



# Congregational News

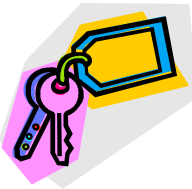
From FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
Corvallis, Oregon

Vol. XLV, No. 17

April 28, 2006

## TEST-DRIVE THE CHOIR IN MAY!

Interested in taking the choir out for a spin? Would you like to “test-drive” the choir and see if perhaps you would be interested in a longer-term relationship with us? It’s that time of year again. You are invited to sing with us for the month of May. Feel free to join us on Wednesday evenings at 7:15 p.m. Open the hood. Kick the tires. We promise not to kick back. Regardless of your experience, knowledge, and ability, we have music and a chair for you. Come on in.



worship bulletin asking for your opinions. If you won’t be in church on Sunday and want to be included, you can e-mail **Liz** at [elizabethoettinger@msn.com](mailto:elizabethoettinger@msn.com)

## DISASTER KITS MAY BE ORDERED THROUGH MAY 1

You may order after worship on *April 30* in Gatton Hall. Or order on line by contacting **Brian Lee**. The cost is \$60 for the basic disaster kit. Orders must be prepaid. Kits will be available in May.

Annual Meeting  
*Sunday, May 7*  
6:30 p.m.: Dessert -- 7:00: Meeting  
Annual Reports will be available for pick-up  
this *Sunday, April 30*.

## HOLY WEEK EVALUATIONS

How was your Holy Week experience? Do you have comments and/or suggestions for our staff and clergy about the services from Palm Sunday to Easter? There will be a form in Sunday’s

## THIS SUNDAY

*April. 30*

**Adult Forum:** In the conclusion to the emergency preparedness series, **Peggy Peirson**, Benton County Emergency Coordinator, will tell us about lessons learned from the Katrina disaster. She also will talk about ways that churches have helped in communities during disasters

**Scriptures:** Acts 3:12-19  
Luke 24:36b-48

**Sermon:** “The Past Is Prologue”  
Ryan Lambert

Dear Friends,

I must begin with a confession. I just pilfered a question from Rev. Manners' box and am going to address it in my "Thought for the Week." I did check with the good Reverend, and my act of theft has been forgiven from that quarter.

So, the question to Rev. Manners concerned the new Gospel of Judas, recently out for publication. The Gospel appears to be a third or fourth century production, a copy of an original dating to about 180 CE. The stir about this particular finding is that the Gospel claims that Jesus asked Judas to betray him, and that Judas agreed as an act of love and devotion.

If this were true, how would it change our theology? Not much, I don't think, except to get Judas out from under the bad rap he's lived with for two millennia. I don't see the figure of Judas as any more critical to our understanding of the story of the crucifixion and resurrection than many others. It is true that many betrayed Jesus in that story; Judas is just one. I don't think this new story shakes the foundation of Christianity.

However, the new availability of this manuscript, along with the wealth of other early Christian documents that have recently come to be accessed by scholars, are shaking the foundations of Christianity in ways both subtle and profound. When I went to seminary some 28 years ago, the general understanding in New Testament studies was that we pretty much knew the shape of the early church. The non-canonical (not included in the Bible) early Christian writings were given little emphasis. We focused on the "real" gospels and were working out their subtleties.

In the last 20 years, the world of New Testament studies has exploded. We have more and more of these non-canonical writings to work with and scholars have come to realize that these documents are essential in our understanding of the conversations going on in the early Christian church. People write in response to other writings. There is dialogue going on between the New Testament literature in our Bible and that which stands outside. Mainline scholars have put aside their former conception that in the early days of the church, the followers of Jesus held a common core of belief. Now we know that right from the start, Christians apprehended the meaning of Jesus—his life, death, and resurrection—in widely diverse ways. They talked and argued, and different groups grew up with very different notions of what it meant to follow their savior. If one is looking for the One True Faith, this is very bad news. If one believes in diversity of belief and practice, we can now claim that model right from our religion's earliest days.

I believe that we are living in the most interesting time, intellectually, to be Christian since the Protestant Reformation. And because of the marketing gurus of Madison Avenue, and our easy access to information, lots of us can participate in this conversation and be challenged to think about the foundations of our faith.

