

Lent

As we think about Jesus' wilderness time of sacrifice and self-discipline during Lent, we step into a season of examination, spiritual contemplation, and a time for reflection, and the renewal of our commitment to faith. We choose to engage in acts of penance, such as fasting, prayer, and almsgiving, as a way to deepen our connection with God.

Lenten fasting transcends the mere avoidance of particular foods or indulgences; it embodies a symbolic act of letting go of the excesses that may hinder spiritual growth. Within this purposeful emptiness, many find a deep sense of gratitude and a renewed appreciation for the essentials of life. The hunger felt during fasting transforms into a spiritual longing, compelling us to seek nourishment from the divine: By intentionally abstaining from certain comforts, we create space for spiritual reflection and cultivate an awareness of our dependence on the divine.

During this season, we can create opportunities to purposefully gather food for those less fortunate instead of investing our resources in indulgent treats. Rather than mindlessly engaging in screen time or other trivial activities, we can make a conscious effort to connect with God or volunteer to assist our neighbors. Intentionally dedicating time to prayer during walks, savoring moments of quiet reflection, and reaching out to



visit neighbors are meaningful ways to enrich this season—all of which can connect us to God.

As Black Heritage Month intercedes with the season of Lent, the resonating question posed by Dr. King echoes in our minds: "Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'" Lent serves as an opportune period to express our love for God by actively connecting with God's cherished children. It reminds us that we are called to embody the essence of God's people and transform into a beacon of love within our community, reaching out with compassion and care to people around us.

Lent provides a sacred pause—an invitation to delve into the depths of one's soul and rediscover the spiritual essence of life. Through intentional connection with God, prayers, and acts of kindness, we embrace the transformative influence of Lent with a renewed sense of purpose and a deepened connection to the divine.

-Pastor Dylan Hyun

From Your Lay Leader - Pressing the Pause Button

I have temporarily paused my attendance at Sunday worship after what happened at our church's Dec. 19 Charge Conference. Instead, I will be focusing on things that Columbia District Superintendent Tim Overton-Harris recently suggested that I do. He encouraged me to follow my curiosity – to visit other churches and report on what's happening with other congregations.

1) I will be talking to clergy across the district to get their impressions on a few subjects, including how the past Charge Conference season worked for them, i.e., splitting the meetings into separate business and ministry meetings.

2) I will be visiting other churches, including our sibling church, Storyline Community. Gwenda and I went there for the first time last month. It is a small but vibrant and fun church. It has the kind of demographic makeup that many churches would envy, ranging from Boomers to young adults, to families with children. In the social justice realm, Storyline focuses on community organizing to alleviate houselessness. Something special is happening there!

3) I will continue as part of Oak Grove UMC's Land and Housing Core Team. Oak Grove United Methodist and Storyline Community are part of the Leaven Community Land and Housing Coalition in Clackamas County. In January, we heard from community member Gary Rifkin. Gary spoke about navigating the Clackamas County bureaucracy while searching

for information on ways to tackle the affordable housing crisis in our area.

(A bit of history: Oak Grove UMC and Storyline talked about joining the Leaven Land Coalition as far back as March, 2020. In April 2020, our previous pastor, Heather Riggs, wrote a grant proposal and was awarded about \$15,000 by the Columbia District Church Extension Society. Work then began on writing a Memorandum of Understanding between OGUMC and Storyline to do cooperative ministry together to increase connections with local schools and start a local cohort of the Leaven Land and Housing Coalition.)

4) I will be going to other churches in the Columbia District to see how they are answering Bishop Cedrick Bridgeforth's call to do Ministry that Matters, particularly in the area of housing. These churches include Aloha, St. Paul's and Christ (Cedar Mill) United Methodist churches, and Portsmouth Union in North Portland.





My favorite picture of Velma and Calvin "Cal" McConnell is one I took of them at McQueen's, a bar down the street from the church.

The McConnells

joined other Oak Grove UMC folks there in May 2017, to celebrate our church's vote to fully include all people, especially LGBTQIA+ folks, in the life of the church.

