

The Link

First Congregational
United Church of Christ
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God is Still Speaking,

August 27, 2013



The Gift of Friendship Karen Owen

The gift of international friendship and understanding is an important part of our church community. I am grateful for the support given to me when I was part of a teacher exchange to the Commonwealth of Independent States (formerly the Soviet Union). Church members continue to be instrumental in a number of exchange programs and efforts. We support projects such as Heifer International. Foreign exchange students are welcomed. We invite representatives of other faiths as speakers.

A burning question many of us ask is: “How might we improve communications and understanding of religious and social views that differ from our own?” In the 2013 book, Engaging Teachers in Classroom Walkthroughs by Kachur, Stout, and Edwards, I discovered some guidelines for conversation that also apply when discussing differing views:

*Respect, accept, and honor each person. Listen to, welcome, and consider others’ ideas. Encourage every voice.

*Create opportunities for and value humor and fun.

*Honor the idea that we are all here to learn and grow together. Look for positive ideas you can take away.

*Ask genuine questions that reflect what you wonder about. Do not set up the answer by asking leading questions. Ask “what if” and “I wondered” reflective questions. Ask for clarification if you do not understand.

*Listen to the perspectives of all. Encourage exchange of ideas.

These guidelines are not easy to follow. With diligence and practice they can become affirmations to help us as we “walkthrough” our spiritual journeys with diverse others.

WORSHIP IN SEPTEMBER

September 1, 2013 Communion

10 AM Worship Service. Rev. Ed and Claudia Martin, preaching. Infant and Toddler Care available.

Worship Volunteers:

Greeters: Greg and Cory Saum-Blystone
Worship Leader: Judith Dahlen
Ushers: Trent Corey and Rory Martindale
Wayne and Doris Fletcher

September 8, 2013

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

Worship Volunteers:

Greeters: Judith Dahlen and Doraine Kohler
Worship Leader:
Ushers: Carol Pendergraft, Dwight Chapman
Darrell and Shirley Brandenburg

September 15, 2013 CE Kick-off Sunday

10 AM Worship Service. Kristina Martin, preaching. Infant and Toddler Care available. 10:20 a.m.: Christian Education for children 3 yrs. - Grade 7. Kick-off Luncheon following Worship.

Worship Volunteers:

Greeters: Harriet Anani and Gail Schmitt
Worship Leader: Youth
Ushers: Ken Rowe and Cory Saum-Blystone
Mike King and Duke Charpentier

September 22, 2013

10 AM 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 11:30 a.m.

Worship Volunteers:

Greeters: Joy Gerlitz and Carol Pendergraft
Worship Leader: Jerry Mathis
Ushers: Tom and Josiah Renner

September 29, 2013

10 AM 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 11:30 a.m.

Worship Volunteers:

Greeters: Wayne and Doris Fletcher
Worship Leader: Alicia King
Ushers: John Bradley and John Hannon

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
Farley Maxwell Bev Boydston
Joan Blair

UPCOMING PUBLICATION DATES FOR "The Link"

Link Deadline
Link Mailed

September 8, 2013
September 10, 2013

Link Deadline
Link Mailed

September 22, 2013
September 24, 2013

From Joan

Dear Church Family,

First, I cannot express to you the love and support I am feeling from you, my church family. I have received more than 75 cards and phone calls which brighten my spirit and my day. The results are in from my biopsy and I have thyroid cancer. I will be having my thyroid removed within the next two weeks then start radiation for the cancer in my back. We are not addressing the spots on my lungs just yet nor the stone and cyst in my kidney. One small step at a time,

With your continued support and love I will come through this a stronger and healthier member of our family. Your prayers, cards and calls mean so much during this difficult time.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart, dear friends!!

Blessings to you all!

Love, Joan



All-Church Book Groups Starting in September. Sign up now!

Start your reading now! From mid-September to mid-November, our church will have book groups for three different books. Sign-up sheets are in the narthex 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 (FAN) is a state-wide coalition of faith communities seeking social change.

All books are available at Powell's Books or from Amazon in new or used. In addition, *Eaarth* is available for Kindle and in audio format, and *The Rich and the Rest of Us* is available on Kindle. Book groups will be offered at several host locations with day and evening groups available so that **everyone can participate**. Please contact Karen Kulm 360-991-5774 with any questions.

You Are Invited

Sunday, September 8th there will be a Birthday Open House honoring Clarice Fossen's 89th birthday to be held here in Bradford Hall at 3:00 p.m. The family would love to have her church family and friends attend.

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.

Social Groups Update:

Hello everyone! I hope summer has been treating you all well. It is hard to believe it is almost over. Now that summer is about to come to an end, it is time to start thinking about our annual sign ups for social groups. Listed below are all of our current groups. Start thinking about which one you might want to join. Also, if you are interested in starting a new group please contact me. Finally we are looking for group leaders for the following groups: Running/Walking Group, Friday Night Movies and the Hiking Group. Please contact me if you are interested in leading any of those groups. Thanks! Contact Rachel Corey at rachel_landstrom@yahoo.com or 630-947-6179

Current Social Groups:

Word Weavers Scrabble Group

Women's Breakfast Group

Prayer Shawl Group

Arts and Crafts Group

Daytime Cards

Evening Book Club

Running/Walking Group *needs a leader

Friday Night Movies *needs a leader

Men's Breakfast Group

Sunday Brunch Group

Hiking Group *needs a leader

Pinocle



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.

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.

Attention Choir

Contributed by Virginia Dunbar

A beautiful summer was had by all, I'm sure, but now we settle into making music again. The first rehearsal is Wednesday, Sept. 4th at 7p.m. in the sanctuary. I've purchased new music that I'm sure you will enjoy. Come, renew friendships but most of all, come, sing your hearts out!



