

# Words of Faith

THE NEWSLETTER OF FAITH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Fall 2015

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## Building Debt Retired & Faithful Service Celebrated



On September 6, the church celebrated two blessings in our collective life--the retirement of the debt for the new building, and the 30 years of faithful service as Elders of Dick Hannula and Steve Jack. Mrs. Bonnie Payne composed this poem to mark the occasion. The church gave the Hannulas and the Jacks, as tokens of our gratitude, trips to Italy and Cayman Islands, respectively.

### *Two Good Men*

Champion swimmers, they both made their mark,  
But the Jesus movement caused a new kind of spark.  
Believers now, in hand their diploma,  
Business man and teacher returned to Tacoma.

New to the faith, devouring the Word,  
Growing in grace and ready to serve.  
Men of such caliber, who could deny?  
“A place on the Session,” the church’s reply.

They married well and raised their kids  
While serving on the Session.  
Yes, thirty years have come and gone,  
And we have reaped the blessing’.

The flock now much larger and troubles abound,  
What spiritual leaders like these could be found?  
Have not you heard our pastor expound?  
“I won’t trade my Elders for any around!”

The best of the best, both humble and wise,  
Where spiritual problems oft met their demise.  
These past thirty years, who their service can measure?  
To honor them now gives us unbounded pleasure!

Mrs. Bonnie Payne  
A Celebration of the Lord’s Faithfulness

## “An Interview with Pastor Rayburn”

### Installment No. 2: Pastoral Duties & Preaching

Dr. Mark Murphy

Dr. Mark Murphy recently sat down with Pastor Rayburn to talk about various aspects of his ministry, his life as a pastor, Faith Presbyterian, etc. Herewith, an excerpt from that discussion, covering part one of Pastor Rayburn’s thoughts on pastoral duties and preaching.

**Dr. Murphy:** *A pastor—in your case, the senior pastor—has many duties/responsibilities. How would you prioritize your top four duties, and how do you arrive at that prioritization?*

**Pastor Rayburn:** It is always difficult to prioritize a pastor’s responsibilities because in respect to the most important of my duties they are interconnected; the neglect of any of them must diminish the others. When the Apostle Paul told Timothy to watch his life and doctrine closely since by them he would save both himself and his hearers, he gave all Christian ministers a prescription for their daily work. So life (and all that “life” must mean in a minister’s interactions with God and with others) and preaching (both public proclamation and private instruction from the Word, or what is nowadays called “pastoral counseling”) are my calling. The apostles characterized their ministry in Acts 6:4 as the prayer (by which they meant the public worship of the church) and the ministry of the word. Those are the ancient ministerial callings: to superintend the worship of the church and to preach and teach the Word of God. Both those New Testament descriptions of a minister’s work amount to a priestly model of the ministry, not a modern, corporate model, now so common in the American church. I am not a CEO. I’ve never thought of myself as the CEO of this congregation, though I did once receive a piece of mail addressed to Faith Presbyterian Church, Robert Rayburn Owner. I should have saved that envelope. It would have clarified matters at some Session meetings! In any case, if I must list four in order, they would be: My own life, Public Preaching, Private Preaching or Pastoral Care, and the Superintendence of divine worship. Everything else must be fit into the time that remains.

**Dr. Murphy:** *I imagine it is difficult, if not impossible, for a pastor to stick to a strict schedule, since “life happens” and circumstances arise that demand your attention. How do you keep the urgencies from crowding out the more routine duties (such as sermon preparation?)*

**Pastor Rayburn:** I have ministerial friends who are time-budgeters. Every Tuesday morning they devote to this, they see people from the congregation on the afternoons of Wednesday or Friday, and so on. I’ve never been a budgeter. Somehow or other if someone calls to see me, they are always welcome at the moment or at the earliest convenience, and I still get my sermons finished. If something gets neglected for a certain period of time, it will neither be the preparation of sermons nor the seeing of people. Somehow that has worked for me. I don’t have a theory of time management except in the matter of paperwork. In regard to that I have developed what I consider to be a startlingly new and brilliant law of time management, one that could easily be made into a best-selling book! It is simply this: if you leave paperwork on your desk long enough, it becomes unnecessary to deal with it at all!

