

# Congregational News

From FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
Corvallis, Oregon

Vol. XLVII, No. 34

September 26, 2008



## LOVING HANDS AND GENTLE VOICES NEEDED!

We find ourselves faced with a wonderful challenge in our nursery this fall. We have many babies that come to play each Sunday and are in need of some caring adults to assist **Shannon** in interacting (and sometimes comforting) them during their time with us. So if you consider yourself a consummate cuddler, an entertainer of infants, a lavisher of love, or just someone who would like to spend a few hours playing with some fabulous children, please call **Molly Chambers** (730-6009) for more information and available dates.

## WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY TO FOCUS ON CHURCH WORLD SERVICE

The Mission and Outreach Board has invited **Lynn Magnuson** from the regional office of Church World Service to lead our Adult Education Forum and provide the sermon on *October 5* as we celebrate World Communion Sunday. Church World Service is a cooperative

ministry of 35 Protestant, Orthodox, and Anglican denominations (including the UCC!), providing sustainable self-help and development, disaster relief, and refugee assistance in some 80 countries. Within the United States, Church World Service assists communities in responding to disasters, resettles refugees, promotes fair national and international policies, provides educational resources, and offers opportunities to join a people-to-people network of local and global caring through participation in CROP Hunger Walks, the Blankets+ program, and the CWS Kits Program. Plan to join us as we celebrate World Communion Sunday and learn about the work done on our behalf by Church World Service!

## THIS SUNDAY

*September 28*

**Adult Forum:** Ryan Lambert on  
"Talking to Children About God"

**Scripture:** Philippians 2:1-13  
Matthew 20:1-16

**Sermon:** "Gotcha!"  
Elizabeth Oettinger

**THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK***Elizabeth Oettinger*

Dear Friends,

God willing, this will be one of my last updates for you on my daughter Jessie's condition. Last weekend, Jessie was in Corvallis. One of the primary reasons for her coming home was to attend church on Sunday to thank you all for your support of her during the intensive phase of her treatment. For those of you who missed her on Sunday, she asked me to make sure that you all know how important it has felt to her to have her church praying for her. She has so appreciated every card and e-mail and expression of connection. The good news now is that she is done with intensive chemotherapy, hopefully forever! Jessie still has 18 months of what is called "prolonged maintenance" on her chemotherapy schedule, but it's lower doses of less toxic drugs. She should start feeling better and her mother should start worrying less.

I say I should start worrying less because I'm not there yet. After months of living from day-to-day or week-to-week and blood count-to-blood count, it's difficult to relax my guard. I know intellectually that this phase of treatment should be much easier for Jessie; I know also that my worrying has not added one iota to the effectiveness of her treatment. But it's harder than I expected to put my worry down. I have this irrational fear that if I lessen my vigilance, something bad will happen. I'm told that this is "normal," that anxiety, like much else in life, is habit-forming. I trained hard to sustain this level of apprehension; now I need to discipline myself equally to lower the threat level below orange!

I have found myself reflecting this week on how adaptable we humans are. Last February, if you had told me that I would grow accustomed to the reality of my daughter's cancer, I would have said it would be impossible. Now in my family we have a whole vocabulary of cancer humor. My bald daughter looks "normal" to me, hair a superfluous gift on a perfect head. Starting this week, we move to a different stage where we are told cancer will be more of a subtext in Jessie's life than her primary daily struggle. And day by day, more despite our inclinations than because of them, minds and hearts and daily patterns will reshape themselves around whatever that looks like, and we'll move on from there.

There are those who say that serious illness is a gift because it teaches us so much. I can't quite go there, but I will say that in a paradoxical way, the uncertainty of these last months leaves in its wake a odd confidence. We can change, adapt, live our lives even in the face of fates we would not choose, and there is power in that knowledge. Part of what makes the changing possible is a sense of not being alone in the darkness. So, like Jessie, I thank you for all your help over the last eight months. It has meant the world to me.

God bless you all, **Liz**



This week for both groups will be doing apple picking and cider pressing at the home of **Judy and Jim Juntunen** (4215 SW 53<sup>rd</sup>). The Middle School group will gather on the Juntunen property at 3:00 p.m. and the High School group will meet there at 5:00 p.m. Please wear sturdy shoes and clothing appropriate for the weather as we will be using ladders to pick apples and hauling loads of apple pulp via wheelbarrow. Friends are welcome!



