



# Congregational News

From FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
Corvallis, Oregon

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## MISSIONFEST IS COMING!

The Mission and Outreach Board invites you to celebrate MissionFest on World Communion Sunday (*October 1*). This year the Mission Board is using the international work of Habitat for Humanity as a lens to explore the church in Central America, the culture and needs of the people of Central America, and how our local affiliate is helping to address those needs. After worship next Sunday, the Mission Board will be serving a meal featuring Honduran recipes and giving a presentation about both Habitat for Humanity: their local and international efforts. Come for the food, the information, and the video of a house that was built in a matter of hours! Sign up at church this Sunday or call the church office if you are coming.

## FIRE DRILL THIS SUNDAY

We have scheduled a fire drill for *Sunday, September 24*, during the Christian Education hour.

## WAKE UP ON COFFEE

Witness for Peace Northwest and the Just Peace Committee of our church is

sponsoring a speaker tour focusing on a Colombian coffee story: "What's in your morning cup? Fumigation, deforestation and uncertainty."

Freddy Urbano, a Colombian farmer and campesino leader, will help us take a deeper look into Plan Colombia, the impact of fumigation and free trade on small farmers in Colombia, organic and fair trade coffee production, and the struggle for food security.

There will be two opportunities to hear this story on *Tuesday, October 3*: at noon in La Raza Room, OSU's Memorial Union; and at 7:00 p.m. at First Congregational UCC. Please come!!

## THIS SUNDAY

*September 24*

**Adult Forum:** "Truth Telling" with **Lon Rycraft**, who will respond to the questions you bring.

**Scriptures:** Psalm 1. Mark 9:30-37  
James 3:13-4:3, 7-8a

**Sermon:** "Standing on Our  
Heads with Jesus"  
Ryan Lambert

## THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

*Elizabeth Oettinger and Ryan Lambert*

Dear Friends,

As part of the cycle of clergy evaluations, every third year the congregation is invited to fill out a survey on church life: how do you feel the church is functioning? Over the summer, the Pastoral Relations Committee collated the data and, two weeks ago, met with the clergy to talk with us about the results. We are writing this “Thought for the Week” together to share with you the survey results.

### **Overall Response**

The survey generated 45 responses, fewer than we would have hoped, but enough to cover a broad range of age groups and length of membership on the church. Asked the question, “How do you feel the church is doing overall, the average score was a 4.4 out of 5. People feel generally positive about church life and the ministry that we do here. Members see the church as having a distinctive theological point of view, a church in mission, a church that values education and is learning to more clearly articulate who we are. What we want is more: more visibility, more members, more education, more opportunities for mission, more opportunities to work, learn, and play together in community.

### **Worship**

Because of a printing error, people had trouble filling out the worship section of the survey. However, the input we did receive showed strong appreciation for the choir and the worship offered on “high holy days”: Christmas, Holy Week, All Saints, etc. Most people seem comfortable with our mix of traditional and “experimental” worship, and there is no question that people love to sing the hymns that are familiar to them (however, exactly *which* hymns are familiar and loved varied greatly!). Preaching is important to the congregation, as is our tradition of lay leadership of worship.

### **Christian Education**

This category encompasses a great many things and thus the responses varied widely. However, several topics were the focus of comments. First, the Adult Forum continues to be a valued part of our educational program. Several people suggested a desire to know of the schedule more in advance of the weekly newsletter. The Adult Education Committee of the CE Board works diligently to plan the programs and we will try to give more notice when that is possible. The committee works 6-8 weeks in advance so more notification should be possible. Second, several people commented on the desire to have an evening bible study option. In response we are offering a Psalms class in the fall and a winter class on Joshua and Judges, each of them six consecutive weeks. Also, late winter and spring will again feature Lenten classes on

Wednesday nights. Third, seeking to solidify our church school programs our Sunday morning routine has changed a bit in the CE wing. We have added a 15-minute all-ages gathering that kicks off church school at 9:15. This helps to center our classes, connect children of all ages, and gives an opportunity for us to celebrate birthdays and give our children and youth a repertoire of camp songs to help ground their faith. Finally, in an effort to provide both a community building opportunity and a spiritual point of connection for parents we are offering a reading and conversation class called “God at Home” that focuses on connecting faith and parenting in a manner that both provides spiritual nurture for our congregation’s children, but also speaks to the need of parents to nurture their own spiritual lives.

### **Pastoral Care**

While most people felt that the church does a good job providing care to members in need, a question was raised by the survey about routine pastoral calling. Ministers used to spend significant time calling on people just to check in and say hello. In recent years, Liz and Ryan, like other ministers, have done little of this kind of calling. Many people are so busy these days that such calls seem more burdensome than beneficial. However, it was clear that some members at least missed friendly ministerial visits, and the ministers enjoy making them. So we’re going to try to devise a way to identify those of you who would enjoy a visit. The problem is not with the ministers’ time; most weeks we have time for visitation. We just don’t want to call on people when a visit is an added stress rather than a pleasure!

