

Your NFC

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

October 30, 2015



● Pastor Quarterly Reports

Nolan Staples, worship ministries—I used to be so good at worrying. I would worry about all kinds of things: *Am I capable of doing this school work? Am I going to fail this paper? Doesn't that make me a failure? Or, If I lose this tennis match, people will realize I'm not as good as they think I am?* to the more serious *Where will I go to college? How will that decision affect my future? What am I going to do with my life? Am I good enough to make it as a musician? Am I good enough for people to love me? Am I even capable of loving myself?*

Toward the end of high school God did some work in this area of my life. God spoke to me through the passage in Matthew 6 that in my NIV is titled "Do Not Worry" (makes it sound so simple...). Matthew 6:25-27 says, "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?"



I was stressing myself out about where I would go to college, and I spent time reading and praying through this passage with God. I slowly began to let go of my sense that these big life decisions were all on me and that I had the potential to really mess up my life (as if I could make a decision that would cause me to be distant from God or not as loved and cared for by God). I began to find peace and comfort in the realization that my worrying wasn't actually helping my situation at all; I was, in fact, losing hours of my life by worrying. I released my worries to God and did my best to trust and listen to and follow God's guiding.

In the years since, I've found it so much easier to reflect back on these big life transitions and personal growth and see how God was in control. I can easily look back now and see how God was molding me, which has helped me to build trust for the present and the future. God has been faithful to guide me in the past (even if I've freaked out about it and not understood how God was working), so I can rest in knowing that God will continue to be faithful. No need to worry—God is taking special care of each one of us individually, and God is caring for us as a community.

Gregg Koskela, lead pastor—Steve Fawver and I lived with two other friends my junior year at George Fox, and the four of us tried memorizing verses together. One became cemented in my heart and mind and has stayed with me to this day, 2 Corinthians 4:16-18: "Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting

away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.



So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.” (NIV)

Two years later Elaine and I were married and lonely in Southern California, missing community and struggling through her first job and my grad

school. I clung to these words, as I have many times since, trusting God to renew and transform me through the struggles!

Cindy Johnson, senior ministries — When we were asked to write about a verse from the Bible that was and is important to us during a difficult time in our life, my mind went back 18 years ago



when my husband, John, fell ill and was close to death. I depended on others around me to carry me through those days, and they would share scriptures they claimed for John and me. I distinctly remember the doctor coming out of the emergency room and telling me he did not know if John would make it, I

prayed “Lord I do not want to pray this but I know I have to—your will be done in John’s life.” Of course this was hard to do because his will is not always our will, my will is not his will (Luke 22:4). I did not know what God’s will was for John, for me, or for our boys, Jamie and Mark. I prayed as I know others did. I held fast to knowing the Lord was in control, I was not.

Through John’s hospital stay, nurses who helped him in the ICU said, “I am not a religious person, but I feel the prayers when I work on him.” Or “Mr. Johnson, I want you to know that I am praying for you and so is my small group.” Many caregivers held him up in prayer. Proverbs 15:29: “He hears the prayers of the righteous.” James 5:16: “The prayers of the righteous are powerful.”

As I drove home from the hospital each night, I played Sherry and Mauri Macy’s CD, repeating the song “Rest”—*Rest, the Lord is near; refuse to fear, enjoy his love... There is no need for needless worry; with such a Savior you have no cause to ever doubt his perfect word still reassures in any trial* (Matthew 11:28). That song, the prayers from all around the world, friends, and family, kept me upright, along with giving the Lord control, and having faith knowing that John was in his care. I learned that as Psalm 18:1-2 says “I love you Lord, you are my strength and shield, my rock in whom I take refuge.”

Eric Muhr, youth ministries — Sometime today, Barclay Press will be announcing its new publisher. And it’s me.

I’ll be replacing Dan McCracken, who has worked for 44 years as the general manager and publisher of the Friends (Quaker) publishing enterprise.

The transition—nearly a year in the making—started last January when Dan announced his retirement in a letter to the board. In the intervening months, I’ve worked alongside Dan and other staff to gain an understanding of what Barclay Press is, what it does, and how it might move into the future with purpose.

But I’m not going anywhere.

I’ll be staying on at Newberg Friends, reducing my hours with youth ministries to 3/4 time while taking on a part-time role at Barclay Press.

To make up the difference at NFC, we plan to add a quarter-time youth ministries coordinator and to keep both of our youth ministry interns. Taylor Swan started working with middle school youth in June. Lindy Booth, a Christian ministries major at George Fox, started working with high school youth in September.



