

The Link

First Congregational
United Church of Christ
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Volume 35 No. 15

God is Still Speaking,

August 13 , 2013

God's Garden **Marnie Wright**

Working in my garden the other day, I watched a minute green inch worm move laboriously from plant to plant – stretching out and grabbing a leaf with its feet and pulling its body to the new leaf. Then along came a striped young snake, searching for insects and slugs and a scurrying school of ants all carrying pieces of food or eggs from place to place, greeting each other as they passed. Buzzing arose from bumblebees and honey bees busily flitting from blossom to blossom, carrying pollen most efficiently and systematically. Overhead, the Mourning Doves were calling each other and screaming crows were chasing a hawk – obviously trying to rob one of their nests. In the bushes, our neighborhood hungry rabbit waited 'till I left before sampling any new arrivals and the dear headed next door for tasty rosebuds.

A garden can remind us of a church – full of diversity. Some of the people may be very different, but like the slugs which plague us, they have a job of cleaning up the debris and keeping things going smoothly. Others are great leaders, and some are very busy bees, doing the mundane, endless work. Just as in our gardens, we need all sorts of animal life; our church needs all sorts of people to keep it alive and well. **Hurray for diversity!**

And... the subject of gardens takes me to FISH. On the days I work there during garden season, there is always an onion bag or other bags of produce from “the neighborhood church garden in Hazel Dell”. These are all contributions which Ed Martin and Dave Slocum and others have picked from our church garden. A lot of you have helped and are helping in that garden – from preparing the soil to planting, watering and weeding. Our garden is one of the diverse ways that we are spreading God's love and care in our community.

WORSHIP IN AUGUST

August 18, 2013 Outdoor Service on the Labyrinth

10 a.m. Worship Service. Harriet Anani, speaking. Infant and Toddler Care available.

Worship Volunteers:

Greeters: Darrell and Shirley Brandenburg

Worship Leader: Jean Beary Stolle

Ushers: Ken Rowe and Cory Saum-Blystone
Mike King and Duke Charpentier

Blessing of the Animals following Worship

August 25, 2013

10 a.m. Worship Service. Pam Osborne, speaking.. Infant and Toddler Care available.

Worship Volunteers:

Greeters: Joanie Nelson and Connie Oppel

Worship Leader: Becky Andrews

Ushers: Tom and Josiah Renner

From Joan Blair

Dear Church Family,

I am reluctantly writing to tell you that I need to take a leave of absence from my position as your moderator for an undetermined amount of time because of some health issues. It was discovered this week that I have a cancerous mass on my A-1 vertebra plus I have a stone and cyst in my kidney.

Tests are being run next week to determine if it is malignant or not. Please keep me in your prayers and keep positive thoughts flowing my way. I would love cards and phone calls.

I will return as your moderator stronger and full of life hopefully in a short time!!

Blessings to you all,
Love, Joan

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
Farley Maxwell
Joan Blair

Mary Craford
Bev Boydston
Dwight Chapman

UPCOMING PUBLICATION DATES FOR "The Link"

August 25, 2013
August 27, 2013

Link Deadline
Link Mailed

September 8, 2013
September 10, 2013

Link Deadline
Link Mailed

Cans for Zambia:

Contributed by Nancy Fite

Summer is a great time to collect those cans for **Good Samaritan Ministries/Zambia**. Ask your neighbors to save them for you also. Cans or beer bottles and even some water bottles are redeemable. No need to crush, just rinse them out. The money goes towards teacher salaries in Zambia. How great is that??? The collection container is downstairs in the main entryway. Thanks so much....Nancy Fite with much help from Dave Slocum.



SEPTEMBER 7TH 9 AM - 4 PM
ESTHER SHORT PARK,
VANCOUVER

Our church is once again one of the sponsors for this wonderful event. The Peace & Justice Fair builds community among the grassroots peace and justice groups in Southwest Washington.

We need volunteers to help staff our table at this event. The fair is family friendly and includes music, poetry, and kids' activities all for free! Grab some food from the Farmers' Market next door and have a picnic in the park.

To volunteer contact Karen Kulm at 360-991-5774 or lk.kulm@gmail.com.

Save the Date

The UCC Northwest Regional Women's Conference

NOVEMBER 1, 2 and 3, 2013

At Kah-Nee-Ta in Warm Springs, Oregon

Theme: **Celebrate the Joyful Journey**
Keynote Speaker: Rev. DaVita McAlister
A variety of workshops will be offered.

Go to nrwr.wordpress.com for workshop descriptions, price and online registration or contact the registrar at 541-554-8501 (nrwrregistrar@gmail.com). Forms are also available in the narthex and the church office.

Vancouver UCC Women's Fellowship has three scholarships available of \$75 each. For more information, contact Beverly Crossman 694-3837 or Ellie Bradley 944-7838.

Paper Recycling to be Discontinued

We will no longer have a receptacle to recycle your papers. Thank you for your participation in this endeavor.

This does **not** impact the can recycling. Please continue to bring your cans and bottles to recycle for **Good Samaritan Ministries/Zambia**. The recycling bins for these will remain in the foyer on the lower level.

