



# Congregational News

From FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
Corvallis, Oregon

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November 21, 2008

## Thanksgiving Sunday

This Thanksgiving *Sunday, November 23*, we will have an offering of food for the South Corvallis Food Bank during worship. Bring commercially-canned or packaged food which will be carried forward during the first hymn. [Suggestions from the food bank for types of food needed are on page 5.] Cash or checks (made out to "South Corvallis Food Bank") are also welcome!

Our 2009 pledges will be dedicated during this service.



### THANKSGIVING DINNER THIS SUNDAY

Those attending our all-church Thanksgiving dinner after worship in Gatton Hall this *Sunday, November 23*, please bring a salad, vegetable dish or dessert—enough to serve 10-12 people. It would be helpful if your dessert were already cut into 10-12 pieces for easier serving. Turkey, stuffing, potatoes and gravy, and beverages are provided.

If you didn't sign up, but wish to attend anyway, bring a side dish and join

us! Food may be left in the Gatton Hall kitchen before the service.

There are always a number of dishes left behind after an all-church function; please be sure all dishes and serving utensils are labeled with your name.

### REMEMBER OR HONOR SOMEONE WITH A NEW HYMNAL

An insert in this Sunday's worship bulletin will offer an opportunity to purchase a new *The Faith We Sing* hymnal for the church, in memory or in celebration of the person you name. The cost is only \$14.

## THIS SUNDAY

*November 23*

**Adult Forum:** Former Troop 1 Boy Scout **Jesse Fitzpatrick** will report on mission work he is undertaking in an AIDS orphanage in Malawi.

**Scriptures:** Deuteronomy 8:7-18  
Luke 17:11-19

**Sermon:** "Returning Thanks"  
Elizabeth Oettinger

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

Dear Friends,

Thanksgiving has long been my favorite holiday. It has limited marketing appeal; other than food, there's little "stuff" involved. Instead, for most of us, it remains a time to remember to be grateful for all that we too often take for granted. This year, more than ever before, it will be important for me to join hands around the dinner table with those I love and to give thanks. It's been a hard year, and yet, paradoxically, the very difficulty of the past months has allowed me to experience and enumerate more blessings than I can count.

This November, I am thankful beyond measure for my daughters, for my friends, for all of you who have been my safety net when times were rough, for health insurance and the kindness of strangers, for compassionate health care professionals, and for every day when those I love are free of crisis. Henri Nouwen, the great pastoral theologian, once remarked that true patience was not just marking time in the distance from x to y, but instead fully living and appreciating the moments between events. If my daughter's illness has taught me anything, it is the truth of that statement. We spend much of our lives in the time between--between this and that news or this or that goal. Too often, our eyes are so fixed on the landscape ahead that we forget to really see what is right here, directly in front of our eyes or beneath our feet. We fail in our mindfulness of daily grace.

There is a part of me that does not want Thanksgiving to come until I can raise a glass and give thanks that Jessie has conquered her cancer forever, but that impulse is wasteful in its impatience. It trivializes the considerable blessings of this day, this moment.

And so, this Thanksgiving, I pray that all of us may learn true patience. May we sit around the significant tables of our lives, join hands with family and friends, and see and hear and taste with relish every good gift of our lives.

God bless you all.

**Liz**



**ADVENT  
FESTIVAL  
IS COMING**

In celebration of the beginning of Advent, the Chris-

tian Education Board is hosting the annual Advent Festival on *Sunday, November 30*. Plan to join us for family and intergenerational activities during the CE hour and during fellowship time after worship. More details next week!



We had 24 people participate in the progressive dinner last Sunday! Thank you

to the **Rorrer, Lambert, Skillingstad,** and **Goldner** families for hosting parts of the dinner! Thanks also to **Libby Ankarberg, Richard and Amy Nafshun,** and **Kathy Mason** for providing transportation through the fog!

This week the youth groups will be meeting at their regular times: Middle School at 5:00 p.m. and High School at 6:30 p.m. In celebration of Thanksgiving we will be building an artistic representation of our own thankfulness.

Curious? Plan to join us, and bring a friend! Questions? Contact **Ryan** at the church or via e-mail.

### **WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP HOSTS CHRISTMAS TEA**

Women's Fellowship will meet on *Wednesday, December 3,* at 10:00 a.m. in the Fireplace Room. The program, "Christmas Sharing," has two parts:

- You share (show and tell) your family Christmas traditions.
- Share with children in the community. Bring an unwrapped gift for a child up to 18 months of age. Suggested gifts: board books, balls, soft blocks, soft books, puzzles, large building blocks, musical toys, crib toys and multi-ethnic baby dolls. (Please do not bring stuffed animals.) The gifts

will be distributed through the Center Against Rape and Domestic Violence.

Let us know if you need child care or transportation.

### **PICK UP A BRIGHT GIFT TAG**

Tags for Bright Gifts for Vina Moses families will be ready for pick up this Sunday. Vina Moses has been distributing toys to needy children in our community for many years. Tags for Janus House, a residential facility in Corvallis for adults with mental illness, will be available on the 30<sup>th</sup>.

Please select a tag or tags on Sunday. Gifts for Vina Moses need to be returned unwrapped on *Sunday, December 14.*

### **HANGING OF THE GREENS**

This year the Hanging of the Greens—our traditional day for decorating the church for Christmas—will be on *Saturday, December 13.*

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 prepare the church for the decorators, to making swags, wreaths and garlands (beginning at 4:00 p.m.). There are activities for the younger members in Gattton Hall. If cooking is your thing, help prepare the meal for the helpers. And, as always, we need people willing to clean up. Sign-up sheets will be in the foyer beginning this *Sunday, November 23.*

## TAKARAZUKA CHURCH NEWS

We had a memorial service on November 2, as is customary on the first Sunday in November every year.

