



# Congregational News

From FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
Corvallis, Oregon

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December 18, 2011



## BELLS RING SUNDAY

Our own Bell Choir will ring for this Sunday's worship. The pieces are: "Earth and All Stars," arr.

Timothy Shepard (prelude), "Huron Carol," arr. Timothy Waugh (offertory), and "Carol of the Bells," arr. Douglas Wagner (postlude). The choir is directed by **Kim Thackray**.

## SIGN UP FOR THE CHURCH

First Congregational UCC is having our annual blood drive on *Wednesday, December 28*, 10:30 a.m. - 3:30 a.m., in Gatton Hall. To schedule your appointment call **Carolyn** (503-779-1266). **Tammy Skubinna** will be in the foyer with blood drive information this *Sunday, December 18*, before and after the 10:30 am church service. Let's  
*[continued on page 2]*



## CAPITAL CAMPAIGN UPDATE

The West Side Capital Campaign is winding down. We had an ambitious goal of \$275,000 for the West Side Project, the sanctuary roof, and the sanctu-

ary furnace. This figure includes the lead gifts. Many wonderful pledges have been received, once again demonstrating your generosity. The Campaign currently stands at \$229,300. If you have not yet made your pledge, there is still time! The West Side Task Force will meet in January to consider changes that can be made to stay within the funds pledged.

## THIS SUNDAY

*December 18*

**Adult Forum:** Once again, this Sunday, we will meet in small discussion groups for our Adult Education hour and share each other's faith journeys. What is your faith journey? How did you get to First Congregational United Church of Christ? What keeps you here?

Barb Clauson's "muffin ministry" continues, so grab yourself a cup of tea or coffee and join us this fourth Sunday in Advent -9:30 in the Fireplace Room.

**Scriptures:** Luke 1:26-38

**Sermon:** "What Child is This?"  
Elizabeth Oettinger

**THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK***Elizabeth Oettinger*

Dear Friends,

This is one of those “awkward” years when Christmas Day comes on Sunday. The last time this happened was 14 years ago—we were spared by leap year 7 years ago. The last time it happened, the Board of Deacons came up with the idea of having church just on Christmas evening because, given family time, none of them thought they would come to a morning service. So this year again, we are not having morning church, but instead a special Christmas Evensong service.

The Service of Evensong is one of the most ancient liturgical rites of the church, and was taken in large part from the form of worship in the synagogues of Jesus’ day. Some historians believe that in slightly different form, it was celebrated by the Apostles of Jesus. It became one of the services of the hours, well established in Christian monasteries by the 6<sup>th</sup> century.

Evensong plays on the physical and spiritual relationship of darkness and light. It is a service of evening, usually celebrated as day turns to night. The liturgy plays on images of light in the darkness. The tradition suggests that much of the service be sung.

Our Christmas Evensong will be a quiet service of lessons and contemplation, with the traditional musical responses sung in simple, haunting plainsong melodies. The service begins with the church in semi-darkness. As the early liturgy develops, more and more candles are lit until we are surrounded literally with light in the darkness. It is a beautiful service, and a special quartet from OSU will provide the chants.

I know that Christmas Day is a busy, sometimes overwhelming day for many of us. It is also, though, a time when we remember those we love of Christmases past who are no longer with us. Unlike the exuberant joy of the Christmas Eve services, Christmas night is more simply beautiful and reflective. It offers a space for both the light and the darkness in us as we live this Holy day.

So I encourage you to come Christmas Sunday evening. I promise it will be a lovely and moving way to end your Christmas day.

May your blessings be many in the coming days.

**Liz**

**CAPITAL CAMPAIGN** *from page 1*

get as many church members and friends to participate as possible! This is a great service project that will make a difference in our community!

**HELP WANTED**

If you have a post-knee/shoulder surgery ice therapy machine to donate to our in-house durable medical supplies collection, please let the church office know.



