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**Winter, 2021**

**MERCER  
ISLAND  
UNITED  
METHODIST  
CHURCH**



**“They are like trees growing beside a stream, trees that produce fruit in season and always have leaves. Those people succeed in everything they do.” <Psalm 1:3>**

Psalm 1 would be a wonderful resolution inviting individuals and churches to question themselves on how happy they are. This Psalm 1 would be a great questionnaire for us to measure how we're doing in terms of 'Spiritual well-being' as Christians who are supposed to be happy and blessed in the Lord, our God.

After several months of lockdowns, social distancing practices, remote educational environments, and political divisions in 2020, it was not just a corona virus issue we were challenged by. We were annoyed by the disengagement of leadership with scientists and medical experts. We are also frustrated by racial inequality and injustice. We are even upset by arrogant and ignorant behaviors intensify our fears and worries. I think the Covid-19, in fact, shamelessly revealed our human natures that are easily swayed, misguided, and selfish and that we are so fragile and limited.

On the other hand, we must praise those who served ceaselessly in public health service. We must thank those who endured and persistently searched for goodness and love in their midst of challenges. We must appreciate many citizens and members of our local community who cared for each other and provided comfort to one another and mourned with them in thoughts and prayers.

In between frustration and appreciation, I believe that one big part we're missing in our lives in 2020 is Joy. That's sharing our happiness. That's celebration. Somehow we lost many opportunities to be joyful with our loved ones: family members, church friends, and neighbors. This unsatisfied and unfilled desire to be with one another might draw us to feel loneliness, sadness, and even depression.

Psalm 1 brought me a vision of Christian individuals and churches in their joys: “They are like trees.” Have you ever thought about yourself as a tree? Have you ever visioned our church being like a tree for our neighboring community? Have you ever imagined our community being like a riverbank where many trees are planted for seasonal fruits and spaces, so all can prosper?

In 2021, I wish everyone of you dreams a dream again. Whatever challenges you faced in the past and are still facing, they cannot take away your joys in God's purpose for you. If you feel down today because you didn't get what you want, imagine yourself like the trees planted by the stream of water in Psalm 1. And smile at yourself knowing that God is thinking of something greater for you and your life. Therefore, it is my prayer for you and me that we're like trees whose joys are in the Lord, our God and God's ultimate purpose for us.

Many blessings,  
Pastor John Go

1 - from the 3rd of January Sunday sermon

# WHAT IS COMING UP?

## Sermon Titles & Lectionary Reading for the Winter Months of 2021



**January 3rd** Psalm 1: 1—6  
“Joys of those”

**January 10th** John 15: 1—17  
“Make you joyful as I am”

**January 17th** Matthew 13: 31—32,  
Daniel 4: 1—12  
“Joyful space”

**January 24th** Romans 11: 17—24  
“Joy that spared”

**January 31st** Amos 7: 14  
“Joy of a grower”

**February 7th** Mark 1: 9—13  
“Jesus in Wilderness”

**February 14th** Mark 1: 14—20  
“Jesus calls disciples”

**February 17th** Ash Wednesday

**February 21st** Mark 1: 29—39  
“Jesus heals and prays”

**February 28th** Mark 8: 27—38  
“Jesus challenges”

An online Live streaming worship service link is provided to the congregation by email at 10:45am each Sunday. Please contact the church office @ 206.232.3044, or miumc@hotmail.com if you need any assistance to join virtually in worship.

The link is also available on <https://www.facebook.com/mercerislandumc/>

### The Month of January & February

January 3rd Commitment Sunday with the Holy Baptism of Joyce Zhang  
January 24th Confirmation Class @1:00 pm, meeting virtually  
January 26th Administration Council Meeting through zoom at 10:30am.  
February 17th **Ash Wednesday**  
February 28th Confirmation Class @1:00 pm, meeting virtually

Every Sunday 9:30 am - 10:30 am Adult Sunday School through Zoom

Every Tuesday 7:00 am - 8:00 am Telios Bible Studay through Zoom

Every Tuesday 9:30 am -10:30 am Tuesday Fellowship Group through Zoom.

# WHAT HAPPENED?

Christmas Decorations on the church grounds by our Youth & church neighbors, Kristen and Bryan early in Dec.



Advent wreathes with Christmas cards were delivered to beloved members of the church.



Bev & Jim Maners after Christmas decorating inside the church



Judy Zhang with her daughters; Julie, Karen & Joyce,



Rev. Mariano with her newly invented Advent Candles



## Sleeping Bag Drive @ MIUMC

During these difficult times, we'd like to embark on a Sleeping Bag Drive to encourage Mercer Islanders to donate their unused surplus sleeping bags to help the homeless. So far, we've collected 9 sleeping bags.

