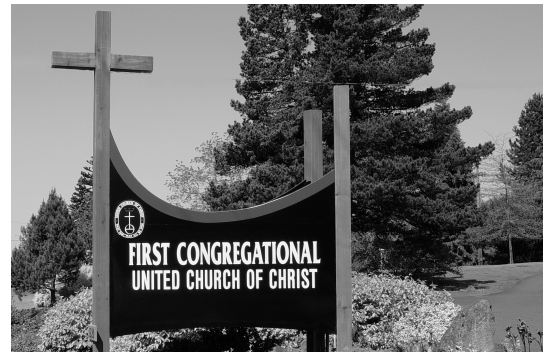


# *The Link*

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*God is Still Speaking,*

August 14 , 2012



## **Our Church: The Fountain of Youth**

Dear Church Family,

This past Sunday Connie Oppel helped me to realize that our church possesses a secret that could very well solve our financial dilemmas and turn our sanctuary into Vancouver's number one tourist attraction. If one pays close attention to the members of our church in their 90s, one can quickly ascertain a clue as to what this secret is. Our 90-plus-year-olds are universally young at heart. They are active, witty, and full of life. They have got more energy than many who are half their age. There really can be no explanation for this fact other than that our church possesses the legendary fountain of youth.

For too long, archeologists and amateur treasure hunters have been swimming in the wrong fish tank. They have been looking in places like Florida and Caribbean when the real fountain is not a spring of water rising from the tropic heat. It is the multi-colored light that streams through our stained-glass skylight. Its rejuvenating powers are likely to inspire scientific studies and nut job theories for years to come. We really need to start charging an entrance fee for the privilege of sitting in our sanctuary. We will then lick that mortgage debt in no time.

Our 90-plus-year-olds are truly physical and spiritual marvels who deserve to be celebrated, so that is precisely what we plan to do this Sunday in worship. Due to our fountain of youth, our members tend to look younger than their age, so if you are in your 90s please let myself or Connie know before Sunday. We want to make sure we recognize you. You are an inspiration to us all.

Your brother in Christ,

Pastor Brooks

## WORSHIP IN AUGUST

### 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**

## 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.

## 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  
Tyler Corey

Clarice Fossen

Our Love and prayers go to the **entire Craford family** upon the passing of **Ruth Craford**. A **Celebration of Ruth's Life** will be held in September.

## UPCOMING PUBLICATION DATES FOR "The Link"

August 26, 2012  
August 28, 2012

Link Deadline  
Link Mailed

## Central Pacific Conference Women's Retreat **"Listen!! God is Speaking!!"** October 12-14 Camp Adams, Molalla, Oregon

This year's Women's Camp will focus on how to listen for the voice of God. So, plan to learn some new spiritual practices and why "God is Still Speaking" to us!

Join us at Camp Adams to worship, discuss, meditate, sing, and play together. Total retreat Fee is \$105.00 which includes a \$65.00 pre-registration fee. The pre-registration is transferrable but not non-refundable.

The Rev. Lea Mathieu will serve as resource leader for the retreat.

Registration forms are available in the office, and the Narthex. Scholarship information is included in the brochure.



**Saturday, September 8<sup>th</sup>**  
Esther Short Park  
9 am to 5 pm ~ free!

**SAVE THE DATE!** Activities include music, poetry, vendors, and children's activities. Food of all kinds is available next door at the Farmer's Market.

Our church is again sponsoring a table and we would love to have your help in telling the community about how we are involved in peace, justice, and trying to make our world a better place. Join us in the park for a fun day!

To volunteer for our table, call Karen at 991-5774 or email at: [lk.kulm@gmail.com](mailto:lk.kulm@gmail.com). A sign-up sheet will be available in the narthex later this month.

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### Organ Repair - Funds Needed

Our beautiful Johannus organ, which is over 20 years old, is badly in need of attention. Ed Frank has started a fund of \$500 and some of the choir members, as a group, have promised another \$500. Now, we need some help from the congregation. We know the cost will be over \$1400. Can you help? We are hoping to get the repair done during the summer. Please call Virginia Dunbar at 360-573-0353 or e-mail her at [vehonda@comcast.net](mailto:vehonda@comcast.net) or speak to her at a worship service if you can donate. Thank-you for your interest.

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### Many thanks---

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for all their prayers, telephone calls, visits, cards and food that have brightened my recovery. I am making progress; just do not have a lot of energy at this time. The plan is to start cardio-rehab in about 3 weeks. Thanks again, y'all. Heart healthy pie is in my future.

