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NEWS YOU CAN USE

Steel Lake Presbyterian Church
February 2017 ENewsletter

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About Us

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The Best Valentine is GOD

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life."

John 3:16



Pastor's Message

John Elting was so wonderful presenting our mission to the Presbytery last month that I wanted you to get it firsthand.

I hope you enjoy reading these words of inspiration from one of our elders. ~Will

"Good evening. My name is John Elting, I'm a Ruling Elder at Steel Lake Presbyterian Church in Federal Way, and I'm here this evening to talk briefly about Steel Lake's new mission and its transition to becoming a missional church.

Like so many churches, Steel Lake Presbyterian was chartered in the late 1940s as soldiers were returning from World War II and children were being born left and right. We hired pastors and youth pastors and started

building buildings; first a modest church building and then a 16 classroom education wing to handle the more than 300 children that were enrolled in our Sunday School and over 200 families that were involved in our church. We didn't concern ourselves with community outreach or local mission; the community was streaming through our doors without being asked. Then, beginning in the mid-1960s, our membership plateaued and stayed flat through the mid-1980s. It seemed pretty obvious to us at the time that our building was holding us back from further growth. If we built a really big building, a whole lot more people would naturally come.

By now you're way ahead of me on where this story is going. Once we added another 28,000 ft² to our facilities, our attendance started to tumble, the mortgage on the new facilities subsumed the funds we had available for staff and ministry, and we started into a spiral of decline. We hadn't paid attention to the fundamental changes in our neighborhood, our community, and our nation, or that the baby boom was over. We hadn't realized the impacts pastor and staff transitions and the changes within the PC (USA) would have on our attendance. We hadn't thought through the financial consequences of building a building if no-one came. And most fundamentally, we hadn't stopped in recent years to ask or listen for what God really wanted of us.

Our formula to fix things had pretty much always been the same; Session would ask God to bless pretty much the same plan we'd had since 1948 to solve our attendance and financial problems: stand by the church doors and wait for God to send us people. But, by the summer of 2015, our worship attendance had dropped to less than 100 people in any given week.

Finally, in October 2015, Steel Lake's Session recognized the need to discern God's will, not their own will, for Steel Lake, and began a 3-month series of prayer and retreat sessions. The ministers of Renewal Ministries Northwest helped us to use God's word to arrive at, and then answer, the following question: 'God, given our gifts, through what ministry can we come alongside and assist (bless) the community?' Once we posed that question to God, to our total amazement, God answered the question to each of us individually in 4 shared themes that we had not anticipated. We were to:

- * Continue listening to God in spiritual discernment.
- * Accept the power of the Holy Spirit.
- * Be a Witness of Christ's Love in this church and outside this church.
- * Minister to the needs of the elderly and their caregivers within and outside the church.

Now, these may not seem too extraordinary to you, but it was they were. They represented a total departure from how we had always done church. All of a sudden, we were to stop waiting at the door for families to show up, and go out into the community to minister, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to the elderly and their community. All at the same time this was revolutionary, liberating, empowering, exciting, and very, very scary! And somehow, we had to tell the congregation that church was no longer about ministering to young families with children! Session walked away from our retreat in awe and surprised at the outcome, but convicted that this was where God wanted Steel Lake to go. (And scared)

Over the next few weeks, we further developed what we had heard into a new mission statement for our church: ***We are called to witness Christ's love and minister to the needs of an aging community, their families, and their caregivers in our church and in the community, accepting the power of the Holy Spirit and listening to God in continual spiritual discernment.***

When we introduced this to our congregation in early 2016, there were a great many worried and upset faces in the congregation. They had truly wanted to receive an "Aha!" moment where we made it suddenly clear how we could put children and young families back into the pews; instead we told them God had told us to minister to the elderly. You could have heard a pin drop, and at the end of the meeting, Session was as worried as the congregation.

A Town Hall Meeting followed where the congregation had the chance to ask questions and voice their concerns about the new call we had received from God. It was, to say the least, a tough meeting.

