



Congregational News

From FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Corvallis, Oregon

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February 8, 2008



WORSHIP FEATURES GUEST BELLS

The ecumenical Carillon Revelry handbells, under the direction of **Colette Schlegel**, returns to our church to play this Sunday's prelude. The selections are "Timbrel and Dance" by McChesney, and "Cantabile," by Emily Li.

ATTENTION: LABEL SAVERS

Many thanks to the folks who are saving "Labels for Education" to send to the UCC Crossroads School in Indiana. Camp-longer front of so all you clip is the  UPC marking which is usually on the back of the can or box. (The UPC label is the squiggly lines and numbers which the grocery store scans when you check out, as pictured.)

YOU HAVE PROJECTS? OUR YOUTH ARE HERE TO HELP!

Our High School youth will be spending five days on the Yakima Indian

Reservation over Spring Break (*March 24-29*) on a learning and serving trip to the Yakima Christian Mission. To assist with the financing of this trip they are offering their services to the congregation in exchange for a donation to the Youth Mission Fund. Beginning this Sunday you will be able to purchase their skills as babysitters, yard workers, dog groomers, bike repair persons, and much more! Seek out the youth during Soup 'n' Bread this Sunday to arrange for help with your projects!

THIS SUNDAY

February 10

Adult Forum: Anthony Terndrup, Executive Director of the Pastoral Counseling Center, will speak about the work of the Center, one of the ministries our budget supports.

Scriptures: Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-7
Psalm 32
Matthew 4:1-11

Sermon: "If"
Ryan Lambert

Dear Friends,

For those of you who have not heard the news, I am writing this week from Seattle. Last Thursday, my daughter Jessie was diagnosed with a malignant tumor on the side of her head. This afternoon we got a preliminary diagnosis. Though there are still a few other diagnoses to exclude, they are relatively sure it is a high-grade lymphoblastic lymphoma. That's all we really know at this time. We go in to see the doctor tomorrow afternoon for some tests to see if the cancer has spread to other parts of her body, and in the next several days, we will have a treatment plan. It is my intention to remain in Seattle until we have a final diagnosis and a treatment plan and, depending on the timing, through Jessie's first chemotherapy treatment. It's hard to be away for so long, especially during this time of the year, but I need to be with my daughter.

I would be dishonest if I told you that I am living through these days with a sure and comforting sense of God's presence with me. Most of the time, God seems very far away. Or it may be that I have put myself far from God because God and I are not at the best of terms at present. It's not that I ask, "Why me?" as if somehow I should be particularly immune from the threatening shadows of the world; more I wonder, "Why anyone?" In the past, I've preached more than one dispassionate sermon about not having satisfactory answers for such questions. It's still true that I have no satisfactory answers; however, I am less dispassionate about the topic.

So what good is faith at a time like this? I have put the question out before me at a distance, to try to turn the rawness of my heart into a science experiment. My data are scattered; I have no elegant theory to propose to you. I can tell you, however, that Sunday morning, I attended worship at St. Mark's Episcopal Cathedral. The music was glorious, a balm to the abraded surface of my soul. And the words of the old Eucharistic liturgy, words I have known since my earliest childhood: they came back to me unbidden from some secret storehouse in my brain, and the effortlessness of them again comforted me for that moment.

In the days since Sunday, I have found that that same storehouse holds an entire treasury of faith: psalms and other scripture I have memorized, prayers, hymns, glimpses of the sacred, hours of wrestling with God as concept and God as presence, the remembered kindnesses of all of you--my community of faith. As I move through the ups and downs of each day, the contents of the storehouse whisper continually if randomly to me: "A mighty fortress is our God, . . ." "even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, . . ." "give us this day our daily bread..." Sometimes they seem a mockery, at others a distraction, and, in rare moments, they give me

peace. But they never leave. In some part of my heart, I know they are holding me even when I refuse to hold them.