These changes, approved by the NFC elders earlier this month, allow us to continue growing youth ministry programming without affecting the budget.

In the next week or two, I’ll be looking for help in finalizing a job description, posting a position, and discerning who God has been preparing (and

prompting) to join the team of parents, volunteers, interns, and others who are already doing the work of caring for, nurturing, and challenging our youth.

This feels good.

I've been at Newberg for nearly six years now, and this transition—like our recent move from the Youth House to the Friends Center—feels like an important opportunity to consider why we do what we do and how we might do it better. Together.

Elizabeth Sherwood, administrative pastor —

There was a season in my life when I equated having the perfect looking life with Christian “success.” I spent a lot of energy on my exterior life. When I encountered struggles, I found myself hiding my challenges and not living authentically. After experiencing emptiness from my own self-effort, I received this encouragement found in the psalms.

“You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings. My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart you, God, will not despise.” Psalm 51:16-17 (TNIV)

The Lord never turns away from a humble person—a simple truth I return to time and time again.



How amazing to follow a God who remembers we are but dust and who desires that we lay down our own efforts for perfection and rely on the Spirit's work within us.

In my role as administrative pastor there are times I want things to be “perfect”—for projects to come in on budget and on time, for meetings to run smoothly, for visions of ministry to fall nicely into place without conflict or hurdles. It is helpful to be reminded that God works in and through us as we live in humility, relying on the Lord's sovereign perfection alone.

Michelle Akins, children and family ministries—

This month we are using a scripture passage or particularly meaningful verse to be the springboard for our pastoral reports. Isaiah 38:15-19 is mine. It begins with these wise words, “But what can I say?”

There are times when words don't seem to capture or contain enough emotion to convey what our heart feels. This passage has been meaningful to me since 2003. That year I was facing utter destruction of every relationship that was important to me.



I had let selfishness control my life instead of turning to God. Gratefully, God wasn't letting go of me. As I sat weeping one day, highlighting the words I now cherish in Isaiah, my two-year-old sat beside me and grabbed the pen. She wanted to “highlight” too. I learned so much that year...and



continue to see how God can use and redeem the anguish of our soul. I found in those words of Isaiah 38, God's desire to heal and give us life. I remember looking at my baby girl, aching to be a mother, wife, friend, and daughter that had integrity and would be able to wisely speak of God's faithfulness. In those moments I had

no idea where God would lead me. Some days I saw Light and others I felt alone and covered by darkness.

Now 12 years later, there are times I sit next to her and wonder how in the world God did this work in me and in our family. I'm grateful beyond words. God has restored me to health, has taught me about forgiveness, and I celebrate by singing loudly without shame in praise to Jesus for the wonderful gift of true life. The people of Newberg Friends Church were and remain a community of deep healing and Spirit-filled hope. If I have a purpose as a pastor, perhaps it boils down to doing whatever I can to offer that blessing to others. May I persevere to walk alongside you in humility and grace, and together may we tell our children about God's faithfulness.

Steve Fawver, spiritual health and care ministries

Do you ever wonder what people say about you when you are not around? Is it true? Is it kind? Is it honest? Does it represent the core of who you really



are? Not that it is really in our control, but we might wonder what people say at times. From my college years until now I have always been intrigued by the chatter of the rulers and teachers of the law in regard to Peter and John after they drug the two out of jail and heard their testimony of healing the lame man. Acts 4:13 offers us an insight, “When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus.” Reading this one day, as I was just beginning as the youth pastor here at NFC,

these words leapt off the page and touched a longing within my soul. They “took note that these men had been with Jesus!” That is what I want. I want to be someone who spends time with Jesus and lets Jesus shape me from the inside out. Not just a follower of the Jesus who was here, but also a daily follower of Jesus who is real and present today.

Something about Peter and John caused the Jewish leaders to grab their iPad, mark in their journal, or send a postcard home that said, “Something is going on here that is bigger than these two men...” We say Jesus is with us all the time and yet there is something about being intentional and attentive to Jesus so that when we are not around others can say, “these folks have been with Jesus!” May this be true of each one of us, as we become known as Jesus people—loving, giving, sharing, speaking, and living daily the life of Jesus so that others can make note of it as well.

Interested in exploring ways NFC can support refugees? Join us November 8, 5 p.m., in Barclay C. (Stay for Story Slam after the meeting.) For more information contact Elizabeth@newbergfriends.org.