### BE A PART OF THE GFBW BOARD!

It's that time of year again. The "elves" are getting busy preparing for another seasonal fair trade gift store. The store, called **Gifts For A Better World**, will take place entirely during the month of November this year. The store location will again be right here at First Congregational Church, in the CE wing. Here's where you come in. The board meets year round and would very much like to grow in size (read; many hands make light work). Please, please, please, if you enjoy the store and would like to get involved, wait no longer. Pick up your phone and call **Rhonda Mueller-Warrant** (758-1667). I'll be happy to tell you more about the board meetings. Honestly, of all the things you could

volunteer for, this is lots of fun. You will enjoy helping. Not much time to spare, don't despair. Call anyway. You can be involved by helping out with a shift or two as a store volunteer. Value diversity? So do we. Men and young adults are grossly underrepresented. Be the first to call and get your choice of volunteer positions.

New to town? Unfamiliar with the store? Call Rhonda. This is a great place to meet friendly people and share your talents at the same time.

### WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP BEGINS PROGRAM YEAR...

On *Wednesday, October 1*, Women's Fellowship will have a luncheon at noon followed by the program "What's Up in Women's Medicine?" presented by our Parish Nurse **Caroline Zaworski**. All women of the church are invited to sign up for this event after church on Sunday. Price for lunch is \$5 and childcare can be provided if requested in advance. The program ends by 2:00 p.m. Here's your chance to get better acquainted with other women in our congregation!

### ...WITH WORKSHOP TO FOLLOW!

We will have a workshop to make more reusable grocery bags following the Women's Fellowship luncheon and speaker on *Wednesday, October 1*. The workshop will be from 2:00 to about 3:30 in the Meeting Hall. There are jobs for any skill level. We have orders for

about 20 bags and it would be nice if we could have that many ready for people to pick up this coming Sunday. If you can stay for even a half hour it will be helpful. Call **Monine Stebbins** (754-8039) if you need more information about this project that is sponsored by Women's Fellowship in response to the Caring for Creation project in our church.

## Corvallis Film Festival

Our church is one of four Corvallis congregations that are members and supporters of the larger CWC (Community of Welcoming Congregations). CWC is an Oregon and SW Washington inter-faith ministry and advocacy organization working toward full inclusion and equality for transgender, lesbian, bisexual, gay and questioning persons.

This fall, the Corvallis congregations and the OSU Pride Center are offering a Film Festival. Mark your calendars for these five award-winning film showings.

- *Sunday, October 5, 5:00 p.m.*  
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship  
"For the Bible Tells Me So" --  
Through the experiences of five very normal, very Christian, very American families, we discover how insightful people of faith handle the realization of having a gay child.
- *Monday, October 13, 5:00 p.m.*  
OSU Ballroom in the Memorial Union "Equality U."-- Documentary following 34 young activists on the

Soulforce Equality Ride. Q&A after the film with Tab Dansby of OSU Pride Center and participant in last year's Soulforce Equality Ride.

- *Sunday, October 19, 7:00 p.m.*  
First Congregational United Church of Christ "Call Me Malcolm" -- A documentary feature about a transgender seminary student. This is not a "how to transition" film but a film about the universal self-seeking that we all do.

- *Sunday October 26, 3:00 p.m.*  
First United Methodist Church "A Jihad for Love"-- Filmmaker Parvez Sharma travels the many worlds of the dynamic Muslim faith discovering the stories of its most unlikely storytellers: lesbian and gay Muslims.

- *Sunday, November. 2, 5:00 p.m.*  
Beit Am (625 NW 36<sup>th</sup> Street)  
"Trembling Before G-d." Intimately-told personal stories of Hasidic and Orthodox Jews who are gay or lesbian, and who seek to reconcile their passionate love of Judaism and the Divine with Biblical prohibitions that forbid homosexuality.

**WANTED:** Volunteer to supervise the kitchen and dining room clean-up on our Stone Soup meal days at First Christian Church, *November 18* and *December 16*. There is a Stone Soup handbook to answer questions. Please call or e-mail **Carol Huntington** or **Pat Johnson**.



First Congregational prepares and serves the 5:30 p.m. meal on the third and fifth Tuesday of each month, so we need volunteers for *Tuesday, September 30*, our second Stone Soup day this month. Sign up Sunday to help with this important ministry.

