

Things to Ponder: Thankful, For What?

By Grant Williams

This week has been a real scramble. My computer is down and I'm sitting in the Washington County library after visiting a church I had never heard of until coming out of Costco this morning. I had no idea what to expect, but since the library didn't open until noon I had some time to fill and decided visiting a new church was a great option.

All week I have been pondering the idea of being a real Christian. What do people think of when they hear that word? Many people are turned off by the mention of Christianity. How sad to think those who claim to be Christians have strayed so far from what Jesus intended. When quizzed, the average person on the street thinks of hypocrites, pious do gooders, and self-righteous people who are consumed with what they can get from God.

The sermon this morning changed my course. He spoke from Luke 5:38, "But new wine must be put into fresh wine skins." He challenged us to become everything God intended us to be. We can be so consumed with the past that we forget there is a wonderful future ahead for anyone willing to listen to God's voice. No matter where you have been or what you have done God is able to make beautiful things of your life.

That brings me to what I am thankful for this holiday (Thanksgiving, Christmas) season.

God gave me a father who never gave up on me. No matter how much I disappointed him he never cut me off, he never rejected me, and I always knew I was loved. I feel so sorry for people who have not experienced that kind of love.

There were certainly times he had every right to cut me off, but he never did. There were times I treated him with disrespect and tarnished our family name, but he never stopped treating me like his son. He never embarrassed me or excluded me from the family, even though he could have easily and justifiably done so.

What would happen if Christians and Churches started to love the world and the hurting like my father loved me? Is it possible people would want to know more about Christianity if we actually started to live like Him (Jesus) instead of being the judgmental, pious people we have become known as?

I don't know about you but I'm tired of being button holed as irrelevant and powerless because I choose to serve a God who is perceived as someone who can't really make a difference in our lives. God has made a huge difference in my life, and I want others to experience the joy and freedom we have in being a part of the family of God.

This year can be the best year ever if we, Christians, decide to put Jesus before our agendas and start to act like the people He saved us to be.

School Board Report

continued from page 14

that they did trail work and painting. They said they enjoyed meeting and working with other students.

Building Reports – Elementary School Principal Aaron Miller and High/Middle School Principal Nate Underwood provided the Board with reports on student instructional hours. Miller's report noted that Elementary students would receive 988 total hours of instruction, including conferences and staff development time; the State requires 900 hours. Miller also presented a report from the University of Oregon Center on Teaching and Learning which provided data on student progress in math and reading. Underwood's report noted that VHS/VMS students would receive 996 total hours of instruction; seniors are required to have 966 hours, other HS students are required to have 990, MS students are required to have 900. Underwood's report also included information about student attendance and student proficiency testing results.

Where do you read the Voice?
Show us where you have traveled.
Submit your photo by email to:
scott@vernoniasvoice.com

Bridge Street Bits

A CHANGE IN OUR SENIOR AND HOME-DELIVERED MEAL PROGRAM IS COMING SOON! In cooperation with three Vernonia restaurants, the Senior Center is introducing a new program for both home-delivered and individual meals for residents 60 and older. Read about details in this issue on page three, or learn more at the Senior Center office on Bridge St., and at the Legion Hall.

FOOT CARE appointments may now be made with the Vernonia Health Center receptionist during clinic hours, 8 am through 4:30 pm, at 503-429-0622, Monday through Friday. The next foot care dates are Wednesday, November 25, and Wednesday, December 30; appointments can be made now. Our provider, Joyce Jossi, RN, is certified in diabetic and elder foot care.

VOLUNTEERS, WE NEED YOU! If you have or would like to get some retail store experience, we're seeking more volunteers to help our BRIDGE STREET BARGAINS store team. Please call Pam at 503-429-3912 to request an

application. Even one day per month would be a big help. Thanks in advance for your willingness to help!

