

*flourish*

Mid-Columbia

Integrating faith, work, and everyday living

## **Annual Report to the Board**

**Fiscal Year – August 1, 2019 to July 31, 2020**

**Prepared by**

**Dan Wodrich, Executive Director**

**[flourishmidcolumbia.org](http://flourishmidcolumbia.org)**

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## A Note from the Executive Director

As I pause at the end of Fiscal Year 2019-2020 to reflect on and report to you some of what God has done and is doing in and through His Flourish Mid-Columbia community and ministry, I am filled to overflowing with great joy and deep gratitude. I am excited to share with you some of the particular activities He is involving us in as His Spirit works to **integrate our faith, work, and everyday living** in Christ. I certainly do not claim to recognize and comprehend all that God is up to in our midst, but it does seem to me that some of His fingerprints are clearly discernible and that the fruit of His handiwork is evident. I invite you to pause with me to “see and behold” and to “listen” to His voice calling us to follow Him together, as He would lead us.

*See, I am doing a new thing!  
Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?  
I am making a way in the wilderness  
and streams in the wasteland.  
(Isaiah 43:19 – NIV)*

*Do not despise these small beginnings,  
for the LORD rejoices to see the work begin...  
(Zechariah 4:10 – NLT)*

This Flourish Mid-Columbia “new thing” is now a 2 ½ year-old toddler! I hope this report will serve to inspire you to join me in praising and thanking God for His loving faithfulness, provision, and accompaniment! We are still learning to walk together in this wilderness as a small but growing community of Jesus’ followers – as He takes us by the hand to mature us in His way, His truth, and His life given for the blessing of others. Despite the difficulties and challenges of this past pandemic year – on so many fronts – He has shown Himself faithful to us in ways far better than we could ask or imagine. I smile to think of Him rejoicing to have done so with us, as He continues to carry on to completion the good work He has begun.

*“A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path; it was trampled on, and the birds ate it up. Some fell on rocky ground, and when it came up, the plants withered because they had no moisture. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up with it and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up and yielded a crop, a hundred times more than was sown.” When he said this, he called out, “Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear.” (Luke 8:5-8 – NIV)*

There is a certain freedom in the way the farmer sows his seed that I think we’re getting to experience as participants in Flourish, in partnership with churches and institutions near and far. The farmer freely and with good intention scatters seed broadly and watches and waits to see what springs up from that which lands on good soil. Similarly, there are a variety of Flourish ministry offerings being “scattered” and a diversity of persons and groups who are participating

with us. The Lord is taking, blessing, multiplying, and distributing these offerings as He sees fit – growing and building in accordance with His good purpose and pleasure.

*...the Lord has assigned to each his task. I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow. So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. The one who plants and the one who waters have one purpose, and they will each be rewarded according to their own labor. For we are co-workers in God's service; you are God's field, God's building. (1 Corinthians 3:6-9 – NIV)*

In some instances, we find ourselves planting seeds with these offerings. In others we “get to” tend to shoots that have sprung from seeds planted and cared for by others. We seek to be alert and responsive to what God is doing, to what He is springing up, and to the particular tasks we discern He is assigning and calling us to engage in. What a blessing to behold what He is doing – and what joy and freedom to participate in His life and His growing ministry!

Much of what is in this report is descriptive of the kinds and varieties of ministry activities that Flourish is engaged in for the blessing of our Mid-Columbia community. I would encourage you to pay particular attention to the personal testimonies that are inset within the descriptions. These testimonies bear witness to the Life that is already springing up and being made manifest in and through named persons in our community. My hope and prayer is that those who read these testimonies and this report will be enabled to hear and see our crucified and risen Lord Jesus alive in our midst and be inspired to testify themselves saying,

*“We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world.” (John 4:42 – NIV)*

I thank the Lord for each and all of you who have shared in our Lord's provision for Flourish and who have participated in this fellowship and ministry we are being given together in Christ. We welcome your thoughts, your prayers, and your partnership with us in the days ahead. Our door is open and there is a place at the table for you. You are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to good work, which He has prepared in advance for you to do. May our Lord flourish you as you participate in His own Flourishing Life – and may you know His joy as you give yourself and your talents for the flourishing of others!



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dan Wodrich  
Executive Director

## **Friends, Partners, and Participants**

There are many persons, churches, organizations, and institutions who have participated in and contributed to the ministry of Flourish Mid-Columbia in a variety of ways over the past year(s). I want to recognize and highlight some of these friends in this report as a way of saying thanks.

### **Board of Directors and Staff**

Our Lord has gathered a unique and diversely gifted, wise and loving team of persons to serve as Board members, friends, and partners in this endeavor. This team has met together monthly (and more often when necessary) to seek and discern the Lord’s leading for this ministry, to pray for and encourage one another and those we are called to serve, and to make strategic and practical decisions necessary to help our young ministry grow and mature for fruitfulness and blessing in the lives of others.

Our current Board is comprised of the following persons:



**Dr. James Morris**  
**President**



**Rev. Steve Ernst**  
**Vice-President**



**Scott Johnson**  
**Treasurer**



**Dr. Melanie Saint James**  
**At Large**

The Executive Director, Dan Wodrich, is a full-time Flourish employee and he also serves as Board Secretary in a non-voting capacity.

