



MERCER ISLAND
UNITED METHODIST
CHURCH

June Events

June 14



June 19



June 24-26

PNW Annual
Conference

Passing It On

June 2016

From Pastor John



On May 15 after our Sunday service, Regina and I were on our way to celebrate the birth of a new Korean church in Portland, Oregon. The church had decided the day of celebration would be during the time of the General Conference. When we were driving on I-5 toward Portland, we were rear-ended with enormous force. It felt as if we were caught in an earthquake. The trunk of our car was crushed, and the car that hit us was demolished in the front. Regina and I were both hurt; the neck, back and shoulder were the main areas of concern. Police cars and paramedics came and moved Regina to the hospital emergency room.

We were so lucky. Paramedics told me that our lives were saved by two things: we had our seat belts on, and our car was well designed with modern technology for safety. But we knew there was more: we were in God's loving care. This was an eye-opening experience and a time of deep reflection for us, reaffirming important lessons about life and death.

First, we need to see each day as a special gift from God. The psalmist was teaching us wisdom about life when he said, "This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it." If you and I could say these words at the beginning of each day and really mean them, it would change our lives. People are so caught up looking at "just another day," they miss the joy in the present moment.

The reason why God gives us each day is to focus on reaching maturity. Learning the wisdom of life is not about making our lives perfect but is about seeing life as it was meant to be seen. Important questions come to mind: Am I really making every day count or is life passing me by? But even more, we need to ask, who am I, really? Our credit rating, our resume, our neighborhood, our mistakes, our body, our roles, are not us because they are changeable. Instead, as we reflect we can realize the grandness of who we really are in God's light.

There is a part of us that is indefinable and changeless that does not get lost or change with age, accidents, disease or circumstances. The journey toward reaching maturity is to find our true selves and to recognize the authenticity in others. Every day when we open our eyes to see the real person we are, the light of God brings us the real joy to celebrate as we become the person God meant us to be.

Years ago when I visited the hospital emergency room to meet a woman whose husband had died in a car accident, she cried and said, "In the morning, we kissed and said I will see you soon, but he came back to me like this." Surely life is a gift. We do not have forever, and we will not have those we love around us forever. Everything in our routine can be our last: a goodbye kiss, a last meal, our last hug, or our last laugh together. Don't miss sharing love with those around us.

Everyone on this journey we call life should experience unconditional love. As we seize each moment of life, love each other and continue to walk the journey toward reaching maturity, let us shout like the psalmist, "This is the day that the Lord had made, let us rejoice and be glad in it."

Peace and grace,
Pastor John