

The Link

First Congregational
United Church of Christ
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Volume 34 No. 2

God is Still Speaking,

January 24, 2012

Developing a Strategy for Communication and Outreach

Dear Church Family,

In recent conversations I have had with members, interest has been expressed in our church's strategy for communication and outreach. For the sake of generating discussion, feedback, and support, I want to share with you the goals our Communications Ministry has for this year along with some of my own thoughts.

If resources allow, the goals for the Communications Ministry include:

- 1) Posting videos on our church's website that might potentially feature church members talking about our church and why they are a part of it.
- 2) Sending postcards to a targeted mailing list of homes in the community as a way of promoting a month of visitor-friendly activities at our church. Such activities would include a special four-week worship series, a fun community event for families, and an adult education series. To read about how another church has had success with this strategy, see Martin Thielen's "Marketing Plan: A Mainline Church in the Bible Belt," www.readperiodicals.com/201107/2411513031.html.
- 3) Placing a sign for our church on the corner of Highway 99 and 68th Street.
- 4) Utilizing a mailing service that would allow us to send an introductory brochure about our church to homebuyers in Vancouver. This is a common strategy among churches seeking to attract new residents who are looking for a church home.

As I indicated in my sermon on Sunday, I am also interested in developing an outreach program at church that involves members interacting with people in the general public. My example on Sunday was to have a table at the Vancouver Farmer's Market that would allow us to practice "reverse evangelism." Instead of telling people what we think they should believe, we would invite them to tell us something about themselves. For example, we might ask them to tell us the story of the most meaningful moment in their life. We could even record the story and provide them with a free copy.

Finally, one of the best ways to bring people into one's church is word of mouth. If you share with others what you love about our church, you may well find that some of them desire to have the same sense of spiritual community and connection in their lives that you have.

A good strategy of communication and outreach for a church requires the input and participation of its members. We need your help in spreading the word!

Your brother in Christ,

Pastor Brooks

WORSHIP IN JANUARY AND FEBRUARY

January 29, 2012

10 a.m. Worship Service. Rev. Brooks Berndt preaching. Infant and Toddler Care available. 10:20 a.m.: Christian Education for children 3 yrs. - Grade 7. Youth Group Meets at 11:30 a.m.

Worship Volunteers:

Greeters: Beverly Boydston and Doraine Kohler
Worship Leader: Leslie Kulm
Ushers:

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING WORSHIP

FEBRUARY

February 5, 2012 COMMUNION

SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY

10 a.m. Worship Service. Rev Brooks Berndt preaching. Infant and Toddler Care available. 10:20 a.m.: Christian Education for children 3 yrs. - Grade 7. Adult Education in the Plymouth Room after Worship.

Worship Volunteers:

Greeters:
Worship Leader: Natalie Cantrell
Ushers: Aaron Cushing, Rory Martindale
Wayne and Doris Fletcher

February 12, 2012

10 a.m. Worship Service. Poetry Reading. Infant and Toddler Care available. 10:20 a.m.: Christian Education for children 3 yrs. - Grade 7. Adult Education in the Plymouth Room after Worship.

Worship Volunteers:

Greeters:
Worship Leader: Kerry Lambert
Ushers: Carol Pendergraft, Dwight Chapman
Darrell and Shirley Brandenburg

February 20, 2012

10 a.m. Worship Service. Rev. Brooks Berndt preaching. Infant and Toddler Care available. 10:20 a.m.: Christian Education for children 3 yrs. - Grade 7. Adult Education in the Plymouth Room after Worship.

Worship Volunteers:

Greeters:
Worship Leader: Gwen Moscoe
Ushers: Ken Rowe and Cory Saum-Blystone
Mike King and Duke Charpentier

Wednesday, February 22 Ash Wednesday

Soup Dinner at 5:45 PM in the Plymouth Room

Distribution of the Ashes at 6:30 PM

REMEMBERING OUR FAMILY IN PRAYER

Prayer requests for:

Our sons and daughters overseas, and the people of the Middle East;

CONTINUING PRAYER REQUESTS FOR:

Yahriel Harrigan Al Ebersole
Martha White Clarice Fossen
Emma Holden

It is with a heavy heart that we announce the passing of **Aili Ray**, a longtime member. Our thoughts and prayers go out to her family.

