



A LETTER FROM THE PASTOR

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“Jesus. Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us... No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening—it’s painful! But afterward, there will be a peaceful harvest of right living for those who are trained in this way. So take a new grip with your tired hands and strengthen your weak knees. Mark out a straight path for your feet so that those who are weak and lame will not fall but become strong. Heb. 12: 1, 11-13

Friends,

It’s time to get moving.

That is usually the phrase I express when Glenn’s snooze alarm has gone off for the third time. But it is also the phrase I told myself when my knees began making sounds similar to that of a bowl of Rice Krispies 😊 So I stopped making excuses and recently signed up to work out at a gym with the help of a trainer. I knew that, left to my own devices, I would start out strong and then excuses would surface. You know what I mean - excuses like lack of time in my schedule, the cost of access to the tools and training, and how I would look doing those exercises compared to others in the gym. Then I came across a scripture that first made me laugh but then made me think twice:

“So take a new grip with your tired hands and strengthen your weak knees”. Heb. 12:12

Now the writer of Hebrews was not looking to make body builders in the physical sense - like those with 6-pack abs - but “body” builders of the body of Christ. The main theme of Hebrews 12 is to “run the race of endurance” as we are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses to the life of faith. See, God has given us spiritual fitness “trainers” in the saints and the Spirit who keep cheering and guiding us when we get flabby in our faith.

For, if we are too comfortable, we will do what we have always done. No movement can result in a flat line and that’s not good spiritually or physically.

In 2024, Mariners has been catching its breath from the previous year of disaffiliation process and costs, changes in staff, and life changes in general. The strategic planning team and the Church Council have set the direction of the new mission and vision statements to reflect the fresh focus of Mariners Bethel Global Methodist Church. So now is the time for us to get moving.

When I walked into the gym that first day of my “fitness mission”, my muscles did not readily jump into the movement. They first needed to gain momentum to move in the way they were designed to move. One intentional action at a time. The same is true of each of us as we “make and mobilize disciples who magnify Jesus Christ.”

“Momentum 2025” is the name of the investment opportunity for the year ahead. Previously we called this a stewardship or pledge campaign that asked folks to consider how much financial support they would give in the coming year. Yet stewardship is not a once-a-year activity. Stewardship is a way of life grounded in understanding that 100% of what we have

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