



Congregational News

From FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Corvallis, Oregon

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February 5, 2010



LENTEN SERIES BEGINS ON ASH WEDNESDAY

Ash Wednesday is *February 17* and the first of our Lenten Wednesday evenings, which offer a simple meal, worship and a choice of classes. Take a look at pages 4 and 5 for the times and places for Lenten Wednesdays as well as a brief description of the classes available. You are welcome to attend any portion of the evenings. Sign-ups for classes begin this Sunday, so that we can have enough class materials and chairs!

HEALTH CARE RESPONSES

Caroline Zaworski has compiled all the responses submitted on the Post-it Notes from last Sunday's service. These will be put in a letter to be sent to our Federal legislators; we are inviting everyone, who would like, to sign this letter either before or after worship this Sunday. Look for the table in the entryway.

Our thanks to **Caroline Zaworski** and **Mike Huntington** for coordinating and preparing the worship service this past Sunday; to **Rose Hart**, Caroline and Mike for sharing their stories; to **Kim Thackray** for the ringing of the bells;

and to **Hal Harding**, worship leader, and **Grant Thackray**, lay reader.

NATIVE PLANTS IN NEED OF YOUR LOVE

Just a final reminder that we hope to see you this coming *Saturday, February 6*, from 10:00 a.m. till noon to plant our new native plants along Dunawi Creek. Need more enticement? We will be providing hot cocoa and cookies as a thank you when we are done.

THIS SUNDAY

February 7 - Communion (remember your food bank donation)

Adult Forum: "Caring for the Elderly: When to Take Away the Keys" -- **Kate Zaworski** will lead a discussion on developing mobility and other options prior to giving up the keys, and transitions that families face when older family members cease driving.

Scriptures: Isaiah 6:1-8
Luke 5:1-11

Sermon: "Gone...fishing"
Ryan Lambert

Dear Congregation members,

The UCC Vision Project Team promised you a preliminary report as soon after the first of the year as possible. This is that report.

We completed the interview portion of the first phase of work in the fall. On behalf of the Vision Team, I would like to thank all of the more than 150 congregation members who participated. Special thanks to our hosts, who opened their homes for this activity. I believe many participants especially enjoyed the exercise because it was hosted in the warmth and comfort of their fellow parishioners' homes. Such intimate settings gave us a greater sense of connection to each other, which added to the depth of our responses.

We were humbled by the stories that you all shared. Thank you for taking the time to participate, but even more, thank you for going where we wanted with these deep questions. There are a few strong themes that emerged from the whole process which tell us a great deal about who we are as a community of faith. There is a pervasive sense that we wish to be deeply connected to each other as a congregation. The desire to serve the world around us is equally strong, as is the longing for a sense of God's spirit within our lives. Finally, we picked up a sometimes nebulous, other times very specific hunger for the church to be more active in offering opportunities for transformative outreach: the kinds of hands-on encounters with others that push us out of our comfort zones, perform real work, and challenge us to reflect on our faith in new ways. These powerful themes should provide us with a base for moving forward in an ever changing and complex world.

We have a great amount of data through which to sort and make sense of from the stories you shared, but don't worry: we have a plan. A group of volunteers met in December to begin the process of assembling the information collected into a database. Essentially, we sorted out the "key word" or activity that triggered a story you told. Then we went looking for what "role" you were playing when you experienced this closeness to God, or to your fellow parishioners. Finally, we pulled from the notes what were the "outcomes" from these experiences. We also put the "three wishes" outcomes into a database with multiple sorting functions and have now identified that which the congregation most wishes to be true about its future.

As you might guess, there's more information needed in order to move solidly forward, and we are setting about collecting that data. Here are the top six wishes and what's next for each.