It's not always easy to count my blessings right now, but when I do, I feel fortunate that Jessie has access to a world class medical facility and she has a wonderful group of close friends and family who will support her through this. For myself, I am thankful, first of all for my colleagues on the church staff, especially Ryan. Their absolute, unhesitating willingness to take care of things at work and be supportive of me is a gift beyond measure. And then there's all of you. I know with certainty that you will give me the time I need to care for my daughter. I know you are praying for her and for me. I know you stand behind me through this. That knowledge is so important. Thank you.

I hope to be home soon.

Liz



Thank you to **Molly, Joe, Megan, and Michael Chambers** for opening their home for the Super Bowl gathering this past week! **Middle and High School** youth groups will be meeting this week at 5:00 and 6:30 p.m., respectively. Both groups will be doing some initial planning for the 8:30 a.m. Easter Service and **Emily Chi** will join us for the beginning of the High School meeting to give us information about the Environmental Justice Conference (*April 4-6*) that she is working on and we will have the opportunity to attend. Plan to join us and always feel free to bring a friend! Questions? Contact **Ryan** at the church or at ryan@ucc-covallis.org.

READ & FEED MEETS

The discussion will focus on Wallace Stegner's *The Spectator Bird* at this

month's Read & Feed at the home of **Nancye Ballard**. The meeting begins at 7:00 p.m.

Our Thoughts and Prayers

... are with **Jessie Oettinger** and her family as she awaits news regarding her cancer diagnosis and treatment plan. For updates on her condition, please call the church office.

Cards and notes can reach Jessie at 1503 14th Ave. S, Seattle, WA 98144. Liz's address in Seattle during this time is c/o Fordyce, 9553 31st Ave. NW, Seattle, WA 98144.

Thanks

... to **Ed Henderlite**, for filling in as liturgist during Communion last Sunday. We are so blessed to have a "deep bench" of clergy people like Ed in our congregation, who ably serve when needed.

UCC JPANet 2007 Brief Summary

During 2007, UCC Justice and Peace Action Network advocates sent nearly 26,000 e-mails and faxes to their members of Congress on a variety of justice issues. The following is a snapshot of the issues JPANet Advocates took on:

- **SCHIP:** The State Children's health Insurance Program was extended until March 31.
- **Funding for Human Needs Program:** Congress closed out the year with the passage of a \$555 billion omnibus appropriations bill, restoring many programs to 2002 funding levels.
- **Farm Bill:** Over \$3 billion was added to the food stamp program for the next five years, but the Senate failed to reform the bill's farm subsidies.
- **No Child Left Behind:** Justice Advocates pushed for significant overhaul. Opposition to the form of the current law means it will likely not be reauthorized until the next administration.
- **Head Start Reauthorization:** In November, the program was reauthorized and will create spaces for additional children.
- **The DREAM Act:** The proposed law to grant some children brought at a young age to this country by undocumented parents the right to qualify for college entrance, etc. failed to pass.
- **Hate Crimes:** Advocates for the Matthew Shepard Act will try again in 2008 to pass this bill, which has strong bipartisan support.
- **Employment Discrimination:** The Employment Non-Discrimination Act, cleared a major hurdle in 2007, but fell short of what justice advocates had hoped: passage of an ENDA bill that includes gender identity language.
- **Energy Bill:** For the first time in more than 20 years, Congress improved fuel economy standards requiring our cars to go farther on a gallon of gas, and passed green building standards and appliance efficiency standards.
- **Iraq:** Advocates are working to build support for the Iraqi Refugee and Internally Displaced Persons Humanitarian Assistance, Resettlement and Security Act and the New Diplomatic Offensive for Iraq Act.
- **Jubilee and Debt Cancellation:** The Jubilee, gaining support, would expand current debt cancellation initiatives to include an additional 47 of the world's poorest countries. It is expected to come before Congress for a vote in spring 2008
- **Sudan:** In 2008, advocates will be called to support full funding of UN peacekeeping programs and a renewed effort at diplomacy to mediate the crisis.