### **Mission**

The responses in this area overwhelmingly involved the desire to have more opportunities for hands-on mission work. People felt very strongly about the success of our financial support for various outreach efforts though the monthly Mission Offerings, but expressed the desire to partner hands-on work with financial giving. Taking our turn at cooking the Stone Soup meal is one way that we are currently addressing this desire, but the Mission and Outreach Board has also chosen to work to become more involved with our local Habitat for Humanity affiliate as one way of addressing this expressed need. Benton Habitat for Humanity is currently building 3 homes, one of which is an “Apostle-Built” house done through a consortium of churches. The Mission Board is recommending we join this effort and our first organized opportunity to help build will be on October 28. More details will be forthcoming! The Mission Board is also looking into other hands-on opportunities and will be sharing them with the congregation in the coming months.

### **Administration and Stewardship**

We are blessed with a well-run church. Our newsletter is effective. Staff and lay leaders do their jobs. Our outreach into the community through use of our building

continues strong. Occasional glitches occur, but most people feel confident about the day-to-day business of the church. Those in charge of managing the church's financial life rated special notice. Their careful work makes everything else easier.

Probably the most "controversial" item on the survey was last year's stewardship campaign! People either strongly liked or equally strongly disliked the "sheep" theme. Important information for this year's Stewardship Committee. However, most people felt that we do a good job in building the budget, articulating a theology of giving, and including the whole congregation in opportunities for giving.

### Conclusion

The survey did not indicate a need for major changes in the life of the church, but some small course corrections: more opportunities, especially for adults, for hands-on mission work; more educational opportunities; more friendly calling; a wider range of small-group fellowship opportunities; maybe even an increase in deliberate evangelism (the E-word!). Thank you to those of you who took the time to fill out the form and make comments. We have looked at all of them, and appreciate your input. And remember, you are welcome any time to talk with one of the clergy or a member of Pastoral Relations if you have a question or concern. We are all ministers in this church. Really.

Liz and Ryan



### UNITED CAMPUS MINISTRY AT OSU

A fundraiser for West-M is scheduled. "Make a Joyful Noise! A Choral Celebration," featuring choirs and ensembles from Mid-Valley United Methodist Churches and partnering congregations, happens on *Sunday, November 12*, at 3:00 p.m. at First United Methodist Church, 1165 NW Monroe in Corvallis.

A free-will offering in support of United Campus Ministry at OSU will be taken. Refreshments will follow. Come and support UCM.



The youth will be meeting at "regular" time at the church this week. **Middle School** will meet from 5:00-6:30 and **High School** from 6:30-8:00 p.m. Please wear shoes suitable for running and bring a friend if you would like! Have you signed on to the list-serv yet? If you haven't, please check your e-mail for the invitation or contact **Ryan** for another. This is a key tool for staying connected to all the youth happenings! Questions? Contact Ryan at the church or via e-mail ([rylamb@yahoo.com](mailto:rylamb@yahoo.com)).

## REGISTER FOR WOMEN'S CAMP NOW!

Are you planning to attend the UCC Women's Camp on *October 6-8*? Then don't delay! We need your registration form soon. **Marsha Gulick** is this year's resource leader and the topic is "Let Your Spirit Soar!" Lavender registration forms are available in the literature rack at the Gatton Hall entrance as well as on the Women's Fellowship bulletin board. Total cost is \$90, with \$50 due at registration.

Camp Adams is the retreat location and carpools from Corvallis will be organized. Financial aid forms are available in the church office but need to be mailed this week to give the committee time to approve them.

We begin the weekend with dinner on Friday and end after Sunday brunch. Contact **Nancy Klingeman** for additional information.

## WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP LUNCHEONS BEGIN

On *Wednesday, October 4*, Women's Fellowship will begin their new program year with a luncheon at noon in Gatton Hall, followed by a program at 1:00 p.m. in the Meeting Hall. **Ryan Lambert** will share some experiences from summer youth camp: "Talking Peace at Camp."

All women of the church are invited to attend these monthly luncheons. Cost for the lunch is \$4. Sign up in the foyer the next two Sundays or call the church

office. Questions? Call **Alice Morrow** or **Julie Maloney**.

## CARING WITHIN THE CHURCH COMMUNITY DEPENDS ON YOU!

Sunday's bulletin will include an insert asking you to sign up to provide:

Emergency meal preparation; transportation to worship, a doctor's appointment, or for grocery shopping; companionship for a few hours; light housekeeping; emergency childcare for church members/friends; or to serve one month as meal coordinator.