1. More families with younger children as members: We plan to organize an event to host an in-depth interview with young families in the church to

- find out what attracted them to UCC and what keeps them here.
2. Expand Caring for Creation: We need to know more about what you meant by that, so our Vision Project members will be meeting with the Caring for Creation group and offering our assistance to more closely identify where your interests and passions as a congregation are focused, and therefore how the whole body of the church can be more engaged in this mission.
 3. Small Group Opportunities Within the Church: We need more information about the small groups wanted, and will likely invite anyone who wishes to discuss “small group opportunities” to come meet with the Vision Group.
 4. More racial and economic diversity within the church: Similar to item #1, this is mostly a membership question and we need to go back into the data and look at specific comments in order to ascertain what the Vision Group’s next step is with this wish.
 5. Balancing New and Traditional Experiences: As the above, we need to get deeper into the database and learn more about what this is saying.
 6. Understanding and Responding to the Homeless: While our church takes a fairly active role in this, we need to learn more. There are several individual members who would be good resources to our Vision Group helping us to better understand what might become of this programmatic/service focus.

Thank you all for the faith and trust that you’ve shown to our group members and to this project through sharing your deeply personal stories. It has been intensely rewarding to have been in the presence of the members as they opened themselves during this exercise. It is even more humbling to realize how much work is left to do, so that we may help the congregation articulate and work towards a vision for our church that is deeply rooted in what we believe, care about, and have a yearning to create.

Michael Henthorne



The youth groups will gather at the church this Saturday morning to join in our church's effort to plant native species along Dunawi Creek. Wear your rain gear and mud-ready boots and join us from 10:00 a.m.-noon on *February 6*, for a morning of service amid God's (muddy) creation!

See you there! Questions? Contact **Ryan** at the church or via e-mail.

YOUNG ADULT NEWS

Our next gathering for young adults (aged 19-30) will be on *Sunday, February 21*, at 7:00 p.m. Plan to join us for an evening of fellowship, food, and community!

Questions? Contact **Ryan** at the church or via e-mail.

WEDNESDAYS IN LENT†

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, *February 17*. Again, we hope to provide opportunities for conversation, worship and study during this special time in the Christian year. Call the church office to enroll in classes or sign up this Sunday.

On Ash Wednesday, our traditional soup and bread supper is at 5:30 (donation), followed by a brief service of penitence and the imposition of ashes at 6:15. At 6:45, classes begin. Child care is available beginning at 6:10. You are welcome at any and all events.

On each subsequent Wednesday in Lent through *March 28*, the schedule will be the same:

5:30 p.m.	A simple supper (with vegetarian alternative), Fireplace Room
6:10 p.m.	Child care begins, Room 5
6:15 p.m.	Worship in the Chapel
6:45-7:25 p.m.	Flash classes (see below)
6:45-8:15 p.m.	Full-length classes (see below)
7:30 p.m.	Sanctuary Choir

“Flash” classes 6:45-7:25 p.m.

Experienced Bell Choir -- Kim Thackray, Music Room. Have you ever thought it might be fun to give handbell ringing a try? This is your chance! Join other beginning ringers (aged 14+), as well as our more experienced ringers, for 6 weeks of music. Learn ringing techniques, and discover how much fun it is to make beautiful music together. Do as much as you are comfortable--play just one bell if you prefer; our more experienced ringers will help you along. Our goal will be to play in church on the Sunday after Easter. If you can't make it that Sunday, that's OK--we'd still love to have you join us. Sign up after church on Sundays, or send an e-mail to Kim Thackray at thackray_family@yahoo.com.

Living our Faith -- Ryan Lambert, Room TBA. How does our reading of the bible inform our beliefs and actions on some of culture's most challenging issues? In this class we will use the bible and other readings to form the basis for conversations about homelessness and poverty, creation care, reproductive rights, racial issues, and faithful civic engagement. Extra-biblical texts will include: *Not Just a One-Night Stand: Ministry with the Homeless*, and Toni Morrison's short-story "Recitatif." Cost: \$15 for reading materials.

Full-length classes 6:45-8:15 p.m.

Judaism: History, traditions, politics -- Ze'ev Orzech, Amy Buccola, and Rabbi Benjamin Barnett, Room TBA. This class will be co-taught by several of our friends from the Beit Am Jewish Community. The class will cover the history of Judaism, fundamentals of Jewish theology and practice, and finally, the politics of Israel. Come and learn more about the religious tradition of Jesus, the roots out of which our own religious traditions grew.

