145 are dead and most of them are children. This is the news from Pakistan on the day I write this. Nine Taliban attackers armed with automatic weapons, hand grenades, and explosive vests stormed the Army Public School and College. They started murdering with shouts of “God is great!” After eight hours, the siege was over but the response had only begun.

The Nobel Prize winner, Malala Yousafzai, herself shot by the Taliban for being a girl in school, said that she was heartbroken and “I, along with millions around the world mourn these children, my brothers and sisters but we will never be defeated.”

This is yet another bloody tragedy in our world. Of course, such horrible acts are not new. Within our own Scriptures, we can look at Matthew 2:16-18 in which we are told of the slaughter of the innocents by King Herod. Feeling threatened by word of a new born Messiah, the King sends troops to Bethlehem to murder the baby boys up to age two.

Fear, anger, attack, grief, and retribution are all parts of a cycle which has gone around so many times in our world from the personal to the international and about every stage in between. It is not surprising that seeing such carnage, Mahatma Gandhi once said, “An eye for an eye makes the whole world blind.” Of course, a primary cause for this blindness is hatred and the desire for revenge. While this can be easy to diagnose from a distance, it is so very difficult to cure not only in others but in ourselves.

In this, we seem hardwired to see other people’s sins with great clarity while often being blind to our own. Here, Jesus says, “Take the log out of your own eye before you take the speck out of your brother or sister’s eye.”

As we begin a new year, I am led back to the quote by Malala in which she says that even in the face of such horror and the mourning which results; she and others “will never be defeated.” I think she means that she and those with her will pursue ways of life which lead to greater learning, understanding, and hope for all. They will do this even in the face of hatred and attack.

I am reminded of the saying, “It is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness.” Particularly in the darkness of winter whether that is literal or metaphorical, we realize the need for the light to shine. As we once again enter a new year which will have many challenges of its own, may we be people, who having seen the light brought by Christ, light candles of strength, understanding, and healing in a world too often blinded by prejudice, fear, and hatred. May we light such candles just as we support all others who work for life in our world.

Pastor Tom Dodd
This year I approached Thanksgiving from a different perspective. I spent time reflecting on what I was thankful for AFTER the holiday. What was Thanksgiving all about from a personal perspective? I spent a quiet day, alone – and yet not alone, filled with appreciation for the many ways God has blessed my life. I realized that He has given me all I need. I know it sounds SO Lutheran, but I have Grace, Faith, and the Word. I live with confidence that I am a beloved and forgiven child of God.

As Christmas approached, I realized God’s abundant generosity gave me an excitement for Christmas I hadn’t experienced before. (I’m reminded of my sons when we took extended car trips: “Are we there yet?”) I found myself full of anticipation for the birth of Jesus Christ! I puzzled over how I would spend Christmas Eve – would I kneel quietly at the side of the manger and worship the baby Jesus; or stand, dance, and sing with the angels: “Glory to God in the highest.” When we look back on Christmas I hope we have experienced quiet reverence and resounding joy as God became flesh and came to dwell among us!

“Love has come and never will leave us! Love is life everlasting and free. Love is Jesus within and among us. Love is the peace our hearts are seeking. Love! Love! Love is the gift of Christmas. Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!”

NEW TO UNITED

We are delighted to officially welcome the Whittaker family into United’s family. They have been worshipping with us for the past year. On Sunday, December 21, Rebekah joined the church by Affirmation of Baptism and her husband, Brent, along with their children, Jackson (6) and Hope (2), were baptized during the 11:00 service.

The Whittakers moved to Eugene in 2012 after eight years in the Portland area where they attended West Linn Lutheran Church. Brent and Rebekah met at the University of Oregon in 2001 and married in 2006. Brent works for the Oregon Golf Association as Director of Tournament Operations. Rebekah is a grad student at the UO working on her Master’s Degree in Education and Elementary School Teaching Certification. They are excited to become members of the congregation, raising their family in this beautiful community, living a life full of joy, service, purpose, and faith.

Veronica was born in Maryland and grew up in a Washington, D. C. suburb, where her father was a mathematician and her mother an English professor. Her grandmother, who recently passed away, was also very influential in her life.