On May 1, 2020, we were blessed to have Mark Taylor join our Flourish staff in a part-time capacity to help launch and oversee our Young Adult Ministry as Director. Prior to coming on staff, Mark had been an integral member of our community – participating in and contributing to numerous Flourish Mid-Columbia conversation groups and activities in a voluntary capacity. We are thankful for Mark and the passion, gifts, and energy he has received from the Lord to offer to the community in service for the flourishing of others. You can hear more about Mark and our Young Adult Ministry initiative later in this report.



**Mark Taylor**  
**Director**  
**Young Adult Ministry**

## Churches

The following churches have partnered with and supported Flourish Mid-Columbia in a variety of ways:

### West Side Church (formerly West Side United Protestant Church)



Flourish Mid-Columbia was originally envisioned and launched by members of West Side Church. The West Side Church family has provided prayerful and practical wisdom, support, and encouragement for this ministry – from providing venue space for an initial “Share the Vision” event in the Fall of 2017 – to financially supporting Flourish through her Mission Council – to providing finance office assistance for receiving and handling donations – to inviting Flourish to lead mid-week adult discipleship activities associated with the integration of faith and science and faith, culture, and worldview. We thank the Lord for our friends at West Side Church and their partnership with us in our Lord’s ministry.

### Richland Lutheran Church



RLC has partnered with and supported Flourish Mid-Columbia in a number of ways – from providing office space for the Executive Director in 2018 – to providing venue space and technical assistance for our “Vision for Vocation” event in the Spring of 2018 – to providing financial support to Flourish via the Outreach Committee – to providing wisdom and administrative help with researching insurance options -- to allowing the lead pastor to serve as Vice-President on our Board – to providing venue space for our hosting of a “ReFrame: Connecting Faith and Life” course – to inviting us to share the Flourish vision and ministry between worship services in their “HeBrews Café” – to conversing with us about ways to nurture a Spiritual Formation culture within the life of the RLC congregation – to inviting Flourish to lead a men’s retreat – to encouraging and enabling the launch of our Young Adults Ministry initiative through the generous grant of seed money by their RLC Foundation. We thank the Lord for our RLC friends and their partnership with us in our Lord’s ministry.

### Northwest United Protestant Church



NWUP Church has partnered with and supported Flourish Mid-Columbia in a variety of ways by providing office and meeting space and utilities for the Executive Director and for various Flourish meetings and activities in 2019-2020 – by hosting and co-leading a “ReFrame: Connecting Faith & Life” course for her church members – by providing venue space for a Flourish-facilitated retreat for Central Church staff and members. We thank the Lord for our NWUP friends and their partnership in our Lord’s ministry.

**Central Church (formerly Central United Protestant Church)**



Central Church has partnered with and supported Flourish Mid-Columbia by inviting our Spiritual Formation coaching and accompaniment for some staff and congregation members and has expressed interest in further collaboration for the blessing of their church family and local community. We thank the Lord for our Central Church friends and their partnership with us in our Lord’s ministry.

**Bethel Church**



Flourish Mid-Columbia has been blessed to have a number of Bethel Church members lead and participate in a variety of our program offerings, especially in and through our Faith & Science vocation group, activities, and events. Greg Williams, Terry Andre, and Scott Chambers et al have shared their leadership, teaching, and communication gifts in significant and meaningful ways. We are also thankful for the willingness of the Bethel Church pastor-elder leadership team to partner with Flourish in planning and preparing to host Dr. Hugh Ross for a multi-church event originally scheduled for May 11, 2020 at the Bethel campus. Unfortunately, due to COVID, this event was cancelled. However, we look forward to exploring ways for mutual encouragement and partnership with Bethel Church in the future. We thank the Lord for the Bethel Church family and for their partnership with us in our Lord’s ministry.

**Eastlake Tri-Cities**



We appreciate receiving Eastlake Tri-Cities Church support in our planning and preparation for the Dr. Hugh Ross, Reasons to Believe, public event that was to be held on May 12. Our Eastlake friends were ready and willing to provide their **Uptown Theatre** venue for our use. We hope to serve and partner with them and utilize their superb venue for events and activities in the future. We thank the Lord for the Eastlake Tri-Cities Church family and for their share in our Lord’s ministry in our community.

**Organizations, Ministries, and Institutions**

**Regent College**



Replicating the kind of quality theological education and Christian community provided and experienced at Regent College in Vancouver, BC has been an integral part of the Flourish Mid-Columbia vision and mission for, to, and in our local community. In the first three years of our existence, Regent staff members, including Dr. James Houston, Dr. Steven Garber,

and Rebecca Pousette traveled to the Tri-Cities to participate in Flourish-facilitated events focused on sharing our vision. Also, in the Fall of 2018, Flourish collaborated with Regent College to host local live webstream viewing of the Regent “Interface” lectures series on Faith and Science integration, sponsored and made possible by the Templeton Foundation. Flourish has utilized the Regent-produced, “ReFrame: Connecting Faith & Life” video course curriculum as one of our primary educational resources. Flourish Mid-Columbia exists as a kind of offspring and fruit of Regent College – serving as a form of Christian study center here locally.

