



Congregational News

From FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Corvallis, Oregon

Vol. XLVI, No. 31

September 7, 2007

SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Sunday, September 23,
following worship

to vote on the church's endorsement of
Corvallis and Albany Assisting Iraqi
Refugees (CAAIR) [see page 3]

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION BEGINS PROGRAM YEAR

The program year for Christian Education begins this Sunday morning. *September 9*, CE Registration will take place in the foyer beginning at 9:00 a.m. and again this year our children and youth classes will begin at 9:15 with singing in Room 5. At 9:30 our middle and high school classes will separate from the group, but this year we are trying a learning community approach with our children aged 3 through 5th grade.

During the learning community we will jointly investigate our lesson in a worship setting and then we will have several different activities that the children will self-select to help them learn more about our lesson. We are hoping that this combined approach will take advantage of our age "clumps" and also

allow our younger children to learn from their older peers. Once again our classes will be using the "Seasons of the Spirit" curriculum which allows our church school classes to follow the lectionary and learn about the lectionary lessons that will be used in worship.

If you have questions about our church school, or would like to volunteer in with any of our classes, please contact **Ryan** at the church.

THIS SUNDAY

September 9

Adult Forum: At 9:30 a.m. in the Meeting Hall, the Revs. **Elizabeth Oettinger, Charles Helsabeck, and Ed Henderlite** will offer "Clergy Reflections on Synod." This is the first of four Forum sessions about the 2007 General Synod meeting in Hartford. Next week will be the perspectives of our youth participants.

Scriptures: Deuteronomy 30:15-20
Luke 14:25-33

Sermon: "Choosing Life"
Elizabeth Oettinger

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK*Ryan Lambert*

Dear Friends,

Welcome Back! Children and youth are headed back to school, crowds are gathering for Oregon State football games, gardens are beginning to overflow with late-season produce, which must mean that the program year is beginning at church. I hope everyone had a great summer, and I hope there are many warm days left in our part of Oregon, but the calendar is announcing that Sunday marks the start of our program year. As our program year begins I wanted to give you a preview of a couple of events that are on the horizon.

In our Adult Education Forum we will spend the four weeks of the program year hearing about General Synod. June's General Synod in Hartford, Connecticut, marked the 50th Anniversary of our denomination and, as the event included many exciting things, we wanted to share them with you. This week you will hear clergy perspectives courtesy of Liz Oettinger, Ed Henderlite, and Charles Helsabeck. In subsequent weeks you will hear from youth, from a panel of lay attendees, and also have the opportunity to see a video of the inspiring address given by Bill Moyers. Later in the fall the forum will also feature sharing about the Witness for Peace trip taken by Aleita Hass-Holcombe and Megan Chambers and the Guatemala trip

If you are looking for intergenerational opportunities to "do" ministry we continue to take our turn providing the Stone Soup meal on 3rd and 5th Tuesdays. Look for sign-ups at church and know that there are many different jobs at Stone Soup which allow many people with many different skill levels to take a part in this important ministry opportunity. The Mission and Outreach Board is trying to set up other opportunities for hands-on ministry and one such event is coming up soon: the Fall Oregon Beach Clean-up on Saturday, September 15. We have signed up to be a part of the crew at Beverly Beach, so plan to take part in the clean-up event and enjoy the sights and smells of the beach at the same time!

We are also looking ahead to the Mission Fest on World Communion Sunday on October 7 when we will welcome the Rev. Farley Maxwell and his spouse, Mary Maxwell, to Corvallis where they will share with us about their time as missionaries in Nepal. The Maxwells will speak about their work as missionaries under the banner of Common Global Ministries, which is the United Church of Christ/Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) entity that organizes the international missionaries for both denominations. The Maxwells will be speaking at the Adult Forum on October 7, Rev. Maxwell will offer the sermon during worship that day, and following worship, the Mission and Outreach Board will be hosting a meal featuring food in the tradition of the Nepalese culture.

Again, welcome back, there are many exciting things on the horizon and we look forward to seeing you often!