UPCOMING PUBLICATION DATES FOR "The Link"

Link Deadline
Link Mailed

February 12, 2012
February 14, 2012

Congregational Budget Meeting January 27, 2012 in the Sanctuary immediately following Worship

There are difficult matters to be considered and your input will be greatly appreciated.

*Of winter's lifeless world each tree
Now seems a perfect part;
Yet each one holds summer's secret
Deep down within its heart.*

~Charles G. Stater

February 26, 2012

10 a.m. Worship Service. Rev. Brooks Berndt preaching. Infant and Toddler Care available. 10:20 a.m.: Christian Education for children 3 yrs. - Grade 7. Youth Group Meets at 11:30 a.m.

Worship Volunteers:

Greeters:
Worship Leader: Marnie Wright
Ushers: John Bradley and John Hannon
Tom and Josiah Renner

11:15 AM

First Lenten Luncheon in the Plymouth Room

A Call for Art

Submitted by Pastor Brooks

Ash Wednesday is on February 22nd this year, and our worship service on that day will once again feature art by church members and friends. We are inviting members to submit works of art related to the following quote from a 19th century Hassidic rabbi: "Human beings are God's language." In thinking about this quote, you might consider how persons in your life have revealed God's love to you, how they have accompanied you at crucial times in your life, or how they have helped point you toward God. Similar to last year, our Ash Wednesday service will give people an opportunity to reflect upon works of art with the accompaniment of music.

Art submissions can be drawings, paintings, photographs, sculptures, collages, quilts, carvings, or almost anything you feel called to create. Members of all ages, including kids, are welcome to participate. Please bring your artwork to the office by February 19th. Don't forget to put your name on it!

Kiwanis Fund-Raiser The Trail Band

The Trail Band is an 8-piece ensemble that creates an energetic blend of brass and string arrangements of traditional and original music featuring 5 great vocalists. The band was formed in 1991 at the request of the Oregon Trail Council to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Oregon Trail.

Hundreds of appearances across America and Japan, plus 8 albums, have established The Trail Band as the premiere historic music ensemble from the Northwest. Cornet, tenor horn, tuba, fiddles, hammer dulcimer, guitars, penny whistle, mandolin, piano, saxophone, spoons, bones, drums, bass, and recorders combine with their rich vocal harmonies to create a diverse tapestry of sound.

Salmon Creek Kiwanis brings THE TRAIL BAND to the Skyview H.S. auditorium on SATURDAY, FEB. 11th, at 3 PM. Tickets can be purchased from Darrell Brandenburg, Ken Rowe or Ed Frank. Prices are \$18 each, or 2 for \$35. All proceeds are given throughout the year to about 25 programs, primarily for kids.



January 30, 5-8:30 PM

**Highland United Church of Christ
7600 NE Glisan St, Portland, OR**

Learn how your congregation can:

- Improve indoor air quality at home and at your congregation.
 - Advocate for equitable food and transit systems.
 - Conduct a healthy and sustainable food drive.
 - Save money while supporting green energy jobs.
 - Give new life to contaminated land.
- Support environmental justice in your community, and much more.

The event will include a locally-grown dinner, keynote by the Rev. Dr. LeRoy Haynes, Jr., and presentations from congregations about their greening efforts. Resource people from the community will be on hand to discuss a variety of topics on putting faith into action around environmental justice, including food justice, transit equity and environmental health.

The doors will open at 5 p.m.; dinner and program will begin at 5:30 p.m.

Registration fee: \$25 per person (\$15 for students). Scholarships are available; contact Alison at awarren@emoregon.org or [\(503\) 221-1054, ext. 210](tel:(503)221-1054).

To register: [register securely online at www.emoregon.org](http://www.emoregon.org), or download a [registration brochure](#). Our church is one of the co-sponsors for this important event.

A Call for Poetry

Submitted by Pastor Brooks

For our worship service on February 12th, members are invited to submit and read poems that evoke the consolations and hopes of faith. Such poems might provide comfort in difficult times or express our deepest yearnings. While original works would be wonderful, you do not necessarily have to submit a poem that you yourself wrote. You can submit a poem written by someone else, a famous poet perhaps. If you are too shy to read a poem in worship, another person can read your poem for you. By February 5th, poems can be either put in my office mailbox or emailed to me at brooks@vanucc.org. Please keep poems short: nothing longer than 35 lines.

