

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE OREGON-IDAHO ANNUAL CONFERENCE – PART THREE, by Raymond E. Balcomb and Robert W. Burtner© (used by permission).

(Part two: Gold was discovered in the Boise Basin in 1860, which rapidly proliferated the areas population, and eventually resulted in the organization of a conference of eastern Oregon and Idaho Territory. The United Brethren Church became active in Oregon.)

In addition to the United Brethren, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, began work in Oregon in 1858, establishing their first Class at the McFarland School House (between present day Corvallis and Monroe). The Class established in Corvallis later on bought the buildings and grounds of a bankrupt school called Corvallis College. The church made it a very successful school that ultimately was designated as the Agricultural College of Oregon. The Methodist Church, South, however, in a few years gave up its part of the school, which then became Oregon Agricultural College (later, Oregon State University).

The work of these early pastors and circuit riders was not for the faint of heart. One early preacher records that “we (he and his wife) have slept many times in barns with the horses and cattle, sometimes in the wagon, or on the ground under the trees of the forest; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst.” He adds, “But we are richer today for these experiences, and would gladly spend another life in the same way.”

Camp Meetings were the primary tool for recruiting church members in Methodism up until about 1900. In 1843 Jason Lee conducted the first camp meeting for white people ever held in Oregon. A pioneer describes a camp meeting held in the Willamette Valley about 1855: “Perhaps a thousand people were gathered. They had come in their ox wagons . . . many had traveled fifty miles . . . to renew here the experiences and rekindle the emotions of the old life beyond the Rock Mountains . . . One of the older missionaries preached at 8 o’clock . . . At 11:00 the Presiding Elder of the Willamette District ascended the stand and delivered one of his great religious orations. At 2:00 p.m. one of the younger men who had entered the work . . . was the preacher. At night a still younger man . . . was put on the stand.” Camp Meetings gradually declined as preachers moved toward large revival meetings sponsored by local churches in their communities. Both provided a working model for the Sunday morning worship services in early northwest Methodist churches.

One of the most urgent concerns of the Oregon Mission was to establish schools, at first for Indians and later for white children. This task was originally delegated to Cyrus Shepherd, a trained teacher with experience in New England schools. Lee was proud of what Shepherd was doing in what became know as the Indian Mission Manual Labor School. The school didn’t survive Lee’s replacement who sold the building to the Oregon Mission, which had formed a school for white children, The Oregon Institute, of which Willamette University was the direct outgrowth and successor.

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MethodistDimensions

RUPERT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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FEEDING MIND, BODY, SOUL

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Church, A Faith Community
Rev. David Madden

Who knows if that incident ever really happened, but the truth it presents is plain enough: Our individual faith gives off more light and warmth when believers support each other.



We all benefit from participation in church life. A faith community provides instruction, support, feedback and accountability. It brings order to our lives. Attending worship is an important way of putting the events of our lives in helpful perspective.

There is a story about a longtime church member who had always attended regularly, but then suddenly stopped coming. After a few weeks, the pastor decided he’d better make a visit. He went to the man’s home and found him alone, sitting in front of a blazing fire. The parishioner invited the pastor in and directed him to a comfortable chair near the fire.

After an initial greeting, the two sat in silence, watching the roaring fire dance over the logs. Then the pastor took the fire tongs and picked up a brightly burning ember, which he then placed to one side of the fireplace by itself. That lone ember’s flame began to flicker and eventually died. Soon it was a cold, gray coal, with no life or warmth. Then the pastor picked up that coal with the tongs, and placed it back into the middle of the fire. Within seconds, it began to glow, with light and warmth, ignited by the flames around it. As the pastor rose to leave, the parishioner said, “Thank you for the sermon, Pastor. I’ll be back in church next Sunday.”

Annual Conference Report



Barbara Nyblad, Conf. Lay Representative

This was the Second Year of the quadrennial Conference theme of “Do This and You Shall Live!” based on Luke 10:26-28, which is Christ’s response to the lawyer who asked Jesus what he should do to inherit eternal life. “And Jesus said to him, “What is written in the Law? How does it read to you?” And the Lawyer answered. “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.” And Jesus said to the lawyer, “You have answered correctly, do this and you will live.”

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Office Hours: Mon, Tues,
Wed, 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Food Pantry: Mon. & Wed.,
11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Rev. David Madden is in the
office on Mon. thru Thurs.
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Listen to live broadcast of Sunday worship service at 11:00 a.m.
Service re-broadcast at 5:00 p.m. on Thursdays
<http://www.youtube.com/user/RUWMC83350>

Access Sunday sermons and special music at:



We have had a very heavy month. The shelves of the pantry are again fairly empty. We can use the following: Mac & Cheese, canned soup, vegetables, fruit, beans, tomatoes or tomato sauce, pasta and toilet tissue. Thank you again for your donations of food and money, and thank you to those who are willing and able to help man the food pantry.

Thank you to those who are watering the flower beds this year.

Thank you to Marcia Hallett for the Keurig Coffee maker, and K cups of Decaf coffee. This coffee maker has only been used for decaf.

Thank you to those who have taken on a summer clean-up project. Some have been completed, and summer is still young - plenty of time to finish.

