



Congregational News

From FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Corvallis, Oregon

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October 15, 2010



Blessing of the Animals

Yes, we are blessing animals this *Sunday, October 17!* Our entire worship service

will be focused around the “creaturely” world. We will begin in the Sanctuary, then process to Hanson Grove to bless the wild creatures, then back into Gatton Hall for the blessing of the domestic animals and the end of the service. We had considered bringing all the animals into the sanctuary but the Worship Committee provided wise counsel that this might prove an irritant to those allergic to animals.

The weather forecast for Sunday predicts a high in the low 60s and little chance of rain. Those of you bringing animals to bless are welcome to either leave your animals in your cars until their part of the service, or bring them--appropriately contained--into Gatton Hall. We have one volunteer “critter sitter” for Gatton Hall and could use a second.

Animals will be organized by species in separate areas in Gatton Hall and the

Meeting Hall hallway. When it is time for each of them to be blessed individually, we ask that dogs and cats be leashed, and other animals in cages, bowls, or other appropriate container. If you have any questions, please call or e-mail **Liz**--and once again, it would be helpful if you contacted the church to tell us if you are bringing your pet to bless so we can be best organized for this event!

It will be different! It will be fun! It will give glory to God for the wonderful gift of the diversity of life on earth!

See you there.

THIS SUNDAY

October 17

Adult Forum: **Cliff and Jo Anne Trow** will offer their traditional expert review of the upcoming election’s ballot measures. 9:30 a.m. in the Meeting Hall

Scriptures: Genesis 7: 1-3; 8:6-19; 9:8-13

Sermon: “All Creatures Great and Small
Elizabeth Oettinger

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK*Ryan Lambert*

Dear Friends,

The Pride Center at Oregon State University is celebrating October as Queer History Month. Queer History Month events at OSU include a Pride Center Open House, a celebration of National Coming Out Day (*October 11*), a film and discussion about hate crimes, and an *October 19* panel discussion about the “History of Homosexuality in Religious Texts” that I will be participating in as a panelist. For more about the Pride Center at Oregon State University see: <http://oregonstate.edu/pridecenter/home>

I am thankful for the Pride Center’s list of events and their presence and advocacy at a time when stories of bullying due to gender identification and sexual identity have been widely reported across our nation. The opportunity to speak on this panel provides an excellent opportunity to remind folks that although the bible has been used to oppress GLBTIQ (gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered, inter-sexed, and questioning) people, there are also congregations and denominations that like ours who are open and affirming to people of all gender and sexual identities. This is an important part of who we are and I am honored to represent our congregation on this panel!

Preparing for this panel and thinking about National Coming Out Day has left me thinking a lot about our “Open and Affirming Church” stance. Such stands make it easy at times to think that we have already dealt with the issues of homophobia and discrimination. On our best days I know that is true, but I am also aware that naming ourselves an Open and Affirming Church is not the end of living out our faith on this issue. As I traveled last week I overheard two separate instances of young people using slurs about GLBTIQ people to bully others, and although I really didn’t have much opportunity to intervene in those situations, they did remind me of the power that words have to hurt people, even when seemingly used in jest. GLBTIQ youth are particularly endangered by such speech, but this is something we can change! As parents, teachers, mentors, aunts, uncles, grandparents, and friends we can speak up when we hear anti-GLBTIQ language, we can educate our children and friends about the effects of these slurs, and we can end this type of bullying. In celebration of the diversity of God’s people I invite you to consider the conversations you need have about this issue!

Blessings,

Ryan**IN MEMORIAM**The memorial service for **Sarah****Hoffman** will be held in our sanctuary on *Saturday, November 6*, at 1:00 p.m.



This *Sunday, October 17*, the youth group will be walking in the Crop Walk at Starker Arts Park beginning at 1:30 p.m. The walk goes on “rain or shine” so dress appropriate for the weather.

