PASTOR LEAH’S REFLECTIONS

During Advent, one of the places to which my prayers are frequently directed are to the homes and dwelling spaces of the grieving. While the rest of us bask in wonder and Christmas spirit as we prepare our hearts and minds for Christmas, I know that many of you are just doing all you can to hold a holy space at a time when the contrast of past pleasant memories with a duller, emptier present threatens to collapse the walls of the season upon you.

As I think and pray for all whom have lost a loved one, an accustomed way of being and/or sense of self, I am reminded that this season – this season that is marketed as “merry and bright” – is actually for you who are struggling the hardest to feel merry.

God looked down on a world where God’s people were in pain, in despair, impoverished of spirit and oppressed by the forces of the world, and God’s heart broke. And that is why God chose to come close in the person of Jesus. GOD CAME FOR YOU, and God continues to draw near for you.

If you are doing all you can just to hold up the walls of Christmas this year, may you feel God refusing to let you do it alone. In the deepest of nights, may the holiness wrap you in the embrace you need, right under the natal star.

Remembering that Emmanuel means “God with us,” Leah

Yesterday’s Pain
Ann Weems
In the godforsaken, obscene quicksand of life,
there is a deafening alleluia
rising from the souls of those who weep,
and of those who weep with those who weep.
If you watch, you will see
the hand of God
putting the stars back in their skies
one by one.
Yesterday’s Pain.
Some of us walk in Advent
tethered to our unresolved yesterdays
the pain still stabbing
the hurt still throbbing.
It’s not that we don’t know better;
it’s just that we can’t stand up anymore by ourselves.
On the way of Bethlehem, will you give us a hand?
Merry Christmas!

Christmas Concert

Join us on Sunday, Dec. 16, at 4 PM, when the Fauntleroy Chancel Choir will sing with the Peace Lutheran Choir, celebrating the season in song. The program will feature diverse styles of songs and instruments, ranging from the rocking, "Midnight Alleluia" to Randall Thompson’s classic "Alleluia", a choral masterpiece composed in 1940. The Fauntleroy Women’s Ensemble and other guest musicians will perform Christmas favorites, with plenty of carol singing for everyone.

All are welcome to attend this free concert. A reception will follow in the Narthex.

Christmas Eve Worship

Hopefully, one of these worship opportunities will work for you and your family.

4:00 PM – Children’s Service
An intergenerational worship with the Christmas Story and familiar carols, especially created with children in mind. Milk and Brithday Cake will be served following worship in Fellowship Hall.

7:00 PM – Worship for All Ages
A traditional service that includes the Christmas Story, carols, special music and a candlelight singing of “Silent Night”.

11:00 PM – A Quiet Communion Service
A quieter, reflective service that includes the Christmas Story, carols, special music, communion and the singing of “Silent Night” while we close the service in a circle.

Celebrating Epiphany

On January 6, 2019, we will have a service remembering the story of how the three wise ones followed the star to the Christ child. On this special day, we’ll celebrate communion together, listen to the stories of three people reflecting on how and where a simple word guided them this past year, and then receive a “star word” meant to invite us to our own epiphanies in the coming year. Leah

Mid-Winter Retreats

Registration is now open for the Conference Mid-Winter Retreats at Pilgrim Firs! The theme is "Spiritual Awakenings", which will focus on spiritual practices and awakening to the presence of mystery and God found within and around us.

Dates: January 18-20 (for both groups)
Time: 7 PM Friday – 1 PM Sunday
Ages: Middle School: Currently in grades 6-8 and High School: Currently in grades 9-12.
Cost: $140
Registration Deadline: January 5th.
Questions, please contact me. It’s lots of fun! Kristen

Parish Life Ministry

Highlights from the Nov. 7 Parish Life Ministry meeting:
- Reviewed and updated the Ministry’s Purpose and Responsibilities.
- An all-church Trivia Night will be hosted by Crock Pots and sponsored by Parish Life Ministry in February.
- Planned for Advent Festival activities. Hot cocoa and cookie decorating continue with several new ones.
- Reviewed the Fuantleroy Fall Festival…what went well and what could have been better.

Sarah

Save the Date

Trivia Night is coming to Fauntleroy on Saturday, Feb. 23. Please mark it on your calendars and look for event details to come in January. Trivia Night is sponsored by the Parish Life Ministry and hosted by Crock Pots. Sarah

As an open and affirming congregation, the members and staff of Fauntleroy Church are committed to fostering community among people of all races, cultures and sexual orientation.
Meet our newest members, who joined the church on Sunday, Dec. 2. If you’d like contact information, please call the church office.

