

2015 Annual Report

Northwest United Protestant Church



May 2016

Moderator's Report

This document includes reports from the Officers, Stewards and Commission Chairs in the church. I am sure you will agree that 2015 and the first quarter of 2016 have resulted in many fine accomplishments in the life of the church.

Having been associated with a variety of churches in my life, I consider Northwest, as a spiritual community, to be the most welcoming and spiritually nurturing I have experienced. A case could be made that Northwest, albeit a small church, is one of the most inspirational in all of Christendom. The reason for this lies with a very gifted pastor and a congregation of big-hearted people of diverse backgrounds and ages.

Over the time period covered by this report, significant progress has been made in church administration and management, development of youth and adult education opportunities, church activities, quality of the worship experience and outreach to the community at large. The church is growing in numbers and it is particularly gratifying to see many children up front every Sunday for children's chat. Financially the church is in the black and getting healthier.

The church does face challenges particularly concerning our physical home. We have started to address our roof and AC problems in a committed manner. Beyond the roof and AC, there is a list of other property issues that will need to be addressed eventually. I am confident, that working in community, we will be able to solve these problems.

It is an honor for me to be associated with the people of Northwest.

Mel Adams, Moderator

Elder's Report

This past year six individuals served our church as Elders. They were Sue Jewett, Joyce Willis, Connie Eckard, Shirley Wolf, Jan Hansens and myself, Mike Dodson who served as the head of the elders for the calendar year. These dedicated leaders of our church met at least once a month with our Pastor Liv Gibbons to review the state of our church and congregation. In doing so, the Elders endeavor to minister to those who may be in need of special attention, review the list of shut-ins or those who cannot attend services and offer them with the opportunity for communion to be brought to them, provide insight and support to the Pastor and serve on the church Board. And

additionally one Elder is in service to the congregation at each Sunday's Worship Service.

In all of those capacities and more the dedicated group of Elders was always ready and willing to step in and provide help and leadership whenever it was needed or requested and I am very proud to have been one of this group.

Michael Dodson, Elders Chairperson

Children and Youth Commission Report

2015 was an important year for the Children and Youth Commission. We began the year creating our own lessons using a The Children's Bible Story Book supplemented with activities from the Children's Bible Activities database and other online low-cost or no-cost materials and ended it with the purchase of supplies for, and the complete implementation of, the Worship & Wonder curriculum. Along the way we took advantage of a six-week series titled "Journey through Lent", provide by teacher Jan Hansens, lesson plans paralleling Pastor Liv's gospel sermon topics, and curriculum provided by the Society of Saint Andrew called "Abundance Orchard" for our summer sessions.

On April 24th, 4 of our 5 teachers attended Worship & Wonder/Godly Play training at All-Saints Episcopal Church in Richland with educators from All-Saints, Shalom, Westside, St. Timothy's Episcopal Church, the Korean Presbyterian Church, Opportunity Christian Church, the United Churches of Olympia, and the First Christian Church of Clarkston. Putting together this valuable training with a professional trainer from Seattle was no small feat and accomplished almost entirely through the efforts of Pastor Liv because of her belief in this material.

Our biggest obstacle in making Worship & Wonder a reality was the initial cost of the reusable materials. This money was raised through an Adopt-a-Lesson event on June 14th put together by the Education Department, a generous \$900 gift from the Memorials Committee and Church Board budgeted funds of \$2,000. When pledges to support our proposed budget fell short and \$1000 of the needed funds were removed from Sunday School funding, teacher Pat Cahow stepped forward with a gift to make up our shortfall.

Much work went into preparing for Worship & Wonder. The Sunday School room was completely rearranged and repainted in August, new furniture was purchased and old furniture was moved out or repurposed. The teachers attended weekly meetings throughout August to practice their lessons, give each other feedback, and to get a

refresher session from experienced All-Saint's teachers. On September 13th we rolled out our new Worship & Wonder curriculum and have been using it ever since.

Admittedly, not everything has gone without a hitch. The material is designed for preschool thru early primary aged kids, so some of our older students found it a little juvenile and impersonal at first. Plus the material is designed for a much longer Sunday School period – 1 hour or more – when we only had 30 to 45 minutes with the kids. But our teachers have adapted, taking the children's comments to heart. We have adjusted the order we present the lessons, moving craft time (which can be lengthened or shortened with ease) to the end, making our Feast more generous, including more face-to-face sharing and interactivity, and older students now are often recruited as helpers.