**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.

Birthdays in September!

- | | |
|--------------|-----------------------|
| September 5 | Woody Woodworth |
| September 6 | Jackie Carr |
| September 8 | Clarice Fossen |
| September 8 | Dwight Chapman |
| September 13 | Becky Andrews |
| September 14 | Leslie Wu |
| September 16 | John Priel |
| September 16 | Darrell Brandenburg |
| September 17 | Ruth Hammer |
| September 20 | Carter Ralph |
| September 26 | Joan Barber |
| September 29 | Sabrina Mauke-Wiswall |

*HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO
 YOU-OOOOO*

WE HAVE FAITH, in our CPC

God is still speaking,

Annual Meeting
September 27-29
Pendleton OR

You Are Invited to Annual Meeting

Our church is one of the 47 churches in Oregon, southern Idaho and southwest Washington that comprise the Central Pacific Conference of the United Church of Christ.

We all get together annually to celebrate, worship, learn at great workshops, and install new officers and ministry team members. Our keynote speaker this year is the Rev. Dr. Susan Thistlethwaite, former president of the Chicago Theological Seminary, and noted author. Her most recent book: *#Occupy the Bible: What Jesus Really Said (and Did) about Money and Power*, is a no-holds-barred look at the real message of Jesus and a call to people sincerely committed to confronting the rising poverty and economic inequality in our country.

Everyone is invited to attend, but if you would like to be a voting delegate from our church, please contact Karen Kulm immediately. To learn more about the workshops, registration, etc. go to: <http://cpcucc.org/> and click on "CPC Annual Meeting". For information about car-pooling, etc. contact Karen Kulm at lk.kulm@gmail.com.

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)

Update from the Financial Secretary

Submitted by Jeff Osborne

For those who may be wondering, there were no 2nd quarter financial statements issued. Just as Dwight Chapman ended his long tenure as our Financial Secretary there was an update to the software we use to track pledges and contributions which meant additional work to ensure that the statements from the new software would be correct. I am working on making sure the 3rd quarter statements will accurately reflect each members' giving for the year.

The new software also gives us the option to deliver the financial statements by email instead of having to print and hand them out four times each year. In the coming weeks I will be learning about this new option and may send out a test message to everyone for whom we have an email address on file. If you definitely do not want to receive your statement by email, or if you would like to make sure your email address is correct in our records, please contact me by email at jeffo@vanucc.org or call/text me at 360.904.5910.

This is also a good time to remind everyone about bringing pledges to the annual budget and the capital campaign up to date and to make a contribution to cover the annual per capita expense of \$13 per member.

If you write checks to the church, you can combine contributions to several accounts (annual budget, capital campaign, etc.) on a single check as long as you use the memo line to indicate how much goes to each account. This will save you some time and checks and does not make the accounting any harder at my end.

Dessert of the Month for September

Ruby Frank's two delicious apple pies brought in \$86.00 for our August Dessert of the Month. Thank you Ruby for your wonderful support! The Dessert of the Month for September is Chocolate Mint Brownies, made by Carole Greenauer; this drawing will be on September 29th.

Thank you for your support.
Teresa Everist

Small Spiritual Transformation Groups Starting Up

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. We will focus this year on spiritual transformation through our desire for God, solitude and silence, Lectio Devina (a way of reading scripture), honoring the body as the temple of the Holy Spirit, the examen or daily review, and the rule of life.

Other 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. The groups 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. Because of the depth of the sharing time, the groups are only open to new members once a year.

Each group will meet once a month (October to May) for two hours and be limited to eight participants so that each person has time to share. One group may meet in the evening and the other in the daytime. If you have questions or would like to sign up, talk to Pam in the Narthex after church, call her at 750-1353, or email posborne430@gmail.com. The deadline for committing is September 27th.

Women's Breakfast Group

The Women's Breakfast Group will continue to meet on the second Saturday of the month at 9:30 a.m. at the Inn at the Quay. The next gathering will be Saturday, September 14th.

All women of the church are invited to celebrate sisterhood, fellowship, friendship and family.

CE News

Bible Adventures:

If you are interested in teaching for Bible Adventures, please let Kristina Martin know. We have 4 teaching teams: preschool (ages 4-Kindergarten), primary (1st & 2nd graders), intermediates (3rd - 5th graders), and middle school (6th - 8th graders). Teachers typically teach 2 Sundays in a row (one lesson) and then have several Sundays off. An orientation in mid-September is being planned. If you'd like to attend, please let Kristina know.

Bible Adventures Resumes 9/22

We will resume Bible Adventures on 9/22. On 9/15, many children have volunteered to participate in the Kick-Off service. If your child wants to participate, please let Kristina know no later than 9/8.

Youth Group Fall Lock-In

If you are in grades 7-12, please plan on attending our Fall Lock-In on Friday, September 6th from 6pm until 9 am on Saturday. Bring a snack to share, a sleeping bag and pillow, and toiletries. Hope to see you there!

Reminder to Mark Your Calendar

The Evening Book Club will resume their meetings on Thursday, September 19th at 7:00 p.m. in the Nettie Fries Lounge.

For the month of September, we will be reading "*Catherine the Great*" by Raymond Massie. For more information, please contact Alice Rowe at 360-576-0490.

Mary Jo Ebel Circle

Contributed by Beverly Crossman

The Mary Jo Ebel Circle will gather for its ***Annual Picnic on the Labyrinth*** ***Wednesday, September 18th*** ***11:00 a.m.***

Everyone is reminded to bring a sack lunch, beverage and a lawn chair.

All women are welcome to come for this fun gathering.