



Congregational News

From FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Corvallis, Oregon

Vol. XLV, No. 6

February 10, 2006

A GATHERING OF YOUNG ADULTS

Who are “young adults”? The UCC defines young adults as those who are of post-high school age up through age 30. Does that describe you? Any and all young adults are invited to join **Ryan** in the Fireplace Room on *Sunday night, February 19*, at 7:00 for a time of food (good desserts!!), fellowship, and fun. Questions? Contact Ryan at the church or at rylamb@yahoo.com

SHROVE TUESDAY PANCAKE SUPPERS - *February 28*

Plan to sign up this Sunday to participate in an informal pancake supper on *February 28*. Shrove Tuesday (also known as Fat Tuesday or Mardi Gras) was the day when one made a meal to use up all the lard in one's home because Lent was a time when no animal products were eaten. At First Congregational Church we have created our own version of Shrove Tuesday which gives us an opportunity to share a simple pancake sup-



per with 6-8 people. This is a wonderful way to visit with a few Congregational friends in someone's home. You may sign up to be a host (we need 4-5) or to be a guest. Supper groups will be formed and those participating will know what group they will be a part of by *February 26*. If you have questions, stop by the table in the foyer after church or call **Marsha Gulick** (754-8367.)

WILL THERE BE SOUP 'N' BREAD?

Yes, following worship this Sunday!

THIS SUNDAY

February 12

Adult Forum: A 20-minute video from the “Questions of Faith” series, called “What Kind of Power Does God Have?” will be followed by a discussion led by **Lon Rycraft**. Join us!

Scriptures: 2 Kings 5:1-14
Mark 1:40-45

Sermon: “What Do We
Choose?”
Elizabeth Oettinger

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

Elizabeth Oettinger

Dear Friends,

It's time to think about Lent again! Lent begins on March 1, and on page 3 in this newsletter, there is a listing of our Wednesday night schedule for dinner, worship, and classes. This year we're trying a somewhat altered schedule. The staff wanted to find a way to do several things. First, Steve Zielke wanted to teach a class. Second, we wanted to focus both Lenten classes and choir on one night, so as to give the largest possible "clientele" for dinner fellowship and worship. That meant trying to put together a schedule that would allow choir members to have some class options beyond choir. So this year we have two different kinds of classes: "flash" classes that will run from 6:45-7:25, and full-length classes that start at 6:45 and run a full hour and a half. Anyone who takes one of the three "flash" options will be out in time to go to choir practice at 7:30.

Yes, it is a little complicated. But we hope that an increased level of participation in the dinner and stronger singing leadership in worship will make the complexities worthwhile. So think now about spending Wednesday evenings in Lent with us. It's a heck of a deal: dinner for \$2 a person and a chance for mid-week worship and learning. We hope to see you all there.

Have a thoughtful week.

Liz



All forms, along with a \$100 deposit for Western Regional Youth Event are due on *February 15*. **Ryan** will be mailing forms Monday at noon, so please **make sure your forms have been turned in to Ryan's box by this weekend** so that he can get every registration mailed in. WRYE takes place in Colorado Springs beginning on *June 22* and we will return on/about *June 29*, after a brief mission extension. This is the priority deadline so it is important that we get forms in early to reserve our spaces!

There will be no youth group this weekend as Ryan is out of town on vacation. Youth are needed to help prepare and serve "Stone Soup" on *February 21*, so let Ryan know if you are available!

INTERESTED IN SERVING ON A BOARD OR COMMITTEE?

The Nominating Committee would like to hear from you if you have questions or would like to offer your services. Call **Nancy Klingeman** (753-3350) or the church office.

Our "newest" Board is the Endowment and Memorial Funds Board, for-
(continued on page 5)



Wednesdays in Lent

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, *March 1*. Again, we hope to provide opportunities for conversation, worship and study during this special time in the Christian year. Call the church office to enroll in classes or sign up this Sunday.