### **Gather4Him Christian College**



G4HCC has supported and partnered with Flourish Mid-Columbia in a number of ways – providing venue space for our Faith & Science evening presentations and gatherings – encouraging G4H student participation in Flourish events – and inviting the Flourish Executive Director and Director of Young Adults Ministry to serve their students as faculty members, bringing Flourish resources and educational emphases to their curriculum.

### **Institute for Marketplace Transformation**



Based in Vancouver, BC, the IMT team (including Dr. Paul Stevens and David Sayson) has collaborated with Flourish Mid-Columbia by sharing their wisdom, expertise, and educational resources, including allowing Flourish to experiment with them by webstreaming a vocational discernment workshop facilitated by the IMT in Vancouver for the benefit of a small pilot group of Tri-Citians.

### **Imago Christi**



The Imago Christi arm of NOVO has partnered and collaborated with Flourish Mid-Columbia in the co-hosting of a local “Spiritual Formation Discovery Retreat” for staff and members of Central Church in Richland. Dr. Melanie Saint James, a member of the Imago Christi core team, voluntarily serves on our Flourish Board – sharing her wisdom, experience, and expertise in Spiritual Formation, among other things.

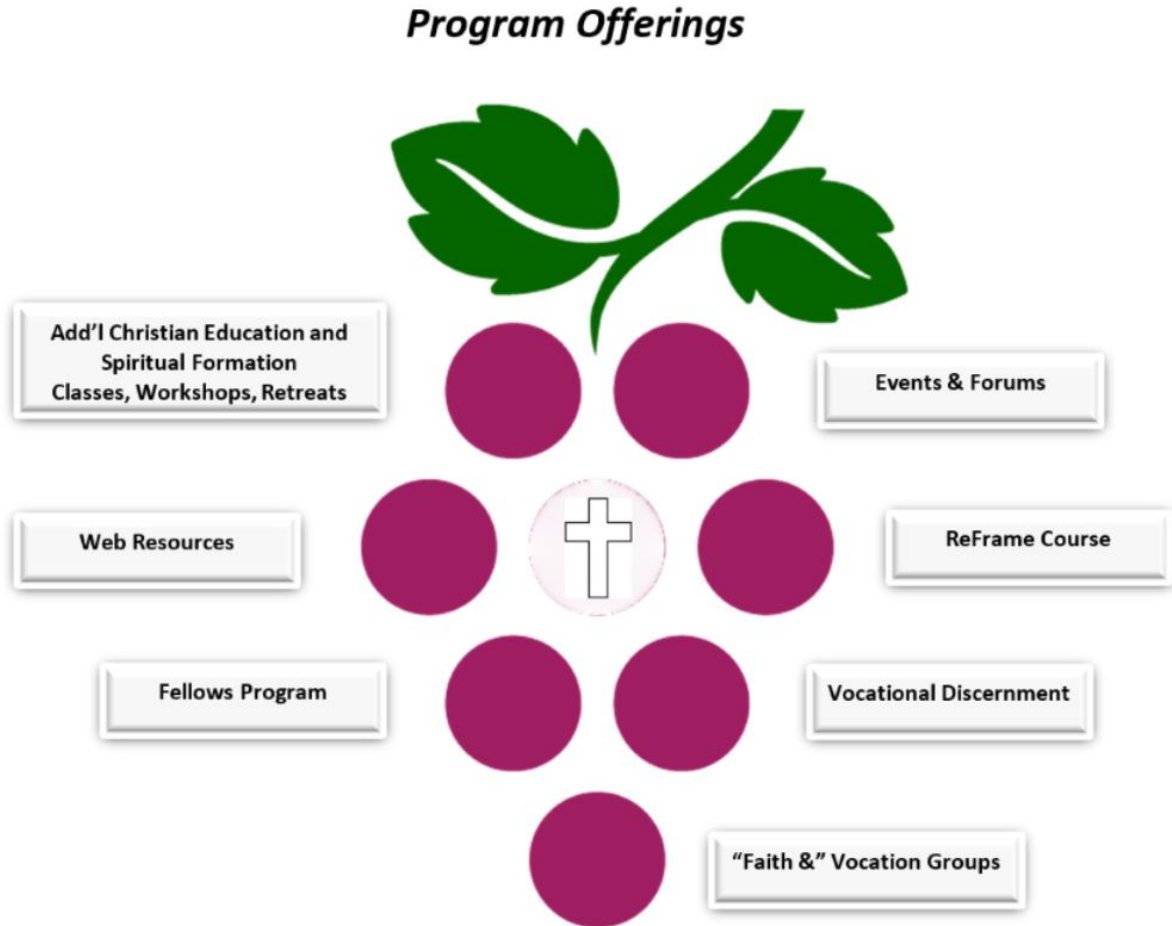
Other organizations, ministries, and institutions who have beneficially influenced, contributed to, and/or partnered with our Flourish Mid-Columbia ministry during our existence include:

- The Ingalls Creek Enrichment Center (Doug Waltar, Executive Director)
- The Denver Institute for Faith & Work (Jeff Haanen, Executive Director)
- Flourish San Diego (Dr. Geoff Hsu, Executive Director)
- Made to Flourish Network – Seattle Learning Community
- The Open Table Conference (Dr. C. Baxter Kruger, William Paul Young, John MacMurray)
- Cascade Fellows – Seattle (Dr. Uli Chi)
- New City Fellows, Raleigh, NC (Katherine Leary Alsdorf)



## Program Offerings and Activities

The vision and ministry of Flourish is being implemented and made manifest through a variety of program offerings. The offerings as originally envisioned are depicted below:



As shown, Jesus Christ and His ongoing Lordship and ministry is central. He is the way, the truth, and the life – the One who has created, who sustains, and who holds all things together. To the extent Flourish is enabled to provide any beneficial service for the flourishing of others it is entirely understood be a gracious gift of “getting to” participate, by the Spirit, in Christ’s life and ministry to and for the blessing of the world, to the glory of God the Father.

