



Congregational News

From FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Corvallis, Oregon

Vol. XLX, No. 8

February 25, 2011

SUNDAY *Specials*

Bell Choir: The bells, under the direction of **Kim Thackray**, will ring the prelude and offertory for this Sunday's service.

Postlude Plus: Recently **Liz** heard **Myles** practicing Charles Marie Widor's famous Toccata in F and allowed that it was her favorite organ piece. He promised to play it on a fourth Sunday Postlude Plus and this is the week. The Toccata is the finale of Widor's Fifth Symphony for Organ. Enjoy.

Lighting Retrofit Meeting: After worship in the Fireplace Room, **Norm Vedaa** will be on hand to explain the proposed lighting retrofit for our building and the Business Energy Tax Credit incentive.

PASTORAL SEARCH COMMITTEE TO BE FORMED

The process of assembling a Pastoral Search Committee to find a new Associate Minister is beginning. The church bylaws mandate that the Church Council propose to the congregation a slate of 7-12 members to make up this committee, to be voted on at the Annual Meeting,

May 1. The Council is seeking a group that will broadly represent our congregation but also reflect particular constituencies involved in the Associate Minister's job description (for example, children and family ministries). If you would like to be considered as a member of this committee, please contact **Monine Stebbins** by *March 5*.

NEW VOLUNTEER MOWERS NEEDED

The grass is beginning to grow, and new volunteers are needed to help with mowing the church lawn this year.

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THIS SUNDAY

February 27

Adult Forum: The *Creative Aging* series resumes this Sunday with "Resistance: Moving Beyond Security."

Scriptures: Isaiah 49:8-16a
Matthew 6:24-34

Sermon: "It's All About Choosing"
Elizabeth Oettinger

Dear Friends,

I grew up a child of the Cold War. We even had a “bomb shelter” in our basement for a while with a stock of food, water, Coca-Cola (which my sisters and I used to raid on the sly), bedding, reading materials and other essentials. I don’t know how or why my parents thought that would save us from a nuclear bomb, but that’s a question never to be answered. The world was divided by the two Super Powers, and that’s just the way it was. Until it wasn’t any more. I remember watching in awe and disbelief the TV footage of the Berlin Wall coming down. The world had changed, and we did not know what lay ahead, only that things would be different now.

I would guess that most of you, like me, have been tracking first the events in Egypt and now Libya. Libya, of all places! Gadhafi has been in power there since 1969, and who knows at this point if he will successfully put down this latest revolt, but it seems different. It seems like there might be change in one of the most brutal countries in the world. Something new and different might happen.

It is so easy to get into the habit of believing that the way things are is the way they have to be, that change is not really possible. And then something happens. The balance shifts, and we are left amazed.

So much of the Bible’s teaching is about believing that the way things are is not the way they always have to be. Whether in our personal lives, our churches, our country, our world. But because of the intractability of human nature and political nature, we doubt. We quit daring to hope for much. We try to help a little bit here or there, but we don’t really think that we or anyone can do more than nibble at the edges of evil and misery. Three weeks ago when I visited the Salem church, I stopped at Starbuck’s for my coffee fix on the way home. The man behind me in line tapped me on the shoulder and asked if I was the minister of a church in Corvallis. I turned. I had no idea who the man was. It turns out that I met him when I was working one night the first year we had the men’s cold weather shelter. I don’t even remember what year that was. But I had spent much of my evening there talking with this man. I didn’t remember him at all. I can’t believe he recognized me. But there we stood in Starbucks, and he told me how his life had turned around. He now has a successful carpentry business in Salem and is getting ready to buy a house. After being homeless and jobless for a little more than a year, he got sober, and then he got a job, and then a better job, and started doing private jobs on the side. He now has two employees. A new life.

We are on the brink of Lent. Ash Wednesday is March 9th and I have been thinking about spiritual practices and spiritual disciplines. In some ways, I think that the

most profound spiritual discipline is the practice of hope. Hope is a choice. Hope is a discipline. It takes courage and stamina and faith not to give in to the temptation to believe that our lives and our communities and our world are beyond the reach of positive change: beyond our reach, beyond anyone's reach, beyond even God's reach. Hope is not sentimental. It is the spiritual toughness to keep pushing against the odds.

