



Congregational News

From FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Corvallis, Oregon

Vol. XLIV, No. 31

September 9, 2005

WELCOME BACK CHILI COOK-OFF!



This year's Welcome Back Event will be on *Sunday, September 18*. The event will be a chili cook-off and will be accompanied with music by **Emily Chi's** Asparagus Quartet. The socializing and music will begin immediately following our church service with the food to follow shortly after. Child care is provided.

In order to make this successful however, we need chili cooks! If you are not a chili maker but are able to provide a dessert, please do. If you can prepare a batch of chili or a dessert for the event, please contact **Eileen Milligan** (757-7756) or family_milligan@yahoo.com. There is no charge for the meal, which will also include cornbread.

Adult Forum begins the new year **OUR CHILDREN, OUR FAITH**

A strong, inquiring, and compassionate faith—that's what we want for our own children and all the children of the church. But can faith be taught? And how? What can parents do to help their children grow spiritually? What can the rest of us do to help parents? What resources are out there to help? For the next two weeks, *Septem-*

ber 11 and 18, **Liz** and **Ryan** will address these important questions in the Adult Forum. This week, Liz will share some of the research available about how children learn to be religious and what we can do to help. On *September 18*, Ryan will share specific resources for family-based religious observances and activities. This class will be of particular interest to parents of younger children; however, since all of us have promised in baptismal covenant to nurture the children in our midst, this is a subject of concern to the whole church. Please come!

THIS SUNDAY

Adult Forum: "Our Children, Our Faith," first of two parts (*see left*), at 9:30 in the Meeting Hall

Scriptures: Exodus 14:19-31
Matthew 18:21-35

Sermon: "A Lens on Our Humanity"
Elizabeth Oettinger

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK*Elizabeth Oettinger*

Dear Friends,

Like the rest of you, I have been riveted by the reports and images of Hurricane Katrina. We are a country of unsurpassed resources, and yet the problems and dislocation caused by Katrina are enormous and will take months and years to solve. Because this disaster taxes us so greatly, I find myself with a new appreciation for those who work in disaster relief in parts of the world with an unreliable infrastructure, less money, less personnel, less everything.

It is important that we keep the victims of Katrina in our thoughts and prayers. It is important as well that we reach out with the more concrete evidences of our support. In this week's newsletter, we are rerunning last week's article on how to send money through Wider Church Ministries to help in the disaster [*page 3*]. I went onto the website of Church World Service earlier this week. I was reminded there that money is more helpful than actual physical supplies (blankets, sanitary supplies, etc.) because the economies of scale of the large relief organizations allow them to purchase what is needed exactly when it is needed and at lower prices.

I want to make a plea here that the money we give to hurricane relief should, if possible, be "over and above" money. It should not replace our normal charitable giving. In the wake of the September 11th tragedy, local food banks, medical clinics, shelters, and other donation-funded agencies around the country saw dramatic drops (often between 25-35%) in the contributions that provided their basic support, causing significant cut-backs in services. People reallocated their contributions rather than giving more. But the reality is that most of us can afford to give more; we can and should extend our generosity in this time of heightened need rather than just reallocating it. Otherwise, the ripple effect of the hurricane will damage lives far away from the Gulf Coast. Along with our financial contributions, Ryan and I are looking into ways that this congregation can take an active personal role in helping with this disaster. Maybe we can help resettle a family of evacuees (many are going to need to be resettled for six months to three years). Maybe after this initial phase of clean-up, we can send a work party to help rebuild homes for the poor. If you hear of opportunities, please let us know.

We are a congregation that has been richly blessed; together we can find ways to use our gifts to bless the lives of others.

I believe in your generosity!

Liz

WATCH FOR IT: The new **2005-2006 Activity Directory** will be out *October 2!*



Middle and High School youth are invited to gather at the church from 4:30-6:30 p.m. this Sunday afternoon, *September 11*, for our youth group kick-off. Join us for

games, planning, pizza and other fun things. Bring a friend if you would like and see all your youth group friends that you missed over the summer! Questions? Call **Ryan** at the church or e-mail at rylamb@yahoo.com.

CHURCH SCHOOL BEGINS THIS SUNDAY

Our Christian Education classes begin anew on *Sunday, September 11*, with programs for all ages. Classes for children and youth will take place in the education wing and our Adult Forum will take place in the Meeting Hall. A registration table will be set up beginning at 9:15 a.m. in the foyer. Please register all children and youth so that we can have updated information on all who participate in our classes.