**Abby Anderson & Meagan Collins**

Abby is a Program Supervisor/Social Worker at a shelter for undocumented, unaccompanied minors. She is a native Washingtonian and loves the mountains and outdoors. After attending school in the Mid-West and living in Latin America for several years, she is so happy to be back here, near family. The church has been important throughout Abby’s life. She wants to be part of an authentic, multi-generational community that seeks radical inclusion and supports her in her quest to find ways to live a full, connected and authentic life.

Meagan works as a mental health therapist at an LGBTQ agency in Seattle. Meagan has so many interests. To name a few: she likes to practice yoga, garden and cook soup in her free time, read, listen to music (especially folk). She also loves the outdoors, being anywhere in nature fills her soul, but she particularly loves the ocean and the thick blanketing of snow on the mountains. Meagan lives near the church, so it was convenient, but she was then drawn in by the church’s open and affirming stance. She feels Fauntleroy is the perfect place for her for many reasons.

**Mary Anne & Scott deVry**

Both Scott and Mary Anne are retired. Scott worked for the US Government as a Jet Pilot, instructor, administrator for US Navy Air. He also worked as a Program Analyst for OSHA. Mary Anne was a Nurse/Social Worker in faith-based organizations. Both Scott and Mary Ann enjoy spending time with their three grown children and five grandsons. Scott also like to sail, ski and coach sport teams with his kids. Mary Anne nurtures her “inner self” by reading, doing crossword puzzles and gardening. They were members of Fauntleroy Church in the late 70’s/early 80’s and both feel this is a homecoming. Mary Anne is especially interested in the church’s outreach ministry and social justice issues. Scott enjoys Leah’s sermons.

**Kathleen “Kathy” Grainger**

Kathy is a retired project manager for an urban redevelopment company. She and her husband, Alan, are the parents of one grown daughter. They are new to West Seattle after living on Bainbridge for 30 years. Kathy enjoys gardening, reading, cooking and is an aspiring knitter! She is also an active community volunteer who loves spending time with friends and family. She deeply appreciates the work of Fauntleroy Church and the UCC. She was involved with the open and affirming process at Eagle Harbor UCC and it’s important to her that she be part of a community that welcomes and accepts all people.

Please welcome all of these new members. We are so happy to have them!

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**CHRISTMAS EVE OFFERING**

On Christmas Eve, the offering will be split in three ways: 1/3 will go to support the Christmas Fund of the United Church of Christ, 1/3 will go to the Northwest Immigrant Rights Project and 1/3 will go to support the ever-growing work and witness of our own Fauntleroy Church.

The Christmas Fund provides assistance to ministers and lay employees of the church who 1) served in settings and situations that made it difficult to obtain financial security in retirement, and 2) still actively serve, but find themselves in emergency situations or financial need that threatens their ability to remain in ministry. Your gifts to the Christmas Fund do much to dispel fear and anxiety in the lives of these individuals who have given so much of themselves to the Church.

The Northwest Immigrant Rights Project promotes justice by defending and advancing the rights of immigrants through direct legal services, systemic advocacy, and community education. Northwest Immigrant Rights Project strives for justice and equity for all persons, regardless of where they were born. NWIRP’s legal services are critical to helping thousands of immigrants in Washington State navigate the complexities of the United States immigration system so they can apply for asylum or other forms of immigration protection. Without appropriate legal assistance, the men, women and children served by NWIRP may be less likely to obtain legal immigration status, and more likely to be returned to a country where they face ill treatment, torture, or even death. Access to NWIRP’s services can also be a major factor in providing economic and personal security. Please join our congregation in heading Christ’s call to care for the immigrant through our giving on Christmas Eve.

(Stevi & Clayton Hamill)

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**SERVICE & OUTREACH**

**OUR DOLLARS ENABLE FOOD BANK TO SERVE**

The holiday season puts added demands on local food banks because, like all of us, their clients want to put a nice meal on the table. Faced with increased rents, so many of our neighbors are struggling and the food safety net these agencies provide is a significant defense against homelessness.

Thanks to the generosity of this congregation, I was able to deliver a check for $2,000 to the White Center Food Bank just before Thanksgiving. The staff was thrilled – and surprised!

That check included donations to our Thanksgiving offering as well as proceeds from our Morgan Thriftway receipts. When we deposit those receipts in the basket in the lobby, the store gives the church a small percentage back, which we pass on to the food bank. A big thank you to Bonnie Beerman for counting and remitting the receipts. Please continue to put them in the basket at the Donation Station in the main lobby to the church/Y offices.

