

Return Service Requested

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
- Director of Hospitality**
Margie Manfred
- Technical Ministry**
Co-Coordinator
Lexi Shay & Logan Tiedt
- Coordinator of**
Ministries with
Young People
Jen Price
- Nursery Caregiver**
Chris Nilles
- Church Secretary**
Mackenzie Draper
- Lay Leader**
Zack Reiber



Check out
our website!



Scan our new QR
code for easy
online giving!

Church Office: 509-924-7262
Office Hours:
Mon-Thurs 8 am - 11:30 am
Friday 8 am - 2 pm

Church website: www.spokanevalleychurch.org
Church email: 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
march 2026

The Respite
by Pastor Alissa

My heart was full and my spirit content when I left the church following our Ash Wednesday service on Feb. 18. After an admittedly chaotic weekend of preparing to preach at Cheney UMC and putting together the entirety of Ethan's Eagle Scout Court of Honor, I was woefully unprepared for the start to the Lenten season as the week began. Tuesday was a scramble of creating the different contemplative practices to be offered at *The Respite*, the new midweek experience we're offering on Wednesdays at 7pm throughout this season (and perhaps beyond...) and putting together service orders for Ash Wednesday and Lent 1. Wednesday started with going shopping with Margie Manfred for the first of the 6pm Lenten soup suppers and setting up all the spaces for both our service and contemplation stations before beginning to prep the meal (gratitude to Margie and Raeann & Ed Ducar for their help!) Though it all came together in the end, as it always does, it all felt more rushed than I would prefer for the start of the holiest season of the year.

I found, however, that once folks began to arrive on Ash Wednesday, and as we settled into the new rhythm that *The Respite* provides, my body started to relax, my breath slowed, and I could feel

the mental release of the tension and pressure that my overfilled "to do" list that day had caused. As we chanted "Come and Fill Our Hearts" over and over, I felt a growing sense of peace and gratitude for the gift of time and space to simply dwell in the presence of God with the people of God all around me. When it



came time to read the scripture (Psalm 51), I shared that *The Respite* was intentionally *not* heavily scripted so I had yet to ask anyone to be the reader but that I trusted the Spirit would speak into the heart of someone among us to bring us the Holy Word for that night. Sure enough, the Spirit spoke and someone who has never served in such a role among us stepped up and so (Cont. on pg. 2)



(Cont. from pg. 1) beautifully spoke the psalmist's vulnerable words of confession of sin that tears filled my eyes.

It was also a fulfilling experience to be a part of a time of corporately held silence in which we each chose our own discipline and quietly spent 30 minutes with God in the safety of our sacred space. I had been intentional in choosing a few "easy to engage" spiritual practices that anyone could do even if it was their first time practicing them. In the Sanctuary, there was simply the call to silence – either sitting quietly, reading the Bible or a devotional book of choice, or journaling or working on a handicraft. In another room, there was a guided "Visio Divina" (divine vision) whereby one gazed upon a piece of art based on the scripture reading to see what God had to show them. In yet another room, there was "Lectio Divina" (divine reading) where you were instructed to slowly read through Psalm 51 three times using the stages of lectio (read), meditatio (reflection), and oratio (response), followed by a time of contemplatio (rest) to hear what God was speaking to you. In a third space, there were materials to color a Celtic rose mandala or to free journal using a few suggested prompts.

For those who would benefit from a corporate experience, there were two options: Shirley Porter offered a short, small group discussion to go deeper into the texts for the day and the meaning of Ash Wednesday while Betsy Pletscher led a time of singing and percussion to learn another chant from the Taizé tradition, "Nothing Can Trouble", that we would later sing altogether as we returned to the Sanctuary. Though I spent some of the 30min in my own practice of contemplation, I did walk around at the beginning to ensure folks had found a place to settle and again at the end to give them a five minute heads up to return to the Sanctuary. As I walked around the church quietly, what I observed were signs of God's sanctifying grace at work in the hearts, minds, and spirits of the people gathered. The reflections shared by a few people during our Listening Circle gave further witness to the wisdom of God that had been found and known through that dedicated time of reflection and attentiveness. As we each received our ashes and crossed the threshold into Lent, there was a true sense of the Sacred joining us as we began our Lenten journey. It was a holy thing to be a part of and I'm grateful to be both a guide and a fellow pilgrim with all who are journeying toward renewal in mercy this Lenten season.

