



THE GLAD TIDER

Stevensville United Methodist

February 2021

What kind of prize comes to someone who would run a marathon (26.2 miles)? Ever wonder how World Record Holder Usain Bolt can run 100m (almost the length of a football field) in 9:58 seconds? For a long distance runner or Olympian, the answers might be obvious, but the prize and process for both are not just for weird or elite athletes. Just like you getting out of bed to eat breakfast, each prize (a gold medal or bowl of cereal) comes step by step, intention by intention, choice by choice.

We all can win a prize. We all need a process.

Apostle Paul exhorts all: **run to win!** *Do you not know that in a race the runners all compete, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win it. (1 Cor. 9:24)*

As high school athlete, I often looked to the end- the prize- Paul talked about, rather than the running. In collegiate athletics, my mindset shifted by necessity, not only to rationalize the amount of time I put in at practice, but to appreciate the growth over a season as part of the larger prize that could include competing in a national championship.

Jesus saw both as crucial- the prize and the process. Jesus knew the prize looked more like healing and freedom than a gold medal or high accolade. Jesus modeled the importance, delight, even duty, of the process- “running in such a way”- in his daily choices.

Jesus stayed present.

Jesus paid attention and care to the people right before him. Even as he walked he knew when people needed/used his power such as the woman who touched the hem of his garment to find healing. A sprinter must focus on their start in order to be a contender at the end.

Jesus recognized the whole landscape.

Jesus understood where people held power, experienced suffering, got lost in the shadows or had been overtly excluded. With the big picture in mind, he could speak to and minister through the multitudes of variables, sometimes saying something to one group by attending to another. A marathoner takes in the whole course- the hills, sunny areas, and even the weather- and then move mile by mile.

Jesus kept a slow but intention pace.

Jesus traveled by foot despite resources and even “need” to go with urgency by animal. Such a choice to go slower kept him from missing important people along the way including the woman at the well or Zacchaeus hanging out in a tree, both of whom needed healing and re-memorizing to the community. Usain Bolt runs with just as much intention, breathing only 1-2 times and taking just 41 strides to maximize the effort in his 100m dash.

The prize before each of us could be experienced in a multitude of mini-prizes along the way, if like Jesus, we see the magnitude of each step, the value of the process. Thankfully, even the process can take on unique iterations according to our gifts and abilities, for some of us might skip or step while others might roll in wheel chairs or crawl across the floor. No matter what, we can be in the race to win the prize.

Want to run your race and seek the prize? Consider **5 ways** to explore the terrain to cross the finish line- step by step, choice by choice.





1. Pick Your Race: Worship, Bible study, prayer, resting, eating with your family, fasting from food or a habit, or another spiritual practice are all great races. They are worthy of your time, talent and resources while also being races that have remarkable processes as well as prizes.

2. Choose Your Shoes: Running a race requires the proper tools and routines. A Bible or study guide can encourage your race. A set time for worship or prayer can guide your day. A journal can help you see the progress. A friend to join you can make the race more fun and feasible to complete and win.

3. Do it- don't just think about it.: Races are rarely won in the mind. Choices and actions get you farther down the racetrack. And thankfully, even if you stop to reevaluate (get some water or tie your shoe), the path before you is still there, ready and welcoming without judgment of speed.

4. Pay Attention to Each Step: The process matters. Your choices along the way can improve or inhibit your race. Some aspects need more attention than others (consistency, letting go of mistakes, recognizing the influence of others). Likewise, the "Ah-ha!" or people who encounter along the way may actually be part of the whole, not an obstacle or interruption.

5. Celebrate Crossing the Line: Races, even short ones, require determination, perseverance, and faith so delight in the experiences you have with God. Acknowledge the time you put in, reflect on what you learn, share with people your race, and discover what is next in store.