Upcoming events include and excursion to the Muddy Creek Corn Maze on the 24th and Pumpkin Carving after church on the 31st! Questions? Contact **Ryan** at the church or via e-mail.

FAMILY THEATRE EXCURSION PLANNED FOR NOVEMBER 14

The Oregon Children’s Theatre in Portland is showing a production of “Alice & Wonderland: A Rock Opera” during November. This is a family-friendly



show that brings the Alice and Wonderland story alive for all-ages! **Tanya Andersson** is helping to organize a delegation to head to Portland for the 2:00 p.m. show on *Sunday, November 14*. If we have a group over 8 people, tickets are just \$12-14 depending on seating location. Please sign up for tickets **THIS SUNDAY** so that we can reserve our

seats! Contact Tanya Andersson or **Ryan** with questions.

CROP WALK THIS WEEK!

The Corvallis Crop Walk is this Sunday beginning at 1:30 p.m. The start of the walk is Starker Arts Park and the walk is a 3-mile out-and-back toward downtown on the walking path. The Crop Walk raises money for local and international hunger relief and is a great way to spend a Sunday afternoon. This is a “rain or shine” event so plan to wear weather-appropriate gear and join us for a Sunday-afternoon walk to help feed people! If you can’t walk, contact the church or look for people seeking sponsors on Sunday morning!

THOU SHALT NOT BE STOLEN FROM

Just a reminder that our building is often open and full of people coming and going, especially on Sunday mornings. Remember to lock your cars and secure valuables when they are not with you.

JOIN THE “HANDS TOGETHER” PROJECT GROUP

Women’s Fellowship is starting a new group called “Hands Together.” We will be doing special projects (mostly sewing so far) for fun and to help others. Our first meeting will be *Thursday, October 21*, from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. We’ll meet in the church library to make some boiled wool turtles with pockets on their backs for a little toy or smaller turtle.

This will be taken to Back Bay Mission by **Nancy Klingeman** when she and **Peter** go to the mission in Mississippi to help with the renovation still needed because of Katrina.

Little children often come to the mission with their families and appreciate these gifts that help entertain them while they are waiting for the services the Mission can provide for their families. Several church groups have been providing these, but they still need more. Bring along some good scissors if you have them. We may do some embroidery and some sewing, but all the materials will be provided. If you have little ones at home that might like these toys, there will probably be enough to share. For more information, contact **Monine Stebbins** (541-754-8039).

Hands Together will meet each month on the third Thursday in the afternoon. November we will sew cloth holiday gift bags which were popular last year. If you have a suggestion for a fun project, let us know.



October 19 is the third Tuesday of the month and that means our church is preparing Stone Soup. If you can help prepare, serve, and/or clean-up at First Christian Church, starting at 3:00 p.m., please sign up on Sunday to join the crew. Newcomers are always welcome to learn the ropes from the regulars.

Babies, Babies, Babies!!!

We have had a baby boom this year! So, as part of our All Saints celebration on *October 31*, we will not only remember in worship our beloved ones who have gone to God; we will also rejoice in the newest “saints” of the congregation in a less formal way during our Fellowship Hour. Come and say a word to our most sleep-deprived members (the parents) and admire their beautiful, brilliant, talented, and adorable offspring. We’re offering animal crackers and milk along with our usual coffee hour fare, so come, enjoy, and give thanks.



Coming Soon to First Congregational!

WITNESS FOR PEACE

SPEAKER TOUR

Witness For Peace Northwest presents “Migrating Towards Justice: Stories to Transform People and Policy.” Speaker **Augusto Obregon** is from El Regadio, Esteli, Nicaragua. He is the vice-president of a non-profit organization which organizes small-scale farmers around sustainability projects and food sovereignty issues.

The talk will be in our Meeting Hall on *Monday, October 25*, from 7:00-8:30 p.m. Co-sponsors of the program are UCC Just Peace Committee and First United Methodist Active for Peace & Justice.

