

Embrace Grand Visions

The church is on a journey of transformation, urging us to embark on a mission to become new creations. Numerous congregations and pastors observe that the ministry of the next generation moves away from traditional practices: Lifestyles have changed, ministry approaches have diversified, and spiritual practices have evolved. This could pose a challenge; entering unfamiliar territory makes us uneasy.

Yet, our faith leads us to find light amid darkness, relying on the path that God walks with us. Much like our ancestor Abraham, who entrusted himself to the Lord and left his familiar home and family without knowing his destination, our faith prompts us to pursue higher callings.

Our bishop encourages us to engage in “Ministry that Matters.” The emphasis of church ministry should be on addressing the matters of people around us more than ourselves: the underprivileged and

marginalized neighbors whose safety and dignity are at risk, people unaware that they are wonderful and beautiful beings no matter what, and those deviating from conventional religious customs. It entails prioritizing appreciation and love for those who differ from us, steering away from our own customs and values to bring vitality to others.

The church ministry intentionally focuses on creating a space for others and the upcoming generations to cultivate their presence and spirituality. This commitment centers on promoting inclusion and progressiveness, which involves actively advancing cultural competency to dismantle existing harmful practices. Moreover, we are to dare dream beyond our previous imaginations, leveraging our resources for unprecedented possibilities. Let's embrace this exciting opportunity and rise together to meet the challenge of a new era. Dream boldly, for in our aspirations, God is counting on us.

-Rev Dylan Hyun





The United Methodist Church

Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference

The Rev. Tim Overton-Harris

Superintendent for the Columbia District

April 3, 2024

Liz Swenson, Chair Staff Parish Relations Committee
Oak Grove United Methodist Church
14700 SE Rupert Dr.
Oak Grove, Oregon 97267

Dear Members and Friends of Oak Grove UMC –

Grace and peace to you in the name of the Risen One, Jesus Christ!

I am pleased to share with you that it is Bishop Bridgeforth's intention to appoint Rev. John Fleming as the next pastor of Oak Grove UMC. Rev. Fleming will be appointed as a part-time pastor for your congregation for this year. He will focus on worship, preaching, pastoral care, and other pastoral duties while assisting with the administration of the life of the church. A plan is being developed with your Church Council for bringing in people to help develop better systems for the life and ministry of your congregation so that you can thrive in ministry for years to come.

Rev. Fleming is a clergy member of the North Texas Annual Conference and comes to you with years of experience as an effective pastoral leader. Rev. Fleming is coming from The Open Door Churches of Salem-Keizer. He has a commitment to helping congregations be all they can be and to the inclusive love of God and Christ lived in community. Rev. Fleming has proven leadership skills and is excited to be your pastor while also having some space to explore an aspect of ministry that he has felt called to for a number of years. Rev. Fleming is excited to get to know you and to see where you can go together in your work of transforming lives and the world.

Rev. Fleming will be moving to live in the area and wants to connect with the local community. I am confident you will find appropriate ways to welcome him into your congregation and community.

As previously announced, it is the intention of Bishop Bridgeforth to appoint your current pastor Rev. Dylan Hyun to a part-time conference staff position. More will be shared soon about what else awaits Rev. Hyun's ministry in the year ahead. I know you will find appropriate ways to show Pastor Dylan your gratitude as he prepares for this change.

Bishop Bridgeforth, the Cabinet, and I will continue to remember you in our prayers during this time of transition.

In Christ's Service,

Rev. Timothy L. Overton-Harris
Superintendent for the Columbia District
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News Briefs - Compiled by David Richards Oshiro

Next Oak Grove Pastor:

The Rev. John Fleming was announced as Oak Grove UMC's next pastor, beginning July 1. The



announcement came in an April 3 message from Columbia District Superintendent Tim Overton-Harris.

Rev. Fleming will serve as a half-time pastor at Oak Grove UMC for the year. He will focus on worship, preaching, pastoral care, and other pastoral duties while assisting with the administration of the church, the district superintendent said.

The money that would have paid for a full-time pastor will be used to bring in people "to help develop better systems for the life and ministry of your congregation so that you can thrive in ministry for years to come," Overton-Harris said.

