



# THE MESSENGER

A PUBLICATION OF NIWOT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

AUGUST 2009

WE ARE CALLED TO HAVE OPEN MINDS, OPEN HEARTS AND OPEN DOORS

## Life Of Prayer

We pray because we need God. Praying is as natural to us as breathing. For many of us praying is the most difficult thing we do. Or at least taking the time to direct our thoughts to God and to hold God in focus is what is hard to do. Our minds wander and we have to call ourselves back into the presence of God. Or we say, "I can pray anytime, anywhere (and that is true), so I do not need to set aside time to pray, to listen, to contemplate God."

There is a story of a simple peasant who regularly spent an hour each day sitting in the front row of a small Roman Catholic chapel in his town. One day the priest met him as he left and was so bold as to ask him what he did each day in the chapel. The peasant pointed to the crucifix hanging over the altar before which he sat and said, "I just look at him and he looks at me."

Prayer can be verbal or nonverbal, public or private. As Christians we need a prayer life, which includes both corporate and individual prayer time. We are to pray in private and in groups gathered in Christ's name.

Jesus often withdrew to pray. He sought and created the time, the place, and the occasion for personal prayer and meditation with God. He had a balance of praying and going forth in ministry. Jesus' life was centered on God and this is what a life of spiritual discipline or a life of prayer can do for us: place God at the center of our living.

Many of our hymns remind us to "speak off with the Lord" or to "take it to the Lord in prayer" or "God answers prayer in the morning, noon, evening---God will keep your heart in tune". So take time to sit before your God and talk with the Lord and God will keep your heart in tune.

Love is revealed in words.  
When words are not enough,  
it is revealed in deeds.  
When deeds are not enough,  
love resorts to music.  
Creation is the music of God.  
*Indian proverb*

Grace and Peace,  
*Merlene*

## Lectionary Readings August 2009

*Sunday, August 2nd*  
2 Samuel 11:26-12:13a  
Psalm 51:1-12 (UMH 785)  
Ephesians 4:1-16  
John 6:24-35

*Sunday, August 9th*  
2 Samuel 18:5-9, 15, 31-33  
Psalm 130 (UMH 848)  
Ephesians 4:25-5:2  
John 6:35, 41-51

*Sunday, August 16th*  
1 Kings 2:10-12; 3:3-14  
Psalm 111 (UMH 832)  
Ephesians 5:15-20  
John 6:51-58

*Sunday, August 23rd*  
1 Kings 8:(1,6,10-11), 22-30, 41-43  
Psalm 84 (UMH 804)  
Ephesians 6:10-20  
John 6:56-69

*Sunday, August 30th*  
Song of Solomon 2:8-13  
Psalm 45:1-2, 6-9 or Psalm 72 (UMH 795)  
James 1:17-27  
Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

## You can contact us at:

Niwot United Methodist Church  
7405 Lookout Road  
Longmont, CO 80503  
Email: [office@niwotumc.org](mailto:office@niwotumc.org)  
Phone: 303-530-0241  
Website: [www.niwotumc.org](http://www.niwotumc.org)

## **Practicing Prayer**

**By Rev. Merlene Barner**

Some thoughts I have gathered along my spiritual journey, as I have engaged in reading, study, and reflection on growing my prayer life. Prayer is intimate conversation with God—engaged, real, demanding, loving conversation between a real person and the real, living, loving God. The language of prayer is the language of faith, of feeling, of love. Each person who prays is unique and the content of each person's prayer is unique. Prayer changes the one who prays. Some may feel that we do not need to practice in praying that we should just know how to pray. But often I hear people say, "I just don't know how to pray. What do I say when I talk to God?" So I offer these suggestions in hope that they will be of use to others in beginning or strengthening personal prayer:

- Chose a time for daily prayer (early morning, mid-afternoon, before dinner, late in the evening). Whatever time of day works for you. Resolve to keep this time, you might write it in your day timer.
- Find a place where you will not be disturbed. You might want to close your eyes or focus on an object—a cross, a picture of Jesus, an icon, etc.. You might begin by reading Scripture. Find a comfortable position, but not too comfortable.
- Take a few deep breaths to help calm and focus yourself.
- Consciously place yourself in the divine presence and address God. I speak words of love and praise, of joy and thanksgiving. I lift up concerns of needs of the world, the afflicted and the oppressed, those who are close to me. I ask for God's compassion and love, mercy and justice. As my own personal cares or joy emerge, I place these before God and seek the divine will.