The hype about the Gospel of Judas is mainly because the National Geographic Society wants to recoup its investment in bringing the gospel to print. And I have no objection to that. It gets people talking and that's good. I don't find the contents of the gospel scandalous; it is another piece of an ongoing conversation about how the Christ event was apprehended in those early days. So what do we know about the sect that wrote it? What does this new perspective add to the conversation of the early church? Why would a group want to "redeem" Judas? Is there any evidence in the other writings that would support this new concept of Judas's place in the betrayal story? These are exciting questions to ask, and as we search for answers, the Christian dialogue will be enriched.

So I ask you: if Jesus did ask Judas to betray him, and that betrayal was indeed an act of selfless love, how would that affect your theology. Let me know if you have an answer.

**Liz**

### **RELAY FOR LIFE**

We, the **UCC Moms for a Cure** (Capt. **Molly Chambers**), do hereby challenge the **UCC Teens for a Cure** (Capt. **Megan Chambers**) to raise more money than us old folks for the American Cancer Society. We will use any legal means necessary to raise money including, but not limited to, begging, cajoling, sweet-talking, trash-talking, and as a last resort, earning the money. Winner take all (breakfast prepared by the other team). The actual relay will be held in the MU Quad on the OSU campus on *Friday, May 19*, beginning with a Survivor's lap at 6:00 p.m. and going through the night until 8:00 a.m. Saturday morning. Let the games begin! Watch for up-

dates in the coming weeks and support your favorite team!

To the women of the UCC,

Come join us for an adventure with a purpose. We'll be camping out and walking like crazy to show these young pups how it's done! Oh yeah, and to raise money to fight for our friend's and neighbors' lives! Team members include **Molly, Ginny Lucker, Kim Thackray, and Ginnie Esary**. We need six more walkers to reach our member goal of ten people. It's easy to sign up at [www.osurelay.com](http://www.osurelay.com) under **UCC Moms for a Cure**. We may not have the fastest feet but we're claiming the biggest hearts!



Both youth groups will be meeting at the church at 5:00 p.m. on *Sunday, April 30*, for a barbecue, followed by Frisbee golf, and croquet. Hamburgers, hot dogs, turkey burgers, and drinks will be provided. (A vegetarian burger will be available if requested). Please bring a salad or dessert to share with the group and plan to be outside for much of our time together. In the event of rain we will still barbecue, but we will do indoor games instead. Questions? Contact **Ryan** at church or at [rylamb@yahoo.com](mailto:rylamb@yahoo.com).

### **MAY 7 FIRE DRILL PLANNED**

On *May 7*, during the Christian Education hour we will be held we are for an emergency. An annual fire drill to check how well prep fire drill is prescribed by our Child Safety Guidelines and, because emergency preparedness is good for all ages, we will use this event as an educational moment for the whole congregation. In the event of a large-scale emergency while we are at the church, it is important that we evacuate the building in an orderly fashion and account for everyone. In an emergency situation it is probable that there would be loud noise of some variety, thus we will be setting off the fire alarm as a part of this drill on *May 7*. So that no one is surprised, the alarm is very loud *and* very shrill. You will know when the drill has begun!

When the alarm sounds, all persons will exit the building and move to the front lawn so that we can be sure everyone is out. We will re-enter the building after we have been assured that all is clear. The front lawn has been chosen as a place to gather in an emergency because it keeps everyone safe from cars that may be entering or exiting the premises. The Christian Education Board encourages all parents to discuss this upcoming fire drill with their children so that the loud noise of the alarm does not scare them and so that they are prepared for the drill. More evacuation details will be available this *Sunday, April 30*, and discussion of the purpose and plan for fire drills will be part of each class's Christian Education time this week.

Also, as a part of this drill there will be an insert in the *May 7<sup>th</sup>* worship bulletin that will describe an exit plan for the congregation in the event of an emergency during worship. By their nature pews restrict movement, therefore it is important to think about an evacuation plan before we need it. There are five ways to exit the sanctuary; how many can you name? Who sits near you who might need assistance in an emergency? Who will make sure the children in Activity Hour are safe? There are many issues that could arise in an emergency situation and we hope that we can address many of them through this drill. If you have questions about the up-coming fire drill, please contact **Ryan** at the church or via e-mail.

