

The Link

First Congregational
United Church of Christ
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Volume 35 No. 2

God is Still Speaking,

January 28 , 2014

Art That Will Blow Your Mind!

Dear Church Family,

In the original Greek of the New Testament, the word “repent” can be translated as “to go beyond the mind that we have.” Scholar Marcus Borg explains what this definition of repentance entails. Our past experiences socialized us to have a particular way of thinking about the world but through our encounter with God and Jesus we have gained a new way of seeing and understanding life. Because Lent is conceived as a season of repentance, our church is going to begin Lent with an Ash Wednesday art display that will *Blow Your Mind!*

For this art display, we are inviting church members to submit photos that represent how they do not conform to a particular stereotype that others might often have of them. For example, if you look like a tough guy enforcer for the mob but also happen to love kittens, then give us a photo of you snuggling on the sofa with your kitty cat. Or, maybe people think that you are a “gentle, sweet grandma” but you happen to also be one of the world’s leading experts on the use of Japanese samurai swords. In that case, we want a picture of you slicing open a watermelon with your biggest sword. Please submit to the main office your photo along with a paragraph explaining the photograph and the stereotype to which you do not conform by Sunday, March 2nd.

To correspond with this Lenten art display, our Christian Education Ministry is organizing a Lenten luncheon speaker series with a theme entitled “The Real You.” The ministry is asking for people to share a story about themselves that reveals a dimension of one’s life that might normally be unknown to others. Maybe people do not know that cultivating bonsai cactuses is your greatest passion in life. We want to hear all about it. Your story does not need to be a long one. We will likely have more than one story each Sunday. Please speak to Kristin Martindale or email her at kristinmartindale@msn.com by Tuesday, February 11th to let her know of your interest in sharing your story.

Let’s make this year’s Lent a meaningful and enriching time that will Blow Our Collective Mind with the fresh winds of repentance. I invite you to join with me in making this happen.

Your brother in Christ,

Pastor Brooks

WORSHIP IN FEBRUARY

FEBRUARY

February 2, 2014 COMMUNION

SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY

10 a.m. Worship Service. Audrey deCoursey preaching. Infant and Toddler Care available. 10:20 a.m.: Christian Education for children 3 yrs. - Grade 7.

11:00 a.m., Faith Formation in Classroom 2

FAN All Church Luncheon

11:00 Bradford Hall

Worship Volunteers:

Greeters: John Fite and Ken Rowe

Worship Leader: Jerry Mathis

Ushers: Rory Martindale and Trent Corey
Wayne and Doris Fletcher

February 09, 2014

10 a.m. Worship Service. Poetry Reading. Infant and Toddler Care available. 10:20 a.m.: Christian Education for children 3 yrs. - Grade 7.

11:00 a.m., Faith Formation in Classroom 2

Worship Volunteers:

Greeters: Ed and Ruby Frank

Worship Leader: Sue Benson

Ushers: Carol Pendergraft, Dwight Chapman
Darrell and Shirley Brandenburg

February 16, 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

Worship Volunteers:

Greeters: Anne and Wayne Kamp

Worship Leader: Dwight Chapman

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

February 23, 2014

10 a.m. Worship Service. Rev. Paul Benz guest preacher. Infant and Toddler Care available. 10:20 a.m.: Christian Education for children 3 yrs. - Grade 7.

First Lenten Luncheon in Bradford Hall following Worship.

Worship Volunteers:

Greeters Dwight and Opal Chapman

Worship Leader: Harriet Anani

Ushers: David Macko and David Harrington
Tom Renner

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

UPCOMING PUBLICATION DATES FOR "The Link"

Link Deadline
Link Mailed

February 09, 2014
February 11, 2014

Adult Ed Session II - UCC: Who We Are...As A Conference

The Christian Education ministry has put together a three-part series on who we are as a church, nationally, as a conference, and as a local church. On **February 16th**, we will have the second of the UCC: Who We Are sessions. Former Central Pacific Conference moderator Corliss Marsh, Conference Outdoor Ministries Director and Education Ministries Task force Leader Natalie Becker, and active Conference Justice and Witnessing Ministries member, Joyce Liljeholm will share with our church how we the conference is working to better the lives of UCC members and communities. A soup lunch will be served by CE immediately after worship that day and the panelists will present afterwards.