THE VERNONIA SENIOR CENTER OPERATES IN TWO LOCATIONS. The Senior Center Office and the Thrift Store, "Bargains on Bridge Street," reside in the former VCLC building at 939 Bridge Street. The senior meal program has relocated to the American Legion Hall at 627 Adams Avenue. Meals are served Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at noon. To reserve a meal, please call Wendy by 11:00 am at 503-429-1414. Suggested donation for seniors over 60 is \$4.00; under 60, the cost is \$5.00. Daily home-delivered meals are still available to qualifying persons; contact Community Action Team office on Mondays at 503-366-6584 for more information or to register.

BARGAINS ON BRIDGE STREET at 939 Bridge Street accepts donations during its regular business hours: Monday – Friday 9-3 and Saturday 10-3. Please bring donations inside. The thrift store welcomes you as a shopper,

too. All donations and purchases support senior services in Vernonia. Watch for special SALE signs in front of the store.

WALKING WEDNESDAY is an opportunity for gentle exercise for seniors and anyone in the community who'd like to join us. Walking Wednesdays continue at Vernonia Lake at 9:00 am (note time change) each Wednesday, rain or shine. Walk at your own pace with a friend or solo. No fee and no pre-registration – just come and walk one or more circuits around the lake.

RUSS CLARK, COLUMBIA COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE OFFICER, IS AVAILABLE to meet with clients in Vernonia. Russ will be at the Senior Center (former VCLC) in the office at the end of the hallway on the first Tuesday of each month from 1:00 to 7:00 pm.

VERNONIA SENIOR CITIZENS, INC.
939 Bridge Street, Vernonia OR 97064
Phone: 503-429-3912
Non-Profit Tax ID #23-7422295

Vernonia Senior Center • 939 Bridge Street • 503-429-3912

Church Directory (in alphabetical order)

Assembly of God
Sunday School: 9:45 am
Morning Worship: 11:00 am
Sunday Evening Prayer: 6:00 pm
Wayne Marr, Pastor
662 Jefferson Avenue
503-429-0373
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints
Sunday Schedule:
Sacrament Meeting: 10:00 am
Sunday School & Primary: 11:20 am
Relief Society, Priesthood and Young Women: 12:10 pm
Roger Cook, Branch President
1350 E. Knott Street
503-429-7151
The Crossing
Southern Baptist Church of Vernonia

Wednesday, 7:00 PM
Troy Pound, Pastor
Cabin in Vernonia
901 Park Drive
503-819-892
Grace Family Fellowship
Sunday School: 9:00 am
Worship Service: 10:30 am
Thursday Prayer: 6:00 pm
Greg "Mac" McCallum, Pastor
957 State Avenue
503-429-6790
Nehalem Valley Bible Church
Sunday School: 9:45 am
Worship Service: 10:45 am
Tues. Ladies Bible Study: 9:30 am
Wednesday Service: 7:00 pm
Sat. Men's Prayer Meeting: 6:30 am
Gary Taylor, Pastor

Grant & North Streets
503-429-5378
Open Door Gathering Place
Service: Sunday 6:00 pm
Grant Williams, Pastor
375 North Street
503-702-3553
St. Mary's Catholic Church
Wednesday Religious Education: 3:15-4:30 pm
Sunday Mass: 12:00 pm
Rev. Luan Tran, Administrator
960 Missouri Avenue
503-429-8841
Vernonia Christian Church
Sunday School: 9:45 am
Worship Service in Youth & Family Center: 11:00 AM
www.VernoniaChristianChurch.org

Sam Hough, Pastor
410 North Street
503-429-6522
Vernonia Foursquare Church
Sunday Worship Service: 10:30 am
Children's Sunday School
Carl Pense, Pastor
850 Madison Avenue
503-429-1103
Vernonia Seventh-day Adventist Church
Sabbath (Saturday) Services
Sabbath School: 9:30 am
Worship Service: 11:00 am
www.VernoniaSDAC.org
Larry Gibson, Pastor
2nd Ave. and Nehalem St.
503-429-8301