

The Link

First Congregational
United Church of Christ
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Volume 35 No. 3

God is Still Speaking,

February 12, 2013

Fast for the Children

Dear Church Family,

Members of our church are still turning in their social action commitment cards, but we have already had a fantastic response. More than 20 of our members will be fasting while more than 25 will be doing an alternative on that day. Moreover, 20 members will make the trip to Olympia. We would still love to have more people participate in any way. Please let Pastor Brooks know of your interest.

In the past week, there were some exciting developments for us. We now have five state representatives who will be fasting with us: Jim Moeller, Monica Stonier, Sharon Wylie, Luis Moscoso, and Derek Stanford. We also learned that the governor will be the keynote speaker for the Faith Action Network advocacy day that we will be joining.

Here is the schedule of events for the fast:

February 19th, 5:30 pm: Mac + Cheese Dinner at St. Andrew Lutheran Church
5607 NE Gher Rd Vancouver, WA 98662

February 20th

- 6:20 am: Meet at church for bus ride Olympia
- 8:30 am: Register in Olympia for Faith Action Network Advocacy Day
- 9:00-3:00 pm: Faith Action Network Advocacy Day
- 3:00-5:30 pm: Assist with Children's Art Display, Play Board Games, or Rest
- 5:30 pm: Pre-Meal Program at United Churches of Olympia
- 6:00 pm: Breaking of the Fast Celebration Meal
- 7:00 pm: Depart for Vancouver
- 9:00-9:30 pm: Arrive Back at Church

Some of our members have thought of other ways to participate in the fast. Those on Facebook can change their profile picture to our blue handprint symbol for February 19th and 20th. The symbol will be posted on our church's Facebook page. Additionally, those who are fasting may want to consider donating the money they would have normally spent on food to the Share Food Backpack program, our monthly mission offering.

Next week promises to be full of meaning and excitement. We will prepare for next week's events when Amy Reynolds, the Director of Programs for Share, joins me for a dialogue sermon this Sunday.

Your brother in Christ,

Pastor Brooks

WORSHIP IN FEBRUARY

Wednesday, February 13 Ash Wednesday
Soup Dinner at 5:45 PM in the Plymouth Room
Distribution of the Ashes at 6:30 PM

February 17, 2013

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

Worship Volunteers:

Greeters: Jim and Beverly Crossman
Worship Leader: Trent Corey
Ushers: Ken Rowe and Cory Saum-Blystone
Mike King and Duke Charpentier

February 24, 2013

10 a.m. Worship Service. Rev. Paul Benz guest preacher. Infant and Toddler Care available. 10:20 a.m.: Christian Education for children 3 yrs. - Grade 7. First Lenten Luncheon in Bradford Hall following Worship.

Worship Volunteers:

Greeters: Ed and Ruby Frank
Worship Leader: Jeff Schnabel
Ushers: John and Joe Eckroth
Tom and Josiah Renner

Guest Preacher and Lenten Luncheon Presenter

On Sunday, February 24th, we will have a special visit from the Rev. Paul Benz of the Faith Action Network. Benz is one of the organizational directors of FAN, and he will be driving down from Seattle to be with us. He has been instrumental in helping us organize the Fast for the Children. In addition to preaching, Benz will give the adult education presentation for our first Lenten luncheon. Benz will help us get better acquainted with FAN and help us think about how we might build upon the successes of the Moses Project, the Marriage Equality March, and the Fast for the Children.

Palm Sunday

Contributed by Kristina Martin

As you look ahead for your Easter season, please note that the Youth Group will be serving pancakes on Palm Sunday. The funds raised will go towards their next conference events.

REMEMBERING OUR FAMILY IN PRAYER

Prayer requests for:

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

CONTINUING PRAYER
REQUESTS FOR:

Kathleen New
Mary Craford
Charlotte Warren
Farley Maxwell

UPCOMING PUBLICATION DATES FOR "The Link"

Link Deadline
Link Mailed

February 24, 2013
February 26, 2013

Link Deadline
Link Mailed

March 10, 2013
March 12, 2013

New Member Orientation

If you have decided that we are the church family for you, you can attend a two-hour orientation class and dinner from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm on Sunday, March 3rd. Once you have completed this class you will be ready to join! The class meets in Bradford Hall which is located on our lower level. If you are interested in attending, let Pastor Brooks know or call the church office.

Men's Breakfast Change

Contributed by Ed Frank

Jerry Mathis will speak to us at our breakfast on Saturday **Feb. 23rd** at 8:30 AM in Bradford Hall. Jerry has been singing in our choir for several months and has an interesting life history.

