God." (Isaiah 56:7)

Our church has embarked on a process of discernment to determine if we will become an Open and Affirming Church. Some of the comments or questions that I've received have been about why we are going through this process. Sometimes this stems from the idea that we already are a welcoming church; we sit beside, love, and are truly glad of the fellowship of our gay and lesbian congregation members. And, I assume by this sentiment that we would be the same with with bi-sexual or transgendered people were they to worship with us.

Sometimes the question comes from those of us who have been through controversy in church and don't wish to go through that again. Since Cindy has addressed this in her piece in this newsletter I will address the former.

Why do we need to declare that the Lummi Island Congregational Church is Open and Affirming?

My answer is: How does anyone that doesn't know us, or hasn't been to our church know that we will welcome LGBT people and their families?

In my role as moderator I would like to be unbiased in this piece but to give you the reasons to why are we doing this, I need to share what I believe.

As we saw in the DVD "For the Bible Tells Me So," many people were taught in church that being LGBT is an abomination. Churches have something to answer for. While our church may not have preached or taught that sentiment, we didn't stand up and declare the untruth. I believe that we need to stand up now, correct the error of our past and declare for all those LGBT people that this church denies the teachings of those other churches.

By doing this we will be tellling those who have been hurt by churches that they can come here and be welcomed and safe.

Family members of LGBT people will know that they can come to our church and talk openly about their family members.

Current members will know that we will stand up and declare that they are beloved by God.

Would you be hurt if I wasn't willing to stand up and say, you are beloved by God?

-Jackie Granger

Talking About Money

Jesus talked about money a lot, you know where your treasure is there lies your heart kind of talk. Some people get uncomfortable when money is talked about in the church, yet it is a reality of our life together. Not only does the church need money to continue our ministry and programs, as individuals we need to give – it actually makes a positive difference in our lives. It is the time of year when we will ask you to consider a financial commitment to the church in the coming year. If this makes you uncomfortable, you may want to explore why this is so.

Meanwhile, prayerfully consider your monetary gift to God through the work of this church.

Elderberries

New hours are in place for this gregarious group of retired folks who gather for socializing, games, and lunch each Wednesday from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm. Lunch is served at noon. Come for lunch, or for the whole time. It is an Island happening!

Confirmation

Did you know since summer we've have 4 middle schoolers in one confirmation class and 3 high schoolers in another? Please pray for our young people as they grow in knowledge and in faith.

New Members

If you are interested in becoming a member of this Church, please let Pastor Cindy or Nancy Wong know of your interest so we can arrange a New Members Class in November.

Three Clergymen, Three Faiths, One Friendship

Too often religion seems to fuel more hatred than love, more conflict than collaboration. Interfaith Talk Radio's "interfaith amigos"—a pastor, a rabbi and a sheikh—provide a rich understanding of the road to interfaith collaboration by sharing their stories, challenges, and the inner spiritual work necessary to go beyond tolerance to a vital, inclusive spirituality.

On Sunday, November 6 the United Church of Ferndale will host these three friends in worship and for a session that afternoon.

To find out more call the United Church of Ferndale at 360.384.3302 or email at office@unitedchurchofferndale.org or watch our bulletin, we'll post more information when it's available.