

The Link

First Congregational
United Church of Christ
1220 NE 68th Street
Vancouver, WA 98665-0508
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Volume 34 No. 19

God is Still Speaking,

October 9, 2012

A Trip to the Pumpkin Patch

Dear Church Family,

Recently, our family of three made its first trip to a pumpkin patch. I went with few expectations. In previous years, one of my sisters had sent wonderful pictures of her daughter at a pumpkin patch, so my main hope was that I would get a good picture of Danalyn next to a giant pumpkin. What I did not realize is that an excursion to a pumpkin patch these days is more like a trip to the county fair, except with lots of pumpkins. We arrived before the pumpkin patch opened, and there was already a line. Inside we found pony rides, a bale pyramid, a bale maze and a corn maze, a calf roping station, a petting zoo, face painting, miniature tractors for kids, a corn bin/rumpus room, pumpkin sling shots, and a hayride to the actual pumpkin patch.

We saved the pumpkin patch until last. It was a hot, dusty day, and the pumpkin patch would have looked like a veritable wasteland of parched dirt had it not been for the pumpkins. The bright orange scattered across the field charmed the senses. Pumpkins had never seemed so beautiful to me. In these round bursts of color, I think I felt a subconscious excitement about the life and vibrancy they represented. For our allotment of two pumpkins that came with the price of admission, we decided to get one that was elongated and another that "had texture." I still can't decide if the one that has texture looks like it has pimples or measles. Either I identify with oppressed teenagers everywhere or I have a soft spot in my heart for the sick and miserable.

If there is a metaphor to be found in this experience, perhaps it is that whenever we feel that we are lost in a spiritual wasteland we should always look for the pumpkins.

The pumpkins may not necessarily be giant, and they may not even be attractive by the standards of the world, but they are still eruptions of an almost magical brilliance that remind us of something greater. We might call this something "the source of life," the divine, or the sacred. We might call it God at work in the world. Whatever we call it, may it be cause for thanksgiving in each of our lives.

Your brother in Christ,

Pastor Brooks



WORSHIP IN OCTOBER

October 14, 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 11:15 a.m.

Worship Volunteers:

Greeters: Barbara Ahola and Doraine Kohler
Worship Leader: Jean Beary Stolle
Ushers: Carol Pendergraft, Dwight Chapman
Darrell and Shirley Brandenburg

October 21, 2012

10 a.m. Worship Service. Duane Sich, Pulpit Guest. Infant and Toddler Care available. 10:20 a.m.: Christian Education for children 3 yrs. - Grade 7.

Worship Volunteers:

Greeters: Bev Boydston and Dorothea Johnson
Worship Leader:
Ushers: Ken Rowe and Cory Saum-Blystone
Mike King and Duke Charpentier

October 28, 2012 All Saints 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. Youth Group Meets at 11:15 a.m.

Worship Volunteers:

Greeters: JoAnn Kersavage and Carol Pendergraft
Worship Leader:
Ushers: John Eckroth and Joe Eckroth
Tom and Josiah Renner

Our Mission and Outreach Focus for October is **NEIGHBORS IN NEED (NIN)**

Neighbors in Need is a special mission offering of the UCC that supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. One-third of NIN funds support the Council for American Indian Ministries (CAIM). Two thirds of the offering is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries (JWIM) to support a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts and direct service projects.

With your support, Neighbors in Need is Imagining a World Without Poverty.

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

If you would like to send a card to the family of Cliff Boydston, you may send to:

**Tom and Glenda Gillihan
512 Hillcrest
Longview, WA 98632**

UPCOMING PUBLICATION DATES FOR "The Link"

October 21, 2012
October 23, 2012

Link Deadline
Link Mailed

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.

New Address

Please Add to Your Directory

**Gertie Hettman
2403 NE 147th Ct
Vancouver, WA 98684
360-608-8009**

Intergenerational Service Project

Our congregation is reaching out to our community and giving back with a **Day of Service**. On Saturday, November 10th, from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m., we are asking for your help in clearing the harmful vegetation around Columbia Springs Fish Hatchery on Evergreen Highway. We will meet at the church at 8:30 to carpool or you may drive yourself if it's more convenient.

The hatchery is located right under the I-205 bridge. They ask that you wear long pants, closed toe shoes and bring your own water bottle. They will provide snacks and tools.

