

# NORTHERN LIGHT UNITED CHURCH NEWS

JUNE 2016

## *Phil's Thoughts*

A commitment shared by the helping professions is to “do no harm.” What it suggests is that when we cannot help, we should strive at least to refrain from making things worse.

I thought of the “do no harm” admonition when I heard the news from the May meeting of one of our denominations. The General Conference of the United Methodist Church met May 10 – 20 in Portland and among the dozens of business items it was to have considered were several on human sexuality, and more specifically, homosexuality. At the meeting, the Bishops of the church offered “A Way Forward” which asked the General Conference to join them in “a ‘pause for prayer’ - to step back from attempts at legislative solutions and to intentionally seek God’s will for the future.” The delegates voted to accept the Bishops proposal which meant deferring a vote on all the human sexuality legislation and referring “this entire subject to a special Commission, named by the Council of Bishops, to develop a complete examination and possible revision of every paragraph in our Book of Discipline regarding human sexuality.” The work of the Commission will be presented to a specially called General Conference in 2018 or 19.

The reason for this pause is that for decades the United Methodist Church, like many Christian

bodies, has been painfully divided about the inclusion into the full life and leadership of the church of persons who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer, and intersex. The Bishops are seeking a way forward that will keep the church united amid its differences. From the standpoint of our congregation which is a Reconciling Church that extends a robust welcome to lgbtqi persons, I saw the Bishop’s proposal as an attempt to “do no harm,” or at least to refrain from doing any more harm to the lgbtqi community.

The official voice of the United Methodist denomination as expressed in the Book of Discipline, and different from our congregation’s stance, excludes lgbtqi persons from ordained leadership and prohibits the church’s blessing of same gender relationships. Many feared that if the resolutions at this year’s General Conference came to a vote, none of those calling for greater inclusion would have been adopted. Whereas it is sad and discouraging that the denomination maintains its stance of exclusion, at least there was no new anti-lgbtqi legislation passed; it is small solace that no further harm emerged from the meeting even as the existing harm remains in place.

I was encouraged that the Bishop’s statement acknowledges that there is language in the Discipline that is “unnecessarily

hurtful.” The starkest example of this is the statement that “the practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching.” The agonizing irony of this phrase is that it first appeared in United Methodist documents as an amendment to a resolution advocating for civil rights for gays and lesbians. In 1972, General Conference passed a resolution stating that “homosexuals no less than heterosexuals are persons of sacred worth ... we insist that all persons have their human and civil rights ensured.” Unfortunately, an amendment was attached to statement that added, “although we do not condone the practice of homosexuality and consider this practice incompatible with Christian teaching.” The church has been stuck with the “incompatibility” language ever since, and it is, as

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## *Youth Mission Trip*

Please pray for the youth mission team as they serve the community in Central Valley, Costa Rica: June 5-16, 2016.

## *Community of Christian Women News*

The Community of Christian Women is pleased to announce that June Degnan and Melody Milard will be attending The Gathering of Presbyterian Women, Thursday June 16 through Saturday, June 18, in Wasilla, AK. The

conference, “One Body – One Spirit” will include devotions, prayer and a book study. Participants, from all areas of the Synod of Alaska Northwest, will also learn about the mission partners, My House, Family Promise,

and Knik House, and will have an opportunity to visit the mission partners. June and Melody will report back about the conference and the connections they made with our Presbyterian sisters throughout the Synod.

## *Camp Champ Volunteers Sought*

Camp Champ is a **June 20-23 camp** at Eagle River Methodist Camp It is for children ages 7 to 11 with challenging life circumstances who normally would not have a camp experience. Volunteers needed for the whole camp, a day, a night, to help in the kitchen, with snacks, etc. For more info or to volunteer, contact K.J. or Peggy Metcalf 586-6738, 500-2894, [angkjm@yahoo.com](mailto:angkjm@yahoo.com).

## *Phil's Thoughts Continued*

WHOEVER YOU  
ARE, WHEREVER  
YOU ARE ON LIFE'S  
JOURNEY, YOU ARE  
WELCOME HERE.  
LET'S ALL SPREAD  
THE WORD!

the Bishops said, “unnecessarily hurtful;” in my view, it is also untrue. It does great harm for Christians to be told by their church that their lives are incompatible with their faith.

As a Reconciling Congregation, our church is one of many voices in the denomination that rejects this incompatibility assertion. As our Reconciling statement declares, “we welcome people of all ages, races, classes, abilities, sexual orientations, and gender identities into

the life and leadership of our church, and we commit to advocating for justice and full inclusion of all people in both church and society.”