Then, after the congregation had more time to think and pray further on things, we held a second Town Hall

Meeting in which each Ruling Elder took the mic and talked about their experience in the retreat, the own concerns, and their own personal conviction that this new direction was indeed from God. Following this, a number of church members stood and spoke in support of Session as their leaders and of their personal support of our new missional approach to ministry. A motion was raised from within the congregation to approve Steel Lake's new mission, and it overwhelmingly passed. In May, we rolled out our new mission to the community, with members of Presbytery and the retirement community speaking and in attendance.

In the weeks and months that followed, the congregation has rallied behind the new mission, even developing and proposing new ideas of their own as to how they might contribute to our mission. One such new program is ministering to the elderly by providing books on tape through Audio Books Ministries.

Our pastor, Will Mason, received the approval of two of Federal Way's retirement communities, Madrona Park and Foundation House, to start conducting monthly worship services for their residents within their facilities. At the end of 2016, Foundation House approved their resident's requests that we increase to two monthly services and that we serve communion. 29 people took communion at our January 8th Foundation House service, many of whom had not been able to partake in the Lord's Supper in a very long time. 10-12 of Steel Lake's 110 members regularly attend these services, playing the piano, signing along with the hymns, and providing fellowship to this neglected population. I'm a regular attendee myself, and honestly, it's my favorite service; it's extremely touching and meaningful. Even former Steel Lake members who have parents in residence are now attending and supporting this service. In a testament to this missional approach, Foundation House recently reached out to Pastor Mason, asking if he would be willing to help their staff with grief counseling and also have our church help them to start an Alzheimer's support group.

As our elder ministry expands and develops, it will be necessary for Steel Lake to develop worship teams and probably hire an Associate Pastor of Senior Ministries. This won't be easy for us, but what a wonderful problem it

is for us to have!

And finally, recognizing how God has changed our call, our congregation recently authorized us to list for sale the facility in which we have worshipped since 1948 in order to find a facility that better supports the congregation's new, exciting ministry.

Had we stayed the course waiting for God to deliver young families to our doorstep, Steel Lake would undoubtedly have died in place in the next two years. But God's plan for Steel Lake Presbyterian Church isn't over just yet. As a dear friend of mine says, "God is Good, All the Time." This is a huge leap of faith for us and very scary, and your prayers would be truly appreciated. Thank you."

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Monthly Financial Update

December 31, 2016

Income: \$40,222

Expenses: \$36,646

Net Income (Loss) \$3,576

Average Worship Attendance
through November: 82

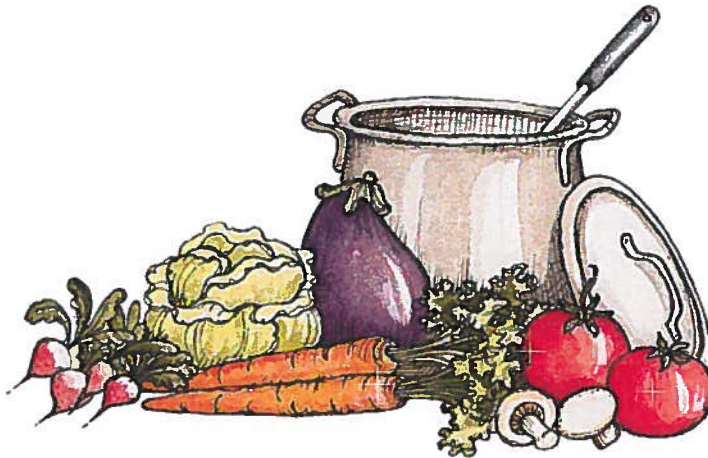
The number of attendees include Madrona Park East and Foundation House worships.

If you have any questions or would like to see a more detailed report, please contact Sandra Ervin in the church office.

For your information, the Per Capita charged SLPC for each member for 2017 is \$40.00

Thank you for your support of this Presbytery fee.

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SOUP SUNDAY'S COMIN'

Warm up with a bowl of hot soup or hearty chili accompanied by tasty breads.

What : Soup Sunday & Coffee Fellowship

When: Sunday, February 19, 2017,
11:00 am following service

Where: Starkey Friendship Center

Soups – Compliments of your Outreach
Committee



Catholic Community Services is seeking volunteers who are interested in serving alongside individuals who visit the Federal Way Day Center. Volunteers would be involved in monitoring the laundry machines and use of the showers. Volunteers would also be present in the kitchen area to assist as needed and a general warm and welcoming presence to all who enter. All volunteers would be under the direct supervision of CCS staff and receive orientation and ongoing training.