Things can change, even when we least expect it. Practice hope.
God bless you all.

Liz



The **Middle School** and **High School** youth groups will be gathering at the **Lucker** home (2985 NW Princess St.) at 4:45 p.m. on *Sunday, February 27*, to watch the **Academy Awards**. The awards begin at 5:00 p.m., but come in time to fill out your prediction sheet. Please bring a snack to share with the group and we will have a pizza dinner! The awards will be over at roughly 8:00 p.m. Friends are always welcome!

On *March 6*, the youth will be assisting at the **Community Soup** event to benefit **Community Outreach**. During this service project we will be serving and clearing tables. Plan to help at this important fundraiser for Community Outreach!

Confirmation: Our confirmation class will have an overnighter at the church this *Friday, February 25*. We begin at 6:30 p.m. and end at noon on Saturday. This session will focus on the Trinity and will include a viewing of "Jesus Christ, Superstar." Please eat before you come on Friday night and bring

a sleeping bag, sleeping mat, pillow, toiletries and a snack to share with the group. Breakfast will include pancakes, juice, pastries, and fruit. Questions? Contact **Ryan** at the church or via e-mail.



IN THE BEGINNING SERVICE SUNDAY AFTERNOON

Our monthly service for families with young children will be this *Sunday, February 27*, at 5:00 in the chapel. Focused on children under 5 years of age, the 20-minute worship is followed by a meal, and then play time for the children while the parents have an opportunity for conversation. Please let the church office know if you can be there so enough food can be prepared.

MOWERS NEEDED *from page 1*

Schedules of volunteers are very flexible, and your help will be appreciated at any frequency of mowing (typically, once every one-two months). Please con-

tact **Pete Nelson** if you are interested (peter.nelson@oregonstate.edu). Training will be provided.

COMMUNITY SOUP BENEFITS COMMUNITY OUTREACH, INC.

Come enjoy great soup and much more at the COI fund-raiser at our church on *Sunday, March 6*, from 5:00-7:00. Tickets are \$9 per person, or \$23 per family. For more information or tickets, call 541-748-3000 or see **Liz** on Sunday after worship.

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP WEDNESDAY, MARCH 2

The meeting starts with luncheon (cost \$5) in Gatton Hall at noon on *Wednesday, March 2*, followed by a program in Gatton Hall at **12:45**.

Our speaker will be **Susan Shaw**. Susan is Professor of Women's Studies and Transition Director of the School of Language, Culture and Society at Oregon State University. She is an ordained Baptist minister and a member of Ainsworth United Church of Christ in Portland. Her topic is "A Feminist Interpretation of the Bible."

All church members and friends are invited. If you are planning to attend, please sign up (before or after worship on the 20th or 27th or call the church office (541-757-8122). Child care is available if requested in advance by calling **Ryan Lambert** (541-757-8122). If

you need transportation, call **Alice Morrow** (541-752-3541).

The program will end at 2:00 p.m. If your schedule does not allow for a two-hour lunch, you may come just for lunch or just for the program.



We are planning our traditional Shrove Tuesday pancake suppers, to be held in the homes of congregation members. If you can set a table for eight and would like to host, please sign up on Sunday (or call the church office). Sign-ups continue Sunday for those who would like to attend a supper. When we have the list, guests and hosts will be matched up for a fun evening on *Tuesday, March 8*. **Tanya Andersson** is coordinating this event.



INQUIRERS' CLASS PLANNED

Those interested in learning more about the United Church of Christ and First Congregational in Corvallis are invited to join the Inquirers' Class, to meet after worship on *March 13* and *20*. Lunch will be provided both days.

Class participants who decide to join the church will be received into membership during worship on *April 10*. Contact the church office with questions or to let us know you will be attending.

THANKS FOR THE FEEDBACK

The **Pastoral Relations Committee** would to thank the members of the congregation for their thoughtful responses and comments to the Clergy Evaluation Survey this fall. We have had an opportunity to review all of the submitted surveys and additional remarks. We will present an overview to the Council which will include some suggestions voiced by the members of the congregation.