Joyce Willis, Children and Youth Commission Chairperson

Personnel Commission Report

Our Pianist/Choir Director, Darla Shupe terminated her employment with Northwest United Protestant Church and moved to Spokane with her family. Pastor Teddy Shupe, her husband was transferred from his church in Pasco, WA to a new church in Spokane.

Carissa Jones filled in for several months but when offered the position, decided not to become our Pianist/Choir Director.

After advertising for several weeks in the newspaper and on the Internet, and checking with individuals who might know of a possible replacement for our Pianist/Choir Director, we received one applicant, Christian Alvarez. After interviewing him, giving him music to play, and listening/observing him, he was offered the position. After he was offered the position, we have had one additional query about the position.

Christian Alvarez is presently working under a three month agreement.

We advertised for a second Nursery Attendant but did not receive any interest in the position. The wages were at minimum wage for only about 2 hours per week. As a result, we are using volunteers from the congregation as the second person for the Nursery.

Jim Kion, 2015 Personnel Commission Chairperson

Property Commission Report

The best way to report the Property Commission activities is to discuss what shared responsibilities it has within NWUP Church. A term of service within this commission will involve not only the coming to the church on Sunday, but also the day-to-day activities surrounding being a member. Duties may include shoveling snow, trimming trees, picking up leaves, pulling weeds, fixing broken windows, fixing locks, unplugging drains, picking up garbage, setting up tables and chairs, repairing equipment, adjusting heating or cooling thermostats or providing a wheel chair when needed.

One of the Property Commission's additional tasks includes the preparation and presentation of budget requirements for the upcoming year. Appropriate budget amounts are directed to the church board: (Salary of staff are not a part of the Property Commission budget.) In order to accomplish this task, each of the responsibilities listed must be addressed.

- Insurance for buildings and properties, people and equipment against all accidental and/or natural causes.
- Utilities that are provided for the buildings and grounds including: electrical, water (irrigation and potable), sewer, and garbage service.
- Fire alarm testing and remote controlled monitoring.
- Custodial supplies.
- Building maintenance and water heaters.
- Equipment used for mowing, spraying, edging, vacuuming, watering, trimming and year round maintaining and maintenance of said equipment.
- Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) maintenance.
- State, county and city fees.
- Additional repair, replacement and/or special cost amounts (from restricted or temporary funds) needed that would not be included in Capital Improvement finance plans.

The Property Commission members proposed a budgetary amount of about \$30,000.00 to provide for NWUP Church 2015 financial operation.

Jim Jewett, 2015 Property Commission Chairperson

Social Concerns/ World Outreach Report

For the first time in the Church's history, the Social Concerns and World Outreach Commissions combined into one Commission. In 2015 we did not have a committee, but rather had a variety of members helping with individual projects where they had an interest.

In February, we had the annual "Souper Bowl of Caring", an opportunity to share lunch and raise money for our local *Food Bank*. This is a long-standing national initiative of Churches raising funds to fight hunger in their own community. It was a rousing success, providing well over \$1000.00 in goods and funds to help our neighbors.

In July we sponsored a table at the "Evening for the Angels" fundraiser for the *Tri-Cities Chaplaincy*. Both November and December provided yet more opportunity for helping. Both Thanksgiving and Christmas brought about opportunity to do extensive food drives for the *Food Bank*. Warm coats and winter wear were also delivered to support the *White Swan Mission*.

This Committee has a small budget to help with items such as gas, food and power bills on an individual basis as need arises. Although not officially under the umbrella of Social Concerns/World Outreach, *Disciples Women's Ministry* had presentations from guest speakers on issues of homelessness, the issue of abduction of minors for prostitution, and the *Support, Advocacy and Resource Center*, focusing on sexual assault and abuse. They also had a presentation from *Safe Harbor Crisis Center*.

Another important group "Food for Friends" provided dinners monthly to members and friends of NWUP on a regular basis. This committee could not have been successful without many individuals sharing their time and talents as needs arose. We extend our hearty thanks to all of them.

