

# *The Link*

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*God is Still Speaking,*

November 26, 2013

## **Walking and Running on Faith**

Dear Church Family,

If you could help save lives by reducing the number of gun-related deaths in the state of Washington by 16%, would you do it? One can never know for certain what the effect of a law will be, but we do know that states with background checks average 16% fewer deaths caused by guns than states without them. This is why the campaign for background checks on all gun sales in our state is such an important moral issue for us. We have the opportunity to literally keep people from being killed.

For some, the challenge of attempting to change or adopt laws pertaining to guns is cause for despair. Some say the gun lobby is too powerful. They have too much money, and gun manufacturers have too much at stake to let background checks become law. However, I think this view underestimates the lengths to which both people who have lost loved ones to gun violence and people who want to prevent the loss of their loved ones to gun violence are willing to go in order to make sure that more people are not killed. I believe this is an issue in which the power of love will prove to be much stronger than financial greed or political ideology.

Through our annual all-church social action, our congregation has the opportunity to play a leading role in making a difference on this important issue. In January, the legislators in our state will be considering whether to pass a law requiring background checks for all gun sales. If they decline to act (which they most likely will), there will be a voter initiative to make background checks on all gun sales a law. We need to show the legislators and the public that the desire and commitment is there to make this happen. We can do this by running and walking in support of background checks on January 30<sup>th</sup>.

To show one's support, one can walk as little as a quarter of a mile or run as much as a marathon. There will also be a 5k walk and a 5k run. Everyone will arrive on the front steps of the legislative building in Olympia before a crowd assembled to cheer the finishers. The event will take place as part of the annual advocacy day for the Faith Action Network. To register or to learn more about the event, visit: [www.runnersforbackgroundchecks.org](http://www.runnersforbackgroundchecks.org).

In the sacred scriptures of Judaism and Christianity, the act of running symbolizes the endurance and stamina that comes with faith. Isaiah says that those who wait on God "shall run and not be weary," while Hebrews asserts, "Let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us." On January 30<sup>th</sup>, runners and walkers of faith will show the state of Washington that they are willing to go the extra mile to make background checks on all gun sales law in the state of Washington.

Your brother in Christ,

Pastor Brooks

## WORSHIP IN DECEMBER

### December 1, 2013 First Sunday of Advent

10 a.m. Communion 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: John Fite and Ken Rowe  
Worship Leader:  
Ushers: Trent Corey and Rory Martindale  
Wayne and Doris Fletcher

**3:00 PM**

### **Advent Festival in Bradford Hall**

### December 8, 2013 Second Sunday of Advent

10 a.m. Rev. Brooks Berndt preaching. Infant and Toddler Care available. 10:20 a.m.: Christian Education for children 3 yrs. - Grade 7.

#### **Worship Volunteers:**

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

### December 15, 2013 Third Sunday of Advent

10 a.m. **Choir Program**. 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  
Ushers: Ken Rowe and Cory Saum-Blystone  
Mike King and Duke Charpentier

### December 22, 2013 Fourth Sunday of Advent

10 a.m. **Children's Program**. No Bible Adventures or Youth Group today. Infant and Toddler Care available.

#### **Worship Volunteers:**

Greeters: Marjorie English and Daryl DeSilva  
Worship Leader:  
Ushers: David Macko and David Harrington  
Tom Renner

### December 24, 2013 Christmas Eve Service

8:00 pm . Worship Service. Infant and Toddler Care available.

#### **Worship Volunteers:**

Greeters: Ed and Ruby Frank  
Worship Leader:  
Ushers:

### December 29, 2013 Family Christmas Brunch

**10:00 AM in Bradford Hall.** No Bible Adventures or Youth Group this morning.

## 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  
John Lee Dugger  
(John is at the Ray Hickey Hospice House)

## UPCOMING PUBLICATION DATES FOR "The Link"

December 8, 2013  
December 10, 2013

Link Deadline  
Link Mailed

December 20, 2013  
December 23, 2013

Link Deadline  
Link Mailed

Please note this Link will go out on Monday instead of Tuesday.

## Birthdays in December

December 2	Nancy Woodworth
December 3	Carol Fish
December 6	Agnes Alexander
December 6	Norma Lee Priel
December 8	Olivia Martindale
December 11	Duke Charpentier
December 11	Brenda Charpentier
December 13	Judy Walter
December 13	Andy Allensworth
December 16	Gwen Moscoe
December 21	Sarah Allensworth
December 22	Tracey Flynn
December 27	Tim Ralph



**Happy Birthday!**



## 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 with gift tags in the narthex. 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).

## The 2013 Advent Festival

Please come on December 1st from 3-5 for our annual Advent Festival. There will be several crafts for kids and/or families to complete, as well as cookies to decorate. This is a fun way to begin your Christmastime celebration so please plan on joining us!

