



# Congregational News

From FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
Corvallis, Oregon

Vol. XLV, No. 45

December 8, 2006

## GET THEM TO THE CHURCH ON TIME!!

If your **2007 pledge** has not been turned in yet – and 25% of them have not – **PLEASE bring, send, or call for pick-up of your pledge card by December 10.** We need all the pledges in order to plan for next year!

## **BRJGHT GJFT SUNDAY JS HERE!**



Please bring your new unwrapped Bright Gifts this Sunday. And remember to attach the tag to your gift. The gifts will be brought forward and placed in front of the Communion table during the opening hymn.

If you did not pick up a bright gift tag earlier or would like to do something more, additional gifts are welcome.

Or bring a food item. We always need more packaged foods: **hot cereal, cold cereal, pasta, rice, macaroni and cheese, mixes.** If you would like to help put food boxes together between now and *December 15* or help with pick-up

and delivery of boxes on the 16<sup>th</sup>, contact **Alice Morrow** (752-3541).

The Vina Moses Center has been providing Christmas baskets to needy families in Benton County for more than 80 years. The Bright Gifts we bring to church on *December 10* are for this program.

Community Outreach, Inc. is looking for more donors for gifts for needy families at Christmas. To offer gifts, please call our volunteer **Amy Hatton** at our office (758-3000). Amy has a list of nearly 350 people wanting presents, and gifts so far for 250. Your help is appreciated this Christmas. Thank you!

## **THIS SUNDAY**

*December 10*

**Adult Forum: Eleanor MacDonald** presents the first of two “Faith Journeys” this Advent – 9:30, Meeting Hall

**Scriptures:** Luke 3:1-18

**Sermon:** “Brooding Over Advent”  
Elizabeth Oettinger

**THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK***Ryan Lambert*

Dear Friends,

Last weekend during the Advent Festival I was particularly struck by the personal interactions that I witnessed and the palpable sense of joy that was present during the event in Gatton Hall. During the Advent and Christmas seasons I am sure you too find yourself attending events because you have responsibilities or because it is what is required of you. This was my fourth Advent Festival, but as I spent time in conversations, helped frost some cookies, and watched people, I must admit that this was the first year that I “got it” about the Advent Festival. Perhaps in previous years I was too stuck in “program” mode or maybe I had already moved on to worship, but for whatever reason the way that we “hung out together” during the Advent Festival seemed different to me this year. Mostly then, I want to say “thank you” and encourage people to do more of the same as we celebrate Advent and await the coming of the Christ child.

We are all painfully aware of the busy schedule that comes with Advent and Christmas, but I truly believe that one of the important things we do as a community of faith is to help each other make sense of the season. Perhaps the most valuable thing we can do for each other this season is to offer our friendship and a genuine sense of connection to one another. As we bring our crèche sets out to mark the coming of the Christ child I am always drawn in by thoughts of the varied witnesses that formed the community in the manger. These are our spiritual ancestors; the ones who were called together by the Christ story. As our common calendar calls us together to worship and sing, hang greens, and share in fellowship, I hope you will take time to welcome new folks, delight in our connection to one another, and celebrate the community that the Christ story has built.

Blessings during this Advent season,

**Ryan**

**COMMUNITY FORUM  
ON DIVERSITY**

Come and express your ideas, reactions, attitudes and beliefs on a crucial community issue at the open conversation with Bonnie Tinker of “Love Makes a Family.” Sponsored by Rainbow Health Resources, PFLAG, Community Alliance for Diversity and others, the

event is scheduled for *Tuesday, December 12* from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. at the Albany Senior Center, 489 Water St. NW.

The recent vandalizing of a lesbian couple’s home highlights the fact that not all of our citizens are safe and respected. We can do better. How can we come together to make our community a safe and welcoming place for all?



This *Sunday, December 10*, the Middle School and High School youth will meet at the church at 4:45 for a combined progressive dinner. We will begin

with appetizers at the **Rorrer** home, move to the **Lucker** house for salad, before continuing on to the **Eric Hall's** house for the main dish. Finally, we will go to the **Lamberts'** for dessert. We could still use more drivers so if your family can drive please contact **Ryan** at church or at [ryan@ucc-covallis.org](mailto:ryan@ucc-covallis.org).