This summer, she received her Ph.D. in Literature from the U of O, fulfilling her passion for literature that she discovered at the age of 14, when her class was assigned to read Night by Elie Wiesel, and then discussed it in class. The subject of her doctoral thesis was American Comics and Graphic Narrative, focusing on environmental thinking in post-war American comics.

Veronica did her undergraduate studies at St. Olaf College, where she sang in the chapel choir all four years and met Damon, whom she married in 2006. Fittingly, they were married in her grandparents’ backyard in Minnesota. After their marriage, they moved to Montana, where she got her Masters in English at the University of Montana before moving to Eugene in 2009 to begin her doctoral studies.

Their first child, Juniper, was born in 2011. Damon and Veronica are expecting a second baby in April 2015. Although Juniper has been hoping for a sister, she will instead have a brother.

Veronica’s favorite Bible verses are the parables of Jesus, particularly the two parables about the woman and the lost coin (Luke 15:8-10) and how the kingdom of God is like yeast (Matthew 13:33).

One thing Veronica would like to see at ULC is name tags so that it would be easier for newer ULC members and visitors to get to know people.
WHO WERE “THE BOYS IN THE BOAT?”

United’s Book Group asks you to learn the answer to that question, as we read and discuss the “sleeper” bestseller of 2014, The Boys in the Boat by Seattle author Daniel James Brown this month. We will be discussing it on Sunday, January 18, 4:00 p.m., in the community room.

This non-fiction book which “reads like a novel” tells the story of the University of Washington’s 1936 crew team which, against the odds, made it to the Berlin Olympics. Highly praised, the book “is fast-paced and emotional nonfiction about determination, bonds built by teamwork, and what it takes to achieve glory.”

The book is now available in paperback and as an e-book. In addition, the Eugene Public Library has several copies.

If you loved Unbroken you will love The Boys in the Boat. Join us in reading and discussing it January 18.

ARNE ELWOOD MOE
1921-2014

Longtime, faithful member, Arne Moe, died peacefully at Good Samaritan Care Center on November 29, 2014, with his family present. He was 93 years old. We remembered his life in a memorial service at United, December 10.

Everyone who knew Arne knew him to be a quiet, steady, kind and gentle man, who was a hard worker. For years at United he was the backbone of the Property Committee along with his younger brother, Lowell, only quitting that in recent years as his health declined.

Arne was born in Bemidji, Minnesota on July 2, 1921. He met his much-loved wife, Sylvia, in 1942, but WWII delayed their marriage, which was in August 1945. Arne served as a bombardier during the war. In 1948 Arne and Sylvia moved with their young daughter, Sue, to Eugene, and that’s where their son, Terry was born. Arne bought working shares in Lane Plywood and worked there until he retired in 1983.

He enjoyed square dancing, bowling, and motor-homing with Sylvia and their friends. Sylvia, sadly, died from cancer in 2001. He is survived by Lowell, Sue, Terry, and their families, and other siblings.

LET’S GO SEE EXODUS!

Join others from United on Saturday afternoon, January 3, in a movie outing. (Time and theater to be announced later.) We will go see the new movie, Exodus: Gods and Kings, and then gather afterwards for a meal and discussion. Please read Exodus, chapters 1-15, beforehand, to compare the biblical account with the cinematic one.

STYROFOAM TO BE COLLECTED

The pastures of the wilderness overflow,
the hills gird themselves with joy,
the meadows clothe themselves with flocks,
the valleys deck themselves with grain,
they shout and sing together with joy.
Psalm 65:9-13

In the midst of such abundance let’s remember in the New Year the old adage: “Use it up, wear it out, make it do or do without.”

In the month of January we will be collecting Styrofoam to recycle. Please bring block Styrofoam to the corner of the Fellowship Hall, near the piano.

LEAVE A LEGACY

Have you thought of including United in your will or living trust? Would you like to leave a lasting legacy to the church? Such bequests strengthen the ministry both now and into the future.

It can be as simple as including in your will:
“I leave ____% to United Lutheran Church, an Oregon non-profit corporation, 2230 Washington Street, Eugene, Oregon 97405.”