## 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!

## Women's Saturday Breakfast

Contributed by Connie Oppel

Remember Ladies, our tables will be ready and waiting for us on Saturday, December 14 at 9:30 a.m. at the Red Lion Inn at the Quay. We continue to meet on a regular basis on the second Saturday of every month.

All are welcome for a great time of fellowship and good food. Just show up.

Questions? Call Connie at 573-8997 or 567-5528

## Spiritual Growth Audio Book Group

This is a book club for people who don't have time for books! To participate in this book club, you do not have to set aside any extra time in your busy schedule to read. Our first book will be Marcus Borg's *The Heart of Christianity: Rediscovering a Life of Faith*. We will be meeting at Little Italy on Tuesday, December 3<sup>rd</sup> at 6 pm. Sign up in the narthex to join us or email Pastor Brooks ([brooks@vanucc.org](mailto:brooks@vanucc.org)).

## Good News from Claude and Joan Blair!

Family & Friends - Joan has just wrapped up two weeks of radiation treatments and boy are we glad that's over. The radiation was focused on the L-1 region of the back with the beams going through her stomach area.

Needless to say, Joan endured major nausea and sickness during this period of time. Her morning sickness episodes were so regular we thought she might be preg..... well I won't even say the word. Suffice to say that it would be impossible on so many levels!

The doctor said that the queasiness will go away by the weekend. Her next round of treatment will be in January when she takes the radioactive iodine. The prognosis is good and there is light at the end of the tunnel.

Keep her in your thoughts and prayers. Joan said to say that she is open to lunch and visitors so give her a call.

Happy Thanksgiving to all,

Claude

## 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 Dosha 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 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!

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## Feeling Blue This Holiday Season?

Pam Osborne will hold a Blue Holiday service in the Sanctuary on Sunday, December 15, at 3pm. What's a Blue Holiday service? This time of year can bring back memories of past pain and sorrow and heighten new experiences of suffering. It can give us a case of "the blues." A Blue Holiday service is a place and time when we can allow feelings of pain, loneliness, worry, sadness, experiences of dark memories, anxiety and fear to be lifted up in faith to The One who can help us relieve our pain. Come and join us as we seek peace in this service and take comfort in knowing that we are not alone.



## 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.

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## Feminine Faith Formation And Fellowship

The Feminine Faith Formation and Fellowship group will meet on December 12th at 7pm. The location hasn't been confirmed yet, but will be in one of the member's homes. We will finish discussing *Take This Bread*. If you missed last month or haven't finished the book by the 12th, please come and join the discussion anyway. Once the location has been confirmed, an email will be sent to members. If you have questions, please email Kristina Martin at [kristina@vanucc.org](mailto:kristina@vanucc.org).

## It's Futbol Time!

Since September, the children and many adults of the church have been adding their money to our Futbol jar and we have enough money in our Children's Offering fund to purchase two soccer balls (futbols). In honor of the memory of Richard Swanson who died on May 14, 2013 while dribbling a One World Futbol from Seattle to Brazil, our 2 balls will be sent to the Breakaway Brazil futbol program. The 2 balls that stay here will be delivered to SHARE which will use them at their center. Additional balls we are able to purchase as the year continues will also be sent to SHARE which their volunteer coordinator will give to SHARE children in need. Thank you so much for your support. By encouraging your children to give a weekly offering, the children of this church are able to enrich the lives of so many other children. If you would like to learn more about the One World Futbol project or Breakaway Brazil, please visit their website: <http://www.oneworldfutbol.com>

## Christmas Cookies

The children of the church will be baking cookies to serve during the coffee hour following the Choir's Christmas program on 12/15. Please consider bringing a plate of cookies to add to the festivities that day. Tables will be set up in the narthex and you can put your cookies on the table on your way into the sanctuary. Any left-over cookies will be used for the Christmas Eve service.

*For, after all, put it as we may to ourselves, we are all of us from birth to death guests at a table which we did not spread. The sun, the earth, love, friends, our very breath are parts of the banquet... Shall we think of the day as a chance to come nearer to our Host, and to find out something of Him who has fed us so long?*

*~Rebecca Harding Davis  
1831-1910*

## The Children's Christmas Program

The children of the church will be performing on December 22nd during the service and we hope you all can be there that day to enjoy their production of "Christmas is Our Gift". Families, please remember that there is a rehearsal on Saturday, December 14th at 10am.



## WHO November Update

Both St. Paul Lutheran & St. Andrew Lutheran WHO shelters have been full every night, and extra severe weather beds have been added. Although our all-church volunteer week is not until next March, there are current **urgent needs** at the St. Paul shelter.

Please consider one or more of the following shifts:

We need more people for every day during the week of Dec 8-14. These include:

2 people - 6-10 pm

2 people - 10 pm - 2 am

2 people - 2 am - 6 am

2 people - 6 am - 8:30 am

**Also**, we need 2 people to volunteer Thanksgiving Day from 12-3 and 3-6 pm as we will be having St. Paul open all day for the men to stay and enjoy the warmth.

