

# *The Link*

First Congregational  
United Church of Christ  
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Volume 35 No. 21

*God is Still Speaking,*

November 12, 2013

## **The Spiritual Growth Audio Book Club**

Pastor Brooks is on vacation this week, but he has offered a passage from Marcus Borg's book *The Heart of Christianity* for your reflection. Borg's book is the book that the Spiritual Growth Audio Book Club will be discussing when it meets at Little Italy on Tuesday, December 3<sup>rd</sup> at 6 pm. Let Pastor Brooks know if you would like to attend or sign up in the narthex on Sunday.

In this passage, Borg summarizes key views on how one can be a Christian who understands Jesus as the decisive revelation of God while also maintaining an interfaith disposition:

To paraphrase William Sloane Coffin, a contemporary author and activist: for us as Christians, God is defined by Jesus, but not confined to Jesus. To paraphrase Krister Stendahl, a New Testament scholar, former dean of Harvard Divinity School, and bishop of the Church of Sweden: we as Christians can sing our love songs to Jesus with wild abandon without needing to demean other religions. We need not diminish our devotion to Jesus or our affirmation of him as the decisive revelation of God in order to recognize the validity of other enduring religions.

Whether you agree or disagree with Borg, you are welcome to participate in the discussion!

## WORSHIP IN NOVEMBER

### November 17, 2013

10 a.m. Worship Service. John Fite, Pam Osborne and Richard Trefren 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. in the Triangle Room

#### **Worship Volunteers:**

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

### November 24, 2013 Stewardship 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.

#### **Worship Volunteers:**

Greeters: Don and Judy Walter  
Worship Leader: Tom Yates  
Ushers: Tom and Josiah Renner  
David Harrington and David Macko

**New Member Orientation Dinner  
5:00 in Bradford Hall**

## Kathleen New's Art

Our church has been blessed with the art work of Kathleen New and for many of you, her works of art grace your homes. We want to recognize her gift and will display many of her works, past and present, on November the 24th.

There will be a special recognition during worship and a reception afterwards sponsored by the Monday Spirituality group, of which she has been a long time member. If you have art work of hers that you would like to share, please bring it to the church on Friday morning the 22nd or on Saturday the 23rd. If you are unable to bring it to the church and would like someone to pick it up please call [Claudia Martin, 624-0038](tel:624-0038). We plan to have the display up for a few weeks so if you are unable to be there on the 24th there will be other opportunities to view it.

## REMEMBERING OUR FAMILY IN PRAYER

Prayer requests for:

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

CONTINUING PRAYER  
REQUESTS FOR:

Farley Maxwell  
Joan Blair

## UPCOMING PUBLICATION DATES FOR "The Link"

<u>Link Deadline</u>	<u>November 24, 2013</u>
<u>Link Mailed</u>	<u>November 26, 2013</u>

**New Address:  
Please add to your directory**

**Glen and Karen Owen**  
3103 NW 125<sup>th</sup> Circle  
Vancouver, WA 98685

## From Joan Blair

Dear Church Family,

My recovery is rapidly progressing on the right path. I am up and walking around the house with limited use of my walker. I have met with my radiologist and it was decided to begin my treatments would begin on November 6<sup>th</sup> and continue everyday for 2 weeks. So far so good, but during this time, I cannot have any visitors; keep the cards and calls coming.

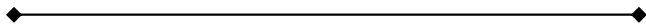
With the surgeries behind me, I am truly on my recovery trail. You all have been walking with me because I've felt all your prayers. Please pray for me daily. I miss you all so much and can't wait until we can be together again.  
Your Loving Friend,  
Joan



## Annual "Adopt A Family" Gifts Due December 8<sup>th</sup>

We have "adopted" a family through SHARE and will be collecting gifts as requested by the family as well as putting together a food basket.

Look for the Giving Tree in the narthex with gift tags. Take a tag, purchase your gift or food item, tape your tag to the un-wrapped gift and return it to church by the 8<sup>th</sup>. We will then take your gifts to SHARE where they will be wrapped and distributed to the family. December 8<sup>th</sup> is the absolute cut-off date per SHARE. Questions? Contact Karen Kulm at 360-991-5774 or [lk.kulm@gmail.com](mailto:lk.kulm@gmail.com).



