



# Congregational News

From FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
Corvallis, Oregon

Vol. XLVIII, No. 37

October 16, 2009

## A SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE AND HOPE: HEALTH CARE FOR ALL

On *Tuesday, October 20*, at 7:00 p.m. our church's **Just Peace Committee** will be sponsoring a service of remembrance for those who die every year due to lack of accessibility to health care as well as for those who have health care but are selectively denied coverage for a variety of reasons. This service of prayer and reflection will be held on the same day as other houses of worship throughout the United States—from the smallest community of faith to large suburban congregations.

The service will include music (**Myles Criss**), interpretive prayer (**Kim Thackray**), sharing of stories, prayer, and scripture. **Mike Huntington** will offer accounts from his recent "Mad As Hell Doctors" tour across the country.

Each of us knows (of) someone who lacks health care: in a nation of great wealth, 45,000 people die each year from lack of access. Five will die during this hour-long service. Please join in this Hour of Remembrance on October 20<sup>th</sup> as we continue to work for health care for all.

## MISSIONFEST REPORT

The October 4<sup>th</sup> Mission Fest focused on uncovering the church's passions for mission work through questions and conversations at our lunch tables. Much information was gleaned through our discussion and many ideas were generated. Past efforts such as refugee resettlement, simple living, and helping to start the cold weather shelter figured often into the discussions.

*[continued on page 5]*

## THIS SUNDAY

*October 18*

**Adult Forum:** **Kevin Finney**, Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon's Public Policy Director, will offer a presentation on religious response to the use of torture. Join us to find out what has been done and how our voices are still needed.

**Scriptures:** Job 38:1-7, 34-41  
Mark 10:35-45

**Sermon:** "God's Ways and  
Our Ways"  
Elizabeth Oettinger

Dear Friends,

At church last Sunday, some of you were made aware of the presence in our midst of a mentally ill homeless man who became agitated and increasingly disruptive. The police were called by a concerned congregation member. According to their protocols, not knowing the level of threat posed by this person, the police responded with several officers and squad cars. Once here, they dealt with the man kindly and appropriately.

I bring up the issue because it became clear as the staff met Monday morning that there was mixed opinion and even more confusion about the "right" way to deal with this situation. We, as an open and accepting church, wish to make ourselves available as a safe, supportive community for all who seek refuge here. However, there will be times when that desire comes into conflict with perceived threat or behavior that is so disruptive as to push too hard against the ability of others to worship and learn in this church. When I was at Plymouth Church in Seattle, we dealt with this issue a lot. We had well-established protocols for assessing and diffusing difficult situations. So far, here at First Congregational, we have not perceived such a need. However, because of Sunday's incident, the staff has developed a basic response plan which we hope you will keep in the back of your mind until such time as it may be needed:

If you see individuals at the church who seem to you to be exhibiting agitated, erratic, or disruptive behavior, please immediately find one of the following people: Liz, Ryan, Caroline Zaworski, John Hawkins, Aleita Hass-Holcombe, or Al Goldner. All these people have some level of training to assess the situation, and have agreed to be resources. They will come and evaluate what steps should be taken.

If you see an individual engaged in potentially threatening behavior: pushing, shoving, threats of violence, the presence of a weapon--immediately call 911, then come and find (or send someone immediately to find) one of the above persons. In my nearly 18 years here, we have never faced this level of problem, but it's good to have a plan ahead of time.

In this community, we want to honor the integrity and safety of all present. The more our ministries reach out to the homeless in our community, the more we will be challenged to truly welcome them among us while setting reasonable limits for acceptable behavior. I am hoping that last Sunday's incident and this "thought" will be not the end, but the beginning of a wide and profound conversation in this church about a new dimension of what it means to be truly inclusive. We will need to learn new skills; we may need to learn to think about community in new ways. It will require more of us. But faith always requires more, even as it gives back abundantly.

That's why we're on this journey.

Yours in faith,

**Liz**



The **Middle** and **High School** Youth groups will gather for a progressive dinner this *Sunday, October 18*, beginning at 4:45 p.m. Meet at the church and we will head out from there for an evening of fun and food! Questions? Contact **Ryan** at the church or via e-mail.

