

The Connection

Volume 5, Issue 7, July 2007

from Pastor Mike...

De-mystifying Spiritual Growth

What Spiritual Growth Is and Is Not

Mention the term “spirituality” today and many people will conjure up images of white robes, lotus position, burning incense, and “ommmmm.” Others think of Christian mystics and monks who cloister themselves away from the real world and subject themselves to the rigors of poverty, chastity, and solitude. Unfortunately, many Christians feel that spiritual maturity is so far out of their reach, they don’t even try to attain it. They have this mystical, idealized image of what a mature Christian looks like. Maturity - they believe - is only for super-saints.

Yet growth is practical

The truth is that spiritual growth is very practical and gradual. Any believer can grow to maturity if he or she will develop the habits necessary for spiritual growth. We need to take the mystery out of spiritual growth by breaking the components down into practical, everyday terms. Paul often compared training for the Christian life to the way athletes prepare



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Another Musical Celebration

Thanks to everyone who attended the Hymn Sing in May! The worship commission is planning another Musical Celebration for the evening of Sunday August 26th.

This will be a “Homecoming Celebration” of Gaither-style gospel music. Big plans are in the works for a spectacular evening, and we hope to bring in ensembles from all over Walla Walla. Don’t miss out — mark your calendar now!

Just a Reminder

The telephone prayer chain is to be used for the concerns of the members of this congregation or their immediate family. (Due to the HIPPA law, we must have permission from the person being prayed for, or a family member, before we can put them on the Prayer Chain.)



From Your Administrative Pastor

As always, I thank God for the opportunity to serve Him through my work at the church. And I thank my wife, Claudia, for her love, encouragement and friendship! As most of you are aware, this past February, Claudia was diagnosed with Early Onset Alzheimer's. Thank you for your prayers, cards, calls and loving concerns on our behalf... we have a deep contentment on this and know that God is leading and helping.

My thanks and appreciation to Kim Skifstad, Julie Caton, Bob Loar, Donovan Skifstad, and Bob Stewart Jr. for another year of high quality, reliable work. You can be proud of these folks-they love the Lord and love serving you here at the church.

Steve Kelty has been the Chairman of the Building and Grounds Commission this past year. You can read the Annual Reports for all of the projects and areas of interest that he has facilitated this past year. Thanks!

We've had another interesting financial year. We had forecasted hiring Youth and Music Pastors and factored that into the budget. Those positions remain open and thus did not contribute to any negative variances in our budget. In fact, through the end of May we were \$33,479.30 in the black.

Approximately \$50,000 came in this past year toward the "Building For Eternity" campaign. We now have \$249,368.96 in the account for the New Ministry Center.

Until next time...

PASTOR DAN II

A Prayer for our Nation

Almighty God, we remember that you are the Lord of all nations including the United States of America. We are mindful that we stand responsible and accountable before you as we consider our stewardship as citizens of this land. Make us equal to our challenges, O Lord. Guide us into providing justice for all. Turn our hearts toward our children that we may teach them rightly to please you in their citizenship. Enable us to make certain that all citizens, affluent and poor, young and old, male and female are treated fairly and never forgotten. Most of all, keep us aware of your providential care and guidance that we may never assume that we are totally on our own. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

God Bless America



Newsletter Deadline

If you have an upcoming event you'd like to promote, faith story or poem you'd like to share, or anything else that pertains to the life of the people of Blue Mountain Community Church, please consider writing a small article (300 words or less) and submitting it to the newsletter. The deadline for articles is the second Wednesday of each month. The editor reserves the right to edit for content and space.

H.E.A.R.T.

by Shirley Musick

Our church has contributed to the H.E.A.R.T. ministry through Faith Promise for decades. I wonder how many of the people in our congregation know what H.E.A.R.T. is...hence this article.

H.E.A.R.T. is the Institute for Hunger, Education and Resources Team. H.E.A.R.T. prepares missionaries for effective life changing service among the poor and hungry of the world. They provide hands-on application of practical and technical skills with instruction from professional and experienced staff.

Students reside in a simulated Third-World Village, located in Florida. This unique interdenominational training center empowers students with problem solving and coping skills so that they can effectively serve in developing countries.

Here are some areas of training:



Celebrate Recovery

by Teri Stewart

Celebrate Recovery has less attendance and fewer newcomers in “Spring/ Summer fever” mode. One wise person encouraged me about waiting upon the Lord. These times are meant for rest and filling up with Him in order to be ready for the next rush. Still I worried that God had stopped blessing us.

Someone comes to CR that had spent 14 or 15 years in and out of jail. He knew scripture and had all the answers to everyone’s plight. Now he realizes that he doesn’t know all the answers, that his job is to work on himself- not others, and he has been jail free for 2 years because of CR.