If you missed the Thanksgiving special offering, you can still donate by putting a check in the plate (to “Fauntleroy Church,” for “White Center Food Bank”). Thank you for working together to make a big difference for our neighbors in need.

- Sheryl Guyon for the Service and Outreach Ministry
Sunday Worship & Church School: 10 AM  
Office Hours: 8:30-3:30 PM Mon.-Thurs. 8:30-2:30 Fri.

Senior Minister  
Rev. Leah Bilinski

Music Director  
Bronwyn Edwards

Acting Associate Pastor  
Karyn Frazier

Little Pilgrim School Director  
Lorrie Cook

Wedding Coordinator  
Rosina Geary

Volunteer & Engagement Coor.  
Sarah Ackers

Youth Leader  
Kristen Almgren

Nursery Supervisor  
Carol Smith

Custodian  
Bill McElroy

Financial Assistant  
Aimee Pinckney

Financial Assistant  
Pat Gedney

Office Manager  
Jackie Gould

CONGREGATOR DEADLINE: TUESDAYS, 1 PM

PRAYER CHAIN
Please pray for...Kevin Glandon, Ron Maynard, Donna (Finney), Louisa Wagner, Lauren Smith, Ev Eldridge, Kersti Muul, Barbara Lee, Huey Simmons, Jo Garrity, The Lane Family, Vivian Belcher, Carolyn Tucker’s sister, Barbara, Vicki Weeks, Marilyn Moore, Mandy Sommer, Terry Clements, Becky and our divided country.

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS
12/1 Nancy Patterson
12/2 Rob Frishholz
12/3 Debi Yeabsley
12/4 Bryce Caldwell
12/6 John Anderson
12/10 Jennifer Casillas, Jeanette Roadruck
12/11 Anna Crean, Caroline Decker
12/13 Donna DiFiore
12/16 Katie Ackers
12/17 Adam Moomey
12/18 Terry Clements
12/20 Jackson Clark
12/21 Judy Pickens
12/24 Anne Douglas, Larry Pierce, Dorinda Reagan
12/25 Carol Karlstrom
12/26 Brenda Donner, Chris Hines
12/28 Dan Dahl
12/29 Bettie Dunbar, Mark Price, Karen Stone
12/30 Bron Edwards, Bob Fulford
12/31 Rebecca Cate

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES
12/15 Dirck & Marie Armitage
Kirke Hopkins & Chris Nacker
Kurt & Hilary Reeves
12/22 Hector Martinez & Jolayne Houtz
12/28 Bill & Mitzi Carroll

Happy birthday and happy anniversary to you all! Sorry it’s a bit late this month, but I hope it was good and will be good!

ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL FUNDRAISER
In mid-November, the Fauntleroy Fine Art & Holiday Gift Fair featured 16 local artists selling their original creations. A good time was had by everyone attending. Proceeds of $2,000+ will go towards the mission of the church. Thanks to a great committee: Francis Gifford, Chair, Jo Ann Anderson, Bonnie Beerman, Marilynn Bernahl, Pat Gedney, Henry Hossner, Izzy Lewis, Leah Hunkins, Janice Menaull, Judy Pickens and Marilyn Whittendale.

SUNDAY MORNING VOLUNTEERS
Ushers:
12/2 #3, Ben Ackers, Captain
12/9 #4, Terry Gaddis
12/16 #5, Bruce Grniewski
12/23 #6, Klem Daniels
12/24 4 PM #7, Steve Sundquist
7 PM #1, Joel Groen
11 PM #2, Glenn Seaverns
12/31 #3, Ben Ackers

Greeters:
12/2 Yvonne Belshaw & Wendy Cwinar
12/9 Angela Gordon & Christina Petty
12/16 The Casillas Family
12/23 Lydia Shepherd & TBD
12/24 4 PM The Stone Family
7 PM Judy Pickens & Phil Sweetland
11 PM The VanGilder Family
12/31 Sue Haughton & Sally Porter

Coffee Hour:
12/2 Rita Gutterud & Marilyn Whittendale
12/9 Marilynn Bernahl & Carolyn Tucker
12/16 Pam Ford & Marilynn Bernahl
12/23 Stevi & Clayton Hamill
12/24 4 PM Marilyn Whittendale & Pam Ford
12/31 Joan Wieringa & Baiba Morris

Thanks so much to you all for giving of your time and talents!