

ARTICLE FOR COUNTRY GAZETTE

October 6, 2004

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Orting United Methodist Church

The golden honey sweet days of October are here, made even sweeter by the knowledge that they will soon be followed by the cold drizzle of November. But we won't think about that now. There is nothing more beautiful than a sunny fall day in Orting with the pumpkins set in rows in the fields and Mount Rainier glowing in the background. The yellow orange leaves hold on a little longer, drawing all they can of the trees' goodness before they let go, give themselves to the wind and swirl to the ground.

Letting go is an autumn theme. I can think of some things I need to let go. I can get caught up in doing too much and forget to appreciate the small joys that so quickly pass by. The smile of a friend, the question of a child, the dream of moon hanging above the mountain.

I can think of some things we as a culture need to let go. Our one-up-man-ship and hard hitting focus on violence that comes out in movies and video games. Even "Christian" video games can't get away from it.

Jim Taylor, a pastor in the United Church of Canada writes: ."

We all know that secular video games are hideously violent. Players destroy opponents by beating, bashing, shooting, decapitating, crushing, exploding, or tearing them limb from limb. Christian video games claim to be different. They decimate their foes more cleanly. They use spiritual weapons that include *soul disks* and *Trinity blasts*. Or they can *smite* their opponent with *a ball of liquid holy energy that vaporizes the bad guys*. I'm not making this up. That's a direct quote from a Christian software company."

Jesus said those who live by the sword will die by the sword and he told Peter to put away his sword, even in the face of death. Nationally the week of October 17-24 is designated as the Week Without Violence. Can we let go of our violence and learn to treat each other with kindness, to be tolerant of differences and approach each other as friends? It is a new kind of life that Jesus calls us to that looks beyond our self interest to the good of all.

Letting go is an autumn theme. We have enjoyed summer's warmth and long days of light. We have absorbed all it could offer us. Now we are called to something else that has to do with release of our grasp on things, letting go of fear and trusting the wind and the process of change, trusting that God has bigger plans for us than destroying our world and each other. God's wind of peace is blowing in our land.