

# Northwest Passage

## MORE COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

**Bellevue Christian, Bellevue** – is working with Habitat for Humanity to build homes at Snoqualmie Ridge. Mike Grogan is the pastor.

**First Christian, Coeur d'Alene** – experienced a burglary of their church building. A number of items were taken, including personal items belonging to their pastor and her family. Lauri Clark-Strait is the pastor.

**First Christian, Bremerton** – celebrated 90 years of ministry on November 8. Rev. Darryl Parr, ordained in 1987, brought the message and they welcomed many former ministers and friends.

## REGIONAL ASSEMBLY LOGO CONTEST

"Poured Out in Mission" is the theme for our 2010 Regional Assembly. The planning team needs your help in creating the logo to be used in promoting this region-wide gathering next May. What images come to mind as you consider this theme? How should it be represented visually in color, shape and pictures? You are invited to submit your logo idea to the Regional Office. The deadline is December 15.

## REGIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL

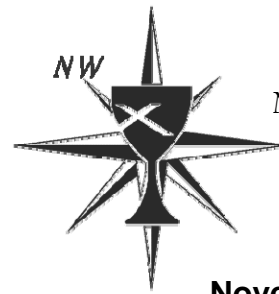
The Regional Youth Council will hold its first meeting November 20-22 at First Christian Church in Kent. The RYC is made up of 15 youth and adult sponsors and provides leader development opportunities for our young people. The RYC is tasked with planning and leading the Winter Retreats. Look for more information about the theme and dates for the Winter Retreats in the next Northwest Passage.

## PALESTINE/ISRAEL WITH GLOBAL MINISTRIES

From November 29-Dec. 11, our Regional Minister, Sandy Messick will be traveling with other Regional Ministers and Global Ministry staff to Palestine/Israel. This is part of the series of trips sponsored by Global Ministries to lift up the idea of becoming a Global Mission Partner Region. We voted to become a partner region at our Special Regional Assembly in May, 2009 and are beginning work with the Northwest Conference of the UCC to identify our joint Global Mission Partner. Please keep Sandy in prayer as she prepares for this trip, and remember her family while she is away. More information will be forthcoming about the itinerary and how you can follow the trip online.

## O COME ALL YOU FAITHFUL

This year's Christmas Offering highlights the ways we are developing faithful leaders through our ministries in the Northwest Region. 100% of the Christmas Offering stays in the Region to undergird our ministries. Materials for this offering will be mailed to all congregations and will be available on the regional website. Please encourage your congregation to give generously to support the work of the Northwest Region through the Christmas Offering.



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Northwest Regional Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

18000 72nd Ave S. Suite 171, Kent, WA 98032

P: 253-893-7202

F: 425-251-4937

[www.disciplesnw.org](http://www.disciplesnw.org)

November 2009

## REFLECTIONS ON THE JOURNEY...

Rev. Sandy Messick

*(A continuing series of articles reflecting on the Objectives outlined in our Regional Ministry Plan)*

### Where does it Go?

A pastor recently asked me what ministries are supported by giving to the Northwest Region. As I attempted to answer his question, I realized that the answer is valuable for all of us. In a time of economic difficulty, with so many of our congregations and individuals struggling to meet their budgets, we all find ourselves weighing carefully where we will share our outreach dollars. Is my giving having an impact? Is it being gratefully received and carefully and faithfully used? Is it supporting ministries and missions that are valuable, life-changing and in-line with my values and commitments? These are important questions, and ones I am happy to answer in relation to the Northwest Regional Christian Church.

When you give to the Region, either as individuals or as congregations, you are helping to undergird the many ministries that fall under the regional umbrella. To name just a few:

**Leader Development:** These include ministries to children and youth such as our camps and winter retreats. We

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## FIRST MISSION COUNCIL GATHERING WAS NOV 14

The weather on the pass cooperated just enough to allow representatives from many of our ministry teams to gather in Yakima for our first Mission Council meeting. Edie Rice-Sauer, interim Mission Council chairperson, led us through a time of sharing, brainstorming and visioning. We heard the stories of ministry taking place around our regional priorities: Youth Ministries, New Church support and nurture, Stewardship, and Regional Facilities. We brainstormed ways to live into our commitments to be a pro-reconciling region and to knit the Mission and Sending priority into the fabric of our work, and made plans to move forward into being a Global Mission Region. We heard reports of our current ministry teams including Turner Lectures, Regional Assembly, and Commission on Ministry, and we talked of other areas, priorities, and ministries we hoped to address in the future. As important as the business work was, we also took time to share a meal together, and worship together through silence, prayer, readings, and song. The Mission Council is part of our new structure as Region and provides the place for holding the vision and creatively imagining new ministries. We are off to a great start!