### THE ART OF GREETING: BEYOND THE HANDSHAKE



The Sunday morning greeter is the first impression our church offers to visitors. So, it is only fitting that we emphasize the various duties one has in this capacity. We ask our greeters not only to introduce themselves to anyone whose name they cannot say (whether member, friend, or visitor), but we also ask that they invite our visitors to sign the guest book, make a name tag for themselves, and to take a packet of information about the United Church of Christ and our church, in particular.

This Sunday, **Nancye Ballard** and **Ann Hawkins** will offer a training session to all those interested in greeting. This year, in addition to greeting, the Diaconate Outreach & Evangelism is ask-

ing the same person(s) who greets on a particular Sunday to also be the host after worship. There are two distinct advantages to this approach: first, the greeter will recognize the familiar face, having greeted them upon arrival; and, secondly, the visitor will recognize a friendly face. Hosting involves: (1) being available to the clergy (in the foyer) when they are greeting people after worship; (2) inviting and escorting a visitor to fellowship time; and (3) introducing our visitor to other people in the church.

So that there might be some continuity, we are asking people to consider signing up for one consecutive three-week period of time, if at all possible. This increases the chances that a greeter will recognize a visitor the second time s/he visits and be able to call that person by name and, again, the greeter will be a familiar face to our visitor—one that s/he has seen before at the front door.

Anyone wishing to serve as a greeter/host is invited to attend the training this Sunday in the Meeting Hall, immediately following worship. The training will last no longer than one half hour. We look forward to seeing many of you!

You must be the change you wish to see in the world.

**Mahatma Gandhi**

## H1N1 Flu: What's A Congregation To Do?

H1N1 flu cases are occurring increasingly in Benton County. Local outpatient clinics are seeing more people with flu-like illnesses. The dominant strain that is identified by lab tests is H1N1 in Oregon and across the US. It is more contagious than the seasonal flu because fewer people have been exposed to it before. The Oregon Flu Hotline is 1-800-978-3040.

H1N1 flu virus is spread by droplets from coughing or sneezing. The droplets may spray 5 to 6 feet from the cougher. It is also spread by direct contact with contaminated objects or surfaces that the sick person touched. The well person who touches the object may then touch their own eyes, nose or mouth to expose him or herself. The virus lives for 2 to 8 hours on those surfaces. Fortunately it is killed by common disinfectants if one follows directions on the disinfectant label.

**Prevention measures** that are effective against this flu virus are the following:

- **Cover Your Cough.** Cough or sneeze into the fabric of your sleeve. If using tissues, throw the used tissue away. Do not reuse it. Wash your hands after using a tissue.
- **Wash Your Hands** after touching any commonly used objects, such as telephone, money, door knobs, hand railing; after using the bathroom; before eating; after coughing or sneezing into a tissue or your hands (Try really hard not to cough into your hands).
- **Social Distancing** means physical space between people during a gathering. Five to six feet between people prevents droplet spread. Stagger seating during worship service and during classes.
- **Get the vaccines** against both H1N1 and seasonal flu this year. H1N1 vaccine is arriving this month. By the end of October it is expected that there will be enough vaccine for everyone who wants to prevent the spread of H1N1. For more information, check [www.flu.oregon.gov](http://www.flu.oregon.gov)
- **If you get sick with the flu, stay home.** One is contagious for 24 hours before first symptoms and at least 24 hours after the fever stops without the help of fever-reducing medication.

Hand gel sanitizers (with 62+% alcohol) is effective against this virus. It's good to see the hand sanitizers at the entrance of the sanctuary. Use them!! More hand sanitizers placed in the meeting rooms, classrooms, and at the beginning of food service line, before picking up a plate are other places to use these.

Some thoughts about handshaking: The flu season is not a safe time for handshaking. Are your hands really clean when you offer them? Our Passing of the Peace is a warm, close time for many of us when we all enthusiastically reach out to

those in our pew, behind us, in front of us, and down the aisle. It's a way for flu viruses to spread easily to each other. Pandemic flu is here. It is time to consider suspending the handshake. Keep your hands to yourself. Offer your smile and your warmest greeting to other members. Spread your heartfelt warmth—not the Flu!

