

# *The Link*

First Congregational  
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*God is Still Speaking,*

July 24, 2012

## **Babies or Beasts?**

Dear Church Family,

Before Danalyn appeared on the scene, I wasn't much of a baby person. Don't get me wrong. I wasn't an anti-baby person. From a distance, I appreciated babies in general, and up close, I absolutely adored my two nieces from the moments they were born. Still, I wasn't the kind of person who from a young age daydreamed about what colors to paint the nursery. For me to become a baby person, I needed to experience life with a baby in a more intimate and ongoing kind of way.

As I write this, I am typing with my right hand and holding a sleeping Danalyn with my left. I suppose I can say that I now have a *first-hand* knowledge of babies. Like many parents who have walked the path of parenthood before me, my experience has taught me how a baby can reorganize one's life and one's thoughts. The truth of this simple assertion hit home for me as I pondered an imagined scenario of brain re-engineering.

Let me explain. Previous to this moment I had been reading about the debate over gun control that the killings in Colorado provoked. As I read a twitter posting on the subject by a famous actor that provoked a landslide of virulent responses, I lamented how issues like gun control, abortion, and marriage equality are red meat issues, especially during an election season. Instead of being topics for thoughtful reflection and discussion, they bring out our inner pavlovian dog....on steroids.

In my fantasy world, I began to wonder what would happen if this feral inner beast was forced to slink away in the background because our gentle, baby-loving side decided to take over our brains. In other words, what if we approached issues without pre-programmed saliva dripping from our mouths but with concern for the future of our children foremost in our thoughts. I am sure if I were a famous actor espousing this idea on twitter I would be ridiculed for my bleeding heart idealism or some other alleged form of moronism. Despite this, I would rather that we keep our inner beasts on a short-leash. I would also like to think that Jesus would have preferred babies over beasts.

Your brother in Christ,

Pastor Brooks

## WORSHIP IN JULY AND AUGUST

### JULY

#### July 29, 2012

10 a.m. Worship Service. Rev. Brooks Berndt preaching. Infant and Toddler Care Available.

#### **Worship Volunteers:**

Greeters: Darrell and Shirley Brandenburg  
Worship Leader: Ellie Bradley  
Ushers: John and Joe Eckroth

### AUGUST

#### August 5, 2012

10 a.m. Worship Service. Rev. Brooks Berndt, preaching. Infant and Toddler Care available.

#### **Worship Volunteers:**

Greeters: Connie Oppel and Charlotte Warren  
Worship Leader: Jeff Schnabel  
Ushers: Aaron Cushing and Rory Martindale  
Wayne and Doris Fletcher

#### August 12, 2012

10 a.m. Worship Service. Rev. Brooks Berndt, preaching. Infant and Toddler Care available.

#### **Worship Volunteers:**

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

#### August 19, 2012

10 a.m. Worship Service. Rev. Brooks Berndt preaching.. Infant and Toddler Care available.

#### **Worship Volunteers:**

Greeters: Sue and Marvin Benson  
Worship Leader: Cookie McBride  
Ushers: Ken Rowe and Cory Saum-Blystone  
Mike King and Duke Charpentier

#### August 26, 2012 Outdoor Service on the Labyrinth

10 a.m. Worship Service. Rev. Brooks Berndt preaching. Infant and Toddler Care available.

#### **Worship Volunteers:**

Greeters: Barbara Harlan and Joanie Nelson  
Worship Leader: John Eckroth  
Ushers: John and Joe Eckroth  
Tom and Josiah Renner

**Blessing of the Animals  
following Worship**

## 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  
Tyler Corey

### UPCOMING PUBLICATION DATES FOR "The Link"

Link Deadline  
Link Mailed

August 12, 2012  
August 14, 2012

### Birthdays in August

August 10	Rachel Corey
August 10	Scott Jones
August 12	Sharon Sollenberger
August 14	Pat Finley
August 23	Yahriel Harrigan
August 24	Marilynn Jones
August 26	Brooks Berndt
August 28	Bev Boydston
August 30	Josiah Renner



