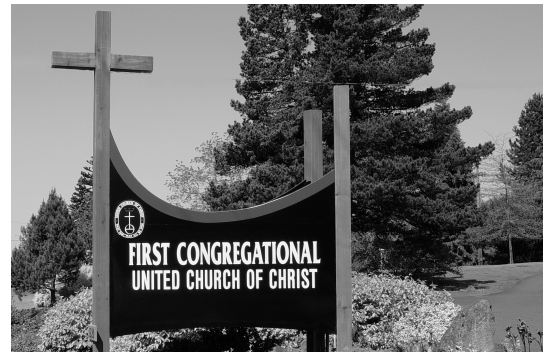


The Link

First Congregational
United Church of Christ
1220 NE 68th Street
Vancouver, WA 98665-0508
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Volume 34 No. 8

God is Still Speaking,

April 24, 2012

Developing a Program of Renewal and Rejuvenation

Dear Church Family,

Our sabbatical task force has been hard at work on our congregation's application for up to \$50,000 in sabbatical grant money with up to \$15,000 of this going toward the congregation's expenses. This Sunday during our congregational meeting we will be considering a proposal from the task force on what our congregation might do while I am gone for three months in the late spring and early summer of 2013. To give you a sense of what they are crafting, I am sharing with you an adapted portion of a drafted proposal:

Rather than just "fill the pulpit" while our pastor is gone for his sabbatical, we realized that both the congregation and our pastor could have a time of resurrection, renewal, and recharging during this period. One thing that inspired our congregation during our first capital campaign was the restoration of the sweeping skylight along our roofline that is covered on the inside by stained glass. Warren Weber, the architect that designed our church, designed four other churches in our conference that have similar sweeping rooflines that result in spacious sanctuaries that draw the worshipers' attention upward. As part of our renewal celebration, we propose visiting these other Weber-designed churches and engaging in fellowship with them.

Other activities such dramatic performances are also being considered. If you have feedback, please contact John Fite. For all their work, I encourage you to thank our task force: Karen Kulm, Pam Osborne, Nancy Olmstead, Richard Trefren, and John Fite.

Your brother in Christ,
Pastor Brooks

WORSHIP IN APRIL AND MAY

April 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: Kathleen Williams and Doraine Kohler
Worship Leader: TBA
Ushers: TBA

MAY

May 6 2012 Communion

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: Susan Rush and Cordelia McBride
Worship Leader: Troy Haliwell
Ushers: Aaron Cushing, Rory Martindale
Wayne and Doris Fletcher

May 13, 2012 Mother's Day

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. No Youth this Sunday.

Worship Volunteers:

Greeters: Connie Oppel, Marcie, Kelsey and Kramer Ramberg
Worship Leader: Bert Martin
Ushers: Carol Pendergraft, Dwight Chapman
Darrell and Shirley Brandenburg

May 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. Youth Group Meets at 11:30 a.m.

Worship Volunteers:

Greeters: Norma Lee Priel and Joan Blair
Worship Leader: Tom Renner
Ushers: Ken Rowe and Cory Saum-Blystone
Mike King and Duke Charpentier

May 27, 2012

10 a.m. Worship Service. Rev. Richard Trefren 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: TBA
Worship Leader: Trent Corey
Ushers: John Bradley and John Hannon
Tom and Josiah Renner

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 Clarice Fossen
Gloria Ross Chad Laskey

Our hearts go out to the Hettman and Cave families on the death of **Nathaniel Hettman**, son of **Dan Hettman** and Heather Cave and grandson of **Gertie Hettman**. A Celebration of Nathaniel's life will be held here at the church Saturday, April 28th at 2:00 PM.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to **Tina Wright** following the passing of her sister, **Emma Holden**. Tina is making the arrangements to take Emma back to Texas for the funeral and burial. Emma was an active participant in our church family for 5 years.

UPCOMING PUBLICATION DATES FOR "The Link"

May 6, 2012
May 8, 2012

Link Deadline
Link Mailed

Birthdays in May

May 1	Kristin Martindale
May 5	Isaac Martin
May 6	Aaron Cushing
May 7	Jim Crossman
May 7	Lynn Degerstedt
May 18	Tom Fey
May 22	Jean Matthews
May 24	Greg Ralph
May 25	Ruby Frank
May 25	Grace Brandis
May 29	Kathy Woolley
May 31	Joe Eckroth
May 31	Boean Marquardt



Blest Be the Soupmakers:

Contributed by Nancy Fite

Thanks to all the people who made soup for the 5th Lenten luncheons. They were all so varied and delicious!! Also, thanks to Dorothy Mathews who coordinated the luncheons. And finally, much thanks to the choir members who helped set up the tables and chairs for the Lenten Luncheons and Maundy Thursday.