This year our classes are meeting in the following configuration: Nursery-age 3; Pre-School and Kindergarten; First-Fifth grade; Middle School; and High School. Once again we are using the "Seasons of the Spirit" curriculum which offers a wonderfully interactive approach to Christian Education. We hope to see everyone on Sunday morning beginning at 9:15. Friends and neighbors are always welcome! Questions? Contact **Ryan** at the church (757-8122) or at rylamb@yahoo.com.

NEW MEN'S SPIRITUALITY GROUP TO MEET

Calling all First Congregational Church men: Join us on *Thursday, September 22*, at 7:30 in the Fireplace Room for a gathering for study, fellowship, and prayer. This group is forming on the heels of the Lenten men's group but is still evolving. Men of all ages are invited to gather and take part in shaping our next steps. Questions? Call **Ryan** at the church or email at rylamb@yahoo.com.

Hurricane relief **HOW YOU CAN HELP**

The Central Pacific Conference of the UCC offers these suggestions to those would like to help the many people affected by Hurricane Katrina:

- Pray for people who live in communities affected by hurricanes.
- Send gifts payable to **First Congregational UCC**, marked for "Emergency USA" with the request they be sent through the Conference office to Wider Church Ministries.
- Send gifts payable to **Wider Church Ministries**, marked for "Emergency USA" to the Office for Global Sharing of Resources, Wider Church Ministries, 700 Prospect Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44115.

Our Thoughts and Prayers

... are with the family of **Billie Gretz**, long-time member of this church, who died on August 27. Several years ago, Billie moved to Colorado to be near her son, Darrell. His address is 171 S. Benton St., Lakewood, CO 80226. Billie was a volunteer at Senior Meals for 25 years; gifts to this organization in her memory would be appreciated. A memorial service will be held at a future time.

... are with **Kim**, and sons **Logan**, and **Seth Hannigan-Downs** and their family. **Steve Downs** was killed in a car accident on September 1 in California.

... are with **Nancy William** and her family on the death of Nancy's mother, **Florence Garber**, in Spokane on September 4.



QUILTERS COMFORT AMERICA

I am coordinating a local effort to assist the Red Cross in making quilts to give to hurricane survivors who have been relocated to Houston, TX. There are approximately 25,000 Americans who have been displaced with little or no personal belongings.

As a local coordinator I am organizing work parties to make quilts and collecting donations of quilting supplies and bedding. **We need donations of 100% cotton fabric and batting (preferably polyester)**. As part of this effort the Red Cross is

also accepting donations of clean used sheets and blankets.

I have scheduled two work parties in Gatton Hall. They will be on *Sunday, September 11*, from 12:30-6:00 and on *Wednesday, September 14*, from 10:00-2:00. **No sewing skills required!** If possible, please bring a sewing machine, thread, cutting mat, rotary cutter, quilting rulers, pearl cotton, embroidery floss and/or circular needles to tie quilts. We can put anyone to work. **All are welcome!**

Please contact me at 754-9045 to volunteer, make donations, and/or to ask any questions.

Peggy Carrick

INVITATION TO PEACE CONFERENCE IN ALBANY

The Albany Mennonite Church, 3405 Kizer Ave. NE, Albany, is offering a weekend conference with J. Denny Weaver, Professor of Religion at Bluffton University. Titled "The Scandal of the Nonviolent Gospel: Theological Reflections on the Atonement," the conference explores these questions among other: What is the relationship of peacemaking to the message of the Gospel? Why did Jesus die? How do theories of atonement influence our faith perspective?

Registration is \$10 for the conference which begins at 6:30 pm. on *Friday, September 30*, and concludes on *October 1*. The church office has brochures with schedule and registration information, or you can contact Larry Eby at breneby@aol.com or (541) 812-1498.