Rev. Fleming is a member of the North Texas Annual Conference. He has been a pastor at The Open Door Churches of Salem-Keizer since July 2020 and has served 29 years in ministry, mostly in Texas.

His interests include performing, writing, and recording acoustic folk/country music; hiking and backpacking; and playing golf.

Let's give Rev. Fleming a warm welcome to Oak Grove UMC!

New District Superintendent:

In a March 19 Zoom meeting with church leaders across Oregon and Idaho, Bishop Cedrick Bridge-



forth announced that Rev. Karen Hernandez (pictured above with husband Ed Hernandez) will become district superintendent of the Columbia District, effective July 1. The district is made of congregations along the Columbia River extending to Eastern Oregon, and includes Oak Grove UMC. She will succeed Superintendent Tim Overton-Harris, who will become a special assistant to the bishop.

Rev. Hernandez will remain as the district superintendent of the Sage District, which covers Eastern Oregon and Southern Idaho. She has led the Sage District since July 2018. Before that, she was the pastor at Kuna United Methodist Church in Kuna, Idaho, from 2011 to 2018.

Hernandez' appointment is part of a shuffling of assignments among Oregon-Idaho superintendents. Rev. John Tucker from the Crater Lake District has reached the term limit imposed by church's Book of Discipline. He will become the pastor at Langley United Methodist in Washington. Cascadia District Superintendent Wendy Woodworth will add the Crater Lake District churches to the portfolio of congregations under her supervision.

Overton-Harris said he will work with the superintendents to look at changes that will help them respond to the needs of emerging ministries. He said church systems need to allow top leaders to be more nimble, flexible and responsive, "and right now, we're not any of those things."



Conference Center Building: Should the Methodist Church's Oregon-Idaho regional headquarters remain in its present office building in downtown Portland? Or should it move when the lease expires at the end of this year?

Earlier this year, a volunteer task force met to determine the future of the three-story office building, at 1505 SW 18th Ave. The building sits on parcels of land owned by the Oregon-Idaho Conference and neighboring First United Methodist Church of Portland. Oregon-Idaho has business and ministry offices in the building. Columbia District Superintendent Tim Overton-Harris and Greater Northwest Area Bishop Cedrick Bridgeforth have spaces there too.

The Oregon-Idaho Conference's 50-year lease on the First UMC property expires at the end of 2024. The conference must decide by June 30 if it wishes to renew the agreement.

The building would need extensive electrical and ventilation upgrades plus renovation work if the Oregon-Idaho Conference chooses to stay. First Church, the property co-owner, did a feasibility study in June 2023 which envisioned conversion of the building to 11 units of affordable housing.

After a tour of the building on March 15, the task force recommended that the lease not be extended. The Oregon-Idaho Conference was directed to work with First UMC Portland with an eye toward developing affordable housing at the site. Conference offices would be moved to other church-owned properties in the region.



General Conference: The policy-making meeting of Methodists from around the world begins later this month. It runs April 23-May 3 in Charlotte, N.C. A group of more than 270 U.S. delegates supports legislative proposals they call "The Three R's." The proposals would:

- **Regionalize the Church** - Allow churches in different parts of the world to adapt the Book of Discipline, the denomination's policy book, to fit the local culture.
- **Revise the Social Principles** - Change Methodist teachings to make them "more globally relevant, theologically founded and succinct." The revision would remove references to homosexuality, which, since 1972, has been called "incompatible with Christian teaching."

- **Remove discriminatory policies** against LGBTQ people – These include bans on gay clergy and same-sex marriage.

More information: <https://www.umnews.org/en/news/us-delegates-name-general-conference-goals>

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On a personal note, I am saddened by the departure of Rev. Dylan Hyun from Oak Grove UMC.

In 2022, I was excited to learn that he was appointed to our church – the first non-white pastor in Oak Grove's history. I am disappointed because we, as a congregation, and Pastor Dylan, as a Korean American clergy person, had a chance to learn so much from each other. It's unfortunate that we've lost this cross-cultural opportunity.