An application and background check are required. The hours of the Federal Way Day Center will be Monday-Friday from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM. If you have any questions or are interested in serving, please contact...

Sue Drake: cell: (253) 740-9630 or
email: sdrake531@comcast.net

Whonakee King: Program Manager, Federal Way Day Center, Catholic Community Services: cell: (206) 549-4048 or email: whonakeek@ccsww.org



Federal Way Food Bank (MSC) is in need of volunteers.

We are looking for a few dedicated volunteers.

Can you.....

Help register existing customers & new customers?

Have computer skills to help with check-in?

Drive a van?

Help load the van with donated food?

Sort and hang clothing?

Sort and bag food donations?

Come join our great team of volunteers.

Interested?

**Call Terri Turner at the Federal Way Food Bank
(MSC)**

253-838-6810

territ@mschelps.org



ROVING REPORTER

2017 is shaping up to be a really big year here at SLPC.

To begin, Elder John Elting made a tremendous impression at the Presbytery meeting held on January 17th. Elder John was gracious enough to allow us an opportunity to read his presentation (which is printed in its entirety in this issue of News You Can Use). We are grateful to Elder John for the great job he did at the Presbytery meeting but for also skillfully articulating a vision of our church going forward, as well as, the goals and outcomes of the missional approach utilized by our church.

Thank you Elder John and may God continue to guide and lead you as you faithfully serve the church and community.

A brief Town Hall meeting was held in the Sanctuary immediately following Worship on January 22nd. The purpose of the meeting was to inform the congregation of the impending sale of the church. Elder John informed us that there have been four offers that have been received thus far, but at this time, nothing is firm and we're still open for others who are interested.

A question was asked: "if a group makes a firm offer and we accept it, how soon would we have to leave?"

The answer is that it fully depends on locating a church for our use. The next church may not be an actual church facility but a facility which we would modify for our needs.

A church in Federal Way has offered us space for Worship and for our office space. The Pre-school has accepted an offer from Our Savior Baptist and will relocate their entire facility to that church, starting the new school term. We have several other renters who have been notified of the impending sale and are making their own arrangements.

A question was asked about the possibility of building our own church and it has been decided, that in our case, it would be better to rent or lease than to attempt to build from ground up because we are a small congregation. We need to fully ascertain our needs vs. our desires. Session is currently identifying our needs and concerns, so that our Worship can proceed. A new name has not been chosen for our new church, but the entire congregation will have input into selecting an appropriate name.

ANNUAL CONGREGATION MEETING: January 29, 2017

Full details of the past year are documented in the 2016 Annual Report. I refer you to them for particulars of events and Committee Reports.

I would like to share a few highlights of the interesting annual meeting.

The first order of business was to review Pastor Will's salary, performance, etc. The congregation was unanimous in voting to accept his recommended salary and had glowing comments regarding the outstanding work being done by him, on our behalf. It was mutually felt that it is vital for him to continue to lead us as we

transition from SLPC into a new facility and that he continue to be the active presence that he is in all aspects of the church.

Additional information was provided as to the sale of the church and an update on the potential offers. Once an offer to buy is accepted by Session, they will call a meeting of the congregation and we will vote on whether to approve it. The final step would be to present the offer to the Presbytery.

The slate of Elders and Deacons was presented, voted and accepted.

The Class of 2019 will include the following people:

Session: Bob Norton and Jenny Treen

Deacons: Sue Schaaf-Horath, Cristy Verellen, Lynn Sommers, Linda Shaw and Marilyn Gerhardt

The meeting was a joyous occasion with several people voicing their appreciation for Pastor Will, our Session and Deacons and a special thanks to Kathy Murphy for the great bulletins boards she decorates so well.

The Roving Reporter will be on hiatus for the next few months. May God bless you all and God continue to bless our Leaders.