On Ash Wednesday, our traditional soup and bread supper is at 5:30 (donation), followed by a brief service of penitence and the imposition of ashes at 6:20. At 6:45, classes begin. Child care is available beginning at 6:15. You are welcome at any and all events.

On each subsequent Wednesday in Lent through *April 5*, the schedule will be the same:

5:30 p.m.	A simple supper (with vegetarian alternative), Fireplace Room
6:15 p.m.	Child care begins
6:20 p.m.	Worship in the Chapel
6:45-7:25 p.m.	Flash classes (see below)
6:45-8:15 p.m.	Full-length classes
7:30 p.m.	Sanctuary Choir

"Flash" classes 6:45-7:25 p.m.

Experienced Bell Choir: Ringers will rehearse pieces on Wednesday evenings during Lent, beginning March 1 (Ash Wednesday). This choir will perform during Holy Week.

Choral Skills 101: Music Director Steve Zielke wants to turn us all into singers! For those uncertain of their singing skills, he will spend 45 minutes on Wednesday evenings improving your music reading skills, your voice quality, and your confidence. Participants are welcome to stay after class to join the choir for Lent and Easter. They say they are a friendly group and welcoming even of beginners.

Writing Our Faith: taught by Liz Oettinger. Do you love stories? Do you like to write? This class is an attempt to help us appreciate the ordinary sacredness of our lives through hearing the sacred stories of others, and writing in response to those stories. On Liz's sabbatical, she had the opportunity to read several contemporary authors' spiritual autobiographies. Each class will include a 5-10 minute reading from one of those works, 30 minutes for your own writing, and time to share at the end. The class will include a bibliography of suggested readings, as well as suggestions for longer writing assignments.

Sin, Forgiveness, and Grace: taught by Ryan Lambert. What is sin and why do we fear the word? What is forgiveness? Are we capable of offering it to others and to ourselves? Where do we find grace? We will read Barbara Brown Taylor's "Speaking of Sin: The Lost Language of Salvation" as well as pieces of Desmond Tutu's "No Future Without Forgiveness," and focus our discussions on the nature of sin, its impact upon us, models for expressing forgiveness, and the role of grace in our lives. The book costs for this class are \$10.95 and can be paid through the church office. The book order will be placed on *February 22*, so please let Ryan know by then if you want to purchase the book.

Voluntary Simplicity: The Just Peace Committee offers this course, developed by Northwest Earth Institute, to motivate us to examine and transform some personal habits and values toward long-term sustainability. Discover a way of life that is outwardly simple and inwardly rich. Course description: The meaning of simplicity; Living more with less; Your money or your life; Do you have the time?; How much is enough?; Swimming against the tide; The practice of simplicity.

BOARDS, COMMITTEES *from p. 2)* merly known as the Foundation. Last year, the Foundation terminated its status as a separate entity and became the fifth standing board of the Church. It is responsible for the receipt, investment, and distribution of property of the church's designated and undesignated funds; administering the church's planned giving program; and for ensuring that the church honors donors' intentions for their gifts.

STANDING CHURCH COMMITTEES

The **Stewardship Committee** is responsible for developing a process for the Annual Stewardship Drive and for encouraging all members to make and meet their commitments of time, talent and treasure.

The **Nominating Committee** is re-

sponsible for recruiting persons to fill the vacancies on Boards and Committees which occur each year as one-third of all positions rotate off at the end of May.

The **Personnel Committee** is responsible for coordinating the formulation and review of position descriptions for all salaried employees; reviewing and updating personnel policy statements; establishing and overseeing policies and procedures for regular staff evaluations; establishing procedures for employing and terminating all employees; hearing grievances and assisting in resolving such; and evaluating the long-range staff needs of the congregation.

The **Just Peace Committee** serves as a resource to the Church Council, Boards and Committees, providing information and guidance in the areas of spiritual witness, education and theology, stew-

ardship and resources, and community witness. The Committee oversees the infusion of Just Peace issues into the life of the whole church family.

