

So You Think You Can Dance?

By Rev. Sandra Hasenauer, associate executive director

A Bible Study on Ephesians 4:12-13

2013-2015 Ministry Focus "A Time to Serve" Year 2

12 To equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, 13 until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ. (*Ephesians 4:12-13, NRSV*)

12 To train Christians in skilled servant work, working within Christ's body, the church, 13 until we're all moving rhythmically and easily with each other, efficient and graceful in response to God's Son, fully mature adults, fully developed within and without, fully alive like Christ. (*Ephesians 4:12-13, The Message*)

Words to Ponder

The popular television reality show "So You Think You Can Dance" (Fox Network) follows the development of young dancers as they move through auditions, cuts, and several weeks of performances on live television. Some dancers start out strong but fade as they hit styles they're not accustomed to dancing; others start out with a lot of room for improvement but grow in technique and performance as they meet the challenge of each week, working with different choreographers, partners, and genres. The show provides the opportunity to watch dancers blossom as they practice, challenge themselves, and accept the guidance of a multitude of choreographers and the feedback from the judges. When you follow the show from beginning to end, you can often see a clear difference in the dancer from the time she or he first auditions to the final episodes of the competition. One way to know that a dancer's skills have improved? How well he or she dances with another, or "partners." The more experienced, skillful dancers move easily together, making clear physical differences such as body size seem meaningless as they work intricate steps with one another. Whoever their partner is, and whatever style of dance they're assigned for a week, they succeed together as they learn to trust one another,

balance one another, and use their bodies to show the meaning of the music.

The Message version of Ephesians 4:3 uses the words "until we're all moving rhythmically and easily with each other, efficient and graceful in response to God's Son...." What a beautiful image. The Message wording makes our faith and our unity (see the NRSV translation of verse 3) feel like a dance. The more challenges we face, the more unfamiliar situations we find ourselves in, our skills and gifts are honed to match. As the dancers express the meaning of the music using their bodies, our bodies in action in the world express the meaning of our faith for all to see. Our partnerships, our unity in Christ, become expressions of trust, balance, and a deep connection to that music of faith.

(You may want to watch a selected dance from the show "So You Think You Can Dance." You can find them on YouTube.)

Questions for Reflection:

- Do you like to dance? Do you dance well or do you have "two left feet?" How do you feel when you dance?
- "Words to Ponder" describes our Christian unity as a dance. Think about or discuss this metaphor: What elements of being a dancer can also apply to being a Christian? What elements of partnering in dancing can also apply to Christian unity?
- This is the second year of our two year ministry focus, "A Time to Serve." What does this biblical reflection suggest to you about serving Christ?