



Newsletter

February 2025

John's Epistle: Resurrection Stories

What's your resurrection story?

Maybe that's a term you aren't familiar with. If that's the case, I certainly wouldn't be surprised. Though I have been using it for almost 25 years now, I don't know if I have ever heard anyone else use the term, in spite of the fact that I have been hearing people tell their "resurrection stories" my whole life.

So, what is a resurrection story? What do I mean when I ask if you have one?

Those are good questions, even if I do ask them myself! Like any good pastor, I'm going to answer it in a roundabout manner.

I first started using the term "resurrection stories" in the spring of 2003, when I was leading a congregation in celebrating the Easter season for the first time. I have always felt as if the church makes a mistake in the way we celebrate Easter. I don't mean Easter the Sunday, but Easter the Season.

We put an enormous amount of work into preparing meaningful worship and spiritual life experiences into the Season of Lent, as if the entire Season of Lent is one long period of preparation for Easter. To be fair, that's exactly what it is—one long period of preparation for Easter. What we get wrong, however, is that Easter isn't a day, it is a season.

In terms of celebrating the Resurrection of Jesus, Easter Sunday is only the beginning. That Sunday that we call "Easter" is the first of fifty days that the church claimed as "the Great Fifty Days." To make an even more decisive point, the Great Fifty Days, unlike Lent, are actually present in the



Christian Scriptures. The Fifty Days begin on Easter Sunday and culminate with the celebration of Pentecost, when the true power of the Resurrection was unleashed and flowed through “all the believers.”

As a first-year pastor in charge, I wanted to celebrate Easter as a Season, rather than as a day. When I was looking for a theme to guide me throughout the Great Fifty Days, it occurred to me that my church members had been telling me all kinds of stories about what God had done in their lives. Those stories were all about the power of the Resurrection being displayed in real life. They were, as I called the series, “Resurrection Stories.”

Every place I have served, in every first year, I have reclaimed that term and led a congregation through a celebration of how the power of the Resurrection isn’t just a story about Jesus. It is a story about us—regular people who have received life.

Sometimes the Resurrection Story is a dramatic story, like the woman, Sherry, who during that first series 22 years ago told the story of her “near-death experience.” Sometimes it’s the story of someone who simply went to church their entire life and finds a beloved community there. And sometimes it’s how someone else’s “resurrection” inspired the teller to claim that power that is available to us all.

So, I’ll ask again ... what’s your resurrection story? Is it something dramatic? A story about a person who was instrumental in your faith development? A story about how you have seen God’s power at work in the world? These kinds of stories are part of how we take seriously the United Methodist Vow of Witness.

On Easter Sunday, I’ll be sharing my own personal Resurrection Story. And I’d like it if you would tell yours, too. No matter how simple or “boring” it may seem to you, I can promise that in telling it, someone will be inspired.

Over the next several weeks, I will be collecting these stories in hopes that in telling them our collective witness might be strengthened. If you have a testimony to share, all I ask is that you send it to me in a letter or an email, or you can make an appointment with me to tell it to me in person. In order to make it easier for you, I’m including my email address and telephone number (texting is great) below.

God has gifted you with a story. Share it!



Winter Blitz Team

Winter Blitz 2024 was a time of learning as each location became independent in many ways including planning, fundraising, scheduling and implementation. Now that we have a good idea of the expectations, I'd like to put together a team to do our work for Winter Blitz 2025. Will you consider being a part of the Winter Blitz Team? Together we can do great work for the students and their families of the schools in our area. A few things of note:

We'll start our work in May with a planning meeting. I don't expect that we will need to meet often – maybe 2 or 3 times before the event.

We'll brainstorm, we'll plan, we'll make decisions, we'll do good works.

Winter Blitz 2025 will be held on Sat, Dec 6 at OGUMC.

If you are willing to be on the Winter Blitz 2025 team, please let me know soon! I look forward to having a team of loving people to implement this program that serves so many in our area. Please consider this opportunity to serve.



Cans & Bottles Drop

The Finance Team is very excited to announce that Tad Boxell has stepped forward to serve as OGUMC's Can Man. As we look for ways to increase our income at OGUMC, this is an easy way to earn some extra dollars. Here's how it works:

You save your cans and bottles that require a deposit at the time of purchase.

You bring your saved cans and bottles to the church and put them in one of the "Drop" boxes in the Fellowship Hall.

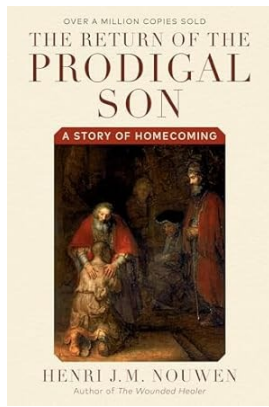
Tad will manage getting our cans and bottles bagged and tagged appropriately and take them to BottleDrop every week or so.