Race On, Pastor Sarah

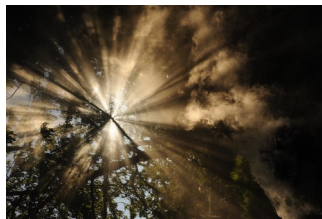
February 2021 Worship

Worship Resources for February 7 & 14: We conclude our series on "God is Holding Our Lives," remembering and reflecting on the transformative ways of God even in the midst of suffering and hope for the future. Thus we turn to our nation's heritage, seen in part through Scouts and Black History Month, where we can learn about and uphold values that honor God and serve one another.

February 7: "The One is Shining Forth" :The Psalm speaks of an active God whose light shines for all time and in all places. God is not silent, but calls the people to remember that they, too, can act on God's behalf, holding all suffering peoples in hands of prayer and care and transforming the world that will shine bright into the future. May it be so.

"God speaks and summons the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting." - Psalm 50

Prayer: Holy One, Light of the World, you help us to see and find our way in this time. Open us this day to a vision of the world made all-right, so that we might alight our own lives to show forth your reign on earth as it is in heaven. We praise you for your steadfast presence, holding our lives together in love. Amen.



Feb. 14: "Either Hot or Cold": Certain activities-earning an Eagle Scout Award, selling Girl Scout Cookies, marching for freedom- bring forth a passion

and conviction that exist not alone but are fueled by values, heritage, and faith. Such activities only succeed when a person gives his/her all. And following Jesus is such an activity that invites us to be either hot or cold, but not lukewarm. As we honor Scout Sunday and Black History Month, we lift up the brave and determined who are guided by a foundation of integrity, honor, and purpose for wholeness. And we're reminded of Jesus, our model to lead us into all our actions and choices with conviction. And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: *'The words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of God's creation. I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were cold or hot! Revelation: 3:14-15*

Prayer: Gracious God of revelation. Lord, you are well acquainted with all our ways, detecting any indifference in our hearts. Convict us with the fire of your Spirit. Stir us to flaming hearts that we may honor your presence, purposes and promises and be your agents to make manifest your beloved community, your kin'dom through our witness. May we be on fire to bring your justice, peace, hope and love to the world. May it be so. Amen. ~ Rev. Lynn Miller Jackson of Hilltop UMC

Lent Begins Wednesday, February 17th . Please see pages 5 & 6 for Lenten service details.



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Sunday morning worship services will continue on-line. Stay tuned for changes throughout the months of February and March.

Your are invited to participate in ways that feed your soul, keep you healthy, and encourage participation with God, the Holy Spirit, & Jesus.

What to expect on Sundays:

- **Live Streaming Worship at 10:30** on YouTube Channel & Facebook.
 - o Announcements will begin at 10:15 and service will start at 10:30.
 - o YouTube: Search for "Stevensville United Methodist Church." Look for the video that says "Live" in the bottom right corner.
 - o Facebook: Search for "@SteviUmc." Scroll till you see the service.
 - o Services are recorded and available on YouTube by noon on Sunday.
- **Morning Study- 9:00- 10:00** with Disciplines Book..
 - o Join on Zoom: Go to zoom and join meeting with Meeting ID: 871 8901 3115 or use link <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87189013115>
 - o No book necessary. Study based on the week's lectionary.
- **Fellowship & Communion at 11:30 on the 1st and 4th Sundays.**
 - o Join Zoom: Go to zoom and join meeting with Meeting ID: 883 6936 8077
 - Or use link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88369368077>
 - o Communion & Fellowship: 1st Sunday. Bring your own elements (something to eat & drink).



Upcoming Opportunities to Engage in Life of the SteviUMC

February 14, 2021 Unified Board Meeting

Join elected Board Members as they discuss the guiding principles of the United Board and goals for Spring 2021.

Zoom Link 12:00 Noon

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84052002327?>
Meeting ID: 840 5200 2327 Passcode: 565657



February 21, 2021 Town Hall Meeting

Topics: Ways to see change
-Update on finances
-Mission Shares

Zoom Link 12:00 Noon

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89880390275?>
Meeting ID: 898 8039 0275 Passcode: 082733



Building & Sapphire ELC Update

The Fellowship Hall has been emptied and the kitchen cupboards are bare. The plan for the rest of January is to salvage as much as we can from the old structure and have it demolished by February 1. We investigated having Waste Less Works do the demolition which would have given us the ability to recycle more of the old building, but unfortunately due to the amount of time it would take and the additional cost it just wasn't feasible.