The last Rec Night of 2011 is *Tuesday, December 20*, from 7:00-9:00 p.m. at the church. This is a joint middle school/high school and alumni event.

Rec Night will resume *January 10*. The next Sunday Youth night is *January 8*, we'll be having a progressive dinner, starting at the church and leaving promptly at 5:00. Youth will be back for pick-up at the church by 7:30 p.m.

### FINANCIAL BOOKS CLOSE JANUARY 1<sup>ST</sup>

December brings an increase in financial activity: pledges are completed, some new pledges are prepaid, and we have the opportunity for several special gifts. All of your gifts are appreciated—whenever you make them. However, if you want to include these gifts in your 2011 taxes, it is important that your gifts be dated in 2011 and be at the church by *Sunday, January 1*. Postmarks don't count! We'll gladly receive your December gifts after January 1<sup>st</sup>, but they will be included in your 2012 giving record.



In this busy week before Christmas, let us not forget the hungry in our own town. Sign up in the foyer to help serve Stone Soup this month. Our day is *Tuesday, December 20*, and begins at 3:00.

Newcomers and one-time participants are always welcome.

### FLOWER FUND GIVING



This is the last Sunday that Flower Fund inserts will be in the worship bulletin, so don't miss the opportunity to give in memory, in honor, or in celebration of a friend or loved one. This fund is used to purchase poinsettias for Christmas time, azaleas for Easter, and flower arrangements for special occasions throughout the year. Names of contributors and those they are honoring are listed in the worship bulletins for the two Christmas Eve services. The cost of a poinsettia is \$15.



... to all who chose Heifer Project International alternative gifts this year. Our total purchases exceeded \$10,000!

### MESSIAH SATURDAY

"Comfort ye ..." rings out the tenor voice of our own **Jeffrey Larkin**, opening the Rep Singers' presentation of the Christmas portion of Handel's *Messiah*. It's *THIS Saturday, December 17, 7:30* at First United Methodist Church, 1165 NW Monroe.

Other familiar faces from our choir include **Barb Clauson**, **Trina Norman**, and **Nicki Zielke**, who sings the gentle aria "He Shall Feed His Flock."



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

**WEEKLY CALENDAR**

*Friday, December 16*

7:30 p.m. Badminton

*Saturday, December 17*

1:00 p.m. Lafe Harter memorial

*Sunday, December 18*

9:00 a.m. Sanctuary Choir

9:30 a.m. Christian Education

10:30 a.m. Worship

(following) Children/Youth Choir

(following) Occasional Congrega-  
 tional Orchestra,  
 Fireplace Room

5:00 p.m. In the Beginning

*Monday, December 19*

7:00 p.m. Trustees Board

7:00 p.m. Boy Scout Troop 1

*Tuesday, December 20*

9:00 a.m. Staff  
**NO** Lectionary class

3:00 p.m. Stone Soup [see p. 3]

7:00 p.m. Rec. Night

*Wednesday, December 21*

7:15 p.m. Sanctuary Choir

*Friday, December 23*

7:30 p.m. Badminton

**LOOKING AHEAD:**

*January 8:* Soup 'n' Bread fundraiser for  
 Westminster House on OSU campus

*January 14-16:* Winter Weekend  
 at Suttle Lake

*January 22:* Annual budget meeting



**Tim** and **Susan**  
**Cowles** are pleased to  
 announce the birth of  
 their granddaughter,  
**Elizabeth Carol Owens,**

on November 1, 2011. Elizabeth lives in  
 Marietta, Georgia, along with her brother  
**Oliver** (2 years old), and her parents  
**Anna Cowles Owens** and **Fritz Owens.**  
 Elizabeth's cousin, **Lucas Cowles** (2.5  
 years old), lives in New York City with  
 his parents **Ben** and **Patti Cowles.** Tim  
 and Susan temporarily reside in Wash-  
 ington, D.C., so they all share the same  
 time zone for the first time in more than  
 a decade!