A woman came to CR full of resentment and unforgiveness. She was incredibly lonely. Just when she became comfortable being single and believed a power greater than her could handle her problems, she met a nice Christian man and married.

One came to CR full of fear. He hardly talked, no self esteem, hard time opening up. This one is now a strong leader, always ready to lend a hand. God has shown him several times that what he does makes a difference in God’s Kingdom.

A few people came because they could **help out** “those” people. After attending, they found out they had their own, hurts, habits, and hang-ups. Now they are happy to work on themselves.

The other night I only counted 28 people at CR. I had hoped for more. Then I realized that we have 19 people in leadership and service positions in CR. That is a 67% service rate! At least 10 people serve at BMCC on top of their CR commitments.

Those that wait upon the Lord will renew their strength; they will mount up with wings like Eagles.

Is.40:31

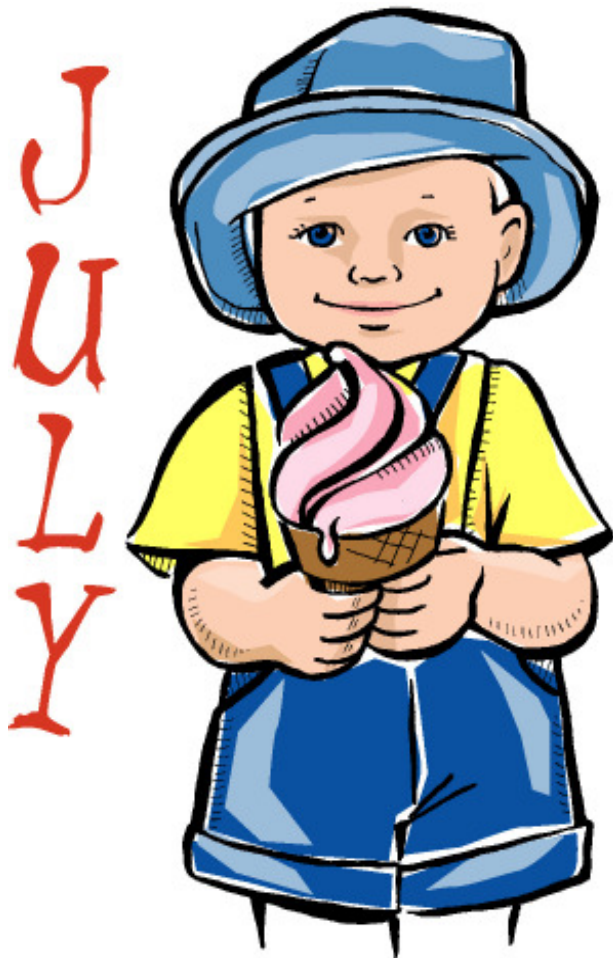


**HAPPY
BIRTHDAY!**

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| 1 Penny Baslee | 14 Etta Blair |
| 2 Danica Freiberg | Scott Krivoshein |
| Norm Slosted | Karen Schroeder |
| Jessica Walters | 15 Chandra Davisson |
| Marcella Welch | Noah Wiles |
| 3 Carter Davis | 16 Anthony Cannone |
| Katie Krivoshein | Donny Snider |
| 4 Kim Burns | Florene VanDonge |
| Donavan Skifstad | Ruby Wachtel |
| Cole Woelfle | 17 Zane Adkins |
| 6 Laura Bowe | Mel Page |
| 7 Josie Hobbs | 18 Jared Cowles |
| Judy Jurgensen | 19 Penny Hood |
| Bob Loar | Betty Johnson |
| 8 Mike Bowe | 21 Terry Freiberg |
| Gene Daniels | 23 Tyler Goodwin |
| Rich Eagon | 24 Kalista Knudson |
| Paulette Goodwin | Bret Larreau |
| Gary Hobbs | Eloise Phillips |
| Dan Minter | 25 Rick Queen |
| 9 Harold Ewing | 29 Tyler Baslee |
| Raegan Figgins | Carolyn Groat |
| 10 Carrie Knudson | Romona Moss |
| Gloria Wilson | Scott Woelfle |
| 13 Talen Alexander | 30 Steven Irwin |
| Bridget Blom | 31 Laurie Klicker |
| | Glenn Vogt |