Time To Celebrate Our Graduates!

If you have a graduate you would like recognized at our Graduates and Teacher Appreciation service in June, please submit to the office his/her names and graduation information. Please have this information turned in no later than May 20th so it can be included. Thank you!

Reception for Malthe Barrett

Malthe Barrett, the Danish exchange student of Tom and Lynn Renner, will be graduating from Woodland High School on June 8th. He has been in the United States since July 2011 and besides attending the High School, has participated in football, soccer, school newspaper, been elected Tolo King, member of the Youth Group, skiing and much more.

Malthe will have his mother, step father, sister and step-sister come to visit the end of June and they will travel back to Denmark together. Malthe will then begin his education for his future career, of which he is interested in Business. Malthe is also a model and hopes to resume working when he returns home.

Tom and Lynn would like to invite everyone to their home (108 Morrison Hts. Rd., Woodland WA) for a going away party on June 23rd 4pm to whenever. Also there will be an opportunity to say good-bye to Malthe at church on June 24th. His family will be attending church with us and the Youth Group will be sponsoring a Potato Bar after church as a fundraiser and opportunity to visit more with Malthe and his family. Mark your calendars!

Tom and I would like to thank our church family for embracing Malthe this last year. We are going to miss him very much.

Lynn Renner

Nursery Attendant Needed:

We need to hire a new nursery attendant. If you know anyone who is looking for a part-time job and who loves small children, please have them contact Kristina Martin for more details.

Pastor Brooks Office Hours

I will be establishing weekly office hours at the following times:

Tuesday 11 am to 1 pm

Wednesday 4 pm to 6 pm

Saturday 3 pm to 5 pm

If possible, please contact me before visiting. I occasionally have irregular meetings, events, and emergencies that take me away from the office at these times.

Maundy Thursday Dinner

Contributed by Nancy Fite

Thanks to the wonderful cooks Jeff and Pam Osborne, and John and Carole Greenauer. It was a scrumptious lamb dinner which 80 people enjoyed. Thanks to the decorators, servers and cleaners: Marilynn Jones, Tina Wright, Teresa Everist, Joanie Nelson, Ken Rowe, Brandon Buck, Dorothy Mathews, Doraine Kohler and neighbor, John and Nancy Fite, Kim McNally, John Bradley, Vince Bowman and Donna Smith. Also, big thanks go to Dwight Chapman and Haydn for collecting the money.

SPRING FLING Update

Contributed by Kristina Martin

On April 13th thru the 15th, Rev. Tara Wilkins and I headed out to Camp Adams to lead this year's Spring Fling titled "Hunger Games: May the Odds be Ever in Your Favor". The weekend included discussions, activities and presentations on what made the novel and movie so popular as well as how its themes are consistent with dystopian literature. Tara had the teens build on those themes with connecting them to passages in the Bible. Although the numbers were lower than we had hoped, the participants were fantastic and we learned as much from them as we hope they learned from us. Over and over I was reminded that the teens in the conference are amazing young men and women. What a blessing the weekend was!

Introducing Kathryn Golden and John and Joe Eckroth

Contributed by Gina Marquardt

Kathryn, John and Joe want to thank all of you for your warmth and acceptance. When they happened on the church in an Internet search, they were initially struck with the church's openness and acceptance of everyone. When they first visited, they had no thoughts of actually joining the church, however. Even though they had been actively involved in many congregations in the various places they had lived, they had never actually joined any of the churches they attended (this is a first in their 21 year marriage). They mentioned that they never felt a strong enough level of comfort or connection.

This church is different. Kathryn and John met at the Claremont School of Theology (where Kathryn earned a Master's degree in Religion and Arts), so the interest has always been there. But they never did find a good fit (although they had not tried the UCC church before). With this church they found a wonderful combination of tradition, inclusivity, social justice, openness and a bunch of really nice and very smart people. In addition, Brooks is pretty good with his sermons. From the first week they attended over a year ago, they were impressed. But they wanted to take their time and they did. They sincerely appreciate your welcoming them into the congregation.

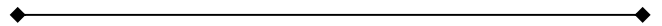
Most of you know Kathryn from her music. She has enjoyed substituting for Christopher as music has been a big part of her life. Kathryn has been playing in church since she was 13, earning a Bachelor's degree in Music along with her Masters in Religion and a Masters in Education. For her day job, Kathryn teaches 5th grade for Portland Public Schools. Kathryn is originally from Oregon City and was determined to make it back after school in California. She did make it back, but only after 9 years in the Los Angeles area and 4 years in Houston (due to John's work).