## Men's Breakfast

Submitted by Jeff Osborne

This Saturday, **November 15th, Stacey Johnson-Kipfer**, an Independent Insurance Agent/Broker, will speak to us about healthcare options for seniors. This is an especially timely topic as many of us are in the annual open-enrollment window and need to make decisions for 2014 soon. Come hear about the changes ahead for 2014. There will be time for questions and answers as well.

Join us at **8:30 AM** in Bradford Hall for breakfast served by our youth group, Mazi, with Kristina Martin supervising.

**...SEE YOU ON THE 15th!**



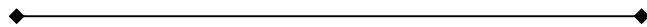
## Typhoon Haiyan How To Help

As the most powerful storm ever to make landfall battered the Philippines early Friday morning, [United Church of Christ Disaster Ministries](#) immediately reached out to partners in the country to offer assistance.

"Because we are part of a worldwide fellowship, we know our partners in the Philippines and Asia are already at work responding to meet the needs of survivors," said Susan Sanders, minister for the UCC's Global Sharing of Resources. "Gifts given previously to [One Great Hour of Sharing](#) enable the UCC to send financial resources immediately to accompany our prayers."

An estimated 10,000 people have died, and up to 600,000 people are homeless. Those evacuated are taking shelter in churches and other areas in more than 20 provinces. Several churches of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines are serving as shelters.

Gifts to assist this response can be made to the [UCC International Disaster Relief Fund](#). You can give by credit card or check by putting "Typhoon Haiyan" in the comment or memo line.



## Sound of Silence

A little over a week ago our organ died! It provided us with beautiful music for almost 30 years but now we are looking for a different instrument. The organ committee has already met to begin learning about what is available. The committee consists of: Jeff Osborne, chair, Christopher Schindler, Glen Owen, Alice Rowe, Richard Trefren and Virginia Dunbar.

## Memorials Committee Update

It has been some time since The Memorials Committee has informed the Congregation what our role is in the work of the church. We keep track of all funds that are donated to the church in memory of a loved one. We work with family members to make the best use of the memorial funds that have been donated. So far this year funds have been distributed to the Interiors/Banners Committee and to The Capital Campaign. Specifically designated funds go towards the sound system and technology areas and to maintenance of the Labyrinth. After memorial funds have been "spent", the name of the decedent and the gift is entered into the Memorials Book under the glass stand in the Narthex. Joan Blair does the calligraphy and we would like to thank her very much for taking care of this item for us. If anyone else does calligraphy and would like to fill in for Joan while she is dealing with medical issues, please let us know.

We would also like to remind you that all tangible memorial donations must be approved through the church's administrative committees. The Pastor and the Memorials Committee are receptive to ideas and will facilitate the approval process.

We celebrated All Saint's Day on October 27, 2013, by holding the service remembering members and loved ones that have passed since the last All Saint's Day service. This is a very meaningful service and lighting candles in memory of our loved ones is impressive. We recently remembered Grace Brandis, Bruce Degerstedt, Daniel New, Barbara Harlan, Randy Rock and Mary Craford. If you have someone that you want us to remember in the candle-lighting ceremony that has passed the last year, please let the Memorials Committee know and that person will be recognized at the next All Saint's Day service.

We welcome input and questions from you regarding the work of our committee.

The Memorials Committee,  
Ruth Hammer  
Judy Walter  
Beverly Crossman  
Joy Gerlitz  
Shirl Zent

## Feminine Faith Formation & Fellowship

Are you looking for a group where you can further your faith and experience the fellowship that accompanies that pursuit? If so, please join a group of interested folks who want to further their faith formation through books and dialogue. Utilizing the unique aspects of a feminist lens, we will read and discuss books that further our faith formation. This group is open to anyone interested in attending, but is focused on the lives, issues, and perspectives of women in their "younger years" (definitions may vary). We will meet at interested member's homes at 7pm on the 2nd Thursday of the month to start, but we may add a second meeting per month if the group decides that is a better fit. If you have questions, please contact Kristina Martin at [kristina@vanucc.org](mailto:kristina@vanucc.org).

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## Taskforce on Simplifying our Church Structure

Submitted by Richard Trefren

At the recent church retreat, strong interest in simplifying our church structure was expressed. A task force to begin looking at our church structure will have its first meeting on December 8<sup>th</sup> after church (around 11:30).

You are invited to join in this discussion!

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## Mary Jo Ebel Circle

Mary Jo Ebel Circle will meet Nov. 20, 10:30 am in Bradford Hall. Jackie Chambers, who spoke to us about the many benefits of Tai Chi last month will be back to lead us in some exercises. There will be something for everyone no matter what your abilities or limitations. so, wear comfortable clothes and join us for fun, food and an (easy) workout.