Rupert United Methodist Church Open door hospitality on July 4th, From 8:30 a.m. until parade begins. Restrooms, ice water & shade available. Come by and say hi! Have a safe and happy 4th of July!



The church is alive with children! Vacation Bible School began this week. There have been around 25 children in attendance. The picture above was from CHAT time on Sun., June 24, introducing Romper the River Otter. The children and leaders will present a short program on Sunday, July 1st reviewing what they learned. Thank you to those who have made another year of VBS possible.

Congratulations to our member and sister, Peggy Gulbranson, who has received an ESTARL Scholarship (Eastern Star Training Award for Religious Leadership). This scholarship is awarded by The Grand Chapter of Idaho Order of the Eastern Star. Peggy will be studying for a masters in Pastoral Ministry. She will be attending on line classes from Northwest Nazarene College. Peggy says she is super, duper excited about this opportunity, as well as super, duper nervous. Your love and prayers on her behalf will be much appreciated.

(Annual Conference Report continued from front page)
If we call ourselves Christians, this is our only command from God through Jesus Christ. This gives ME, and EACH of us THE Authority to be A neighbor to our next door neighbors, as well as people living continents away from us, and to everyone with whom we come in contact.

Rev. Dr. Brian Brown, based on the book "Anatomy of Peace" by the Arbinger Institute, showed us how to correct our own mindset and to look at our own behavior in helping us to be neighborly to someone else. This, in turn, helps us feel at peace. As Rev Dr. Brown put it, "Get out of thinking in a box! This is thinking in the flesh where "out of the box thinking" is Spiritual thinking.

Please read Joyce Orem's Conference report in the United Methodist Women's insert in this church letter for more inspiring happenings from and around the Oregon-Idaho Conference.

We have a good start in making Rupert United Methodist a force in our community and with our neighbors through our food pantry, and by housing a childcare program to assist in the needs of working families. There is a new opportunity for our church to participate when the new Humanity Center opens in Rupert. Another way we serve our community is through the reading of children's books on our radio station. There are other ways for each of us to show God's Love to everyone through Jesus Christ so NO ONE feels unloved. The United Methodist Women, Pastor David and I have more details in these areas, which will benefit each of you as well.

The Conference is currently working with the Nez Perce Camps, and the Wilder area Hispanic ministries. This year Worship offerings at Conference collected over \$2,000 for each of these programs. There was over \$3,000 raised at conference to send several members of the Oregon-Idaho Conference to the General Conference in 2020. Their participation will give a voice from our Conference to changes being made to the Book of Discipline. It was comforting to know that Mission work is active in the Oregon-Idaho area, as well as, the World Wide Missions and Relief that our Methodist Church is doing.

Again, thank you for letting me attend conference. I wish all of you could have participated in this Conference experience. Please let Pastor David, Joyce Orem and myself know if you are interested in more in-depth study, conversation, or have questions about the many topics covered in our Conference.

SAVE THIS DATE!!
SUNDAY, AUGUST 12, 2018
RUPERT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH ANNUAL ICE CREAM SOCIAL
FRONT LAWN - ENTERTAINMENT TO BE ANNOUNCED!

During the early years of the Mission, there were no public schools, but there was intense interest in children receiving an education. Methodist clergy often led moves to develop facilities and instruction either sponsored by the church or the community. From 1858 to 1865 there were five Methodist preachers who were county superintendents of common schools. In addition, the church started several schools of its own: The Portland Academy, Santiam Academy, Umpqua (or Wilbur) Academy, Oregon City Academy and Female Seminary, Sheridan Academy, Ashland College, Drain Academy and the aforementioned Corvallis College of the M.E. Church, South.

Membership in the Oregon conference showed both periods of growth and periods of decline beginning from the 1850s. By 1970 the membership was 67,215. However, this figure is the result of the 1969 merger of the Oregon and Idaho Conferences and does not reflect the time when membership in both conferences was declining. This decline continued down to 1997 when the membership was reported as 39,129.

A number of mergers have enriched and pluralized Methodism in Oregon since 1900. Oregon members of the Pacific German Conference (which was organized in 1905) were merged with the Oregon Conference in 1928. Nationally, three Methodist bodies - Methodist Episcopal Church, Methodist Episcopal Church South, and Methodist Protestant Church - in 1939 agreed, as one church historian wrote, "to kiss and make peace." This merger created The Methodist Church and involved the merger of several Oregon congregations and conferences. A Japanese Provisional Conference had been established in 1940 on the west coast but then the members in Oregon merged with the Oregon Conference in 1964.

In 1968 the Evangelical United Brethren Church nationally merged with the Methodist Church, creating The United Methodist Church. Most EUB churches in Oregon chose to form a new denomination, though a few congregations merged with the Oregon Conference. In 1969 negotiations were completed for the merger of the Idaho Conference with the Oregon Conference to form the present Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference. Currently, in Oregon Methodism the fastest growing ethnic group has been the establishment and growth of Korean Methodist congregations. Two new Korean congregations have been established within the bounds of the conference. NOTE: (I have tried to find when this article was written, however, have not yet been able to track that down. My best guess is 2004, or later. The Conference is attempting to up-date this article. 2017 membership of the OR-ID Annual Conference, 24,634). The final installment of this article will appear in the August newsletter - discussing women preachers, change in style of preaching & social issues)