I am thankful that General Conference did no more harm with regard to lgbtqi sisters and brothers, and I pray that the Bishops’ hope for “a way forward” bears the fruits of inclusion, justice, unity, and love. I believe in diversity; we should not require uniformity of thought and we should respect freedom of con-

science. The church is stronger when we honor all voices.

Our way forward as a Reconciling United Methodist and More Light Presbyterian congregation means continuing our ministry of hospitality, healing, and hope, opening our hearts, minds and doors to lgbtqi persons and everyone else. Whoever you are, wherever you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here. Let’s all spread the word!

## *Financial Help for Campers*

Financial assistance is available for Northern Light children and youth who want to go camping this summer.

Northern Light wants every child or youth to have a fun and rewarding camping experience that can deepen faith and establish lasting, positive relationships. Money should not be an obstacle to such an experience. Thus, Northern Light will cover costs beyond what the camper's family can afford for a child or youth connected to Northern

Light to go camping at Eagle River United Methodist Camp out the road in Juneau., or Rainbow Glacier Camp in Haines, an independent camp with historic ties to the Presbyterian Church. Info about camping opportunities is found below.

**Campers needing financial assistance for camp registration and/or transportation must submit an Application for Assistance (available at the church) at least 10 days before the session they**

**wish to attend starts.**

The assistance application should be submitted to either Pastor Phil or Christina at the church office (400 West 11<sup>th</sup> Street).

**Completion of an Application for Assistance does not eliminate the need to also complete an application to attend a particular camping session.**

**Scholarship forms and camp registration applications are available in the church office.**

NORTHERN LIGHT WANTS EVERY CHILD OR YOUTH TO HAVE A FUN AND REWARDING CAMPING EXPERIENCE THAT CAN DEEPEN FAITH AND ESTABLISH LASTING AND POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS. MONEY SHOULD NOT BE AN OBSTACLE TO SUCH AN EXPERIENCE.

## *Eagle River United Methodist Camp*

Discovery Camp: July 17-21, For campers entering 3rd grade – completed 8th grade

Cost: \$165

Counselor-In-Training (CIT) Program For teens entering 9th grade – completed 12th grade (under 18 years). Staff training: July 16-17; assist with Discovery Camp, July 17-21; wrap-up on July 22.

Cost: \$100

More information and registration details at [www.methodistcamp.org](http://www.methodistcamp.org).

## *Rainbow Glacier Camp, Haines, AK*

Braveheart Camp (2 nights) (grades 2-5)

June 16, 1pm - June 18, 11am

Cost: \$120

Wildwood Camp (grades 6-8)

June 27, 1pm - July 1, 11am

cost: \$255

Wildheart Camp (4 nights) (grades 3-5)

July 5, 1pm - July 9, 11am

cost: \$235

Tamarack Camp (grades 9-12)

June 20, 3pm - June 24, 4pm

cost: \$275

For more information, or to register online, visit [www.rainbowglaciercamp.com](http://www.rainbowglaciercamp.com).



## ***Free Swim Passes for qualifying students***

Students ages 8 – 17 who have an expressed financial need and/or qualify for free or reduced school lunch may apply for a **FREE Youth 10 Visit Pool Pass** good at either the Augustus Brown Pool or the Dimand Park Aquatic Center. Passes will be given to the first 150 qualified applicants. More info and applications are available at the church. Passes are funded by the Benito & Frances C. Gaguine Foundation.

## ***Summer Lunch Volunteers Needed***

This year's Summer Lunch program is up and running; meals will be served through August 12. Our church is once again partnering with others to provide lunch for children and youth in public housing centers. Northern Lighters cook for those at Geneva

Woods, Cedar Park, and Gruening Park, and serve and offer activities at Geneva Woods.

***More Volunteers Are Needed!*** Volunteers help cook, serve, and lead activities. Paid site coordinators oversee the effort

at the three housing complexes. Meal preparation occurs in our church kitchen in the morning and lunch and activities are from 11:30 – 1 M-F at Geneva Woods. To help or find out more, contact the church office, 586-3131, [nluc@ak.net](mailto:nluc@ak.net).

## ***Library News***

Our church library houses children's stories. This includes some of the Battle of the Books selections, which is a children's reading program in all of our schools. These books are on the top shelf of the children's section. Research shows that summer reading helps children grow in their learning instead of losing the progress they made this past year.