If you would like to volunteer please contact Kevin at 360-699-5106 ext 103 or email at [who@councilforthehomeless.org](mailto:who@councilforthehomeless.org)

You can also volunteer using an online tool. [Click here to be taken to our Volunteer Spot site](#) to sign up. Thank you!

## **Final Reckoning on Three Together Concert:**

The net income from the concert on October 12th totaled \$2,251.88. One-third goes to WHO, one-third to our church interior improvements and one-third to the principal on the Skylight/Roof mortgage. Thank you everyone who participated in making this concert a success. And it really was a fun fund-raiser!

---Nancy Fite and Jean Stolle, co-chairs

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## **Your Cans Pay Zambia Teacher Salaries:**

Please continue collecting cans for Zambia. This is a fund raiser in conjunction with *Good Samaritan Ministries/Zambia*. A teacher's salary is only \$100 a month, so our cans go a long way. Over the holidays, you may have more aluminum cans, redeemable beer bottles and water bottles, so rinse them out, don't crush, and deposit them in the container by the downstairs entry door to the church. We thank you so much!!

Contact Nancy Fite if you have questions.

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## **Kathleen New Art Show**

Our church has been blessed with the art work of Kathleen New and for many of you, her works of art grace your homes and last Sunday we unveiled a collection of Kathleen's art in the Sanctuary.

You don't have to wait until Sunday morning to come to view the works of this amazing woman. The church and office are open most days and we'd love to have you come and take your time to perhaps meditate and to appreciate.

Just as a reminder, the office hours are Monday, Tuesday and Thursday: 9:00 am until 2:00 pm; Wednesday from 9:00 am until 1:00 pm and Fridays from 9:00 until noon.

## **Annual Choir Christmas Concert**

The choir will present their annual Christmas music concert during the worship service on December 15th. Selections, this year, will center around familiar carols such as; O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM (with audience participation), THE FIRST NOEL, GOOD CHRISTIAN FRIENDS, REJOICE and JOY TO THE WORLD! and more. Some of the carols will be accompanied by tone chimes. Also on the program will be ANGELS WE HAVE HEARD ON HIGH played by Nancy Fite, flute; Cary Pederson, clarinet and Dr. Christopher Schindler, piano. Pam Osborne will be the narrator.

You won't want to miss this service of beautiful music so invite your friends to join you.

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## **Discussion Opportunity**

Would you be interested in learning more about the early church and the Letters of Paul? I am taking an on-line course through edX and would love to have some face-to-face discussions about the readings, course, et cetera. The course, "Early Christianity: The Letters of Paul" is taught by Harvard professor Dr. Laura Nasrallah and is **free**. The course begins on January 6th and is done completely on-line. If you have questions, you may visit the website [www.edx.org](http://www.edx.org) or email Kristina Martin ([kristina@vanucc.org](mailto:kristina@vanucc.org)).

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## **Christmas Fund**

The Christmas Fund offering being collected in December is one way that we, as UCC lay members, can embody God's love for one another. The money we donate this Christmas Season will be used by the national UCC Pension Board's Ministerial Assistance Program to provide emergency assistance grants. When giving remember the ways that a retired pastor, a retired Sunday school teacher, a retired church secretary, or a retired minister of music have touched your life. Giving envelopes will be in the pews all during this month. Your contributions will be gratefully appreciated.

*The Mission and Outreach Committee*

## Report from Book Group by Alona Steinke

Our group chose Bill McKibben's book *Eaarth Making a Life on a Tough New Planet*. Bill McKibben is the founder of [350.org](http://350.org). He was among the first to warn of the dangers of global warming.

Global warming is already happening. The earth is warming, the Arctic ice caps and Greenland are melting, and species are shrinking. The pH of the oceans is changing, bringing disaster to the shell fish industry and destruction to coral reefs.

Warm air holds more water vapor than cold air. This means increased evaporation and hence drought in arid areas. Once that water is in the atmosphere, it has to come down, which means increased deluge and flood in moist areas.

There is a glimmer of hope. McKibben says that if we work really hard to stop the burning of fossil fuels, and if we stay committed, with luck we may be able to maintain a planet that will sustain some kind of civilization. It won't be the same planet, so it can't be the same civilization.

If we can actually pull it off, McKibben foresees a future where maintenance, rather than growth, is the goal. Both food and energy production will be local and diverse instead of centralized. To that end, our group has committed to growing much of our own food and encouraging others to do so. We want to buy local and what is in season.

We are activists. We show up in force at hearings, where we testify against the transport, export, and burning of fossil fuels. Sometimes we even make a little mischief to get our point across. We don't want to see the Columbia River become a conduit for coal and oil. We are proud to have signed the Planet Earth Pledge, and we invite you to sign as well by going to [www.PlanetEarthPledge.org](http://www.PlanetEarthPledge.org) and clicking on the word follow. You will be hearing more about the pledge in the coming weeks.

Alona and Don Steinke  
360 892 1589