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**SPokane Valley  
United Methodist  
Church**  
115 North Raymond Rd  
Spokane Valley, WA  
99206

**Sunday 9am  
Traditional Service  
Sunday School & Nursery**

**Pastor**  
Rev. Alissa Amestoy

**Director of Music**  
Betsy Pletscher

**Accompanist**

Zachary Bjurstrom

**Director of Hospitality**

Margie Manfred

**Technical Ministry**

**Co-Coordinators**

Lexi Shay & Logan Tiedt

**Coordinator of**

**Ministries with**

**Young People**

Jen Price

**Nursery Caregiver**

Chris Nilles

**Church Secretary**

Mackenzie Draper

**Lay Leader**

Zack Reiber



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our website!



Scan our new QR  
code for easy  
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Church Office: 509-924-7262

Office Hours:

Mon-Thurs 8 am - 11:30 am

Friday 8 am - 2 pm

Church website: [www.spokanevalleychurch.org](http://www.spokanevalleychurch.org)  
Church email: [secretary@spokanevalleychurch.org](mailto:secretary@spokanevalleychurch.org)

#### **OUR PURPOSE:**

*Spokane Valley United Methodist Church is here  
to invite people to: follow Jesus, love others,  
and transform the greater community through  
the grace of God.*

**connections**  
february 2026

#### **Renewed in Mercy: A Lenten Journey Toward New Life**

A number of years ago, I took 10 students on a Spring Break mission trip to Vernonia and Portland, OR where we would spend our days cleaning up after a catastrophic flood and serving the unhoused and spend our nights sleeping on the floor in churches. One of the students, upon arriving in Vernonia late in the evening, came to me to confess, that in the process of packing, he had failed to include socks and shoes so only had the slip on plastic sandals he had worn in the van. A quick Google search confirmed there was a thrift store in this remote rural town so I assured him we'd start there in the morning and hope for the best. Not two minutes later, another student came inquiring if I had an extra toothbrush she could have because she hadn't packed hers. She was in luck – I'd learned from previous mission trip experiences that certain items often get neglected and so I had a spare to share. But the icing on the forgotten items cake was one student who said he couldn't find his suitcase or his sleeping bag in the pile of things we had unloaded from the van. After searching amongst everything to no avail, we finally figured out his items had never even made it into the van because he had never taken them out of the trunk of his car that morning! When I had said, "Did everyone put their things in the van?" before leaving, he had assumed that I had gone across the church parking lot that morning to take his items out of his *closed* trunk and loaded them for him, so he said "yes!" Not much could be done for him, so a makeshift bed of church blankets was hastily created and I added him to the thrift store visit list. While I did what I could to resolve their lack of preparation one way or another, the lesson these three students learned that night is that long journeys require *preparation* and *attention* to what is needed to embark on them properly!

Though Ash Wednesday (Feb. 18) marks the beginning of our Lenten journey each year, we must remember that all long journeys begin not with the first step or rolling down the road, but with preparation. Even though we go on this journey year after year, the Holy Spirit's sustaining grace persistently invites us to experience it anew, to learn new things about how we prepare and begin Lent well, and how we can make the most of this annual "spiritual road trip." To guide us on the path, our Lenten series for this year comes from the General Board of Disciples and is titled "Renewed in Mercy: A Journey Toward New Life."

Grace and mercy are two sides of a divinely offered "coin," if you will. As we've talked about the past few weeks through our "Transformed by Grace" series, grace, especially prevenient grace, is something good we receive from God but don't deserve. Mercy, on the other hand, is *not* receiving something bad you *do* deserve, because, through mercy, God forgives punishment and gives another chance at a new life. Think of it like this: mercy is the officer letting you go with a warning even though you *were* speeding, while grace is a colleague helping you finish a project you couldn't do, earning you a bonus you didn't deserve. Both work hand-in-hand to help us live into the transformed, renewed life God desires for each of us.

(Cont. on pg. 2)

(cont. from pg. 1) During this season of Lent, we will focus on this concept of "re-new," of making new again, or re-encountering something as new again. The Zen Buddhist tradition calls this the "beginner's mind" - the practice of releasing expectations or preconceived notions and approaching both new and familiar people, events, and ideas with a fresh perspective. There are several ways we imbue this Lenten season with a sense of a new encounter with God's mercy. During Sunday worship, we will engage one of the Psalms as a form of confession which will teach/remind us that as Wesleyan Christians, we understand that to even recognize our need to confess is a faithful response to the persistent work of God's grace in our lives. But rather than simply reading them, we will use a resource called "The Emergent Psalter" which pairs sung antiphons (short chants) with the scriptures. We will also be learning a new song to draw us back from our time of passing the peace. Jonathan Parlance has created a custom song called, "Come, Let's Join and Be Transformed," to match our annual theme of "By grace transformed, transforming by grace" which will replace the "Gloria Patri" for this season.

We will also be offering *The Respite*, a mid-week contemplative worship experience on Wednesdays at 7pm beginning on Ash Wednesday. At *The Respite*, you will be offered a place to rest during the journey of Lent and invited to engage in different spiritual practices of noticing and paying attention to where grace and mercy are at work in your life and in the lives of our greater community. At our Ash Wednesday worship service on Feb. 18, we will begin our Lenten journey at 7pm in the Sanctuary (free soup dinner at 6pm in Room 115) and it will serve to prepare us and set the stage for a season of repentance that is not just turning away from sin but turning toward God's renewing mercy working in the world. I invite you to join us as we experience the renewal that comes from God's never-ending mercy and to walk with our Lord on a journey to new life!

