



# Congregational News

From FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
Corvallis, Oregon

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November 18, 2005

## Thanksgiving Sunday

This Thanksgiving Sunday, *November 20*, we will have an offering of food for the annual Community Holiday Food Drive during worship. Bring commercially canned or packaged food which will be brought forward during the interit. Cash or checks (made out to "Community Holiday Food Drive") for the purchase of turkeys and other necessities are also welcome! The Bell Choir will play the offertory.

We will also dedicate the 2006 pledges during worship, so be sure to bring yours with you. Shepherds: Please check with the members of your flock.

### DINNER THIS SUNDAY

For our all-church Thanksgiving dinner after worship this *Sunday, November 20*, please bring a salad, vegetable dish or dessert—enough to serve 10-12 people. It would be helpful if your dessert were already cut into 10-12 pieces for easier serving. Turkey, stuffing, potatoes and gravy are provided.



There are always a number of dishes left behind after an all-church function; please be sure all dishes AND serving utensils are labeled with your name.

### PHOTO OP!

Don't miss the chance to have your photo updated (or posted) on our photo board. **Mark Thackray** will be taking pictures at the far end of Gatton Hall this *Sunday, November 20*, after worship.

## THIS SUNDAY

**Adult Forum:** "Can Faith Wipe Out Fear?" We live in difficult times; all around us there are appeals to our fears. How do we handle our fears? Is fear the opposite of love? Do we let it paralyze us? Join us this Sunday for a 20-minute video "Can Faith Wipe Out Fear?" and the follow-up discussion, led by the Rev. **Lon Rycraft**.

**Scriptures:** Ezekiel 34:11-16  
John 12:1-3

**Sermon:** "Extravagant Thanksgiving"  
Elizabeth Oettinger

Dear Friends,

I still think of it as the worst Thanksgiving ever. I was 20 years old, a student at Yale, and I had a brand new boyfriend who lived in Vermont and was going home for the holiday. It was too young a relationship for me to go home with him, but he had told me that he would call some time on Thanksgiving. I, along with several other “strays” whose families were far away, had been invited to the Chaplain’s home for an afternoon of games and Thanksgiving dinner. Thanksgiving morning came; I was invited to go on a walk with some of the other students left in the dorm. I declined so that I could sit by the phone. No phone call. Morning turned to afternoon. It was time for fun and games at the Chaplain’s. I sat by the phone. No call. At 5:00, I reluctantly left my room, and arrived at the Chaplain’s just in time to eat. I fussed because I was away from the phone, and barely stayed through dessert so that I could get back to my dorm room in case the phone rang. I didn’t partake in the general hilarity, didn’t appreciate the fine meal and the good company. Back at my room at last, I cut off my parents with the briefest of greetings when they called to wish me a Happy Thanksgiving. I kept my vigil by the phone until late at night, and then tumbled into bed exhausted, angry, and frustrated. I had not spent one minute of my day feeling thankful about anything.

It took more than a decade for me to realize that it was not the boyfriend who had spoiled my Thanksgiving; it was my own doing. I had chosen to focus all of my energy and all of my attention on what was missing in my day, and to ignore all that was good. And it made me miserable.

Once when I was visiting the home of a church member, I encountered a sticky note posted by the bathroom sink. “Practice gratitude,” it read. Its owner had obviously posted the note in that spot to be a daily reminder. Most of us could use a similar reminder. Gratitude is a quality not tied to any particular life circumstance; it is instead a spiritual discipline that we as Christians are encouraged to bring to all of our living. Sometimes it’s easy, sometimes not. But like any discipline, the more we practice, the better we will get at it.

So I invite you to give thanks this Thanksgiving. Even if you’re sad. Even if you’re tired. Even if your least favorite relative is seated next to you throughout the long Thanksgiving meal. Give thanks for the blessings that are yours and enjoy whatever can be enjoyed in your day.

And may God’s abundant grace be present around all of our tables.

