



Congregational News

From FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Corvallis, Oregon

Vol. XLV, No. 9

March 3, 2006

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

This year's World Day of Prayer, will be held *Friday, March 3*, at Grace Lutheran Church (Kings and Harrison) beginning with coffee at 9:30 a.m. The worship service begins at 10:00 a.m. The USA Committee of World Day of Prayer celebrates with the women of South Africa who wrote this year's service: "Signs of the Times."

World Day of Prayer is an international movement observed by 170 countries; it is an opportunity for informed prayer and prayerful action. The women of South Africa remind us that they live in a post-apartheid era through God's grace. They invite everyone to "take courage in the risen Lord who is the sign of all times."

CRAFT FAIRE OFFERS

ART RAFFLE

Spring Fling Craft Faire is coming *March 18!* In addition to the arts and crafts available at the vendors' booths, there will be a raffle of some wonderful



art pieces. Get your tickets this coming *Sunday, March 5*, and on *Sunday, March 12* in Gatton Hall. Tickets are \$3 each or four for \$10. The raffle will be held the day of the faire. You need not be present to win—but we hope many of you will already be at the faire! If you need more information, please contact **Jody Eleveld** (758-4371 or eleveld@comcast.net).

THIS SUNDAY

March 5

Adult Forum: The first of a month-long series on mental health issues, this Sunday's program is titled "Mental Health and Our Church: Living with Mental Illness." An introduction by **Elizabeth Oettinger** will be followed by personal stories from **Molly Chambers, Christine Storm** and **Steve Lucker**.

Scriptures: Genesis 9:8-17
Psalms 25:1-9
Mark 1:9-15

Sermon: "Solitary Confinement"
Ryan Lambert

Dear Friends,

We have entered into the season of Lent, the liturgical season of the church that encompasses the forty days and six Sundays leading toward Easter. As you know, Lent is known as a time of prayerful preparation as we journey toward the Holy Week, and traditional observances include penitential prayer, fasting, and charitable giving. Often the focus of Lent centers on “giving up” something as a way of preparing the mind and soul to be made whole on Easter, when we celebrate the risen Christ.

Contemporary Lenten observances take many shapes, but often they center around altering habits and dedicating time for prayer and worship. This is a good thing, but I do think that sometimes in our Lenten observances we get caught up in the rigidity of altered behavior. Although Lent is something of a transient time period as it is always moving a bit on the calendar, it is always a wonderful time of year in the Northwest. For in the Northwest I am aware that it is during Lent that the rebirth of plants and emergence of new colors happen as the dormant cycle of winter ends and we enter into spring. There is nothing that is quiet or penitential about this process as nature is already beginning to scream of new things happening in purple buds emerging in our yard. The dividend of the winter rains is beginning to be seen all around us. Nature then provides us with a note of encouragement for our Lenten journey, a reality that I think speaks to the most important aspect of Lent: awareness.

Lent is not ultimately about how many cups of coffee (or cans of Pepsi) you don’t drink this year. We engage in Lenten disciplines not because we want to punish ourselves, but because we want to become more aware of God’s presence in our lives. Perhaps by altering our behavior we ritualize our awareness of God during this season. Lent is about the blessed relationship we have with God and about our desire to actively nurture that relationship. And so we pray and fast, seek relief from our sins, and study. Perhaps we give up something or even add something to our lives so that we are changed during Lent, always in an effort to more fully know God. This year we are seeking to build wells for those in need, but we are also being called into prayer, into awareness of budding trees and emerging flowers, and as always into constant awareness of God’s presence with us. It is Lent, and some things change, and some do not.

Blessings for your colorful journey through Lent!

Ryan

BELL CHOIR UPDATE: The Learning Bell Choir has finished for the season. The regular Bell Choir will rehearse on Wednesdays at 6:45 p.m.



UNITED CAMPUS MINISTRY AT OSU

You are invited to join in a celebration of ministry as we install the Rev. **Leah McCullough** as our newest Co-Director and Campus Minister with the United Campus Ministry at Westminster House. We will gather this *Sunday, March 5* at 3:00 p.m. at Westminster House (corner of 23rd and Monroe). Join us for a joyful community celebration followed by time for conversation and refreshments.

Timothy Stover, Campus Minister



The **Middle School** and **High School** youth groups will gather at the **Thackray** family home (4728 NW Inger Place) on *Sunday afternoon, March 5*, to watch the Academy Awards. Plan to arrive around 4:45 to fill out your ballots. Prizes will be awarded for the best-dressed person and the person who correctly predicts the most awards. A pizza dinner and drinks will be provided, but please bring a snack to share. The awards are scheduled to end around 8:00 p.m. See you there!

HEALTH COMMITTEE REPORT

The "Justice in Health Care" was on Saturday, February 25. First Congrega-

tional members joined nine other churches to hear more information about how the current U.S. health care system costs all of us too much. We gained tools and heard from Oregon leaders who are working in coalitions to reform health care issues in Oregon. We want to bring these tools and proactive information to the rest of our congregation.

The next health committee meeting will held on *Sunday, March 5* right after worship in the church library. We have three new business items on the agenda:

1) Liz will talk with us about how our fairly new committee may begin to work with the Diaconate and Evangelism Committee.

2) Justice in Health Care—Choose activities we want to make happen and develop our plan.

3) If there is time, we're beginning to write our mission statement. It may be a helpful guide as we choose our projects.

Old Business: Preparing our homes/families for disaster.

We welcome all who may be interested in joining us to keep our congregation informed and ready to take care of ourselves and advocate for vulnerable people with very little resources to secure their health care.

Eileen Marma
753-0540

WANTED: Two HEPA filter machines for Circle of Hope. If you are able to donate one, please call **Eileen Marma** (753-0540).