## HANGING OF THE GREENS



This year, Hanging of the Greens—our traditional day of trimming trees and making wreaths and swags—will be on *Saturday, December 16* at 2:00. We still need help with decorating set-up, beginning at noon, and with children's activities: (paper chain making, graham cracker houses, etc.), starting at 2:00. Refreshments, cookies, fun and laughter will be served to all.

We also have an urgent need for greens and holly for the Hanging of the Greens. Please let **Jerry Groesz** (758-3638) know if you have any greens and/or holly you can deliver (or that we can pick up) on Saturday morning the 16<sup>th</sup>.

## ALL THINGS\$ FINANCIAL...

The end of the year is accompanied by a flurry of financial activity. Pledges are made, pledges are completed, and other giving opportunities abound! Please keep the following in mind as the year draws to a close.

Do your finance officers a favor and submit 2006 reimbursement requests as soon as possible, preferably by *December 18*.

Timing and dates are important factors with end-of-the-year giving. Contributions you wish credited toward 2006 giving need to be dated 2006 and received at the church by noon, *January 2*. Contributions for 2006 but received after this time, will appear on 2007 giving records, even if dated 2006.

Prepaid contributions for 2007 can be made in 2006; they will be credited for 2007 as far as the church is concerned, but for tax purposes they will appear on your 2006 giving records.

If you are considering prepaying your pledge, you might be interested to know that prepayments are very helpful in maintaining cash flow during the year, and we prorate them out over the year. As always, thank you for your generosity.

**Verlyne Phillips**, Treasurer

## Congratulations

... to **Michael Bendixen**, on his new job filming and producing for OPB in Portland. Look for his name on Oregon Art Beat, Oregon Field Guide, and more.

## WRAPPING, BAKING, COFFEE SALES HELP TRAVEL FUND

*Sunday, December 10* is the last Sunday to order **Christmas cookies** from the high school youth. They will be baking and delivering them on *Saturday, December 16*. There are many types of cookies to choose from and for every four dozen you order you will receive a free HALF dozen!



Also, on *Sunday, December 10* the youth will be **wrapping Christmas gifts** for you. Just bring your gifts to church and they will wrap them with your choice of paper (at least six options!), will clearly mark them as to which one is which, and finally, they will deliver them to you!

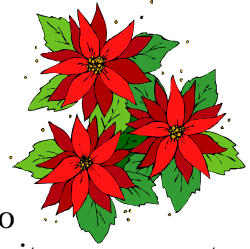
Thanks to all who supported the youth General Synod trip by purchasing **coffee and chocolate** on Sunday. The plan is to have a table set up on a weekly basis so that we are not only raising funds for the Synod trip but also supporting organic and free-trade farmers.



Look for the tables on Sunday for all three of these opportunities. And thank you for supporting the youth as they

fundraise for their General Synod trip in June 2007.

## GIVE A GIFT OF FLOWERS FOR THE CHURCH YEAR



In this Sunday's worship bulletin, there will be an insert to provides you an opportunity to make a contribution to the church's Flower Fund. Donations to this fund allow the church to purchase Christmas poinsettias, Easter lilies, and flowers for other special occasions. The insert has space to list the names or persons in whose name you may wish to contribute – whether it be in honor, celebration, or memory of someone.

The insert will also be in the next Sunday worship bulletin. The names of the donors will then be listed alphabetically in the two Christmas Eve worship bulletins. We invite you to share in this Christmas tradition.

## SONGS OF THE SEASON

**Jubilate!** The Women's Choir of Corvallis, conducted by **Betty Busch**, presents their 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Winter Concert for three special performances. The first concert will be held on *Sunday, December 10* at 7:00 p.m. at our church The second concert will be held on *Saturday, December 16* at 7:00 p.m. at the First

United Methodist Church, 1165 NW Monroe Avenue in Corvallis. The final concert will be held *Thursday, December 21* at 7:00 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 2945 NW Circle Boulevard in Corvallis. All three concerts are free; donations will be gratefully accepted at the door.