Blessings,

Ryan



The **Middle and High School youth groups** (and parents too!) will begin our year with a Kick-off Dessert on *Sunday, September 9*, at 7:00 p.m. in Gatton Hall. Join us for ice cream sundaes as we reconnect after the summer, go over our fall schedule, and debut our new space in Room 1. Plan to join us!

INTRODUCING CAAIR

WHO: Corvallis and Albany Assisting Iraqi Refugees (CAAIR) is composed of concerned citizens from all walks of life, community organizations--both faith-based and secular -- businesses, clubs, and schools. Anyone can become involved. You may visit CAAIR's website as www.caaair.org for more information.

WHAT: CAAIR is a not-for-profit humanitarian fund-raising project. (Limited time duration: September 11, 2007 to end of February 2008)

WHERE: CAAIR is functioning within Corvallis and Albany. Fund-raising events are in the planning stages [*see right*]. For more information about events and regular planning meetings, go to the website for dates, times and location.

WHEN: In February 2008, a sum total shall be donated by CAAIR to Mercy Corps (www.mercycorps.org), a non-profit humanitarian organization currently serving Iraqi refugees in Jordan.

WHY: To raise funds for humanitarian purposes that will help Iraqi citizens in Jordan -- CAAIR is currently working with Mercy Corps to choose a project among the following: nutritious food, adequate shelter, education for children, and /or medical and health care. We have asked Mercy Corps to identify a project for use of our funds in one of these areas.

CAAIR FUND-RAISING BEGINS

The Corvallis and Albany Assisting Iraqi Refugees (CAAIR) fund raising project will be holding their official kick-off event at 7:00 p.m., *Tuesday, September 11* in the Main Meeting Room of the Corvallis Benton County Public Library.

Marta Colburn, the in-country director of Mercy Corps programs in Jordan, will be speaking about the plight of Iraqi refugees in Jordan and Mercy Corps' projects to assist them. CAAIR will be raising money to support a Mercy Corps project in Jordan and plans to announce the specifics of that project at the September 11 meeting. Additional fund raising events will be held in various lo-

cations between *September 11* and *February 1*.

Since 1979 Mercy Corps has been providing emergency relief services that assist people afflicted by conflict or disaster. More than 90% of the agencies resources have been allocated directly to programs that help people in need.

Contribution checks may be made out to CAAIR and sent to CAAIR, P.O. Box 365, Corvallis, OR 97339-0365. Contributions are tax deductible and you will receive a receipt. For on-going announcements and listings of other CAAIR events as they develop go to: www.caair.org.

SEPTEMBER IS HABITAT FOR HUMANITY MONTH!

At First Congregational UCC we are celebrating "Habitat for Humanity" Month! How are we doing that? We have designated September's Mission Offering for the Habitat organization in Benton County. This is a chance for all of us to help this amazing organization that has built 24 homes in Benton County since 1991. Several of our members worked on the latest Habitat home on Conifer Boulevard this year and the Mission Board is looking for ways for our church to have more "hands-on" opportunities on other Habitat houses.

Benton Habitat for Humanity is an affiliate of the parent organization, Habitat for Humanity International (HfHI), which has a goal of "building home and homes" through relationships and com-

munity volunteer effort. HfHI was founded in 1976 and since then has built more than 220,000 homes worldwide. Each partner family contributes 500 hours of "sweat equity" towards the construction of their home or the home of another family. Volunteers from the community work side by side with the family to make the home a reality. When the house is completed, Habitat sells it to the family at cost, with arrangements for a 15 to 30-year, no-interest mortgage. Income from the sale is then used to provide houses for other families. 10% of funds raised locally are donated to providing homes internationally through Habitat for Humanity International.

Please give generously to Benton Habitat for Humanity through this month's Mission Offering! Let's help our local families, as well as families abroad!

Tammy Skubinna
Mission Board

WELCOME BACK EVENT:

CHILI COOK-OFF



On *Sunday, September 16*, the Fellowship Board of the Diaconate is hosting our annual Welcome Back event. Again this year it will take the form of a Congregational Chili Cook-off, so it is time to dig out that secret recipe and plan to bring on the 16th for our after worship event. Sign up after worship (or call the church office) to say you are

bringing your chili so that we will know that we have enough cooks. You may also sign up to bring cornbread if that is your specialty. This is a great opportunity to try your creative hand at a new chili or bring back an old family recipe! Whether you bring a pot of chili or not, this is one of our big fellowship events and it is a great opportunity to catch up with people after the summer. Plan to join us after worship for a chili lunch on the 16th



JOIN THE CHURCH BEACH CLEAN-UP CREW!