*The care of human life and happiness, and  
not their destruction, is the first and only  
object of good government.*

~Thomas Jefferson

## Thank You

Dear Church Family,

Thank you so very much for helping me raise money to go to the National Youth Event in Indiana. In my opinion, the best part about the trip was the singing and the motivational speakers during worship. The motivational speaker's stories were really inspirational because they shared with us their own story on how they overcame and adapted to their disability or problem and learned to live with it and teach other people that they can do the same. I thank you all again for all the help you've given not just me, but Kristina and Tim as well to help us go to Purdue University in Indiana for the National Youth Event.

Yours Truly,

Josiah Renner

P.S.: J.R. Martinez said something that I thought was awesome at the National Youth Event: "If you have a disability, take the "dis" away and you have an ability because truly it's more like an ability than a disability."

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## Adult Education

Contributed by Kristina Martin

As a person of faith, I have found answering the question "what do you believe" to be a challenge at times. It isn't that I don't know what I believe that makes my answer a challenge. It is because my answer isn't one that fits into a simple box. As Facebook would say, "It's complicated."

When discussing my faith with teens I finally realized that my faith is based more upon what I do, not on what I don't – my faith is based on living the example put forth by Jesus rather than simply following the list of "Don't" rules I once thought defined being a Christian. My answer is a bit less complicated now, but I still struggle with explaining what I believe.

That struggle, which I believe leads us to a more full understanding of the divine as well as our own self, is for me the journey of faith. And the best part of that journey is the conversations I have with other people as I talk about and learn more about my faith...about what I really believe.

I invite you all to join the CE ministry in September as we revisit the *Living the Question 2* DVD series beginning on September 16<sup>th</sup>. *LtQ2* is an open-minded alternative to studies that attempt to give participants all the answers and instead strives to create an environment where participants can interact with one another in exploring what's next for Christianity.

## Run/Walk for Congo Women

Join our church's team in the Run for Congo Women. This is a 5k run/walk that will be held along the Willamette River in Portland on August 4th at 9 am. Registration costs \$35. Go to the following link and click on "Join Our Team":

<http://rfcwportland2012.kintera.org/firstcongregational>

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## Camp Earth Walkers 2012 (VBS), August 15-17

Contributed by Kristina Martin

Camp Earth Walkers 2012 is a three day exploration of better health and fitness, inspired by the progressive Christian teachings of John 1:2

"Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, as it goes well with your soul."

- Camp Earth Walkers is open to all FCUCC kids and extended family members in preschool thru middle school.
- Camp Earth Walkers costs **\$15** to defray material costs.
- Children should arrive by **9 am** and be picked up at **1 pm on Wed/Thurs. On Friday please pick up your camper at 12 noon.**
- Children should bring a non-refrigerated sack lunch (no microwave items) with their name on it each day.
- Children should bring a water bottle to ensure good hydration. (Label all personal items, please.)
- If you have any questions, please contact Kristina (360) 635-1075.

Registration materials will be mailed the end of July. Additional registration forms are in the office. **Registration materials are due August 1, 2012.**

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## "Like" Us on Facebook

Facebook is a great way to let your friends and acquaintances know about our church and its events. Find us at: [www.facebook.com/vanucc](http://www.facebook.com/vanucc)

## **All Church Retreat 'Staycation' At First Congregational UCC August 17-18, 2012**

### **"Feeding Our Body, Spirit and Earth"**

Contributed by Kristina Martin

This year's all church retreat will be held at the church so that all our church family might be able to join us! The festivities start with a potluck dinner on Friday night, followed by a vespers service and S'Mores around a fire pit. People are welcome to spend the night in tents or campers/motor homes. Saturday starts with a pancake breakfast, includes a day of relaxed but exciting activities and ends with a grilled hot dog/German sausage dinner Saturday night.