Lenny Johnson and Dean Diers have been working on reclaiming the cedar wainscoting that will be used in a remodel of one of the cabins at the Flathead camp.

The light fixtures are down and will be headed to the Resale Store in Hamilton. Like wise the windows will be offered to Habitat as well as the kitchen cabinets.

Once the demolition begins our contractor, Carl Construction will salvage what they can to reuse in the new building.

Paul Ludington and John Fisher met with Carl Construction and representatives from Garden Heating and Plumbing to discuss HVAC and plumbing details. We have decided on four zones in the new facility, each with it's own furnace and climate control thermostat. This has the benefit of occupant comfort and in the long run it is more energy efficient. We have also selected the plumbing fixtures for the building. If anyone is interested in those details reach out to John or Paul.

Next up will be looking at lighting fixtures and selecting flooring materials. The plan is have a combination of commercial grade carpet and LVP flooring in the classrooms, LVP in the kitchen and the carpet in the fellowship area.

If you have questions or comments please get a hold of someone on the build committee.

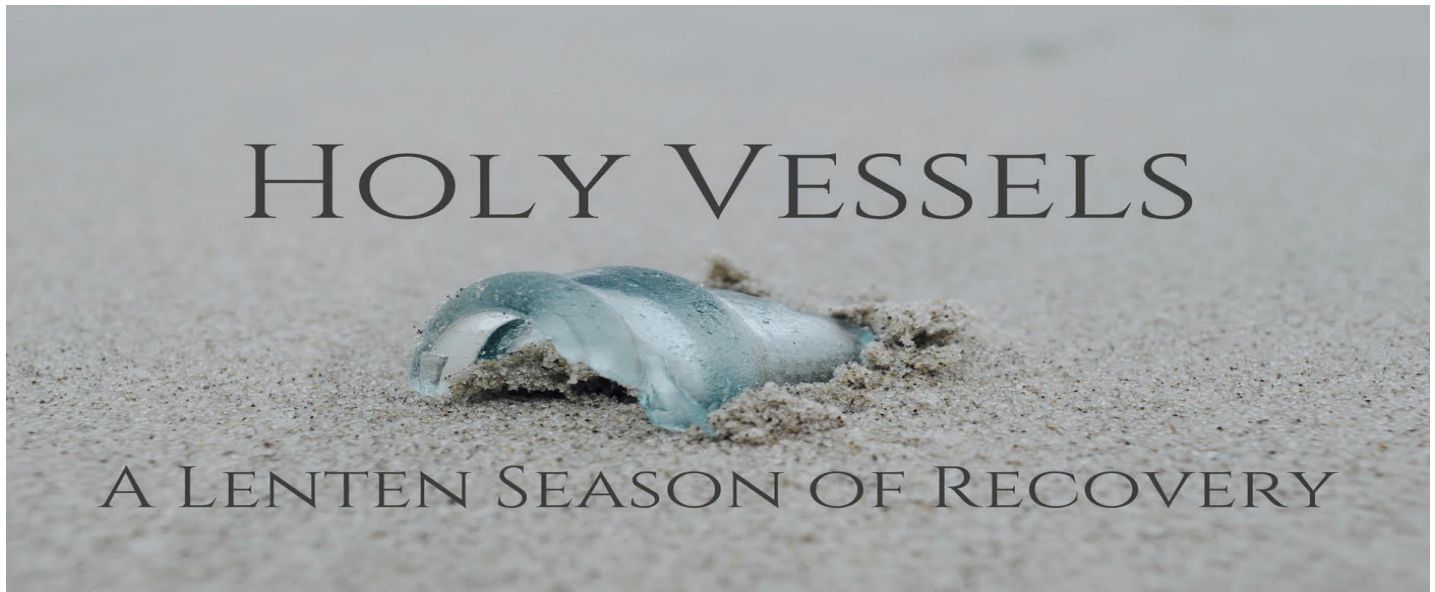


The Fellowship Hall Lives On!