Feel free to contact the members of the Trust Fund Committee (Mary Beth Wilson, Janet Gustafson, Jennifer Haliski, John Masson, and Eileen Peterson) if you have any questions.
NEW: CAMP LUTHERWOOD OFFERS TIERED PRICING!

In order to make it possible for more people to experience the joy of camp, regardless of financial means, Camp Lutherwood Oregon is now offering a voluntary three-tiered pricing program. Consider selecting the highest price you can afford as that helps more kids go to camp.

Tier 1: Most accurately reflects the “true cost” of camp.
Tier 2: Slightly subsidized for families needing some support to make camp affordable.
Tier 3: Subsidized rate through fundraising, special events, and contributions from camp supporters. Choose this rate if you are applying for additional Campership support from Camp Lutherwood Oregon.

Register online at http://lutherwoodoregon.org/registration.

BIRTHDAYS
8 - Katie Johnson
9 - Alex Snook
10 - Paige Buenau
13 - John Masson
16 - Rachel Hample
20 - Paul Frantz
24 - Dick Bowers
   Cameron Wisecaver
27 - Ruby Bryce
   Sydney Simmons
29 - Elizabeth Gustafson
   Margaret Kaesar
   Ellen Krueger
30 - John Landon
31 - David Glass

BAPTISMAL ANNIVERSARIES
9 - Thomas Gustafson
11 - Thea Petersen
13 - Denise Wendt
14 - Alex Hirsch
16 - Lorene Martinson
22 - Mark Spence
29 - Mark Raney
   Kathy Saranpa

“We must develop and maintain the capacity to forgive. He who is devoid of the power to forgive is devoid of the power to love. There is some good in the worst of us and some evil in the best of us. When we discover this, we are less prone to hate our enemies.”

Martin Luther King, Jr.

YOUR UNITED VOICE IS BROUGHT TO YOU BY:

United’s “gems” are sparkling brightly.

Ellen Krueger and Joanne Gulsvig helped prepare the December newsletter for mailing in November.
Thank you!

If you wish to help, come to the church community room at 2:00 p.m. on Friday, January 23.
WOMEN OF UNITED NEWS

The Bible Study this month is in the January issue of *Gather*. You are invited to join any of the following circles:

Mary Magdalene Circle meets on Thursday, January 8, 6:30 p.m., at Shoran Adair’s home.

Ruth Circle meets on Monday, January 12, 9:30 a.m., at Doris Helikson’s home.

Circle of Faith meets on Tuesday, January 13, 1:00 p.m., in the church community room.

Thank you to all who worked to make the Danish Christmas Dinner at church such a success in December! That includes making ornaments and decorating the beautiful tree.

About a dozen women attended the Christmas Lunch. No officers were elected at the meeting following the lunch and the future of Women of United as an organized group was discussed. The Bible Study Circles were praised as valuable for the community and support each woman finds in her circle.

Church Women United will examine “Activism for Christians” at the January forum, to be held on Friday, January 9, 9:00 a.m., at the Church of the Brethren, 1072 Main St., Springfield. The Rev. Melanie Oomen, assistant pastor at First Congregational Church in Eugene will talk about what we as Christians can do to make this a world we want for our children and all the children of the world. A continental breakfast will be provided from 9:00 to 9:40 a.m. Bring a friend!

Breakfast at Brails is now meeting the Tuesday after the Friday forum, at 7:30 a.m. at Brails Restaurant, 1689 Willamette St. It is now a time to socialize and perhaps have a follow-up discussion on the month’s forum.

In February the topic will be “Health Care System Improvement/Health” with speakers from Health Care for All.

Q: What are the last three words of Martin Luther King Jr.’s “I Have a Dream” speech, which also appear in his epitaph?

Answer on page 7.

UPDATE YOUR DIRECTORY

The following people have moved. Call the church office if would like the addresses.

Israel & Elizabeth Jurich
Lowell & Leona Moe
Brent & Rebekah Whittaker
Joan Wren

From FISH
December 3, 2014

Dear United Lutheran Church,

Thank you for your generous gift of $275.00. Your generosity will make life better for individuals and families who have great needs. On their behalf and on behalf of our wonderful volunteers I thank you.