John had thoughts of finishing a degree in Old Testament, but ran out of time and money. As a young single dad, John continued on as a CPA, finishing Masters Degrees in Business Taxation and Business Administration. John currently works as a business consultant for his former employer in Houston and teaches Accounting in the Graduate Business School at Portland State and in the University of Oregon's Executive MBA program in Portland.

John also has adult children (although John admits that Kathryn did most of the work raising them...), a daughter who works as a Manager of a staffing firm in Santa Barbara, California, and a son who is finishing a PhD in Artificial Intelligence (part of the School of Computer Science and Engineering) at The Ohio State University.

Joe, a Californian by birth like his dad, lived in four different states before he was six years old. Joe has earned his black belt in taekwondo, but lately has more of an interest in hip-hop dance and electronic music. Joe is also fascinated with all things related to roller coasters. His parents hope that translates into doing more math homework as Joe will be entering Skyview High School next fall in their Science, Math and Technology magnet program.

John and Kathryn spend much of their free time exercising at the gym or participating in some of the local running events. They even have a new tandem bicycle, but Kathryn mentioned that the tandem has required a level of marital cooperation beyond their capabilities at the moment. Joe is also a frequent participant at the gym, but prefers hip-hop dance to the running events. They are looking forward to participating with the hiking group, as well as more and more activities with the church as time goes on.



Mindful Eating Potluck and Film

Do you ever think about where your food comes from? Do you think about how your strawberries are picked or how a hamburger patty is made? These are the kinds of questions raised by mindful eating, and they are questions that can have a profound impact on our lifestyles and spirituality. On May 6th after worship, you are invited to a mindful eating potluck and movie screening. For the potluck, we are inviting people to bring a dish and to write down on a card or piece of paper, as best as you are able, the different geographical locations from which its ingredients come. For the movie, we will be watching *Food, Inc.*, a film that exposes the often hidden origins of our food and how it is made. Discussion will be facilitated by Greg Saum-Blystone and Eunita Rankins.

(Continued next column)

Youth Group and NYE

Contributed by Kristina Martin

There are only 10 weeks remaining until members of the Youth Group and I travel to Purdue University to represent our church for the National Youth Event (NYE) 2012. We are super excited to take part in NYE and bring back lots of stories and excitement to share with you!

To help offset the costs of attending NYE, the Youth Group has three fund raisers planned before we leave on July 10.

1. **The Men's Breakfast on 4/28.** Tom Renner and Greg Ralph are making a fabulous breakfast to serve to the men who attend the Men's Breakfast on the 28th. Please consider attending the Men's Breakfast, listen to the fascinating stories about the CIA that will be shared by the special guest speaker, and donate to the Youth Group the cost of your breakfast.
2. **BUNCO PARTY and BASKET RAFFLE** on 5/20. Joan Blair and Teresa Everest have graciously offered to host a BUNCO party to benefit the Youth Group immediately following church on the 20th of May, down in Bradford Hall. BUNCO is a fun and easy to learn dice game that the whole family can enjoy playing. Also at the BUNCO party, we will raffle off two baskets donated by Teresa. One basket is a "family movie night" theme, and the second is a wine and chocolate basket. There will be pizza, cookies and drinks and we are hoping to provide an "away space" for children who are too young to play. Please see Kristina Martin or one of the youth group teens to buy your tickets for both the BUNCO party and the basket raffle. BUNCO tickets are \$10 for adults, \$5 for kids and raffle tickets are \$1 per ticket, 6 for \$5.
3. **Potato Bar on 6/24.** Greg Saum is coordinating a Baked Potato Bar after church on the 24th. There will be baked potatoes with all kinds of tasty fixings. It is \$5 per person with a \$20 family max. This will also be our last day to celebrate our youth group member, Malthe Barrett as he heads back to Denmark after the 24th.

Camp Adams Scholarships

Many thanks to all of you who donated towards our Campership program. Thank you for helping our church kids have a chance to be a camper! The Mission focus for the month of April is Camp Adams and every dollar you donate gives our kids more opportunities to experience the magic of outdoor ministry.

Adult Ed

The Adult Education presentation scheduled for April 29th has been canceled.

Please continue to look for information on when Kaye Kipp's helpful and important presentation on Caring for Yourself While Caring for Others will be rescheduled.

The Mission and Outreach Focus for May Is: FRIENDS OF THE CARPENTER

Friends of the Carpenter is a ministry of building positive and productive relationships between the poor and homeless in the Community of Christ. Through a safe and supervised activity of simple woodcraft, people experience "sanctuary" where everyone is welcome, accepted and respected.