The wainscoting went to a remodel project at Flathead. The kitchen cabinets, choir robe closet doors and ceiling fans were donated to the Habitat for Humanity's Resale store in Hamilton. We are looking at ways to reuse the stained glass on the SUMC campus somewhere. It doesn't fit the new building structurally or architecturally, but we will find a spot for it. The exterior kitchen door will be used to replace the exit door in the upstairs nursery. Some of the floor joists will be used for headers and other places in the new building.

Your Sharing has been Greatly appreciated!

- *S.A.F.E is using your donation to provide safe places.
- *Wesley House took care of leaky roofs, insulation, flooring, and windows.
- *Pantry Partners Food Bank sent a thank you to us for 206 pounds of groceries!
- *Youth Homes was able to get coats, music, art supplies, and shoes for kiddos in one of the homes.
- *The Salish Kootenai College Foundation sends their gratitude for your contribution which has helped exceed the yearly funding goal helping students.
- *Flathead Lake United Methodist Camp will be able to offer camp due to the contributions received.



Holy Vessels: A Lenten Season of Recovery

“He took our infirmities and bore our diseases.” Matthew 8: 17b

Each of us is created a precious and holy vessel of embodied love. We have been through a harrowing time since last Lent that has shattered our sense of wholeness—body, mind, and spirit—like a glass vessel fractured into pieces. In this Lenten “season of recovery” for our physical, communal, mental, intellectual, and environmental health, we will explore the healing narratives of Jesus that tell of divine solidarity with human suffering and remind us that we can begin a journey toward making something beautiful from that which is seemingly broken. Beach glass offers us a multifaceted symbol of this transformative process.

Feb. 17, Ash Wednesday: Shattered

Matthew 11: 28-30

Ash Wednesday is a time of naming brokenness. As we enter the season of Lent, we commit to enter also into a season of healing and recovery that requires the naming of what has been shattered as a first step. We take “the yoke” of responsibility as disciples of Jesus to be the Body of Christ—a body of those who need healing and offer healing in the world. The promise of Jesus is that he is with us in our weariness and burdens.

Feb. 21: Treasure (Physical Health)

Matthew 8: 1-4, 16-17

Beach glass begins as something whole and yet discarded. As it is tumbled by the sea, it is broken and polished until it becomes a treasured “mineral gem.” We do not embrace that suffering is necessary or God-given, but that suffering is a part of life. When pain comes and brokenness enters our lives, Jesus reaches out to touch and remind us of the Treasure that we *all* are—worthy of new life in the midst of hopelessness. In a year when pandemic has wreaked havoc on our world, we begin by affirming our journey to physical health.

Feb. 28: Safe Keeping (Community/Economic Health)

Matthew 8: 5-13

God gathers us as a Beachcomber gathers and marvels at every precious surviving piece of beach glass she finds. We are never alone, we are never lost to the One who seeks humanity’s wholeness. We affirm our commitment to be the Body of Christ that knows we cannot be personally healed until we see the interconnected community as part of the process of healing. Jesus has the power to re-vision the family of God in which false boundaries are overcome. In a year of devastating loss of livelihood, we consider the economic health that reimagines status quo.



March 7: Stories (Mental Health)

Matthew 9:27-33

March 14: Different Pictures (Intellectual Health)

Matthew 9:18-26

March 21: Restoration (Environmental Health)

Matthew 8:18-27

March 28, (Palm/Passion): Holy, Wholly (Integrated Health)

Matthew 9: 1-8

Resources used with permission from Dr. Marcia McFee & worshipdesignstudio.com.

Lenten Worship Service Opportunities

Ash Wednesday Feb. 17- Open House from 6-6:30pm

A modified experience of imposition of the ashes along with a time for reflection, prayer, and confession. A short video will be shared that morning to lead you through the day recognizing brokenness that is held in love and healing care by Jesus Christ.

Sunday Services at 10:30

*In-person Participation at Stevensville UMC using pandemic precaution of a mask and physical distancing.