**Dr. Murphy:** *It is clear that you love to preach, and you take the ministry of the Word very seriously. Has it always been that way for you, or has your love of preaching grown over the years?*

**Pastor Rayburn:** I have always had an interest in preaching and always a desire to do it, but my approach to preaching has certainly changed over the years. For example, the ease with which sermons are hatched in the mind has changed significantly for the better. The attention I now pay to the explanation of the text while reading it before the sermon developed only over time. Even the organization of sermons has changed markedly from the early years. I am a firm believer that the only way for any preacher to become a better preacher is by preaching. Of course, other factors likewise have influenced my preaching over the years as they have shaped my intellectual life, my understanding of the Word of God, and as they have deepened my sympathy with people facing the challenges of life in this world. In any case,

it is no surprise to me that I don't find myself re-preaching sermons that I preached in the earlier years of my ministry. My convictions as to the importance of preaching and its fundamental principles have also continued to develop and deepen through the years. Much of this is the result of my reading. I don't listen to preaching very often – I virtually never listen to sermons on the internet; I haven't the patience – but I have read many books about preaching and many books of sermons.

**Dr. Murphy:** *You are known primarily for expository preaching. Apart from the distinction between expository and topical preaching, how would you describe your preaching style? Which historical and contemporary preachers have most influenced your preaching and in what ways?*

**Pastor Rayburn:** My father was my homiletics professor in seminary and he exercised an immense influence. I probably have never listened to any preacher more often than I listened to my dad, though I was then much younger and much less thoughtful about sermons. I obviously had pastors that I listened to Lord's Day by Lord's Day in the churches of my youth, but I am hard pressed to discern any particular traits that I caught from them. Dad was always careful to say that the rules he was teaching, the wisdom he was imparting about what made a good sermon, should not be replicated slavishly by any minister once he is in his own pulpit. Each preacher must find his own approach to preaching and it had to be his own if it was going to be effective. I'm sure that is right. The best definition of preaching I ever heard was: "truth mediated through personality." If you were somehow to have given the 100 greatest preachers in the history of the Christian church the same text to preach, you would get 100 different sermons. All of them would be good sermons, all of them would be faithful to the text, but none would be the same as any other. "Truth mediated through personality" has been the experience of my own life as a preacher. I could not exactly describe the process by which I moved from the seminary type of sermon that I was preaching at the outset of my ministry to the sort of sermon I preach today, but obviously it was something natural

for me and my sermons are not like anyone else's, as other men's sermons are not like mine. I don't doubt that this reflects some defect on my part, but I'm not sure I can even say what my style of preaching is. I never listen to myself preach, so am even less able to say how my sermons compare to those of others. In any case, my style must be an amalgam of many influences picked up consciously and unconsciously through the years. Among the preachers who have influenced me in one way or another I would include, after my father, Robert Murray M'Cheyne, Alexander Whyte, Martyn Lloyd Jones, Klass Schilder, John Stott, and my pastor in Aberdeen, William Still. They have all attracted me to their sermons for one reason or another. But while I could describe their influence, probably no one reading their sermons and then mine would be able to detect any obvious similarity in approach, organization, or manner of delivery. "Truth mediated through personality!"