What follows is a report on the fruit, activities, accomplishments, and progress (or not) in each of the programmatic offering areas above (moving clockwise around the grape cluster diagram).

## Events & Forums



Due primarily to the COVID-19 pandemic, there were no large-scale Flourish Mid-Columbia events or forums conducted during the past fiscal year. In early 2020, the Faith & Science vocation group was finalizing arrangements to bring **Dr. Hugh Ross** of “**Reasons to Believe**” (RTB) to the Tri-Cities on May 11-12. **Bethel Church** had graciously agreed to partner with Flourish to host the May 11<sup>th</sup> multi-church gathering with Dr. Ross on their campus. **East Lake Tri-Cities Church** had graciously agreed to allow Flourish to reserve their Uptown Theatre venue for the May 12 “open to the public” gathering. However, due to the pandemic, the RTB organization understandably curtailed Dr. Ross’s travel and speaking schedule and it was necessary to cancel our May 11-12 events. Flourish looks forward to the possibility of reengaging Dr. Ross and RTB after travel and social distancing restrictions are relaxed.



## ReFrame Course



In the past fiscal year, Flourish continued to introduce and share one of its core resources entitled, “**ReFrame: Connecting Faith and Life**” – developed and published by **Regent College** in association with the **Washington Institute for Faith, Vocation & Culture**. Flourish engaged Mid-Columbians with the ReFrame course in several different ways and settings including:



- ReFrame was again incorporated into the Bible Study Methods class curriculum at **Gather4Him Christian College** in the Fall Semester of 2019. Engaging and accompanying **young adults** in the Spirit’s work to recognize, integrate, and live all of life in Christ is a key element of our Flourish vision and calling. The class was taught by the Flourish Executive Director who is a G4HCC faculty member. Below are a few remarks received from students:

### **Personal Testimonies – Gather4Him Christian College students**

- *“ReFrame has opened my eyes in a new way. It has helped me realize who I am and what I need to do.”*
- *“It opened my eyes to how the culture has influenced me and made me think more critically about the ideas that I consume.”*
- *“ReFrame provided a deeper and clearer understanding of how we find our part in God’s Story. I have been told for years that we have a part in the Story of scripture, yet I have never been told how we can truly go about finding our part -- how we can be active participants in the larger Story of life. This is exactly what the ReFrame series did for me.”*
- *“I sit here and so much of me says YES to everything that ReFrame has revealed in teaching how God works in our everyday...This series has brought so much understanding to my faith and God’s heart and where I belong in His story -- my identity.”*

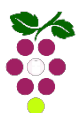
- Two G4HCC faculty/staff members (who are also members of **Sozo Church** and the **Korean Presbyterian Church** locally) took the ReFrame Course, accompanied and coached by the Executive Director.
- In early 2020, a former Tri-Citian and Boeing engineering manager, and current member of the **Renton Bible Church** was introduced to ReFrame by the Executive Director. He and a couple friends took the course. After experiencing firsthand the rich blessing of the course, he gathered and led a group of men from his church through ReFrame via Zoom last Spring. This past Summer he gathered another group of men and he has accompanied them through ReFrame. And as of the time of the writing of this report, another ReFrame group is forming to engage the course in early 2021. He and the Flourish Executive Director meet via Zoom once or twice monthly for fellowship, ReFrame coaching, feedback, and prayer.
- On March 6, 2020, the Executive Director was invited by **Gary Bush** to lead an opening devotion and to introduce Flourish and the ReFrame course to a men’s alumni group associated with the local “**Walk With Christ**” weekend spiritual retreat ministry. These alumni meet monthly at **Central Church**. Several attendees expressed interest in Flourish and ReFrame and seeds were planted for possible engagement and collaboration in the future, as our Lord may lead.
- Flourish and ReFrame seeds planted at **Richland Lutheran Church** over the past couple years have sprouted into plans to share the ReFrame course with congregation members who regularly participate in a Wednesday evening Bible study led by RLC’s lead pastor (and Flourish Board Vice-President), **Rev. Steve Ernst**. The ReFrame course will be the weekly Bible study resource engaged via Zoom from mid-November 2020 through February 11, 2021, concluding before Lent. The Executive Director will facilitate the course and Pastor Steve will participate.
- Over the Summer of 2020, several participants in the **Flourish Faith & Science vocation group** expressed interest in engaging the ReFrame course. A date and time for that course is yet to be determined.