----John Fite

## 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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### 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.

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### Pastor Brooks Office Hours

My weekly office hours are at the following times:

<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>11 am to 1 pm</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>4 pm to 6 pm</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>3 pm to 5 pm</b>

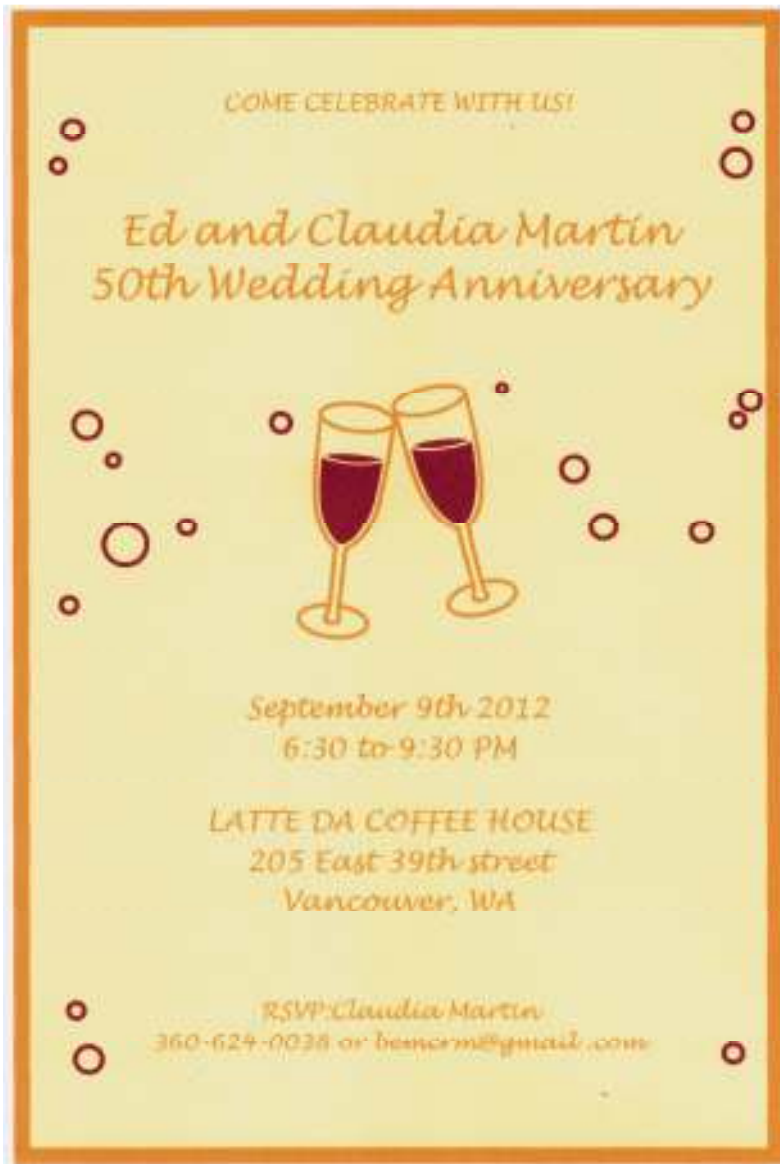
If possible, please contact me before visiting. I occasionally have irregular meetings, events, and emergencies that take me away from the office at these times.

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### "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)



## Recycle Your Styrofoam at the Church

Niels Rasmussen is a member of our church who works at a place that specializes in recycling materials that have traditionally gone into landfills. He is now collecting styrofoam that he can recycle at his job. Instead of throwing it away, bring it to church on Sunday, so that it can be recycled into new styrofoam. Find Niels after worship, and he will take it off your hands.

## Upcoming Worship Themes

For the next two Sundays, Pastor Brooks will continue his worship series on modern day saints. On Labor Day weekend, we will look at issues of fairness and justice for workers from the perspective of the longstanding commitments of our faith and our denomination. Mission and Outreach has invited a local worker from Fred Meyer to speak briefly for our Moment for Mission that Sunday.

## **Flash!** **Mary Jo Ebel Circle**

You are invited to a garden "Tea Party" in Charlottes's back yard at Kathy and Jim's home at 9801 NW 29<sup>th</sup> Ave.

**Date: Friday, August 24<sup>th</sup>**  
**Time: 11:30 AM**

Please bring a plate of tasty, small, tea party type sandwiches to share. Charlotte will provide a variety of teas, (hot and cold), plus coffee and lemonade. There will be dessert!