If you didn't have an opportunity to join us on Ash Wednesday, I want to encourage you to join us on a future Wednesday in Lent. As I shared at the beginning of the service that night, a respite is an interval of rest or relief, generally from something unpleasant or difficult, but it is also used to indicate a break from the usual pattern of day to day life. The word originates from the Latin word *respectus* meaning refuge. We've chosen to name the midweek service that will be offered throughout the season of Lent *The Respite*, because we intend it to be an experience where we, as the people of God, can find a place of rest and relief from the day to day challenges and difficulties of life out in the world. If what I've described above is what you're seeking, I encourage you to join us on Wednesdays for dinner at 6pm and a time of corporate and individual contemplation at 7pm using some of the practices I named as well as others we will introduce throughout the season. If Wednesday evenings or leaving your home simply are not possible for you, but you'd still like to engage in a practice of contemplation, please contact me using the information below – I have ways of sharing them with you!

As our Lenten journey to renewal in mercy continues, I pray God's blessing upon you and give thanks that we walk this path together.

Peace-
Pastor Alissa
alissaamestoy@gmail.com or 509-879-2278 (call or text)

MARCH BIRTHDAYS WEEKLY EVENTS:

- 3/2 Richard Simpson
- 3/6 Jerry Larson
- 3/7 Otto Vegele
- 3/8 Orva Phillips
- 3/10 Ann Holmquist
- 3/12 Stephanie Mackin
- 3/13 Georgiann Cheney
- 3/14 Betsy Pletscher
- 3/17 Alissa Amestoy
- 3/23 Kay Hurlbut
- 3/25 Brandon Stultz
- 3/26 Raymundo Henderson
- 3/27 Sharon Schuh
- 3/28 Michael Cheney
- 3/29 Zack Reiber

Mondays:
9:30 am Shirley's Group (115)
10:00 am Walkers (gym)

Wednesdays:
9:30 am Disciple 3 Group (115)
10:00 am Walkers (gym)
7:00 pm Lenten Contemplative Worship Service

Thursdays:
9:00 am Thursday Crew
1:00 pm Lois' Group

Saturdays:
10:00 am Choir Practice

ANNIVERSARIES

- 3/3 Joe & Susan Ingalls
- 3/18 Otto Vegele & Nancy Moore
- 3/30 Jerry & Pat Bishop
- 3/31 Jon & Carmen Schaffer

SPECIAL EVENTS:

- 3/2 11:00 am Quilters (125)
6:30 pm Sarah Circle (FPR)
- 3/3 10:00 am SPR (FPR)
- 3/9 10:00 am Prayer Shawl Ministry (Youth)
6:30 pm Trustees Meeting (FPR)
- 3/10 9:00 am Huddle (213)
12:30 pm Esther Circle (115)
- 3/12 11:00 am Rachel Circle (FPR)
- 3/16 11:00 am Quilters (125)
- 3/17 10:00 am Touched by Cancer (FPR)
2:30 pm Finance (FPR)
6:00 pm Coordinating Council (FPR)
- 3/23 10:00 am Prayer Shawl Ministry (Youth)
- 3/24 9:00 am Huddle (213)

KIDS' KORNER

As we prepare for Holy Week, our Sunday School children are having their own "Journey through the Wilderness" each week where they will prepare their "backpacks" with a new element to remind them of Jesus' journey we remember during Lent. Once Easter is upon us, they will bring their "backpacks" home with all their stickers, crafts and stories to share. They will be receiving a heart "rubbing stone" to help them to remember to pray in times of need and release their concerns.

We will be hosting an Easter Egg Hunt on Easter Sunday after service and would love candy to fill our abundance of plastic eggs we have. Please contact Jen Price for more details.