Annyeonghi Gaseyo, Mogsanim!

– David Richards Oshiro



Land and Housing Core Team

The Oak Grove Land and Housing Core Team met March 26 at the church. Stori Long gave an update on discussions to keep Wichita Center open. (Spoiler: Nothing much to report. The Clackamas Board of County Commissioners, who are also directors of the North Clackamas Parks and Recreation Department, are negotiating privately with North Clackamas Schools over ownership of the Wichita School property.)

Stori also spoke about the March 10 Statewide Mass Assembly, sponsored by Leaven Community, a coalition that organizes people to create more equitable, diverse and thriving neighborhoods. The statewide assembly, "A Place to Call Home," was at Central Lutheran Church in Northeast Portland. The gathering, of several hundred church and neighborhood people, discussed housing insecurity and land stewardship.

In addition, the team talked about the McKinney-Vento program to aid houseless students; supportive housing services; and people who are couch-surfing or other wising living on the edge of houselessness, known as "Population B."

They also talked about a newspaper story that said Clackamas County reduced homelessness by 65 percent since 2019. The team questioned the methods the County used to count the homeless population, so it wasn't sure what to make of the County's claim.

From Your Lay Leader: Ministry That Matters

Gwenda and I recently toured The Opal, an affordable senior apartment built on property owned by our sibling church, Christ United Methodist in Cedar Mill. Rev. Paul Richards-Kuan, pastor at Christ UMC, said the apartments are set to open “after decades of dreaming, years of planning, 22 months of construction, and countless days and hours of dedication and work.”

The Opal, with its 54 one- and two-bedroom apartments, is open to seniors 55+ earning 60 percent or less of the AMI (Area Median Income). For a family of two, that’s about \$56,640 a year. (For them, affordable housing would cost \$1,416 a month or less.) Twenty six units are reserved for extremely low-income seniors, or individuals who make \$24,800 or less a year.

The church's website said the project was intentionally designed to be friendly to LGBTQ+ people because they are twice as likely to be single; 3-4 times less likely to have children; and are frequently estranged from their families. In addition, they report having experienced discrimination in housing, and fear the need to "re-closet" in senior living communities.

“We recognized the challenges that LGBTQ seniors face in the community and the need for safe, affordable, inclusive housing for them,” said Rev. Richards-Kuan. “Our church is committed to helping underserved populations, and we know the need for housing like this is great in our region. The Opal is an expression of that part of our mission.”



Home First, developer of The Opal, said funding for the \$23.4 million project came through a number of sources, including Metro’s 2018 affordable-housing bond measure, Washington County's Housing Authority, the state's Business Oregon agency, and the Red Stone Equity Partners group.

Our denomination's Columbia District Church Extension Society, which has funded many church-related projects in our area, also played a role in financing the project.

The Opal fits neatly into United Methodist Bishop Cedrick Bridgeforth’s priority for churches to do “Ministry That Matters” for their communities, particularly in the area of housing.

"Our neighborhood has an incredibly positive view of the church because of this work," Rev. Richards-Kuan said. "Our neighbors who are moving in next door are us. They are people just like us who are LGBTQ and straight; seniors; and (who) struggle to find an affordable and safe place to rent."

"We see this as ministry with our neighbors ... When everybody has moved in, we just will be really excited that we have new neighbors that we can get to know, join, and love."

- David Richards Oshiro
(oshirobot@gmail.com)

Lent Refugee Service Project Completed!



As we rejoice in our risen Lord, a refugee family can rejoice in receiving our donated items that will help make their new apartment a real home, a comfortable place to live in their new country, the United States. Our United Women in Faith sponsored our Lent service project of providing kits to help with new home set-up for refugees through the "Salem for Refugees" organization. These items are to be given to refugees arriving in our area to help them rebuild their lives, one item at a time.

We have 5 kits filled, one for some kitchen items, one for welcome items such as: clock, electric tea kettle, welcome door mat, umbrella, scissors, sewing kit, flashlights, paper and pens; as well as two bedding kits, one is queen size, one is twin and a cleaning kit with mops, bucket, broom, and dust pan, laundry soap, sponges and dish detergent and those ever handy paper towels to name some of the items...