### Vocational Discernment



Besides “ReFrame,” there were no other explicit “vocational discernment” workshops or courses offered by Flourish during the past fiscal year. That said, Flourish staff members and volunteers continue to engage personally with others in the Mid-Columbia to encourage and participate with them in “listening for, discerning, responding to and walking in God’s call” – in their homes, workplaces, and community. This way of discerning and living with one another is implicit in all Flourish interaction and accompaniment.

### “Faith &” Vocation Groups



Another type of program offering is referred to as “Faith & ...” vocation groups. The first and longest running Flourish vocation group has focused on “Faith & Science.” In the past fiscal year, Flourish staff and volunteers have launched and participated in four

other “Faith &” groups – namely, “Faith, Culture, & Worldview”, “Faith & Medicine”, “Faith & Pastors”, and most-recently, “Faith & Education.”

**“Faith & Science” Group**

Given the demographics of our Mid-Columbia region, commencing and facilitating a vocation group and conversation in the arena of science, engineering, and technology was and continues to be a high priority. Under the leadership of **Dr. Jim Morris** (microbiologist specializing in immunology, and Flourish Board President) a program planning team was assembled. In addition to holding weekly planning team meetings at **McDougall’s** over lunch, the team also held a Fall 2019 planning meeting on December 14, 2019 at **NWUP Church** and a morning prayer and discernment retreat on January 18, 2020 hosted by **Lino & Patty Niccoli** in their home. The lunchtime planning meetings were discontinued in the Spring of 2020 due to COVID-19 restriction.

In the Fall of 2019, Flourish hosted several Faith & Science gatherings as part of our “A Conversation on Faith and Science” series. On September 24, 2019, **Greg Williams**, a former Deputy NASA Administrator, spoke at **The Reach Museum** on “Space Exploration in the Apollo Era, Today, and Tomorrow.” On October 8, 2019, **Amy Evans**, a local middle school teacher and Board member of the **Ingalls Creek Enrichment Center**, delivered a presentation at the **SIGN Fracture Care Conference Room** pertaining



*“The Flourish Faith and Science group has been a most helpful, motivating place to explore the relation between Faith and Science, in the company of, and with the help of, a very broadly talented group. This mutual reinforcement has taken me beyond where I could have gone alone. I’m grateful for the conversational approach; it has opened my perspective.”*

Lino

to the faith journeys of several prominent scientists – from chemists to astrophysicists to geneticists. On October 22, 2019, **Dr. Darrol Timmons** facilitated our viewing and follow-on discussion of the film, “The Privileged Planet” at the SIGN

Conference Center. These Wednesday evening presentations were videorecorded by **Scott Johnson**, who then post-produced them and uploaded them to the Flourish Mid-Columbia website where they continue to be accessible.

The Faith & Science team, with a significant leadership contribution from **Greg Williams**, created and led a 9-week class on Wednesday evenings that was held at **West Side Church** from September 11 through November 13. The class was entitled, “Christ the Lord of Science and Creation.” Class teachers included **Greg Williams, Amy Evans, Dr. Scott Chambers, Rev. Dr. Ralph Kieneker, Mark Taylor, and Rev. Dan Wodrich**. The class presentations were recorded and uploaded to the Flourish website by Scott Johnson where they remain accessible.

A slate of Faith & Science speakers and presentations for the continuation of “A Conversation on Faith & Science” was arranged for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays of the month from February through June. **Dr. Jim Morris** commenced the series on February 25, 2020 at **Gather4Him Christian College** with a talk entitled, “*I ‘Get to’: Learning Freedom in God’s Story as a Christian and Scientist.*” The remaining slate of scheduled local speakers included **Dr. George Garlick, Steve Schlahta, Rev. Corey Smith, and Dr. Alan Waltar**. As previously mentioned, **Dr. Hugh Ross, *Reasons to Believe***, was scheduled to be an out-of-town invited speaker in this series on May 11-12. Due to COVID-19, it was necessary to cancel all but the first of the evening lectures in the series. Jim Morris’ presentation was recorded and is available on the Flourish website.

***“The Flourish discussion group in Faith and Science has brought together a group of people with varied backgrounds. Each week I have been encouraged, challenged, and enlightened as we explore aspects of our faith within the context of scientific thoughts and discoveries. The participants’ mixture of educational and religious backgrounds allows for those of us who are not scientifically or theologically trained to fully participate without watering down key components of either one. This time has been a blessing on many levels.”***

Terry

Since the arrival of COVID-19 social distancing restrictions in the Spring of 2020, the Faith & Science vocation group transitioned to meeting via Zoom on Tuesdays from noon to 1:30 pm. This weekly gathering has typically ranged from 12 to 20 people with various persons providing leadership in teeing up the faith and science “fodder” of video, audio, and book resources for our ongoing conversation. Some of the fodder has included the following:

