

# The Evangel

Stayton United Methodist Church  
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## Learning about the Power of Love from My Dog Tahiti

While I know all about a dog's unconditional love for their human companion, I am relearning about the power of my unconditional love in Tahiti's life. It works like this. After we have had several missteps along our rout, my frustration takes over. I hear the mean tone in my voice when I talk to her. I have even been a little rough when I drop the harness and pick up my cane, pulling her along. And here's the thing. It never works. It only confuses her and makes her reluctant to guide. Then I remember to keep my tone positive, and if I need to use my cane, to simply do that right away before my frustration takes over. When I do that, and simply show her what I need her to do, her tail continues to wag as she comes along beside me. And, sure enough, if I retrace our steps and show her again, she gets it right the next time. She only needs for me to be clear in my communication. Wow, having just written that sentence, I wonder if learning this lesson a long time ago wouldn't have helped my marriage heal. Relationships thrive with the power of love. It shouldn't take a dog to teach that to a pastor. I thank God I got wise enough in my old age to get a guide dog. May she continue to teach me more about the way of love.

*Pastor Janine*

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## Our Road Ahead: The Parables of Jesus, A different Perspective

Over the next 2 months, I will be preaching from the book Short Stories by Jesus from Jewish author and scholar Amy-Jill Levine. Her goal, and mine, is to help us hear the parables as Jesus' first listeners would have heard them. The book helped me look at the ways I have preached that have portrayed Jews in less than complimentary ways. Her knowledge of first century Jewish culture brings a fresh perspective that often challenges the typical sermons we have heard over the years.

Jesus told parables because they can help us ask the important questions of life. How do we live in community together? How do we determine what ultimately matters? How do we live the life God longs for us to live? Parables are not primarily morality tales meant to help us feel good or learn a particular lesson. They are meant to challenge, provoke and even confuse us into asking more questions about life and our usual ways of understanding it. So, join me in worship and let's explore them together. Then, join me at 11:30 for a further discussion.



## Book Study Group

Our May book is “On the Brink of Everything: Gravity, Grace and Getting Old” by Parker Palmer. Drawing on eight decades of life -- and his career as a writer, teacher, and activist -- Palmer explores the questions age raises and the promises it holds. "Old," he writes, "is just another word for nothing left to lose, a time to dive deep into life, not withdraw to the shallows." This book was written to encourage adults of all ages to explore the way their lives are unfolding. It's not a how-to-do-it book on aging, but a set of meditations in prose and poetry that turn the prism on the meaning(s) of one's life, refracting new light at every turn.

Our next book is “The Atomic Weight” of Love by Elizabeth J. Church spans the years from World War II through the Vietnam War to tell the story of a woman whose scientific ambition is caught up in her relationships with two very different men. For Meridian Wallace - and many other smart, driven women of the 1940s - being ambitious meant being an outlier. Ever since she was a young girl, Meridian had been obsessed with birds, and she was determined to get her PhD, become an ornithologist, and make her mother's sacrifices to send her to college pay off. But she didn't expect to fall in love with her brilliant physics professor, Alden Whetstone. When he's recruited to Los Alamos, New Mexico, to take part in a mysterious wartime project, she reluctantly defers her own plans and joins him. What began as an exciting intellectual partnership devolves into a "traditional" marriage. And while the life of a housewife quickly proves stifling, it's not until years later, when Meridian meets a Vietnam veteran who opens her eyes to how the world is changing, that she realizes just how much she has given up. The repercussions of choosing a different path, though, may be too heavy a burden to bear.

We will meet to discuss "On the Brink of Everything: Gravity, Grace and Getting Old" on Sunday, May 19, 2019 at 2 pm in the home of Pastor Janine. Please bring a small snack to share. Everyone is welcome to join us for this discussion or several. If you have any questions or need a ride, please contact Shirley Hardee or Irene Marchbanks.

### United Methodist Men Breakfast Quesadilla Brunch

The United Methodist Men will serve a Breakfast Quesadilla Brunch on May 19th. Your Free-Will offering will help fund different church projects. In the past we have given money to help buy a lawn mower, pay for lawn mowing service, hall carpet, shelving for the shed, etc. It seems that we never have a shortage of projects that need a small amount of money, but never funds to cover them. The men's group request that the K – P group bring cut up fruit and help clean up. Everyone is welcome!

Jerry Capps and Zeke Coleman

### UNITED METHODIST WOMEN ACTIVITIES

Ladies interested in crafts and fellowship, knitters, seamstresses, cutters, gluers, painters, ideas people, etc. will meet at the church at 9:30, Wednesday, May 15.

At 12:30 the monthly Ladies' Luncheon will be held at Scio Covered Bridge Coffee House. Meet at the church at 12:00 to car pool to Scio.

## OUT OF LOVE

As I write this, I am also working on a message for our April 28th Earth Day service. Earth Day, of course, is all about stewardship – caring for the planet that God has placed into our hands. We always cite the command of Genesis, chapter 1, verse 28. I like Eugene Peterson's translation:

God blessed them:  
 "Prosper! Reproduce! Fill Earth! Take charge!  
 Be responsible for fish in the sea and birds in the air,  
 for every living thing that moves on the face of the Earth."

Yet our duty to exercise responsible stewardship of the earth flows from an even deeper source than this charge. It comes from the very nature of the God in whose image we are made – Love. In caring for the Creation, we reflect that Love.

Yes, it's love for all living things, for the magnificence of the Creation, but for us it's even more personal. It's love for our children, for our grandchildren, for progeny yet unborn, whose lives are inextricably tied up with ours and our actions, and for whom we want the very best. This was driven home for me in the words spoken by a Eugene high school student at a state capitol Earth Day rally. He spoke of the opportunity he'd had in his travel to Salem to visit Silver Falls State Park. He described his awe of the beauty he saw there, and expressed his thankfulness for the people who stepped forth a hundred years ago to preserve it. Because of them – because of their love – the beauty still existed for him to savor.

The challenge is passed from generation to generation. Out of our love for those we have created, we are called to preserve a home as beautiful and nurturing as the one we have enjoyed. We know our earth is in trouble. Let us, out of the Love in whose image we are made, accept the challenge and make the sacrifices to save it.

-- Don Robinson

### Movie Day

Church members and friends who have gathered for Movie Day each second Sunday at 3:00 have seen and discussed several interesting films. No movie is scheduled for May, due to Mother's Day; and then the summer hiatus begins. Movie Day will resume on September 8. But if you notice an enjoyable movie at a theater during the summer, please give me a call, and I can try to schedule a small group to carpool from the church. Thank you to those who have participated this year!

Mary Kruger

### Nursery Attendants for May

MAY 5 MICHELLE MILLER  
 MAY 12 MARY FERGUSON  
 MAY 19 JUDY HALSE  
 MAY 26 CAROL NORTH

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

**Mission Statement:** As a spiritual community, our mission is to grow in our Love of God, Relationships with Others, and Service to the Community  
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**The Evangel**  
The Evangel is a monthly publication of the Stayton United Methodist Church. Articles and items must be submitted by the 23rd of each month.  
Editor: Angel Miller  
Support Staff: Kyle Rumley  
Proofreading: Mary Ferguson  
Thank you to all our contributors.  
Become one!  
The people of the Stayton United Methodist Church  
*welcome you!*



**Office Hours**  
Monday through Friday - 9:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.  
Pastor's Day Off: Friday

**Sunday Schedule**  
Sunday Worship: 10:00 a.m.

Coffee Hour following the Service

**OPEN HEARTS OPEN MINDS OPEN DOORS**