**Dr. Murphy:** *Paint a picture for us of how a sermon develops in your mind and heart, from the time you select the passage of Scripture.*

**Pastor Rayburn:** In most cases for me the text has already been chosen: it is the next paragraph in the book that I am preaching through. Not always, but most of the time. So the text is read, commentaries are read, I gather from that study the main burden of the text, and then I fashion the argument. A sermon is invariably an argument. In one way or another it is always an argument. It may have instruction in it, but in the final analysis it is the making of a case. The preacher is saying that since the text says this, in this way or that we must respond to it in faith and obedience. So in my preparation I must first determine the burden of the paragraph so that I can explain its implications for our lives today. There are preachers today who eschew application as an infringement on the work of the Holy Spirit. I do not find that model of preaching in the Bible. With Jonathan Edwards I have come to believe that the primary importance of a sermon is to be found in the impression it makes upon people when it is

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preached. A sermon ought to be the living voice of the Lord. Any faithful preacher prays that his sermons may prove to be exactly that. My task is therefore to identify the truth in the passage and with the Holy Spirit's help to make you feel the force of it. The minister's collateral reading, the reading done over a wide range of subjects that in most cases has no immediate connection with the subject of the sermon itself, as well as his observation of life, are immensely important for this reason. One draws from those reservoirs evidence and illustration to empower the argument.

## **“That Hideous Strength” Is Evangelicalism’s Text for the Future**

An essay reprinted from the patheos website--by Jake Meador, an editor with Mere Orthodoxy and Fare Forward, and board member of the Davenant Trust. He has written in First Things, Books and Culture, and Christianity Today.

At the heart of American Evangelicalism has always been an unhealthy alliance between the two types of Americans that Wallace Stegner has described as “boomers” and “stickers.” Boomers are the industrialists, the progressives (in the general sense of believing in inevitable social progress, not the more specific political sense), the people who move from work to work, always in motion, always growing, always trying new things in hopes of earning more money or “advancing” society. Stickers are the Hobbits of the world, the people committed to a small way of life who tend to be less concerned with abstractions like “social progress” or even “economic growth,” which is a kind of abstraction as well.

For most of our history and certainly since the Second Great Awakening we have attempted to blend these two approaches, mixing an emphasis on revival, innovative techniques for preaching the gospel, and for growing churches with a desire to retain our commitment to basic Christian orthodoxy and piety. Whether it is George Whitefield, Charles

Finney, Billy Sunday, Bill Hybels, or Mark Driscoll we evangelicals, like any good marketer hawking a product, have always had a talent for Americanizing our faith to suit the tastes of our target audience.

That alliance, however, is now collapsing. The boomers outside the church, who have always been averse to limitation, have now decided that even the natural design of our bodies should not limit our sexual expression just as their industrialist predecessors of the 19th century decided that the natural design of creation should not inhibit their ambition or wealth. And so the American business world has become one of the places most hostile to traditional Christian orthodoxy. This explains why “liberal” companies like Apple as well as more “conservative” companies like Walmart had the same reaction to religious freedom bills adopted in Indiana and Arkansas. Today’s boomers have discovered that orthodoxy is bad for business. And so they have turned on orthodoxy.

The result of this will be that it will become more and more difficult for American evangelicals to cozily nestle in with the bourgeois bohemian establishment in modern America as they will increasingly be forced to choose between faithful Christian practice or their place in the mainstream world of middle-to-upper class Americans. As my friend Matthew Anderson noted on Twitter the other day, we will soon find out who the serious leaders of Evangelicalism are.

By necessity, this will also force a hard choice upon evangelicals. Though we have always had a foot in both the boomer and sticker worlds, the boomer side has been consistently winning out since the early 1980s when seeker-sensitive churches first began to emerge. Prior to that time Evangelicalism had tended to be a more poor to middle class tradition, plugging away on the margins of society while the mainline occupied the mainstream. It was in the 1970s and ‘80s that we began to be richer and part of the economic establishment. As a result of this shift we have become less and less familiar with the sticker tradition. In the years to come that will have to change as the business world becomes increasingly hostile to orthodoxy and as our legal system follows suit.