Please make note of the date change. The meeting has been delayed to the 4th Saturday because of scheduling conflicts.

Dessert of the Month for February

Contributed by Teresa Everist

We had a very successful January with our new fundraiser. The chocolate Peanut Clusters went very well with a total of 7 dozen given out and netted us \$111.00. Our winners were **Linda Wear, Vince Bowman, and Joan Blair.**

The sponsor of February's dessert will be Nancy Fite and she will be donating a Chocolate Mousse Cake so get your tickets early. The drawing will be held on the last Sunday of each month.

Our Fundraising money will be dedicated to Parish Life, WHO and SHARE and to establish a fund for new flooring for the choir room and the Plymouth Room.

We still need two more months filled for desserts; August and November, so please let me know if you would like one of those months.

Thank you all for your support!

Teresa Everist
360-921-0611

Easter Sunday Bulletin:

Once again we will honor and remember loved ones in a special insert in the Easter Sunday bulletin. We asking a minimum donation of \$5.00 per name on your list.

If you would like your loved ones honored or remembered please fill out a form in the narthex, place the form and your donation in one of the white envelopes, and place in the basket on the sideboard.

The deadline for names for the insert is Palm Sunday.

Youth Group

Contributed by Kristina Martin

Don't forget that February's special activities are:

February 24: meet at Pop Culture (19th & Main in Vancouver) for tater tots and games!!! (This is a change to the master calendar!!!)

SAVE THE DATE For the Winter Hospitality Overflow Shelter (W.H.O.)



This year we are teaming up with Congregation Kol Ami Feb 24- March 2. Sign up sheets are available in the narthex.

We need YOU to volunteer at the men's shelter located at St. Paul Lutheran Church. The "work" is easy, but rewarding. Never volunteered before? No worries: "newbies" can be paired with veterans and you can read the orientation book, as well as receive on-site orientation nightly. You can also view the orientation book on-line at:

<http://whoprogram.org/volunteer/volunteer-resources/> (click on "St. Paul" under Host Manual)

A SHARE social worker is on-site nightly to manage who is admitted and to assist the men with accessing services that will, hopefully, help them get off the streets. Our job is simple: to provide snacks, a friendly, caring environment, assist with showering, laundry, wake-up calls and help clean the facility in the morning. However, the men at the shelter are deeply appreciative of us sharing our time and hospitality with them.

If you are unable to volunteer at the shelter, we ask that you donate food, clothing, C-Tran tickets, etc. Place these items in the yellow container in the narthex marked "WHO." If you have any questions, please contact Karen Kulm 991-5774 or email at lk.kulm@gmail.com.

The Poetry of Our Members

Due to popular demand, here are three of the poems featured last Sunday. We hope to make Harriet Anani's poem available soon.

I Love This Church

by Tom Renner

We got teachers, we got preachers,
safety dudes and bankers,
and we got yuppies, we got bakers,
we got a group of trail hikers,
and everybody knows for what we search.
Hm, Hm, Hm, I love this church.

We got nurses, we got doctors,
some computer geeks, and actors,
and we got activist and fighters,
but most of all we got lovers,
and none of our people will leave you in a lurch.
I love this church.

It is my kind of place
just walking through the front door puts a
big smile on my face.
It ain't too far,
come as you are,
I love this church.

I've seen a harpist, we got high techs, blue collar boys,
few rednecks,
and we got singers, lots of singers,
and I've seen dancing girls and runners,
and we like to hear our choir singing from their perch.
Hm, Hm, Hm, I love this church. Yes I do.

I like my trucks, I like my tractors,
I like to take Lynn out to dinner,
I like a movie now and then, but I love this church,
It's my kind of place,
just strolling through the narthex puts a
big smile on my face.
No cover charge, come as you are.
Hm, Hm, Hm, I love this church.
Hm, Hm, Hm, I love this church.

FISH

Marnie Wright

I looked for you, God, in the spreading rays of
the setting sun – The clouds tinted in
unbelievable shades of pink and gold. I saw
your creation – but not you.

In the line at FISH, someone timidly asked a
question about where to find help. As I started
to search for an answer, a soft voice came from
the line – with the information and
encouragement for the questioner. Here, at last,
I found you – quietly working.

I looked for you, God, along the salmon filled
creek – watching darting kingfishers, swooping
ospreys, and thieving eagles gather their
lunchtime meal. I saw your creation – but not
you.

At the food counter at FISH, a client, frustrated
and tired by the long wait, suddenly exploded
and turned on her neighbors. In a show of
understanding, they listened to her, and one
woman put her arms around her and comforted
her. Here, at last, I found you – quietly working.

