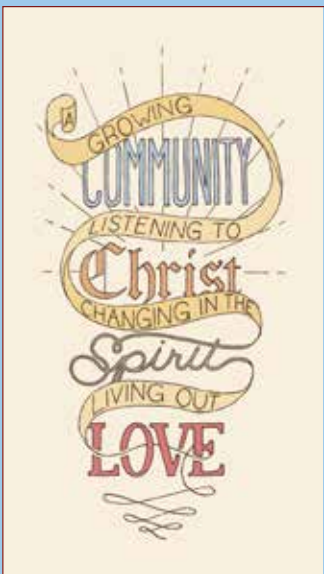


Your NFC

a weekly newsletter for the
people of the
Newberg Friends Church
community

October 23, 2015



Ministry Happens

by Brandon Buerkle

A while back I had begun to crave more time for listening corporately. I like open worship, but I wanted more time. Back when NFC held three services, I used to attend unprogrammed worship at North Valley before going to NFC for third service. I missed those times I had shared an hour of intentional listening with other members of the body. So I asked Gregg about facilitating an unprogrammed meeting for worship during first service, and you can imagine my delight when he answered with a resounding, “Ask Steve Fawver.” ... And then I asked Steve and he said, “That would be great!”



Steve noted that previous attempts had been made to do this same thing in the past, and they had lasted a little while and then tapered off. Undeterred, I figured it was worth a try, even if it was for my own selfish want of some space. I knew that my wife, Korie, craved that space, that my mom wanted that space, and that surely there must be others who would get something out of that space as well. Even if it ended up being a kind of Buerkle family house church held at 9 a.m. on Sundays in Barclay C, then so be it. Steve graciously agreed to print off the week’s scripture so that we could center on the same thing as the rest of the congregation, and I wrote up a short explanation of unprogrammed worship for anyone new to the process. We began the second week in August, with—if memory serves me—three people, including Steve and me.

Meeting for unprogrammed worship is truly life giving for me. Working through the week’s scripture and my own wrestlings, hearing what other people hear in those words and how they apply it to their week or the things they wrestle with or the issues being raised by world events—these are great sources of encouragement to me. Being able to share an experience of listening for the Spirit in our midst with other seekers is life giving. Sharing that experience with only two or three people, though, is admittedly not as life giving to my ego.

Attendance peaked at six or seven people, and then summer ended and Sunday school classes began. Surprising for a congregation purportedly full of introverts, the social (and, okay, far more focused and directed) environment of Sunday school seemed to have a bigger draw than sitting in silence for the better part of an hour. We were back to three or four people on any given Sunday. But as we open with prayer each Sunday I remind myself and anyone attending of the words of Jesus in Matthew 18:20, “where two or three gather in my name, there I am with them.” I know this verse is taken totally out of context, and that Jesus is present with any one person at any time, but well... there it is. The thing is, I need to be reminded of the real, living, present,

risen Lord Jesus. I also want to console myself with this out-of-context verse because there were so few people coming to a ministry I had endeavored to take up.

When you look at the context of Matthew 18:20, Jesus is talking about discipline within the church. If someone sins, one person should point it out and talk with them. If they keep doing it, two or three witnesses, in accordance with the law, should speak with the offender. If that doesn't do the trick, then the entire church needs to intervene. Failing that, the church must "treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector." What the church decides has staying power, and Jesus reminds his disciples that whatever they agree on will be done, because where two or three gather in Jesus' name, there he is with them.

As we gathered again last Sunday morning (October 18), only Steve Fawver, Phil Smith, and I were there. I opened with a prayer for Jesus to speak and for us to listen and for us to take what we hear through our week. Again I invoked my out-of-context verse about two or three gathering. After about half an hour I spoke about how James brings up all kinds of dichotomies, but James seems to recognize that all these black and white things blend together into gray in each person. But what stays black and white is the source of these things: either words come from our tongue or from God; either wisdom comes from the world or from God. As we examine the fruit of our lives, we can tell if it comes from selfish ambition or from God.

Then after a bit Phil prayed to God, who was in the room. And then Steve prayed to God, who was

in the room. And then I realized I had been just talking about God as if God were not in the room. And so I prayed to God, who was in the room, and confessed the good news of Jesus, for myself. In the silence God prompted me. God talked to me and pointed out my sin. God noted that in the same breath that I confessed the source of life I forgot the source of life. God opened my eyes a little wider, and bid me dig a bit deeper, and I saw something dark at the source of my words and actions. I saw selfish ambition. So with no small amount of pride swallowing, I confessed to Phil and Steve and God, who were in the room as witnesses, that I was speaking because I wanted to seem wise. I wanted to be seen as a leader (while "leading unprogrammed worship" is the height of self-contradiction). I show up for prayer with those leading worship before the service because I want to be seen as a leader, as someone important. My motivations for this ministry are gray. I am doing this ministry because God wanted to use it for something good. I am also doing this ministry for myself, as a self-seeking thing, and for my own vanity.