While the new format presented some initial challenges, we feel it was successful overall and we gathered valuable process information as well as excellent feedback from the congregation. We are grateful for your response and for your willingness to participate in this important part of the life of the church.

HEALTHY AGING COLATION FORUMS

By the year 2030, one in five people in America will be over the age of 65. Between now and then, health care spending for those over 65 is projected to increase by 25%, due to these demographic shifts. To help prepare for these changes, the **Healthy Aging Coalition of Linn and Benton Counties** is holding forums to engage members of the community in a discussion on healthy aging. The goal of the forums is to identify needs in the community and the role the coalition can play in addressing those needs. The Corvallis forum was on February 22, as noted in last week's newslet-

ter. The Albany forum will be *Tuesday, March 8*, at the Albany Senior Center, 489 Water Avenue NW; and the Lebanon forum will be *Tuesday, March 29*, at the Lebanon Senior Center, 80 Tangent Street. Hours for each are 3:00 to 5:00 p.m.

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

Clara McCormick 3/1, Steve Elbinger 3/1, Caroline Zaworski 3/2, Natalie Lucker 3/3, Monine Stebbins 3/8, Linda Hadfield 3/9, Christopher Rorrer 3/14, Greg Christianson 3/15, Welcome Lahey 3/20, Jacob Zaworski 3/28,

* * *

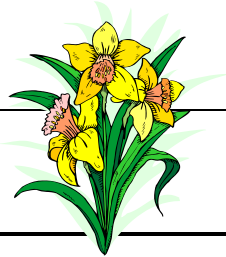
To have your family's birthdays and/or anniversaries listed, put a note with the details in the newsletter office mailbox or e-mail **Susan Wickes** (susanwickes@comcast.net).



... to **Verlyne Phillips**, selected to represent Central Pacific Women at General Synod as one of the "Celebrate the Gifts of Laywomen." She will be honored at the conference Women's Annual Meeting on *May 10* as well as at a luncheon on *July 3* in Tampa. Usually they also appear on the stage of a General Assembly gathering during Synod. Corvallis women who have been honored in the past include **Aleita Hass-Holcombe, Priscilla Zaworski, Ruth Page, and Welcome Lahey**.



Congregational News (USPS 128-820)
 PERIODICALS POSTAGE PAID AT CORVALLIS OR
 Postmaster: Send address changes to:
 Congregational News, 4515 SW West Hills Rd.
 Corvallis OR 97333-3925. Published weekly
 except twice a month in July and August by
First Congregational United Church of Christ



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Copy deadline for next issue of newsletter is Tuesday noon, March 1.

WEEKLY CALENDAR

Friday, February 25

6:30 p.m. Confirmation overnight
 (till Saturday at noon)

7:30 p.m. Badminton

Sunday, February 27

9:00 a.m. Sanctuary Choir

9:30 a.m. Christian Education

10:30 a.m. Worship
 (following) Guatemala trip meeting,
 Library

(following) Lighting meeting,
 Meeting Hall

4:45 p.m. Youth Academy
 Award party, Lucker

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

Monday, February 28

7:00 p.m. C E Board

Tuesday, March 1

10:15 a.m. Staff

Noon Lectionary class

6:30 p.m. Outreach & Evangelism

6:30 p.m. Worship Committee

7:00 p.m. Boy Scout Troop 1

7:30 p.m. Diaconate

7:30 p.m. Personnel Committee

Wednesday, March 2

Noon Women's Fellowship

6:30 p.m. Bell Choir

7:15 p.m. Sanctuary Choir

Thursday, March 3

6:30 p.m. Girl Scout Troop 20142

Friday, March 4

7:00 a.m. First Friday Forum

7:30 p.m. Badminton

Watch for the **Wednesdays in Lent** schedule in our next issue.

Our Thoughts and Prayers

... are with **George Mueller-Warrant**, who will have surgery for prostate cancer on *Friday, February 25* in Salem;

... continue to be with **Sharon Calhoun**, now at Corvallis Manor. Her room number is really **316** (corrected from last week.).