Cans for Zambia

Contributed by Nancy Fite

Do your cans and bottles make a difference? Yes, they really do. Good Samaritan Ministries is now putting that money towards teacher salaries in Zambia. So continue the good work recycling your aluminum cans, beer bottles or any other bottles that can be redeemed in Oregon. It all adds up. Please don't crush the cans/bottles, but do rinse them out. That is very helpful to Dave Slocum who has to rinse them if you do not. A basket for depositing those items can be found right inside the downstairs church entrance. A thousand thank-yous!!

Visitors Welcome

We are a church committed to supporting each other in leading lives full of meaning and purpose. Through our ministries, we provide opportunities for enrichment, service, and action. If you have not already received an orientation packet, please ask an usher for one. If you are interested in becoming a member or have questions about us, please let Pastor Brooks know. By becoming a member, you can affirm that this is a community to which you belong. Pastor Brooks enjoys meeting one-on-one with prospective members if they are interested. He can be reached at brooks@vanucc.org or 693-1476.

Pastoral Relations Committee Meeting Scheduled

The Pastoral Relations Committee will meet on Tuesday, January 31st. If you have any issues that you would like to be addressed by this committee and Pastor Brooks, please feel free to call any of the committee members listed below.

John Fite	699-0380
Gertie Hettman	892-8449
Kaye Kipp	721-3804
Darrell Brandenburg	693-7981
Joan Blair	573-6505

Thank You,
The Pastoral Relations Committee

New Members Orientation Dinner Planned

If you are considering joining our church family, then come to Bradford Hall on Sunday, March 4th for a New Members Orientation Dinner from 5 until 7 p.m. Childcare will be provided if needed.

Join the March for Marriage Equality

This Sunday will be the last chance to sign up in the narthex for participation in the marriage equality march or the events related to it. Here are the events you can attend:

February 9th Prayer Breakfast Kickoff, 7 am to 8 am

Vancouver United Methodist Church, 401 East 33rd Street, Vancouver, WA

February 11th Marriage Equality Community Forum, 6 pm

Longview Untied Methodist Church, 2851 30th Avenue, Longview, WA (Note that the location for this has changed).

February 15th Rally on Front Steps of Legislative Building in Olympia, 4:30 pm

We will gather at 4:00 pm at United Churches of Olympia to walk the final blocks of the march before the rally. Afterward we will have a celebration potluck at United Churches of Olympia

Please Be My Valentine!

Contributed by Kristina Martin

If you would like to be a Valentine for one of the children/teens of the church, please select a name from the Valentines in the narthex and bring a valentine for them by February 12th. If you have questions, please contact Kristina Martin.

Mary Jo Ebel Circle to Meet

Contributed by Charlotte Warren

The Mary Jo Ebel Circle will meet on February 13th, 10:30 AM at the home of Charlotte Warren; 9801 NW 29th Ave. All women of the church are invited to attend.

If you would like more information or need directions, you may call Charlotte at 360-576-8935. We hope to see you there!

Property and Finance Have Goals for 2012!

Your Property and Finance Ministry has a list of items to purchase and tasks to accomplish this year. Thanks to the diligence, hard work, and generous donations of our church members, we have accomplished some of them already.

Have you noticed the new upper parking lot lights? If you like them, then thank John Greenauer for working with the PUD for the installation and John Priel for the generous donation to purchase them. How about the new paint color in the hallways? Thank Marilyn Jones and her son Ty for the beautiful paint job and John Priel, Nancy Fite, Virginia Dunbar, and Marilyn Jones for purchasing the paint.

We also have a new leaf blower purchased by John Priel that replaces the stolen one. Additionally, the old brown chairs with cushions have been re-upholstered by Marilyn Jones, Nancy Fite, Alice Rowe, and Carole Greenauer with material donated by Gertie Hettman. We're working on the design of two railings to be installed down the ramp into Bradford Hall and will be purchased by Ed and Ruby Frank.

Do you like the new look to the Nettie Fries Lounge? Marilyn Jones and Carole Greenauer are our resident designers. If you haven't been in there lately, go take a look. Kathleen New's drawing of the Labyrinth is breathtaking.

We will keep you informed of the projects the interiors Committee has planned for this year. Our ministry is grateful to everyone who is giving their gifts and talents to make our church a building to be proud of in God's name.

Calendar Information

It's really easy to keep up with what's happening at First Congregational, Vancouver. We have a virtual calendar on the website.

