Pastor’s Pen  “A Place Where We Have Never Been Before”

I read a lot of books. Most of them aren’t church books. Yes, I do have a life outside of church! Of the church books I’ve read, I’ve read many that were touted as the single “must-read” book of all time that will totally revolutionize your life and your ministry. They almost always fall short of expectations.

So I was skeptical when I recently heard someone describe a book with similar superlatives. It’s an older book. It was published in 1978. I’d never heard of it. Neither had our local libraries. It was not listed in the Nampa / Treasure Valley library system. Northwest Nazarene University didn’t even have a copy. I got it on an inter-library loan from Gonzaga University of all places. Probably because the author is a Catholic priest. I expected it to be another one of those books that fails to live up to the hype. It took me about two pages to ask myself, where has this book been all my life?

It’s called Christianity Rediscovered. It was written by Vincent Donovan. You may remember I could not keep it out of my sermon a couple of weeks ago. It’s the one about the missionary to the Masai of Tanzania in east Africa.

The old way of doing mission work was to go way beyond the simple sharing of Jesus Christ. It was felt necessary also to impose western culture and values. Until the native people built churches that looked like churches should look and sang hymns that sounded like hymns should sound, the missionary’s work was not done. It was a “we know best” approach that treated those who were receiving the Gospel as inferior.

What Vincent Donovan did was to strip the Gospel down to its core, respect indigenous ways, and trust the Holy Spirit to give shape to the new churches once he had left and was busy sharing Jesus elsewhere. I can imagine Father Donovan locked horns with his superiors, because he didn’t seem at all interested in the trappings of Catholicism! Even the United Methodist Book of Discipline would be seriously stretched by the way he operated. But it worked. Like Paul in the New Testament, he left behind strong Christians and strong churches.
Pastor’s Pen continued

His secret? He wasn’t trying to sell them anything. He met them as one who was searching and seeking as they were. He didn’t talk down to them. He was bold about sharing Jesus. But he was also gracious about the way he shared. He was interested first in getting to know them and their ways, their hurts and their longings.

Here are the words he heard coming out of his mouth one day, words he had not intended to speak: "No, we have not found the High God. My tribe has not known him. For us, too, he is the unknown God. But we are searching for him. I have come a long, long distance to invite you to search for him with us. Let us search for him together. Maybe together, we will find him."

I don’t think I’ll ever be a missionary to Africa. But I am a missionary right where I am. You are too. God expects us to share Jesus with those who don’t know him or don’t know him well. The reason Father Donovan’s book so spoke to me was because it helped me see how a missionary in a place like Nampa, Idaho needs to operate.

We aren’t going to succeed in winning many new people to Jesus by talking down to them, or arguing with them, or insisting that they first learn to appreciate what we appreciate in terms of worship style. When our purpose statement says that we are here to "Know Christ", that doesn’t mean that we already know him, we’ve already found him, and now we will do others the great favor of lifting them to our level. That approach would be offensive. And it isn’t what we really believe, is it?

Would you agree with me that we are all on the same journey of getting to know Jesus? We are inviting others to join us in that journey. We aren’t standing on the top of the mountain calling to those below to hurry up and get to where we are. We are all still climbing, we are traveling together, to a new place. A place where neither they nor we have ever been before. Let’s search for Jesus together. Maybe together, we will find him.

New Sermon Series Coming

Beginning Mother’s Day, May 13, Rev. Watts will preach a five-part series of sermons on the family. We’ll be talking about the qualities present in strong families, qualities that can be present in greater measure in your family. These qualities include (1) commitment to keeping the family together, (2) good communication, (3) resiliency in conflict and crisis, (4) time spent together, and (5) expressing appreciation freely and frequently. This will be an excellent series for inviting your friends who have children still at home. Copies will be available each week on our new website, nampaumc.org.
As every teacher knows, this time of year gets very busy with us feeling like there’s so much left for us to do with the children and for the children. I’m very proud to say that our preschoolers that have been going for their kindergarten evaluations have been scoring very high. I always say we have a great staff and program, but I love hearing that kind of feedback from the parents to let us know we truly are getting the job done.