Faithfully Facing Dying: Critical Issues and Decisions -- Caroline Zaworski, Room TBA. We all confront fears around our own dying — that it could be a long process, that we will lose control, that today's amazing technology can prolong life but may require us to consider the cost, both personal and financial. We will discuss medical technology and how it affects dying, documents which give guidance, materials for family discussions, and Biblical texts. With this UCC study, the context of our faith will allow for thoughtful reflection, enabling each participant to find some clarity.

Art in the Evening -- Molly Chambers, Room 5. Children of all ages are welcome to come and explore a different genre of art each week. The first 45 minutes of class will focus on learning about the genre and its artists, then trying our hand at creating our own masterpieces! There will be developmentally appropriate opportunities for everyone. The second 45 minutes will be a time of supervised freeplay and fellowship. Young children may choose to go to the nursery for free play if they find that a more comfortable setting.

WANTED: Soup 'n' Bread soup makers and a soup monitor for next Sunday! Sign up or call the church office to volunteer.

THEOLOGY ON TAP CONTINUES ON FEBRUARY 25

Our next installment of Theology on Tap will occur on *February 25* at 7:00 p.m. at Bombs Away Cafe on Monroe. Join us for a beverage of your choice and theological conversation. Contact **Ryan** at the church or via e-mail for more info.

THANKS, SHELTER VOLUNTEERS

We wish to thank everyone who helped serve in the Women's and Men's Cold Weather shelters. There were bus drivers, overnight assistants, greeters, and folks who made snacks. Also schedulers, and point people, and people who did laundry. So many parts come together to create a welcoming environment for our friends who need a place to stay. On January 31, primroses were

available to show our thanks. If you volunteered, but weren't there to select a flower, please call **George** or **Rhonda** at 541-758-1667. We still have a few left; you can come and pick one up at our house.

F•Y•I: Our church Emergency Food Coordinator is **Julie Maloney**.

Our Thoughts and Prayers

... are with **Nicole Laing**, who had knee replacement surgery in Salem on February 3;

...and with **Erna Esbensen**, who continues at Corvallis Manor, being treated for pneumonia;

... and with **Kathie Merriam**, also recovering at Corvallis Manor;

.. and, of course, with **Liz Oettinger**, whose February 5th surgery was announced last week, but, of course, happens *this* week. She will be recovering at home for the next three weeks.



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Copy deadline for next issue of newsletter is Tuesday noon, February 9.

WEEKLY CALENDAR

Friday, February 5

- 7:00 a.m. First Friday Forum
- 6:30 p.m. "Talk Back" Movie:
Montgomery bus
boycott of 1955
- 7:30 p.m. Badminton

Saturday, February 6

- 10:00-noon Dunawi creek
planting [p. 1]**

Sunday, February 7 - Communion

- 9:00 a.m. Sanctuary Choir
- 9:30 a.m. Christian Education
- 10:30 a.m. Worship
- (following) Inquirers' Class
- (following) Winter Weekend
planning meeting,
Meeting Hall**
- 6:30 p.m. Read & Feed 10th
anniversary dinner,
Fireplace Room

Monday, February 8

- 7:00 p.m. Mission Board

Tuesday, February 9

- 8:45 a.m. Staff
- Noon Lectionary class
- 7:00 p.m. Trustees Board
- 7:00 p.m. Boy Scout Troop 1

Wednesday, February 10

- 7:30 a.m. Breakfast Group
- 6:30 p.m. Bell Choir
- 7:15 p.m. Sanctuary Choir

Thursday, February 11

- 7:00 p.m. Girl Scout Troop 142

QUILT SHOW AT CEDAR HILLS

The Cedar Hills UCC is hosting a quilt show on *Friday, March 5* and *Saturday, March 6*, (10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.) There will also be a quilt raffle, and a trunk show by Mary Maxwell, art quilter, on Friday (11:00 a.m.) and Saturday (1:00 p.m.).

The church is at Cedar Hills Blvd. and Park Way in Beaverton (503-644-3838). Admission is \$6.00 for 12 and older; this includes a \$1 donation to the Oregon Food Bank.