

GROWING IN Grace

The Monthly Newsletter of Morning † Star Lutheran and Monroe United Methodist Churches

June 2023

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Thoughts from Pr Malcolm,

June 2023

Part 1. Part 2 will be in July's Growing in Grace Newsletter

As the weather is getting warmer and I spend time with my grandchildren outdoors, and as they anticipate their summer vacation time, I am reminded that as a child how wonder filled and extraordinary summer always was. This time with them gives me hope and I begin to see their world of wonder and excitement. If you have lost some of this wonder yourself, I invite you in these next months to take a child into the wonders of God's creation. Watch then play and live in God's grace and his unfailing faithfulness that surrounds you from the warmth of the summer sun on your face to the squeals of a summer parade.

The long green season of Pentecost after Holy Trinity Sunday (June 4th), is the longest season of the church year is often called ordinary time and yet in Matthew's Gospel, we will hear great, not so ordinary, but extraordinary, stories of Jesus and his teachings. We will hear stories that will remind us of the relationship of Jesus' life in our lives today, life on life, living daily as baptized, forgiven, blessed, gifted, and named as beloved children by God. We will grow and learn and be challenged through the scriptures to become good neighbors and be a blessing to them. No, not so ordinary time indeed!

My dear siblings, **Breathe Deep!** Breathe in the living breath of the living God who has been faithful through the years, continues to be faithful today, and will continue to be faithful tomorrow and forever. Have some Holy playtime and Holy laughter. Trust and believe that God is leading and guiding us to be sign of love, hope, healing, wonder, mercy, and grace.

Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote, "**make yourself necessary to someone.**" In a chaotic world, friendship (love) is the most elegant, most lasting way to be useful. We are, each of us, a living testament to our friends; compassion and tolerance, humor and wisdom, patience and grit. Be the person who listens, who has genuine conversation with others. Be the person who loves others with their whole heart, soul, and mind. By truly loving another, you become necessary to them. So go out and love others boldly. In doing so, you will make yourself necessary in their lives.

Friendship, not technology, is the only thing capable of showing us the enormousness of the world. May God's abundant grace and love bring you wonder and awe, and may the gift of family and friends bring you love and grace in these summer months!

May you be blessed, find wonder and bliss in our world and in your world, in the midst of your life this summer.

Peace, love, hope and grace,

Pr Malcolm



Morning Star has a NEW EMAIL ADDRESS

Effective immediately, our new email address is:

office@unitedingrace.org

Please delete the old address from your records and replace it with this new one.

The email address for Monroe United Methodist remains the same:
office@monroeumconline.org

RAINBOW BINGO WAS A HUGE SUCCESS!

We sold out over a week in advance, had over 60 people attend, and raised over \$1,000 for Hazel's Little Free Pantry! Everyone had a great time and many attendees commented on how welcoming the environment felt. The reporter for Seattle Gay News shared that it meant a lot to her to have a church supporting the LGBTQ community. Go to <https://www.sgn.org/> to see the article. To see some great pictures from the night, go to page 4.

Keep your eyes open! We plan to host another event in October.

JUNE SUNDAY MORNING MINISTRY SCHEDULE



There are **A LOT** of **open** spots this month! Hopefully we'll get the majority of those filled this Sunday, but your support is greatly needed. Please email the office and let me know where you would like to serve. No experience is necessary—on the job training is provided! You'll find this form, as well as **July and August**, in the church narthex (lobby) under the "Sign Up To Serve" sign.

	JUNE 4 THE HOLY TRINITY	JUNE 11 SECOND PENTECOST	JUNE 18 THIRD PENTECOST	JUNE 25 FOURTH PENTECOST
Worship Asst.	Nancy Franke	OPEN	Nancy Franke	Missy Maxson
Greeter	Harriet Barr	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN
Ushers	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN
Acolyte	Ric Hart	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN
Reader	Ben Ault	OPEN	Ben Ault	Missy Maxson
Serve Communion <u>need 2</u>	Tanya Hubbard Charlie Brown	OPEN OPEN	Tanya Hubbard Charlie Brown	OPEN OPEN
Communion Prep.	Harriet Barr	Kathleen Sallee	Charlie Brown	Kathleen Sallee
Coffee Hour	Amy Halgren	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN
Altar Flowers	Tanya Hubbard	Jill Sumpter	Velma Smith	Jill Sumpter
Soundboard	Kathi Cooley	Charlie Brown	Kathi Cooley	Charlie Brown

GET CONNECTED - FELLOWSHIP AND STUDY OPPORTUNITIES



**Monroe Pride Festival 2023
Saturday June 11, Sky River Park**

The Monroe Pride Festival is coming back for its 3rd year on Saturday, June 11th, and United in Grace will be there for our 2nd year! We had a wonderful time last year meeting people and getting the word out that we are a church that accepts and loves everyone in our community; that we truly live by the words of Grace. We'd love for you to stop by and say Hi. We'll be there from 12:00 until 4:00.