The adult Sunday School and Lenten study group book selections are available also. These books are on the top shelf above the

adult sections. The recent Lenten study book, *A New Kind of Christianity* by Brian McLaren is worth reading and reflecting on. There are many other inspirational stories for all ages.

The library books are placed on the shelves under different topics of interest. Some topics are: Inspirational, Jesus, Grief/Loss, Addiction, Family Life, Parenting, Alaskan Cultural, Women of Faith, Bible commentaries, and much more.

Just help yourself to a book and return to the church's library (on ground floor) or the book drop in the fellowship hall when finished.

The library is available to use as a meeting room for a small group, and a place to relax while waiting for friends or family.

Also, children's books, crayons and coloring papers are available in baskets right outside the doors of the sanctuary for use during worship.



## *May Giving Continues a Strong Trend*

During May, for the fourth time this year, monthly congregational giving in support of Northern Light’s day-to-day operations has exceeded what it was budgeted to be. Thanks for all of the contributions which have placed Northern Light in this good fiscal circumstance.

Combined with generous giving in previous months of 2016, we now find ourselves, for the year as a whole, over \$10,000 above the revenue (to date) called for in our adopted budget.

This is a good state of affairs because of the confidence it gives the

numerous programs which rely upon our revenue to function in a full-bodied manner.

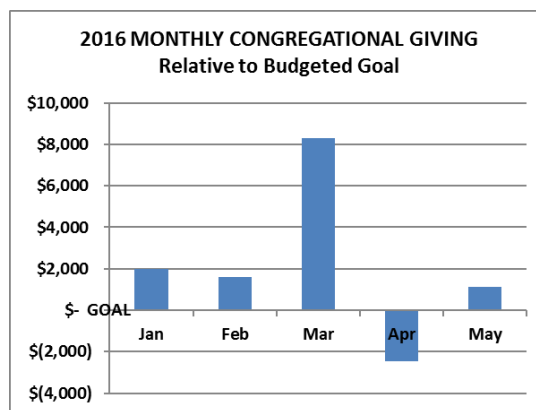
It is also good because we are beginning a time of year in which, historically, giving has been under budget. During the last five years, in the time between the end of May and end of August:

- congregational giving has dropped, on a monthly basis, further and further under budget in 3 of those years and,
- conversely, on a monthly basis, grown above budgeted levels in the other 2 years.

The average monthly de-

cline during the three “dropping” summers was 43% a month while the average increase during the “rising” summers was 13% a month.

As previously mentioned, beyond what is discussed above, designated giving in support of the Cooperative Youth Group’s mission trip this month to Costa Rica has been very strong – pushing \$15,000. Fully half of that amount has come from congregations (participating in the Cooperative Youth Group) other than Northern Light.



## *Church Yard Work Volunteers Needed*

The Committee on Property Management seeks volunteers to help keep the outside areas of our church building in good shape this summer. Regular, ongoing tasks include mowing and weed-eating the small grassy areas, weeding flower beds, sweeping of sidewalks and entryways and other clean up. Signup for a two week stint (or more!) on the Fellowship Hall bulletin board. If you need equipment, or have questions, contact Judy Knight before June 7 and after June 16, 586-9562.



## *Birthdays*



|   |                   |    |                   |                |                     |
|---|-------------------|----|-------------------|----------------|---------------------|
| 1 | June Degnan       | 11 | Linda McCargar    | Kelly Thomson  |                     |
| 3 | Doug Standerwick  |    | Ellen Moore       | 20             | Catrina Mitchell    |
|   | Emily Yost        | 12 | Barbara Streveler | Krista Thomson |                     |
|   | Merijke Coenraad  |    | Maxine Richert    | Sophia Pugh    |                     |
| 7 | Anne Vander Naald | 15 | Will Bishop       | 21             | Steve White         |
| 8 | Lucy Hudson       | 16 | Virginia Palmer   | 22             | Carlton Smith       |
|   | Rich Lyon         | 18 | Steve Zimmerman   | Bob Coghill    |                     |
|   | John Doogan       |    | Kathryn Alter     | 26             | Vivian Hegg         |
|   | Summer Putman     |    | Bailey McWhorter  | 29             | Theresa Mores Araki |
| 9 | Marsha Smith      | 19 | Achamma Mathew    | Renee Vonda    |                     |

## *Thank yous*

Many people and groups are involved in making sure things happen at NLUC. Each month we would like to recognize some of those individuals and groups for their special services. Special thanks to:

\*those who served as Liturgists: Laura Doogan, Tom Perkins, Peggy Sue Wright, George Partlow, Kelly Henriksen

\*those who served as Greeters/ushers: Carol Barril, Bob Coghill and Jane Ginter, Denise Carroll, Don and Jan Kussart, Marie Olson

\*Don and Jan Kussart and company who assembled the May newsletter

\*Those who were refreshment hosts: Esther Millea and Andi Story.