Do all these things to protect yourself, your family, others who may have compromised immune systems and everyone else.

**Eileen Marma**

### **MISSIONFEST *from page 1***

The **Mission Board** was particularly interested in the ideas generated for future projects. Ideas included suggestions for clean water and green-house gas projects, Camp Adams work crews, working with Habitat for Humanity, an Amnesty International writing program, and working toward/on a permanent homeless shelter to further address the needs of our area's homeless people. The Mission Board is currently evaluating next steps and will have bring further information and opportunities before the congregation soon!

### **PRAYER CHAIN RETURNS**

I will again be developing an e-mail prayer list for anyone interested in this ministry. I will list all of the prayers requested in worship and others that come to me or the pastors.

If you wish to participate in this ministry by receiving these e-mails, please contact me via e-mail at [cj.zaworski@gmail.com](mailto:cj.zaworski@gmail.com). This is a way of continuing our ministry of the community beyond Sunday mornings

**Caroline Zaworski**

### **PEACE SPEAKER SUNDAY**

Corvallis-Benton County Public Library hosts a free, public presentation with Jeffrey Kovac, author of the new book, *Refusing War, Affirming Peace: A History of Civilian Public Service Camp #21 at Cascade Locks*. Jeff, a chemistry professor in Knoxville TN, has an avocation for peace issues and strong ties to Oregon. His father-in-law, Charles Davis, was a CO at Cascade Locks, and his papers have been a rich resource for Jeff's research.

Jeff will be Corvallis on *Sunday, October 18*, for a 3:00 p.m. The event will combine talk about the book, a Power-Point presentation to supplement, and discussion about the history of the CPS and its pertinence in the contemporary peace movement.

### **THEOLOGY ON TAP**

The next gathering of "Theology on Tap" will be *Thursday, October 22*, at 7:00 p.m. We will gather at Woodstock's Pizza Parlor on Kings Blvd. for fellowship and theological conversation as we study Mark 10:17-31. All are welcome! Questions? Contact **Ryan** at the church or via e-mail.



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Copy deadline for next issue of newsletter is Tuesday noon, October 20.

**WEEKLY CALENDAR**

*Friday, October 16*  
                                   **Women's retreat,**  
                                   **Camp Adams**  
                                   **NO** Badminton

*Sunday, October 18*  
 9:00 a.m. Sanctuary Choir  
 9:30 a.m. Christian Education  
 10:30 a.m. Worship  
 (following) Inquirers' Class  
 (following) Greeter/Host training,  
                                   Meeting Hall  
 4:45 p.m. Youth progressive  
                                   dinner [page 3]

*Monday, October 19*  
 9:00 a.m. Staff  
 7:00 p.m. C E Board

*Tuesday, October 20*  
 Noon Lectionary class  
**7:00 p.m. Service of Remem-**  
                                   **brance and Hope**  
 7:00 p.m. Boy Scout Troop 1  
 7:30 p.m. Spirit Quest

*Wednesday, October 21*  
 6:30 p.m. Bell Choir  
 7:00 p.m. EMF Board  
 7:15 p.m. Sanctuary Choir

*Thursday, October 22*  
 11:45 a.m. Lunch Group  
 7:00 p.m. Theology on Tap,  
                                   Woodstock's [p. 5]  
 7:00 p.m. Girl Scout Troop 142

*Friday, October 23*  
 7:30 p.m. Badminton

**RAISE YOUR VOICE FESTIVAL**  
 The **Oregon Youth Choral Festival and Gala Concert** will be held on *Wednesday, October 28*, from 7:00 p.m.-9:30 p.m., at the First United Methodist Church. Conducted by Eric Whitacre, the concert features Grammy Award-winning soprano Hila Plitmann, and the Combined Choirs of Oregon State University. Proceeds benefit Community Outreach of Corvallis.