Our list was long, but our church jumped into the project with joy and enthusiasm, fulfilling the list of items required for each set-up kit.

Our driver to deliver to Salem is Marv McKimpson and the effort was coordinated by Rhonda McKimpson and the UWF.

Lent is time we think beyond ourselves and our church really showed where our hearts are, with those in need. Thank you all who participated and showed your caring for a stranger in our land. As our Bible teaches us, as you do good for the stranger, you do good for Jesus himself...thank you so much!

• • • Sponsor a 2024 Yearbook

For a New Urban High School Student!

That's right! We once again have an opportunity to show our support to the students of NUHS by sponsoring their annual yearbooks! The yearbook costs this year are \$35 per book, and the students are very excited about all that is going into their preparation. Do you remember picking up your yearbook at the end of the school year and delighting in seeing all that had happened throughout the year? Do you remember searching that same book years later and reflecting on all the friendships, memories, and goofy hairstyles? Let's help ensure the students of NUHS have a chance to enjoy all those memories from the 2023-24 school year by donating to the NUHS Yearbook fund! Simply give what you can toward the books - If you can sponsor a book for \$35 - that's great! But if not, whatever you give will help purchase a book for a student. Simply mark your offering "NUHS Yearbook" and put it in the offering box or send it to the church. And, let me say on behalf of the students, "Thanks for the Memories!"

-Deb Payne, Coordinator



Spiritual Retreat For Women

Wichita!

Opportunity for God's Spirit to "fall afresh on me" ...

All women are called to a spiritual renewal retreat on Saturday May 18, from 9am-3:30pm at St Stephen Lutheran church in Gladstone.



Join women in our church, our United Women in Faith and other congregations in a day of retreat, a time set apart to explore, deepen, declutter and set straight one's spiritual path. It is a time for deepening and strengthening relationships we have with others through Christ.

This is for women of all ages, stages and interests. This is for you!

Our retreat is themed on the hymn "Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me" ... With shared personal experience, song and celebration we will move together to a closer relationship with God and move into a community of faith and support that will follow us home and strengthen our days.

Consider inviting a personal friend or family member who you are mentoring to growth in their faith. Do this together... your relationship will be much richer for it! All are welcome, no church membership is required.

This retreat is for you - the extraordinary woman God has made.

Mark your calendar for May 18, more details to follow!

Questions to: donna1metcalf@comcast.net

Or Cindy (Cynthia) Mittelsteadt at cmittel@comcast.net

I was proud and elated when I received this email last week and I want to share it with all of you, because we are a part of a great and God-driven effort to help the families and children of the North Clackamas Family Center at the Wichita School.

Here is the good news for the past year and although some of you may think that we only send egg cartons and food items to the Center twice a month let me tell you that a lot more goes on at Wichita!

Here is the SERVED number for 2023:

10,637 food for Households

21,341 food for kids

43,781 food for kids

Kids Clothes Closet visits: 4,176 Please remember that our own Women's Clothes Closet provides clothes for women of all ages.

3,420 Volunteer Hours were recorded.

1,242 Backpacks for kids were distributed for weekend snacks for needy kids.

688 coats for kids were distributed

One could say, Wow, are there really that many needy families in the North Clackamas School District? Or we could thank God that we are a church that supports a better life for those children, youth and families and be happy that we have the opportunity to be a part of the greater whole! Thank you, OGUMC