Our youth will meet throughout Lent with the following reminders:
 February 22: Confirmation
 March 8: Youth
 March 15: Community meal - serving lunch @ St. Anne's
 March 22: Confirmation
 March 29: Youth - filling eggs
 April 5: Easter egg hunt for Sunday School

May this Lenten Season be one of reflection and good health.
 - Jen Price, Coordinator of Ministries for Young People



Join us for special **coffee chat conversations** about our new devotional book, *Walking In Grace*, with other readers. Grab a coffee after service on March 1 and again on March 29, and come to Room 115 with your book to discuss some of your favorite devotionals from February & March. Questions? See Madelyn Bafus or Shirley Porter.

Thanks to my church family for your prayers, cards, and calls. Each and every one to me is precious, and I am grateful for your encouragement & friendship. God bless you all. -Susan Ingalls

MARCH WORD SEARCH

- Compliment
- Vacation
- Learn
- Tea
- Reading
- Waffle
- Nap
- Pi Day
- Kitten
- Geranium
- Park
- Blossom
- Write
- Violet
- Scrabble
- Song
- Niagara
- Crayon
- Dance
- Fat Tuesday
- Phlox
- Daylight Savings
- Barbie
- Bluebell

D	S	Q	J	Z	C	O	P	T	X	B	N	P	W	V	G	M	K
W	A	F	F	L	E	B	E	F	S	E	C	N	A	D	R	H	U
N	I	Y	P	Q	S	L	H	B	T	U	D	C	Z	T	E	J	O
V	G	X	L	S	O	V	F	T	I	W	A	R	A	G	A	I	N
S	Z	B	W	I	N	J	I	Q	E	G	V	A	K	M	D	O	R
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R	C	U	J	P	N	H	A	E	T	V	E	O	B	T	N	J	M
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I	E	O	Z	T	R	F	N	L	A	C	A	J	V	B	X	P	D
M	A	U	S	W	Z	B	J	E	P	V	L	N	P	B	O	Z	S
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Z	N	I	B	Q	O	B	L	E	U	S	D	N	B	R	J	O	U
U	Q	R	X	L	Y	M	U	I	N	A	R	E	G	C	B	M	T
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P	N	C	O	M	P	L	I	M	E	N	T	R	Y	N	V	S	A

LENT WORSHIP PREVIEW

MARCH 1 – LENT 2 – “GUIDED BY PROMISE”

Pastor Alissa preaching a sermon on Psalm 121 and 13-17 & John 3:1-17 (Nicodemus) with a Celebration of The Great Thanksgiving

MARCH 8 – LENT 3 – “COMPANION FOR THE JOURNEY”

Pastor Alissa preaching a sermon on Psalm 95 and Romans 5:1-11 (Justifying Grace)

MARCH 15 – LENT 4 – “JOURNEYING IN GRACE”

Pastor Alissa preaching a sermon on Psalm 23 and Ephesians 5:8-14 (Reconciliation)

MARCH 22 – LENT 5 – “REDEMPTION ROAD”

Pastor Alissa preaching a sermon a constellation of texts that, when put together, offer a description of the road of redemption we travel – Psalm 130, Ezekiel 37:1-14, Romans 8:6-11, and John 11:1-45

MARCH 29 – PALM/PASSION SUNDAY – “MARCHING ORDERS”

We will shift to a new Holy Week worship series called "Journey's End: A New Start" and explore the final days of Jesus' life through a service of word and song using the following scriptures: Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29 & Psalm 31:9-16 and Matthew 21:1-11 & 26:14-27:66

APRIL 1 – HOLY WEEK EXPERIENCE AT THE RESPITE

Join us for one last Lenten Dinner and a special Holy Week Contemplative Experience at *The Respite* where we will walk Jesus' last days together and in private meditation.

