



Congregational News

From FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Corvallis, Oregon

Vol. XLVIII, No. 8

February 20, 2009



We begin our Lenten schedule this *Wednesday, February 25*. Join us for a simple meal in the Fireplace Room, followed by worship and the imposition of ashes in

the chapel. Classes begins immediately afterwards. Watch for posted signs with class locations that evening!

Descriptions of the class offerings may be found in the February 13th issue of *Congregational News*, available on the church website: <http://www.ucc-corvallis.org/newsletter.htm>

SHARE THE FEAST ON COMMUNION SUNDAY!

Amid difficult economic circumstances the needs of the hungry are a growing concern in our community and across the country. The **Mission Board** would like to invite our congregation to think of the hungry in our community as we are spiritually fed through the taking of Communion. Starting *March 1*, non-perishable foods will be collected during Communion as a way of



reminding us that Communion feeds both our spirit and the body of Christ in our community. Simply bring your item with you and leave it in the front pew
[continued on page 2]

THIS SUNDAY

February 22

Adult Forum: For the last session from our Caring for Creation group, our speaker is **Sarah Drydahl**, an outreach coordinator for the Benton County Soil and Water Conservation District. Sarah manages their Adopt a Stream program which promotes educating people on the importance of caring for our urban streams. Since the church's property includes a portion of Dunawi Creek, the C4C group thought this would be a timely topic. Come learn about Dunawi Creek, what makes it special, and how we can do our part to take care of it.

Scriptures: 2 Kings 2:1-12
Mark 9:2-9

Sermon: "The Fragile Impermanent"
Elizabeth Oettinger

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK*Ryan Lambert*

Dear Friends,

This Sunday will mark the end of Epiphany, and on Wednesday we mark the beginning of Lent with an Ash Wednesday service that includes the imposition of ashes. As a community we will gather throughout Lent for worship and classes on Wednesday night, thus providing an opportunity to be intentional about our preparation for our journey through Holy Week. Gathering together for a community meal, attending mid-week worship, and participating in a class all serve as Lenten disciplines, but still, many of us look for personal and private ways to observe this season. This year I find myself seeking to add something during the Lenten season rather than eliminate things or habits from my life. Because I often think of Lent as an opportunity for rebirth I returned to my January 4th sermon as we entered Epiphany as a potential guide from how I might observe Lent. In that sermon I asked whether one other road that we might take in response to the Magi's travels down another road might be to take a heightened interest in the care that we take of our own bodies? I wondered if we saw our bodies as a gift from God, or merely as a commodity that is ours to use as we see fit? Those questions were meant to jog our collective memory concerning how Holy we all are as Gods creation and in some small way they were also meant to spur me into more healthy living.

Alas, my own intentions around exercise faded amid the cold temperatures of January and my New Year's resolution about running and biking has fallen by the wayside as we approach the end of February. However, I still hold to the belief that I, and we together, should be healthier as the bodies of Christ that we inhabit. But obviously theory doesn't always mean things come to fruition, so, as we enter Lent together I invite all of you to consider joining me in adding meaningful exercise to your life during this season so that together the body of Christ might be healthier. I am committing to running and/or biking 5 days a week during Lent for my health and also as a way of marking the weeks of Lent. I hope some of you will join me in altering the way we take care of the body of Christ that is ours. Feel free to ask me how things are going, and to share your stories from the bike, the road, or however you might travel through Lent.

Blessings for your Lenten journey,

Ryan**COMMUNION *from page 1***

as you come forward for Communion.
The bounty will be used to feed the hun-

gry through the South Corvallis Food
Bank and Linn Benton Lunch Box.



This week the **Middle and High School** youth are invited to gather at the **Thackray** home (4728 NW Inger Place) to watch the always theologically-important event known as the Academy Awards. Plan to arrive at 5:15 to fill out your ballot for the prediction contest! We will be ordering pizza during our gathering and will also have our own contest and award for the youth who is best dressed. Bring a snack to share with the group and join us! Friends are always welcome!