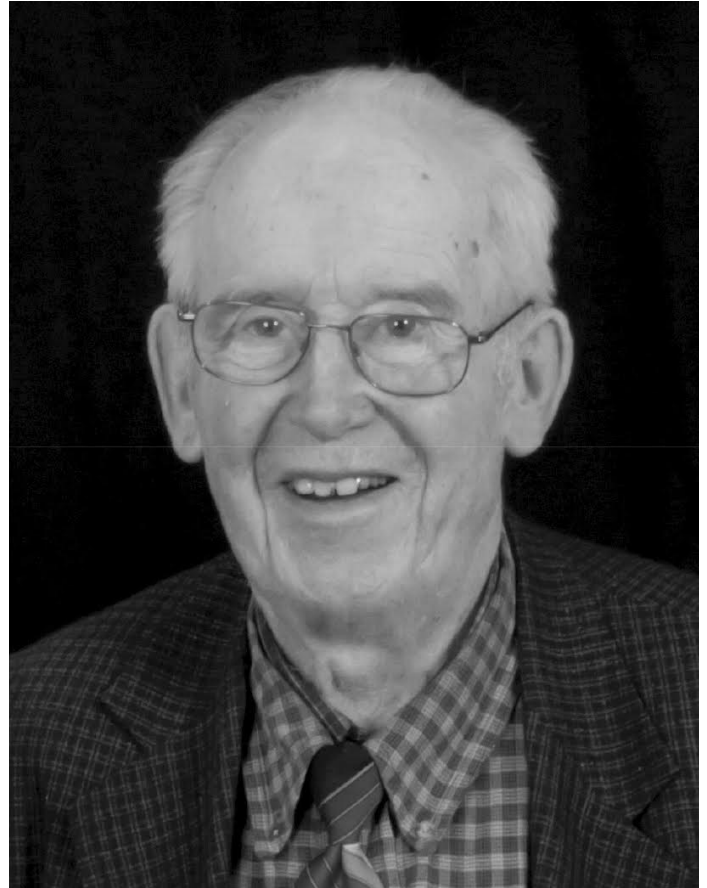
## Leo Halinen

Leo E. Halinen, 87, died at the Weatherly Inn, Tacoma, WA, on July 18, 2015, where he resided with his beloved wife. His death was due to complications of congestive heart failure.

Born May 9, 1928 and baptized June 30, 1928 in Jyväskylä, Finland, Leo lived in the Tacoma area for 65 years after emigrating from Finland in 1950 with his sister, Terttu (aka Marietta). He initially worked for local building contractors and in 1958 began planning his business, Leo Halinen Construction Company. He was a busy, self-employed building contractor until his retirement in 1994. In addition to crafting many fine homes and numerous commercial building remodels in greater Pierce County, Leo built his family residence and several duplexes in University Place, where he was a well-loved neighbor, landlord, and generous community member. He was a long-term member of the United Finnish Kaleva Brothers & Sisters (UFKBS) and the Tacoma Finns, and took pleasure in celebrating his Finnish heritage at the local Scandinavian Days Festival at the fairgrounds in Puyallup, selling yellow Finn potatoes, and preparing and serving Marjakeitto (berry soup) from berries and plums that he grew and picked. No one could make gravy and mashed potatoes like Leo did, and his Thanksgiving turkey and stuffing was amazing. He was proud of each of his children and grandchildren, and loved his wife unconditionally.

Leo was an adherent at Faith Presbyterian Church (FPC). During the last two years, he enjoyed the many talented young FPC musicians who came to the Weatherly Inn on Sundays to accompany hymns of praise during the 10:00 a.m. service.

He is survived by his wife of 63 years, Rose Marie; their three children: David (and wife, Patricia), Debra (and husband, Matthew), and Lisa; seven grandchildren: Joel (and wife, Kimberly), Jeremy, Justin, Anne (and husband, Alex), Joshua, Zachary, and Nathaniel; two great-grandchildren: Katie and Sara; a brother, Martti (and wife, Marja); five sisters: Irja, Marietta, Marja-Liisa (and husband, Adolf), Maire (and husband, Ilkka), and Tarja; numerous nieces and nephews in the US, Finland, and



Germany; and many distant relatives and friends. He was preceded in death by his parents, Eemil Halinen (1898-1975) and Fanny Halinen (1905-1985), and a brother, Osmo Sysmäla (nee Halinen) (1925-2004).