This is an intergenerational activity so all ages are welcome. Please call or e-mail Joan Blair at 360-573-6505 or icblair99@msn.com if you plan on coming.

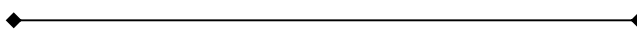
Women's Saturday Breakfast

Contributed by Connie Oppel

Remember Ladies, our tables will be ready and waiting for us this Saturday, October 13th 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.

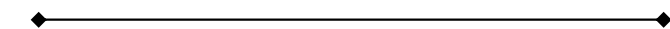
Questions? Call Connie at 573-8997 or 600-1098.



A CALL FOR COLD WEATHER COMFORT SUPPLIES

Cold, rainy weather is just around the corner. That means that the Winter Hospitality Overflow Shelter (WHO) will be opening soon. Although our volunteer work week will not be until February, the men will be needing clean, dry sox, hats, and gloves soon. We ask that you begin bringing these supplies now and place them in the big yellow barrel located near the Nettie Fries lounge.

If you want to be an on-call substitute volunteer throughout WHO season or just for specific weeks, please let Dave Slocum or Karen Kulm know. Thank you for easing the way for the men.



Mary Jo Ebel Circle October 17, 2012, 10:30 a.m.

The home of Judy Walter
4700 NE 25th Ct.
Vancouver WA 98660
360-693-0393

June Vining, Executive Director of TIP (Trauma Intervention Programs) will speak to us about the TIP organization and its programs.

Co-hosted by Judy and Virginia Ebersole.

Parking is limited, car-pool if you can.



Running Group and Walking Group

Join our running and walking groups! 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.

You are Invited...

**To The Community Of Faith Summit:
Responding To The Challenges Of
Homeless Children, Families And
Individuals In Clark County.**

Tuesday, Oct 23rd at 6:00 - 8:45 pm.

**Hudson's Bay High School in the
commons area. (1601 E McLoughlin)**

We are inviting the Faith Community of Clark County to a conversation around the issues of homelessness in our community.

The summit will be a time of learning, inspiration, discussion and collaboration. We also will have opportunity to move into action steps to begin to solve the issue of homelessness.

We do need you to RSVP for this event. You can RSVP for this event in the following ways:

Call 699-5106 x 103

Email who@icfth.com

From Congregation Kol Ami

Dear Friends at First Congregational UCC

Thank you so much for everything! The palm tree is beautiful and accents our walls perfectly.

There aren't words to describe how grateful we are that we could use your gorgeous church for our various events. We really appreciate all of your support for our congregation and the building of our new synagogue.

We can't thank you enough!

Congregation Kol Ami

Doug Smith Concert and CD Release Party

Where: First Congregational Church, Vancouver

When: Saturday, October 20, 2012

Time: 7p.m.

Tickets: \$15 each, selling every Sun. in narthex or call Nancy Fite 360:696-0380 to reserve your tickets.

Acoustic guitarist Doug Smith is a Grammy Award winner and 2006 winner of the prestigious Winfield International Fingerstyle Guitar Competition. His Grammy is for participation in 2005's "Henry Mancini: Pink Guitar." Doug and his wife Judy Koch Smith have performed nationally together, including the recent Crown of the Continent guitar Festival in Big Fork, Montana.

This is a very special fund-raising concert for our church and a CD release party for Doug. His new CD is "Six String Paradox," and you get to hear it first at our church! Doug and Judy graciously give all the ticket sales money to us and the money they earn is from their CD sales. So be thinking of Christmas and birthday presents. Be on the lookout for an article in The Columbian about this concert.

The profits from the Doug Smith concert will go to paying down the principal on the church mortgage which includes the roof replacement and skylight repair. "

Youth Group

Don't forget that we are hosting and serving at The Men's Breakfast on October 20th. Be at the church by 8am to help set up. We will have some fun activities together as well as cleaning up afterwards. Can't wait to see you there!

"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

Wildcat Football!!!

As many of you by now know, John Lambert is the coach of the La Center High School football team. On Friday, October 19th, we will have a church outing to watch the La Center Wildcats play. We will meet in the church parking lot at 6:00 pm and carpool to the game in La Center.



