



Congregational News

From FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Corvallis, Oregon

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March 24, 2006

SUMMER CAMP BROCHURES ARE HERE!

Camp brochures have arrived and the bright yellow packets are available on the information table in the foyer and in the church office. There are camps planned for children, youth, and adults. Our conference's Outdoor Ministries program provides a terrific opportunity for people of all ages to experience the beauty of God's creation and grow in faith in a camp setting, and the church pays half the fee for children and youth to go to camp! Please pick up a brochure and see **Ryan** with any questions.

LOCAL FOOD SURVEY COMING

Just a reminder that when the Just Peace Committee conducted a census of our congregation's priorities, "Food Security" ranked highly as a concern and "Acting Locally" ranked highly as a strategy. Currently there is a program that will allow us to act on our priorities.

Please read the message on page 5 from **Liv Nevin Gifford** who is working in Corvallis on the Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon project called "Interfaith Food & Farms Partnership." This Sunday in our worship bulletins a copy of the project's "Local Food Survey" will be found. Thank you for taking a few

minutes to fill this out and return it in the identified Survey Return Basket. I am hopeful that First Congregational United Church of Christ will demonstrate a high rate of return for this important project that reflects an issue of high concern in our congregation.

Aleita Hass-Holcombe
Just Peace Committee, Chair

THIS SUNDAY

March 26

Adult Forum: This last of four sessions addresses "Mental Health Education and Hope." A panel will discuss where we go from here. Participants include **Jeff Lindner** of the Pastoral Counseling Center and community advocate **Aleita Hass-Holcombe**. A time for questions and comments will follow.

Scriptures: Numbers 21:4-9
Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22
John 3:14-21

Sermon: "Snake Bitten"
Ryan Lambert

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK*Elizabeth Oettinger*

Dear Friends,

I was rummaging through a little-used drawer yesterday, and along with other interesting items, I came across a copy of my Last Will and Testament. Being in a procrastinating sort of mood, I read the document. It was written in early 1999 when I still had a child in middle school and one in high school. Both of my daughters are now over the age of 21. Hmmm....maybe the will could use some updating!

I suppose there are those who think that musing about updating wills is not a very theologically uplifting subject. However, I would disagree. In the course of my ministry, I have spent time with a lot of families in the aftermath of death. There's not much one can do about the inertia, shock, and grief that attend the death of a loved one. Those things must be experienced and lived through. The one thing we all can do to ease the possible burden of our death on those we love is to have our affairs in order: to have our wills or other estate planning provisions make sense, have a list of key documents and accounts, give clear guidelines about what we want—or don't want—in terms of final arrangements.

Harold Hunter, my estate planning/planned giving guru, says that we should look over all of our documents, lists, etc. every five to ten years. I've heard him say that several times. Did it prompt me to run home and check when I last reviewed my stuff? Of course not. I just tucked it in the back of my mind as something to do "sometime." Only my lack of desire to actually mop the kitchen floor (instead of think about mopping the kitchen floor) yesterday led me to take a look at where I am with all these arrangements.

The church can help. In the church office, we keep, as a service to members, both a form concerning funeral and memorial service wishes and a "Personal Inventory" form which is a starting point for putting together necessary information others will need in the event of your death. It's not something most of us want to dwell on, but it is important. It is, in fact, one significant gesture of love to our families at a time when they will need all the help they can get.

So, how old is your will? It's probably worth taking a look.

Liz

TROOP ONE INVITATION

The Boy Scouts of our sponsored Troop One invite the boys of this church, aged 10½ through 17 years, to join us for the following events. To sign up call

Frank Hall (752-1303).

Monday, March 27, 5:30-8:00 p.m.:
Rock climbing at OSU rock wall. Meet at OSU's Dixon Center rock wall. Wear
(continued on page 4)



Spring Break is here! To celebrate the beginning of spring we are going hiking on Bald Hill this weekend. Meet at the church at 1:00 p.m. on *Saturday, March 25*. Wear weather-appropriate clothing, and bring along a water bottle for the trek. The hike is about 2.5 miles in length and should be fun. Friends, parents, and siblings are welcome!