Guest Preacher Next Sunday

Audrey deCoursey lives in Portland, where she pastors the Living Stream Church of the Brethren, an online worship community. She has served as a pastor in Illinois and a chaplain in Oregon. She attended Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley for seminary, which is where she met Pastor Brooks.

WOW WOW WOW...

... you all did it for the month of December, we broke all records. The Rum Balls were in high demand and the beautiful Santa (also in very high demand) sent us over the edge for this finally drawing of the year. Our Thanks goes out to Kristina Martin and Ed Frank for really helping us all out with the great fundraiser. We have raised \$1326.90 for this year and our break down of funds is as follows:

\$119.33 to Share/Who
\$132.69 to Parish Life
\$1,074.88 to the Flooring fund
\$1,326.90 for our Year total.

We do not have anyone signed up for the Dessert of the month for January, we do have February, March and July filled, but need your help to continue this fundraiser for our church. Please call me at 360-921-0611 to sign up and remember the desserts are not due until the end of each month. This is a call to all of those wonderful bakers that we have in our congregation. Just ask anyone of the winners on how wonderful their winnings tasted, Joan Blair, Lynn Renner, Susan Ross, Glen Olson, Alan Allensworth, Bev Boydston, Ken Rowe, Kathy Woolley just to name a few of this lucky winners.

Special thanks to Teresa Everist, Nancy Fite, Doraine Kohler, Patty Yates, Tina Wright, Marilynn Jones, Joan Blair, Ruby Frank, Carole Greenauer, Dorothy Mathews, Natalie Cantrell, and Kristina Martin our Baker's of the Month. Ed Frank, I can tell you that everyone loved your Santa and wanted it to take home.

Thanks to all of you for making this a great year!!!

Blessing to you all,
Teresa Everist

Souper Bowl Sunday

While you are getting prepared to watch the Seahawks beat the Broncos on February 2nd, please consider picking up an extra can of soup or other non-perishable food item to donate to MAZI's annual SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY canned food and money drive. This year all the food and money will be donated to Martha's Pantry. Please leave your donations at the table in the Narthex. Thank you for supporting MAZI and Martha's Pantry.

Hot Cocoa Bar after Worship

On February 9th, we will have a hot cocoa bar in Bradford Hall after worship. All are invited to come and enjoy a cup. Warm your tummy and your heart before Valentine's Day!

This is an event hosted by the Membership Committee.

Feminine Faith Formation & Fellowship - Books and Discussion

Our feminine faith formation book group is reading a fabulous and thought provoking book to discuss for the months of February and March. If you'd like to join us, please be prepared to discuss the first 2 parts of Sue Monk Kidd's *Dance of the Dissident Daughter* on February 13th. (The location has yet to be determined, Kristina will email everyone the address.) The next book we will read and discuss for April and May is *The Feminine Face of God: The Unfolding of the Sacred in Women* by Anderson & Hopkins. The used book store near the church, Cover to Cover Books, will try to locate enough copies for us if we let them know soon. Everyone is welcome to join the discussion even if they are behind on the reading - your fellowship is important to us! If you have questions, or to RSVP, please email or phone Kristina at kristina@vanucc.org or (360) 695-4545.

Women's Breakfast Group

The Women's Breakfast Group continues to meet on the second Saturday of the month at 9:30 a.m. at the Red Lion Inn at the Quay. Our next gathering will be Saturday, February 8th.

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

Spiritual Growth Audio Book Group

This is a book club for people who don't have time to read! The club's next meeting will be on Tuesday, February 4th at 6:00 PM. Our book for this meeting is *Stitches: A Handbook on Meaning, Hope and Repair* by Anne Lamott. We will be meeting at Little Italy in downtown Vancouver. Sign up in the narthex to join us or email Pastor Brooks (brooks@vanucc.org).