\*Those who provided breakfast: Jane Ginter and Bob Coghill

\*Those who provided flowers: Wally Marvin, Judith Maier, Howard and Marion Rider, Don and Janet Kussart, Linda McCargar and George Partlow

\*All who brought food for the reception after the recent John and Linda Borbridge Celebration: Jean Overstreet, Melody Millard, Teresa Campbell, Maxine Richert, Carol Barril, Jane Ginter, Freda Westman, Barbara Searls, Kate Burkhart, Jenny Purcell, Laura Doogan, Margaret MacKinnon, and Judy Knight. Also, to those who set up and did clean up

*If you have a suggestion for a thank you, call Christina at the church office, 586-3131 or e-mail her at [nluc@ak.net](mailto:nluc@ak.net).*

## *Vases*

We keep several larger vases in various sizes in the kitchen cupboard. If you have taken one home, please return. Our supply is low.

# JUNE 2016

| SUN  | MON  | TUE   | WED  | THU                             | FRI   | SAT   |
|--|--|---|--|---------------------------------|---|---|
|  |  |   | <b>1</b> 11:00 Memorial<br>12:00 ACOA<br><b>5:30 Chancel Choir</b> | <b>2</b> 9:30 Lectionary Study  | <b>3</b> 7:00 Men's Breakfast<br>12:00 ACOA<br>3:00 Violin Lessons  | <b>4</b>  |
| <b>5</b> 10 Worship<br><b>11</b> Breakfast<br>5:00 Wedding | <b>6</b> 11 Lifering<br>5:15 Juneau People for Peace & Justice | <b>7</b> 10 SEACC<br>3:00 Violin Lessons<br>5:30 Climate Change | <b>8</b> 12:00 ACOA<br><b>5:30 Chancel Choir</b>                   | <b>9</b> 9:30 Lectionary Study  | <b>10</b> 7:00 Men's Breakfast<br>12:00 ACOA<br>3:00 Violin Lessons | <b>11</b> 1:00 Juneau Pride and Celebration Reception |
| Overnight Group  |  |   |  |                                 |   |   |
| <b>12</b> 10 Worship<br><b>11</b> Breakfast                | <b>13</b> 11 Lifering  | <b>14</b> 3:00 Violin Lessons                                   | <b>15</b> 12:00 ACOA<br><b>5:30 Chancel Choir</b>                  | <b>16</b> 9:30 Lectionary Study | <b>17</b> 7:00 Men's Breakfast<br>12:00 ACOA<br>3:00 Violin Lessons | <b>18</b>   |
| <b>19</b> 10 Worship<br><b>11</b> Breakfast                | <b>20</b> 11 Lifering  | <b>21</b> 3:00 Violin Lessons<br>5:30 Climate Change            | <b>22</b> 12:00 ACOA<br><b>5:30 Chancel Choir</b>                  | <b>23</b> 9:30 Lectionary Study | <b>24</b> 7:00 Men's Breakfast<br>12:00 ACOA<br>3:00 Violin Lessons | <b>25</b> 5:00 Saxophone Concert                      |
| <b>26</b> 10 Worship<br><b>11</b> Breakfast                | <b>27</b> 11 Lifering  | <b>28</b> 3:00 Violin Lessons                                   | <b>29</b> 12:00 ACOA<br><b>5:30 Chancel Choir</b>                  | <b>30</b> 9:30 Lectionary Study |   |   |

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Youth Director: Rev. Melissa Engel

E-mail: [pastor.engel.ak@gmail.com](mailto:pastor.engel.ak@gmail.com)

Sunday Services streamed at

<http://livestream.com/nluchurchjuneau>

Newsletters and Juneau Empire articles also can  
be found on our website:

[northernlightchurch.org](http://northernlightchurch.org) or you can find us on face book.



**Summer Schedule**

*Worship at 10 am*

*Breakfast following Worship*

*No matter who you are,  
no matter where you are on life's journey,  
you are welcome here.*