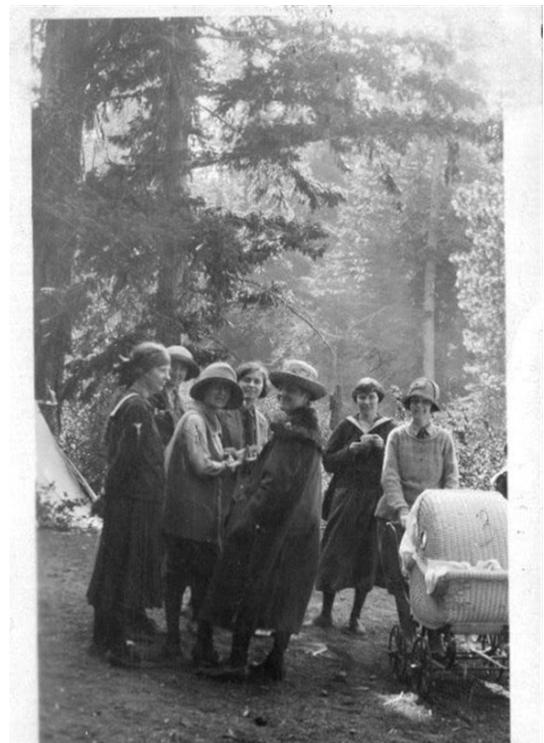
Our History: Suttle Lake Camp

The roots of Suttle Lake Camp were formed when memories of World War I and the 1918 flu were fresh. The 19th amendment had given women the right to vote. Much of America was roaring into the 1920's, however historians agree that in many ways the Oregon economy was only whimpering. The demand for ships, lumber, grain, and other materials had declined abruptly as troops returned home. Stock market speculation increased and banks grew unsteady. Following the war, 50,000 Oregonians left the state looking for a brighter future. Amidst these complexities, churches were a stable force in the lives of parishioners and communities.

It was in the context of these times that a group of young people from the Prineville, Redmond, Bend, and Madras Methodist Episcopal Churches met for a business meeting in Redmond to consider the possibility of starting an Epworth League Institute. Institutes had grown in popularity across the nation to bring youth and young adults together for fellowship, worship, Christian service, and to study the Scriptures for several days at a time. Late in January 1922 the Central Oregon Young Peoples Association enthusiastically finalized the decision to hold its first Institute the week of July 31-August 7, 1922 at Suttle Lake or a spot near the head of the Metolius, each of which was seen as "an ideal place for inspiration, recreation, and vacation." Officers and members worked to recruit prominent speakers to attend and

participate in the program, including Dr. D. H. Leach (District Superintendent of The Dalles District) and Dr. Eugene Hickman (professor at Kimball School of Theology in Salem). Funds were raised towards this effort by holding bazaars and food sales.

In the spring a small delegation from Madras picked the camping site, since their church community picnicked at Suttle Lake often and was well familiar with the area. League minutes described the spot they chose as being "between the Miller residence and the lake on the west side of Lake Creek." They erected a large sign they had previously made to advertise the upcoming event. They planned to use the natural stadium across the creek for the programs which would be held in the morning. Afternoons were set aside for recreation like playing horseshoes, fishing, boating, hiking along the Skyline Trail, and swimming. Inspirational speakers were planned along with singing in the evenings.



According to a pamphlet published for the event, a cordial invitation was extended, letting participants know that the Institute would be a place to find “a delightful combination of earnest, interesting study and jolly healthful play, in company with wholesome, congenial companions an outing worthwhile.” Leagues from across the state expressed interest in attending and most planned to send delegates. Free transportation from Bend was arranged for anyone traveling by rail. Participants were asked to bring a “complete camping outfit, tent, bedding, groceries, and personal articles,” noting that all the League could provide was “a good camp site and a good program.”

With preparations made, 91 registered to attend and 138 participated in Sunday’s worship. Those in attendance included a missionary who had recently returned from Malaysia. Officers for the coming year were elected and discussion for a 1923 Institute began before the session closed. The 1922 Suttle Lake Epworth League Institute was declared as “unusually successful for a young affair as it is the first Institute of this character held in this part of Oregon.”

The Suttle Lake Institute grew in the coming years, becoming one of the most anticipated events for young people in Central Oregon. The Institute continued to



strive “to send those who attend(ed) back to their home Churches with a Forward Look, and Upward Lift, and a Helpful Hand.” It is in the same Spirit of these early Suttle Lake Institutes that Suttle Lake Camp continues in 2024, creating sacred spaces of Christian hospitality and learning.

On the road to wonder, love, and justice,

Rev. Todd Bartlett
Executive Director Oregon Idaho
of Camp and Retreat Ministries

With the building of modern highways young people from the Willamette Valley began to flock to Suttle Lake Camp, and attendance at the annual Epworth League Institute increased until it reached 300 in 1945.

