

The Link

First Congregational
United Church of Christ
1220 NE 68th Street
Vancouver, WA 98665-0508
360.693.1476
Website: www.vancouverucc.org



Volume 35 No. 26

God is Still Speaking,

December 23, 2013

Rachel Fudly

Christopher Schwallen

Our Wish for You

*May you have
the spirit of Christmas*

which is Peace,

the gladness of Christmas

which is Hope,

and the Heart of Christmas

which is Love.

Virginia Dumbae

Kathy Woolley

Richard Trepen

Richard Trepen

Brooks Berndt

WORSHIP IN DECEMBER and JANUARY

December 30, 2012

Holiday Brunch and Service

10:00 am

January 5, 2014 Communion

10 a.m. Worship Service. Rev. Carole Elizabeth, Preaching. Infant and Toddler Care available. 10:20 a.m.: Christian Education for children 3 yrs. - Grade 7. No Youth this Sunday.

Worship Volunteers:

Greeters: Barbara Ahola and Doraine Kohler
Worship Leader:
Ushers: Rory Martindale and Trent Corey
Wayne and Doris Fletcher

January 12, 2014

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. Youth Group Meets at 11:30 a.m.

Worship Volunteers:

Greeters: Ruth Hammer and JoAnn Kersavage
Worship Leader:
Ushers: Carol Pendergraft, Dwight Chapman
Darrell and Shirley Brandenburg

January 19, 2014

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. Youth Group Meets at 11:30 a.m.

Worship Volunteers:

Greeters: Marnie Wright and June Lasher
Worship Leader: Marilyn Jones
Ushers: Ken Rowe and Cory Saum-Blystone
Mike King and Duke Charpentier

January 26, 2014

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. Youth Group Meets at 11:30 a.m.

Worship Volunteers:

Greeters: Connie Oppel and Marcie Ramberg
Worship Leader: Barb Harlan
Ushers: Joe and John Eckroth
Tom and Josh Renner

Congregational Meeting on the Budget
Immediately Following Worship

*Deep in the darkness of a silent night
and quietly in the secret of your soul, the
Mystery of God continues to be born.*

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
Yahriel Harrigan

The Celebration of the Life of John Lee Dugger will be held on Saturday, January 18th at 3:00 PM in the Sanctuary.

UPCOMING PUBLICATION DATES FOR "The Link"

January 12, 2014
January 14, 2014

Link Deadline
Link Mailed

Mission and Outreach Focus for Christmas Eve: The Discretionary Fund

The Christmas Eve offering goes to our discretionary fund for the upcoming year. This fund is used to assist church members in times of need and crisis. In a difficult economy, our ability to help people in hard times is often a true blessing for those who receive it.

Birthdays for January

January 3	Ken Rowe
January 7	Charlie Ross
January 16	Kathleen New
January 18	Allison Kocher
January 22	Danya Marquardt
January 24	Dorothy Mathews
January 28	Judith Dahlen



Worship Leader Orientation and Training

If you would like to serve as worship leader in 2014, please sign up in the narthex to attend a worship leader orientation and training after worship on January 19th. Next year Parish Life would like for all our worship leaders to have participated in this 20-minute orientation.

Faith Formation Groups

In 2014, our church will be starting new Faith Formation groups that will follow a curriculum designed to introduce concepts and practices that will enrich one's daily spiritual life. Each Faith Formation group will explore ways to make meaning out of life and get connected with God. This six week program involves meeting with a small group of 8 to 10 persons that is led by a skilled facilitator. New members and others who are new to our church are encouraged to join. Sign up sheets are in the narthex.

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 book next month will be Brian McLaren's *Why Did Jesus, Moses, the Buddha, and Mohammed Cross the Road?: Christian Identity in a Multi-Faith World*. We will be meeting at Little Italy in downtown Vancouver Tuesday, January 7th at 6 pm. Sign up in the narthex to join us or email Pastor Brooks (brooks@vanucc.org).

All-Church Action on Background Checks

Our All-Church Action for 2014 will be to run and walk in support of background checks on all gun sales in the state of Washington. The event will be part of the Faith Action Network's Interfaith Advocacy Day on January 30th in Olympia. For those walking, there is a 5k walk or the final quarter of a mile to the legislative steps. For those running, there is a marathon, a half-marathon, a 10k, a 5k, or the final quarter of a mile. For those who want to support and cheer our walkers and runners, volunteers are needed as well. Sign up to participate in the narthex.

Thinking About Becoming A Member?

If you have decided that we are the church family for you, you can attend this two-hour orientation class and dinner from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm on Sunday, January 19th. If you are interested in attending, let Pastor Brooks know as you leave the sanctuary today or call the office at 360-693-1476. Childcare provided upon request.

Christmas Brunch/Service

December 29th, 2013 we will gather downstairs in Bradford Hall for our Annual Brunch. Please bring a breakfast dish to share and come join us in the last service for 2013, ending our year with a spiritual meeting and rejoicing for the New Year. Richard Trefren will be officiating. We will also need volunteers to help clean up after the service.



The cold weather has kept the WHO shelters full with overflow beds. Please continue to donate men's socks, gloves, hats, thermals, and underwear to the big yellow basket in the narthex.

Sign up now for our WHO week March 16-22. Once again we are partnering with our friends at Kol Ami. Volunteering is easier than ever this year by using Volunteer Spot.

Here's how it works in 3 easy steps:

1. **Click this link** to go to our invitation page on Volunteer Spot:
<http://vols.pt/cbdRWF>. Advance the calendar to March to find the shifts available during our shared week shifts, March 16 – 22.
2. **Enter your email address:** (You will NOT need to register an account on Volunteer Spot)
3. **Sign up!** Choose your spots – Volunteer Spot will send you an automated confirmation and reminders. Easy! Note: Volunteer Spot does not share your email address with anyone.

