

Music Ministry Team Addition

Music is at central part of our ministry here at Seaside. It infuses our worship with power and draws us in to a deeper connection with God both by teaching and by helping us to center our spirits during worship. We are blessed with many gifted musicians in our Choir, Praise Team and our numerous ensembles. But the leadership of this ministry gives it shape and sets the tone.

For more than a dozen years, Seaside's music team of Kathryn Parker and Lynn Enzor have overseen enormous growth. The Praise Team's growing repertoire and the increasing demands for accompaniment for the choir mean that the absence of even one of our leaders creates a bind. Add to that the demands on Lynn in her "other life" as a bank manager, and we began to recognize the need for a third person in Music Ministry leadership.

After more than a year of discussions and search, we are pleased to announce the addition of Janette Schroeder to our Music staff beginning May 15th. Janette joins us as Assistant Music Director for Traditional Worship. She will be playing organ as well as piano and will help with the duties of directing our choirs, handbells and other ensembles. Janette has an extensive background in music ministry and we are excited to include her in our program.



The addition of Janette will allow Lynn to focus her considerable gifts on the oversight of the praise team ministry and our 9:30 worship service. Her new title will be Assistant Music Director for Contemporary Worship. Of course Kathryn continues to capably fill her role as team leader and Minister of Music for the church. Janette will provide accompaniment and other roles at 8:00 and 11:00 each week. Of course each is capable of pinch-hitting when needed!

Thank you for what I know will be a warm welcome for Janette

and for your continued support of our music ministry.
Scott

April Fools!



Jokes. We all like jokes—even if we don't all like the same jokes. Public speakers (including preachers) will often use a joke to break the ice before getting to the heart of their subject. And April fools is the one day of the year that is set aside for jokes. The inner child in all of us longs to shout those words again: "April Fools!"

But what do we do when April Fools day falls on Easter? It doesn't happen often. The last time Easter fell on April Fool's Day was 1956. It will happen only twice more this century—in 2029 and 2040. The reason it is so rare, of course has to do with the peculiarities of dating Easter according to the full moon and the Spring Equinox...First Sunday after the

first full moon after the vernal equinox...but that's another story for another day. We're talking about April Fools Day—which is not what we might call a religious holiday. So what advice would you give to a struggling preacher?

Perhaps you would say that God and Jesus and the resurrection are serious things, not to be taken lightly. Ignore April Fools Day. Avoid the levity and get to the heart of the matter—that Jesus died, for heaven's sake...and for ours...and that he rose again on the third day. A middle ground might be to gently acknowledge the April Fools side of the day with a joke—perhaps even a joke about April Fools day—but then get on with it. Preach the resurrection with all the serious and solemnity it deserves, giving only lip-service to the lighter side of this coincidence of the secular and sacred calendars.

But there is another possibility that I hadn't considered. It's something that gets to the heart of what defines a good joke—one that allows us to see a truth in a new and quite unexpected way. The premise and conclusion of a joke stand in tension. If you buy into the premise, the conclusion (the punch line) reveals something ludicrous about the premise and our assumptions. In sketch comedy the punch-line comes as something is revealed that the audience recognizes, but the characters fail to comprehend.

Consider this. On Good Friday (could there be a more ironic name for a day?) Jesus died on a cross and was buried. There he lay through the Sabbath until early Sunday morning. Now the women move to the tomb for an ordinary, if painful duty. In truth, everything you and I have experienced about life and death, would tell us that their concerns—including about who they might get to move the stone—were deeply and sadly legitimate. But the stone is already rolled away. The tomb is empty save for some linen grave clothes rolled up in the corner. Mary turns and in her confusion sees one whom she believes to be the gardener until he speaks her name. "Rabbouni," she exclaims. The Truth is standing in front of

focus to human beings and says, "Let us make human beings in our image, according to our likeness." Much has been made over God's voice switching between both singular and plural here. To whom was God speaking? Christian understandings have connected the plural to our trinitarian understanding of the One God; that in creation, Father, Son and Spirit were together the source of life and all that is; and that this existence in eternal community is also reflected in God's creation of the human being in God's image. A few verses later, God observes the human being and states that "It is not good that the human being should be alone." These themes are reflected throughout scripture as God speaks of his people in the terms of belonging. We belong to God and we belong to each other. Over the next six weeks we will be exploring the themes of belonging.

Week 1: "Belonging: God's Image" (Genesis 1:26-2:3) Scott Wilson-Parsons

What does it mean to belong to the God whose nature is to be in community, and how we are to experience and reflect that nature through the Church?