A CHILDREN'S EXCURSION

Save the date! The Children's Committee of the Christian Education Board invites children and parents to carpool to Salem after worship on *Sunday, April 9* to visit the A. C. Gilbert Discovery Village. Bring a sack lunch and following worship we will eat, and then head to Salem to explore the Gilbert House children's museum. The group admission rate makes the cost only \$3.50 per person. At church that day we will organize carpools. Questions? Contact **Ryan** at the church or at rylamb@yahoo.com

Reverend Manners Returns!

For those of you who have joined the church since the days Rev. Manners wrote a column for the *Congregational News*: Rev. Manners is a retired minister of vast education and experience. The Reverend will again be available to members of First Congregational Church

to answer questions about church etiquette, traditions, and theology. Do you have a question about church life? *Ask Reverend Manners!* This week, your news staff interviews Rev. Manners.

Q: Rev. Manners, what have you been doing since you left Corvallis?

A: Oh, a little of this and a little of that. I had a quite lovely nine month interim assignment in Hawaii, and then did some work for the Still Speaking Campaign—fine campaign that, to do a better job of letting the world know that are choices in Christianity!

Q: What are your plans now that you're settled back in Corvallis?

A: Oh, I never consider myself settled. I am writing my memoirs at the moment, and some friends are after me to take up birding with them—great way to see the world. I'll do more traveling. That's why I can't promise to write a weekly column, but I shall stay in touch.

Q: Why do you write for the Congregational News?

A: Well, of course I knew Liz and Lois, and this new fellow, Ryan, I'm just getting to know him, but I think he's tops. Outside of my respect for your staff, it has always seemed to me that many church people have questions for which there's really no forum to get them answered. "Why does the church do things this way?" "Is it okay if I....?" "What does this mean?" "Where does the word 'Lent' come from?" (In case you don't know, dear, it comes from the

word “lengthen.” Lent is the season of lengthening days, lengthening light.)

Anyway, I love answering people questions. So if you’ll just ask people to write to me and leave their questions in the Newsletter box, I will try to answer their concerns in a timely manner.

PFLAG MEETS

PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbian, Gay, Bi and Transgendered People) will hold its March meeting on *Monday, March 27* at 6:45 p.m. at the First United Methodist Church, 1165 N.W. Monroe Avenue (in the basement Martha Room). All who celebrate diversity, gay or straight, are welcome. Please come for friendship, support and sharing. Questions? Call 231-9598.

WOMEN’S FELLOWSHIP LUNCH

“North to the Yukon” will be the program for the Women’s Fellowship luncheon on *Wednesday, April 5*, in Gatton Hall. The cost is \$4.00—good food and good company! Please sign up for the luncheon at church this Sunday or next week so we can prepare food and tables enough for everyone.

Lunch begins promptly at noon. At 1:00, we will move to the meeting room for our program with **Joan Pelto, Priscilla Zaworski, Eleanor MacDonald, and Mary Blake**. These four adventurous women drove to the Yukon last summer, seeing the sights of British Columbia, some parts of Alaska, and the Yukon. What an adventure! Come and

hear their wonderful stories. If you need a ride or child care, please contact **Pat Johnson** (619-4943) or **Monine Stebins** (754-8039).

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climbing shoes or good sneakers. Cost is \$8. We need more adults who can belay (requires orientation within last year).

Mondays, April 3 & 10: 7:30-9 p.m.

First aid skills by **Al Goldner, M.D.** (qualifies for Merit Badge). Gatton Hall.

Monday, April 17, 7:00-9:00 p.m.—

CPR Certification by **Todd Washington** of CPRWorks. Cost is \$5. Gatton Hall.

Saturday/Sunday, April 22-23:

Camping trip on coast. Day hike, tide pools, beach-combing, kites, campfire cooking.

FROM OUR HEALTH MINISTRIES COMMITTEE

How the U.S. health care system compares:

- We spend over \$5000 per capita for health care in the U.S.—twice as much as any industrialized country that provides universal health care. But life expectancies are lower and rates of disease higher than in many countries that spend a lot less.
- Babies born in the U.S. are twice as likely to die during the first year of life than in 41 other countries.
- The U.S. health care system is inefficient. Americans tend to believe that we have the best health care system in the world. But, we spend far

more per person on health care than any other country—75% more than Canada or France—yet rank near the bottom among industrial countries in indicators from life expectancy to infant mortality.