Happy November Birthday

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| 1 Polly Peterson
Noah Rathkey | 12 Brian Beals
Hannah Lee | Celeste Stone |
| 2 Tamara Brand
Dan McCracken | 13 Lawson Evans
Betty Hockett | 23 Levi Briedwell |
| 4 Zinabu Czarnecki
Keian McDonough | Cindy McCracken
Kay Passmore | 24 Brian Carlson
Ken Howe |
| 6 Ian Lamm
Drew Littlefield
Melvin Marshburn | 15 Lew Goslin
Jay Shaw | 25 Crystal Headrick
Madeleine Kern |
| 7 Kimberly Goss
Nick Maurer
Maggie Peterson | 16 Haley Howard
Eric Lyman | 26 Austin Drew
Jessica Ragsdale
Quinten Semler
Bike Witter |
| 8 Marion Comfort
Bethlin Harmon | 17 Kevin Jones | 27 Ursa Shaw |
| 9 Elenita Bales
Yvonne Carr
Jesse Goodfellow | 19 Sandi Hutchens
Johndy Lewis | 28 David Brown |
| | 20 Kati McKee
Florence Thomas | 29 Pat Auld
Kelsey Hampton |
| | 22 Stephanie Anderson
Corban Harwood | 30 Martin Millage
Florene Nordyke |

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

6pm | Taize gathering | NFC sanctuary

Monday, November 2

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

Intercessory prayer | 9am | Barclay C

Strong For Life | 10:30am | Barclay B

Wednesday, November 4

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, November 5

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

Friday, November 6

Strong For Life | 10:30am | Barclay B

Celebration of life for Don Lamm | 2pm | NFC sanctuary

Saturday, November 7

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

All-church work morning | 9am-noon

Sunday, November 8

Read ahead: James 5

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

Plan Ahead

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

November 22 | Thanksgiving combined worship service at Bauman Auditorium | Community Time @10am; Worship @10:45am

November 23 | Margaret Fell WMF | 7pm | Spaulding Oaks Community Center | featuring Dennis Littlefield, Tilikum

November 26-27 | NFC office closed for Thanksgiving holiday

NFC's Calendar on the Web!

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

Background to Our Exploration of Human Sexuality

The last 20 years have seen huge and rapid changes in how society understands human sexuality and specifically gay relationships and marriage. Christians, and more recently Evangelical Christians, have also become more varied in their beliefs. This has created a lot of anxiety in the church, because sexuality is an intimate and important part of our lives, one that (like all areas of life) is best experienced in the way God intends. How do we show both love and acceptance to each other and also challenge each other to live in faithful obedience to God? How do we work through our differences in understanding God's intent, when there used to be no differences at all?

Our yearly meeting has discussed these issues for several reasons in the last couple of years. On March 1, 2012, alumni from George Fox University released a public letter, asking George Fox University and Northwest Yearly Meeting to change policy to allow committed same-sex relationships (<http://www.onegeorgefox.org>). Discussion around this letter also made more public that one church in the yearly meeting, West Hills Friends Church, had gone through a 12-year discernment process that led to full inclusion of LGBTQ people in the life of their meeting (here is a link to their description of the process: <http://www.westhillsfriends.org/wwhistory.html>). The yearly meeting Board of Elders were informed of West Hills' decision in 2008 and began discussions with West Hills Friends Church in 2012, as this decision was out of harmony with the yearly meeting Faith and Practice.

West Hills' decision to be open and affirming of gay and lesbian relationships, and later to perform a same-sex wedding, was deeply disturbing to many people in the yearly meeting. They believe West Hills' practices are clearly wrong, both according to the Bible and to our yearly meeting's Faith and Practice. In 2013, the yearly meeting Board of Elders determined that West Hills' decision was "shattering" to the yearly meeting and began a two-year process of discernment about how to address it. The Board of Elders also asked local churches and meetings to discuss and study issues of human sexuality. Newberg Friends Church responded with a series of four Sunday night meetings in February and March of 2014, attended by 73 people.

The yearly meeting Board of Elders also proposed a revision to the Faith and Practice statement on sexuality that did not change the position of the yearly meeting but sought to "season the language with grace." Consensus was not found to approve the revision in 2013 or 2014. On July 24, 2015, the Board of Elders announced their decision to release West Hills Friends Church from the yearly meeting. Reaction to this decision was mixed: some were relieved, some were angry, many felt sadness. Eight churches appealed the decision within the 30-day deadline, and the Administrative Council of the yearly meeting is considering those appeals (for documents and more details see this page on the yearly meeting website: <http://nwfriends.org/elders-decision-regarding-west-hills/>).