IGUATEMALA 2011!

There is a good chance that a pilgrimage to Guatemala will take place in 2011. I have received an e-mail that funding looks like it will happen and PAVA will be looking at possible sites for us. If you want to be notified as the plans develop, let me know (chhelsabeck@yahoo.com) and I will put you on a distribution list

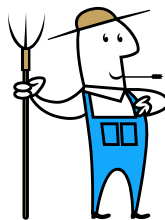
If you think you might want to go, but are not interested until I know when and where, I will put that information in a future newsletter.

Charles Helsabeck

¡Día de los Muertos!

On *Friday, October 29*, the **C E Board** will be sponsoring a Día de los Muertos dinner event. This is a family-focused all-ages event that will include a dinner of tortilla soup, beans, and rice, as well as “Day of the Dead” craft activities.

We are starting at 6:00 p.m., so plan to come over after the downtown trick-or-treating for dinner, crafts, and fellowship. Sign up beginning this Sunday so that we can prepare enough food! A suggested donation is one can of food per person, which will be donated to the South Corvallis Food Bank. Questions? Contact **Ryan** or **Donna** at the church or via e-mail.



“THAT'S MY FARMER” STILL GOING

The season for supporting local farmers at the Corvallis Farmer's Markets is not over yet. In fact it goes through *November 24*.

Our church has prided itself in the past for strongly supporting the “That's My Farmer” program. This year the support has dwindled. I have had about three regular customers and about a dozen random buyers. I have not asked for a second batch of booklets and hope that I can sell what I still have left from the original batch. Maybe a lot more of you are planting your own gardens,...and that would be a good thing.

Bottom line is I hope to see at least seven of you next Sunday. Using the coupon books really does demonstrate support for local farmers --- and the booklets remind us to eat “well.”

Aleita Hass Holcombe

DON'T MISS GOSPEL EXPLOSION

This musical event on *Sunday, October 24*, is a fund-raiser for Partners Place, the “Housing First” project sponsored by the Corvallis Homeless Shelter Coalition. The 7:00 p.m. performance is at First Christian Church, 602 SW Madison Ave. The performance features the Inner Strength Gospel Singers and several other local performers. Tickets are \$10 at Grass Roots Book Store. For more information, call **Aleita Hass Holcombe** (541-740-3235).



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Copy deadline for next issue of newsletter is Tuesday noon, October 12.

WEEKLY CALENDAR

Friday, October 15

7:30 p.m. Badminton

Sunday, October 17

9:30 a.m. Christian Education

10:30 a.m. Worship

**1:30 p.m. CROP Walk,
 Starker Arts Park**

5:00 p.m. In the Beginning
 Worship, Chapel

Monday, October 18

7:00 p.m. C E Board

Tuesday, October 19

10:15 a.m. Staff

Noon Lectionary class

3:00 p.m. Stone Soup (*see p. 4*)

7:00 p.m. Boy Scout Troop 1

7:30 p.m. Spirit Quest

Wednesday, October 20

6:30 p.m. Bell Choir

7:15 p.m. Sanctuary Choir

Thursday, October 21

1:00 p.m. Hands Together
(see page 3)

5:30 p.m. Pastoral Relations
 Committee

6:30 p.m. Girl Scout Troop 142

Friday, October 22

6:30 p.m. Confirmation class
 overnight

LOOKING AHEAD: *Friday, October 29:* Día de los Muertos, at 6:00 in Gattton Hall; *Saturday, November 6:* Memorial service for Sarah Hoffman, at 1:00 in the sanctuary; *Sunday, November 14:* Oregon Children's Theater trip to see "Alice & Wonderland: A Rock Opera"

HYGIENE KITS SHIPPED

Recently, we sent five more hygiene kits to Church World Service in the Midwest. This makes a total of 26 kits shipped from our congregation. Many thanks to everyone who brought items for these kits and to **Nancy Klingeman** for organizing the effort.