Preparations begin at 3:00, but help is welcome anytime between 3:00 and 8:00 for preparation, serving, and/or clean-up.

## TAKARAZUKA CHURCH NEWS

Dear friends at First Congregational

We would like to introduce some traditional events for children in Japan. These originated in the 8<sup>th</sup> century and take place during the summer break between July 20 and August 31, while children are away from school for about 40 days.

At Takarazuka Church we had a "Cool Evening," organized by our Church School. We enjoyed all kinds of fun activities including games and a lot of food. We also invited our neighbors to this event.

There are several events observed during the "Obon" period from August 13 through 15. "Obon" is a Buddhist tradition for Japanese people who believe that their ancestors' spirits return home for reunion during the "Obon" period.

"Bon Dance": Though there are several traditional dances in Japan, one of

the most famous and common dances is the "Bon Dance," called "Bon Odori" in Japanese. People gather at a local open-space or park and dance with traditional Japanese music after sunset. The music needs to be happy to welcome the ancestors' souls.

"Toro-Nagashi": a Japanese ceremony in which participants float paper lanterns down on a river. This is primarily done on the last evening during the "Obon" festival, supposedly as a way to guide the spirits departing back to the other world.

"Jizo Bon": an event to commemorate "Jizo," a protector for children. "Jizo" statues are familiarly seen along roadsides in Japan. Figures of "Jizo" are often dressed with a bib. This practice is believed to have begun when grieving parents who had lost a child put a bib of the deceased child on a "Jizo" statue in the hope that he would protect their child in the other world. The "Jizo Bon" is a festival for children, honoring and celebrating "Jizo," and they are fed with sweets and home-made dishes.

Though children who come to church are not familiar with these events, we would like to introduce these to you, because these are very traditional summer activities in Japanese culture.

Reported by

**Etsuko Omori and Sumiko Uegaki**

(Please see the related photos on the Takarazuka bulletin board in the church foyer.)

*Dear Friends,*

*My thanks and appreciation to all who contributed in some way to the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of my ordination on September 14. This has been for me an important time of memory and reflection. Nancy and I are indeed blessed to be a part of such a caring and thoughtful church.*

*Special thanks to Liz and Ryan.*

*Ed Henderlite*

### **REMEMBERING RED SKELTON**

"A Mirror Image: Remembering Red Skelton" will be presented at First United Methodist Church, 11<sup>th</sup> and Monroe, on *Thursday, October 23*. Jerry Peters, a professional clown for over thirty years, brings to life one of American's most beloved clowns. He is among a handful of people licensed by the Skelton family to impersonate Red.

The show is a fundraiser for their Camp Magruder on the coast. Ticket sales begin *October 5*; call 752-2491. Adults are \$12 (\$15 at the door); youth (12-18) \$5; children under 12 are free.

### **WOMEN'S CLUSTER MEETING SCHEDULED**

On *October 15*, the fall Women's Cluster meeting for Willamette Valley churches will be held at Lincoln City Congregational UCC beginning with registration at 9:30 a.m. The program will feature speakers from the UCC workcamp at Back Bay Mission in Biloxi, Mississippi.

This trip was sponsored by Central Pacific Conference to assist with repairs from Katrina damage to the mission and surrounding area.

The worship service will be presented by women from St. John's UCC in Tillamook are 10:00 a.m. Registration fee is \$7, which includes lunch. This gathering will end by 2:00 p.m.

Please contact **Nancy Klingeman** or the Lincoln City church to make a reservation for the meeting. Carpools will be arranged from Corvallis.

### **DAUGHTERS INVITED TO WOMEN'S CAMP**

High school age daughters are invited to attend the Central Pacific Conference Women's Camp with their mothers on *October 17-19*. Some Confirmants from a Portland area church may attend with their leaders.

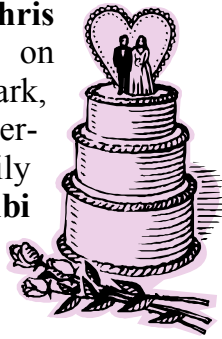
"God Is Still Giving" is the theme with Rev. **Jean Doane** as the resource leader. Registration forms are available in the literature rack outside Gatton Hall. \$55 is the pre-registration fee with \$40 due on arrival at camp. Registration deadline is *October 13* unless spaces are filled before then.