## OPEN HOUSE AT NHTS

The **Northwest House of Theological Studies** will sponsor an Open House in *May 12-13* for all of those interested in learning more about the House of Studies. The open house will allow folks to interact with faculty, staff and current students as well as attend classes. There are three options for visitors. First, individuals are welcome to attend the entire weekend's activities beginning with a reception on Friday night at 4:30 p.m. and continuing through the end of classes on Saturday at 3:30. Second, one may wish to begin a visit Saturday morning with the chapel service at 8:30 a.m. and stay for classes. Finally, one may choose to simply attend Friday evening events. Please contact NHTS to register: Northwest House of Theological Studies, 680 State Street, Salem, OR 97301 (503-588-4344) or [nhts@099west.com](mailto:nhts@099west.com).

### Friday, May 12

4:30 p.m. Reception  
 6:00 p.m. Dinner  
 7:00 pm. Choose one of two course offerings:  
     "Introduction to Theology" with Dr. Delwin Brown *or*  
     "Theological Themes in American Culture" with Dr. Steven Lewis

### Saturday, May 13

8:00 a.m. Coffee and donuts in the NHTS office  
 8:30 a.m. "Chapel and Spiritual

Formation"  
 in Cone Chapel

10:00 a.m. Classes  
 12:00 Lunch  
 1:00-3:30 Classes

## MEASURE 111: HEALTH CARE FOR ALL OREGONIANS

Petitions may be signed after worship on *April 30* in Gatton Hall. This measure requests the legislature to develop an organizational and financial framework to provide basic health care for all Oregonians. You can read more about it at [www.healthyoregon.net](http://www.healthyoregon.net).

## LAST SUNDAY TO SIGN UP FOR WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP LUNCHEON

Plan to sign up for the Women's Fellowship Luncheon this Sunday and join us on *May 3*. The luncheon speaker is **Cherie Babb** who works with Grace Center Adult Day Services. She is very enthusiastic about the new facility that they will be moving to very soon. She will share a video about the services offered at Grace Center, so we can have a better understanding of this special service.

Lunch will be served promptly at noon in Gatton Hall and reservations are appreciated so sign up this Sunday or call the church office. The program will start at 1:00 p.m. in the Meeting Hall. If you would like a ride or child care, please call **Pat Johnson** or **Monine Stebbins**.

On *May 9*, our church will be hosting the Women's Cluster meeting which will

start at 9:30 a.m. and then we will be providing a luncheon at noon. **Monine Stebbins** will be coordinating the lunch and needs to have some volunteer cooks. We will have a simple meal, with some of the work done ahead so that we can also attend most of the meeting.

## **REPORT ON THE TAKARAZUKA CHURCH SCHOOL**

We just celebrated the completion of the church school year here in Japan, which begins in April and ends in March.

On March 19, every child received a specially-made certificate with pictures of events they participated in throughout the year. (You can see these certificates on the Takarazuka bulletin board. One is for pre-school and elementary, and one for junior and senior high.)

At the Takarazuka Church, we have Church School from 9:15-10:00 a.m. for both assembly worship and classes, for pre-school, elementary, junior high and senior high. There are 10 to 18 children in both pre-school and elementary, 15 to 16 in junior high at the beginning of the year, decreasing to 2 to 3 at the end of the year; and 1 or 2 in senior high.

The curriculum is designed around the church calendar. I would like to explain what we did last year chronologically.

\* \* \*

April: We began new church year.

May: We had a special worship service for Children's Day or Flower Day,

when all children and adults worship together. On that day the adults gave flowers to the children to celebrate their childhood and prayed for blessings. On Pentecost Sunday, we baked dove-shaped cookies and ate together.

July: We enjoyed a cool evening in the churchyard. The children invited their friends, and adult church members supported and helped with this event. There was barbecue chicken on skewers, corn-on-the-cob, shaved ice, cold noodles, watermelon and rice balls. We enjoyed shooting, playing with yo-yos, fishing and playing quoits. And the fun night ended with fireworks. Then we had a summer break until the beginning of September.

October: We began preparing for the church bazaar which we had on the last Sunday of October. We sold hand-made coasters, cotton candy and candy leis at our own booth and made an offering to the church. We also had recycling and a used book sale. It was a fun day.

November: We had a worship service together with adults and children on Thanksgiving Sunday. We played keyboard harmonica, castanets, bells and hand bells during the service.

December: Christmas is the most important event. We had a church school worship service after we had enjoyed eating cakes and playing games. We all enacted the Nativity. Everyone had a part to play in this program. We worked so hard and it turned out to be a wonderful

play. Santa Claus visited to give us presents.