Week 2: "Belonging: A Gracious Hospitality" (Luke 19:1-10) Stefanie Riley

The Story of Zacchaeus offers us a glimpse of what the grace of belonging looks like as it is offered and as it is received.

Week 3: "Belonging: All in All" (Acts 2:43-47; 5:1-11) Mary Jane Wilson-Parsons

Belonging is a word we sometimes apply to possessions. How are we to understand possessions in a community where all belong and are included?

Week 4: "Belonging: Building Trust" (I Thessalonians 5:12-28) Mary Jane

Belonging requires vulnerability and vulnerability requires trust. In a world that is often harsh and unforgiving, how do

we open ourselves to each other?

Week 5: "Belonging: You Are Enough" (Gen. 3:1-13, II Cor. 5:17-21) Stefanie

Before we can authentically welcome another, we must first understand our own identity in Christ. Who does God say that we are?

Week 6: "Belonging: Getting to 'Us'" (I Corinthians 12:12-27) Scott

How do we transition from being a gathering of individuals to a body of believers, bound by the love of God and shaped by the nature of God through belonging to each other?

Come and join us as together we explore what it means to belong to God...and to each other.

Scott

What Is "Proper Matter" for the Bread in United Methodist Celebrations of Holy Communion?

July 12, 2017

By [Taylor Burton-Edwards](#)

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click below to read more...

Source: [What Is “Proper Matter” for the Bread in United Methodist Celebrations of Holy Communion?](#)

(De-)Humanizing God

In the months between Advent and Easter, one of the most common themes is that in Christ, God became one of us—human. That is the essential story of Christ’s birth in Bethlehem to a young woman named Mary. As we make our way through Epiphany, we are reminded that this human child, dependent and vulnerable, had to be protected during his young life as his parents became refugees in Egypt, seeking to escape the jealous (and mad) king Herod. At a certain level we get that I suppose. And we get it again during Holy Week as Jesus is arrested, given a cursory trial and is executed. Indeed, sometimes I think that the efforts of some to dwell on the dehumanizing torture and death of Jesus is a way of trying to reclaim his humanity—to remind us that God isn’t just “watching us from a distance” (ala Bette Midler’s famous song), but rather that God really did become one of us.

But then we move into the rest of our year—the rest of our lives, and easily find ourselves stuck in the old habits of thinking of God in largely transactional and propositional ways. We do this when crux of our engagement with God comes in asking God for things (transactional) or making statements “about” God as if God “weren’t in the room” (propositional).

The transactional view treats “God as Vending Machine” where I merely need to insert my coin (good works, prayer, etc.) and press the right buttons to get what I want. The Propositional view of God is like standing in an art gallery pondering a masterpiece, discussing the aspects of the piece with admiration and appreciation, but still engaging the piece as an object—an “it” to be discussed and understood. In either case, the God “who became flesh and dwelt among us” is de-humanized. J.B. Phillips would remind us that this sort of a God is too small. This is bad theology.



I know a lot of employer-employee relationships that are largely transactional. I show up, do my work and get paid. But can you imagine such a relationship with a friend? A spouse? I’ve been in hospital rooms where a physician (or a family member) operated on a propositional basis and keeping a sort of professional distance from the one in the bed talking about the patient as if they weren’t there. Would you do that with your beloved?

✘ The God who became one of us is fundamentally about being in relationship. And vulnerability characterizes that relationship. This means the relationship necessarily changes us. William Paul Young (author of “The Shack”) says,

“Relationships are entwined, entrenched, elusive, messy, enabling, enrapturing, maddening, exhilarating, frustrating, exposing, and too beautiful for words. There are moments when we think we might finally have a whisper of control over our world, and then—whoosh! in comes someone who knocks it completely sideways.”

Have you been “knocked sideways” by God recently? Do you allow God to get that close or do you hold God at a safe distance? Are you capable of telling someone all about God, yet you don’t really know God? How comfortable are you just sitting and being quietly in God’s presence? At Seaside, let us invite one another into transformative relationship with the one who longs to be WITH us.

Have You Considered Rebooting?



That’s a common question that I ask when someone comes to me with a computer problem. It seems silly, but anyone who has had much experience with computers has discovered the “miracle” of rebooting to fix a frustrating computer issue. The fact of the matter is that computers, like people, are incredibly complex. As complexity increases, so, too, does the opportunity for things to go wrong. A transistor doesn’t switch properly, one algorithm conflicts with another, or a tiny,

obscure bit of code has a syntax error that the engineers missed. One error introduces a small drip (or even a cascade) of additional glitches, the computer slows to a crawl, and you contemplate which window through which you will hurl the frustrating device. Have you tried rebooting? Often as not, rebooting a computer can reset all the broken or disrupted processes.

