

The Bell



P.O. BOX 1191

ISSAQUAH WA 98027

The monthly newsletter of The Community Church of Issaquah February 2016

A Word from the Pastor—*Irrationality*

Dan Ariely is a behavioral economist at Duke University who has become famous studying human irrationality. Humans, he says, are “predictably irrational.” We are consistently illogical in the same ways, time and time again.

For example, if given an option between a honeymoon in Paris (with free breakfast), Rome (with free breakfast), or Rome (no breakfast included), most people will choose Rome with the free breakfast.

Why is this? Ariely answers that Rome with the free breakfast looks superior in contrast to Rome without a free breakfast. With this psychological advantage, Rome with the free breakfast becomes preferable even to Paris with the free breakfast. Logically, Rome and Paris with the free breakfasts should be about equal to choose between. But humans are not logical. With the negative of Rome without breakfast lingering in our minds, we choose Rome with breakfast.

Human irrationality isn't confined to decisions about where to honeymoon, however. In 1st Samuel, Nathan tells King David the story of a poor man whose beloved lamb was stolen, slaughtered and eaten by a rich man. David immediately declares, “This man deserves to die!” Nathan then responds, “You are the man.” David had taken Bathsheba, Uriah's wife, for his own, and arranged for Uriah's death on the battlefield. When Nathan told his story to

David, David's own irrationality was exposed. There was a disconnect between how David thought the world should work (respect for what others' love) and how he was actually living his life (his taking of Bathsheba).

Like David, we too are predictably irrational. We often have high moral standards, and yet fail to see how we do not live up to the standards we espouse. Our lives are filled with irrationality—little ways in which we smooth over the inconsistencies of our lives. But perhaps the story of Nathan and David can give us insight in how to deal with our irrationality. Nathan exposed David's blindspots. David couldn't clearly see the inconsistency in his life, but Nathan could. We need others in our lives. We need Nathans in our lives to expose our double standards and show us where we have fallen short.

The church is where Nathans can be found. Our friends in Christ who have been formed by a love of God can help us to see what we can't see. Maybe it will be a moral failing. Maybe it will be as simple as a honeymoon vacation. But just maybe, our predictably irrational lives might find that in the church they find a bit more consistency.

-Pastor Britt



Thank yous from the staff:

- Thank you all so much for the Christmas card and gift. It was unexpected, and therefore even more of a joy. I'm very grateful to be a part of a church that is so faithful and thoughtful in its care for its minister! Thank you for your love to me, not just in this, but in all things this past month and a half. ~ Britt
- Thank you for the beautiful Christmas card and best wishes. Playing for our church is a privilege and the blessing I receive from all of you are priceless. In God's Love, Velma
- Thank you so much for the card and gift. It has been a pleasure getting to know each of you in a different way over the past 2 years. It's been an adventure. ~ Linda

Men's Winter Clothing Drive

We will be collecting men's winter clothing for donation to the Issaquah Clothing Bank and Union Gospel Mission Feb 14-29. A list of requested items is available in the office. A barrel is located in our entry area for placement of any donated items. Anyone wishing a receipt, write your contact information on the clipboard at the front desk and one will be mailed to you.



L O C A L M I S S I O N S

Compassion House Update

From Mark Miller, Founder & Chairman of Compassion House:

Outreach funds provided to Compassion House for resident auto repairs—\$5,000; spent thus far: \$1,112.68; remaining for future use: \$3,887.32.

“We are so appreciative of your partnership in this ministry. Please know that we are available at any time to share more about Compassion House with your congregation.”

Haiti Mission Update



*Report from the
Mission Field*

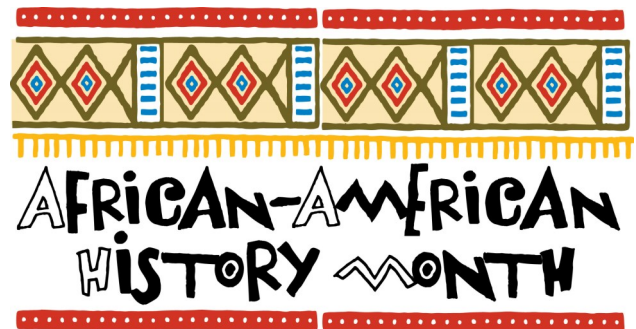
A van was received as a 2015 gift to the Haitian women's ministries. It was released from customs on January 19, 2016! "Our heartfelt thanks to those in our IM office, to our MPT leader and to all those who give, without hoping to meet those who receive/use their gifts."