We could use a couple of people to help with setting up, then taking down the booth. You are also welcome to spend time at the booth during the afternoon, talking to those who stop by. If you'd like to help in any way, please talk to Nancy Franke or Kathleen Sallee.

United Women in Faith
Saturday June 3rd
10:30am
In the Fellowship Hall

Theme: Bold Women of Faith
This is the last meeting until the fall

**BIBLE NERDS:
FOOD FOR THE SOUL**

Meets on Wednesday's
June 14th and 28th
then on recess until
the fall.

Dinner at 6:00pm
Bible Study at 6:30pm in the Fellowship Hall

Questions? Ask Jasmine

June Birthdays & Anniversaries *

Happy Birthday and Congratulations!

- 6 Alan Barr
- 8 Jenny Schroeder
- 9 Joel & JoLynn Garrison *
- 10 Ken & Patty Tompkins *
- 12 Jeff & Jenny Schroeder *
- 12 Judie Esqueda
- 16 Jane Kelly
- 17 Kathi Cooley
- 20 Patty Tompkins
- 23 Jay & Rhonda Morgan
- 25 Jerry Esqueda
- 28 Rick & Marian Hart *
- 29 Gwen Paietta
- 30 Brian Johnson

HAPPY
Father's Day
June 18, 2023

Books, TV, & Movies!



All are welcome at the next BTM on Tuesday, June 20th, at 6:30pm. Our host is Allene Zanger. You'll find Allene's address in the directory or call her at 703-298-6825. Hope to see you there!



Photo by Lauren Vasatka

Crystl Jewelbox



Photo by Bryce Cooley



Photo by Lauren Vasatka

Ariel, Miriam, and our very own Finn!



Photo by Bryce Cooley

Waiting patiently for their number to be called!



Photo by Lauren Vasatka

The fun table!

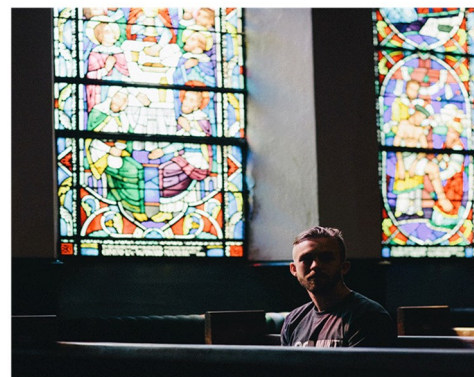


Photo by Lauren Vasatka

Clinton in the "Best Runway Walker in Monroe" contest.

Severe Mental Illness and the Church

As many of you know, I suffer from schizoaffective disorder – sort of a cross between schizophrenia and bipolar. It’s been a rough journey, but God has been with me all the way and now is allowing me the privilege of sharing my journey with others. It’s not easy to have a mental illness in the church. There is still a veil of shame, and some persist on believing it’s caused by sin in the person’s life or even demon possession. The truth is mental illness is no different than any other physical illness such as diabetes or heart disease. God doesn’t always bring healing, but God’s children are called to love and support one another regardless. To help bring understanding to this issue I will be teaching a course on “Severe Mental Illness and the Church” from June 19-30. It is available online via Beadisciple.com, a United Methodist learning platform. The cost is \$50. Continuing Education Units are available.



Course Description:

This course explores ministry within the church to those with severe mental illness. Learners will examine the prevalence of mental illness, the difference between the more common mental illnesses and severe mental illness, and the efficacy of treatment for mental illness.

Learners will also explore their own personal biases towards those with mental illness and the church’s response. This course delves into the reasons behind stigmatization of those with mental illness and the struggles often experienced during ministry to this particular group.

Finally, learners will have the opportunity to share their own best practices and explore additional options to minister to those with severe mental illness.

Learners will need to obtain this book: “Troubled Minds: Mental Illness and the Church’s Mission” by Amy Simpson.

If you’re interested, you can register using the following link: <https://beadisciple.com/online-christian-courses/care-for-self-and-others/efd318-severe-mental-illness-and-the-church/> If you have questions, just ask!