Mission & Outreach Special Offering for February: Winter Hospitality Overflow (WHO)

Contributed by Karen Kulm

Every year it takes thousands of dollars to support the winter overflow shelters known as WHO. Our church will be sending volunteers to be hosts at the shelter March 16-22; but financial and material support is also needed.

If you are unable to physically volunteer at the shelter, please consider making a cash donation or bring the following needed items to the church to be delivered to the shelter: Warm clothing such as sweatshirts, socks, jeans, underwear (M-XL), and raingear can be placed in the big yellow barrel in the narthex.

To make a cash donation, simply make your check out to our church with "WHO" in the memo line and drop in the offering plate any Sunday in February.

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.

If you have any questions or problems with the sign up, contact Karen Kulm at 360-991-5774.

"Homelessness is a moral indicator of how we are doing as a society. As long as men, women and children are forced out on the streets, we have a responsibility to build a better world. Societies that do not care for the 'least of these' always crumble."
~ Rev. Chuck Currie, UCC Pastor.

Carolyn Hatfield

The memorial service for longtime member, Carolyn Hatfield was held Jan. 4th in Oregon. Cards and contributions to Carolyn's Memorial Fund may be sent to her son, Jim Hatfield, PO Box 1595, Brush Prairie, WA 98606

Summer Camp At Camp Adams

It's time to start planning your summer fun, so open up that calendar and write down these dates:

- Family Camp - Full Week: June 29-July 5, 2014
- Family Camp - Half Week: July 2-July 5, 2014
- Genesis/Seekers: July 6-July 12, 2014 (completed grades 2 & 3)
- Taller/Smaller: July 9-July 12, 2014 (ages 5, 6, 7 with an adult)
- Discoverers: July 13-July 19, 2014 (completed grades 4 & 5)
- Sojourners: July 20-July 26, 2014 (completed grades 6, 7, 8)
- Exodus: July 27-August 2, 2014 (completed grades 9, 10, 11, 12)

MAZI and the SOLV Beach Clean-up near Lincoln City, OR

If you are planning on joining MAZI on the weekend of March 21-22nd, please RSVP with Kristina Martin (360) 695-4545 no later than **Wednesday, JANUARY 29th**. After the 29th, you will need to make your own arrangements for this great opportunity to clean-up our beautiful beaches.

Central Pacific Conference SPRING FLING for teens in grades 6 - 12!

It's not too late to register for Spring Fling at Camp Adams this February 7-9th. The focus of the retreat is how media shapes our lives and includes teens making their own videos to share with other teens. The cost is \$60 (scholarships are available for active youth in the church). Register on-line at <http://www.cpcucc.org>. If you have questions, please contact Natalie at www.campadams.org or Kristina Martin at kristina@vanucc.org.

Super Bowl Potluck This Sunday

We would like to invite each of you to the Super Bowl Potluck after worship on February 2nd, 2014. We would like to ask you to bring a Super bowl type food, (Nachos, wings, chili, pizza, meatballs, chips, dip, etc.). This is for "All Church Action" and because you did a **Super Job**. Please join us in the fun.

VBS Task Force

The CE Ministry is looking for 2-3 volunteers to participate in a task force to review our Vacation Bible School (VBS) program and make recommendations on what kind of offering we put forward in 2014. We are looking for folks with a fresh perspective and great ideas! It is anticipated that this task force would meet approximately once a month for the next few months, and may require some research on various programs and offerings available. If you are interested please email the CE Ministry Chair, Kristin Martindale, at kristinmartindale@msn.com. Thanks!

A Call for Poetry

For our worship service on February 9th, members are invited to submit and read poems that capture the lighter side of life as we reflect upon the divine through the gift of laughter. While original works would be wonderful, you do not necessarily have to submit a poem that you yourself wrote. If you are too shy to read a poem in worship, another person can read your poem for you. By February 2nd, poems can be either put in my office mailbox or emailed to me at brooks@vanucc.org. Please keep poems short: nothing longer than 35 lines.