Memorial contributions are welcome online at the Alliance of Christian Musicians (<http://www.allianceofchristianmusicians.org/support/>). After completing the donation and credit card information webpage, please click "Review Donation and Continue" and designate your donation "for FPC scholarships in memory of Leo Halinen."

Our family would like to express heartfelt thanks to the staff at the Weatherly Inn for their tender loving care of Dad and Mom, as well as the staff at St. Joseph Hospital, Group Health Tacoma Medical Center, and the Group Health Hospice team. We are also grateful for the caring and regular visits of Uncle Martti and Aunt Marja, and cousin Martti, Jr.

## “Wonder & Delight”

Jennifer Sullivan

*Two fallen tendencies of man are the wont to pass by God's stunning works with a bored or jaded mind and heart—lacking wonder or delight; or seeing, rush to harness these wonders for harm and selfish ends.*

### Our Common Confession

*The first:*

God forgive the groaning we have set creation to. Ourselves included. For now we pass by your wonders with a tired glance, or a shallow glance, as passengers on a journey, too tired to care about the amazing view, pull the shade and rest their head; their minds too full and dulled or unmoved and empty. Beside are wonders You put there to dazzle, inspire, fill and interest. Yet on we pass, like men whose days are spent and who would rather go to bed. *“For we have sinned and grown old, and our Father is younger than we”* --G.K.Chesterton.

Sure, we'll wake for laughs—trinkets and toys—babylike with twisty ribbon or flappy wrapping paper, instead of the rich reward of your great educational present—a mine to dig in for real treasure in a world of light. Then we are too old. God, forgive us for every psalm of praise not sung in wonder, every thrill of glory passed right by, for the fire we could not muster, because the dust we are returning to clogged our mind.

Beside us are heights and depths to climb and plumb. Eagles soaring over canyon pinnacles spread before us. And colors—bright glowing-light yellow, shimmery shiny sun yellow, banana yellow, lemon yellow, summery sweet tangy yellow, gentle Southern Belle yellow, warm Tuscan gold yellow setting on green rows of grapes. Green verdure-pine green, spruce green, soft mossy glen green, jewel toned emerald green, olives off the tree green, ocean breeze of blue-green seas, which contain yet another world below. Wonders—hydrogen and oxygen, elements combine, forming splashing water. Cool, cleansing, quenching, hot, cooking, steaming, lovely, soothing, flowing water. Marvels—DNA mapping our unknown future connected to the past. Infinitely intricate structures forming, Mandelbrot set and fractal geometry. Your bigger hand ruling all around

(nearsightedly called chaos theory). Atoms link, building the life we must close our eyes to rest from; seeds grow, sowing new life, a future we will not be here to see. Your glories drip, slipping through our fingers like the sands in the hourglass of our life. Forgive us for this reality we made in the beginning. Thank you that You are too great to be diminished by our diminishment.

*The second:*

Take care, O man, your first great thoughts tend to end in ways to harm, hurt, or make a hazy glaze which coats the truth. Amazed by flight, longing to soar, we searched and studied, undauntedly pursuing the way of form and lift, speed and current. Success achieved, the skies were ours (though let's admit, we cannot flit like lark or hummingbird). Within a few short years, up high above the ground, we realize that we have found, a vantage point that we could use to drop our bombs; making scarring, marring marks on the earth and in men's hearts. The things below now vulnerable to this new advantage in the sky, our planes go higher, faster, and with great stealth-- not to delight, but fight. Is this the use that You intended when you set the laws of nature, established the force of the wind, and made the hawk to soar and spread its wings toward the South?