- | |
|----------------------------|
| 1 Dale & Talitha Kelly |
| Mike & Danna Jones |
| Ron & Penny Knight |
| 4 Joseph & Karla Banks |
| Tom & Jeanne Fox |
| 5 Walter & Betty Zier |
| 6 Dan & Ellen Kilmer |
| Dan & Julie Wooton |
| Kenneth & Brenda Hobbs |
| Rich & Trudy Young |
| 8 Jerry & Betty Eyestone |
| 12 Ken & Joyce Paine |
| 14 Larry & Robin Harris |
| 14 Paul & Florence Lamb |
| 15 Terry & Bettie Freiberg |
| 16 Larry & Felicia Wachtel |
| 17 Bob & Julianne Hoppen |
| 20 Ken & Judy Jurgensen |
| 21 Seth & Adrienne Harris |
| 23 Ty & Diane McEuen |
| 24 Dale & Kelly Hutcherson |
| 26 Burl & Evelyn Wallace |
| 29 Ron & Pamela McBride |





Weekly Events

Sunday

Middle School Group 6:00 PM

Tuesday

Taking Off Pounds Sensibly 5:30 PM

Boy Scouts 7:00 PM

Wednesday

Women's Bible Study 9:30 AM

Adult Bible Study 6:30 PM

High School Group 7:00 PM

Thursday

Worship Team Rehearsal 7:00 PM

Friday

Celebrate Recovery Dinner 6:00 PM

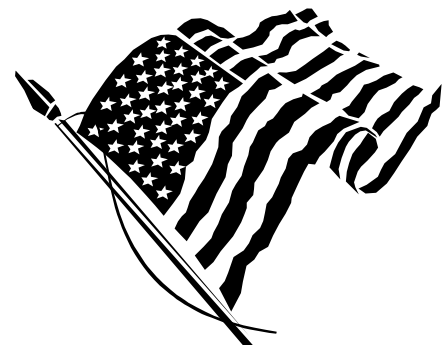
Celebrate Recovery 7:00 PM

Monthly Events

- 1 Life Development Classes 4:00 PM
- 5 Celebrate Recovery Leaders Meeting 7:00 PM
- 7 All Commission Meeting 9:00 AM
- 9 Worship Commission 6:30 PM
- 10 Quilter's Guild 6:00 PM
- 12 SAMS 10:00 AM
- Board of Elders Meeting 6:30 PM
- 14 Men's Breakfast 7:30 AM
- 16 The Ark Commission Meeting 6:30 PM
- 18 Missions Commission Meeting 6:30 PM
- 19 Building & Grounds Commission 7:00 PM
- 26 CE Commission Meeting 6:30 PM

Special Days

4 Independence Day



continued from page 1

themselves and stay in shape. I love the Phillips paraphrase of 1 Timothy 4:7 - which says, *“Take the time and the trouble to keep yourself spiritually fit.”* The path to spiritual fitness is as practical as the way you become physically fit. It involves personal discipline.

Anyone can become physically fit if he or she will regularly do certain exercises and practice good health habits. Likewise, spiritual fitness is no mystery. It is simply a matter of learning certain spiritual exercises and being disciplined to do them until they become habits. Character is shaped by the habits we develop. Though these habits will include time spent with God, prayer, Bible reading and obedience to what He reveals to you, there is no particular formula for when you do these things and how much time you spend.



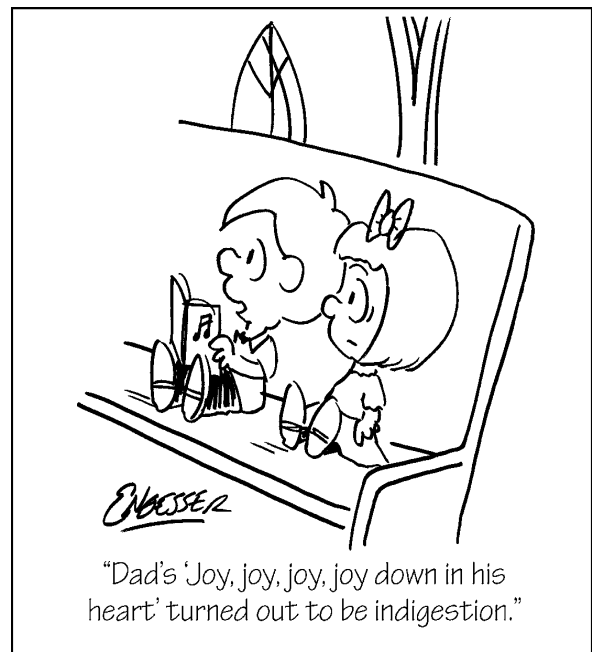
There is no magic bullet

We must always remember that there is no one single habit that will be the magic bullet to instant spiritual maturity. This is a popular misconception. It is obvious that many Christians at least hope maturity will happen instantly if they can just find the right key. Many sincere Christians spend their entire lives earnestly

searching for an experience, a conference, a revival, a book, a tape, or single truth that will instantly transform them into a mature believer. Their search is futile. Although we have instant coffee, instant potatoes, and now even instant weight loss through liposuction, there is no such thing as instant spiritual maturity. There are no shortcuts to maturity. It takes time. Ephesians 4:13 says, *“... we arrive at real maturity - that measure of development which is meant by ‘the fullness of Christ.’”* (Phillips)