To view the calendar, go to www.vancouverucc.org and click on the church calendar link. From the list version you may then click on Google Calendar and view the next few months.

February Birthdays

February 1	Sue Yorioka
February 12	Gail Schmitt
February 12	Carole Greenauer
February 13	Ron Beckman
February 25	Don Walter
February 27	Lee Shefcheck

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU-OOOOOO!

Ash Wednesday Dinner February 22, 2012

Before our Ash Wednesday Service this year, we will be gathering for a soup dinner in the Plymouth Room of our church. The dinner will begin at 5:45 pm. The Ash Wednesday service will begin at 6:30 pm.

Lenten Luncheons to Begin February 26

We will be holding our annual Lenten Soup Luncheons in the Plymouth Room following worship beginning February 26th through March 25th.

If you would like to provide soup for one or more of these luncheons, please contact Dorothy Mathews at 574-7669.

PER CAPITA DUES

Contributed by Dwight Chapman

The Central Pacific Conference of the UCC assesses each church \$13 per person as per capita dues each year. Now is the time when we ask each member to contribute this \$13 per person in addition to their regular pledge. If you do not pledge, we are still asking for your dues contribution. The church is billed for the total number of members on its rolls as of January 1st each year. If you do not pay your dues, the amount must come out of the already tight operating budget for the current year.

Mission & Outreach Lenten Focus “Drink Water For Life”

The “Drink Water for Life” idea originated as a Lenten observance of the 1st Congregational United Church of Christ in Salem, Oregon, which is committed to serving the poorest of the poor by funding community water and sanitation projects. The idea is simple: covenant to “give up” all pricey beverages during Lent (lattes, soda, etc), and drink water instead. Then donate all the money you have saved to a water project (wells, purification, etc) in a needy part of the world. Salem’s first year of the project raised \$3,500. Since then, their idea has spread to other churches, high schools, and universities.

We invite you to participate in “Drink Water for Life” and turn your beverages into clean drinking water to save lives in Haiti. You can learn more at www.drinkwaterforlife.org.

Adult Education “Inspired Aging”

Our February Adult Education Offering is entitled **Aging Inspired**. It will be a four-part discussion about the importance of being present during our experience of trading youth and vitality for spiritual awareness and wisdom.

Feb 12 Ed and Ruby Frank will start us off on with the topic of being present by discussing how they stay active and young at heart.

Feb 19 John and Carol Greenauer will lead a humorous discussion on the emotional aspects of aging.

Feb 26 Ed and Claudia Martin will talk about the importance of the development of faith in the life process and the place that the church can occupy in an inspired life.

(The program continues after a six week break for Lent)

April 15 Kay Kipp and Joan Barber will lead a discussion on how to achieve serenity near the end of life experience.

Bonnie Hennessey is coordinating this exceptional offering that introduces findings from the MacArthur Foundation Study of Aging in America, a ten-year study that shows how participation in a church community promotes successful aging.

List of Contacts for Social Groups

Hiking Group	<u>Aaron Cushing</u> 716-864-1789
Women's Sat Breakfast	<u>Connie Oppel</u> 573-8997
Ultimate Frisbee	<u>Trent Corey</u> 600-1086
Friday Night Movies	<u>Barb Harlan</u> 574-5870
Men's Breakfast	<u>Ed Frank</u> 573-3848
Sunday Brunch	<u>Carol Pendergraft</u> 993-0483
Prayer Shawl Ministry	<u>Joanie Nelson</u> 254-5419
Spirituality Group	<u>Kathleen New</u> 694-3682
Daytime Cards	<u>Joan Blair</u> 573-6505
Pinochle	<u>Darrell Brandenburg</u> 693-7981
Pinochle Subs	<u>Nancy Phelps</u> 576-0302
Bread Baking	<u>Bonnie Hennessey</u> 699-1766
Evening Book Club	<u>Ed Martin</u> 624-0038

Have You Visited the UCC Website

Submitted by Pastor Brooks

The website for our denomination is visited more than seven thousand times a day. The page that is most frequently visited is the page that enables people to find a UCC church near them by typing in either their zip code or the city in which they live. On this website, you can also watch videos of UCC members as they share how the UCC has changed their lives. One of those featured is a former pastor of our church: the Rev. Ed Evans. One can also find on the church website a "Short Course in the History of the United Church of Christ," daily devotionals, information on our denomination's ministries to justice, and much more. Explore for yourself at www.ucc.org.