



Congregational News

From FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Corvallis, Oregon

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February 17, 2006



MARDI GRAS

Come and enjoy an authentic New Orleans-style Mardi Gras on *Saturday, February 25*: Cajun/Creole dinner and drinks, live bands, dancing and a silent auction. This evening is sponsored by St. Mary's to benefit **WE CARE, Benton Habitat for Humanity, and Linn Benton Food Share.**

We encourage everyone to participate. Tickets are \$50 per person and can be purchased at Albright and Raw, Inside/Out Garden Visions, Grassroots Bookstore, Border's, or through **Joni Peterson** (929-5718).

SIGN-UPS CONTINUE FOR SHROVE TUESDAY, LENT

There is still time to add your name to the list of people participating in the Shrove Tuesday pancake suppers and the Lenten classes. Classes will be part of the Wednesday evenings in Lent (*March 1-April 5*), which begin at 5:30 with a simple supper. Following that there will be worship in the chapel from 6:20 to 6:40; classes begin at 6:45 and end either at 7:25 or 8:15. A complete schedule with class descriptions can be found in

last week's newsletter (*February 10*), available on the church's website [www.ucc-corvallis.org]; or at the sign-up table this Sunday. You can also call the church office for information.

GUEST MUSICIANS, NEW MEMBERS THIS SUNDAY

We welcome new members to our congregation during worship this *Sunday, February 19*. We are also happy to have **Justin Yun**, violin, play for our service, accompanied by **Rebecca Jeffers**, and to have **Myles Criss** at the organ this week while **Kristin** is away.

THIS SUNDAY

February 19

Adult Forum: **Gretchen Morris** will speak about her visit to China in the fall of 2005.

Scriptures: Isaiah 43:18-25
Mark 2:1-12

Sermon: "Pardon the
Interruption"
Ryan Lambert

Dear friends,

Have you ever been made aware of an issue or idea and then found yourself virtually unable to walk away from it? That has been my recent experience concerning both the prevalence of mental illness and the difficulty that communities have in addressing its many forms and repercussions. Seemingly, this issue is everywhere I look. For example, Liz brought a profound message about mental illness into our worship service during the sermon just a few weeks ago. I have also been made aware that a good friend of mine has spent some time in the hospital as he tries to control his own mental illness. In another instance during the Earl Lectures, a workshop was dramatically altered due to the mental illness of one of the attendees. Finally, during a meeting I had on Tuesday afternoon the issue of Corvallis's ability to care for the chronically mentally ill was raised as a key part of a conversation. Seemingly this issue is all around, yet it remains largely a taboo topic in our culture.

Mental illness of course has many forms. Chronic depression, bi-polar disorder, and schizophrenia are some of the well-known diagnosis that are included under the umbrella of mental illness. All of us, I suspect, have been touched in one way or another by mental illness, yet even in the church we often steer clear of talking about the wide-ranging effects of these psychological conditions. I am not sure whether it is fear, embarrassment, or ignorance that leads us to try to bury these issues, but whatever the reason I wanted to lay some groundwork for an important educational series that we are hosting during Lent.

The Adult Education Committee has chosen to focus on various issues around mental illness during the Adult Forums throughout the month of March. These Forums will include persons sharing first hand experiences of their families' struggles with mental illness, a look at community and governmental responses, a look at theological rationales for confronting mental illness and caring for each other, and a wider panel discussion of the issues around mental illness. This column is essentially an advertisement for the March Forums because I believe this series is so important in the life of our church and our community. More and more faith communities are becoming key players in crafting how a community cares for those in need. But our fears often get in our way. This series is aimed at helping us to increase our knowledge and combat our fears so that we may be a more informed and faithful voice for the needs of our community.

Please plan ahead to attend these important adult education forums during the month of March!

Many blessings, **Ryan**

HELP STONE SOUP FEED CORVALLIS HUNGRY

Next *Tuesday, February 21*, is First Congregational's turn to prepare Stone Soup at West-M. If you are available to help cook or serve that day, please let **Ryan Lambert** (757-8122) or **Pat Johnson** (619-4943) know.

MANY NEW TITLES IN LIBRARY

There are over 300 new titles in the church library including an entire shelf of fiction. Currently, books on display are in honor of Black History month. Come in and have a look! Many thanks to **Marion Whitney** for her help in cataloging and processing these new books.

YOUNG ADULTS REMINDER

All young adults (post-high school through age 30) 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.

Cheers

... for our youth and their supporters who bought Souper Bowl sandwiches! Profits produced a donation of \$84 for Community Outreach.

SOUP 'N' BREAD THANKS

Thanks to the folks who made last Sunday's Soup 'n' Bread possible: **Joan** and **Jack Overturf**, **Kim Thackray**, **Cynthia Janes**, **Carol Huntington**,

Kathie Merriam, **Ineka Estabrook**, **Elizabeth Pearce Smith**, the **Goldner** family, **Brian Lee** and **John Murphy**.

THE "LION OF THE COURTROOM" RETURNS

"Clarence Darrow: The Search for Justice" will be performed on *Saturday, February 25*, at 7:00 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in Corvallis. Gary Anderson portrays attorney Clarence Darrow, famous for his involvement in the Scopes "Monkey" Trial. Tickets are \$10 at the door. For information or ticket reservations, all 754-3470.

COMMUNITY THANKS

From COI: I want to thank First Congregational for your recent, generous donation of \$1,713 to support our work with the poor in our community. All of us at Community Outreach, Inc. value our continuing close relationship with you. We appreciate your joining us in helping our low-income, uninsured, and homeless neighbors as they overcome obstacles to helping themselves and others lead healthy, productive lives.

Richard Donovan, Executive Director

From Vina Moses: Your very generous donation [\$1,855.30] to the Vina Moses Center makes it possible for Vina Moses to continue to help and serve those in Benton County who need assistance.

Christine Duffney, Director



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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, February 21.

WEEKLY CALENDAR

Friday, February 17

Winter Weekend
 (through Monday)

Sunday, February 19

- 9:30 a.m. C E classes
- 10:30 a.m. Worship
- (following) Learning Bell Choir
- 7:00 p.m. Young Adults,**
Fireplace Room

Monday, February 20-Presidents' Day

Office closed

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

Tuesday, February 21

- 9:00 a.m. Staff
- Noon Lectionary class
- 7:00 p.m. Trustees Board
- 7:30 p.m. Spirit Quest

Wednesday, February 22

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

Thursday, February 23

- 11:00 a.m. Spirituality Group

Our Thoughts and Prayers

... are with the churches and communities that have been affected by the string of arson-caused fires that have burned twelve Baptist churches over the last couple of weeks.

Reminder
SEEKING JUSTICE IN HEALTH CARE WORKSHOP

Nine Corvallis area churches (including ours) and the Mid-Valley Health Care Advocates are sponsoring a workshop on **Seeking Justice in Health Care** on *Saturday, February 25*, from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 2945 NW Circle Blvd., Corvallis. Registrations (and \$5 fee) need to be turned in to our church by February 21. Contact **Caroline Zaworski** with questions.