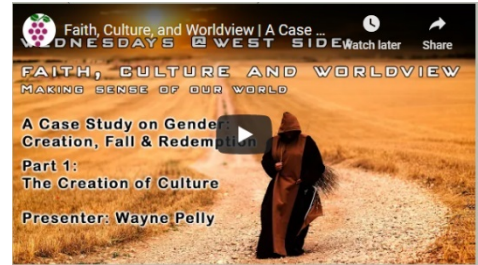
- “The “Veritas Forum” on the Coronavirus with panelists Dr. Lydia Dugdale, Andy Crouch, and David Brooks
- Bill Gates and Dr. John Fankhauser speaking about pandemic outbreaks
- Rev. Tim Keller speaking on “How do you find hope in the midst of uncertainty?”
- Dr. John Lennox speaking on his book, “Where is God in a Coronavirus World?”
- Dr. Francis Collins speaking on “Science and Faith in Pandemic Times” and at the award ceremony during which he received the 2020 Templeton Prize.
- The person of Dr. Albert Einstein and his perspectives on science and religion via Dr. Alister McGrath’s book, “The Theory of Everything (that matters)”
- Dr. Jane Goodall video interview and TED talk on anthropology and becoming human
- Dr. Katherine Hayhoe speaking on climate change
- Dr. Elaine Ecklund – a sociologist presenting research on scientists’ views on religion

**Lino Niccoli** and **Greg Williams** are spearheading development of a Faith & Science integration curriculum for sharing with young adults in the Mid-Columbia. They are beginning to engage with Liberty Christian school teachers and administration staff to explore shared interest. Also, Flourish Faith & Science vocation group members are

having conversation with Flourish Young Adults Ministry staff and volunteers about collaborative possibilities to accompany, teach, and have conversation about Faith & Science with other young adults in our community. (Read more about the Flourish Young Adults Ministry later in this report).

**“Faith, Culture, & Worldview” (FCWV) Group**

In January of 2020, Flourish was invited by West Side Church to create and lead a weekly Wednesday evening class on “Faith, Culture, & Worldview.” A teaching team was gathered, interestingly comprised primarily of persons with years of foreign mission and cross-cultural ministry experience.



Members of the group included **Wayne Pelly** (former pastor, missions elder, and teacher with Empower Ministries International in Africa); **Terry & Nancy Sullivan** (Wycliffe Bible Translators in Benin, Africa); **Scott Johnson** (formerly of Latin America Mission and Roblealto Childcare Association, Costa Rica); **Kathy Sands** (SIL Asia/Biola); **Dr. Jim Morris** (Flourish Board President), and the Flourish Executive Director. The group developed and taught the course entitled, “Faith, Culture, and Worldview: Making Sense of Our World” from January 8 through April 1, 2020. Five class

sessions were devoted to “A Case Study on Gender: Creation, Fall & Redemption” led by **Wayne Pelly**. Wayne’s class sessions were recorded by Scott Johnson and uploaded to the Flourish website. The other four class sessions

***“I have been enriched by my participation in a ‘Faith and’ vocation group...on a topic that spans several vocational and avocational interests: ‘Faith, Culture and Worldview. This group has facilitated our going deeper in our ongoing discussion of issues important to us, with group members contributing insights from their unique backgrounds. Flourish has created an opportunity for an in-depth discussion of issues in a Christian context that would be unusual in a church-based setting. My participation has been a source of insight and growth for me.”*** Wayne

were led by **Terry & Nancy Sullivan** who shared their wisdom and experience from their anthropological studies and mission experience in Benin, Africa.

Following the class, with the onset of COVID-19 restrictions, the FCWV group continued meeting weekly on Thursday afternoons to debrief with one another the curriculum and to continue exploring relevant issues together. Included in the group’s fodder for conversation were a 6-part video series by Jacques Ellul entitled, “The Betrayal by Technology” and the book, “Foolishness of the Greeks” by Lesslie Newbigin. **Dr. Robert Paul** graciously joined in the conversation (via Zoom) on one occasion to answer

questions and share insight gained from his PhD dissertation work at the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies entitled, “Towards a practical theology of mission in postmodern North America, with special reference to Lesslie Newbigin and Lamin Sanneh.”

### **“Faith & Medical Students” Group**

A small group of Christians, most from West Side Church, formed and gathered around three Christian medical students living and learning in the Tri-Cities as part of the WSU Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine program – to provide personal encouragement, support, and accompaniment to them. The Flourish Executive Director and his wife were invited to be part of the support group that met monthly with the students for a meal, conversation about the challenges, hopes, and sorrows of medical student life and the practice of medicine vocationally, and for Scriptural reflection and prayer together. The group disbanded this past summer when the students graduated and moved on from their Tri-Cities program placement.

### **“Faith & Education”**

This vocation group formed out of the Flourish Young Adults Ministry initiative commenced in May 2020 (more on that later). It became apparent early-on in the young adults gatherings that there was a preponderance of persons (young and old) either vocationally engaged in education or in the process of completing their university education to become teachers. It seemed good to those involved to break-off a group of participants to form a separate “Faith & Education” vocation group – to gather seasoned teachers with young adults nearing completion of their university degree in education and/or anticipating or recently having started their teaching profession. The initial Faith & Education leadership team has been comprised of **Amy Evans** (Middle School teacher in the Kennewick School District), **Luisa Campbell** (teacher and consultant at HomeLink in the Richland School District), **Mark Taylor** (former teacher at Liberty Christian School; current faculty member and head of the Biblical Studies Department at Gather4Him Christian College, and Director of Flourish Young Adults Ministry), and the Flourish Executive Director. The leadership team together prepares the conversation fodder and facilitates the meetings. The vocation group began by meeting twice monthly in the summer and has continued into the Fall of 2020.