It has been 54 years since Takarazuka Church was established in 1954. Our church has 92 members at rest. By request of church members, their family members are accepted even if they are not affiliated with church. Four people were added this year.

Pictures of those at rest were placed by their families at the front table during the service. We prayed together remembering those at rest. After the service, we went to the city cemetery, located at the foot of a mountain, a 15-minute drive away from our church, to have the memorial service in front of the church graveyard, where 37 members' ashes have been placed and individuals' names have been engraved on the tomb. Scripture was read, hymns were sung, and prayers offered. We placed ashes of a member who passed away on August 23.

There are many gravesites owned by Takarazuka Church members in this cemetery. The picture (posted on the Takarazuka Church bulletin board) shows one of them.

We also visit this cemetery on Easter in addition to the first Sunday in November.

**Takako Nobunaga**

(Please see the Takarazuka Church bulletin board.)

## *Stewardship Statement*

In the seven short years of our church's history of which I have been a part, I have consistently felt welcomed. It has been clear to me from the very beginning that unconditional welcome of everyone, regardless of life circumstances, is an important mission of the Corvallis UCC. For me, these past seven years have seen changes in my life that I could never have imagined or anticipated. In times of great joy and celebration I have found enthusiasm. And in times of trial, comfort and solace. The personal sharing and open generosity of spirit that is consistently displayed by this congregational is one of the greatest strengths of this church family.

The open welcome so boldly proclaimed by our wider church is concretely manifested at Corvallis UCC. From the way that the church space is used for diverse community needs as well as for church business, it is clear that an open welcome is the legacy of those that came before. By maintaining and even modifying our church spaces to be used by our community, we show another dimension of welcome to whoever crosses our threshold. It is this open welcome to all that I hope will be passed along in years to come. I hope that in the troubled times in which we live, we will maintain our capacity for unconditional welcome. This welcome includes all those who seek a church family, and to the needs of our broader community

whether they are consciously seeking a church family or not. By our behavior as individuals, a congregational family, and as stewards of our church spaces we have an opportunity to be examples of openness, generosity and welcome to all.

**Becky Flitcroft**



### **HEIFER PROJECT GIFTS AVAILABLE**

There will be a table offering Heifer Project alternative gifts at this year's Advent Festival on *Sunday, November 30*. Prices will range from \$10 for a share of a goat, sheep, pig, rabbit trio, or tree seedlings to \$500 for an entire heifer. Also, available will be: a "Knitting Basket" of a pair of llamas and a pair of sheep for \$500 or \$50 a share; "Milk Menagerie" of a heifer, two goats, and a water buffalo for \$1000 or \$100 a share; and "Joy to the World" of two sheep, four goats, one heifer, and two llamas for \$1500 or \$150 a share.

### **THANKS FROM SCFB**

South Corvallis Food Bank sends UCC a very big thank-you for your ongoing support. The Food Bank continues to have over 215 families and over 850 individuals on average (over 20% increase from a year ago). UCC folks contribute to the food banks ability to maintain services during these times of increasing needs.

Thank you for your generosity,  
**South Corvallis Food Bank**

### **FILL THE BIN FOR THE SOUTH CORVALLIS FOOD BANK**

For December, January, and February: **any protein, or hearty soup items, dental hygiene items, jam-jellies (no canned-at-home) and decaf herbal tea.**

OPPORTUNITY: Folks who are interested in volunteering are encouraged to contact **Bettina** by e-mail at: [miller2406@comcast.net](mailto:miller2406@comcast.net)

More info about the Food Bank at: <http://www.southcorvallisfoodbank.org/>

### **SEASONAL BOOKS ON DISPLAY IN LIBRARY**

Thanksgiving books for children are currently on display in the church library and available to be checked out. Christmas books will be displayed beginning in December. We have a nice supply of these but "early birds" will have the largest selection to choose from! Please be sure that children sign both first and last names of the library card. Your librarians are not always super-detectives!



### **NEXT PFLAG MEETING IS DECEMBER POTLUCK**

There will not be a PFLAG meeting on the usual 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of the month in either November or December. Our next event will be *Monday, December 8*, for a potluck that is open to everyone at First United Methodist Church in Corvallis. More information to follow.



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Copy deadline for next issue of newsletter is **Monday noon, November 24.**

**WEEKLY CALENDAR**

*Friday, November 21*

7:30 p.m. Badminton

*Saturday, November 22*

10:00 a.m. Cooking and set-up for  
 Thanksgiving dinner

*Sunday, November 23*

9:00 a.m. Sanctuary Choir

9:30 a.m. Christian Education

10:30 a.m. Worship

(following) Children's Choir

**Noon Thanksgiving Dinner,  
 Gatton Hall**

2:00-5:00 Boy Scout Fair

5:00 p.m. Middle School Youth

6:30 p.m. High School Youth

*Monday, November 24*

9:00 a.m. Staff

*Tuesday, November 25*

Noon Lectionary class

7:15 p.m. Church Council

7:30 p.m. Boy Scout Troop 1

*Wednesday, November 26*

7:30 a.m. Breakfast Group

*Thursday, November 27-Thanksgiving*

**Office closed**

*Friday, November 28*

**Office closed**

**MAKING MUSIC  
 AT CHRISTMAS**

The **Occasional  
 Congregational**



**Orchestra**, under the direction of **Jeffrey Larkin**, will begin rehearsals after worship on *Sunday, December 7*. Youth and adults: Bring your string, or wind instruments and join in. Weekly practices will last about half an hour. The ensemble will play Christmas carols for 30 minutes prior to the start of the early Christmas eve service (from 5:00-5:30).

**Our Thoughts and Prayers**

... are with **Kay Harris**, recovering from hip surgery on November 16.