Jan Hansens, 2015 Social Concerns/World Outreach Chair

Stewardship and Finance Report

In April, Anna and Jim Kion attended the Stewardship and Finance Retreat, "CREATING A CULTURE OF GENEROSITY" sponsored by the Disciples Church. The Retreat took place on Friday evening and Saturday (April 17 and 18) at the Country Homes Christian Church in Spokane, WA. The retreat was led by Bruce Barkhauer, Minister for Faith and Giving for the Disciples of Christ, and Rev. Jerry Lang, vice

president for the Christian Church Foundation. The information from this retreat was used for NWUP Church's 2015 Stewardship Drive.

In May, we formed the Stewardship and Finance Working Group to oversee the budget expenses and assist in the coordination of those functions that impact the church budget and financial status.

In August, the NWUP Church sent thank you letters to those individuals who had pledged for Calendar Year 2015.

In September, NWUP Church kicked off our Calendar Year 2015 Stewardship Drive. The Stewardship Drive was a success with a greater number of individuals pledging support than the previous two years. The approved budget for Calendar Year 2016 is consistent with the pledges received.

It was determined that the General Electric (GE) stock that was gifted to NWUP Church would be sold and placed in a Money Market fund with GESA Credit Union. GE Stock was determined to be too volatile for an investment medium for the church. The stock was sold and funds were temporarily placed in our GESA checking account.

We are preparing for a capital campaign to repair the roofs over the church and Education and Office building. The work will also include replacement of the HVAC units for the Education and Building. The cost of the needed work is approximately \$80,000.

Jim Kion, Stewardship and Finance Commission Chairperson

Worship Commission Report

Pastor Liv Gibbons began the year with inspiring worship services for us. The first special event for the year was the Ash Wednesday Service. NWUP Church hosted a soup and bread supper and worship service following the meal.

NWUP Church participated with Shalom in the Maundy Thursday Service. Pastor Gibbons had a role in that service. The service was presented as a Seder meal and some very informative information concerning the Seder was provided. NWUP Church had a good representation at the meal.

The Good Friday Service was well attended and the attendees participated in the service. The setting for the service was dark and somber and we went away with a

reminder of Jesus' suffering and death. It also set the stage for the celebrations on Easter morning.

The Easter Sunrise Service was a very special narrative of scripture and song. It focused on the events leading up to the resurrection from Jesus' birth to the crucifixion and the resurrection. While the morning was quite cold, there was a good attendance and the service was well received.

The 9:45 Service was excellent. Pastor Gibbons introduced a new tradition of flowering the cross and the congregation seemed to be very responsive to the concept. The sanctuary was full for the service and a number of the attendees commented favorably about the service. Pastor Gibbons is to be congratulated for a very well presented service that was meaningful and reinforced the Easter message for us.

In May the Central Ringers presented a service of hand bell music. This was well received and we will hopefully be able to get them back for at least several specials during our worship service.

The choir suspended practice and presentation of special music for the months of June, July, and August. However, a number of our members and a number of groups from the community supplemented our services with special music during the summer. Those from the community included the Shalom Praise Team led by Keith Petersen and Tina Beverly, Laura Pattillo soloist, Darla and Talia Shupe flute and piano, Nonni Mosher and The Men's Quartet from the Seventh Day Adventist Church. We were blessed to have such outstanding talent shared with us over the past year. Brenton Nundahl, Jessie Brinson-Wagner, Connie Eckard, Joyce Willis, Sue Jewett, Brad Butherus and Anna Kion also shared their musical talent with us.

Darla Shupe, our pianist/choir director for the past two years, resigned effective October 4, 2015. The church immediately began a search for her replacement. Carissa Jones agreed to temporarily fill in for several months and Onnie Adams supported Carissa when she was unavailable. Calls were made to a number of contacts in the Tri-Cities to publicize our search. An ad was also placed in the Tri-City Herald for a replacement. The search continued into 2016.

Pastor Gibbons went on maternity leave in late November and Faye Serene filled in for her in her absence through December. Pastor Gibbons interrupted her maternity leave to do the Christmas Eve service. She returned to us full time in late January 2016.

The Christmas Eve service was well attended and provided a very special time of worship commemorating our Savior's birth. Special music was provided by Carrisa Simpson and Jesse Brinson-Wagner.