- **International Trade:** In light of World Trade organization stalled negotiations, the Bush administration has sought bilateral free trade agreements, negotiating directly with individual countries.

For more details, see the UCC website.

MISSION OFFERING THANKS

CAAIR Steering Committee members want to extend our gratitude for the generous donation of \$1997 to CAAIR from your members. In September we began the fund raising with a goal of obtaining \$35,000 by February. With your contributions, our total to date is \$32,000. On *February 9*, CAAIR and community members will celebrate the success of all efforts and present the total balance of all funds raised to a representative of Mercy Corps. You are invited to join us at 7:30, at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 2945 Circle Blvd, Corvallis.

Mercy Corps plans to use CAAIR funds to support approximately 110 Iraqi boys and girls living as refugees in Jordan to obtain the equivalent of a 10th grade G.E.D. with vocational skills in various trades. The money may be used to supply food to families, provide medical care, wheelchairs or crutches for children with war-related injuries, in order to support a child in getting an education. CAAIR has requested Mercy Corps report back within a year on this project.

Thank you for your very generous support to serve some Iraqi refugees in Jordan.

Eileen Marma
CAAIR Steering Committee

CAAIR THANKS WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Last Sunday the Women's Fellowship and Just Peace Committee sponsored a potluck fund raiser for CAAIR. Thank you to the women who arranged set-up in the Fireplace Room: **Nancy William, Osa Martinson, and Coral Torley.** And many thanks for the following for cleaning up: **Alice Morrow, Monine Stebbins, Eleanor MacDonald, Julie Maloney, Brian Lee, Aleita Hass Holcombe, Christine Storm, Donna Rhesus, Joan Crawford, and Bob Stebbins.**

Our guest speaker, **Noor Khaki**, told stories about her Iraqi family members living in Jordan. The food was fabulous. Generous donations to CAAIR totaled \$475. Thank you!!

Eileen Marma

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your generous support over the last year. It is only through the continued generosity of good friends like yourself that the Widening Our Welcome Fund campaign can be about expanding churches, camps and new faith communities within our geographical region.

We gratefully acknowledge receipt of your 2007 gift in the following sum: \$37,188.

Debbie Jacober, Bookkeeper CPC



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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
 Home Phone: 754-0117

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

WEEKLY CALENDAR

Friday, February 8
 1:00 p.m. Ruth Freund memorial,
 Sanctuary

Sunday, February 10
 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
 Noon Soup 'n Bread
 Noon Nominating Com-
 mittee, Library
 Noon Winter Weekend plan-
 ning, Fireplace Room
 5:00 p.m. Middle School Youth
 6:30 p.m. High School Youth
 7:00 p.m. Read & Feed, Ballard

Monday, February 11
 7:00 p.m. C E Board, Conference
 Room
 7:30 p.m. Badminton

Tuesday, February 12
 8:30 a.m. Staff

Noon Lectionary class
 7:30 p.m. Boy Scout Troop 1

Wednesday, February 13
 7:00 a.m. Breakfast Group
 1:30 p.m. A D Circle [below]
 5:30 p.m. Lenten supper
 6:10 p.m. Child care begins
 6:15 p.m. Lenten worship
 6:45 p.m. Lenten classes
 7:30 p.m. Sanctuary Choir

Thursday, February 14-Valentine's Day
 5:30 p.m. Church Basketball
 7:00 p.m. Girl Scout Troop 142

LOOKING AHEAD: March 20:
 Maundy Thursday; March 23: Easter

A D CIRCLE MEETS

The A D Circle will meet on
Wednesday, February 13, at 1:30 p.m. at
 the home of **Anna Marie Holmes**, 3848
 SW Neer Ave. All are welcome. Contact
Coral Torley (752-0114) for further in-
 formation or for transportation.