Dessert of the Month

Contributed by Teresa Everist

For the Dessert of the month for June we would like to THANK, Marilyn Jones for her Yummy Strawberry Cake, Carol said "it was the best, she just loved it".

Joan Blair made the great Lemon Lush for July and we made \$103.00 on the delicious dessert. THANK YOU Joan Blair for making July a great dessert month.

For August we will be blessed with not one but TWO Apple Pies from Ruby Frank, we look forward to those two chances to win on August 25th.

Please buy your tickets and thank you for supporting our wonderful Dessert of the month.

We have made through July 31st a total of \$849.90 with 10% going to Parish Life \$84.99 and 10% going to Who/Share \$76.40 and \$688.51 to the Flooring fund, and we still have 5 months to go Great Job FCUCC!!!!

Sincerely,
Teresa Everist
360-921-0611



Fall Book Groups Coming Soon

Start your reading now! From mid-September to mid-November, our church will have book groups for three different books. We will start sign ups for the book groups soon, but if you want to start reading now, these are the books that were decided by a planning group at our church:

Beyond the Bullet: Personal Stories of Gun Violence Aftermath by Heidi Yewman
The Rich and the Rest of Us: A Poverty Manifesto by Tavis Smiley and Cornel West
Eaarth: Making a Life on a Tough New Planet by Bill McKibben

Each of these books relates to one of the three areas of focus for the Faith Action Network in the coming year: poverty, environment, and gun violence. The Faith Action Network is a state-wide coalition of faith communities seeking social change.

Book groups will be offered at several host locations with day and evening groups available so that **everyone can participate**. Sign up sheets will be available soon. Please contact Karen Kulm 360-991-5774 with any questions.



Mission & Outreach Special Offering For August – School Supply Drive

We will be having our annual school supply drive in August. Most schools now post lists of specific supplies, so as these lists become available we will place them in the narthex with a container for supplies. Thank you for your support of families in our church neighborhoods

Free Preview of Doug Smith/Three Together

Contributed by Nancy Fite

On Sunday Sept. 8th, Doug Smith and Three Together will perform during our worship service. You will not want to miss this. And you really don't want to miss their concert at our church on Saturday, October 12, 2013. This church fundraiser is about as painless as it gets. Invite your friends and relatives. Jeanie Beary Stolle will start selling tickets after church on September 8th. Tickets are \$15 each. Questions: call Jeanie or Nancy Fite. co-chairpersons.

Bible Adventures Teachers

There are always ways for you to get involved in teaching the children of our church in our Bible Adventures program. We need lead teachers, assistant teachers, and substitutes at all grade levels (preschool, primary, intermediate, and middle school). We will be having an orientation this August (date TBA) to prepare teachers to work with our new Joyful Path curriculum which is based on the 8 Points of Progressive Christianity. We have an exciting year ahead of us and we want you to be a part of it!!!

Outdoor Worship on the Labyrinth and Blessing of the Animals

**This Sunday, August 18th
10:00 a.m.**

Please bring pets on leashes or in carriers.

Book Club News

Contributed by Alice Rowe

The heretofore unnamed book club of First Congregational is taking two months off. We will have our next meeting on September 19th. All of our meetings will be held in the Nettie Fries Lounge on the third Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

For the month of September, we are reading *Catherine the Great* by Raymond Massie. Please join us if you like lively discussion and the opportunity to read new and interesting books.

If you have any questions, please call Alice Rowe at 360-576-0490

New Post Office Box Information

Due to an incident during which our mailbox was broken in to last winter, First Congregational has rented a post office box for mail containing funds.

The address is:

**First Congregational United Church of Christ
PO Box 65694
Vancouver, WA 98665**

While this incident was singular in nature, you might feel more secure sending your mail to this PO Box address. You may, however, continue to use the street address. The PO box will also be checked daily.

The worst sin towards our fellow creatures is not to hate them, but to be indifferent to them. That's the essence of inhumanity.

— George Bernard Shaw

Kick-Off Sunday's Service and Luncheon

Kick-Off Sunday will be on September 15th this year and we want as many kids to be part of the service as possible. If your child is interested in reading parts of the service, please let Kristina Martin know so she can include him/her. Email Kristina at kristina@vanucc.org soon please. Also, if you are able to donate something for the annual BBQ sandwich luncheon, your donation would be gladly accepted. The menu includes shredded meat (like pulled pork or BBQ chicken), a vegetarian option, coleslaw, potato chips, buns, and cookies.

**Doug Smith Concert:
Please put this date on your
calendar: October 12, 2013
(Saturday night)**

Yes, we are having Doug Smith return to give us a concert which is a big fund-raiser for First Congregational. This time Doug will be joined by Don Mitchell on guitar and Judy Koch Smith on vocals and flute. The trio is called Three Together. They are wonderful musicians and very entertaining, especially with Don Mitchell's humor thrown in the mix. You will hear more about this concert as time goes on, so please mark your calendars so you won't miss out on this fabulous concert.

--Jean Beary Stolle and Nancy Fite
(concert co-chairs)

If you have men who will exclude any of God's creatures from the shelter of compassion and pity, you will have men who will deal likewise with their fellow men.

— St. Francis of Assisi