EXPERT TO SPEAK ON SUICIDE TERRORISM

Robert A. Pape is a military strategist, Professor of Political Science at the University of Chicago, and Director of the Chicago Project on Suicide Terrorism. He will speak on “Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism,” which is also the title of his recent (2005) book.

Dr. Pape will examine alternative explanations of what motivates individuals to commit suicide terrorist acts. His findings are surprising.

This program will be presented at First United Methodist Church, 12th and Monroe, Corvallis, at 2:00 p.m., *Thursday, March 9*. He will also speak at the University of Oregon in the evening. The talk is sponsored by the Willamette Valley Forum, a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization devoted to bringing knowledgeable speakers to Western Oregon; also OSU’s Political Science and Liberal Studies Departments, the Political Science Department and the Oregon Humanities Center at the University of Oregon, Beyond War of Lane County, and the Peace and Justice Committee of the First United Methodist Church of Corvallis.

MEMORIAL FOR ROLLIE SMITH

Many will miss **Ralston Smith**, long a cheerful activist for justice and compassion in Corvallis and statewide. Rollie served on our school board, City Council, Education Services District, and

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, worked with Westminster House, NAACP, and PFLAG, and helped to move his church, First United Methodist, to be a Reconciling Congregation (Open and Affirming). His memorial service begins there at 2:00 this *Sunday, March 5*.

Thanks

... to **Marion Whitney** for this piece of an Ann Weems poem for the start of Lent:

Just when we were beginning
to enjoy the play
the stagehands came out
and dismantled the manger.
From its wood
they built a cross,
What kind of drama is this
anyway?

The happy ending wasn’t
an ending after all,
but just act 1.

CARDV THANKS

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your contribution of \$1,040.00 to the Center Against Rape and Domestic Violence (CARDV). Your generous support of our efforts to help those fleeing domestic and sexual violence is greatly appreciated.

May your home be filled with peace and joy always.

With heartfelt thanks,

Nancy O’Mara, Executive Director

JUST FOR LAUGHS

A woman was trying hard to get the ketchup to come out of the jar. During her struggle the phone rang so she asked her 4-year-old daughter to answer the phone "It's the minister, Mommy," the child said to her mother. Then she added, "Mommy can't come to the phone to talk to you right now. She's hitting the bottle."

A 6-year-old was overheard reciting the Lord's Prayer at a church service: "And forgive us our trash passes, as we forgive those who passed trash against us"

A little girl was sitting on her grandfather's lap as he read her a bedtime story. From time to time, she would take her eyes off the book and reach up to touch his wrinkled cheek. She was alternately stroking her own cheek, then his again. Finally she spoke up, "Grandpa, did God make you?"

"Yes, sweetheart," he answered, "God made me a long time ago."

"Oh," she paused, "Grandpa, did God make me too?"

"Yes, indeed, honey," he said, "God made you just a little while ago."

Feeling their respective faces again, she observed, "God's getting better at it, isn't he?"

Terri asked her Sunday School class to draw pictures of their favorite Bible

stories. She was puzzled by Kyle's picture, which showed four people on an airplane, so she asked him which story it was meant to represent.

"The Flight to Egypt," was his reply.

Pointing at each figure, Ms. Terri said, "That must be Mary, Joseph, and Baby Jesus, But who is the fourth person?"

"Oh, that's the Pontius-pilot."

The Sunday School teacher asks, "Now, Johnny, tell me frankly do you say prayers before eating?"

"No sir," little Johnny replies, "I don't have to. My Mom is a good cook."

A little boy was attending his first wedding. After the service, his cousin asked him, "How many women can a man marry?"

"Sixteen," the boy responded. His cousin was amazed that he had an answer so quickly.

"How do you know that?"

"Easy," the little boy said. "All you have to do is add it up, like the Bishop said: 4 better, 4 worse, 4 richer, 4 poorer."

A little girl became restless as the preacher's sermon dragged on and on. Finally, she leaned over to her mother and whispered, "Mommy, if we give him the money now, will he let us go?"



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, March 7.

WEEKLY CALENDAR

Friday, March 3

10:30 a.m. World Day of Prayer
 (Coffee at 9:30)

7:30 p.m. Bridge Group

Sunday, March 5

9:00 a.m. Sanctuary Choir

9:30 a.m. C E classes

10:30 a.m. Worship

(following) Health Committee,
 Library [see page 3]

**3:00 p.m. Installation of Leah
 McCollogh, West-M**

4:45 p.m. Middle and High
 School youth groups,
 Thackrays' [see p. 3]

Monday, March 6

5:30 p.m. Basketball

7:30 p.m. Boy Scout Troop 1

Tuesday, March 7

9:00 a.m. Staff

Noon Lectionary class

6:15 p.m. Worship Committee

6:30 p.m. Outreach & Evangel-
 ism

7:30 p.m. Diaconate

7:30 p.m. Personnel Committee

Wednesday, March 8

1:30 p.m. A D Circle [see below]

5:30 p.m. Lenten supper

6:15 p.m. 40+ Basketball

6:15 p.m. Child care available

6:20 p.m. Lenten worship

6:45 p.m. Bell Choir

6:45-7:25 Flash classes

6:45-8:15 Full-length classes

Thursday, March 9

7:00 p.m. Girl Scout Troop 142

LOOKING AHEAD: April 13: Maundy
 Thursday; April 14: Good Friday

A D CIRCLE TO MEET

The A D Circle will meet on
Wednesday, March 8, at 1:30 p.m. at the
 home of **Anna Marie Holmes. Joan
 Overturf** will lead the discussion. For
 further information, contact **Coral Tor-
 ley** (752-0114).