Del Hawkins, Coordinator

HEALTH CARE FOR ALL

You are invited to attend the January meeting of Health Care for All, Tuesday, January 6, 7:00 p.m., at First United Methodist Church, 12th and Olive, Eugene. The group is signing up people to fill four buses from Eugene to go to the February 11 Advocacy Day at the Capitol in Salem, where they will lobby our legislators on “Health Care for All is a Human Right.” The group is expecting 4000 supporters from around the state gathering on the Capitol steps with speakers and great music.
YOU ARE INVITED TO LUTHERFEST!

Lutheran Campus Ministry at OSU & Lane Benton Community College invites you to Lutherfest, the third annual Luther House beer and cheese pairing event in support of Luther House, **Sunday, February 8, 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.**

Thanks to three major sponsors (St. Mark Lutheran Endowment Fund, Grace Lutheran Church Foundation, and Ron Mohr and Charlie Owen of Thrivent Financial, along with the Thrivent NW Community Board) all expenses are covered. So 100% of ticket sales will directly support the ministry of Luther House!

In addition to enjoying local craft beers, Oregon artisan cheese, fresh baked breads, and many more culinary treats, enjoy the music of the Deepwood Strings ensemble. OSU experts from the Food and Fermentation Science programs will provide an update on the latest in beer brewing and cheese making in Oregon. And learn about Lutheran Campus Ministry.

Tickets are $50/person or $350/table of eight. Advance purchase is required at [http://www.luther-house.org/programs/lutherfest/](http://www.luther-house.org/programs/lutherfest/).

ORIGON INTERFAITH ADVOCACY DAY
RAISING DIVERSE VOICES OF FAITH TO STRENGTHEN OREGON COMMUNITIES
**Wednesday, February 11, 2015**
9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Salem, Oregon

Join several hundred Oregonians of many religious traditions in Salem for a day of interfaith worship, dialogue, education, and advocacy on behalf of Oregonians facing hunger, homelessness, or lack of access to affordable health care.

Activities will include an interfaith panel on “Confronting Poverty, Promoting Economic Equality, and Preventing Gun Violence,” training in advocacy skills, issue briefings, meetings with legislators, and a keynote address by Nichole June Maher, MPH, president and CEO of Northwest Health Foundation.

Cost is $20/general, $10/students with ID. This includes lunch and materials.

Registration and Morning Session will be at St. Mark Lutheran Church, 790 Marion St. NE. The Afternoon Session will be at the Oregon State Capitol.

For more information or to register: Call 503-221-1054 or visit [www.emoregon.org](http://www.emoregon.org). Pastor Dodd has registered and invites others from United to participate.

SETTING THE TABLE

Gathering of Lutheran Hunger Advocates to Share Experiences and Strengthen Ministry

**Saturday, January 24, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.**
Emmaus Lutheran Church
18th and Polk, Eugene

Breakout sessions will focus on similar ministries such as sit-down dinner, backpack buddies, collaborative community meals, congregational food banks, simple food closets shared with passers-by who are hungry, and a special breakout session for unique services that are special approaches in meeting in these needs.

“I hate clothes shopping!”
Happy New Year to:

January 4
Jeremiah 31:7-14; Psalm 147:12-20; Ephesians 1:3-14; John 2:1-9, 10-18

January 6
Isaiah 60:1-6; Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14; Ephesians 3:1-12; Matthew 2:1-12

January 11
Genesis 1:1-5; Psalm 29; Acts 19:1-7; Mark 1:4-11

January 18
1 Samuel 3:1-10 (11-20); Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18; 1 Corinthians 6:12-20; John 1:43-51
1 Samuel 3:1-5, 10; Psalm 62:5-12; 1 Corinthians 7:29-31; Mark 1:14-20

January 25
Jonah 3:1-5, 10; Psalm 62:5-12; 1 Corinthians 7:29-31; Mark 1:14-20

Happy New Year to:

Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

Isaiah 60:3, NRSV

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