**Liz**

### CHILDREN'S CHOIR NOTICE

This *Sunday, November 20*, the Mary's Heart Children's Choir will practice after the Thanksgiving dinner. Choir members should go to the front of the food line and then bring their food to the special table in Gatton Hall, marked for them. After dinner, the choir will move to the Music Room for rehearsal.

### LOOKING AHEAD TO ADVENT *Advent Festival*

The Advent Festival will be held at 9:30 on *Sunday, November 27*, in Gatton Hall, and will continue after the service. Activities this year include: potato-print decorating, cookie decorating, sponge-painting Christmas gift bags, and Advent wreath making. Children and youth will make their own Sunday morning name tags



### *Hanging of the Greens*

Greens will be hung on Saturday afternoon, *December 10*. Sign up this Sunday to participate in activities for all ages and a simple meal.

### *Bright Gifts*

Tags identifying recipients will be hung on a Christmas tree in the foyer on *November 27*. Take one or more, purchase a suitable gift for the person described, and bring the unwrapped gift(s) to worship on *December 11*.

### HEIFER PROJECTS OFFERS ALTERNATIVE GIFTS

November has begun and that means the **Advent Festival** is not far away. As usual, there will be a table at the Festival for those who would like to give alternative gifts through Heifer Project. If, however, you will be away over Thanksgiving weekend or otherwise won't be at church on *November 27*, you can arrange for Heifer gifts by contacting **Nancy Klingeman** before then.

### WOULD YOU LIKE TO SERVE ON A CONFERENCE COMMITTEE?

The Central Pacific Conference is asking for names of people who would be interested in serving on a Conference Committee. It's a great opportunity to interact with UCC folks outside our own congregation. Please call the church office (757-8122) to indicate your interest.

Options include: **Synod Delegates** (travel and attendance costs are paid by the Conference; term is four years, covering two General Synods); **Board of Directors-At-Large** (serve with elected members as ex-officio members; three-year terms); **Nominations Committee** (works with local congregations to find members to serve the Conference; three-year terms); **Ministry Teams** (meet at least three times a year, setting their own times and places; three-year terms). Ministry Teams are: **Administration Ministry; Covenants Ministry; Justice and Ministry, Local Church Ministry; and Wider Church Ministry.**

## BUY A 2006 CHURCH CALENDAR

Only a few of **Mark Thackray's** gorgeous 2006 church calendars are left. They will be available for purchase this Sunday (\$20). If you miss out and would like one, we will be starting an order list. If 25 or more people are interested, we can do another printing run. Proceeds benefit the youth mission fund.

## HOLIDAY INVITATION FROM PFLAG

PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbian, Gay, Bi and Transgendered People) will hold a Holiday Potluck on *Monday, November 28*, at 6:30 (note time change from regular time) All people, gay or straight, who celebrate diversity are welcome.

Join us at First United Methodist Church, 1165 NW Monroe Ave., Corvallis, in the Martha Room in the Basement; enter by back parking lot. Please bring: a dish to share that feeds 8 to 10 people and your own place setting. Drinks will be provided.

Our speaker after the dinner will be **Anthony Terndrop** from the Pastoral Counseling Center. Questions? Call 231-9598



## GATTON HALL ENTRANCE MAKE-OVER IS UNDER WAY

Doesn't the Gatton Hall entrance look nice with the new retaining wall

and all? And this is only the completion of the first phase. In the spring the second phase will see the planting of small trees and shrubs. Kudos to **Steve Ham** and his crew for a job well done and to **Betty Starker Cameron** for making this a reality. Also, for all you bike riders out there, a bike rack area will be installed on the left side to complete the project.

The ninety-five year old woman at the nursing home received a visit from one of her fellow church members.

"How are you feeling?" the visitor asked.

"Oh," said the lady, "I'm just worried sick!"

"What are you worried about, dear?" her friend asked. "You look like you're in good health. They are taking care of you, aren't they?"

"Yes, they are taking very good care of me."

"Are you in any pain?" she asked.

"No, I have never had a pain in my life."

"Well, what are you worried about?" her friend asked again.

The lady leaned back in her rocking chair and slowly explained her major worry.