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## REFLECTIONS ON THE JOURNEY CONTINUED...

provide leadership development opportunities not only at the events themselves, but through the Regional Youth Council. The Commission on Ministry helps shepherd and encourage our seminary students as they move through their education and work towards ordination. In addition the Commission oversees the nurture and support of our licensed ministers and grants standing and encouragement to our ordained ministers. In the coming year, the Commission will be offering Boundary Training for all clergy with standing in the Region and will begin to require it of our licensed and ordained pastors.

***New Church and Congregational Transformation:*** Though New Church ministries and Transformational programs such as Journey of Discovery and New Beginnings are largely supported through designated funds, your gifts to the general fund of the region help provide the staff support for these programs as well as the administrative costs of providing and encouraging these programs.

***Connecting and Resourcing Congregations:*** As with most local congregational budgets, the largest portion of the regional budget provides for staff salaries including the Regional Minister, Office Manager, and Accountant. Many of you know Amber who runs our church office and have appreciated her gifts in keeping us connected by keeping the website current, maintaining lists of clergy and lay volunteers, providing resources to congregations on request, administering the registrations for events such as Turner Lectures, summer camps, winter retreats and Regional Assembly, and a myriad other activities she performs largely

behind the scenes. As your Regional Minister, I am coming to see that the most important part of my job is connecting with congregations. To that end, in the last 6 months I have been present with 27 of our 59 congregations, either in worship or in a significant meeting setting. I have met with search committees as they perform the important work of seeking and calling a new pastor; celebrated with congregations at installations, anniversaries, and ordinations; helped congregations deal with conflict, or do the hard work of facing difficult realities; and joined in worship for times of singing, prayer, and preaching.

***Reaching out beyond ourselves:*** Our Regional ministry is not just about supporting and connecting our congregations. The Region itself is church and therefore is called to reach out beyond itself. A portion of our regional budget goes to support our work among our ecumenical partners including School of Theology and Ministry at Seattle U, Alaska Convention, Washington Association of Churches, and Campus Ministries in Higher Education. In addition 10% of the Christmas Offering is given to Yakama Christian Mission to support the ministry they are doing on behalf of the whole church. Designated funds help provide support for Global Ministries.

All of these ministries, and more, are helping us live into our vision as expressed in our mission statement:

*Called by God and sent by the Living Christ, we the Northwest Regional Christian Church intentionally engage with one another rejoicing in our diversity and shared gifts, deepening our spiritual life, building true community, acting courageously in*

*ministry and mission, and sharing God's good news with a fresh voice and a new song. We seek to "do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with our God." (Micah 6:8)*  
Thank you for your support of the region, both through your financial gifts and through your prayers and participation. We literally couldn't be the Northwest Regional Christian Church without you. (Next month: Where does your DMF giving go?)

Blessings,  
Sandy



Here is a sampling of what's going on around our regional Community of Communities. To add your congregation's story to this list, go to the website, [www.disciplesnw.org](http://www.disciplesnw.org) and click on the Connections tab. Please limit your news item to 2-3 sentences.

**North Hill Christian, Spokane** – has called Michelle Mitchell to be their new pastor. Rev. Mitchell is set to begin her ministry at North Hill by at the first of the new year.

**First Christian, Bellingham** –is co-hosting the 2nd Annual Multi-Faith Alternative Holiday Market on Sunday, November 22, 1 - 4 p.m., at Bloedel-Donovan Park. "Come join in the fun and the belief that we're doing something good...loving God's world and her creatures, while celebrating our holiest of days. And, we're doing it together. Please bring: a can or jar of baby food to benefit the Bellingham Food Bank. (Other co-hosts are Assumption Catholic Church, Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship, Dharmakirti Buddhist Center, Islamic Society of Whatcom County, and St. James Presbyterian Church.)"

**First Christian, Kent** – will celebrate the installation of their new minister, Bob Brooks, on Sunday, November 22 at 3:00 pm.

**Memorial Christian, Ephrata** – has called Robert Needles to be their interim minister. She began her work at the beginning of October.

**Lake City Christian, Seattle** – is working with 3 Story Church to redesign their web site. 3 Story Church is a unique web design company run by Will Boyd (whose wife is Janetta Cravens-Boyd, pastor of University Christian in Seattle.) Rod Smith is serving as Interim Pastor.

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