- If I find myself being distracted by thoughts or images, I will not cling to them or try to control them. As calmly as I can, I return to my conversation with God.
- Sit quietly and try to discover God's will for you. Listen to the stirring of your heart.
- When your prayer time comes to a close, offer thanks for God's care and compassion and mercy.
- Quietly gather yourself in order to rejoin the busyness of the day.

## **Rethink Church**

This is a program sponsored by the UMC to be used by local churches to become more actively engaged with spiritual seekers in our communities. Welcome. Connect. Identify. The Methodist movement began when John Wesley and others connected with the needs of people in England and later in the United States. Our church grew as people moved west and held worship services, began schools, hospitals, and orphanages and provided care for people in need. What if church wasn't just a building, but thousands of doors, each opening to a different concept or experience of church, so whenever someone opened a door they find a journey to call their own? What if church was not just a place to go, but something to do? A menu of adventure? An active verb instead of a noun? Stay tuned for more updates and information, as NUMC continues to look at how we can Welcome people not only inside our doors, but also outside in the world around us. Connect with seekers who need to meet us outside the church walls and transition from talking about church to being the church. Let's identify who we are and who we want to reach in our community and who we want to become as the NUMC. You can go online for more information: [rethinkchurch.org](http://rethinkchurch.org) or [10thousanddoors.org](http://10thousanddoors.org)

### **Back-To-School Blessing**

Sunday August 16th, there will be a Blessing of Students and Teachers as they prepare to go back to school. Students and teachers will be invited to come down to the chancel area and we will gather around them for a laying on of hands to bless them as they go forth into the new school year.

### **Why Do We Pay Wider Missions?**

First, it is biblical to give for mission work in other places, as well as to care for our own church and community. Our mission giving goes to support colleges, camping ministry, retirement support, children's homes, hospitals, etc. Our wider mission giving helps pay for our UM colleges with the hope that our students will become better educated and perhaps become faithful leaders and ministers within our churches. Diana Neff, Susan Warren, and Rev. Merlene have benefited from UM scholarships.

### **John Wesley Visits Colorado**

The Reverend John Wesley (aka Roger Nelson) will be performing the production "The Man From Aldersgate", 6:00 p.m. Saturday, August 22nd at the United Methodist Church of Estes Park. The Rev. Wesley will also assist with the Sunday morning worship at Estes Park UMC at 10:30 a.m. August 23rd.

Roger Nelson will be in Colorado for several days in August if you would be interested in booking a performance of either John Wesley or St. Patrick. His website is: [www.a1manplay.com](http://www.a1manplay.com)

### **Mission Tidbits From 2009 UMW Prayer Calendar**

In Bolivia John & Suzanne Funk, missionaries of the Evangelical United Methodist Church in La Paz, write: "Seis de Agosto (August 6<sup>th</sup>) is Independence Day for Bolivia. We celebrated here at the school and all of the community came out in support. The day was filled with drama, dancing, singing, poem reciting and athletic events. Also, John and I, along with two other teachers, took 40 children to La Paz to celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first Methodist school in Bolivia (Instituto Americano)."

If you would like to send an email note of encouragement or thanks to the Funks, their email address is: [John@funk4.com](mailto:John@funk4.com)

### **Blessing of the Animals in Sept.**

Details to follow!

### **Save A Tree Reduce Resource Usage**

Remember you can go to our website [www.niwotumc.org](http://www.niwotumc.org) for a copy of our newsletter: The Messenger.

Please contact the office if you would like to stop receiving your hardcopy of The Messenger through the mail.

Thanks!

### **Finance Update**

As is the case in other institutions, NUMC is experiencing a challenge in financing our operations. This has been shared in previous communications. We can report that this situation has improved somewhat in the past 1-2 months. Thank you for making this possible.

- We are still asking that where possible you consider reducing and/or postponing expenditures. Several people have found or suggested ways to do this. Again, thank you.
- We are including expenditure vs. income information for the previous month in the weekly bulletins.
- Christine Heidebrecht has graciously volunteered to coordinate a series of special fund raising activities.