On another note: "God is blessing us with the ministry of providing clean water in the communities. ...

These pumps are your contribution to the economic improvement of the lives of our people. The pumps are your contribution to reducing the death risk and the death rate due to uncleanness and all kinds of waterborne diseases. They are your contribution to restoring the dignity of our people. ... [They] are your contribution to making the people of Haiti feel that they count and that they are important in the eyes of God."

"Penniless, landless, jobless, and with no political and social power in the society, what could black people do except to fight with cultural and religious power and pray that God would support them in their struggle for freedom? Black people "stretched their hands to God," because they had nowhere else to turn. Because of their experience of arbitrary violence, the cross was and is a redeeming and comforting image for many black Christians. If the God of Jesus' cross is found among the least, the crucified people God is also found among those of the lynched in American history."

~ James Cone, *The Cross and the Lynching Tree* pg. 23



"Christians are not men and women who are hoping for salvation, but those who have experienced it."

~ Martin Lloyd-Jones

February Church Events

Sharing the Adventure Fellowship

Plan on joining us for our upcoming Sharing the Adventure fellowship sessions. We meet here at the church from 12:00-1:30 pm. We will have a potluck meal, prayer time, sing some hymns or choruses, and have a short program. Please bring sandwiches, soup or a salad to share. Here is what is scheduled for our first session:

February 3rd—Sherry Pepke will help us to make pop-up Valentine Cards for delivery to our homebound members, friends-in-fellowship, and grandchildren.

February 17th—Looking at the 23rd Psalm with Pastor Britt.

What other experiences would you like to have us schedule for future Wednesdays?

Annual Meeting & Potluck

We will hold our Annual Meeting after a Potluck on Sunday, February 14th, after worship. Your attendance is requested to be a part of making decisions for this upcoming year.

Board Meeting

Our monthly Board meeting is scheduled for Sunday, February 21st, shortly after worship. Board members please plan to attend.

Adult Forum

We continue our study of the life of Christ. The Forum meets Sundays at 10:00 a.m. We have had some interesting discussions. Come join us.

2016 Board & Committee Positions

Thank you to all who have agreed to serve on the Board or a committee. Your participation is much appreciated and valuable in the life of this church.

ABW-PNW Annual Conference

April 22-24, Red Lion Hotel, Richland, WA. Registration deadline is **March 31st**. Theme: "See ... A vision for our future." There will be a Bible study, project, workshops, White Cross work party, and game/craft event. Small scholarships are available on a first-come basis. See Britt or Linda for a registration form.

Other CCI Updates

CCI Website

Take a look at our website, Pastor Britt has updated the look and content making it easier to find one's way around it. Find it at www.commchurchiss.org. Also, tell your friends where to find it.

CCI Prayer Chain Update

It is time to update CCI's Prayer Chain. If you are currently on the prayer chain list and wish your name removed, or if you would like to joint the Prayer Chain, please contact Roma Bowen as soon as possible. Phone (425) 643-5227.

Excerpt from ABCUSA Connection, w/ Rev Dr A Roy Medley

Q. A recent Pew Research Center survey documents a significant rise among Americans who don't believe in God or who said religion isn't important to them. This includes "nones," those who have had no experience in religious communities, and "dones," those who have left them. The rise is especially strong among "millennials" and other younger persons. **Transformed by the Spirit** seeks to listen to, and then respond to, those apart from church life. How difficult will it be to establish that connection?

A. Reaching the "nones" and "dones" is clearly one of the adaptive challenges the church faces in North America and Western Europe. Our basic message needs to be that which it has always been: "God loves you." But we need to add to that "and God loves all of creation and is passionate about bringing about peace and justice to the world through Christ's love at work through you and others. We invite you to join us in concrete actions of compassion, and peacemaking." Younger people need to know that the church can connect them to God with rich spiritual resources and connect them to the world in ways that make a difference.

Many young adults I speak with ask why the church has to be so judgmental and condemning. We need to quit emphasizing what we are "anti" and instead promote what we are "for." They wish to meet a people who mirror the compassion of Jesus. Re-establishing the church as a center for personal and world healing is a major task for us. I think the ABC focus statement has it right: "American Baptist Churches are missional congregations that nurture devoted disciples of Jesus who live their lives in mission and ministry for the healing of the world through the love of God."