*Live Stream Participation via YouTube and Facebook



Holy Week Services: Maundy Thursday & Good Friday at 7pm

Short services of action and contemplation, living into the mission of Christ with healing and drawing community as one all the way to the Cross
In-person & Live Stream Participation available.

Easter Sunday, Celebrating the Ultimate Story of Healing: April 4 at 9:00 and 10:30

9:00: Outdoor Service (weather permitting) 10:30: In-person & Live Stream Service

Lenten Study Opportunity: We Make the Road by Walking by Brian McLaren

Discussion and discoveries in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-8)

Book is not necessary but helpful, meaningful guide. Focus is chapters 27-33.

Zoom: Wednesdays 6:30-7:30pm, beginning on Feb. 17- April 7

In-Person: Thursdays 2-3pm, beginning Feb. 18- April 8

A Gift for Lent to receive and an invitation to share. On February 13 and 14 the church will deliver a Lent package for you to use through the season in worship, study, and reflection. You are invited to set a bag of non-perishable food items on your front porch that will be delivered to Pantry Partners on your behalf.

Thank you to all who contribute to Loaves & Fishes so care can be known & shared in abundance.
If you or anyone you know needs short-term assistance of food, gas, rent, or utility bills, please contact the office : 406-777-4433.





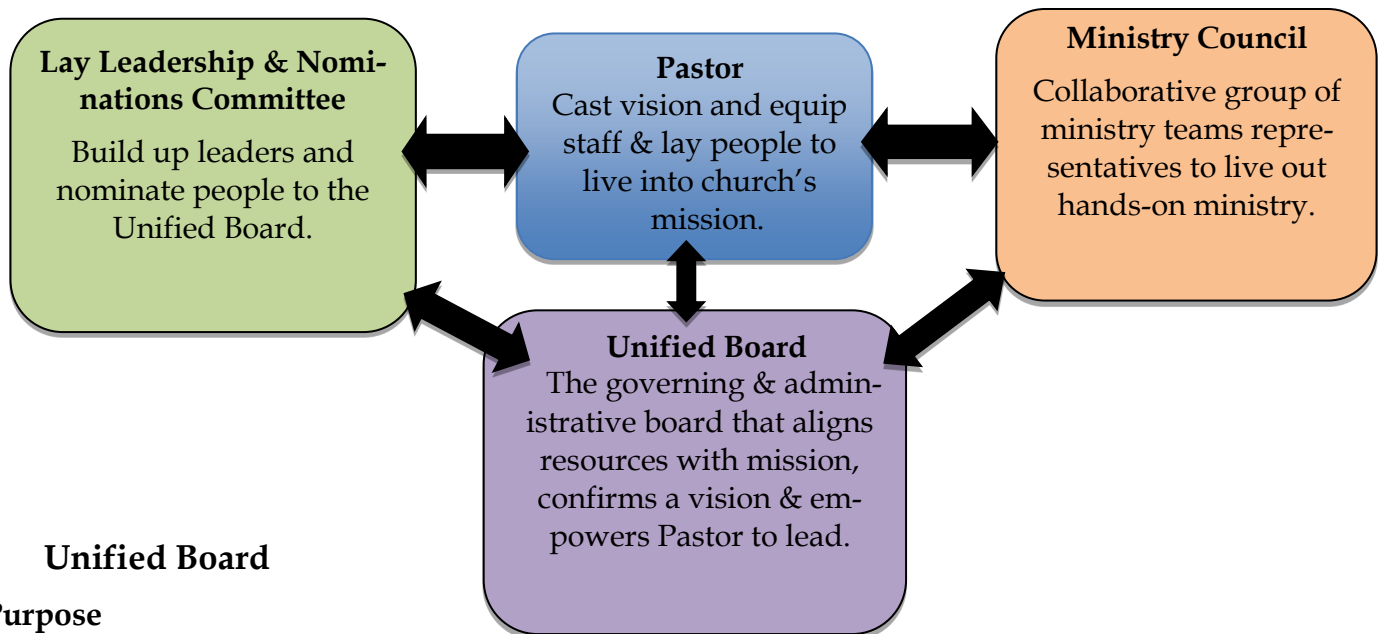
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The Organization of Stevensville UMC 2021

January 1 kicked off a new era of governing and visioning for Stevensville UMC. The **Unified Board** will serve as the administrative leaders. The **Ministry Council** will serve as a collaborative group where the ministry teams can work together to live out the mission with hands-on ministry. The **Lay Leadership & Nominations Committee** will build up leaders and nominate people to the Unified Board.