Anne, Jo Ann, & Shirley

## MAZI Fund Raiser

As MAZI prepares to travel to Western Regional Youth Event (WRYE) next June, we are selling raffle tickets for holiday gift baskets. Tickets are \$1 each or 6 tickets for \$5. These wonderful baskets will make lovely gifts.

1. Facial Pampering: Samples and gift certificate for a spa facial by Caisa from the EnvyMe salon and day spa in downtown Vancouver. Caisa was at the award-winning Doshia Salon and Day spa before relocating north of the Columbia River.

2. Mystery Books: 4 mystery novels and a \$5 gift certificate to Cover to Cover Books in Vancouver. These four books are by 2 local mystery writers and one novel even takes place in Vancouver.

3. Scrapbooking Fun: a scrapbooking set, stickers, packs of paper, and an idea book to create the perfect scrapbook, all held in a latching bin.

4. Spa Spoiler: a lavender stuffed eye mask, matching shower gel and lotion, and bath salts in a plastic tote with two terry cloth towels.

5. Husky Fever!: MAZI alums, Leslie and Kristin are donating an assortment of UofW Huskey products that are only available at the student bookstores. Stay tuned for final items but rumor has it that the basket will include a UofW sweatshirt, mug or water bottle, and either a hat or poncho. This is perfect for a Husky's fan!

Tickets will be on sale before and after services and at the Advent Festival until 4pm. This is a perfect opportunity to cross some holiday gifts off your list and support MAZI at the same time!

## Rev. Kelly Burd to Speak

How many of us struggle to explain what it means to be a UCCer? Well, help is on its way! The Christian Education ministry is thrilled to host Rev. Burd for Adult Ed on Sunday, November 17th following the service. We will gather in Bradford for a soup and bread lunch, and then Rev. Burd will tell us about what it means to belong to the UCC as well as what the national UCC church is doing these days. If you struggle to explain kind of church you belong to, please come to this Adult Ed session sure to give you lots of ways to talk about your faith.

From the national UCC's web page: Rev. Kelly Burd serves as Minister for Leadership Development with Justice and Witness Ministries in the United Church of Christ. She earned a B.S. in Education from Ohio University and taught English as a Second Language in Tokyo for 15 months before matriculating at Yale Divinity School, where she earned a Master of Divinity degree in 1998. Kelly was ordained in 2000 and served as Associate Minister at Dover Congregational United Church of Christ for over seven years. The common thread in her vocational experience and calling has been the care, education and empowering of others, especially young people who are seeking their identity, discerning their spiritual paths and discovering their potential. Kelly lives in Cleveland with her spouse John Forristal, their son Sam, a dog and two cats.

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## MAZI Service Project at Columbia Springs

Many thank yous to all who participated in the Columbia Springs Stewardship Saturday service project. We made a difference for Columbia Springs and it was a great experience to spend the hours with you.

MAZI members - if you need credit for the service hours, please print out your service hours forms and get them to Kristina ASAP.

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## Children's Christmas Program

By now, hopefully all the families of the church have received the invitation and music selections for this year's Children's Christmas Program on December 22nd. Solos and readings are due to Kristina no later than November 17. You can email them to [Kristina@vanucc.org](mailto:Kristina@vanucc.org). **There is a mandatory practice for all soloists on December 14th at 10am.**



## THANKSGIVING FOOD BASKETS

We have begun our annual Thanksgiving Food Basket collection. A table is set up in the narthex with specific food items listed for each family. Dry goods can be brought in anytime. Perishable items and gift cards should be brought in on November 24<sup>th</sup> (the Sunday before Thanksgiving) when we will deliver the baskets.

These food baskets help provide a little extra love and support for folks within our congregation to ensure they have a stress free holiday. If you have any questions, please contact Karen Kulm at 360-991-5774 or [lk.kulm@gmail.com](mailto:lk.kulm@gmail.com).

## Advent Festival

Please plan on attending the annual Advent Festival in Bradford Hall on Sunday, December 1st from 3-5 pm. There are several really exciting and wonderful crafts available (including Cory's famous gingerbread houses) as well as cookies to decorate. And, of course, MAZI's gift basket raffle will occur at the Advent Festival. Get this special date on your family calendar because you won't want to miss it!