HELP UCC

HABITAT VOLUNTEERS

Bill Merriam, son of **Larry** and **Kathie**, will be going to Ecuador on a Habitat for Humanity project in late April, along with others from UCC churches in the metropolitan area. He will be the only representative from the Wilsonville UCC “Frogpond” church, where he is a member. Any help toward transportation would be appreciated; call the Merriams (752-5308).

CITY CHARTER FORUMS

Corvallis City Charter revisions are being discussed in an effort to make the charter language more inclusive and to update the city language to match its diversity goals. As this church is well aware that discrimination in Oregon exists, it is a very important exercise in moving non-discrimination forward when language about valuing diversity is publicly expressed in a City Charter.

Please look at your calendars and make an effort to have our open and affirming voice heard. The First City Charter Forum on this issue is scheduled for *Thursday, February 16, 7:00 p.m.* at the Wilson School Library. This is the session to discuss diverse identities and will be facilitated by Alex Johnson and Terry Ross. It is critical that we get

folks out to attend this meeting and make sure sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression are in the plan. Please pass this information on to others.

The second forum will be on *Thursday, February 23* and will be on Affirmative Action. The third is on the *February 27* and will be on Access to Services and Governance.

February Mission Offering

GRACE CENTER & DIAL-A-BUS

“What is Grace Center?” you may ask. **Grace Center** is “day care for adults” – a safe place for adults to spend the day, have a meal, and receive care from attentive care givers. Working families needing a place for family members to be cared for look to Grace Center for that assistance.

Dial-A-Bus serves the clients of Grace Center as well as a large number of seniors and disabled people in the Corvallis community. The cars and vans of Dial-A-Bus are seen all over Corvallis taking riders to the grocery store, to congregate meals, to jobs, and to appointments of all kinds. Supporting these two local organizations through our Mission Offering helps them continue their fine and much-needed work.

Our Thoughts and Prayers

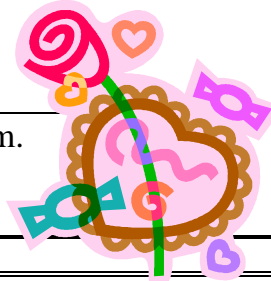
... are with **Frank** and **Pamela Rinkus**, after Frank’s cancer diagnosis;

... and with **Susie Nelson**, recovering from knee surgery on February 7.



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Copy deadline for next issue of newsletter is Tuesday noon, February 14.

WEEKLY CALENDAR

Sunday, February 12

- 9:00 a.m. Sanctuary Choir
- 9:30 a.m. C E classes
- 10:30 a.m. Worship
- (following) Soup 'n' Bread**
- (following) Learning Bell Choir
- 4:30 p.m. Middle School youth
- 6:45 p.m. High School youth
- 7:00 p.m. Read & Feed, Ballard

Monday, February 13

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

Tuesday, February 14

- 9:00 a.m. Staff
- Noon Lectionary class
- 7:00 p.m. Adult Confirmation

Wednesday, February 15

- 5:30 p.m. 40+ Basketball
- 7:15 p.m. Sanctuary Choir

Thursday, February 16

- 11:45 a.m. Lunch Group
- 7:00 p.m. Girl Scout Troop 142
- 7:30 p.m. Men's Spirituality

READ & FEED MEETS

Read & Feed will meet on *Sunday, February 12*, at 7:00 p.m. at the home of **Nancye Ballard**. The discussion will cover the last part (page 167 to the end) of Karen Armstrong's *Battle for God*.

PRACTICE OF HOPE WORKSHOP

Keeping the window of hope open is essential in both a personal and community sense. Yet authentic hope cannot be based on denial so we must prepare to embrace the news of the day, even if it is depressing. This free workshop, conducted by **Jeanne** and **Dick Roy**, co-founders of the Northwest Earth Institute, will explore the "practice of hope" and how it may be helpful today and in times ahead.

The workshop is on *Wednesday, February 15*, at 7:15 p.m. at the Oddfellows Hall, 223 SW 2nd Street, Corvallis.