In that moment, they were a down-to-earth couple, part of a joyful celebration. Cal was a retired bishop and deeply spiritual. Velma was small in stature but filled with so much love and compassion. She was an active member of the Reconciling Ministries Network, which advocates for LGBTQIA+ inclusion in the church. Together, Cal and Velma gave the Reconciling Ministry Team advice as we worked to become an inclusive church.

Velma passed away Jan. 24. Bishop Cal died last year, on Nov. 28. I especially appreciated Velma's support and encouragement of me as Oak Grove UMC's lay leader, and was honored when she gave me a packet of sermons and stories written by Bishop Cal. We are all so fortunate to have known the McConnells. They are missed.

David Richards Oshiro (oshirobot@gmail.com)

(A memorial service for Velma will be held at Rose City Park United Methodist Church in Portland, Feb. 24, 2024, at 11 am. Rose City Park UMC will stream the service for those unable to attend.)

Salem for Refugees



During Lent, our United Women in Faith and Trinity UMC is inviting us to participate in providing kits to help with new home set-up for "Salem for Refugees". The donated

items will be put into tubs to be given to legal refugees in our area to help them start new homes and rebuild their lives. Categories include kitchen, bathroom, bedding, welcome, infant and toddler, cleaning and personal care. Donated items must be new, so as to bring honor to the refugees. There will be an informational display and collection point in the Fellowship Hall and a weekly updated list in Sunday Bulletin of specifically needed items.



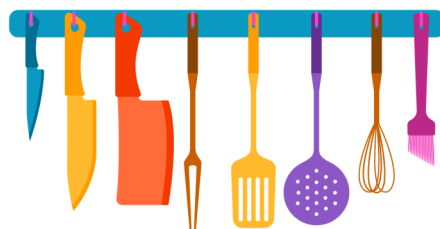
Additionally, you may donate money for item purchase and consider including a personal handwritten note of welcome to the refugees. This must be in an unsealed envelop, please.

This is a wonderful opportunity to live out the welcome and inclusion extended by Jesus during his ministry...

Questions/donations to Donna

Metcalf, donnalmetcalf@comcast.net UWF

President or Rhonda McKimp-



Church Council

Greetings to All! The Church Council had it's first meeting of the year, and we have launched into our work. A few things to share with you:



The make-up of the Council has changed a bit since our Charge Conference in December. This is the current membership: Chair (interim)-Deb Payne, Lay Leader-Dave Richards Oshiro, Lay Member to Annual Conference-Dave Richards Oshiro, Young Adult Representative-Josh Hinckley, Youth Representative-TBD, Finance Chair-Deb Payne, SPRC-Chair TBD by committee, Trustees-Jean Fairbairn, Nominations-Pastor Dylan, Visionaries-Norma Campbell, Tiffany Davis, and one TBD.

The Council will meet monthly in 2024 with a combination of in-person and virtual meetings. Just a quick reminder that all are welcome at our meetings and with voice, but only those who are members are eligible to vote. We welcome anyone who wants to attend any of our meetings.

We discussed at length and agreed to a preliminary budget of approx. \$286,000, with the Finance team watching expenses closely and offering updates and recommendations to the Council on a regular basis through the year.

The Council has lots of work to do this year, and we're jumping in. In the early months, we will be looking to a) solidify our plans for our work in alignment with the Bishop's M.I.L.E., b) determining what our mission and goals are for the coming year(s), and c) working on a way to improve how we work together including planning,

decisions, communications, etc. We look forward to all who are interested in participating to join us for this work. Just let Deb know and watch the Newsletter for updates!

Calling All Singers!



Save the dates. Let's get together and sing an anthem on Palm Sunday, March 24th. We will plan

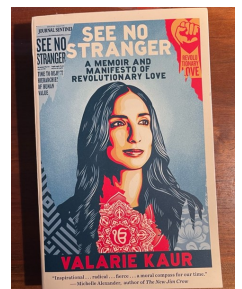
on two Wednesday evening rehearsals; March 13th and 17th at 7:00pm. at the church. It is so rewarding to sing with our friends and share a musical Lenten message with our church family. If you have questions, contact Norma Campbell directly or through the church office .