Food for Thought

Make New Friends, But Keep the Old

Lately, I have been thinking about friendship. I still sometimes hum along in my head with a song from my childhood: *Make new friends, but keep the old. One is silver and the other gold.* I remember when I learned the meaning of that song – silver and gold are different from each other, but each one is valuable and dear. And, the same thing applies to all of our friendships.

A good friendship is like cooking up a delicious meal. Each person brings something unique to the dish and the results are very good!

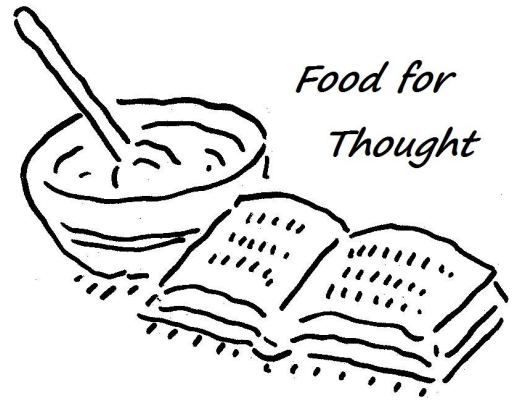
We all need friends and we also need a community of people who care about us. To make a friend you need to be a friend – old advice, but still very true today. I think there are two really important traits that friendships need. They are the abilities to **share** and to **show up**.

Share. To be a friend I know that I must share a little bit of myself. And, just as importantly, I need to create the space so that my friend can share, too. I want to make it my intention to be genuine and sincere with my friend.

Show up. If my friend invites me over or wants to go to lunch, I think I should make every effort I can to show up and be fully present. I am not as good at this as I would like to be. Sadly, adult friendships are often something that get bumped down on the list of grown up priorities and the unexpected things that life brings. But, it is during those unexpected times that I know I am going to need my friend so I will commit to showing up and being a friend.

I hope that the month of February brings you the joys of giving and receiving friendship. I think your friend might like a cookie, too.

~ Teri Hansen



A good start

He who fritters away the early morning, its opportunity and freshness, in other pursuits than seeking God will make poor headway seeking him the rest of the day. If God is not first in our thoughts and efforts in the morning, he will be in the last place the remainder of the day.

~ E.M. Bounds

Special Dates in February

- African-American History Month
- Baptist World Alliance Sunday - Sunday, 02/07
- Transfiguration Sunday - Sunday, 02/07
- Boy Scout Sunday - Sunday, 02/07
- Ash Wednesday - Wednesday, 02/10
- First Sunday in Lent - Sunday, 02/14
- Valentine's Day - Sunday, 02/14
- Presidents' Day - 02/15
- Second Sunday in Lent - Sunday, 02/21
- Third Sunday in Lent - Sunday, 02/28



BLESSINGS
ON YOUR
BIRTHDAY

TO...

3 Don Good

9 Robert Eastlick

14 Alice Brenenstahl

15 Bessie Burton

February 2016 at CCI

- Sharing the Adventure - 02/03
- Potluck & Annual Meeting - 02/14
- Sharing the Adventure - 02/17
- Board Meeting - 02/21
- Bell Article Deadline - 02/22

LONG TERM PRAYER LIST

Perhaps you would like to add these church family members to your prayer concerns:

1. **Craig & Karyn Akishin** -
*350 N 190th St, Apt C215
Shoreline, WA 98133*
2. **Daisy Cox** - *at University House*
3. **Jane Forbes**
Kirkland, WA
4. **Don & Alice Good**
Bellevue, WA
5. **Elvira Lindsay** - *at Aegis Living*
6. **Martha Nordhagen**
Adams House, Oregon
7. **Dody Tweeddale**
Cascades Adult Family Home, Bellevue
8. **Cherie Vivolo** - *at home*

Not coming back

Several years ago, a story on the newswires told of a boomerang that returned to its owner after 25 years. Here's how: An American tourist stole a boomerang from Australia's Mount Isa museum and managed to get it out of the country. But a quarter of a century later, he sent it back, along with a full confession. Apparently, guilt had been eating away at the man; he hadn't known how his mischief would ... boomerang.

Sin has a way of returning in ways we didn't expect, bringing loads of shame along with it. During Lent, with its focus on confession and absolution, we remember that God tosses those "boomerangs" of wrongdoing as far "as the east is from the west" (Psalm 103:12). In other words, they'll never come back.

~ Timothy Merrill