Enjoy the coast, clean up the beach, and be a part of the First Congregational Church community all at the same time! We are having a team of church people participate in the Beach Clean-Up Day on *Saturday, September 15*. Meet at the church parking lot at 8:15 a.m. that day and car-pool, or meet us at Beverly Beach (just north of Newport on Highway 101) at 10:00 a.m. We'll pick up litter on the beach until 1:00 p.m. (Leave earlier if you need to.)

This is a great chance for families, singles, couples, and all parts of our church community to spend a day at the coast, get to know each other, and make a difference for our environment. Everyone is free to stay at the coast after the clean-up and have fun, go out to lunch

with a small group, or head back home in time for the 3:30 p.m. OSU football game. Call the church office (757-8122) to let us know you are coming, or just show up! Be sure to bring gloves to wear for picking up litter.

Congratulations



... to **Yoshie Kimura** and **Gary Lee**, who were married in Burlingame, California on September 1. **Liz Oettinger** officiated. The date marked the first anniversary of Yoshie's sister, **Rie**, and husband, **Josh Opperman**, whom Liz married last year.

... **Ben Cowles** and **Patti Gobo** of Bayville, New York, who were married on August 25 in the Brooklyn Botanic Garden. Among the wedding party were Ben's sister and brother-in-law, **Anna** and **Fritz Owens**. Ben and Patti Cowles live in Astoria, New York, while Anna and Fritz Owens live in Manhattan. To the additional happiness of parents **Susan** and **Tim**, the two couples are great friends and see each other often.

A NEW IDEA FOR FEEDING OUR LOCAL NEEDY

Volunteers are needed for **The Cooking Club** on Monday mornings this October. The Cooking Club is a series of classes for low-income people interested in learning to use fresh, locally grown fruits and vegetables into simple, nutritious meals. Join us in the kitchen or

nursery at First United Methodist Church and support participants in learning to prepare healthful food for their families. Contact **Liv Gifford**, coordinator of the Interfaith Food & Farms Partnership, at (541) 752.1856 or e-mail lgifford@emoregon.org.

AUGUST FINANCIAL REPORT

True to form, summer income has been low. As of the end of August, we are behind on the annual budget a little over \$10,000. The good news is contributions toward Camp Adams were \$1,450, a very strong Mission Offering.

The annual budget is a month-to-month operation: we count on current income to meet current expenses. We do have budget reserves, which we like to keep at work earning interest for us. It's always a challenge to get the balance just right between maximized earnings and adequate cash flow. Projected September expenditures include some very high quarterly payments. When you add the deficit to the fact that September giving patterns are usually interrupted by the Labor Day worship in the park, this translates to a high likelihood that we will need to dip into a C.D. and incur a penalty. It's possible to make the argument that we have the reserves available for just such a time as this. However, I wouldn't mind if we had good September income and could avoid cashing in some of the invested funds! If enough of you find you are able to do some catching up on your pledges, I think it is doable.

Verlyne Phillips, Treasurer

***From Despair to Hope* COLLINS LECTURE IN PORTLAND NEXT MONTH**

The Collins Lecture is an event designed to provide an opportunity for clergy and laity to explore issues related to religion and social ethics. The lecture has been part of EMO's ministry for over 30 years. This year the lecture will be at First United Methodist Church, 1838 SW Jefferson Street, Portland, on *Thursday, October 18*. Speaker is E. J. Dionne, Jr., a syndicated columnist for *The Washington Post*, senior fellow at the Brookings Institution and professor of the Foundations of Democracy and Culture of Georgetown University.

From 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. there will be an Interfaith Conference on Poverty, including panels on "Interfaith Perspectives on Wealth, Poverty and the Beloved Community" and "Socioeconomic Dimensions of Poverty," followed by two workshops

The cost for the lecture (7:00-9:00 p.m.) is \$10 (\$5 for student with ID). The interfaith conference (which includes continental breakfast and lunch) is \$30 (\$15 for student). Registrations are due by *October 10*. For more information, see the Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon website www.emoregon.org or e-mail emo@emoregon.org. The hallway bulletin board flyer also has more details.