Forgive us. O Lord, we found your atom, splitting it apart, and used the energy inside, for strife. And now, never clear of fear, man uses your marvels, to threaten or protect himself. And God, we took your beautiful thing called love, and made it an occasion of confusion, or of chains. From family to friend, our actions tear and rend; our hopes defeated, our eyes on ourselves instead of others, hurt instead of whole. We even thought to use technology to beam promiscuity into every home. Down through the years sowing shame, some wrap themselves with rainbow colors, to hide from blame. But still You call to man, “Where are you?” Hear, dear man and turn around, remember He formed you from the ground, and if not flood, then fire. And so, O God, we confess, we tend to turn towards Your ways, and yawn; or turn them into harm—shades of colorless gray and deepening night.

*“And when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, “Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?” which means, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”*  
Mark 15:33-34

*“All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one.”*  
Romans 3:12

*“But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.”*  
Isaiah 53:5

## News Bits

### A Most Artful Wedding

Tamala Aown wed Caleb Bestvater August 14, 2015, amidst a stunning outburst of art and flowers. Delicate flowers floated in a mobile-like structure, roses adorned an arch over the couple at the altar, and petals strew the way of the bride. If this floral feast left guests' senses anything less than fulfilled, Tamala's own art work—a canvas of 150 sq. ft. (or more)—bestrode the dais. The aural delights—in the form of numerous hymns—were equally great. After honeymooning in Maui, the Bestvaters--both students at UW, live in downtown Tacoma and continue to attend Faith Presbyterian.



# Calendar

## Advent & Christmas Events

Nov 29 – First Sunday in Advent  
Dec 6 – Christmas Messiah in the Evening Service  
Dec 10 – Covenant High School Concert & Art Show  
Dec 11 – Covenant High School Madrigal Feast  
Dec 12 – Rachel Gary & Nate Shelden Wedding  
Dec 20 – Sunday School Christmas Program in the Evening Service  
Dec 24 – Candlelight Services

## Calendar of Events

Jan 2 – Meghan Johnston & Nikilas Cuddeback Wedding  
Jan 6 – Brendan & Erin Connally at Prayer Meeting  
Jan 16 – Michaela Welch & Jonathan Rutherford Wedding  
Jan 17 – Sanctity of Human Life Sunday  
Jan 21 – Joint Officers Meeting  
Jan 22-24 – Youth Group Snow Retreat  
Jan 27 – Church Dinner and Annual Meeting  
Jan 28-29 – Presbytery Meeting at Christ Church Bellingham  
Feb 10 – Ash Wednesday, Lent Begins  
Feb 28 – Selections from Elijah in the Evening Service  
Mar 20 – Palm Sunday  
Mar 25 – Good Friday Service, Men's Night of Prayer  
Mar 27 – Easter Sunday

# Member Changes

## Additions

Sean Stipek, communicant to voting member, 7/5  
Nick Shelden, communicant to voting member, 7/5  
Samuel Aown, communicant to voting member, 7/12  
Kirk & Melissa McMillan with communicants Wyatt, Ellis, Reid, & Joel, transfer from Bible Presbyterian Church, Tacoma WA, 7/12  
Tova Forman, communicant to voting member, 7/19  
Spenser Gross, communicant to voting member, 7/26  
Elizabeth Jimmink, communicant to voting member, 7/26  
Amy Lewis, communicant to voting member, 8/21  
Matthew Pfefferle, communicant to voting member, 8/21  
Ethan Rowan, communicant to voting member, 8/21  
Grace DeGraaf, communicant to voting member, 8/21  
Ereke & Ann Bruce, reaffirmation, with non-communicants Jonathan & Samuel, 10/20

## Transfers

Jack & Debby Bowdle, to The Anglican Church of St. George the Martyr, Simpsonville SC, 7/28

## Baptisms

Presley Pappuleas, child, 5/3  
Hannah Bellarts, child, 5/10  
Brigid Sheridan, child, 7/12  
Karsten Schlaudraff, child, 9/13  
Clara Pulliam, child, 9/27  
Filbert Stopoulos, child, 9/27