I looked for you, God, in the sparkling, star filled
sky – the moon gently dusting the earth with
silver. I saw your creation – but not you.

Again, in the line at FISH, an elderly woman with
an aching back started to leave. Behind her
stood one of our daily, not too clean, tough
looking street-wise clients. Leading her to a
chair, treating her like a queen, he seated her
and promised to keep her place in line. Here, at
last, I found you - quietly working.

"Divine Trilogy"

by John Hannon, half a century ago

Pathway 2-10-61

Coming first from the vine,
Hushed but not always silent,
Infinite source of joy and celebration,
Summation of the truth,
This way is only right.

Little Flowers 11-19-60

Midst of your rush,
Excitement to nothing,
Little things hushed,
Make life interesting.

Untitled 1-18-59

Much is said,
Little is done,
In his fight (or sight)
For our eternity.

Flower Chart

Contributed by Marnie Wright

We are fortunate to have some beautiful permanent flower arrangements created by such people as Harriet Anani and the Kohler family. But you can add to our worship service by bringing flowers on any Sunday. The flower chart is in the Narthex. Sign up now to get the day you want.



Supplemental Pledges Update

On January 27th, we passed our 2013 church operating budget, contingent on raising an additional \$19,409 through supplemental pledges. As of February 12, 2013, the total amount pledged toward our 2013 operating budget, including supplemental pledges received is \$187,777—an increase of \$4,284 since January 27th. So far, six supplemental pledges have been received. In order to balance the budget, we still need \$15,125 in supplemental pledges.

Please prayerfully consider your response to our church's need. If you are able to increase your pledge, please clip the Supplemental Pledge Card printed on this page and return it to the church by Tuesday, February 26th.

Thank you for your generosity and commitment to our church!

Richard Trefren
Treasurer

Lenten Series

"Discovering God: A Lenten Series On Finding God In New And Creative Ways"

Contributed by Kristina Martin

I am so excited about the members of our congregation who will be sharing their hobbies with us during the Lenten series. On March 3, please come to Bradford Hall for soup and some short presentations by workshop leaders on hobbies that bring them joy. Before you leave, sign up with a workshop to attend the following week.

On March 10, after another fabulous soup lunch, workshop leaders will give some short instructions on the hobby which you will finish at home. Finally, on March 17th, support the Youth Group's Baked Potato Bar and then see and hear about the processes workshop attendees experienced in learning a new hobby that just might have allowed them a new way to discover God.

At this point, we have workshops on Quilting, Art (Painting), Knitting, and Short Memoir Writing.

Even if you haven't participated in the Lenten Series, please come on the 17th for a baked potato and a chance to learn more about our church family's passions and interests. It will be a fun time!



2013 Supplemental
Pledge Card
For
Church Records

I understand that this commitment can be changed at any time by giving notice to the Financial Secretary.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State ____ Zip _____

In addition to my original pledge for 2013, I plan to give the following amount for our congregation's ministries in 2013:

\$ _____ Please return by February 26, 2013.

I will also pay the \$13 UCC annual conference dues for each church member in my household.

For Your Records
2013 Supplemental Pledge Card

Date: _____

I commit myself to give the following amount *in addition to my original pledge for 2013* for the ministries of this Congregational United Church of Christ in 2013.

\$ _____

I will also pay the \$13 UCC annual conference dues for each church member in my household.

Mission and Outreach Focus for February

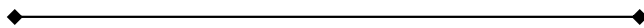
Contributed by Alice Rowe

Please help our local **SHARE BACKPACK PROGRAM**. Share House serves 1556 children each week in Clark County. Volunteers deliver food to 71 schools in 6 districts where children and families get 1 can of fruit, 1 vegetable, 1 can of soup or beans and a boxed meal. They get 1 protein source, tuna or peanut butter and pasta or a loaf of bread.

Just six dollars sends a pack to a needy family. Please help us help **SHARE**.

Mary Jo Ebel Circle

The Mary Jo Ebel Circle will meet Wednesday, February 20th at 10:30 AM in the home of Tina Wright. You may call Tina for directions and information at 360-574-3685



Souper Bowl Sunday Success!!

Contributed by Kristina Martin

A big "Thank You!" for all the wonderful generosity shown again this year by our congregation in supporting the Souper Bowl youth group food drive benefiting F.I.S.H. I'm thrilled to announce that 1,599.65 ounces of food was collected as well as \$155. Both the food and the money will be donated to F.I.S.H. in our church's name. Your support of this wonderful cause fills many hearts and tummies in Clark County!