I have never been one to make much over the turning of the calendar from December to January, but I have been thinking lately about rebooting. The year just past has been...well...complicated. I'm ordinarily active and healthy and have always been able to do pretty much what I wanted. But I write this sitting in a recliner just a bit more than 3 weeks after knee replacement surgery—and remembering that this wasn't even my only surgery of the year! In 2016 Mary Jane's father received a serious cancer diagnosis and is still undergoing treatments. And, as most of you know, we spent a month at the ICU bedside of our oldest son as he clung to life after a catastrophic work accident (He's still recovering, but I'm glad to say that the long-term signs are positive). And we're just one family. Many of you have faced as much or more than we. As the calendar changes to January from December, I roll that question over in my mind... "Have You tried rebooting?"

This is not to say that 2016 was an altogether bad year. I'm too optimistic to believe that any "year" is all bad. You—that is to say, our Seaside church family—have been amazing. As we, have faced personal and family challenges, you have stepped up. The year just past has been one of the most successful in the 27-year life of our church as we have seen increases in membership, attendance, mission and stewardship. The rain-delayed Country Fair ended up being a surprising success—though, all things considered, was it really a surprise? In spite of everything we face in life, God is Good. All the time.

So the calendar turns. For good or ill, the ball will drop in Times Square on New Year's Eve. We do not know what 2017 will bring any more than we knew what would come in 2016. So it's a good time to pause. Rest. Reflect. Repent. Embrace gratitude. Claim hope. To reboot calls

us to each of these to one degree or another. The writer of Hebrews suggests that we “lay aside every weight and the sin which clings closely and run with perseverance the race that is set before us.” But most importantly, he reminds us to look to Jesus, “the pioneer and perfecter of our faith.”

Scott

Hurricane Matthew and Recovery Efforts

During the early days of the recovery from the great South Georgia Floods, a Red Cross representative reminded us of a sobering fact. He said, “It’s not a matter of whether you will be hit by a natural disaster, it’s a matter of when.” We have been fortunate to have lived here on the Southeast Coast of NC now for 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ years without a hurricane. In contrast, during the same time span in our last assignment, we had experienced no fewer than 5 named storms! We have now been reminded that there is no place that is or can be entirely safe from natural disasters.

Hurricane Matthew was easily the closest brush with a full blown hurricane that we have seen in this area in many years. Thankfully, local damage from the storm was, for the most part, less severe. However further West and North, Matthew dumped enormous amounts of rain on already saturated lands and rivers. As I write this, we wait for crests on the Tar, Neuse and other major rivers in Eastern North Carolina. Projections are that the flooding from Matthew may meet or exceed that of Floyd. The death toll in North Carolina has now reached 20. Major roads, including US 74 and I-95 have sections that are

closed to traffic.

Beyond the state and region, Hurricane Matthew made a sustained and powerful direct hit on the Caribbean Islands of Haiti, Jamaica, Eastern Cuba and parts of the Bahamas. Haiti alone has reported over 800 fatalities. And the infrastructure damages to this poor island nation compounded the still unrepaired damage from a major earthquake seven years ago.

Having experienced disasters ourselves, and having led response and recovery efforts along the way, we have seen that these events can bring out both the best and the worst in us. Rumors easily circulate in an environment where accurate information is slow to arrive. Our inclination to fear and self-preservation can create a cocoon of selfishness and mistrust. But more commonly, we have seen inspiring scenes of neighbor helping neighbor—from sharing generator power to picking up debris to workteams from less affected areas traveling to areas with greater devastation. The book of Ecclesiastes reminds us that there is nothing more tragic than a solitary person going it alone—that together we are stronger, more capable, and even happier.

Therefore, as we move into the recovery phase from Hurricane Matthew, let me encourage you to bring out your best by participating in some way to the relief and recovery. Before the storm, we began collecting items for “Flood Buckets” (link below). A trip planned for the MERCI warehouse in Goldsboro to organize materials for recovery is slated for October 20. And there are always opportunities to contribute financially to the recovery efforts. You should know that **100% of gifts to the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) go directly to the designated project.**

Below are a series of links offering ways you can help assist with recovery efforts in North Carolina and beyond. Please help.