In addition to the Sunday morning requests that you hear for this assistance, the church clergy and staff frequently must arrange such help on short notice during the week. Having lists of volunteers available is critical to not just providing help, but providing it with a minimum of phone calls.

Currently, we have two special needs: Monthly meal coordinators and worship transportation volunteers. Being a monthly meal coordinator involves using a prepared list to call volunteers who have indicated a willingness to prepare emergency meals. **Pat Johnson**, as past-president of Women's Fellowship, oversees the emergency meal coordinators and will be happy to answer your questions.

Frequently there are folks in our congregation who are unable to attend adult education or worship without a ride. These requests go to Doris Sherry. She currently needs volunteers who can pro-

vide adult education transportation on both a regular and an occasional basis.

Look for Sunday's bulletin insert and thank you for making the statement in our bulletin "Ministers: Each member of the church" a reality.



### TAKING ACTION WORKS!

Excerpts from a letter sent to **Warren Hovland**, a member of our Just Peace Committee, demonstrate that using the national UCC website can make a difference on issues of peace and justice. Join Warren and others in the UCC who use [www.ucctakeaction.org](http://www.ucctakeaction.org) to make a difference!

\* \* \* \* \*

Dear Warren,

This summer, the UCC Justice and Peace Action Network is taking a moment to reflect on your advocacy work during the 2005-2006 congressional session. Your advocacy efforts have been very effective. Overall, you have sent 186,728 messages to the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress (2005-2006). Your advocacy actions have ranged from federal budget and tax to environmental protection to global concerns in East Timor, Darfur, the Middle East and Pakistan. You have sent messages on civil liberties, fair courts, human rights, peacemaking, and adequate domestic and international funding for poverty alleviation programs. Your successes include:

- **Reauthorization of the Voting Right Act**—(VRA) JPANet ad-

vocates sent 4,673 messages to Congress to press reauthorization of expiring provisions of the VRA, one of the most effective pieces of civil rights legislation in U.S. history.

- **Defeat of the proposed Federal Marriage Amendment**—JPANet advocates sent 7,010 messages to Congress during the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress in opposition to adding discrimination into the U.S. Constitution by defining marriage as a union between one man and one woman, arguing that this decision belongs to the churches.
- Near authorization of federal funding for potentially life-changing stem cell research—JPANet advocates sent 6,915 messages in just three short days, first in support of the bill to authorize this funding passed by Congress, and then to protest the President's veto of that funding for research that could change the lives of millions.

Further, you sent nearly 9,000 messages in favor of increasing the federal minimum wage and a whopping 31,504 messages calling for moral 2006 and 2007 federal budgets and fair taxes. The legislative campaigns to increase the minimum wage and pass a moral federal budget are ongoing movements, and your work on the federal level and on the state and local levels is essential for eventual success.



### OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

Peter Banwarth 10/1, Ray William 10/1, Douglas Pentland 10/3, Patrick Yun 10/3, Kiko Kimura 10/4, Beth Riley 10/6, Mary Vedaa 10/7, Kay Harris 10/7, Terry Robertson 10/9, Neal Peterson 10/9, Beth Christianson 10/9, Luke Ebinger 10/11, Irwin Harris 10/12, John Koch 10/13, Robin Frojen 10/14, Karen Miller 10/15, Rose Christianson 10/16, George Mueller-Warrant 10/19, Nancye Ballard 10/19, Doug Richmond 10/21, Sean Skyllingstad 10/21, Emily Chi 10/24, Chris Koch 10/25, Chase Cochran 10/25, Nancy Groesz 10/27, Eric Hall 10/28, Hokie Adams 10/30, Alan Holcombe 10/30, Julie Rorrer 10/31

### OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES

Cliff and Jo Anne Trow 10/10 37<sup>th</sup>

### WE'RE INVITED TO A HOEDOWN

The Corvallis Square Dance Club is hosting a hoedown this *Saturday, September 23*. No square dancing experience is needed; all moves will be called "directionally." Just know your right from your left. Dance time 7:30-10:30. The price is a very reasonable \$1.33 an hour (or \$4 for the evening).

### A BIG HEARTFELT THANKS

... to all who helped with the Photo Directory. Thirteen folks made reminder phone calls to help us all remember to have our picture taken. Seventeen folks

helped staff the tables to sign people in for their photos, some staying until 10:00 in the evening. We couldn't have done it without you! THANKS SO MUCH!

A huge thank you to **Brian Lee** for taking pictures of those who weren't available for the photo directory and for taking pictures of the shut-ins; and to **Mark Thackray** for coordinating and doing the layout of activity pages pictures for the directory; and, of course, to **Linda Hadfield, Bob Stebbins, and Ann Hawkins**, who oversaw the whole project.