Sheep Barn Adventure

To re-enforce our CE wing Heifer Project goal of buying one sheep for a family in need, we are taking a trip to the OSU sheep barn this Sunday. Please join us to go see the mama sheep and their lambs (and maybe see a lamb born!) after lunch this Sunday. We will gather in Gatton Hall and eat our sack lunches brought from home, then head out to the barn. Please dress warmly including gloves as the barn is not heated. All are welcome to join us whether you are a child in body or in spirit!



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The **Corvallis Daytime Drop-in Center** is again operating. The Center is open from 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Monday through Friday at First Christian Church.

The center is offering just the basic service of a place to come in and sit down. Folks can visit, have coffee or tea, play a table game or put together a puzzle. In order for this center to be available, volunteers are needed. Our church is scheduled to provide volunteers the week of *March 2*. Two volunteers are needed each day (or more if shorter shifts are assigned). Please contact **Aleita Hass-Holcombe** (740-3235) if you can help.

REPORT ON CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Last Sunday, the congregation voted to fund the proposed sidewalk project. During the meeting questions arose about the plans for the entrance driveway, landscaping, and parking lot. The Trustees will be reporting back to us on this soon, and will provide an opportunity for congregational input.

ORGANIZING MEETING



Pat Johnson (with help from **Monine Stebbins** and others) has diligently served as lead cook and organizer for Stone Soup since we began taking on this task. The **Mission and Outreach Board** would like to expand the number of people who are capable of serving as lead cooks for this endeavor so that if Pat or Monine are gone we are still capable of taking our turn. After worship on *Sun-*

day, *March 1*, Pat Johnson will host a **brief** meeting for people interested in learning how to organize Stone Soup meals. The gathered group will learn a little about the process that Pat uses to put together the meal and plan a time to meet at the Stone Soup pantry to learn about gathering supplies. If you are willing to learn about organizing a Stone Soup meal, plan to attend this meeting!

WHAT ABOUT YOGA?

Women's Fellowship will meet on *Wednesday, March 4*, to find out all about yoga from **Ellie Erkkila** and her mentor. Please sign up this Sunday or call the church office to reserve a spot for lunch. The meeting begins at noon with a lunch for \$5 in Gatton Hall followed by the program at 1:00 p.m. in the Meeting Hall.



TAKARAZUKA CHURCH NEWS

Dear friends at

First Congregational UCC in Corvallis,

We celebrated New Year's Day on January 1, observed as a national holiday in Japan. Most companies and government offices were closed from December 30 through January 3. All the schools from kindergarten through university had a two-week-long winter break over Christmas through New Year's Day.

In such a cultural environment, many churches in Japan have a special New

Year's worship service on January 1. At our Takarazuka Church, we had a service at 11:00 a.m. and it was shorter than the regular Sunday service. After the service we exchanged New Year's greetings with each other and had fellowship time with tea. This year, we had 64 attendants. Although it is not certain how this special service started in Japan, it must have originated from a Japanese tradition that people pay a visit to a shrine or temple on New Year's Day. It is interesting to know that the number of shrine/temple visitors is larger than the Japanese population.

I would like to report on our annual event in January. The day all the women members had longed for happened on the second Sunday in January. Men's Fellowship members hosted a special crab-pot party, and no women were allowed to enter the kitchen. All the work for ordering the ingredients, preparing dishes, setting up tables, and cleaning up was done by men. It would have been the best if we could have had snow crabs from the Japan Sea, but due to the limited budget, we had frozen crabs from Canada. All men paid \$22, the rest of members paid \$5.50, and all children including college students were free. All the ingredients were purchased through small local churches so that they could receive some commission fees. On this day, all women enjoyed themselves to the full. This special dish was even accompanied with mellow "sake" donated by a church member. I suspect some ate

too much. There were 62 attendants, including a few children.