Unified Board

Purpose

- ♦ Be accountable to Jesus Christ in making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world
- ♦ Utilize a leadership style combining accountability, responsibility, and authority
- ♦ Encourage & equip hands-on ministry by reducing the number of people engaged in administrative details
- ♦ Align resources (staff, finances, facilities) to match and fulfill the mission and vision by developing goals and administrative processes
- ♦ Empower the pastor to lead

People (serve in classes and roll off after the designated time)

2021: Lisa Menery, Joey Diers, Tania Jensen

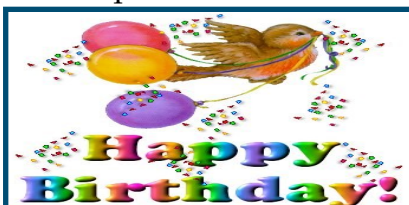
2022: Paul Ludington, John Fisher, Nilda Bishop

2023: Gina Farnham, Bob Edgar, Julie McGarvey

Ex-Oficio (non-voting members) Lenny Johnson- Treasurer, Pastor Sarah Merchant

People of SteviUMC as non-voting participants

..Continued on Page 8...



February Birthdays

2/3 Charles Petty

2/4 Ryder Grandjean

2/4 Ruth Cleveland

2/8 Les Smith

2/9 Connie Rakiecki

2/12 Ava Schrock

2/25 Stacy Braach

2/26 Tania Jensen



Roles

- ♦ Each person wears the hats of Staff Parish Relations (SPR), Trustee, Finance
 - ♦ Specific people are named to be contacts/legal reps for the church and conference
 - >**Paul Ludington**- Board Chair (Convenes meetings, creates agendas & meeting packets, Consults with Pastor)
 - >**John Fisher**- Trustee Chair (Legal rep to the State of Montana and any fiduciary documents, i.e. loan agreements)
 - >**Nilda Bishop**- SPR Liaison (Contact to District Superintendent)
- Elected leaders create sub-teams for projects (spring clean up, budget creation, etc.)
All staff relations will remain confidential and attended to by the members of the UB.

How do I participate? Meetings will be every 2nd Sunday at 12pm via zoom (Feb- June 2021). Meetings are open, except for discussion of personnel content. To become a voting member, contact Pastor Sarah or Lay Leadership Team to be added to the nominations list developed and voted on each fall.

Ministry Council (a work in progress)

The ministry council includes representatives of any hands-on ministry teams. This Council will meet quarterly to align projects with the goals set forth by the Unified Board. These teams continue their work with on-going projects as well as specific efforts as goals and season call forth. There is **no term limit** for participants of these teams. Teams include:

Shepherding [Congregational care and connection]

Worship [altar guild, worship planning, music, media]

Christian Education [Small groups & Children's ministry]

Outreach [Activity & Connection with the wider Bitterroot Valley community]

Missions [Ministry of God's love and resources shared locally and beyond]

Facilities Team [Ongoing care and maintenance of church facilities]

United Methodist Men [Build discipleship and providing fellowship and service, including youth.]

United Methodist Women [Attend to climate justice, welfare of women and children, economic inequality, and efforts to stop the increase of numbers of juveniles to prison]

How do I participate? Contact the church office with your desire to serve and you'll be connected with that group.