News Bits

See No Stranger: The Columbia District of the United Methodist Church will host an event with social-justice activist Valarie Kaur May 19 at First United

Methodist Church Portland. Kaur will lead a "master class" in Revolutionary Love – a doctrine that embraces love for all who are in harm's way, including refugees, immigrants, Muslims, Sikhs, Jews, queer and trans people, and others.

A member of the Sikh religion, Kaur was raised to see other people as brothers, sisters and siblings. "Our humanity binds us together, and we vow to fight for a world where all of us can flourish." Kaur's beliefs were tested in the aftermath of the terror attacks of Sept. 11, 2001,



when Sikhs, Muslims and other BIPOC people became the targets of hateful, vengeful individuals.

Attendance to the District-wide event will be limited to those who have read Kaur's book, "See No Stranger." Columbia District Lay Leader Cynthia MacLeod will lead a book study session at Fremont UMC Feb. 24, 9 am to 3:30 pm.

Register here: <https://gnw-reg.brtapp.com/columbiadistrictlaitysession>

View Valarie's TED Talk, "Three Lessons of Revolutionary Love in a Time of Rage," by going to YouTube.com and searching for "Valerie Kaur Ted Talk."

Visit the online Revolutionary Love Learning Hub by going to <https://valariekaur.com/revolutionary-love-project/>

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"Ministry that Matters" – People from around the metro area visited the new Safe Rest village at Aloha United Methodist Church during a recent open house. Visitors toured the complex, looked inside two of the 30 new pod houses, checked out the shower facilities and asked questions about how the village will function when it opens later this month.

Aloha UMC courageously went forward with the project in the face of intimidation from a small group of vocal opponents. It's ready to help its houseless neighbors get off the street, and the people at Oak Grove UMC did our small bit to help our sibling church. The personal-hygiene kits we assembled and delivered will help make life in the tiny, spartan houses a little more comfortable.



The village will be there for two years, at which point, Washington County expects to have additional transitional and other housing built to accommodate houseless folks.

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General Conference: The United Methodist Church will hold its worldwide General Conference April 23 to May 3 in Charlotte, NC. The General Conference is the church's lawmaking body, which last held its regular session in 2016. The church normally meets every four years, but the 2020 conference was postponed by the COVID pandemic.

Find answers to Frequently Asked Questions here: <https://www.umnews.org/en/news/a-beginners-guide-to-general-conference>

Rev. Jeremy Smith, pastor at Seattle First UMC and author of the Hacking Christianity blog, sees worldwide regionalization and LGBTQIA+ inclusion as top talking points at General Conference. Read his take here: <https://hackingchristianity.net/2023/11/behind-the-on-again-off-again-2026-general-conference.html>



**General
Conference
FAQ**



THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Mark your calendars: The Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference will meet at Tigard United Methodist Church, June 20 to 23, to do the business of the Church in our region. This year's theme will be "Being Well," building on the 2023-24 theme of "Go and Do Likewise," said Rev. Dr. Cedrick Bridgeforth, resident bishop of the Greater Northwest Area of the United Methodist Church.

This year's theme takes the story of Jesus' encounter with a Samaritan woman at a well from John 4:4-17. Their interaction brought refuge to the woman and those around her and prompts a teaching moment we can choose to learn from even today, the bishop said.

The Oregon-Idaho conference will be about a month after the global General Conference. Bishop Cedrick asks for prayers for the United Methodist Church, conference delegates, Oregon-Idaho staff members and volunteers, and himself as the church discerns its next faithful steps forward.

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Wichita Center: The Oak Grove UMC congregation is a big supporter of the work of Wichita Center for Family & Community. The center has a food pantry and clothing closet, and provides important services to students and families in the North Clackamas School District, including to students at New Urban High School



So, many were surprised when Clackamas County terminated its agreement with Wichita Center, and gave it 180-day notice to vacate the property. Without a new accord or location, Wichita Center will close June 30, said North Clackamas Schools Assistant Superintendent Cindy Detchon in a story in The Milwaukie Review.

The newspaper also reported that North Clackamas School leaders are working with the county to keep Wichita Services going.

To read the story: Go to milwaukiereview.com; search for Wichita Center; then click on "Wichita Center to 'remain a public service' despite Clackamas County's termination."



Financial Update

by Deb Payne, Finance Chair

Greetings to all from the Finance Team! Here's a few tidbits from the Team as we kick off a new year!