- U.S. health care is rank #37 by the World Health Organization. The ranking is based on a range of factors including access, cost, longevity and infant mortality

MAY WORKSHOP ON ETHOS OF THE NORTHWEST

The Northwest House of Theological Studies announces a workshop of interest to all those working within religious institutions in this region of the U.S. “The None Zone II: Secular but Spiritual.”

Guest speaker, Mark A. Shibley, is Associate Professor of Sociology at Southern Oregon University where he coordinates an interdisciplinary Social Science and Policy program in Environmental Studies. His book, *Resurgent Evangelicalism in the United States: Mapping Cultural Change Since 1970*, won the Distinguished Book Award from the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion in 1997. His publications include articles on the Christian Right and on the role of religious organizations in the contemporary environment movement. His most recent work on the spirituality of the “unchurched” was published in *Religion and Public Life in the Pacific Northwest: The None Zone*.

The registration fee of \$60 includes

lunch for early registration before April 18. After this date the cost for the workshop will be \$65. If CEUs are desired, the cost will be an additional \$15. For more information or to register, please call the Northwest House of Theological Studies (800-745-3609). There is also a poster on the foyer bulletin board. Registration deadline is May 2, 2006.

Liv Nevin Gifford's Message

Thank you for participating in a Benton County Community Food Assessment, organized by the Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO). The goal of this grassroots, participatory assessment is to learn as much as we can about food, hunger, and local farming in our county. By gaining a thorough understanding of the challenges and opportunities we face, we can work together to create change and build food security.

This week, please help us with the assessment by filling out a Local Food Survey. This short survey asks you to tell us about cooking, gardening, and shopping in your household, as well as issues surrounding hunger, farms, and the role of your faith community.

We thank you for taking a few minute this week to complete your survey and return it to First Congregational UCC. If you are interested in learning more about EMO's Interfaith Food and Farms Partnership, you are most welcome to contact **Liv Gifford** (541-757-1988, ext. 107).

Our Thoughts and Prayers

...continue to be with **Clara McCormick**, recovering at Heart of the Valley. She would welcome visitors.



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 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 28.

WEEKLY CALENDAR

Saturday, March 25
 1:00 p.m. Youth hike [see p. 3]
Sunday, March 26
 9:30 a.m. **NO** Sanctuary Choir
 C E classes
 10:30 a.m. Worship
NO youth groups
Monday, March 27
 5:30 p.m. Basketball
 6:45 p.m. PFLAG, 1st Methodist
 [see page 4]
 7:30 p.m. Boy Scout Troop 1
Tuesday, March 28
 9:00 a.m. Staff
 Noon Lectionary class
 7:00 p.m. Adult Confirmation
 7:15 p.m. Church Council
Wednesday, March 29
 5:00 p.m. 40+ Basketball
 5:30 p.m. Lenten supper
 6:15 p.m. Child care available
 6:30 p.m. Lenten worship
 6:45 p.m. Classes begin

6:45 p.m. Bell Choir
 7:30 p.m. Sanctuary Choir



APRIL BIRTHDAYS

Chunhuei Chi 4/1, Ed Miller 4/5, Robin Miller 4/5, Toby Pearce-Smith 4/5, Ineka Estabrook 4/9, Gavin Milligan 4/10, C. J. Svela 4/11, Bruce Pentland 4/11, Jay Sperling 4/11, Mateo McCann 4/11, Marthanne Norgren 4/12, Grant Elbinger 4/17, Steve Zielke 4/17, Rhonda Mueller-Warrant 4/19, Michele LaBonte 4/20, Susan Wickes 4/21, Kaia Larson 4/21, Ashley Walker 4/22, Priscilla Zaworski 4/23, Ann Hawkins 4/24, Nancy William 4/24, Joan Pelto 4/25, Gwyneth McMorris 4/27, Pam Ruzek 4/28, Bond Starker 4/28, Russ Youmans 4/29, Norm Elwood 4/29

APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

Gregg and Jacqueline Smith 4/5