Peace- Pastor Alissa



Pastor Alissa, Bruce Butler (left), and several others from our congregation participated in the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Rally and march downtown on January 19th. The photo to the right is of some of the United Methodist pastors and laity from area churches.



## BIRTHDAYS

2/6 Gabe Erickson	2/10 Rob Peck	2/23 Kay Hurlbut
2/7 Dot Burdette	2/16 Desiree Forster	2/24 Aubriana Henderson
Marlene McCoy	2/17 Michael Myers	2/25 Laurie Harmon
2/8 Ruth Johnson	2/20 Paul Bos	2/27 Barrett Meckel
2/9 Stephen Ross		

## ANNIVERSARIES

2/12 Don & Judy Fox	2/23 Adam & Sarah Stultz
2/13 Dennis & Laura Gottberg	

## SPECIAL EVENTS:

2/2 11:00 am Quilter's Group	2/12 11:00 am Rachel Circle
6:30 pm Sarah Circle	2/16 11:00 am Quilter's Group
2/3 10:00 am SPR Meeting	2/17 10:00 am Touched by Cancer
2/9 10:00 am Prayer Shawl & Lap Blanket Ministry	10:00 am Prayer Shawl & Lap
6:30 pm Trustees Meeting	2/23 Blanket Ministry
2/10 9:00 am Huddle	9:00 am Huddle
12:30 pm Esther Circle	2/24 2:30 pm Finance

## WEEKLY EVENTS:

<b>Mondays:</b>	9:30 am Shirley's Group (115)
	10:00 am Walkers (gym)
<b>Wednesdays:</b>	9:30 am Disciple 3 Group (115)
	10:00 am Walkers (gym)
<b>Thursdays:</b>	9:00 am Thursday Crew
	1:00 pm Lois' Group
<b>Saturdays:</b>	10:00 am Choir Practice

# NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS



Join us Sunday, February 15th at 2 PM in the Sanctuary for Ethan's Eagle Scout Court of Honor! It This event honors Scouts who achieve the highest rank in Scouting, the Eagle Scout

Award, celebrating their commitment, leadership, and service. There will be a reception after the event in the gym. All are welcome!

**Sunday, February 15th is Flannel Sunday! Wear your warmest and coziest flannel to service!**



On behalf of our youth group I want to extend my deepest thanks to everyone in our congregation who donated food and elements for our Birthday Celebration kits. We donated 491 pounds of food and completed 50 Birthday Celebration kits. Our kits went quickly and I will be discussing with our youth when they would like to do another drive focusing on the Birthday Celebration kits since they were gone in under a week.

Sunday School is currently focusing on Jesus' disciples and how they learn from them as a way to follow Jesus in their daily lives and be "fishers of men."

Confirmation and youth have resumed. We are focusing on discipleship in Confirmation and the importance of prayer and its components during our youth Sundays.

- Jen Price, Coordinator of Ministries for Young People



## FEBRUARY 1 – 4<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

With Pastor Alissa gone the whole week before to participate in the Board of Ordained Ministry Interviews, Dr. Shawna Beese, candidate for Certified Lay Speaker, will preach a sermon called "Transformed by Grace: Happy and Foolish" based on 1 Corinthians 1:18-31. We will also celebrate communion together!

## FEBRUARY 8 – 5<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

Pastor Alissa will wrap up our first worship series of the year with a sermon called "Transformed by Grace: Salt of the Earth" based on Matthew 15:13-20. Our two Eagle Scouts, Ethan Amestoy & Tyler Meckel, will help lead worship along with C.J. Amestoy who is an Eagle Scout and the current Committee Chair for Troop 313. We will also bless the handmade items from our Prayer Shawl and Quilting Ministries.

## FEBRUARY 15 – 6<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

The Inland District pastors are swapping pulpits this Sunday so we will welcome Rev. Damian Carruthers from Cheney UMC while Pastor Alissa heads back to preach at her previous appointment! Pastor Damian will preach a sermon based on Mark 9:2-9 and all are encouraged to wear their FLANNEL SHIRTS! We will also celebrate Scout Sunday and hear a Ministry that Matters Moment with Sarah Henderson from Partners Inland Northwest.

## LENTEN SEASON SERIES: RENEWED IN MERCY – A JOURNEY TOWARD NEW LIFE

### FEBRUARY 18 – ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE – "A CLEAN HEART"

Begin your Lenten journey with the imposition of ashes at our contemplative worship at 7pm in the Sanctuary. Scriptures are Psalm 51:1-17 and 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10.

**We will continue to offer a contemplative worship experience at 7pm on Wednesdays throughout the season of Lent with a free soup/bread/salad meal offered at 6pm.**

### FEBRUARY 22 – LENT 1 – "MERCY ON THE WILDERNESS ROAD"

Pastor Alissa preaching a sermon on Matthew 4:1-11 (Temptation of Jesus)

### MARCH 1 – LENT 2 – "GUIDED BY PROMISE"

Pastor Alissa preaching a sermon on Romans 4:1-5, 13-17 & John 3:1-17 (Nicodemus)

**JOIN US FOR WORSHIP ON SUNDAYS AT 9AM AS WE  
CONTINUE OUR MISSION TO TRANSFORM THE GREATER  
COMMUNITY BY THE GRACE OF GOD!**

# FEBRUARY WORSHIP PREVIEW