The CE ministry hopes that you will be able to come to all or part of what we hope is our best retreat yet. Please see the board in the narthex for more details and to sign up so we have a head-count for meals. We can't wait to spend the weekend with you!

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### **New Running Group and Walking Group**

Our new running and walking groups are off to a great start! Both groups meet at 9 am on Saturdays near the entrance to the Salmon Creek greenway next to the Felida Bridge and NW 36th Avenue. Some of our runners who do distances over 6 miles in length will start earlier in the morning and then join the others when they arrive.

Let Pastor Brooks know if you are interested in joining either the runners or the walkers.



### **Sports Sunday July 29, 2012**

Join us for Sports Sunday at worship on July 29th. Wear your sports shirt/jersey or logos and come root for your favorite team. It will also be Olympics time so red, white and blue are among the options.

## **Bible Adventures on Hiatus**

The CE ministry, after getting feedback from families and teachers, has decided that Bible Adventures will break for the summer. During the summer, all children preschool through high school will stay in the service with their families. Nursery care for children birth - age four is still provided as usual. Bible Adventures will resume on September 9th for Fall Kick-Off. There will be some activity sheets and pencils available in the narthex for children to complete during the service if they want one.

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### **OUTDOOR WORSHIP AND ANIMAL BLESSING**

On Sunday, August 26<sup>th</sup>, we will have a special outdoor worship service on the labyrinth. Come and sing camp song favorites as we enjoy the beautiful outdoor setting! Following the worship service, we will have a blessing of the animals, so make sure you bring your doggies, kitties, and hamsters as we lift up the love, affection, and joy that our animals bring into our lives. In order to help keep the peace, let's keep our dogs on leash.

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### **Please Add to Your Directory**

**Cordelia McBride**  
11510 NW 9<sup>th</sup> Ave  
Vancouver, WA 98685  
360-574-4896

**Correction:**  
**John and Carole Greenauer**  
Phone:  
360-314-6490  
**John's Cell:**  
360-608-3674

**Alice Rowe**  
e-mail: [alicemrowe@gmail.com](mailto:alicemrowe@gmail.com)  
Cell Phone: 360-989-4398

## NYE 2012

Contributed by Kristina Martin

I've been thinking about how to explain what my experience at National Youth Event 2012 (NYE) was like this year. It isn't that I don't have anything to say about NYE, because I do. My difficulty lies in finding the right words to convey how powerful of an experience NYE is for the youth and their adult leaders and chaperones. For every attendee, there was at least one moment that is powerful and meaningful. For me, there were many such moments.

Perhaps the most powerful and meaningful part of NYE for me was seeing 2700 teens be the best kind of people we can ever hope to have leading us into the future. All day, for four days, I witnessed teens being kind and hopeful and wise. I saw strangers hold out their hands in friendship over and over. I saw those same strangers greet each other the next day as something more than strangers – members of one church, uniting all through the vision of a better tomorrow.

After NYE 2008 I said that every UCC teen should attend these events but that each teen should take ten or twenty or fifty chaperones with them. NYE 2012 refueled this belief. As important as it is for the teens of the UCC to come together and grow in the energy present in the greater community, it is even more important for their adult leaders to witness their growth. It refuels us to witness that growth and it affirms our belief in the good work of the UCC.

Thank you First Congregational UCC Vancouver for so generously supporting the youth group in order that we could attend NYE 2012. And an even bigger thank you to Josiah Renner and Tim Ralph for taking me with them...I am refueled by your energy!

### Doug Smith Preview on Aug.12<sup>th</sup>:

Grammy Award winner Doug Smith will play guitar during our church service on Aug.12<sup>th</sup>. He is the winner of the prestigious Winfield International Fingerstyle Competition in 2006. His finger picking style recalls the playing of Chet Atkins. You will be dazzled. And this is only a preview to our church concert on Saturday, October 20<sup>th</sup>, when Doug will join Three Together for a fantastic evening of music. Tickets will be on sale Aug.12<sup>th</sup> after the church service. Look for Jean Beary-Stolle and Joan Blair. Questions: call Jean Beary-Stolle or Nancy Fite.