Jasmine Ray-Symms
www.jasmineraysymms.com

*A Celebration of Life for
 Margaret “Peggy” Ray
 will be held on June 24th, at 1:00pm at
 United in Grace
 All are welcome to attend*

CHURCH ATTENDANCE

MAY 2023

In Person: 30 Online: 16

The last Sunday of the month is
Hazel’s Little Free Pantry Day!

JUNE 25TH!

Special offerings are taken to buy food for the pantry. You’ll find specially marked envelopes in the backs of the pews, or you may mail your offering to the church if you’re unable to attend.

Thank you for your continued support of this Untied in Grace Ministry!



From the Spirit, June 2023

From the NWWA ELCA Bishop:

In 1994, the ELCA adopted a social message entitled, *Community Violence*. This social message acknowledges that the causes of violence are complex and pervasive and that violence breeds violence. This social message raises these questions:

In the face of this, what are we as a church called to be and do? What resources of our faith can we bring to bear on this apparently intractable predicament? How shall we respond to both victims and perpetrators of violence? What shall we do in cooperation with others as together we seek to counter violence in our communities?

As I write this, we have had more mass shootings in the United States than days of the year (mass shootings are defined as an incident in which four or more victims are shot or killed). The sheer volume of these killings naturally brings up the questions above – how do we respond?

First, we are called to pray. We are called to pray individually and collectively. We are called to pray for the victims of violence and for the loved ones of those harmed. We are called to pray that justice might come, for reconciliation and for peace. We are called to pray in repentance that we are not paralyzed in fear or hatred or numbness. I confess that I do not like memes that make fun of people saying, “thoughts and prayers.” My siblings in Christ, we are called to pray as people of faith! But prayer is not an excuse to do nothing. Through prayer, we are called to action.

Second, we are called to prayerfully enter into hard conversation about this issue with one another – in love and grace and accountability. Have someone directly affected by gun violence come and speak – a trauma doctor, a school counselor, a parent, a social worker. While I know some people would rather come to church to take refuge *from* the world and not engage the world, we, as siblings in Christ, grow in peace and understanding when we carefully listen and learn. When we are faced with difficult decisions or situations, the Holy Spirit gathers diverse people together to challenge one another and to discern where God is calling us to be as people who follow Jesus.

Third, we are called to advocate – especially for those without voice. Provide and call attention to resources and services that prevent violence, racism, and hate. Work individually in your own life to learn more about how systems of oppression lead to violence and humbly learn and practice. Partner with other congregations, churches, interfaith communities, and organizations to have a larger voice toward peace and justice. The advocacy arm of the NWWA Synod is Faith Action Network. Go to their website (www.fanwa.org) and see how to be engaged.

For other resources, I encourage you to go to <https://www.elca.org/60days> and download “A 60-Day Journey Toward Justice in a Culture of Gun Violence.”

Fourth, we are called to treat each person as a child of God.

We choose life or death every day in our words and in our actions. Fundamentally, as Lutherans, we believe that the good news of Jesus Christ has redeemed each one of us. So how do we live and move and be in this world with such good news?

Pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer writes in *The Cost of Discipleship*, “Words and thoughts are not enough. Doing good involves all the things of daily life. ‘If your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink’ (Romans 12:20). In the same ways that brothers and sisters stand by each other in times of need, bind up each other’s wounds, ease each other’s pain, love of the enemy should do good to the enemy. Where in the world is there greater need, where are deeper wounds and pain than those of our enemies? Where is doing good more necessary and more blessed than for our enemies?”

As your Bishop, I pray that through God’s Holy Spirit, we may work together toward peace, toward justice, toward understanding, and toward the end of violence in all forms, especially, in this day and time, the end of gun violence.

Trusting in God’s grace, we pray, we listen, we advocate, we act.

+ Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee

bishop@lutheransnw.org



Bishop Cedrick Bridgeforth offers encouraging and challenging message during installation service

Bishop Cedrick D. Bridgeforth was installed as the resident bishop of the Greater Northwest Episcopal Area of The United Methodist Church on Sat., May 20, 2023, during a worship service held at Aldersgate UMC in Juneau, Alaska. The Greater Northwest Area includes the Alaska, Oregon-Idaho, and Pacific Northwest Annual Conferences. Representatives from each annual conference participated in person and virtually, with over 1,000 others tuning in to watch the live stream over the first 48 hours, with some gathering in local church watch parties.