We have had a very successful year of meaningful worship with our attendance continuing to increase slowly. We look forward to the next year to do God's work and to anticipate with great excitement the many blessings God may provide for us.

Anna Kion, 2015 Worship Commission Chair

Audio Visual Steward's Report

Several items have been repaired since the first of the year:

- The sound system was repaired. Some cables were unplugged that changed the operation of the microphones. The lines were re-plugged.
- Something happened to the low voltage line that powers the overhead microphone over the communion table, The 48 volt button on the mixer board was reset it and the line adjusted.
- The pastor's wireless mic after Easter was broken. It is at least 20 years old. The pastor ordered a new wireless mic for about \$ 100. It was installed.
- An upgrade of the system is needed sometime in the future because of issues with the old system.
- There have been some changes in personnel operating the system. The church is lucky to have some nice people to help in the operation of the system.

Bob Leveque, Audio-Visual Steward

Historian's Report

January - The Tri-City Herald printed a picture of John Paul Dudley with his best friend Sunny Bunny and of Kay Humphry's-team honorees (Electrical Utilities Transfer). Congratulations to our 2015 Mission Support Alliance Honorees!

March – Northwest welcomed one new member, Stephanie Hall-Mullen.

May- Zane Carey passed away on April 24, 2015.

Jesse Brinton-Wagner was a Talent Show Winner at Southridge High School and in April competed, in the All-City High Schools Talent Show with Kennewick, Kamiakin and Southridge.

Holly Cahow went to Minneapolis, Minnesota for a three day training class for CASE (Curricular Agriculture Science Education) LTO (Lead Teacher Orientation).

June- Farewell to our Foreign Exchange Students Silvia Mouzo-Prado & Antonia Schmidt.

William (Bill) Porter away on May 9, 2015.

Pam Coon's daughter, Chelsea Duvall, received her Master of Fine Arts from the California Institute of the Arts. Chelsea has been invited to go to Edenborough, Scotland.

On June 15th we sadly said good-bye to Midge and Pam Coon who moved to Spokane, Washington to be closer to family and medical help. Midge and Pam Coon have been active in the life of Northwest Church for many years with Midge serving as Elder, Deacon, Chair of the Hospitality Commission and heading up DWM for many, many years as well as filling other positions within the church.

August - Holly Espinosa, with her FFA young people, took home some ribbons from the Benton-Franklin County Fair.

September – Our Annual All-Church Campout was attended by about 40 adults & kids. There was a treasure hunt for the kids and hot dogs, hamburgers and Smores. Sunday morning breakfast was sausages and pancakes.

October – NWUP gave a baby shower for the expected new baby of Pastor Liv Gibbons and Elijah Buck and big sister Isla.

We said farewell to Darla Shupe our Pianist/Choir Director. She moved to Spokane Valley with her husband Teddy, where he will be serving a new church in the area.

The church held its first Halloween Party with about 50 adults & kids. A good time was had by everyone with spooky foods (bones and mummy's) and games (a cake walk and a bean bag toss). About 40 gift bags were decorated by kids and adults to be given to the fire fighters and policemen in the area. Spooky stories were provided by the "So-They-Say Storytellers.

November – On *All-Saints Day* at Northwest we remembered loved ones Zane Carey & Darlene LaBorde.

December – Our annual Church Christmas Dinner was held on December 12th.

Pat Cahow, Church Historian

Librarian's Report

In 2015 the library was refurbished with over half of the books being recycled due to not being used for years and being obsolete. The shelves were completely reorganized and labeled. The pictures of former pastors were moved to the parlor and the library walls were decorated with donated artwork. About a dozen new books have been added to the library by donation. Once a month in the church newsletter reviews of a new book are being published.

Mel Adams, Librarian

Manual Steward's Report

The church manual (aka Blue Book) was completely revamped, reorganized and revised in 2015. The revision of the Blue Book led to a restructuring of the church organization including reduction in the number of board members, streamlining and reduction of committees, and institution of steward positions. The Blue Book is now under configuration control and is kept up-to-date online at manual.nwup.church. A record hard copy is also being maintained. The Constitution and By-Laws were also completely revised to be consistent with each other and consistent with the Blue Book. The new Constitution was approved by vote of the congregation. Changes to the Blue Book and By-Laws were approved by the church board.

Mel Adams, Manual Steward