## Social Groups at First Congregational UCC

<b>Hiking Group</b>	<u>Aaron Cushing</u> 716-864-1789
<b>Women's Sat Breakfast</b>	<u>Connie Oppel</u> 573-8997
<b>Friday Night Movies</b>	<u>Barb Harlan</u> 574-5870
<b>Men's Breakfast</b>	<u>Ed Frank</u> 573-3848
<b>Sunday Brunch</b>	<u>Carol Pendergraft</u> 993-0483
<b>Prayer Shawl Ministry</b>	<u>Joanie Nelson</u> 254-5419
<b>Spirituality Group</b>	<u>Kathleen New</u> 694-3682
<b>Daytime Cards</b>	<u>Joan Blair</u> 573-6505
<b>Pinochle</b>	<u>Darrell</u> <u>Brandenburg</u> 693-7981
<b>Pinochle Subs</b>	<u>Nancy Phelps</u> 576-0302
<b>Evening Book Club</b>	<u>Ed Martin</u> 624-0038
<b>Running Group</b>	<u>Pastor Brooks</u> 693-1476

### Women's Saturday Breakfast

Contributed by Connie Oppel

Remember ladies, our Saturday Breakfast Group will be meeting through the summer. Our tables will be ready for us the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of each month at 9:30 a.m. at the Red Lion Inn at the Quay.

All are welcome for a great time of fellowship and good food. Just show up.

Questions? Call Connie at 573-8997 or 600-1098.

**Mark your calendars now for August 11<sup>th</sup>.**

## The August Mission & Outreach

Focus will be:  
**A School Supply Drive**

We will donate supplies to a nearby local school. All the schools now have required lists of supplies, so as soon as the list is published we will make it available to you. There will be a container in the narthex to collect your donations. The *School Supply List* is posted on the bulletin board in the narthex and we will also publish it in the next Link.

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### Pastor Brooks Office Hours

My weekly office hours are 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.

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### Estate Planning

David Avison is the Planned Giving Director for the UCC's Central Pacific Conference. His offers a number of important suggestions for churches:

- 1) Remind members that it is important to both have a will and occasionally update it. He recommended checking one's will every 10 years or at key moment of change or transition in one's life.
- 2) Ask members to consider their church when they make their will.

### Estate Planning (con't)

When it came to ways in which church members can include their church in their will, Avison listed a number of options:

- 1) Include a provision in the will that ensures any outstanding annual pledges to the church our paid. Avison shared his own experience at a church that was left with 30% shortfall for their annual budget due to the passing of three members who gave significant pledges to the church.
- 2) Endow one's pledge. Avison approximates that leaving a gift that multiplies one's pledge by 50 will ensure that your pledge is endowed forever.
- 3) Give a specific asset to the church. (If you want to give a Baldwin Grand Piano, you might want to check with Virginia first.)
- 4) Give a specific amount of money to the church.
- 5) Give a percentage of the residue of one's estate to the church.

Avison listed a number of other types of estate planning and planned giving ranging from charitable gift annuities, charitable remainder trusts, charitable lead trusts, pooled income funds, life insurance, retirement assets, and endowment fund gifts. If one is interested in learning more about these options or pursuing one of them, Avison suggests seeking professional assistance. Estate planning is usually best done by a team that includes your lawyer, accountant, financial and insurance advisors, and potentially others such as a planned giving officer.

While our church does not presently have its own endowment fund, endowed gifts can still be directed to our church through our denomination's endowment fund. This fund receives and administers gifts that can be directed to either the denomination's programs or our own local church. For assistance, one may call 1-800-846-6822 or email [giving@ucc.org](mailto:giving@ucc.org).