"Every close friend I ever had has already died and gone on to heaven. I'm afraid they're all wondering where I went."

## QUILTS FOR HURRICANE KATRINA UPDATE

Thanks to the generosity of church members and friends, our two work sessions in September yielded 23 completed quilts.

I just received an e-mail from the American Quilters Society. "Quilters to the Rescue" has been a resounding success. Quilters have contributed 5,000+ quilts as of today – all going to the victims of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Quilts have gone to Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Texas, Tennessee, Kentucky, and New York.

A recently received note from the Pascagoula, Mississippi group:

*I cannot tell you [all the quilters] how thrilled they [the quilts] have made their new owners! Most of the remarks have been "You mean they made these for us?" to "What a blessing this is!"*

*The quilts are just beautiful and we have enjoyed opening them up and matching personalities with quilts. We have lists of children or older adults who need warmth, and also parents. So as we get a pinky one for a girl we call someone with a girl; as we get a cowboy one or one more boyish we call families with boys. It has been a fun job just distributing your work.*

*It is a wonderful gesture that you [all the quilters] have done and a great service!!! We are very appreciative of all the hours you have spent making them. People*

*spent making them. People want the ones with a name in the corner of who made it or that it was for a survivor -- that makes it more personal. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts!!*

*–First Baptist Church*

Thank you for helping us make a difference!

**Peggy Carrick**

## CRÈCHE EXHIBIT OPENS

The eleventh annual Corvallis Community Crèche Exhibit will be held from *December 1*, from 5:00-9:00 p.m.; *December 2*, from 2:00-9:00 p.m.; and *December 3*, from 2:00-9:00 p.m. A half-hour concert is held on each night of the exhibit; they begin at 7:00 in the chapel of the host church: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints at 4141 NW Harrison. Everyone is invited to attend and encouraged to display their Crèches. Both the exhibit and the concert are free and the event is handicapped-accessible.

For additional information, contact Mary Jackson (753-8158) or [mary.jackson@comcast.net](mailto:mary.jackson@comcast.net).

## Our Thoughts and Prayers

... are with **Dale Kirk**, whose brother who died in Ontario, Oregon, on November 11.

... are with **John Gantt**, our new interim Central Pacific Conference Minister, as he begins his ministry and leads us through this transition period.



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Copy deadline for next issue of newsletter is Monday, November 21.

**WEEKLY CALENDAR**

*Saturday, November 19*  
 10:00 a.m. Thanksgiving set-up  
 1:00 p.m. Turkey carving  
*Sunday, November 20*  
 9:00 a.m. Sanctuary Choir  
 9:30 a.m. C E classes  
 10:30 a.m. Worship  
 Noon Bell Choir  
 (following) **Thanksgiving dinner**  
 (following) Children's Choir  
 1:00-6:00 Scrapbook making,  
 Room 3  
 4:30 p.m. Middle School youth  
 6:45 p.m. High School youth  
*Monday, November 21*  
**Newsletter deadline**  
 5:30 p.m. Basketball  
 7:00 p.m. Youth Committee,  
 Conference Room  
 7:30 p.m. C E Board, Conference  
 Room  
*Tuesday, November 22*  
 9:00 a.m. Staff

Noon Lectionary class  
 7:00 p.m. Adult Confirmation  
 class, Library  
**NO Church Council**  
*Wednesday, November 23*  
 7:15 p.m. Breakfast Group  
 5:30 pm. 40+ Basketball  
 5:00-7:00 Mary's Heart rehearsal  
**NO Bell Choir**  
**NO Sanctuary Choir**  
*Thursday, November 24-Thanksgiving*  
**Office closed**  
*Friday, November 25*  
**Office closed**

**NEWSLETTER ALERT!!**

Because of the Thanksgiving holiday, we will be doing the next newsletter a day early. Please submit your hard copy by **Monday noon, November 21**, for the *November 25* issue of *Congregational News*. E-mails may arrive any time Monday afternoon. Thanks for your help.

**Susan Wickes**