The Planned Giving Herald

It is estimated that 70% of all Americans die without a will. In many cases the wills that do exist prove to be outdated and inappropriate for circumstances and commitments of the person at the time of death.

Planned gifts are contributions that are determined during the donor's lifetime but not transferred to the receiving church or charity until after the donor dies. These planned gifts can be life insurance arrangements, bequests, and life income gifts. Life income gifts include gift annuities, pooled funds, and charitable remainder trusts that provide the donor with income for life. Following the death of the donor, the remaining principal of the gift is paid out to the church or charity as designated in the donor's agreement.

Several members of our congregation have recently arranged planned gifts for the church. One member has chosen to leave a pledge continuation bequest at the time she moves away from Corvallis.

The Planned Giving Committee hopes that your will is up to date and that you will include the church in the text of your will and trust. If you are thinking along these lines please talk with Harold Hunter or Liz Oettinger.

"What will we leave behind besides an empty pew?"

**The Planned Giving Committee:
Mike Huntington, Harold Hunter,
Jo Anne Trow, Gretchen Morris,
Joni Peterson, John Erkkila,
and Liz Oettinger**

ANOTHER LADDER DAY SAINT

Arne Larson was also on hand to climb the 38' ladder and help **Gregg Smith** with replacing the sanctuary spotlights. All of us who can see the chancel much better thank you both!

WANTED: Soup 'n' Bread coordinator

-- to organize sign-ups for cooks, bread bakers, set-up and clean-up crews, and recruit additional people for these tasks, if needed; to make reminder phone calls to volunteers prior to the event. Contact the church office if you can help keep this much-enjoyed event going.



...to all who provided food for the **Munford and Freund** memorial service receptions on August 23 and 24: **Charlene Hunter, Janice Engle, Doris Sherry, Susan**

Wickes, Chris Cantey, Sandy Piper, Monine Stebbins, Osa Martinson, Beth Christianson, Verlyne Phillips, Judy Juntunen, Nancy Klingeman, Gretchen Morris, Kathie Merriam, Ann Hawkins, Carol Huntington, Bettie Muckleston, and Kiko Kimura.

Special thanks to the kitchen crews of **Carol Huntington, Karen Herold, Monine Stebbins, Janice Engle, Doris Sherry, Ann Hawkins, and Priscilla Zaworski.**



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Copy deadline for next issue of newsletter is Tuesday noon, September 11.

WEEKLY CALENDAR

Friday, September 7

6:00 p.m. Dinner for 5th grade
 and under, Esarys'
 7:00 p.m. Badminton, Gatton Hall

Sunday, September 9

9:00 a.m. Sanctuary Choir
9:00 a.m. C E registration
 9:15 a.m. Church School, Room 5
 9:30 a.m. Adult Forum
 10:30 a.m. Worship
 7:00 p.m. Middle School and
 High School Youth
 and parents
 7:00 p.m. Read & Feed,
 deLespinasse

Monday, September 10

5:30 p.m. Basketball

Tuesday, September 11

9:00 a.m. Staff
 Noon Lectionary class
 7:30 p.m. Boy Scout Troop 1

Wednesday, September 12

7:00 a.m. Breakfast Group

1:00 p.m. Women's Fellowship
 Board
 5:30 p.m. 40+ Basketball
 7:15 p.m. Sanctuary Choir

Thursday, September 13

7:00 p.m. Girl Scout Troop 142

Friday, September 14

7:00 p.m. Badminton, Gatton Hall

READ & FEED MEETS

Paul and Doris deLespinasse will host the meeting of Read & Feed on *Sunday, September 9*, at 7:00 p.m. The book for this month is *The Heart of Christianity* by Marcus Borg.

Our Thoughts and Prayers

...are with **Betty Massoni** and her mother, **Virginia**, who is ill in Grants Pass.

...continue to be with the Johnson family. The memorial service for **Betty Johnson** will be held in our sanctuary at 4:00 on *Thursday, September 20*.