



Congregational News

From FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Corvallis, Oregon

Vol. XLX, No. 42

November 25, 2011



Plan to join the CE Board this *Sunday, November 27*, for the intergenerational craft extravaganza known as the Advent Festival.

The festival occurs in Gatton Hall during both the 9:30 CE hours and our after-worship fellowship time and includes many craft-y ways to prepare for Christmas. This year, we will have old favorites and some new projects: make Advent wreaths (and get an Advent worship booklet for home), Advent paper chains, greeting cards, Christmas magnets, and pinecone bird feeders; decorate cookies or gift bags, or try finger knitting and making *ojos de Dios*. There will also be an opportunity to purchase Heifer Project gifts [see page 3 for details].

WATCH FOR BRIGHT GIFT TAGS

During Advent, one of our mission activities is the collection of gifts to be distributed by two community agencies—the **Janus House** and the **Vina Moses Center**. Tags from the agencies are placed on the



Bright Gift tree which will be up on *November 27*. Individuals/families take tags, purchase the gifts and place them (unwrapped) under the tree during the service on *December 11*.

The Janus House is a residential treatment facility for adults returning to the community after a psychiatric hospitalization. Each Janus House tag lists an item which the staff has determined would be an appropriate gift for a specific individual. If you buy for the Janus House, buy what is on the tag and put the tag on the gift. This facilitates our sorting the Janus gifts from the Vina gifts and helps the staff at the Janus house as they wrap the gifts.

[continued on page 4]

THIS SUNDAY

November 27

NO Adult Forum [see left]

Scriptures: Isaiah 64:1-9
Mark 13:24-37
Sermon: "To Keep Awake"
Elizabeth Oettinger

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK*Elizabeth Oettinger*

Dear Friends,

It's so hard to make the abrupt transition from turkey eating to Advent, but here it comes! This Sunday is the first Sunday in Advent, so come and enjoy the Advent festival!

And try to enjoy all of Advent as well. There is no time in the calendar year when the rhythms of the world are so out of sync with the rhythms of the church. Out in the world, it's all lights and Christmas music coming even out of elevator speakers, and the invitation to cast off all restraint and celebrate, be extroverted, make merry, buy, buy, buy. Inside the church, the hymns are played in minor keys, and the scriptures lead us to take time for quiet, to reflect, to go deep inside to the very core of our soul and search out our deepest longings, our empty places, the hole in our lives that only God can fill.

I know that in the church there are those who become impatient with Advent's solemnity. But that's the point really. The goal of Advent is for us to want, and to take time to stand, sit, even kneel silent, meditative, paying attention to that wanting. What are we waiting for? What do we want at the deepest level of our being? Can we discipline ourselves to live in that place of wanting for four weeks, becoming acquainted with its contours, its depth, its every detail.

When I was a child, every year we had Advent calendars, with a daily door to open, each day bringing us closer to the joy of Christmas. It was so hard not to go straight to the big door that was Christmas Day, but the years I managed it, I always felt like I had accomplished something important. As adults, when we keep Advent, we accomplish something important, and I truly believe it makes the joy of Christmas fuller and more meaningful.

So welcome to Advent 2011. May these days of waiting, may the holy discipline of our restraint, bring us fully to the wonder and celebration of the angels' proclamation of peace on earth and God's love to all peoples.

God's blessing to you all in this holy season.

Liz

**CHRISTMAS BOOKS
NOW ON DISPLAY**

The church library will have a large assortment of Christmas books on display after Thanksgiving. They will be for both children and adults.

**LAST DAY FOR
GIFTS FOR A BETTER WORLD**

This *Sunday, November 27*, is the last day for the non-profit, fair-trade store, in the upper level of our C E wing. Hours are 11:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.



Rec Night for Middle and High School students resumes *Tuesday, November 29*, (we took a week off for the holiday).

On *Sunday, November 27*, the youth are invited to participate in a service event. Watch Facebook for more details. We're beginning a series on identity and culture – dialogue will focus on what it means to be a young adult in a society that defines people by the way we look and the things we own.

Does the “good news” have anything to say to consumer culture? We think it does. Join us while we work our way through the murky mess toward the hopeful message of Christ.

Questions? Call **Jen** at the church, at 541-760-8114, or e-mail jen@ucc-covallis.org.

HEIFER PROJECT AT YOUR SERVICE

During the Advent Festival which begins at 9:30 on Sunday, the **Heifer Project** table will be ready to take your orders. Catalogs will be available to look at if you didn't have a chance to figure out your alternative gifts from last week's price list. We will also have a variety of donor cards for you to present as gifts. Checks should be made out to Heifer Project International and will be considered tax deductible. Contact **Nancy Klingeman** for additional information.

WHAT IS IT? WHY GO?

Winter Weekend

Pat and I have enjoyed going up to Winter Weekend for several years. We go back each year to share a special time with our church family. There are great talks by the fire in the lodge, funny stories and stories of tragedy, tears of laughter and perhaps tears of compassion. The special gift of that time together with our faith family is something that is carried with you long after the weekend is over.

We have gone hiking in a snow storm at night and seen the stars through the silhouetted trees and the snowflakes falling silently. Sitting and relaxing in the lodge, or doing a puzzle with friends, or playing a rousing board game together all contribute to that feeling of “family.” Everyone pitches in to help with cooking and cleaning up, and mealtimes with 40 of your friends just can't be beat, especially after a long day of skiing or hiking. We look forward to it every year. Join us!

Dorothy Price

COMPOSER KUDOS

A new hymn collection published by Wayne Leupold Editions, Inc., contains a hymn tune by **Sally McBride**. The hymn's text is by Edith Sinclair Downing of Lacey, WA. The hymn was introduced at The Hymn Society's annual conference in San Antonio, Texas.





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



Office Hours: 8:00 a.m.-noon
Office Phone: 541-757-8122
www.ucc-corvallis.org

Editor: 541-754-0117 or
susanwickes@comcast.net
Facilities: 541-753-2106

Copy deadline for next issue of newsletter is Tuesday noon, November 29.

WEEKLY CALENDAR

Friday, November 25

Office closed

Sunday, November 27

- 9:30 a.m. Advent Festival,**
Gatton Hall
- 10:30 a.m. Worship
(following) Children's Choir
(following) Advent festival
continues
Youth service project

Monday, November 28

- 7:00 p.m. Boy Scout Troop 1

Tuesday, November 29

- 9:00 a.m. Staff
Noon Lectionary class
7:00 p.m. Rec. Night

Wednesday, November 30

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

Thursday, December 1

- 6:30 p.m. Girl Scout Troop 20142

Friday, December 2

- 7:00 a.m. First Friday Forum,
Shari's Restaurant

BRIGHT GIFTS *from page 1*

The Vina Moses Center collects gifts for children. The gifts are put on display at the Vina Moses Christmas Center and the parents select gifts. The Vina Moses tags give suggestions of what you might buy. It is not mandatory that you buy what is on the tag. They do ask that you not buy stuffed animal as they always have an overabundance of them. If you shop the pre-Christmas sales and find great items at great prices, buy them even though you do not have a tag from the tree suggesting them. The Vina Moses Center can use toys, dolls, art supplies, craft kits, books, puzzles, sports equipment—suitable for children from birth to twelve years of age. Take your children shopping with you; they know what kids like. If you don't have children, adopt one for the day to be your shopping consultant. As you shop, remember many of the families are Hispanic. Wrapping paper is always welcomed by the parents.