No white gloves are needed, just a phone call to 576-8935. I hope you can come!

Charlotte Warren

## **September 9th: Pack the Church Sunday!**

On September 9th, we want to Pack the Church! Bring yourselves, bring your friends, bring your neighbors. We want to feel as much energy and vitality in our church that Sunday as we can possibly muster, because we will be kicking off our fall programming on that day. On September 9th, we will be starting our fall education programming for our children, and we will also be starting a five week worship series that we will be advertising to the broader community. Please come and invite others to come.

## **Spectacular Hike for the Whole Family**

On Saturday, September 22nd, all are welcome to join our hiking group for one of the most scenic hikes on the Columbia River. We will do the Wahclella Falls hike that day. It is an easy two mile hike that leads to a beautiful waterfall. We will meet in the church parking lot at 9 am to carpool. The hike is less than an hour away. After the hike, we will go to Edgefield McMenamins for lunch. If you are interested in joining us, either sign up in the narthex on Sunday morning or email Aaron Cushing at [fishquvac@gmail.com](mailto:fishquvac@gmail.com).

## Seeking God Together

Pam Osborne will again be leading two small groups at church this year called "Seeking God Together." They are designed to help participants see and recognize the movement of God's Spirit in their day-to-day lives. The groups will provide each member with discerning, caring, empathetic companions to walk with on their spiritual journeys and to have this time set aside on a regular basis to reflect on God's presence in their lives. The majority of the content will come out of issues and experiences that individuals bring to the group when we will listen for God's voice and look for God's leading. Each session may begin with a short visualization, theme, poem, etc., or we might explore spiritual exercises such as centering prayer, walking meditation, connections with nature, etc. to deepen our relationships with God.

Each group will meet once a month (October to May) for two hours and be limited to seven participants so that each person has time to share. Most likely one group will meet in the evening and the other in the daytime. Talk to Pam in the Narthex after church or call her at 750-1353 if you have questions or would like to sign up. The deadline for committing is September 23<sup>rd</sup>.

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## 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 by Tom Renner, includes a day of relaxed but exciting activities (bring a sack lunch) 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. If you are interested, but want to know more, give Lynn Renner a ring at 360-225-8119. We can't wait to spend the weekend with you!

## Tickets Now Available For Doug Smith Concert

Once you hear Grammy-Award winning Doug Smith play guitar, you will become a groupie. You will have an opportunity to do that on Saturday, October 20, 2012, at our own Vancouver First Congregational Church. 7:30p.m. Tickets are \$15. This concert also includes a set by Three Together with Doug and wife Judy Koch plus Don Mitchell. All the profits of this concert go to our church, a very generous arrangement by this group. All they ask is they we sell their CD's. We will also be selling refreshments at intermission, so if you are interested in donating your favorite fancy cookies or dessert, please contact Joan Blair. For tickets and further information, please contact Nancy Fite 696-0380 or Jeanie Beary Stolle 360-574-9011 .

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## Thanks to Richard Trefren, Our Facility Manager

Contributed by Joan Blair

It has been almost a year since we created the job of Facility Manager and hired Richard Trefren to fill that position. Richard has exceeded our expectations. He rises to our call and needs with a smile. Among his many accomplishments has been repairing our peeling front church sign, painting the "Ruby rail" going into Bradford Hall and continually fixing the microphone system, toilets, leaks and lights.

Thanks Richard for all you do that goes unnoticed. Know that you are appreciated and invaluable to our church!

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## New Friendship Pads

Contributed by Joan Blair

This last Sunday, our pews were holding new registration pads thanks to money from the Ollie Stevens and Virginia Robinson memorials. What better gift to hold their names than friendship pads because we so treasured the two as our dear friends. Remember their love of our church and church family as you sign your name each week. These two ladies were gifts to our church and shall always be our forever friends.

**The August Mission &  
Outreach Focus will be:  
Annual School Supply  
Drive.**

This year we will again be donating school supplies to local schools. All the schools have lists of required items needed to successfully complete the school term. We have posted an extensive list in the narthex and provided a container in which to place your donations.

Along with the required supplies, many basic items are also appreciated: warm jackets, socks, underwear, backpacks etc. These are things that many families may not be able to provide or that would come in handy in the school environment and are oft times provided by the teachers and principals out of their own pockets.

**We can help! Your generosity is  
deeply appreciated.**