Jesus corrected me with those two witnesses gathered on Sunday. He set the verse back in its proper context when we agreed that unprogrammed worship has nothing to do with me and everything to do with God. It is a place to listen corporately for the real, risen, living, present Jesus Christ, who is in the room. Unprogrammed worship is still life giving for me, even if difficult and humbling as well. And while I am taking a trip this weekend and won't be there on Sunday, Jesus still will be. And that's the point.



Margaret Fell Friends Women
cordially invites you to an international dessert tea
featuring *Hayley Koskela*
October 26, 2015 • 7-9 p.m.
NFC social hall

RSVP by picking up a ticket in the library between services
or call Janelle Nordyke at 503-550-4114.



READ AHEAD FOR SUNDAY

James 4



Pastoral Team

Michelle Akins

children and family ministries

Steve Fawver

spiritual health and care

Cindy Johnson

seniors ministries

Gregg Koskela

lead pastor

Eric Muhr

youth ministries

Elizabeth Sherwood

administration

Nolan Staples

worship ministries

Support Staff

Denise Lyman

bookkeeper/receptionist

Sherry Macy

admin assist / communications

Arnie Mitchell

buildings manager

Dan Ritter

buildings manager

Mark Thompson

cemetery sexton



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Please direct
all publications items
to Sherry Macy.

What's Ahead

SUNDAY

9am | Sunday school for children and adults — for times and classroom information, find "Educational Opportunities" at each entrance, each "Info Center," at the welcome center, or ask a greeter to help you.

9am | worship gathering

9am | unprogrammed worship | Barclay C

9am | college/young adult gathering | Room 232

10-10:45am | Community Time | in the social hall or library

10:15-10:45am | library staffed

10:30am | Agape Sunday school class | Barclay B

10:45am | worship gathering

1:30pm | Bible Quiz practice | Friends Center Room 100

Monday, October 26

Intercessory prayer | 9am | Barclay C

Strong For Life | 10:30am | Barclay B

Margaret Fell WMF international tea | 7pm | NFC social hall | featuring Hayley Koskela, speaker

Wednesday, October 28

Strong For Life | 10:30am | Barclay B

Middle school youth group | 6pm | Friends Center

Listening Life group — James | 6:45pm | Barclay A/B

WBFpm | 7pm | Barclay C

High school youth group | 7:30pm | Friends Center

Thursday, October 29

Women's Bible Fellowship | 8:45am | social hall

Friday, October 30

Strong For Life | 10:30am | Barclay B

Saturday, October 31

Men's prayer meeting | 8am | Friendsview Creekside, 2nd floor, TV room

Daylight Saving Time ends | set your clocks back before bedtime

Sunday, November 1

Read ahead: James 4

Taize gathering | 6pm | NFC sanctuary

Plan Ahead

November 2 | JOY breakfast | 8am | Friendsview Hess Creek dining room | \$4 | for seniors 55 and older

November 6 | celebration of life for Don Lamm | 2pm | NFC sanctuary

November 7 | all-church work morning | 9am-noon

November 8 | Story Slam | 6pm | NFC sanctuary | hear some of NFC's best storytellers

November 14 | wood ministry work session | 9-11:30am | Friends Cemetery on Everest Rd | contact Larry Hampton, 503-538-6508

November 18 | Julia Pearson WMF | 1:30pm | Friendsview classroom | this month features Eloise Hockett, Musembe Primary School

NFC's Calendar on the Web!

**From the Newberg Friends Elders,
Clerk of the Meeting Phil Smith, and the Pastoral Team**

What leads us to study human sexuality?

For the last couple of months, we have been thinking, discussing, and praying about how to lead Newberg Friends Church in the midst of our current differences about human sexuality. Our goal is to encourage everyone first and foremost to obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ. We are prompted in part by the discernment of our yearly meeting Board of Elders. Here is a quote from their July 2015 letter:

“We recognize that we need to do the hard work of theological reflection as Friends on the issues of revelation (including the authority of both the written and living Word of God) and human sexuality (in a broader sense than just LGBTQ issues).”

The differences in our congregation on this issue came out strongly and in sometimes hurtful ways in our business meeting on August 23. We want to challenge our church community to speak and act with humility, recognizing that we have people in our church with beliefs all across the spectrum who are committed to obedience to Christ and the authority of the Bible.

While some may be clear in their own beliefs in regard to human sexuality and therefore confused about why we should spend time and energy to study and reflect on human sexuality, we believe reflection is needed for several reasons. Prayerful study and reading the Bible are always beneficial in helping us to live obedient lives. Questions and wrestling are not the enemies of truth; they are helpful in pursuing it. Human sexuality is one of the key questions of our time, and we believe it is central to the health of our church to study it together.