We are partnering with Tent Cities to distribute the sleeping bags collected. For more information, call Judith Hullin at 206-948-2882 or drop off items in the church drop box, which will be located on the upper parking lot of the church.

# STORIES TO SHARE



**On New Year's day** - I was so fortunate to have my older daughter and her boyfriend bring over dinner and then drive downtown to view all the colorful lights ...And because the roads were still wet from an earlier rain - I was able -with my i-phone to take out my window the colorful photo of the Pike Place Market.

And taking a photo of the star over the bldg which used to be a Macy's department store - I was reminded of years ago when I took a photo of Will (my husband) holding my grandson (now 15) so he could put some money in the Salvation Army kettle. I have always loved that photo as it definitely told a story.

-Darolyn Quayle



## This is the Day

We are all waiting. We are waiting to be vaccinated, waiting to see a friend's smile instead of a mask, waiting for our country to be healed of bitter division. In the midst of this dark time, we long for the light. We hear "Better times are coming." And we wait.

While we are waiting, let's hear the words of the Psalmist: "This is the day the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it." (Psalm 118:24.) Not tomorrow, or next month, but **THIS** is the day the Lord has made. We need to remember that David's life was not a "bed of roses" when he made this statement. He was surrounded by enemies that sought to kill him. And yet he could affirm the worth of that day. I need to remember that God is not only with me during this waiting period, but that He has created each day as something of value, something to rejoice in and not to be wasted.

Was there a spectacular sunrise? Did a friend call to check in? Did a neighbor leave a sleeping bag at the Church for a homeless person? Are you warm, well fed in your home today? Then let us rejoice and be glad in today. Let's keep reminding each other of God's goodness and faithfulness even as we wait.

- Linda Hodge, Lay Leader

# DOERS OF THE WORD

**“Small steps can have a big impact. Create where it matters.”**

## *Leadership Matters...*

**“The church council is the administrative agency of the charge conference to envision, plan, implement, and annually evaluate the ministry of the congregation.** (The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, 2016, ¶252) The chair of this group is elected annually by the charge conference (¶251.3).”

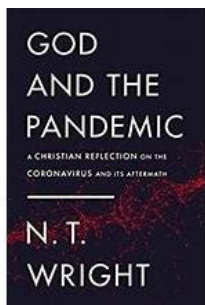
The leadership team is accountable to the charge conference and serves as the executive agency of the charge conference between meetings to oversee the administration and ministry of the congregation. The team determines God’s call to the congregation for ministry that is transformative. The team initiates planning, establishes goals, implements action plans, and evaluates effectiveness for congregational ministries of nurture, outreach, witness, and administration. The team strategizes so that the congregation makes disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

The team works with the committee on staff/pastor-parish relations and the committee on nominations and leader development for effective pastoral, staff, and lay leadership. The team recommends to the charge conference the compensation, housing needs, and benefits for the pastor(s) and other staff after receiving recommendations from the committee on staff/pastor-parish relations. The team fills leadership vacancies between meetings of the charge conference upon the recommendation of the committee on nominations and leader development. The team provides for financial support, physical facilities, and the legal obligations of its local congregation. The team maintains the congregation’s connection with appropriate district and annual conference programs and structures.

## *Getting Started*

Talk with your pastor and others to understand their hopes and dreams for the congregation and the way your leadership will advance the congregation’s vision for ministry. Learn what life is like for people in your community. Gather information by being attentive to the neighborhood, asking questions, and listening deeply. Set aside time for prayer. Express your concerns, joys, and observations to God; and listen for God’s direction for your leadership and your congregation. Soon after you are elected, convene a meeting of the church council to get acquainted, share hopes and concerns, and begin to plan your work for the year. Engage the leadership team to join you in the actions described above. Evaluate the present ministry of the congregation. What is working well? Where are there weaknesses? What are the gaps?

[www.umcdiscipleship.org](http://www.umcdiscipleship.org)



Adult Sunday School has a new book to read and discuss together. This new study with God and the Pandemic by N.T. Wright will begin on January 3rd through Zoom led by Dr. Vince Picozzi :

Meeting ID: 927 0975 7518

<https://greaternw.zoom.us/j/92709757518>



## Winter 2021 Newsletter

Mercer Island United Methodist Church

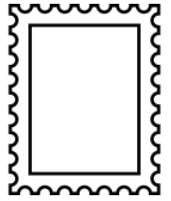
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Recipient Name

Recipient Address Line 1

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