It's a super simple way to increase our income at OGUMC, you don't have to manage returning your bottles and cans, and it will help us to continue serving the congregation and community at large. It's a win-win-win! Please consider bringing your cans and bottles to the church for Tad, The Can Man to turn in for us!

Deb Payne, Finance Chair

Lent Bible Study



Lent is a time of introspection and growing spiritually closer to God. Your church is offering a Lent study of "Return of the Prodigal Son: A Story of Homecoming" by Henri Nouwen. It is a very rich, meditative study helping us look at ourselves through the lens of the familiar parable.

Our class will run for 6 weeks from Monday, 3/10 to 4/14 at 10:30am in room 7 of the church. We will offer hybrid teaching so the classes will have a zoom option as well as in person.

Please order your own books which are \$9.49@ on Amazon. If you need help getting a book, let Donna Metcalf know and it will be obtained for you.

Registration starts on February 9th, Contact Donna Metcalf at (503) 200- 9716 or donnalmetcalf@comast.net for questions and registration.

This is a life-changing study, please don't miss it!"

Why Go to Church

At a recent meeting of the Renewal Team, Cliff Hillebrandt shared this, and we want to share it with you!

A church goer wrote a letter to the editor of a newspaper and complained that it made no sense to go to church every Sunday. "I've gone for 30 years now," he wrote, "and in that time I have heard something like 1500 sermons. But for the life of me, I can't remember a single one of them. So, I think I'm wasting my time and the pastors are wasting theirs by giving sermons at all."

This started a real controversy in the "Letters to the Editor" column, much to the delights of the editor. It went on for weeks until someone wrote this clincher. "I've been married for 30 years now. In that time, my wife has cooked some 32,000 meals. But, for the life of me, I cannot recall the entire menu for a single one of those meals. But, I do know this... They all nourished me and gave me the strength I needed to do my work. If my wife had not given me these meals, I would be physically dead today. Likewise, if I had not gone to church for nourishment, I would be spiritually dead today!"

When you are DOWN to nothing... God is UP to something! Faith sees the invisible, believes the incredible and receives the impossible. Thanks to God for our physical and spiritual nourishment! (author unknown)

See you in church!



Mardi Gras CELEBRATION

SATURDAY, MARCH 1ST 6PM

OAK GROVE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
14700 SE RUPERT DRIVE, OAK GROVE, OR 97267



PANCAKE DINNER

DIXIE LAND BAND

MARDI GRAS ACTIVITIES

\$25 PER PERSON

TICKETS AVAILABLE
AT THE DOOR OR ON-LINE

GO TO THIS WEBSITE OR SCAN THE QR CODE TO REGISTER

<https://tinyurl.com/UWFMardiGras>



Fundraiser for the local United Women in Faith

- Benefits UWF mission work for children youth and women
- Some proceeds go to UWF Women's Retreat on May 10 at Alton Collins

Contact Donna Metcalf (503-200-9716) or donnalmetcalf@comcast.net
for more information

Don't miss the fun Mardi Gras celebration the United Women in Faith are providing just before the start of Lent! It is on Saturday, March 1 at 6pm and includes a deluxe pancake dinner, Dixie Land band via Mark Ortloff, and fun Mardi Gras activities with Kathi Ortloff.

This event is a fundraiser for the UWF with tickets for \$25@ to benefit the UWF Spring women's retreat at Alton Collins as well as local, national and international mission for women, children and youth - all terrific causes!

You certainly get your money's worth with dinner and entertainment plus you are helping others move closer to God's kingdom.

Please purchase tickets at church or you can do on-line registration following the QR code or website below Fliers and ticket sales in fellowship hall following worship.

All are welcome, so consider bringing a friend or family member...share the fun!"

COMING HOME

Your Lenten Task Force is hard at work planning for the Lenten Season and a joyful Easter morning. Although we are still locking down plans, we want to give you some general information as we remember and reflect on the forty days Jesus spent in the desert fasting and praying before beginning his public ministry. We will remember the passion, death, and resurrection of our Lord Christ Jesus during this time of reflection, and we will work to recover ourselves through the practice of faith. This can happen in many ways for each of us – individually and together through prayer, worship, study, fasting, penance, giving, and more.

. Here are some special dates to remember:

Ash Wednesday, March 5th – Worship Service at 6:00pm

Palm Sunday, April 13th – Worship Service at 10:30am

Maundy Thursday, April 17th – worship info available soon

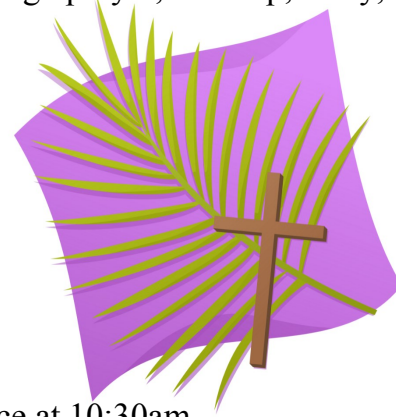
Good Friday, April 18th – worship info available soon

Easter Sunday, April 20th – Celebrate the Risen Christ! – worship service at 10:30am

Adult Study Class: Mondays at 10:30am beginning March 10th. We will use “The Return of the Prodigal Son” written by Henry Nouwen who guides us to recovering God in our lives. We will be led by Donna Metcalf through this hybrid study, meeting both in-person and online each week through April 14th.