Notice that maturity is a destination we arrive at. That implies a journey. We always want to speed up the process, but it can't be done. It's a journey that will last a lifetime. Although God could instantly and miraculously change us into mature believers, he has chosen to develop us slowly and teach us one lesson at a time, just as he allowed Joshua and the Israelites to possess the land *“little by little”* (Deut. 7:22), God uses a gradual process of change to develop us into the image of Christ.

Not to say there aren't tools that will help along the way, but different things work for different people. The important thing to remember besides its gradual process is that spiritual growth is a relationship. You cannot grow spiritually without growing closer to Christ. These are not rote disciplines we put ourselves through, but a relationship we remain faithful to, and God has promised to lead us along the way as we stay faithful to Him. He will be with us to the end of the age (Matthew 28:20).



Life Development Classes

After almost a year hiatus, Life Development classes have returned! These classes are a four part series that starts with an overview of our church, to understand the “why” behind what we do. Every person who calls Blue Mountain Community Church home should attend class 101, to understand what belonging to a church is about. Class 101 also introduces you to the doctrines this church holds.

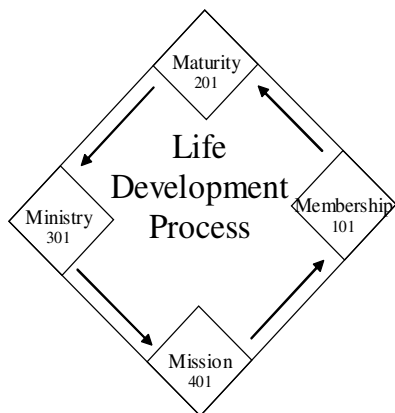
Class 201 provides tools for you to grow as a disciple of Christ, teaching methods of Bible study, prayer, tithing, and fellowship that are the foundation for spiritual growth.

Class 301 helps you discover the gifts, experiences, and talents given to you by God and how they can function within the church body.

Class 401 enables you to write a short testimony and equips you to share God’s work in you with others. It encourages you to practically and empathetically share the gospel.

All these classes will be offered Sunday, July 1st from 4-7 PM and at other times throughout the year. These four classes are excellent tools to accomplish our church’s purpose:

Bring In. Build Up. Train. Send Out.



Christian Education Survey

In your bulletin the next couple of weeks, you may have noticed a green insert, the Christian Education Survey. The CE Commission, in conjunction with the Board of Elders and pastoral staff, have a strong desire to rebuild adult education at Blue Mountain Community Church. Recognising that any changes made will only be effective if they meet the needs of the people, this survey was born.

Please take a few minutes in the next few weeks to fill out one of these forms, so we may have a better understanding of the needs and desires adults have in Christian Education. Surveys may be dropped in the offering plate or submitted to the church office.

We Can Start Anew

Norman Vincent Peale

On December 9, 1914, the great Edison Industries of West Orange were practically destroyed by fire. Mr. (Thomas) Edison lost two million dollars that night and much of his life’s work went up in flames.



“My heart ached for him,” Charles Edison (Thomas’s son) told me. “He was 67 — no longer a young man — and everything was going up in flames. He spotted me. ‘Charles,’ he shouted, ‘where’s your mother?’ ‘I don’t know, Dad.’ I said. ‘Find her,’ he bade me. ‘Bring her here. She will never see anything like this again as long as she lives.’”

The next morning, walking about the charred embers of all his hopes and dreams, Thomas Edison said, “There is great value in disaster. All our mistakes are burned up. Thank God we can start anew.”



It is
for
FREEDOM
that
CHRIST
has set
us
FREE.

Galatians 5:1

Our Ministry Team

Senior Pastor — Mike Hinrichsen
Administrative Pastor — Dan Huntley
Children's Pastor — Sharon Wiles
Student Ministries Interim — Adam Hinrichsen
Worship Interim Pastor — Richard Easton

A monthly publication of **Blue Mountain Community Church** 928 Sturm Ave., Walla Walla, Washington 99362, (509) 529-1212, www.bluemountainchurch.com, Editor: Julie Caton, bmccbulletin@gmail.com. Deadline for submissions: The second Wednesday of the month prior to publication. Editor reserves the right to edit for content and space. Unsolicited materials welcome.
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