Last month we were in chapel and Pastor John was talking about Easter. At this age it’s hard to keep the kids focused and not just wanting to talk about the Easter bunny or all the candy they received. As teachers we just hope that every now and again we can get through to them and really touch them. On this particular day I felt blessed because I was touched. Pastor John always asks the children if they have something to share. As he was talking to the other children, Emily Curtis from my class turned to me and said “Ms. Carolyn, I’m having a thank you party for my daddy.” Of course I was curious and inquired for more details. She went on to say that she was having the party to thank her daddy for all the things he does for her. She was sending invitations to friends and family. She was even giving me details of the party treats she was planning on serving. At that moment I was so touched by her sincerity and thoughtfulness toward her daddy. It was obvious that she had put a lot of thought into this. Her parents should be very proud.

Our preschool graduation will be held Thursday, May 24th at 10:00 a.m. All are welcome to join us for this wonderful celebration.

God Bless,
Ms. Carolyn

Registration for Kid’s Stuff Preschool begins Thursday, May 23rd from 9:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m.
We will be holding open enrollment for the 3 yr old and 4 yr old classes for fall.

3 Year Old Class: Child must be 3 yrs by Sept. 1st and potty trained.

M & W 9:00—11:30 a.m.
T & Th 9:00—11:30 a.m.
Tuition: $100.00/month
Registration fee: $100.00 due at time of enrollment

4 Year Old Class: Child must be 4 yrs old by Sept. 1st.

M & W 9:00—12:00 p.m.
T & Th 9:00—12:00 p.m.
Tuition: $120.00/month
Registration fee: $100.00 due at time of enrollment

After preschool care is available for both classes at a rate of $13.00 for up to 5 hours of care.
If you or anyone you know is interested in preschool or daycare please call 467-2178. We are also available for summer daycare needs.
United Methodist Men

The United Methodist Men met at the 2nd Street Deli on Tuesday April 17th. We will return to holding our meetings on the second Tuesday of each month. The change was done to accommodate Dwayne so that he could hunt turkeys. It was a successful hunt. Dwayne stated that walking into the woods in total darkness and experiencing the woods coming to life at day break is an awesome experience. Birds singing, chipmunks chattering and squirrels doing their rituals and the smells and sights God has provided us.

Dennis Frasier and Dwayne Evanson provided, prepared and served over 100 meals at the Community Shelter for the month of April, part of your church’s outreach program. We have made some changes to the menus due to the higher cost of ingredients. A handout was provided to those in attendance at the Saturday morning men’s study program that was just completed on “The 10 Questions That Trouble Every Man.” Copies are available by contacting Dwayne.

We will be starting a new series on Saturday morning @ 9:15 a.m. led by Reed Hoefling titled “The Gospel; the first four books of the New Testament”. Every man in the church is welcome.

There was an Easter to Pentecost Suggested Daily Bible Reading sheet passed out to the congregation on Easter. Thanks to Pastor John for the challenge. Dwayne has nearly completed the challenge and has found the readings to be enlightening, educational and spiritually rewarding. The balance of the meeting was fellowship and church related concerns.

Join us for our next meeting on May 8th at 8:00 a.m.

Dwayne Evanson

New Pastor’s Class Offered

This class will give a basic introduction to the Christian faith, the United Methodist expression of that faith, and the history and ministry of Nampa First United Methodist Church. Anyone who is new to the church, interested in membership, or would like to learn more about the church is encouraged to attend.

Join Pastor John Watts for this 5-week study beginning Wednesday, May 2 at 7:00 p.m. in the G.P.S. Building. If you have any questions or would like more information please contact the church office at 467-1151 or John directly at watts22909@gmail.com.
Administrative Council met Monday, April 9. Here are some highlights from that meeting:

- We agreed to a request from the Canyon County clerk that our church serve as a polling place. The agreement is for one year and begins with the May 15 election.