Hortense Foster began participating at Suttle Lake in 1946 with her husband Jesse Foster, serving together as directors of music. She remembered there being a choir of 40 members who sang at the evening services. The Galilean Service was inspirational for many. Hortense recalled, “This service was held on the hill (the highway side of the lake) for at that time there was hardly any traffic and sound was audible. The choir and campers gathered on the hill while Rev. and Mrs. Kleen, along with a quartette of voices and the speakers were in a boat on the lake. I had my violin in the boat also. In the boat was a cross of lighted flashlights. The choir sang "Jubilate" with the echo voices coming from the quartette in the boat. After the service campers followed the boat’s lighted cross back to camp as they walked the trail in silence to their tents.”

With the use of the site growing, a master plan was worked out with the Forest Service in 1941 to meet the increased need.

A new building would replace the 1925 open-air kitchen and dining area with an indoor dining hall, full kitchen, and a basement providing an activity room for recreation and education. However, World War II stalled any building program. Meals were eaten in two shifts to accommodate everyone.

The new building began as soon as materials were available following the war and was well underway in 1947 with the leadership of Fredrick Martin (Madras). Hortense remembered being on site during the construction. "One episode surrounding the events of the week was the Jewish Rabbi falling into the huge excavation hole (for the dining hall) one night. In the darkness of night he always accompanied his wife to the outhouse on the other side of the excavation since she was afraid of animal encounters (they came from L.A.). When he heard footsteps of 2 other women, he decided, in order to avoid frightening them, to step to one side of the path and he fell into the excavation hole. It was a great idea for a skit on Skit Night---'Joseph in the Pit.' The scripture was read and the faculty portrayed the event. What a ruckus it caused among the parishioners when the kids returned home to reveal what we had done. SACRILEGIOUS!!!"

The new facility was dedicated on August 22, 1948. The dedication program read in part:

Looking to the future we dream of gas stoves and a dishwashing machine for our kitchen; we dream of an oil furnace; we dream of a

piano; we dream of additional sanitary facilities, an infirmary, the development of our own softball field, bathing beach, dock and boathouse; we dream of a caretaker's cabin.

Someday these dreams will come true, and even greater dreams. But most of all we have in our minds a long procession of thousands of young people to whom Suttle Lake means the most memorable time of their lives--truly a mountaintop experience.

Do you think they could have pictured what Suttle Lake Camp might have looked like 75 years later? What might you dream for the future of the camp?

Jane Petke
Director, Suttle Lake Camp



April Birthdays

April 3 Adrian Blackman
April 4 Nicole Willson
April 5 Norma Campbell
April 10 Joe Dryden
April 13 Donna Hall
April 14 Tami Busch
April 18 Vena Edwards
April 19 Deb Payne
April 21 Jeannie Lambert
April 21 Alyssa Bolger
April 21 Amy Persad
April 22 Maya Day
April 24 Patricia Doyle
April 24 Geri Nelson



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

May Birthdays

May 9 Linda Erland
May 16 Gloria Arts
May 18 Samantha Persad
May 27 Berta Richards
May 28 Donna Raschio
May 29 Camie Estes
May 30 Linda Dorfi
May 31 Joe Fairbairn



Are we missing a birthday? Let us know! Contact the office 503-654-3161 ogumc@comcast.net

Connect with us

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Office Hours:

Monday-Thursday

9am-12pm & 1pm-3pm

Weekly Events

- **Sundays at 10:30am**
Worship Service in-person and online
- **Tuesdays at 10:00am**
Men's Bible reading class
- **Wednesdays at 11:00am** Pizza Delivery
- **Wednesdays at 12:00 pm**
AA Women's group
- **Wednesdays at 6:00 pm**
AA Women's group
- **Wednesdays at 7:30 pm** Al-Anon
- **Thursdays at 10:00 am** Quilters
- **Thursdays at 10:00am** Al-Anon

Our Mission:

*“Connecting people with
Jesus and each other to better
our world.”*