Thank you for all the prayers, support and encouragement I received from the congregation during the illness and subsequent loss of my husband, Frank. First Congregational UCC is a very special place.

Sincerely,  
Pamela Wood-Rinkus

### Chili Thanks

...to **Eileen Milligan**, who chaired the Welcome Back event, and to all the cooks, set-up and clean-up crews, and the musicians.

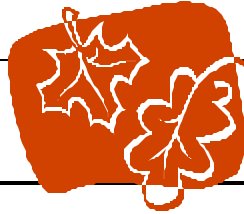
### Congratulations!

...to **Eric Hall**, who won the Welcome Back Chili Cook-Off for the second year in a row.



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Copy deadline for next issue of newsletter is Tuesday **noon**, September 26.\*

**WEEKLY CALENDAR**

*Sunday, September 24*

- 9:15 a.m. Church School, Room 5
- 9:30 a.m. Adult Forum, Meeting Hall
- 9:30 a.m. God at Home class, Library

**FIRE DRILL**

- 10:30 a.m. (following) Worship Fellowship, Gattton Hall
- 5:00-6:30 Middle School youth, Room 2
- 6:30-8:00 High School youth, Room 2

*Monday, September 25*

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

*Tuesday, September 26*

- 10:30 a.m. Staff
- Noon Lectionary class
- 7:15 p.m. Church Council

*Wednesday, September 27*

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

- 7:15 p.m. Sanctuary Choir
- Thursday, September 28*
- 11:00 a.m. Spirituality Group
  - 4:00 p.m. Adult Education Committee, Pelto
  - 7:00 p.m. Psalm Pstudy class
  - 7:00 p.m. Girl Scout Troop 142

**REMINDER:**

The library book *A Mother's Story of the Battle of Okinawa* is still missing and urgently needed for background information by the folks who are going on our next visit to Japan. ASAP!

**\* NEWSLETTER ALERT!**

The deadline for the next *Congregational News* issue will be **Tuesday noon, September 26**. Usually information submitted by e-mail or phone Tuesday afternoon or evening is fine, but, for this one issue, I can not take anything after noon – and earlier is better. Thanks.

**Susan Wickes, Editor**



## LEGACY

What will you leave beyond an empty pew?

**Michael Bendixen**, a grant from the Christian education endowments

In November of 2005, Michael Bendixen, a 26 year old member of our church, was invited to participate in a Witness for Peace delegation to Nicaragua. His participation in the trip was made possible by a grant from the Christian Education endowments at First Congregational. The purpose of the trip was to learn how global economic policies, including US policy, impact the life of the poor in third world countries, especially around issues of food sustainability.

Michael, a lifelong resident of Philomath, believes that his eyes were opened by this experience. He says, "When you lead a comfortable and relatively affluent life, and you don't actually see poverty, it really doesn't exist for you." As a professional photographer and videographer, Michael used his trip to document his experiences on film, in the hopes of making the situations he encountered in Nicaragua emotionally available to others. He is producing a 15-minute documentary slide-show of his trip

"Christianity is about trust," Michael reflects. "A lot of people in the church don't know me, and still they gave me the money for the trip. In return, I feel a responsibility to do good with what I saw and learned. In the church, we often give without knowing the clear benefit of what our money will do. I want the church to see the benefit to me and know I will use it to open other people's eyes as mine have been opened. I am grateful for the church's trust in me."

### **Herman and Bessie Scullen**

Herman Scullen and his wife Bessie joined First Congregational Church when it was still federated with the Presbyterian church downtown. He was a Professor of Entomology at Oregon State, working with honey bees. He was also active with the Boy Scouts, supporting Troop 1 and serving on the regional Boy Scout Council. A long-time church member remembers Herman Scullen as a gracious and delightful man, always smiling and willing to lend a hand, deeply committed to providing young people with positive role models and life experiences. Largely through his efforts, a small cabin was built on the church grounds where the children's play structures now

stand. That cabin became the special and beloved domain of both Troop One and church youth groups. Unfortunately, the cabin burned in an arson fire in 1991.

At the time of his death, Scullen left a bequest to the church's endowments to be used for the benefit of young people and Christian Education. Those monies, now paired with the Fred Morgan endowment, as the Morgan/Scullen endowment provide campership funds for children and youth to attend special youth events and most commonly to attend church summer camp at Camp Adams. To support our Conference camping program and to get the children and youth of the church involved in outdoor ministries, the church will pay half the cost of any child connected with the church to attend church camp in the summer. Every year the Christian education endowments allow between five and fifteen children from our congregation to enjoy their week at camp: experiencing the beauty of Camp Adams, making friends with children and youth from other Conference churches, worshipping, singing, studying, and playing together. It is a significant gift to the children and their parents and an equally significant investment in the church of the future. We are grateful to Herman Scullen for his commitment to children and youth and his generosity to the church.