- Judy Matthews was elected as our new head communion steward. Thank you Joan Harmon for many years of faithful service!

- Most of our time was spent working together on the church profile requested by the Snake River District, including our measurable goals for (1) worship attendance, (2) profession of faith, (3) small groups & classes, (4) people engaged in mission, and (5) dollars given to mission.

Administrative Council will meet next Monday, May 14 at 7:30 pm.

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This Month's Sermon Topics

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Scripture</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 6</td>
<td>“Now to Get Serious”</td>
<td>Luke 14:25-33</td>
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<td>May 13</td>
<td>“Strong Families Are Committed to the Family”</td>
<td>Hebrews 13:1-8</td>
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<td>May 20</td>
<td>“Strong Families Have Good Communication”</td>
<td>James 1:19-20</td>
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<td>May 27</td>
<td>“Strong Families Survive Crises and Resolve Conflict”</td>
<td>James 4:1-12</td>
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Mission News

Among the many good acts by United Methodists are shipments of supplies for use after natural disasters or school bags of supplies for school children. Thousands of kits are distributed in the U.S. and other countries around the world. UMCOR maintains one of two depots in the U.S. for these kits. The closest to us is:

UMCOR West Office & Depot
1479 South 700 West
Salt Lake City, UT 84104-1605
1-800-973-7250

Currently there is need for school bags. Members can contribute by Advance number 901440. By check you can specify our local church then put the advance number in the memo line. In this way our local church receives the credit for the contribution. Cleaning buckets cost $55 to assemble and school bags cost $11. Additional funds for shipping would be most appreciated. Small groups in our church can assemble school bags and ship them to the SLC Depot. There are lists for the items required to fill a cleaning bucket or a school bag. Also, there is a pattern for sewing the school bag. Contact Jean Holland for copies of the lists and instructions. To learn more about UMCOR West contact Rochelle Killett, Jean Holland or other members of the Mission Committee. Mission needs never end.

Outreach Ministry Team

Last month our Outreach Ministry Team reached out to you and asked that you bring in clean, gently used clothing to donate to the Nampa School District clothing barn. You stepped up in a big way. On Friday, April 6th we delivered two truck loads of clothing. We talked with the pastor of the church and she informed us that since the clothing barn was opened in August 2011, they have helped over 500 children. They are always in need of clothing, both children and adult sizes. Thank you for your generous donations! You have made a difference in the lives of children right here in our community.
Imagine kids trusting God forever...the sky's the limit!

Join us this year for SKY VBS!
Everything is possible with God!

June 18-22, 2012
Cost is $15.00 per child
Scholarships are available & Volunteer’s children are free!

Registration forms are available in the Narthex or on our website at www.nampaumc.org under “Children and Youth”

We are expecting 160 children this year at VBS!
In order to soar this year we need as many “flight attendants” (also known as volunteers) as possible! If you enjoy flying high and soaring with God then fly on in and volunteer!

We will also have a list of supplies that can be donated available in the Narthex soon—so keep your flight goggles on the lookout!

If you have any questions please contact any one of our committee members:
Kathy Huff, Brandy Yearous, Lisa Lujan, Heather Carter or Lisa Wink
Women’s Book Club

The Women’s Book Club will meet Saturday, May 12th at 9:00 a.m. in the GPS Building. They will be discussing “The Submission” by Amy Waldman.

In June they will be discussing “Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet” by Jamie Ford. All women are invited to join the group at any time. For more information please contact Lisa Wink in the church office.

Rachel Circle

Rachel Circle will meet on Thursday, May 10th at 1:30 p.m. at the Hong Kong Restaurant. This will be their last meeting until September. If you have any questions please contact Betty Ziegler at 468-7960.