1) As of the January Church Council meeting, I am your new Church Finance Chair. I took last year off and served with Francie Naftzger as one your Financial Secretaries. This year, tho, I am back in the chairperson's seat, and I am excited to say that Gloria Arts and Kathy Drais are your new Financial Secretaries and are working to learn the processes. And, the amazing Amy Persad continues to serve as our Bookkeeper (thank goodness!) And Francie is still nearby to help me when I need to consult on the various needs in the world of Finance. Thanks, Francie!

2. Statements for 2023 have been distributed Yay! If you have any questions about your statements, please reach out to Francie or me, and we will dig into it. NOTE: We discovered after statements went out that the data dump did not pick up the Winter Blitz donations. So, we have updated the statements for those givers and mailed out corrected statements.

3. This is one of those “stating the obvious” statements, but here it is anyway. There was no financial giving campaign held last Fall for 2024. As such, we are making educated guesses about what the giving will be for 2024 and have created our budget around that information. If you are able to continue to give as you did in 2023 or even increase your giving, it will be very much appreciated as we work to meet the financial needs of our church. And, I will keep you informed each month how we are doing financially and what efforts are being made to support the financial needs of our programs (Nurturing, Outreach, Education, Worship), staffing and administrative expenses, building and grounds expenses, etc.

4. And, that said, looking back at 2023, we ended the year in the black by more than \$11,000. However, to complete a number of required and significant building and grounds expenses, we have continued to dip into endowment accounts that are available to us along with auction proceeds earlier than we usually have to do. But, we're in the black, and the Finance Team will keep a tight watch on our projects and expenses through the year.

Thank you for all you do! It is because of you that we continue to Be the Church Together. You are truly amazing and wonderful people!

Deb Payne, Finance Chair

Our History: What created camp and retreat ministry?

During the next few months, we are going to cover a bit of the history of our United Methodist camps in Oregon and Idaho.

We operate six sites across the conference: Camp Magruder, the Alton L. Collins Retreat Center, Camp Latgawa, Suttle Lake Camp, Wallowa Lake Camp, and Sawtooth Camp. Each has stories to be told that have shaped the camp and its ministry in that location. I hope this series will enable you to know more about all of our sites and the ministry that they offer.

Before we get to the sites, I want to provide you with a little history of the organization itself. I'll do that next week, when I will focus specifically on camp and retreat ministry in Oregon-Idaho as an organization. But this week I would like to share with you some of the wider history that shaped camp and retreat ministry in general. And I want to give a shout-out to Lisa Jean Hoefner, who served as our executive director of camp and retreat ministry for 16 years (speaking of history!). Much of the information for today's "history lesson" comes from Lisa Jean.

There are at least four movements that created what we think of today as camp and retreat ministry. Each responded to the needs of the time. The first part of our history comes from tent meetings. These were opportunities for people to gather in places apart from their local community and share in a religious experience with others (some they knew and some they didn't). Tent meetings were



*PHOTO: The sign for Leewood, which was on the grounds of what is now the Alton L. Collins Retreat Center. Stay tuned to this newsletter for more about the history of the Leewood/Collins site and its ministry in the Portland area and beyond (Todd Bartlett).

focused on worship and preaching; they were multigenerational events (think of our current family camps), and often had a tabernacle that centered the community. Falls City UMC is a location where tent meetings were once held right here in our own conference.

The second element from history I want to lift up is the Chautauqua movement. This effort focused on supporting the Sunday School model, teaching the teachers. There was an emphasis on arts, recreation, education, great speakers, and living in community together on the grounds of the community (this was often buildings rather than tents). The Collins Retreat Center is a clear example of the influence of the Chautauqua movement.

The third element is that of the Epworth League Institutes. These institutes supported high school leadership development, using workshops and speakers. Church groups came to sites to live and share meals together. Both Suttle Lake and Wallowa Lake hosted Epworth League Institute events in their early days.

The fourth element, following World War II, was that of small-group rustic camping. This practice extended the age level downward and provided focus on learning, discovering, and reflecting, rather than the speakers and classes that were part of Chautauqua and Epworth League. Loon Lake

Loon Lake (a southern Oregon site that was sold in the early part of this century) followed the small-group rustic model, and Magruder still has elements of that type of camping.