*Friends of the Carpenter
Inviting the Homeless to:*

C – ommunity

H – ope

R – enewal

I – nspiration

S – elf Esteem

T – ruth

Through Friendships

Camp Adams

The time is now to register your campers for summer camps at Camp Adams. Camp is \$345 until 5/21 when the price goes up to \$385. Sessions are as follows:

Genesis/Seekers: July 8 – 14, for students who have finished grades 2 & 3

Discovers: July 15 – 21, for students who have finished grades 4 & 5

Sojourners: July 22 – 28, for students who have finished grades 6, 7, 8

Exodus: July 29 – August 4, for students who have finished grades 9 – 12.

Young Adult Camp: July 4 – 7, for young people out of high school and under 30. (see website for prices)

Family Camp, 6 day option: July 1 – 7 (see website for prices)

Family Camp, 3 day option: July 1 – 4 (see website for prices)

Family Camp, 3 day option: July 4 – 7 (see website for prices)

Work Camp: July 1 – 4, free. See website for details.

**Central Pacific Conference
Women's Annual Meeting
May 17, 2012**

**Waverly Heights Congregational
United Church of Christ**
3300 SE Woodward St.
Portland, OR 97202

Registration: 10:00 AM
Luncheon (\$10.00) 11:30 AM
Opening Worship 1:00 PM

*Presented by First Congregational UCC,
Vancouver, WA. Includes offering for
Loan/Grant Fund.*

Program: 1:15 PM
**International Human Rights
in the United States.**

Presented by Gwynne Skinner, Assistant
Professor of Clinical Law at Willamette
University.

Business Meeting 2:30 PM
Please make reservations by May 14th with
Waverly Heights Congregational, 503-238-1337

Women's Breakfast Group

Contributed by Connie Oppel

The two round tables near the window are reserved for us at 9:30 on May 12th at the Red Lion at the Quay.

Last month, 16 of us enjoyed good fellowship and good food. It was a great morning, but there's plenty of room for more.

There's no need to call for reservations, but if you have questions, you can call me, Connie O. at 360-573-8997 or my cell at 360-600-1098.

Hope to see you there!

Strengthen the Church

Contributed by Marnie Wright

Each year the UCC has a special offering that helps the church's love to grow and thrive. Called **Strengthen the Church**, this offering funds new congregations and renews existing ones. It supports programs for youth and young adults and nurtures current and future leaders.

Your gift during May, will help send our "God is still speaking..." message of extravagant welcome into the waiting world.

**Doug Smith Concert
Mark Your Calendars!!!**

Grammy Award winning acoustic guitarist Doug Smith will play for us on Saturday evening, October 20, 2012!! He is the winner of the prestigious Winfield International Fingerstyle *Competition* in 2006, and *Billboard Magazine* writes, "Inviting melodies....stunning finger-picking." www.DougSmithGuitar.com

Doug will also join Three Together at our concert. Doug, his wife Judy Koch Smith and Don Mitchell have been playing together since 1997. This group's trademark at rehearsals and live performances is having FUN- especially for the audience!! www.threetogether.net

Doug, Judy and Don are very generous in that their pay for the evening will be the money they make on their CD's that we sell. Please be thinking of who you can bring to the concert. Tickets will be available soon and will cost \$15.00.

Questions? Call Nancy Fite or Jeanie Stolle.

WHO

Thank you to all who volunteered at St.Paul this year for the Winter Hospitality Overflow which ended on March 31.

The men have gone back onto the street, but we sent them out the door with sleeping bags and tarps donated by First Congregational UCC, Family of Christ Lutheran, a local Baptist church and clients of Dave's at his clinic.

Dave and I have gone out with dinner the past two weekends and have found several of the men who enjoyed the fellowship and meal with us. We brought clean socks and they were happy to change out of wet socks into a clean pair. If you would like to help with this ministry, the following things are much appreciated:

Sleeping bags
Tarps
Flashlights
Socks, new or clean used ones
Granola bars
Sandwiches

Please call Dave at 573-5120 if you can help. Thank you in advance.

Judy Enders

Forward Together: Shining Our Light

In May we will be kicking off our capital campaign, **FORWARD TOGETHER: SHINING OUR LIGHT**. Here are some important dates to remember:

April 29th - Members of the congregation are invited to pick up their informational packets after worship.

May 6th and May 13th - Capital Campaign Inspirational Worship Services

May 20th - Dedication of Commitment Cards during Worship followed by a Celebration Meal and a Bunco Fundraiser

Please note that we would like all the congregation to attend the celebration meal on May 20th. Participation in the bunco game is optional.

Your Capital Campaign Committee

Calendar Information

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.