“Classics” Luncheon

The “Classics” luncheon will be Thursday, May 17th at 12:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. This will be the last luncheon before we take a break for summer. If you are 65 or older you are invited to join us for lunch, entertainment and fellowship. If you need a ride please call Diane Morris at 467-4297.

Church Website

Our new church website is up and running. Go to www.nampaumc.org and check it out! Thank you to the Communications Team for a great job!

Methodist Counseling Center Closure

The MCC Board of Directors has voted to close the business effective the end of May. We appreciate the leadership of Heather Tustison and Karin Watson and wish them well as they continue on with their counseling endeavors. If you have questions about this decision, please contact our church office.

Teacher Recognition

The Discipleship Committee would like to thank the following facilitators for their dedication and willingness to serve as leaders for our small groups and classes:

Heather Carter
Jim Pratte
Don Schultze
Margie Frasier
Jodie Mogensen
Karla Martell
Lynell Hamilton
Ric Ramirez
Kathy Huff
Lisa Wink
Dawn Renfrow
Karen Hatch

Birthdays & Anniversaries

May Birthdays

May 1 Sarah Frasier
May 5 Sydney Schafer
May 8 Sue Bankston
May 10 Lovina Housman
May 11 Dan Ward
May 11 Katie Parry
May 12 Tom Burgess
May 14 Mary Ann Brown
May 14 Cole Hatch
May 15 Virginia Paynter
May 15 Diane Morris
May 18 Patsy Waters
May 19 Roberta P. Witteman
May 20 Heather Carter
May 20 Emery Baker
May 25 Rick Thayer
May 25 Betty Anderson
May 27 Robin Peterson
May 27 Glenda Eubanks
May 29 Jodie Mogensen
May 30 Hal Morrison

May Anniversaries

May 9 Larry & Mary Ann Brown
May 11 Roy & Karla Martell
May 17 Bill & Betty Ziegler
May 20 Jeff & Janel Pickens
May 23 Hal & Aneta Morrison
May 26 Jamie & Jenny Gould
May 29 Jim & Patsy Waters
May 31 John & Bee Tindell

Please let Lisa Wink know if we’ve missed your birthday or anniversary. We are working from an old list since the theft of the computer. Thank you for your understanding.
Thank you to the Rachel circle for the flowers and card in memory of my wife, Phyllis Henry.

Sincerely,
Jack Henry

A big thank you to my church family. I want to thank you all for the prayers, cards, calls & visits during my recent surgery & recovery. I know that it made it result in my positive outcome to have your thoughts and prayers with me. Thank you all again so much!

Katie Parry

Graduates!
The end of the school year is quickly approaching. If you have anyone graduating from High School or College this June please let us know. We would like to honor our graduates during worship.

Lisa Wink Appreciation Day
Lisa Wink’s last day as our church administrator will be May 31. She and her family are moving to Wisconsin where Bo is taking a job transfer. This is Lisa’s next to last “Friendly Caller”. We have been so blessed with Lisa these past 4 years!

Sunday, June 3 will be Lisa Wink Appreciation Day. More details to come.

John Watts
SUNDAY WORSHIP HOURS

Childcare in the nursery is provided during morning services.

9:00 a.m. - Wesley Service: Traditional worship
10:00 a.m. - Sunday School & Shared Fellowship Time
11:00 a.m. - Youth Group
11:00 a.m. - Celebration Service: Contemporary worship
6:00 p.m. - Simply Worship: For the disabled and their friends

Pastor: John Watts
Church Administrator: Lisa Wink
Kid's Stuff Director: Carolyn Curtis
Treasurer: Traci Alonzo
Organist: Nancy Parks
Choir Director: Jeanne Kusterer
Lead Musician: Tim Swanson
Custodian: Carolyn Curtis
Lay Leader: Leatha Thayer
Bishop: Robert Hoshibata
Assistant to the Bishop: Kim Fields

Office Hours

Monday through Thursday
9 a.m. – 2 p.m.