Perhaps most importantly, we are aware that some who have grown up with or have chosen Newberg Friends as their church home identify in some way as LGBT or are questioning their sexuality. As leaders at NFC, we want to model that Christ, the Bible, and the Christian community are our guides into all truth. We want to care for and welcome people as we seek God’s guidance and direction for our lives under the lordship of Jesus Christ.

This journey will require each of us to be open to the Holy Spirit’s transforming power, to show respect and love as we disagree. And it will give us wonderful opportunities to learn to love others as we love ourselves!

As we enter this process, we want to be clear that we are not seeking to change our current practices at Newberg Friends Church, including those related to marriages. We want to emphasize that our goal for this process of study and reflection is to deepen our understanding of human sexuality and Christian discipleship. We want to learn from the Bible, from teachers, from each other, and most importantly from God.

Please join us in praying for unity, truth, and love to saturate our whole community as we seek God together. Next week in *Your NFC* we will share some more background to this process, and in future weeks we will offer suggestions for individual study and reflection, all in preparation for some kind of corporate study in late winter/early spring 2016.



Young Friends Singers Sunday!

We're inviting children to help us lead in worship through music on Sunday morning, **December 20!** We will gather to learn music on the four Saturday mornings prior to December 20 (November 28; December 5, 12, and 19) in Room 246, from 10 to 11:30 a.m. We ask that singers attend at least two of the four rehearsals, *December 19 required*. Children ages 4 through 5th grade are welcome to join us for this fun opportunity to sing some Christmas songs together! If you would like more information, contact Nolan Staples, Becky Ankeny, Davida Brown, or Liz Dillow.

Please notify [Nolan](#) if your child/ren plan to participate.

NFC Story Slam

Sunday, November 8, 6 p.m.

come to hear some of NFC's best storytellers recount their finest stories



NFC ALL-CHURCH WORK MORNING



**Saturday, November 7
9 a.m. to noon
ALL COMERS!**

- Some tasks to accomplish:**
- clean kitchen • paint
 - rake leaves (bring a rake!)
 - weed flower beds
 - stack wood • clean classrooms

New Member

We welcome **Kati McKee** to membership at Newberg Friends Church.



REMINDER!

Bible Foundation's Annual October Bible Drive

Gather up the Bibles you're no longer using and drop them in the basket marked "Bibles" in the ramp entrance by the library.

For details, visit the Bible Foundation website.

It's time to get started!



*Click the image above for instructions and help with choosing what to put in your OCC shoeboxes this year.
Collection date: November 22*

Need Sheet

Needed:

- Chehalem Youth and Family Services (CYFS) is looking for a career development specialist in Newberg and/or McMinnville. For more information about our agency please view the following video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tyVEm_mzKis. For more information about the position, please visit our website for this and other employment opportunities: <http://www.cyfs.net/newbergemployment>.
- At the International Friends Gathering Place, we could use a *small* electronic keyboard. Contact Loren Van Tassel at 503-537-7971 or lorenvantassel@gmail.com.
- I'm Karen Bates-Smith. You may know me from Newberg Friends or George Fox. Perhaps you saw my display of Newberg workers at Coffee Cottage last April or photos of flora and fauna at Newberg Friends in April and May. A few may have seen my photographs at the Fr. Jim Nibler Memorial Golf Tournament these past two years. I'd like to do a black and white photographic series of active people in their 70s, 80s, and 90s. Would you be interested? The modest cost of \$65 covers the creative fee, plus one framed print. The series will be displayed at Coffee Cottage or other venue, after which you will be given the framed photo. I may also ask your permission to use your photograph in my print and online portfolio. If you are interested in this project, please contact me at 503-347-0692.
- The Thomas family is still looking for a lawn mower. The one we had didn't work. Someone kindly offered one to us at church a few weeks back, but in our state of transition we can't remember who that was. If you happen to have a lawn mower you want to sell please contact Debby Thomas at 720-375-2909.
- I am looking for a rare, old, Quaker book called *Early Settlement of Friends in North Carolina*, written by Addison Coffin. If you have a copy would you be willing to let me borrow it? Please call Julie Anderson at 503-537-9242.

Available:

- Attention: piano teachers/students. Free student-oriented piano music. What isn't claimed will be recycled. E-mail Mauri Macy at maurimacy@gmail.com.

For Sale:

- Delta circular saw with 4-inch jointer, 3/4 HP motor rollers, 9-inch saw blade, 8 new blades, (table size 22in x 15in), 9-inch tilting table circular saw. \$200 OBO. Call 503-538-6280.

To place a one-time free ad — • e-mail: sherry@newbergfriends.org

• mail: NFC, P.O. Box 487, attn. Sherry

• bring a written ad to the NFC office at 600 E. 3rd Street

deadline: November 11 • no phone-in ads; please resubmit repeated ads
online at newbergfriends.org/resources/need-sheet/



**Abuse Recovery
Ministry & Services**

**Now available in our community: a faith-based support
group for women who have or are experiencing
domestic violence or abuse of any kind.
Please call 503-846-9284.**