National Coming Out Day Prayer Breakfast 10/11/12 Bradford Hall 9 AM

Join us for the annual National Coming Out Day Prayer Breakfast on Thursday, October 11 at 9:00am at First Congregational Church in Vancouver. Come and support **Washington United for Marriage**, the campaign to approve marriage equality. Special Guests will include local clergy and the Faith Director for Washington United for Marriage, *the Rev. Debra Peevey*. Faith leaders from Washington and Oregon across tradition will come to show support for the LGBTQ community, including the freedom to marry.

Featured at this year's breakfast will be the preview of Coming Out as a Person of Faith project. A joint effort of Basic Rights Oregon and the Community of Welcoming Congregations, Coming Out as a Person of Faith is a multi-media project revealing the experiences, stories, and perspectives of clergy LGBT persons of faith who support marriage equality.



The Long And Winding Road to Equality

The opposition to Ref 74 has already purchased 1.5 million dollars worth of TV ad time. They will begin showing their misleading ads soon. Faith communities around the state are being asked to get out and have conversations with their friends, neighbors, and co-workers about what the law really says and why marriage matters.

Washington United for Marriage, the statewide coalition of over 100 faith communities and over 700 business, union and community endorsers is training people to **phone bank and canvass**. You will receive training and materials.

Phone banking will be held at our church on Tuesdays Oct. 9th and 23rd, and Thursday, Oct. 18th from 6- 9 pm. Free training will be provided. A script is also provided and you will only have to speak to people who are likely to be in the "moveable middle." **NOTE:** bring a laptop and your cell phone to the phone banking. Phone banks are happening now at churches all around the state with positive results. It is so important for voters to hear that people of faith do Approve Ref. 74.

It would also be a good time to write to The Columbian to thank them for their recent editorial supporting Ref. 74 or to comment positively on the recent letter to the editor written by PFLAG mom and Ainsworth UCC member Antoinette Edwards <http://www.columbian.com/news/2012/sep/16/should-voters-uphold-same-sex-marriage-law/>

Sabbatical Planning

Our church was not one of the fortunate recipients of a sabbatical grant. Nevertheless, as a congregation, we do not intend to drop our plans for rejuvenation and renewal. Council is forming a pulpit supply task force as well as a sabbatical task force to develop a plan for us to implement while Brooks is gone during the summer of 2013. If you are interested to be on either of the above listed committees please let it be known to Joan Blair-573-6505 or jbclair99@msn.com.

Grandparents and Helpers Needed

Contributed by Kristina Martin

Our church classes are growing in size! It is recommended by the national church that there are always 2 adults in each classroom and now that some of the classes average 10 kids, this recommendation is becoming even more important to follow.

If you've ever wanted to volunteer in a Sunday school classroom but didn't feel ready or able to teach, now is your chance! I am looking for a group of individuals who would be willing to come into class during Bible Adventures on a limited basis to help especially the younger students work on projects or just to understand the directions. Having a Bible Adventures "really help make each child feel successful on Sundays. Participation Grandparent" or "Class Buddy" can would be once every 6-8 weeks depending on the number of adults involved. If you are interested, please contact Kristina Martin.



Stand With Our Triple Point Youth National Coming Out Day Sign Waving

On 10/11/12 meet at Children's Home Society (home of Triple Point) 1112 Columbia St, Vancouver at 4:30 pm to walk with our youth to the Evergreen St. I-5 overpass to wave signs and rainbow flags to show we love and support our LGBTQ youth! Make your own sign or carry an Approve 74 sign which will be provided. If you prefer, you can just meet us at the I-5 overpass around 4:45 pm.

Questions? Contact Karen at lk.kulm@gmail.com.

Memorial Service for Rev. Trudy Bradley

“Uniquely UCC” took on a new meaning, following the tragic death of Trudy Bradley in a traffic accident in Pendleton while attending the annual UCC Assembly.

A Memorial Service for Rev. Trudy will be held on Saturday, October 27, 2012 at Noon at First Congregational United Church of Christ, 1126 SW Park Ave., in downtown Portland where Trudy was serving as Assistant Minister. A light lunch will be provided after the service.

Questions? You may call the First Congregational UCC church office (503) 228-7219.

Members and staff at First Congregational UCC want you to know how much they appreciate all the expressions of support for the church and for Trudy's family.