[Bridgeforth offered a message](#) based on Luke's Gospel (10:30-37) during his installation service. The Greater Northwest Area's 2023 Annual Conference theme, "Go and Do Likewise," was central, with Jesus' words providing both challenge and direction. The bishop encouraged United Methodists across the Greater Northwest to “pray with our feet” and “get to neighboring” among many other topics. If you would like to use his sermon as a supplement in your church, use [this link to download the sermon](#).

As part of the ritual of installation, Bishop Cedrick was gifted with several signs of the episcopacy, each one naming a way in which a bishop is called to serve. You can [watch that specific portion of the worship service here](#).

JUNE 2023 - MONROE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Happy June to you all –

As we start the summer months and tend to all the flower and vegetable gardens that have been planted and are reminded of how life renews itself after a long, cold winter, we also remember, with a bit of sadness for our loss, the passing into a new life of Margaret “Peggy” Ray, and remember the scriptures “To everything there is a season, A time for every purpose under heaven”. Peggy’s memorial Celebration of Life service will be June 24th at 1pm at the church, with a reception to follow. I will be coordinating the memorial service and am putting the call out for cookies, breads, cake or other desserts to be provided for the gathering. Please let me know if you can help with providing something in honor of Peggy – thanks!

We have an upcoming hole to fill in our MUMC council for Staff-Parish Relations Committee Chairman, as Judie Esqueda will be stepping down from the position when she and Jerry move cross country to Pennsylvania to be with their children on July 30th. We thank Judie for her service to the church as head of SPR for the past 6+ years. This position oversees the 3 paid employees of MUMC, leads the meetings for the committee that does employee evaluations and determines pastor salary changes. I’m sure Judie would give anyone interested, the details and how much time it actually takes each year, so feel free to contact her by email or phone. If you are called by Pr. Malcolm to serve on this important committee, I hope that you will seriously consider it, or if you would just like to volunteer, please let me or Pr Malcolm know.

Below are the receipts and disbursements for April - thank you Tanya for preparing the treasurers report, as always - thank you all for supporting the church with your time, your talents, your offerings and your prayers.

April 2023

TOTAL RECEIPTS	\$ 5,807.79
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	\$ 7,317.30

Short - \$ 1,509.51

Onward into summer! May yours be filled with fun and good memories.

See you in Church!

Nancy Franke
MUMC Financial Secretary

2023 MUMC LAY LEADERSHIP

Board of Trustees Chairman	Ric Hart	360-794-7772
Treasurer	Tanya Hubbard	360-793-8959
Financial Secretary	Nancy Franke	360-794-6954
Staff-Parish Relations Committee	Judie Esqueda	951-201-0061
Membership Secretary		
Lay Leader to Annual Conference	Margaret Ray	509-432-3029
UMW President	Jasmine Ray-Symms	425-223-9866
Recording Secretary	vacant	


JUNE 2023 - MORNING STAR LUTHERAN CHURCH

2023 NON-DESIGNATED OFFERINGS AND EXPENSES

	2023 Budget	March Actual	April Actual
Offerings	\$ 8,917	\$ 6,607	\$ 5,759
Expenses	\$10,384	\$10,627	\$11,177
Surplus/deficit		-\$ 4,020	-\$ 5,5718

2023 MSLC COUNCIL

Administrative Dir.:	Missy Maxson	206-437-2535
Ministry Director:	Kathleen Sallee	425-387-2638
Treasurer:	Brian Johnson	425-503-8352
Community Relations:	Jill Sumpter	360-348-7231
Worship:	Kathi Cooley	425-293-8694
Facilities:	vacant	
Secretary:	vacant	

 Morning Star Lutheran Church

 Monroe United Methodist Church

412 South Lewis Street
Monroe, WA 98272-4149



June 4: THE HOLY TRINITY ~ COMMUNION ~ Scripture: Psalm 8; 2 Corinthians 13:11-13; **Gospel: Matthew 28:16-20**

June 11: SECOND PENTECOST ~ COMMUNION ~ Scripture: **Gospel: Matthew 8-26**

June 18: THIRD PENTECOST ~ COMMUNION Scripture: **Gospel: Matthew 9:35—10:8 (9-23)**

June 25: FOURTH PENTECOST ~ COMMUNION Scripture: **Gospel: Matthew 10:24-39**

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Music Director: Jill Sumpter

Live stream/editor: Bryce Cooley

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MORNING STAR LUTHERAN

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Email: office@unitedingrace.org

Website: www.unitedingrace.org

10:00 SUNDAY MORNINGS IN-PERSON
AND LIVE STREAMED ON YOUTUBE



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