January: We participated in the "Children's Memorial, Remembrance and Archive Concert for the Earthquake," sponsored by the Hyogo District of the UCC of Japan.

March: We attended the "Children and Church Seminar 2006" and made friends with other church children. We received certificates for our completion of the year-long church school program. The church gave us Bibles, hymn books or books to celebrate the move up from pre-school to elementary, elementary to junior high, and junior high to senior high.

We hope that we will have the opportunity to see you in the near future.

**Takako Nobunaga**



### OUR CHURCH BRIDGE GROUP NEEDS YOU!

Bridge Players: If you would like to participate in a friendly monthly game at the church, please let **Rhonda Mueller-Warrant** (758-1667) know!!! If you are interested, but there is another time or day that works better for you than the first Friday of each month, let Rhonda know that too.

### HOLY SOX PRACTICE UPDATE

All interested softball players are invited to come to the Holy Sox coed team practices, which are on Thursdays at

7:00 p.m. at Chintimini Park. Cost is \$35.00 per player for inside Corvallis and \$45.00 for outside Corvallis (write checks to **Pete Nelson**). Contact **Tammy Skubinna** with questions

### FIRST PRESBYTERIAN BELL CHOIR SPRING CONCERT

Please join us for a celebration of bell music on *Sunday, April 30* at 7:30 p.m. This free concert will take place in the First Presbyterian sanctuary, and will feature not only bells, but organ and clarinet pieces as well. Our congregation is represented in the bell choir by **Karen Miller** and **Kim Thackray**.

### MAY BIRTHDAYS

Lauren Esary 5/2,  
John Hawkins 5/2, Ellie  
Erkkila 5/4, Christine  
Cantey 5/7, Rachel  
Pearce-Smith 5/10, Ginny Lucker 5/11,  
Susie Nelson 5/13, Sheila Schweizer  
5/13, Charlene Hunter 5/14, Marj El-  
wood 5/15, Bettie Muckleston 5/15, Jean  
James 5/16, Scott Christianson 5/17,  
Ginny White 5/17, Mike Schweizer 5/17,  
Liz Oettinger 5/18, Jacqueline Smith  
5/19, Ruth Leeper 5/20, Kim Jones 5/21,  
Verlyne Phillips 5/24, Grant Smith 5/25,  
Lafe Harter 5/28 Peter Klingeman 5/31,  
Andrea Mueller-Warrant 5/31



### MAY ANNIVERSARIES

Mary Bolton and Karen Herold 5/8  
(32<sup>nd</sup>)  
Greg and Rose Christianson 5/17 (26<sup>th</sup>)



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](mailto:sbwickes@comcast.net)  
 Home Phone: 754-0117

Copy deadline for next issue of newsletter is Tuesday noon, May 2.

**WEEKLY CALENDAR**

*Friday, April 28*

**Central Pacific Conf.  
 Annual Meeting,  
 Vancouver, WA**

*Sunday, April 30*

9:00 a.m. Sanctuary Choir  
 9:30 a.m. C E classes  
 10:30 a.m. Worship  
 (Activity Children's Chimes,  
 Hour) Meeting Hall  
 5:00 p.m. Youth groups' barbe-  
 cue  
 (see page 3)

*Monday, May 1*

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

*Tuesday, May 2*

9:00 a.m. Staff  
 Noon Lectionary class  
 6:15 p.m. Outreach & Evangel-  
 ism  
 6:30 p.m. Worship Committee  
 7:30 p.m. Personnel Committee  
 7:30 p.m. Diaconate

*Wednesday, May 3*

Noon Women's Fellowship  
 Luncheon (page 5)  
 5:30 p.m. 40+ Basketball  
 7:15 p.m. Sanctuary Choir

*Thursday, May 4*

7:00 p.m. Girl Scout Troop 142  
 7:00 p.m. Holy Sox practice,  
 Chintimini Park

*Friday, May 5*

7:00 p.m. First Friday Forum,  
 Elmer's  
 7:30 p.m. Bridge Group

**F-Y-I:** **Ryan** will be at the UCC Na-  
 tional 20s and 30s Clergy Conference,  
 May 8-11.

**Our Thoughts and Prayers**

.... are with the **Koch-Ankarberg** fam-  
 ily. **John's** brother **Richard** died re-  
 cently in Los Angeles.

... and with those gathering for the  
 CPC Annual Meeting in Vancouver.