The weekend begins with dinner on Friday night and ends after brunch Sunday morning. Carpools will be arranged from Corvallis.

Please contact **Nancy Klingeman** (753-3350) for additional information. Financial aid is available from the Rev. Anne Smith Educational Loan/Grant

Fund. (Forms are in the church office but must be completed by *October 1*).

**Edith Sperling** and **Chris Gilliland** were married on June 22, 2008, in Estes Park, Colorado. It was a wonderful day with lots of family present, including **Abi Sperling** and her partner, **Tom Howard**, both of whom came from Auckland, New Zealand for the event. Edie and Chris are now living in Tacoma, Washington where Edie just began graduate school in the Physical Therapy program at the University of Puget Sound.



#### **FROM THE PASTORAL COUNSELING CENTER**

Dear Friends,

On August 31, clergy and laity from your churches gathered to celebrate Christian unity at an ecumenical service in Bruce Starker Arts Park. At this interdenominational celebration, a special offering was collected to support the mission of the Pastoral Counseling Center (PCC). This generous collection of \$1,148.30 will help the PCC to offer premium and affordable counseling for individuals, couples, and families. These funds will allow us to adjust our standard fee, as needed, based upon the ability to pay of persons who come to us for quality and accessible care. On behalf of our clients and their counselors, I wish to

express my deepest gratitude to your congregations for these contributions, as well as for the sponsor church covenants you keep with us in order to sustain the healing ministry you entrust to us.

Thank you!

**Anthony Terndrup,**  
Executive Director, PCC



#### **OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS**

Ray William 10/1,  
Douglas Pentland 10/3,  
Patrick Yun 10/3, Kiko  
Kimura 10/4, Paul  
deLespinasse 10/4, Ryan Lambert 10/5,  
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 Elbinger 10/11, Irwin Harris 10/12,  
John Koch 10/13, Karen Miller 10/15,  
Rose Christianson 10/16, George Mueller-Warrant 10/19, Nancye Ballard 10/19, Doug Richmond 10/21, Sean Skillingstad 10/21, Emily Chi 10/24, Christopher 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**

Jan and Larry Thornton 10/1  
Cliff and Jo Anne Trow 10/10 (39<sup>th</sup>)



If your name(s) are not on our list, you may drop the information in the newsletter office mailbox. (Anniversary dates are optional.)



**Congregational News** (USPS 128-820)  
 PERIODICALS POSTAGE PAID AT CORVALLIS OR  
 Postmaster: Send address changes to:  
 Congregational News, 4515 SW West Hills Rd.  
 Corvallis OR 97333-3825. Published weekly  
 except twice a month in July and August by  
 First Congregational United Church of Christ



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Copy deadline for next issue of newsletter is Tuesday noon, September 30.

**WEEKLY CALENDAR**

*Friday, September 26*

7:30 p.m. Badminton

*Sunday, September 28*

9:00 a.m. Sanctuary Choir  
 9:30 a.m. Christian Education  
 10:30 a.m. Worship  
 3:00 p.m. Middle School Youth  
                   cider pressing,  
 5:00 p.m. High School Youth  
                   cider pressing

*Tuesday, September 30*

**8:30** a.m. Staff  
 Noon Lectionary class  
 3:00 p.m. Stone Soup  
 7:30 p.m. Boy Scout Troop 1

*Wednesday, October 1*

Noon Women's Fellowship  
                   luncheon, Gatton Hall  
 2:00 p.m. Bag-making workshop,  
                   Meeting Hall  
 7:15 p.m. Sanctuary Choir

*Thursday, October 2*

7:00 p.m. Girl Scout Troop 142

*Friday, October 3*

7:00 a.m. First Friday Forum  
 7:30 p.m. Badminton

**F.o.y.o.i**

The humorous "report" on the Bible that **Ellie Erkkila** read last Sunday during the children's message time can be found on-line at:  
<http://dbstalk.com/showthread.php?t=133473>

Dear Friends at UCC,

For over twenty five years you have been active supporters of We Care. Beyond your financial support [\$500], you have sent us Joni Peterson, Joni has just agreed to continue on another year as Treasurer-- a most important role! Her contributions of time and careful stewardship are excellent. We are so grateful to her for cheerful leadership.

Very sincerely,

Prue Kaye,  
 We Care Board Secretary