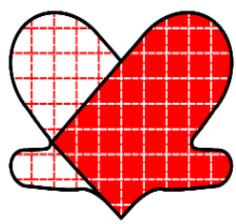
APRIL 8 – EASTER SUNDAY – “A NEW START”

Pastor Alissa preaching a sermon on Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24 and Matthew 28:1-10 with a Celebration of The Great Thanksgiving

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



The Thursday Crew is a great group of guys who get together every Thursday morning at 9 AM to do odd jobs around the church. Lightbulb out in the kitchen? The Thursday Crew takes care of it. Door to the Sunday School room cracked? The Thursday Crew takes care of it. Toilet clogged? Lock not turning? Tables need setting up? The Thursday Crew takes care of it! In addition to exercising their handyman capabilities, the men of the Thursday Crew get a chance to drink coffee, eat a sweet treat, and hang out together in fellowship. For all they do, we thank the Thursday Crew! If you'd like to drop off a treat for the Thursday Crew to enjoy, you can bring it by during the week or to the kitchen on Sunday morning.



Helping Hands

serving one another in love
GALATIANS 5:13

*"Do all the good you can,
By all the means you can,
In all the ways you can,
In all the places you can,
At all the times you can,
To all the people you can,
As long as ever you can."
John Wesley*



United Women in Faith

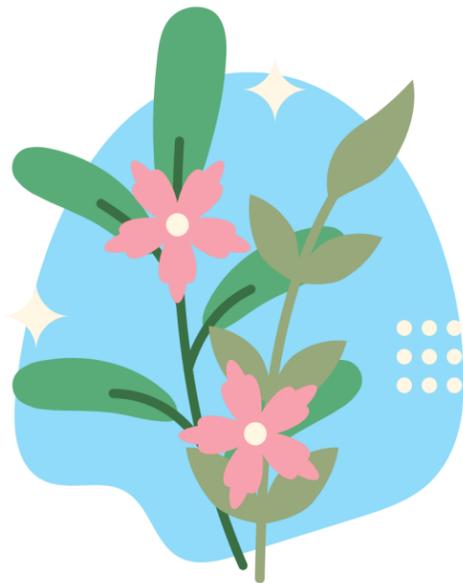
United Women in Faith shall be a community of women whose purpose is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative, supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church.

Thank you



Thank you for supporting the Cinnamon Roll Sale during Coffee Chat on Sunday, February 8! We were able to raise \$667 toward our covenant relationship with Katherine Parker in Nepal.

Thank you for making the MCOC hygiene drive a great success!



Spokane Valley United Women in Faith Dining In and Takeout Annual Easter Dinner March 28 (Saturday) from 5:00-6:00 pm

Ham, Creamy Potato Casserole, Carrots, Cole Slaw and Roll
Easter Cake for Dessert

Adults - \$15
Children (6 – 12 years) - \$7
Children 5 and under - Free

Pre-order by calling Madelyn (509-869-8213) beginning Sunday March 22 through Friday March 27 from 9 am - 1 pm.

Make any checks out to SVUWF, or have cash ready in a sealed envelope with your name & number of meals to be picked up. Takeout pick up will be by the double gym doors. We will collect your money and return with your meals. For dine in, food will be served in Room 115 and we will collect your money at the door. We will not be collecting money prior to the event.

SVUMC is gathering food pantry supplies for Partners Inland Northwest in March! Please bring the following items to the Connect Desk throughout this month: applesauce, canned beans, canned chili, canned fruit, canned meat (spam, tuna, etc.), cereal, cup of noodles, fruit cups, fruit rollups, fruit snacks, mac & cheese, oatmeal, ramen. (Please ensure that canned food items have pop tops for ease of access.)



- 3/2 Sarah Circle (FPR)
- 3/9 Prayer Shawl (FPR)
- 3/10 Esther Circle (115)
- 3/12 Rachel Circle (FPR)
- 3/23 Prayer Shawl (FPR)

On Tuesday, March 10, Esther Circle is hosting a program put on by the Spokane Valley Fire Department at 1 PM in Room 115. The program will be regarding safety around the home, fire prevention tips, and more. To RSVP, contact Shirley Porter at 509-951-9027.