Links

- [Items for Flood Buckets](#)
- [Donate through Seaside United Methodist Church](#)

Use this link to send a gift to United Methodist Relief Efforts through the United Methodist Committee on Relief. This link will open a donation page. Enter your Disaster Relief donation in the box labeled “UMCOR–Haiti” and/or “UMCOR–North Carolina” to donate to the Caribbean response efforts or the NC Response efforts (you may enter donations in either or both). These donations will be forwarded by the church to the appropriate agencies and you will be acknowledged on your giving statement from the church.
- [Donate Directly through the North Carolina Conference](#)

Use this link to send a gift to United Methodist Relief Efforts through the North Carolina Conference, specifically for UMCOR relief efforts in North Carolina. These funds will be used directly by the NC Conference in North Carolina. You will be acknowledged for tax purposes by the NC Conference by email.
- [Donate Directly to the United Methodist Committee on Relief for International Matthew recovery efforts \(Caribbean islands including Haiti, etc.\)](#)

UMCOR provides relief services around the world. This link allows you to donate directly to the efforts in the Caribbean, such as Haiti. You will be acknowledged by email directly from UMCOR.
- [Donate Directly to the United Methodist Committee on Relief for US Matthew Recovery efforts](#)

This link will take you directly to the donation site for UMCOR to donate to Matthew relief efforts in the US–Florida, GA, SC, NC. You will be acknowledged by email directly from UMCOR.

Louisiana Flood Assistance



Photo from the Louisiana Conference webpage –
courtesy of WBRZ-TV Reminder

Find out more about how you can assist our brothers and sisters in Louisiana after the recent floods. We will receive a special offering during services on Sunday August 28. You may give online through our website's [Online Giving Portal](#) (select UMCOR as your donation designation) or follow the link below which will allow you to contribute directly through the United Methodist Committee on Relief.

[North Carolina Conference Disaster Recovery Page.](#)

or give directly through the [United Methodist Committee on Relief.](#)

Blessings and thanks for your assistance.

Scott & MJ

Country Fair 2016



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someone new to our area recently and when she learned I was connected to Seaside, she brightened up and said, “Oh, I have heard about your fair and I can’t wait!” For many, September means the ending of the summer season, the beginning of school, football season and (mercifully) cooler weather. But for us at Seaside—and for many in this community—September means Country Fair! Yes, it’s that time again friends.

Many of you have signed up already to help out. Others are making arrangements to be at one or more of the events associated with the fair. For everyone, please check your calendar for the following dates:

- **September 9 (Friday 5:30–7:00 pm): “A Taste of Italy,”** Country Fair Kick-off Dinner in the Fellowship Hall. Join us for your choice of Meat or Vegetable Lasagna, salad, bread, drink and dessert. Pre-sale tickets are \$15 and are available now in the church office. ***Tickets will not be available at the door.***
- **September 11 (Sunday 4:00 pm): “Red White and Blue”** Our 2016 RWB Concert features “Letters from Home” a dramatic and musical tribute to World War II era Veterans. The appearance of this remarkable duet is courtesy of a

grant from BEMC. Doors open at 3:15. There is no charge for the event, but a love offering will be received in support of the fair effort.

- **September 13 (Tuesday, 8:30 am): Country Fair Setup begins.** Tents start going up and tables moved into place.
- **September 14 (Wednesday, 8:30 am): Country Fair Setup Continues** as we begin moving merchandise into place. Trucks and hands needed.
- **September 15 (Thursday, 8:00 am): “All Hands on Deck”** Kick-off service will run from 8:00 to 8:30 am, then final setup for the fair begins. This involves moving many of our larger items, so extra pickup trucks and many hands are needed. Lunch for workers will be in the fellowship hall at noon.
- **September 16 (Friday, 7:00 am to 6:00 pm): COUNTRY FAIR!**
- **September 17 (Saturday, 8:00 am):** Live Auction begins at 10:00 am, Silent Auction closes at noon. Clean-up begins at 1:00 pm (*Hang around and help clean up if you can...PLEASE!*)
- **September 18, (Sunday, 10:00 am): “A Celebration of Unity,”** Join us for a single Sunday morning worship service where we celebrate the unity that the fair represents for our congregation. Take the rest of the day off...you’ve earned it!

Remember the last day for Country Fair drop-offs is August 29, Last day for Pickups (scheduled in advance) is August 30.

We look forward to a great 2016 Country Fair.

Scott

Bishop Palmer pulls no punches in the Episcopal address

After somewhat lackluster morning worship filled with multiple languages and liturgies of confession, Bishop Gregory V. Palmer rose to offer the episcopal address this morning at the Oregon Convent...

Source: [Bishop Palmer pulls no punches in the Episcopal address](#)