Please note: Kol Ami is also volunteering in December & January and has open shifts available January 1, 2, 3 and 4 from 6-10:30PM. If you can help them out, please contact Sue Meyer at sue@edtcorp.com immediately.

Let's Give a Gift of Hope January Special Offering

Women who have fled the violence in Darfur find relative safety in refugee camps in Chad but for many, their lives are still in danger every day. These women must leave the camp daily to gather firewood so they can cook meals for their children. Older girls go with them. Soldiers also prowl the bush so every time these women and girls go for wood, they are in danger of rape, beatings, and murder. We have a chance to buy these women solar ovens that work well in their climate of sun and heat. A solar oven means they can stay safe in camp and still provide food for their kids. Your gift of \$40.00 will supply a woman with 2 solar ovens, cooking pots, utensils and skills training on how to use them. A gift of \$120.00 provides cookers for three families. Our Special January Offering, *Solar Ovens for Women in Africa*, can help as we pool our gifts.

Go to <http://www.jww.org/projects/ontheground/sudan/solar-cooker-project> for more information, a video and personal stories from the women. This multi-faith program is run by groups from around the world. This isn't just a gift of technology; it's a gift of safety and life.

Christmas Eve Service

The Christmas Eve Service will be at 8:00 pm. The theme of this year's service is "*Images of a New World.*" Reflections and meditations will be interspersed with selections by the choir and congregational carol singing. The service will end with the candlelight singing of Silent Night. Following the service, we will have a time of fellowship with cookies and wassail in the narthex. You are invited to bring a plate of cookies to share

The Planet Earth Pledge

In the last issue of the Link, an exciting new opportunity for environmental stewardship and care was announced. The Planet Earth Pledge is a commitment to take action against global warming for each week of 2014. A weekly action might be as simple as signing an online petition or sending an email to your legislator. To pledge or learn more, visit the sign up table in the narthex or go to www.planeteearthpledge.org.



WIND AND STRINGS CELTIC BAND

7th Annual WHO Benefit Concert
Saturday, January 11th at 3 and 7 PM
St. Andrew Lutheran Church
5607 NE Gher Road, Vancouver, WA
and
Sunday January 12th at 3 PM
St. Paul Lutheran Church
1309 Franklin St., Vancouver, WA

Property & Finance Notes

Contributed by John Greenauer

We are beginning to plan for an exciting 2014 with projects to protect and enhance our facilities. A new roof over the Education Wing, painting and repairs to the outside of the building, new carpet in the lower and upper corridors and a new organ are all possible and planned depending on bids and funding. Also, we are forming a task force to determine what modifications can be made to the outside entrance to the Sanctuary. If you are interested in participating in discussing changes to the entrance please talk with John Greenauer.

Several people have asked for examples of the cost for various projects. We are in the process of determining the timing, scope, soliciting bids and determining the cash available but early bids reveal the following approximations:

Pastor's Office or any Christian Education room will cost approximately \$1,000.

Modifications to the entrance range from \$100 for a window to \$300 for a skylight.

A replacement organ will cost between \$5-6,000 and we currently have \$4,800 in the organ fund.

The Capital Campaign and designated funds will provide for most of the financing of these projects, but not all. If you would like to make a year-end gift to support a particular project or one year pledge to the Capital Campaign it will help provide funding beyond the pledged Capital Campaign level.

Please call John Greenauer, Interim Chair to discuss how you can help at 360.608.3674

Temporary Organ

Submitted by Jeff Osborne, Chair, Organ Committee

On November 2nd, our Johannes 3-keyboard electronic organ suffered a failure that rendered it unusable after many years of service in our sanctuary. A small committee had been formed earlier in the year to begin looking into replacing the organ when it suffered another failure that was not yet terminal.

Over several meetings to-date we have been educating ourselves about the current state of electronic organ. It had just returned from a time in Medford and was going to be idle during this period. Knowing of our situation they offered the instrument as a loaner to help us through the Christmas season and to allow us to experience a modern electronic organ. On December 18th Chris Nordwall and Michael Ruppert, partners in RCOB, installed an Allen L227e electronic organ in our sanctuary including twelve speakers and the large sub-woofer on the right side of the chancel (for those who are curious, this one-year-old organ would be priced at about \$40,000 for purchase).

We appreciate the loan of this instrument and hope you enjoy the music Christopher brings forth from it while it is in our sanctuary. Please direct any questions or comments to the Organ committee through me at jeffo@vanucc.org. We have received donations of about \$5,000 towards the purchase of a replacement organ and are beginning our search for a permanent replacement.

About a week ago we were contacted by Rose City Organ Builders (RCOB) in Portland to see if we would like to borrow their rental organ for about six weeks, free of charge. It had just returned from a time in Medford and was going to be idle during this period. Knowing of our situation they offered the instrument as a loaner to help us through the Christmas season and to allow us to experience a modern electronic organ. On December 18th Chris Nordwall and Michael Ruppert, partners in RCOB, installed an Allen L227e electronic organ in our sanctuary including twelve speakers and the large sub-woofer on the right side of the chancel (for those who are curious, this one-year-old organ would be priced at about \$40,000 for purchase).

We appreciate the loan of this instrument and hope you enjoy the music Christopher brings forth from it while it is in our sanctuary. Please direct any questions or comments to the Organ committee through me at jeffo@vanucc.org.

Calendar Information

It's very easy to access our online calendar of events by going to vanucc.org and clicking *The Link* in the left hand column.

Thank You, Thank You!

Many thanks to Lori Parafinczuk for all of the beautiful artwork she has donated to help us brighten and decorate our walls throughout the church.

Watch for even more new pieces to appear over the next few months.

Marilynn Jones
and the Interiors Committee