As I pointed out above, most of our outdoor ministry experiences today are shaped by one or more of these four elements. Some experiences are clearly a descendant of only one of these models, but others have been influenced by pieces of several elements. Examining these historical threads is a reminder that people of faith have always looked for creative methods to respond to the spiritual needs of their communities. May we continue to find ways for the Spirit to work in and through us and our models for ministry.

On the road to wonder, love, and justice,

Rev. Todd Bartlett

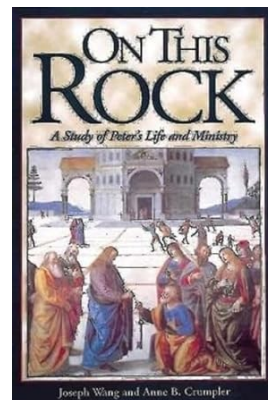
Invitation to LENT class...

Don't miss our LENT study about the life and ministry of Peter! He bridges Jesus' life, ministry and carries over after the resurrection to the fledgling Christian community. Peter personifies how imperfection is transformed through faith.

Our study text is "On This Rock" by Joseph Wang and Anne Crumpler.

First In-person class of this 6 week study is on Tuesday, 2/20 at 1pm and zoom class offered Wednesday, 2/21, at 4pm. Contact Donna Metcalf

donnalmetcalf@comcast.net for information or to register. All are welcome!



Our Journey Together Through Lent

Oak Grove United Methodist Church

Together in Worship

Ash Wednesday Feb 14 at 6:30 pm

Let's begin the Lenten season together on this day – Ash Wed – a solemn reminder of human mortality and the need for reconciliation with God.

Sunday Worship Sundays at 10:30am

Let's worship together during the six Sundays of Lent – the period of reflection, penance, fasting, and preparation.

Good Friday March 29 at 6:30pm

Let's come together to remember the day Jesus was crucified – the day Jesus willingly suffered and died as the ultimate sacrifice for our sins.

Easter Sunday March 31 at 10:30am

Let's celebrate together the resurrection of our Lord

Together in Study

"On This Rock: A Study of Peter's Life and Ministry"

This six-week study will take place as follows:

- In-person class starts at 1pm on Tuesday, Feb 20 thru March 26 at the Fairbairn home. Donna Metcalf to facilitate.
- Zoom class starts at 4pm on Wednesday Feb 21 thru Mar 27 on-line. (Rhonda McKimpson to facilitate)

Please let Donna Metcalf know which class you will be attending. And, order your book now so that you have it on time!

Together in Service

We have two ways to serve our communities during this season. Please consider being in service as we step through the season of Lent together.



Sack Lunch Preparation: We gather to create 150 sack lunches twice monthly to be distributed by Clackamas Service Center and Father's Heart to those dealing with food scarcity. Sign up in the Fellowship Hall to volunteer and be in service together. Coordinator: Norma Campbell
Feb 12 @ 3:30 Feb 26 @ 3:30 Mar 11 @ 3:30 Mar 25 @ 3:30

Kits for "Salem for Refugees" Program: Our United Women in Faith and Trinity UMC are sponsoring an effort to provide kits to help with new home set-up for refugees in our area. There will be an informational display and collection point in the Fellowship Hall. Watch for details in the newsletter and weekly emails for details. Coordinator: Donna Metcalf

Additionally, you may donate money for items to be purchased; make your checks out to Oak Grove UWF and consider including a personal handwritten note of welcome to the refugees. Please put your donations of money in an unsealed envelope with your note. This is a wonderful opportunity to live out the welcome and inclusion extended by Jesus during his ministry.

