



# Congregational News

From FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
Corvallis, Oregon

Vol. XLVI, No. 44

December 7, 2007

## BRIGHT GIFT SUNDAY IS 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.

Our gifts are for those served by Vina Moses Center and Janus House. Vina Moses has been distributing toys to needy children in our community for many years. Janus House is a residential facility in Corvallis for adults with mental illness.

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

## MEETING TO REVIEW ADULT BASKETBALL

A meeting to review the adult basketball program in the church will take place this *Sunday, December 9*, immediately following church (approx. 11:45 a.m.), in the church library. Adult basketball currently meets on Monday and Wednesday evenings from 5:30-7:00

p.m. in Gatton Hall. Members of the church who have an interest are invited to attend. If you would like further information, or are not able to attend but would like to provide input, please contact **Pete Nelson** (752-1278).

## JOIN THE OCCASIONAL CON- GREGATIONAL ORCHESTRA!

Orchestral instrumentalists, young and old, are invited to play Christmas carols from 5:00-5:30 on Christmas Eve, under the direction of **Jeffrey Larkin**, Assistant to the Music Director. Rehearsals start this Sunday in the Fireplace Room after worship. Other rehearsals are *December 16*, and *23*.

## THIS SUNDAY

*December 9*

**Adult Forum:** Mark Thackray presents the first of this year's "Faith Journeys" at 9:30 in the Meeting Hall.

**Scriptures:** Isaiah 11:1-10

Matthew 3:1-12

**Sermon:** "A Word to the Brood"  
Elizabeth Oettinger

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

Dear Friends,

As you know the Cold Weather Shelter opened shortly before Thanksgiving and is now providing a warm and dry place for homeless men to stay each night. The shelter is housed in the former Pi Beta Phi sorority at the corner of 27<sup>th</sup> and Taylor, and each night it is home for more than 20 homeless men. The shelter is operating as most of these types of endeavors do—with a shoestring budget and many volunteers. The especially wet and cold weather has meant that more people are searching for services and the shelter's headcount represents an increase over last year. I am thankful for all who have played a role in assuring the shelter's existence again this year!

Faith communities and civic groups are serving as the primary volunteer staff for the shelter, and our congregation is signed up for the week beginning on January 6, 2008. During that week our church will be responsible for providing snacks each night, providing 3 people to be present from 6:45-11:00 p.m. to open the shelter and welcome the men, and for providing one person who, along with a paid staff person, will staff the overnight shift from 11:00 p.m.-7:00 a.m. On Sunday, December 16, all who are interested in taking a volunteer shift at the shelter are invited to come to a short information session in the Meeting Hall after worship. The meeting will focus on information about the shelter, its rules and procedures, and volunteer responsibilities. This session is not required in order to volunteer, but we offer it as a way of giving people information and allowing people an opportunity to learn about how they can help and how they can feel safe and comfortable doing so.

Last year I took a couple of shifts at the shelter and, although I occasionally felt as though I bumbled my way through some of the interactions, it was one of the best and most rewarding experiences I have ever had. I believe that this shelter saves lives and we have very few opportunities to participate in making such a direct difference in the lives of others. I hope that many of you will feel called to volunteer, either by providing snacks or spending some time at the shelter this year. Please be looking for the sign-up sheets in the coming weeks!

Advent blessings,

**Ryan****CALENDAR CORRECTION:**

The Willamette University Chamber Choir will sing for worship on *January 6*, **not** *December 30*. On the 30<sup>th</sup> is our traditional congregational carol-sing

**CHRISTMAS BOOKS ON DISPLAY**

Christmas books for both adults and children are currently on display in the church library and available to be checked out.



The **Middle** and **High School** groups will meet at their regular times this week.

Plan to join us as we make ornaments for your family Christmas trees. Friends are always welcome!

Our annual youth **Christmas Party** and white elephant gift exchange will occur on *December 21* from 7:00-9:30 p.m. The **McCann** family will host the gathering and everyone is to bring a wrapped white elephant gift, a warm pair of socks to donate to the homeless shelter, and a snack or drink to share with the group. Pick up a flyer at youth group!

#### **CHILDREN'S CHOIR TO SING CHRISTMAS EVE**

The Children's Choir, directed by **Kristin Rorrer**, will sing during worship at 5:30 on Christmas Eve. They rehearse this Sunday immediately after worship in the Music Room.

#### **HANGING OF THE GREENS**

This year the Hanging of the Greens will be on *Saturday, December 15*.

This is a great community activity to help us all get into the holiday spirit, with something for everyone: from gathering the greens and trees in the morning, to setting up to make the church ready for the decorators, to making swags, wreaths and garlands (beginning at 4:00 p.m.). There are activities for the

younger members in Gatton Hall. If cooking is your thing, help prepare the meal for the helpers. And, as always, we need people willing to clean up. Sign-ups continue in Gatton Hall this Sunday.

#### **GIVE A GIFT OF FLOWERS FOR THE CHURCH YEAR**

In this Sunday's worship bulletin, there will be an insert offering 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.