**Steve Zielke's Corvallis Repertory Singers** will do *Candlelight & Carols* in our sanctuary shortly after Hanging of the Greens, on *Saturday December 16*, at 7:30. The concert will be repeated the next afternoon at LBCC in Albany.

### READ & FEED CELEBRATES

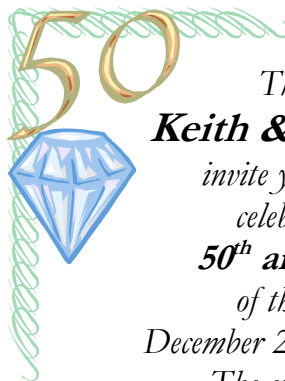
**Bob and Monine Stebbins** are hosting the Read & Feed potluck at 6:00 p.m. on *Sunday, December 10*. No time to discuss a book this time; too busy solving a murder!



### SAVE CANCELLED STAMPS

Help pay utility bills for needy folks in Washington county by saving the cancelled postage stamps from your Christmas cards. Simply cut stamps off the envelopes, leaving a ¼-inch margin and bring them to the church. The second drawer closest to the office on the nametag stand is designated to collect these stamps for Church Women United. This same drawer is the collection box for "Labels for Education" and Campbell or Swanson soup labels to be sent to

Crossroad residential school in Indiana (a UCC affiliated agency for troubled children).



The family of  
**Keith & Doris Sherry**  
invite you to join in the  
celebration of the  
**50<sup>th</sup> anniversary**  
of the couple's  
*December 29, 1956 wedding.*  
The event will be a  
**Potluck at the church**  
**Saturday, December 30, 2006**  
12 noon  
*No gifts, please*

*RSVP would be appreciated.*  
Please contact Marcia Sherry-Newby  
541-601-0171  
[philandmarcia@earthlink.net](mailto:philandmarcia@earthlink.net)

### HOLIDAY BOOKS NOW AVAILABLE IN OUR LIBRARY

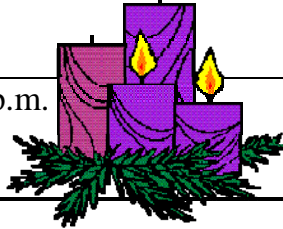
Holiday books for Advent, Christmas, Kwanzaa, and Chanukah are currently on display in the church library and ready to be checked out.

### *Our Thoughts and Prayers*

...are with **Nancy Orcutt**, recovering at home from pneumonia, She would welcome phone calls and occasional visits.



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Copy deadline for next issue of newsletter is Tuesday noon, December 12.

**WEEKLY CALENDAR**

*Sunday, December 10-Bright Gifts*

- 9:00 a.m. Sanctuary Choir
- 9:15 a.m. Church School, Room 5
- 9:30 a.m. Adult Forum
- 9:30 a.m. God at Home class
- 10:30 a.m. Worship
- (following) Children's Advent Choir, Meeting Hall
- (following) Occasional Congregational Orchestra, Fireplace Room
- Noon Soup 'n' Bread
- 12:15 p.m. Sanctuary Choir
- 4:45 p.m. Middle and High School youth progressive dinner
- 6:00 p.m.** Read & Feed potluck, Stebbins

*Monday, December 11*

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

*Tuesday, December 12*

- 10:30 a.m. Staff
- Noon Lectionary class
- 7:00 p.m. Trustees Board
- 7:30 p.m. Spirit Quest

*Wednesday, December 13*

- 5:30 p.m. 40+ Basketball
- 6:30 p.m. Children's Advent Choir**
- 6:30 p.m. Bell Choir
- 7:15 p.m. Sanctuary Choir

*Thursday, December 14*

- 11:00 a.m. Spirituality Group
- 7:00 p.m. Girl Scout Troop 142

**THANKS TO HEIFER DONORS**

Many thanks to all the folks who participated in the Heifer Living Gift Market last Sunday! We began supporting this project in 1997, and each year has shown an increase in sales. But this year topped all the others and we sold over \$10,000 worth of animals. Thanks also to **Pete Klingeman** who helped us set up and to **Priscilla Zaworski** who assisted in taking orders.