**REMEMBERING AND RESPONDING
TO 9/11:
A TAPESTRY OF MUSIC &
SPOKEN WORD**

On *Sunday, September 11*, at 2:00 p.m., ArtCentric presents a performance with Absolute & guests. The event, produced in conjunction with ArtCentric's 9/11 Memorial Tapestry exhibit, will weave a tapestry of music and spoken word. Absolute, joined by guest musicians, speakers, and readers, will honor lives lost and explore reactions to 9/11. The music, which ranges from a traditional South African song to contemporary folk music from the United

States, includes two original compositions: Absolute member Julie Williams' song, "Last Sweet Breath," and guest artist Susan Peck's "Requiem," both written in response to the events of September 11. Jim Gouveia will share his experiences of being at Ground Zero soon after the attack, and the Reverend Gretchen Woods of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Corvallis will offer closing words.

This event is free and open to the public, though donations, which will be gratefully accepted at the door, will help support the artists and the programs of ArtCentric.

popcorn eucharist (concluded)

the hilarity began as the kernels started popping, turning in an instant to fluffy pure white morsels. some decided to leap from the bowl. quickly, doña guadalupe covered the pot with the tortilla plate. we could all hear the familiar pop pop pop under the lid. i say familiar but that familiarity was really only for those of us who have popped popcorn before. doña guadalupe could not contain her curiosity and so she lifted the lid to find out what was happening. at this point the cooking process was in fast forward. kernels came shooting out, hitting people in the face, bouncing off bodies, and falling into the sand of the fire box where they were quickly grabbed by the eager fingers of those gathered around the merriment. there was quite a bit of screaming and laughing at this point. she quickly re-covered the pot. but popcorn will burn if it is not stirred. so they finally worked out that doña guadalupe with two small cloths would hold the top slightly open (giving the bowl the appearance of a clam) while virgilio stuck the spoon through the open mouth for a quick few swirls.

soon the first batch was done and it was quickly whisked off the fire, the top removed, and the bowl covered with a small clothe. this managed to contain the still popping kernels, which kept trying to escape. we waited. bit-by-bit the noises underneath the cloth grew farther and farther apart. we all sat on the edge of our seats as we thought the popcorn was ready and then once more there would be a pop. finally we were convinced that it had popped its last pop and the popcorn was poured into a mid-size canasta (reed basket). don virgilio then walked around with the treat to the spectator who were, by now, anxious and curious. that was the best popcorn i have ever had.

two more batches were made and each came out better than the last. through it all though, laughter and conversation warmed us all just as much as the fire and the crunchy kernels. we all shared together that night, in maybe a little unorthodox of a way, a eucharist that many will not forget for a long time...

pablo



Congregational News (USPS 128-820)
 PERIODICALS POSTAGE PAID AT CORVALLIS OR
 Postmaster: Send address changes to:
 Congregational News, 4515 S.W. West Hills Rd.
 Corvallis OR 97333-3925. Published weekly
 except twice a month in July and August by

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UCC
 4515 S.W. West Hills Road
 Corvallis, OR 97333-3925

Office Hours: 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
 Office Phone: 757-8122
 Facilities Coordinator: 753-2106



Susan Wickes, Editor
 e-mail: sbwickes@comcast.net
 Home Phone: 754-0117

Copy deadline for next issue of newsletter is Tuesday noon, September 13.

WEEKLY CALENDAR

Saturday, September 10

**9:00 a.m. Church Council
 retreat, Meeting Hall**

Sunday, September 11

9:00 a.m. Sanctuary Choir
 9:30 a.m. C E classes
 10:30 a.m. Worship
 (following) Youth Committee,
 Room 2
 (following) Outreach & Evangelism
 Committee, Library
 (following) Adult Education
 Committee, Room 8
 12:30 p.m. Quilt workshop (p. 4)
 4:30 p.m. Youth groups pizza
 and planning
 7:00 p.m. Read & Feed, Peterson

Monday, September 12

5:30 p.m. Basketball
 7:15 p.m. Mission Board.
 Conference Room
 7:30 p.m. Boy Scout Troop 1

Tuesday, September 13

9:00 a.m. Staff

Noon Lectionary class

Wednesday, September 14

7:15 a.m. Breakfast Group
 10:00 a.m. Quilt workshop (p. 4)
 5:30 p.m. 40+ Basketball
 7:15 p.m. Sanctuary Choir

Thursday, September 15

11:45 a.m. Lunch Group
 7:00 p.m. Girl Scout Troop 142

READ & FEED MEETS SUNDAY

The discussion of *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* by Maya Angelou begins at 7:00 this *Sunday, September 11*. The meeting will be held at Joni Peterson's home. Dessert follows.