#### **UPDATED KIOSK-- CHECK US OUT!**

Many thanks to **Nancye Ballard** who mounted all new pictures for the Gatton Hall entryway kiosk! We have entered the year 2007 (having been represented previously only up through 2004)! Check out this current year's events and look for your face in the many activities represented.



PHOTO thanks to Brian Lee:  
 (from L to R) Bryan Wright, with  
 Tommy); Maria Wright (with  
 Elena); Sue Gillespie, Cobie  
 deLespinasse

### **Cobie deLespinasse**

Cobie works at WET Labs in Philomath, where she is a lab technician. She enjoys music (she sings in our choir), and hiking. Cobie's parents are **Paul** and **Doris deLespinasse**, members of our church.

### **Sue Gillespie**

Sue is retired, but many of us have enjoyed her life-time gift of music. Sue plays the flute and harp. Her hobbies include music, reading, and travel. She was attracted to our church because it is an open and friendly church community, has wonderful pastors, great music, and is a beautiful church building.

### **Devan Lewis & Kevin Makinson**

Devan is a 6th grade math teacher at Linus Pauling Middle School and has a seven-year-old cat named Archimedes. She enjoys reading, learning about history and mythology. Her boyfriend Kevin's parents attended a UCC church and they were looking for a church community. "We really enjoyed Ryan and Liz and the friendly atmosphere."

Kevin is employed at Oregon State University where he is a graduate student in Radiation Health Physics. His hobbies/interests include being an Alpine ski coach and playing guitar (jazz, blues, funk, rock). He was attracted to our church because he comes from UCC background; he and Devan recently moved to Corvallis.

### **Maria & Bryan Wright**

## JUBILATE! CELEBRATES DECEMBER

Jubilate! The Women's Choir of Corvallis celebrates December with its annual winter concert. "Drumming in the Dawn--Songs to Celebrate the Season" is a program to celebrate the December traditions of Kwanzaa, Hanukkah, Christmas, and Winter Solstice. The public will have three opportunities to attend the concert: On *Saturday, December 15* at 7:30 p.m., at the Corvallis First United Methodist Church, 1165 NW Monroe Avenue, Corvallis, or on *Friday, December 21*, either at 6:00 p.m. or at 8:00 p.m., at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 2945 NW Circle, Corvallis .

The concert is free; donations will be gratefully accepted at the door.



### 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 ¼-inch margin and bring them to the church. The second drawer closest to the office on the name-tag stand is designated to collect these stamps for Church Women United. This same drawer is the collection box for "Labels for Education" and the bar codes from Campbell or Swanson soup labels to be sent to Crossroad residential school in Indiana (a UCC-affiliated agency for troubled children).



... to **Doris Sherry**, for her continuing important work coordinating rides to church for those who need transportation. If you need a ride or would like to offer to pick up someone, let Doris know.

### MISSION OFFERING THANKS

Dear members and friends  
at First Congregation,

Thank you for your overwhelming generosity -- a nice donation of \$1632 to Senior Meals/Meals on Wheels. This money goes directly to provide meals for our frail homebound neighbors in Corvallis.

Time, talent, and dollars is what this program runs on; you do it all.

Most sincerely,

**Cynthia Janes**, Corvallis Site Manager

### THANKS TO HEIFER PROJECT DONORS

Many thanks to all the folks who purchased Heifer Project animals and trees last Sunday and to **Priscilla Zaworski** who helped take your orders. Our total sales was over \$11,000 this year--the most ever!

### POTLUCK AND Pictionary FOR READ & FEED

No reading, but plenty of feeding this month. **Susan** and **Bill Wickes** host the annual potluck and game night at 6:00 p.m. *Sunday, December 9.*



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

**WEEKLY CALENDAR**

*Friday, December 7*

7:00 a.m. First Friday Forum

*Sunday, December 9*

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@Home class  
 10:30 a.m. Worship

(immediately following) Children's Choir  
 (following) Soup 'n' Bread \*  
 (following) Basketball meeting  
 (following) **Occasional Congregational Orchestra, Fireplace Room**

(following) Bell Choir  
 5:00 p.m. Middle School Youth  
 6:00 p.m. Read & Feed potluck  
 6:30 p.m. High School Youth

*Monday, December 10*

5:30 p.m. Basketball  
 7:00 p.m. Mission Board

*Tuesday, December 11*

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

*Wednesday, December 12*

7:00 a.m. Breakfast Group  
 5:30 p.m. 40+ Basketball  
 7:15 p.m. Sanctuary Choir

*Thursday, December 13*

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

*Friday, December 14*

7:30 p.m. Badminton

**Corvallis Repertory Singers** -- "Candlelight and Carols," 7:00 p.m. on *December 16* in our sanctuary.

**\* GO TO THE HEAD OF THE LINE**  
 Participants in Bell Choir, the basketball meeting, and orchestra rehearsal should go to the head of the Soup 'n' Bread line so they can eat in time for their next activity.