

PRESIDENT'S report

A TIME TO GROW

Last week, as I walked outside, I noticed new buds sprouting up and the sounds of birds excitedly filling the air. The signs of spring are approaching and I would like to take this opportunity to talk to you about seasons of growth.

Ecclesiastes 3 reminds us that “There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens: a time to plant and a time to harvest.”

Every season has a purpose, but growth doesn't happen by accident — it happens when we are faithful in the season we're given.

I believe that in 2026, God is providing us with a time to grow, an opportunity to grow deeper in our faithful stewardship to Him and His church.

Now when we hear the word stewardship, many people immediately think about money. But stewardship is much bigger than that.

Stewardship is about how we manage everything that God has placed in our hands — our time, our talents, and our treasure.

First, we grow when we steward our time.

Did you know that the average lifespan in the United States is just about 80 years? The average person spends 26 of those 80 years sleeping; 11.4 years are spent on screen time; 1.4 years are spent commuting to jobs that consume 13.2 years of our lives; but only 1.2 years, or 1.45 percent of our lives, are spent attending church.

I encourage you to invite God into every moment of your life — into both the secular and the sacred activities of your life. This includes your commute, your career, and your calling to walk with Him — to intentionally make Jesus the center of the entirety of your life.

Second, we grow when we steward our talents.

I believe that God is calling each of us to use our unique skills, abilities, and passions to serve His purposes in our church and community.

I want to invite you and your church to reach out to your community in creative ways this year to Serve One More. The Conference is here to help you to do just that by providing ideas, funding, and support through our Serve One More initiative.

Thirdly, we grow when we steward our treasure.

Jesus taught that those who are faithful with little can be trusted with much and that where your treasure is there will your heart be also.

God doesn't ask us to give because He lacks something. Rather, He invites us to give because giving grows us. It stretches our faith, it aligns our hearts with His purposes, and it reminds us that everything we have comes from Him.

I am genuinely thankful for the dedicated faithfulness of God's people in Upper Columbia Conference who have returned a faithful tithe and offering to fulfill the mission He has called us to accomplish together — to share the Good News of the Gospel in the context of the Three Angels' Messages.

Since 2015 our tithe has increased by 25 percent, but unfortunately, our average employee costs

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DAVID JAMIESON

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ACTIONS TAKEN AT 2.26.26 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Administration update

- Cade Bolin, pastoral intern at Spokane Valley and West Plains Churches, shared a devotional about the importance of the Trinity.
- David Jamieson, UCC president, gave a president's report about the results of a recent survey regarding strategic priorities for the conference. In addition, an update was given about the 2026 camp meeting convocations planned for Walla Walla, Wenatchee, Spokane Valley, and Republic.
- Conference office staff participated in a Serve One More event — packing emergency buckets for community members and performing random acts of kindness in the city of Airway Heights.
- Eric Brown, UCC vice president for administration, provided a report from the secretariat office.
- UCC membership increased in 2025 by 0.3%.
- In 2025, more than 34 churches are categorized as growing or multiplying as compared to 26 churches in the same category in 2024.

Financial update

- Allee Currier, UCC vice president for finance, shared a financial report.
- Walla Walla Eastgate Church paid off its revolving fund loan almost 9 years early; Pasco Riverview paid off its loan 18 years early.
- December year-to-date tithe showed an increase of 3.8%, making 2025 the second-highest tithe ever received by UCC.
- The additional tithe, combined with UCC operating well under budget, helps address the 2025 year-end projected budget shortfall.
- The Conference continues to demonstrate financial resilience, despite ever-increasing employment costs mostly due to Washington Minimum Salary Thresh-

A TIME TO GROW...

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increased by 50 percent which caused us to have to make some reductions.

Yet despite this challenge, God is still moving in our Conference. In 2025 we were blessed with one of the highest number of baptisms during the last ten years.

But can you imagine what could happen in Upper Columbia Conference in 2026 when we steward well together in every aspect of our lives.

More lives could be changed, more needs could be met, more ministries could be strengthened, and there could be more impact beyond our church and school walls.

old, inflation, and rising insurance costs.

- The 2026 budget was presented. Financial projections estimate a \$1.3 million shortfall for 2026 and a \$2.7 million shortfall for 2027.
- Sandi Bowman, manager of ABC Christian Bookstore, gave highlights on College Place ABC and the efforts there. Spokane ABC ended 2025 with a profit, though College Place ABC ended the year with a loss.
- Both ABC stores continue to implement suggestions from town hall meetings.

Education update

- Adam Littell, UCC vice president for education, presented an education report.
- Several schools throughout the conference hosted Christmas programs that were open to the public, sharing the message of the birth of Christ with others.
- PJ Deming, principal of Upper Columbia Academy, shared an update regarding exciting events happening at UCA. A large number of students have recently indicated a desire to give their lives to Christ.

Other actions

- It was voted to recommend the following individuals to serve on the North Pacific Union Nominating Committee: Pastor Teddy Shupe, Erna Marquez, and Dennis Burke.
- It was voted to approve an enabling action for the personnel committee to issue a call for the following positions:
 - Inchelium/Kettle Falls/Northport
vacant November 2025
 - Chewelah/Deer Park/Spokane North View
vacant March 2026

During this year, we have invited our pastors and elders to share a conference-wide stewardship emphasis in our churches to focus on growing every aspect of our stewardship.

I believe that when we choose to be faithful in this season, God can and will bring incredible and miraculous growth — in us, through us, and beyond us.

As we step into Spring 2026, it is my prayer that your faith will grow deeper, your joy will overflow abundantly, and that your life will be a faithful testimony to God's goodness and grace through your time, your talents, and your treasure.

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