## Fellows Program



A 9-month intensive “Fellows Program” has been an integral offering of “centers” for faith and work integration in other cities around the country. During the past fiscal year 2019-2020, there has been little if any explicit progress made toward establishing a Fellows Program here due to our commitment to other activities, limited resources, and the pandemic disruption and challenges we have faced. That said, this prospective program offering has shown itself to be a well-attended, beneficial course in other cities and it remains a significant element of our vision.

In the previous fiscal year 2018-2019, Dr. Melanie Saint James and the Flourish Executive Director started contacting, gathering and reviewing the curricula from other centers such as the **Cascade Fellows in Seattle**; the **Gotham Fellows in New York City**; the **New City Fellows in Raleigh, NC**; the **5280 Fellows in Denver**; **Framework Fellows** from the **Center for Faith + Work in LA**; et al. The annual rhythm for these other Fellows Programs typically involves an applicant review process in the Spring/Summer with the program from September through May.

## Web Resources



We continue to be richly blessed by **Scott Johnson** and his ongoing involvement in Flourish Mid-Columbia as our Board Treasurer and overseer of communication via newsletters, brochures, and webpages. Scott shares his skill in audio and video recording technology and applications to help capture, create, and edit Flourish-original video resources and to make them easily accessible via our website for the blessing of others. In addition, Scott is curating a growing website collection of video, audio, and print resources and recommendations. An example of one such curated resource, which was created by a sister “faith and work” organization (The Denver Institute for Faith & Work), is entitled, **“The Politics of Neighborly Love: Christian Living in a Divided Age.”** Scott was involved in its “vetting” with others in Flourish Mid-Columbia and he has extended the reach of this superb video resource and discussion guide to our Mid-Columbia community via our website. Under Scott’s leadership, we anticipate growing the number and types of resources we will make available and accessible via the web in the years ahead.



## Additional Christian Education and Spiritual Formation Classes, Workshops, Retreats



There are a wide variety of ways Flourish is being invited to personally accompany, encourage, educate and equip Mid-Columbia residents who are seeking an integration of faith, work, and everyday living. A few examples in the past fiscal year include:

- On August 22-24, 2019, Flourish collaborated with **Imago Christi** to co-host a “Spiritual Formation Discovery” retreat for some pastoral staff and church members of **Central Church**. **NWUP Church** graciously offered and shared their facilities as the retreat venue for the blessing of Central Church. **Dr. Melanie Saint James**, core team member of **Imago Christi** (and Flourish Board member) partnered with the Flourish Executive Director to plan and lead the retreat.

*“During a recent spiritual formation retreat I experienced a special time of being with God. Over the prior six months a small group of friends and pastors longing for a deeper relationship with God met with a Spiritual mentor...and in August met for a two-day retreat on “Discovering Your Spiritual Formation Journey”...During a group Contemplation practice of Abiding Prayer, I experienced an extraordinary silent time with God. While the retreat and previous studies, in general, prepared me for this time, the actual encounter was quite unexpected and nearly indescribable – but I will try. I felt deep, deep peace, tranquility beyond understanding, not empty but restful, no fear or trepidation...The deep peace was so extraordinary that I could not keep it for myself. And this is why I am sharing my experience with you. I understand that this was a special encounter and may not happen to everyone right away. My hope and prayer are that you have a similar encounter with the trinity on your journey toward growing deeper with God.*

Tom

- On September 20-22, 2019, the Flourish Executive Director led a **Richland Lutheran Church** Fall Men’s Retreat held at the **Stonewater Ranch** near Plain, WA. The retreat was entitled, “Encountering Jesus: Stories of Transformation.” **Dr. Jim Morris** (Flourish Board President) and **Marty Evans** (Flourish volunteer) participated in and shared their testimonies at the retreat, as well. The Executive Director was invited to help plan and lead an RLC Spring Men’s Retreat that was to be held in May 2020, but the retreat was cancelled due to COVID-19.
- After being blessed by Flourish accompaniment in their use of the ReFrame resource, **NWUP Church** leadership requested assistance in choosing suitable resources for their Fall 2019 and Winter 2020 adult education and discipleship offerings. The two video-based curricula recommended and selected were: *“Godspeed: The Pace of Being Known”* – developed by **Matt and Julie Canlis** of Wenatchee – and *“Surprised By Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church”* by **N. T. Wright**.

## Young Adult Ministry Initiative Launched!



During the past fiscal year, with the encouragement and generous financial support and seed money received from the **Richland Lutheran Church Foundation**, Flourish launched our Young Adult Ministry initiative – for folks post-High School, College, and Young Career-age. This ministry is responsive to our Lord’s call to “*tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD, his power, and the wonders he has done.*” (Psalm 78)



On May 1, 2020, **Mark Taylor**, a Denver Seminary grad, part-time youth pastor at Central Church, and Biblical Studies and Theology faculty member at Gather4Him Christian College, was hired in a part-time capacity to help us launch this ministry. As Director of our Flourish Young Adults Ministry, Mark is spearheading and overseeing our initiative to personally engage, accompany, and equip young adults (post High School, college, and young career age) in our region to integrate their faith, work, and everyday living in Christ. The initiative is being carried out in partnership with local churches, ministries, and institutions. Below are a few words from Mark about our Young Adult Ministry initiative...