Watch this space for more to come!

The Lenten Task Force



TICKETS AVAILABLE!



Throwback Concert with Mark Ortloff & Friends

A Musical Celebration of Decades Past

Saturday, March 15th at 4:00pm



If you missed out on getting tickets for this wonderful concert (that’s back by popular demand) at the Fall FUNdraiser and would like to attend the concert, please see Deb or Gloria Payne for tickets. They are \$15 each (checks made out to the church), and a fun time will be had by all! Don’t miss out on this special time together!

Newsletter Articles & Due Dates

Greetings to All! As we continue into 2025, and as your new Lay Leader, I want to make sure that you have the information that you need to stay informed about the happenings at Oak Grove UMC. One of the most effective ways to do so is through our monthly church newsletter and the weekly email blast.



We use our church newsletter and weekly email blast to effectively communicate information to the congregation in order to keep everyone informed about church activities, foster a sense of community, and essentially acting as a central hub for sharing news!

So, if you have information to share with the congregation, share away! Due dates for your articles are:

Monthly Newsletter: due no later than 9:00am on the fourth Monday of each month (and it is included in the weekly email blast on Thursdays).

Weekly Email – due no later than 9:00am on Tuesday of each week, and it is sent each Thursday afternoon.

NOTE: If you do not receive the weekly email blast on Thursdays, just let Jenny know in the church office, and she will make sure you are on the distribution list.

A Message from Your Lay Leader

Greetings, my friends! As I write this, I am coming up on the end of the first month as your Lay Leader. Let me start this first message as your Lay Leader by saying thank you – thank you for your trust in me to serve in this capacity, for your support as fellow lay persons (and you clergy, too), and for your willingness to serve with me in the coming year.

I've had several people ask me in the last couple of months what the Lay Leader does. Good question! The United Methodist Discipleship Ministries shares the answer to that question in this way:

The lay leader represents the laypeople in the congregation in working with the pastor for the mission and vision of the congregation. (Establishing a mission and vision for Oak Grove UMC is a priority for me this year in working with the Renewal Team. Stay tuned for how you can be a part of this very important work in the near future!)

The lay leader engages in spiritual practices that build a relationship of attentiveness to God's will and direction.



The lay leader represents the laypeople in the congregation and serves as a role model of Christian discipleship for the congregation.

The lay leader works with the pastor and other leaders to launch or strengthen ministries that build discipleship.

The lay leader assists in advising the church council about opportunities available and the needs expressed for a more effective lay ministry of the church in the community.

The lay leader plans with other leaders in the congregation for celebrating the ministry of laypeople throughout the year and especially on Laity Sunday.

The lay leader meets regularly with the pastor to discuss the state of the church and the opportunities for ministry to advance the mission and ministry of the congregation in the community.

The lay leader informs the laity of training opportunities provided by the annual conference.

Lay leaders are encouraged to become certified lay servants.

The lay leader is a voting member of the charge conference, the church council, the pastor-parish or staff-parish relations committee, the finance committee, and the nominations committee. (Each of these committees has specific responsibilities, but the lay leader represents the laity in each situation, as well as serving as an interpreter of the actions and programs of the annual conference and the general church.

Whew! That sounds like a lot! As I take a deep breath, I will share that in many ways, I feel as though I have been serving as your unofficial Lay Leader for well over a year. But, now it's official, and I look forward to your support and help in ensuring that I serve you well as your lay leader. Watch this space each month for info, updates, and missives as they strike me!

Blessings to you all!

Deb Payne, Lay Leader

Wichita Center Focused Needs
February

 Canned meat, like tuna, chicken, etc.

 New underwear

 Socks for school age kids

 "2 in 1" shampoo

Clackamas Service Center
Focused Needs
February

 Cold/Hot Cereal 

 &  Shampoo/Conditioner



February

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

March

March 2 Laurie Yadon
March 6 Janet Beale
March 8 Bud Robinson
March 15 Barbara Brandt
March 16 Cathy Dulmage
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 officeogumc@gmail.com

Connect with us

Facebook:

OakGroveUnitedMethodistChurch-Oregon

YouTube:

Oak Grove United Methodist Church Oregon

Website:

www.OakGroveUnitedMethodist.com

Phone:

503-654-3161

Email:

officeogumc@gmail.com

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 68238
Oak Grove, OR 97268

Street Address:

14700 SE Rupert Drive
Oak Grove, OR 97267

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 12:00 pm**
AA Women's group
- **Wednesdays at 6:00 pm**
AA group
- **Wednesdays at 7:30 pm** Al-Anon
- **Thursdays at 10:00 am** Quilters
- **Thursdays at 10:00am** Al-Anon