Please contact any member of Finance with additional ideas for increasing income or reducing expenditures

### **Niwot Nostalgia Day 2009**

We need a coordinator for the NUMC booth at Niwot Nostalgia Day on Saturday, September 12th. This is a great opportunity for community outreach. The booth is open from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Duties:

1. Put out a sign-up sheet for people to work (2-hour shifts: 9-11 (includes set up); 11-1; 1-3 (includes take down), minimum 2 people per shift).
2. Arrange to get the booth over there from the church (it's in the shed on north side of church & requires a pickup to haul)
3. Come up with game and/or fundraiser with prizes. Last year we did water balloon toss, and Nothing But Nets basketball shoot as a fundraiser.
4. Coordinate with Mike Weiss to get the \$25 booth fee paid.

For more info and to volunteer, contact Biff Warren at 303-652-2433.

### **NUMC at the Rockies Wrap Up**

Niwot UMC had 21 fans in attendance July 20th for the Colorado Rockies' 10-6 win over the Arizona Diamondbacks! Divine intervention was at work as the victory put the Rockies in first place in the National League Wild Card race, which fulfilled the prophecy in the July NUMC Newsletter. Congratulations to Bea Hill for winning first prize by answering all 20 Trivia questions correctly!

To get group rates to Rockies games, we normally need a minimum of 25 tickets sold. This year we sold only 23, but they gave us the discount anyway. If there are better months, days of the week, gametimes, please contact Biff Warren at 303-652-2433

**Thanks For All You Do!**

- ♥ Thank you Mary Davidson for your beautiful solo for special music on July 5th.
- ♥ Thank you Ruth Graeter and Gayle Weiss for the evocative Indian flute blessing on July 5th.
- ♥ Thank you Gayle Weiss for the uplifting special music on July 12th.
- ♥ Thank you Christine Heidebrecht and Gayle Weiss for the inspiring Introit on July 19th. Thanks to Don Davidson, Christine Heidebrecht, Gayle and Mike Weiss for the beautiful Special Music on July 19th.
- ♥ Thank you Don Davidson for the deeply moving special music on July 26th.
- ♥ Thank you Rev. Dave for bringing the message while Rev. Merlene was on vacation.
- ♥ Thank you Alice Haverstock, Lay Leader for bringing the message while Merlene was on vacation.
- ♥ Thanks to Bea Hill for organizing the great Ladies Luncheon at Chautauqua. What a great day.
- ♥ Thanks to all who are helping with the various work projects around the church both inside and out
- ♥ Thanks to Pat Koh who provides inspiring music for our Preludes, Postludes, and Offertories. We are blessed to have her talents shared with us as our pianist for our hymns and the Choir accompanist.
- ♥ Thanks to Mary Ann Jeffers who sees that our church is clean and ready for worship.
- ♥ Thanks to Melissa Klein whose work enables the smooth flowing of our ministry and outreach.

**Dembroski's 50th Anniversary**

In celebration of their fiftieth wedding anniversary, Dorinda and Joe Dembroski invite you to a garden party at their home and garden at 7054 Elm Street Niwot Saturday, August 8th from two-thirty to five o'clock in the afternoon. The dress is casual. No gifts please.

**Aug Birthdays/Anniversaries**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 Mary Davidson</li> <li>4 Drew Shively</li> <li>5 Mike Weiss</li> <li>6 Michael Warren</li> <li>9 Zoe Wagner</li> <li>10 Rev. Merlene Barner</li> <li>Madelyn Gehring</li> <li>15 Peter Byrne</li> <li>17 Kris McNeal</li> <li>18 Christine Ford</li> <li>23 Betty Jamison</li> <li>24 Kathy Shively, Bev Strand</li> <li>Kevin Schoonover</li> <li>25 Todd Briethaupt, George Mills</li> <li>29 Tyler Kemp</li> <li>30 Susan Johnson</li> <li>31 Rick McNeal, Joe Dembrowski</li> </ul> |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4 Dixie &amp; Richard Piland</li> <li>14 Chuck &amp; Elinor Sorenson</li> <li>12 Joe &amp; Dorinda Dembroski</li> <li>13 Doug McCallum &amp; Diana Neff</li> <li>14 Todd &amp; Tracy Breithaupt</li> <li>19 Fred &amp; Liz Smith</li> <li>25 Ron &amp; Pat Kiel</li> </ul>  |   |