*It has been a joy to join in the ministry of Flourish Mid-Columbia in 2020. My task is to help shape and guide our efforts to engage with young adults and journey with them through the questions and challenges of the world in which they find themselves. This has proven difficult—as 2020 has in many ways been more challenging than anyone expected—but it has also been rewarding. I have been blessed especially by the following:*

- *Working with a team of gifted and passionate leaders who share a common vision and camaraderie.*
- *Participating in an organizational ethos that values people, that pursues personal influence over numerical metrics, and that thinks critically not just about what we do but also the way we do it, seeking to follow the Jesus way and not just achieve his supposed goals.*
- *Interacting with young adults who share their lives with us and gratefully receive what God gives us to share with them.*
- *Having my voice heard and my contribution valued within the Flourish community.*
- *Fostering respectful conversations about ideas and issues that matter for our lives and for the life of the world.*

*We have sought to develop community among small groups of young adults and around common topics of interest (current issues, Scripture, other books, vocation). This has led to the formation of “The Well”, which we envisioned as a gathering place for young adults to find community and receive living water to quench their soul’s thirst. There is also a triad of young adults who meet regularly to read and discuss important books. Finally a vocation group for educators spun out of our young adult community; this “Faith and Education” group has taken on a life of its own and is blessing those who participate.*

*Looking to the future, we hope to expand our work in a few specific ways. One is to build partnerships with other young adult communities in hopes of supporting and collaborating in the work they’re doing. One form this might take is to create a forum for regular conversation about pressing issues and perennial questions of life, faith, culture, etc. A second, related, aim is to form friendships with young adults who are disillusioned with religion and thereby create space for respectful listening and mutual learning. We pursue this goal prayerfully, asking the Lord to show us his way of loving our neighbors. Third, we want to continue offering a community where young adults can find friendship and encouragement as they walk in the way of Jesus.*

**Mark Taylor**

Mark has already gathered and is leading a passionate and gifted team of adult leaders from several Tri-Cities churches – some of which do not have sufficient church leadership and/or resources to personally disciple folks of this age. Team members include **Amy Evans, Steve & Sandra Critchlow, Scott Johnson,** and **Kristin Jackson** from **West Side Church,** **Amanda Daniels** from **Richland Lutheran Church,** and **Mark** from **Central Church.** These team members are together seeking to discern and participate in the Spirit’s work of forming Christ in young adults. Together they are exploring ministry opportunities, developing and articulating goals and plans, and they are walking alongside and serving young adults in Jesus’ way for their blessing and growth to maturity in Christ. Mark reports to the Executive Director, and together they are accountable to the Board.

Here is a note received from one of our young adult friends who joined us at “The Well” during the past year,

***“The Well’ and Mark have made a meaningful difference in my life during these difficult times. They have connected me with a community when I was lonely during the quarantine, and we have had many interesting and insightful conversations about topics both biblical and secular.”***

**TK**

### **Administry Accomplishments in Fiscal Year 2019-2020**

- Renewed office space “lease” with **NWUP Church** through September 2021. We are so blessed by the generosity and neighborliness of NWUP Church and their gracious provision of office and meeting space, Wi-Fi, and utilities free-of-charge to Flourish. Thank you!
- Purchased six large bookshelves for the Flourish library of book resources in the main office.
- Purchased a locking fireproof two-drawer filing cabinet for safeguarding corporation records.
- Purchased Zoom videoconferencing license allowing two simultaneous meetings and hosts.
- Obtained liability, D&O, and property insurance policy with **Church Mutual Insurance.**
- Created and distributed periodic Flourish newsletters.
- Continued to upgrade and develop the Flourish website.
- Established separate QuickBooks Online accounting “classes” to receive and track donor-restricted funds and expenses.

## FINANCIAL REPORT

The Lord has richly blessed Flourish Mid-Columbia through the gracious giving of a growing number of financial donors – both individuals as well as churches and foundations. We are truly thankful for these donors and their incredible generosity and partnership with us.

In addition, our Lord has provided for us with wise and skilled persons with gifts in financial accounting and bookkeeping to safeguard and steward the resources He is providing us with. Flourish is deeply grateful for the following persons who have advised and helped us with various aspects of our tax reporting, accounting and bookkeeping needs:

- Scott Johnson, Board Treasurer
- Brandon Oswalt, Oswalt Financial Services
- Wayne Vinson, CPA, Spokane
- Diane Pratt, Finance Office staff at West Side Church

I want to note that the Flourish Board has approved two “classes” of accounts for income and expenses. The first is the “General” class. This class was created at the inception of Flourish and is associated with “unrestricted” income and expenses. The second class is entitled, “Young Adult Ministry.” It was established by the Board in April 2020 to allow for and track donor/grant-restricted income and expenses associated with the new Flourish “Young Adult Ministry” initiative launched in May 2020.

Flourish Mid-Columbia utilizes QuickBooks Online accounting software for its financial bookkeeping and reporting. Scott Johnson and Brandon Oswalt partner closely together in recording and monitoring donation and grant income and expenses. **Brandon has prepared and Scott has reviewed and approved the financial statements appended to this Annual Report to the Board, copies of which are available upon request.**

Dan Wodrich  
Executive Director, Flourish Mid-Columbia