February Schedule of Events

Wednesday, February 1:

Ruth Circle- 12:00 p.m., Billy Paddock residence

Communion Service- 1:00 p.m., Madrona Park East in FW

Thursday, February 2:

Lectionary Bible Study- 1:00 p.m., Lakeside/Pacific Room

AA Men's Group- 6:30 p.m., Fellowship Hall

Sunday, February 5:

Session meeting- After worship, Pacific Room

Outreach Committee- After worship, Lakeside Room

Coffee Fellowship- After worship, Starkey Friendship Center

Madrona Park East worship- 2:00 p.m., Madrona Park in FW

Monday, February 6:

Birthday Brunch- 11:30 a.m., location varies

Tuesday, February 7:

Alzheimer's Support- 6:30 p.m., Pacific Room

Bell Choir Rehearsal- 6:30 p.m., Sanctuary

Church Choir Rehearsal- 7:30 p.m., Sanctuary

Wednesday, February 8:

ROMEOS Lunch- 12:00 p.m., Black Bear Diner

Stewardship Committee- 6:30 p.m., Lakeside Room

Thursday, February 9:

Lectionary Bible Study- 1:00 p.m., Lakeside/Pacific Room

AA Men's Group- 6:30 p.m., Fellowship Hall

Saturday, February 11:

Session/Deacons Training- 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., Starkey Friendship Center

Sunday, February 12:

Foundation House Worship/Communion- 2:00 p.m., Foundation House

Tuesday, February 14:

*Esther- Rachel Circle- 12:00 p.m., Gladys Johnson residence- **PLEASE NOTE NEW TIME***

Local Pastors Lunch- 12:00 p.m., location varies

Worship Committee- 6:00 p.m., Lakeside Room

Bell Choir Rehearsal- 6:30 p.m., Sanctuary

VFW Meets- 7:00 p.m., Fellowship Hall

Church Choir Rehearsal- 7:30 p.m., Sanctuary

Thursday, February 16:

Lectionary Bible Study- 1:00 p.m., Lakeside/Pacific Room

AA Men's Group- 6:30 p.m., Fellowship Hall

Deacons Meeting- 7:00 p.m., Starkey Friendship Center

Sunday, February 19:

Soup Sunday & Coffee Fellowship- After worship, Starkey Friendship Center

Tuesday, February 21:

Bell Choir Rehearsal- 6:30 p.m., Sanctuary

Church Choir Rehearsal- 7:30 p.m., Sanctuary

Thursday, February 23:

Lectionary Bible Study- 1:00 p.m., Lakeside/Pacific Room

AA Men's Group- 6:30 p.m., Fellowship Hall

Session Meeting – 7:00 p.m., Pacific Room

Sunday, February 26:

Foundation House Worship- 2:00 p.m., Foundation House

Tuesday, February 28:

Bell Choir Rehearsal- 6:30 p.m., Sanctuary

Church Choir Rehearsal- 7:30 p.m., Sanctuary

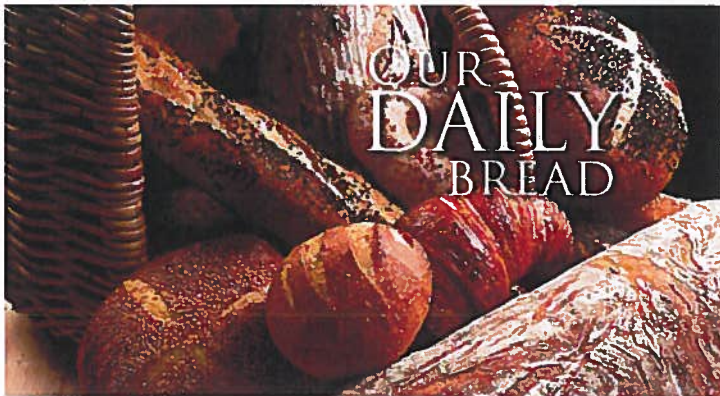
****Every Sunday:**

Christian Education- 9:00 a.m., Pacific Room
Worship Service- 10:00 a.m., Sanctuary
City of Glory Worship- 3:00 p.m., City of Glory
Worship Center

****Every Monday:**

Community Supper- 4:00 p.m., Fellowship Hall

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"Our Daily Bread"

Our Daily Bread

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