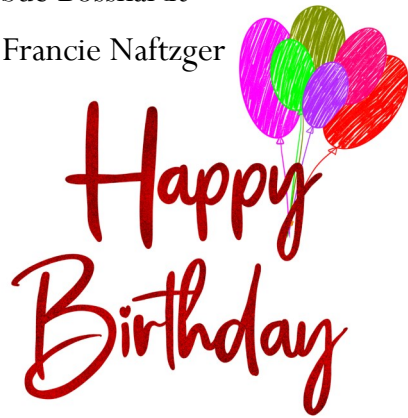
Lenten Calendar – 2024

February 14 thru March 30

Sunday Worship	Monday Fasting	Tuesday Pray	Wednesday Do Good	Thursday Connect	Friday Health	Saturday Study
This Lenten Calendar is to guide us through this season of prayer, fasting, good works, study, and connection with others as we prepare to celebrate the Lord's Resurrection.			Ash Wednesday Worship at OGUMC @ 6:30pm 	Send a note of encouragement to a friend who is going through a difficult time.	Stretch out for 10 minutes when you get out of bed today. Thank God for being with you.	Read: Psalm 27:14 Reflect and then pray to God for patience.
First Sunday of Lent Worship with all your heart and soul.	Fast from criticism this week.	Breath Prayer <u>In:</u> Let me be still and know <u>Out:</u> that you are my God, my hope, my peace.	Choose a group to volunteer and/or pray for throughout the Lenten season.	Write a note to someone who has helped you grow in your faith and say "thank you."	Take a walk and greet those you meet with a smile. Ask God to be with each of the people you meet.	Read: Philippians 2 vs 3-4 Reflect and then pray for God's guidance.
Second Sun of Lent Worship with all your heart and soul.	Fast from complaining this week.	Pray for your pastor and other ministry team members at our church.	Smile and offer a compliment to three people who are not expecting it.	Write a note or call someone to thank them for the good works they do for others.	Grab a couple of weights or cans and life them as you listen to a song that is filled with hope.	Read: Psalm 25:5 Reflect and then pray for God's guidance.
Third Sunday of Lent Worship with all your heart and soul.	Fast from procrastination this week.	Pray for our congregation as we strive to care for each other and the community.	Give up some of your time by helping someone who needs it.	Write a note or call a friend who needs to hear from you.	Park away from the store door to add extra steps to your day. Thank God for being with you.	Read: Romans 12:12 Reflect and then pray for God's guidance.
Fourth Sunday Of Lent Worship with all your heart and soul.	Fast from negative thinking this week.	Pray for each of your family members asking for God's love and support.	Do an act of kindness for someone who is not expecting it.	Meet up with a friend or family member to just talk and support one another.	Put on some music and dance to it with wild abandon. Thank God for dancing with you.	Read: 1 Peter 5:6 Reflect and then pray for God's guidance.
Fifth Sunday Of Lent Worship with all your heart and soul.	Fast from gossiping this week.	Make a list of things you are grateful for and thank God for the abundance	Donate some gently loved items that you no longer need.	Reach out to a loved one who you will not be with for Easter and have a chat.	Do something healthy with a friend or family member and thank God for that person.	Read John 14:25-31 Reflect and then pray for God's guidance.
Palm Sunday Worship with all your heart and soul. 	Fast from guilt this week.	Pray for those on the prayer chain and others you know who are struggling.	Do an act of kindness for someone who does not know you did it.	Maundy Thursday 	Good Friday Worship at OGUMC @ 6:30pm 	Holy Saturday Read: Micah 7:7 Reflect and then pray to God for patience.

February Birthdays

Feb. 10 Linda Martin
Feb. 18 Carl Martin
Feb. 20 Mary Lou Stoutenburg
Feb. 22 Nichole Bolger
Feb. 23 Glaydis Basinger
Feb. 24 Kimberly Johnson
Feb. 24 Mary Lu Streight
Feb. 25 Sue Bosshardt
Feb. 26 Francie Naftzger



Connect with us

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Office Hours:

Monday-Thursday

9am-12pm & 1pm-3pm

March Birthdays

March 2 Laurie Yadon
March 6 Janet Beale
March 8 Bud Robinson
March 14 Stori Long
March 15 Barbara Brandt
March 19 Walt Garvin
March 22 Joan McNamara
March 28 Dale Naftzger
March 29 Steve Busch

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

Weekly Events

- **Sundays at 10:30am**
Worship Service in-person and online
- **Tuesdays at 10:00am**
Men's Bible reading class
- **Wednesdays at 10:00 am** Quilters
- **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 10:00am** Al-Anon

Our Mission:

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