At Newberg Friends Church, a called business meeting on August 23, 2015, considered whether our church should make an appeal. There was lack of consensus to appeal. Some strongly support the decision to release West Hills. Some agree with West Hills' position and worry that there is no longer room for them within the yearly meeting. Some disagree with West Hills' position, but still want them to remain a part of the yearly meeting, desiring to be part of a community that can remain in unity despite diversity of thought and belief. These are just a few of a wide variety of perspectives in our church.

The business meeting made it clear that we are deeply divided as a church around this issue, an issue that evokes a wide range of emotions, often very strong. Some felt it was wrong to even discuss the issue, believing the Bible to be clear. Some loved the discussion and appreciated the good start of listening to each other and to God. Some left the meeting feeling unheard. Some felt shamed and unsafe in voicing their opinion. Some felt hurtful and damaging things were spoken to those in the room who might be questioning or identify as LGBTQ. (The NFC elders made a statement on page 4 of the October 16 issue of *Your NFC*: <http://newbergfriends.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/October-16-2015.pdf>).

As those charged with the leadership of Newberg Friends Church in this season, we acknowledge the differences in our church and call us to do the hard work of loving and respecting each other through these difficult conversations. We believe God's truth and God's love are both active and needed; they are not in opposition to each other. We invite God's Holy Spirit to guide, correct, convict, and empower us as we seek God's way forward through our differences.



ANNUAL THANKSGIVING SERVICE
AT BAUMAN AUDITORIUM
NOVEMBER 22

10 AM—COMMUNITY TIME

COFFEE, DONUTS, FRESH-PRESSED APPLE CIDER
BAKE SALE BENEFITING THE THANKSGIVING OFFERING
CREATIVE FAIR

10:45AM—WORSHIP

NFC Story Slam

Sunday, November 8, 6 p.m.

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



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 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
 - clean classrooms



Newberg Friends Church CREATIVE FAIR

**Bauman Auditorium Lobby
Sunday, November 22, 10-10:45 a.m.**

Come share your creative side. Whatever God has gifted you to create, we want to see it! This is an event for all ages. If you'd like to have a space to display your creation(s) as a part of our Thanksgiving service community time, please contact Michelle Akins by November 20 so we can have enough table space for you. Send a description of your item(s) and a sentence or two about why you like to create in this way.

Contact: michelle@newbergfriends.org



The social hall came alive last Monday for the Margaret Fell WMF International Dessert Tea, featuring a devotional by Gerry Willcuts and speaker Hayley Koskela. Thanks to Michelle Akins for these photos.



Sabbath ^{by} the Sea

I want to personally invite each of you to consider taking some time to come away and be with Christ this coming January. I have the opportunity to work with an exceptional group of people (including many NFCers) as we lead week-long and half-week retreats at Twin Rocks Harbor Villa on the beach in Rockaway, Oregon. Sabbath by the Sea is spacious, restful, and open for you to be with God. Bracketed by simple morning and evening prayers, the schedule leaves you free to explore, walk on the beach, nap by a fire, read, eat scrumptious food, and spend time with Jesus. Groups are limited to 12 participants.

Not everyone can get away for a whole week, so we offer opportunities to come from Monday to Thursday or from Thursday to Sunday. Those who work during the week can take one day off on Friday and still have a good chunk of time to pray and listen to God. I invite those who have attended a January retreat in the past to consider going again and taking someone with you who might need time and space in life right now.

Visit the website or give us a call! We will send you a brochure. The table is always set and Christ invites us to come away to listen, rest, and abide with him.

—**Steve Fawver**, pastor of spiritual health and care
503-538-8381



Daily schedule:

- 7:45- Pre-breakfast scripture & prayer
- 8:30- Breakfast
- 9:30- Morning gathering
- 10:15- Personal time
- 12:30- Lunch
- 1:30- Personal time
- 4:00- Optional spiritual direction
- 5:30- Dinner
- 6:45- Worship, highlights, and prayer
- 8:00- Sleep, play, relax, read...

Leaders:

- December 31-January 3 – Susan and Gary Fawver
 - January 4-10 – Steve Fawver, Martha Wood
 - January 11-17 – Bethany Lee, Paul Bock
 - January 18-24 – Hank and Jo Helsabeck
 - January 26-29 – Bruce and Di Murphy
 - March 17-20 – Susan and Gary Fawver
- Worship singing will be led each week by Mauri Macy or Nate Macy*