Lay Leadership & Nominations Committee

A parallel team to the Unified Board and Ministry Council, this committee serves 2 roles:

- ♦ Identify, build up, teach and encourage people for leadership (on the UB or beyond)
- ♦ Nominate new voting members to the Unified Board

Elected and voting members:

2021: Dave Racecki

2022: Sara Malo, Dean Diers

2023: Lynda Fisher, Donna Lewis

How do I participate? To become a voting member, contact Pastor Sarah or Lay Leadership Team to be added to the nominations list developed and voted on each fall.



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The stars are a bit dimmer, the Earth a little heavier, and the bird feeder outside her window less vibrant. On 12 December 2020 we lost Susanne Audrey Cunningham to this world. During her 93 years she made a remarkable impression as a woman, wife, mother, mentor and friend. Married to her beloved George for more than 71 years she raised a family of 2 sons, Ken and Keith. But being a wife and mother was not enough. In the post-WWII era she worked as well, teaching elementary school, thus balancing home-making as a newlywed with a challenging profession. Amazingly she went back to college in the 1960's earning both a Bachelors and Master's degree in the emerging field of speech pathology. As a pioneer in this field, she had opportunity to mentor many young men and women also pursuing advanced degrees in this area of academia. Many of these students continued life-long contact with this woman who had so positively influenced their lives

and shaped their careers. During these same years she and George served as hosts to a number of international students, opening their home to young people from Switzerland. This too, brought out the best in her amazing character now bridging language and culture, effectively adopting new members into her family and loving influence.

Inclusion, generosity and humility were hallmarks of their southern California home. To this extended family, including her two sons and daughters in law, she was a best friend and confidant. The stories about "The Adventures with Sue and George" now abound on several continents and in many hearts. In her later years, post-retirement, she and George reestablished their Montana roots, the family home to many Cunningham, May, and Davies forebears. They adopted Stevensville as their own and loved every minute making new friends in the Bitterroot. This was another chapter in their lives and perhaps their most cherished time together. As the years advanced, they left the old homestead in town and moved into The Living Centre. Here they made yet new friends among the residents and staff. It was here that Susanne passed in the loving arms of so many that tended for her care. In the isolation of CoVid-19, the family is grateful to the staff of The Living Centre who loved her as family and ushered her into the arms of an awaiting George. Now the stars can once again shine brightly, the Earth can sigh, and the birds sing with joy. Today the world is richer having experienced the grace of the life of Susanne Cunningham. We will miss her always. God will take care of you.

First Published in The Bitterroot Star 12/20/2020

Sue was a faithful member of SUMC for 30 years. She loved to serve as liturgist and did it often and well. Her enthusiastic support of all mission activities and fundraisers was legendary.

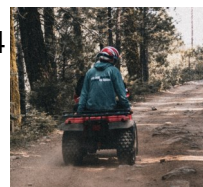
The UMW Bazaar was a loved event for Sue, and she served as an enthusiastic Crafts Chairman for years. No one who saw her costumed dramatic impersonations of Eleanor Roosevelt, Corrie Ten Boom and

Suzanna Wesley will ever forget them. Sue and George invited

church newcomers and old timers alike to their lovely yard for 4th of July and Labor Day barbecues every year.

"Well done, thou good and faithful servant, well done."

The Lord blessed me the day I became neighbors to both Sue and George. And they will always be an example of the people I want to be like as I grow older. I imagine them together now pain-free, fishing and riding 4 wheelers through the clouds and mountain tops. ~ Kymme



She had a real dramatic flair!

Ways to Contact Us

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Office email: steviumc@gmail.com

Pastor Sarah's email: revsarahmerchant@gmail.com

Church website: steviumc.org

Office hours: Tues. through Fri. 9:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M.



The Holy Spirit Wind brought an opportunity to get together.

Firepit Fellowship

Fun, friendly faces, and food around the firepits at Stevi UMC.

Sunday, January 31, 4pm.

Bring a lawn chair. We'll bring the wood...and s'mores.

A Celebration of Life
for Anna Storkson
Saturday, February 6,
2:00 Outside on the
front lawn.

~ CHANGES OF ADDRESS ~
Bulk-rate mail is not forwarded.
If your address changes, if we have it wrong,
or if you no longer want to receive this newsletter,
please let us know.

ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED

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