This concludes our January News from Takarazuka. We wish you another wonderful year and are sorry for late arrival of this news.

Reported by
Kiyomi Higashimoto

TALK ON LIBERAL FAITH AND POLITICS AT OSU

Robert P. Jones, president of *Public Religion Research*, will speak on the topic, “Progressive and Religious” at Oregon State University on *Monday, March 2*. The talk, which begins at 7:00 p.m. in OSU’s Gilfillan Auditorium, is free and open to the public. Gilfillan is located adjacent to Wilkinson Hall, 2601 S.W. Orchard Ave. in Corvallis.

In recent years, many Americans have become frustrated with the troubled relationship between religion and politics punctuated, Jones says, by an exclusive claim on faith and values from the right, and a radical divorce of faith from politics on the left. Now a new group of religious leaders is re-envisioning the role of religion in public life and blazing a trail that goes beyond partisan politics to work for a more just and inclusive society. Jones will discuss how Jewish, Christian, Muslim and Buddhist leaders are tapping the deep connections between religion and social justice to work on issues of poverty and workers’ rights, the environment, health care, pluralism, and human rights.

Jones is author of “Progressive & Religious: How Christian, Jewish, Muslim, and Buddhist Leaders are Moving Beyond the Culture Wars and Transforming Public Life.” He is a visiting fellow in religion at The Third Way, a progressive think tank, and a regular columnist for the online magazine *ReligionDispatches.org*. For more information, go to <http://oregonstate.edu/cla/philosophy>

THANKS FROM COMMUNITY OUTREACH, INC.

Dear Friends,

Thank you so much for your generous gift of \$723.75. As the need in our community increases for services ranging from mental health treatment to medical and dental care, we are especially grateful for your financial support. Your gift helps support people who are working to create better lives for themselves and their families.

We are grateful for a community that sees the value in providing basic resources to its neighbors. Every day, we help clients address their circumstances and substantially change their life situation. Our vision is to continue to deliver basic services to community members who need them. Thank you again.

Rich Donovan, Executive Director

Mark your calendars for the SOLV Spring Beach Clean-Up on *Saturday, March 28*, from 10:00 to 1:00. We'll carpool from church.



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ASH WEDNESDAY

Copy deadline for next issue of newsletter is Tuesday noon, February 24.

WEEKLY CALENDAR

Sunday, February 22

- 9:00 a.m. Sanctuary Choir
- 9:30 a.m. Christian Education
- 10:30 a.m. Worship
- (following) Guatemala trip group,
Fireplace Room
- 2:00 p.m. Boy Scout Fair,
Gatton Hall
- 5:15 p.m. Middle/ High School
Youth, Thackrays'

Monday, February 23

- 9:00 a.m. Staff

Shrove Tuesday, February 24

- Noon Lectionary class
- 6:00 p.m. Shrove Tuesday
pancake suppers
- 7:00 p.m. Boy Scout Troop 1
- 7:15 p.m. Church Council

Ash Wednesday, February 25

- 7:30 a.m. Breakfast Group
- 5:30 p.m. **Ash Wednesday
supper,
Fireplace Room**

- 6:10 p.m. **Child care available**
- 6:15 p.m. **Worship and
Imposition of Ashes**
- 6:45 p.m. **Lenten classes begin**
- 7:30 p.m. Sanctuary Choir

Thursday, February 26

- 11:00 a.m. Spirituality Group
- 6:00 p.m. Caring for Creation,
Library

Friday, February 27

- 3:00 p.m. Gracie Shannon
memorial service
- 7:30 p.m. Badminton

Our Thoughts and Prayers

... are with former member **Sid Shannon** and his daughter, **George Shannon Maddox**, following the death of wife and mother, **Gracie Shannon** on February 8. Gracie's memorial service will be held in our sanctuary on *Friday, February 27*, at 3:00 p.m. Sid's address is 1270 NW Heather Dr., Corvallis.