

The Link

First Congregational
United Church of Christ
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Volume 36 No. 5

God is Still Speaking,

March 11 , 2014

A Spiritual Practice for Lent

Dear Church Family,

Lent is a time of pilgrimage, of walking on the path that leads us back to a conscious awareness of God. One does not need to go on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem to have a meaningful Lent. One can instead drive to our church on any day of the week and walk our labyrinth. Churches have long used labyrinths as places of pilgrimage-in-miniature. The act of walking a labyrinth is a traditional Lenten practice. This Lent I invite you to make walking our labyrinth a weekly practice. If it helps, each week you can meditate on one of the following questions as you do your walk:

Can God be found in the tugging of the heart?

Can God be found in a moment of rest?

Can God be found in the beauty of nature?

Can God be found in the forgetting of the self?

Can God be found in forgiveness?

Can God be found in the bonds of love?

Your brother in Christ,

Pastor Brooks

WORSHIP IN MARCH

March 16, 2014 Second Sunday in Lent

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: Joy Gerlitz and Clarice Fossen
Worship Leader: Lynn Renner
Ushers: Ken Rowe and Cory Saum-Blystone
Mike King and Duke Charpentier

Lenten Lunch Series and Potato Feed

March 23 , 2014 Third Sunday in Lent

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: Ruth Hammer and Dorothea Johnson
Worship Leader: Jean Beary Stolle
Ushers: David Macko and David Harrington
Tom Renner

Lenten Lunch Series

March 30 , 2014 Fourth Sunday in Lent

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: Adina Tarpley and Carol Elizabeth
Worship Leader: Sue Benson
Ushers: John Bradley and John Hannon

Lenten Lunch Series

Mary Jo Ebel Circle to Meet

The Mary Jo Ebel Circle has a few changes to their meeting scheduled for Wednesday, March 19th at 10:30. **Please take note:** The gathering, originally scheduled to meet at Charlotte Warrens home will now be held in the **Plymouth Room at the church; same date, same time.** Connie Oppel and Ruth Hammer will be hosting. The featured speaker will be *Dawn Barton of Open House Ministries.*

All women are invited to share this wonderful time of sisterhood, information and fun!

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

March 23, 2014
March 25, 2014

Link Deadline
Link Mailed

April 6, 2014
April 8, 2014

Men’s Breakfast Meeting Saturday, March 15th

Contributed by Ed Frank

New member, Don Steinke, will talk to us about his life journey when the men meet at 8:30 AM for breakfast this Saturday in Bradford hall. Don is active in environmental issues with the *Environmental Coalition* which opposes the proposed oil terminal at the Port of Vancouver. Earlier this year, we heard from a representative from the port who answered many of the safety concerns about oil tank car transport to the terminal and storage and movement via tanker ships or barges to coastal refineries. It is the nature of our congregation to listen to all sides of any issue, so we hope you will have questions for Don. In keeping with our desire to learn more about our new members, however, we hope that he will spend much of his time telling about his life to this point.

We hope all men, young and old, will consider attending.

Mission and Outreach Focus for March

Contributed by Alison Kocher

We Are One. This statement is the powerful theme of our One Great Hour of Sharing. The basic premise is if any of us have a need, then ALL of us have a need. The need is greater than our neighbor down the block that needs help. This need reaches across the world. Our offering has helped the UCC in supporting disaster relief, refugee and development all over the world. Some of the projects have been assisting with the Aizu Radiation Center in Japan, Typhoon assistance in the Philippines, helping high school graduates in Haiti start businesses and much, much more. You may make out your check to First Congregational UCC and put OGHS in the memo line or use one of the OGHS envelopes in the pews.

Lenten Luncheon Series- What Does Lent Mean to You?

For the next five weeks, we will be offering a soup luncheon and discussion based on the game "Live Stories" as we make our way through the Lenten season. Discussions will include such topics as *What Lenten rituals to you observe?; What have you experienced from Lent?; How has Lenten practice changed you?; and What does the sacred Easter mean to you?*

Come on down to Bradford Hall after worship for amazing homemade soup, great fellowship and thought provoking discussion.

Palm Sunday Pancake Breakfast To Benefit MAZI

On **April 13th**, please come early for a Palm Sunday Vegetarian Pancake Breakfast in Bradford Hall. Gluten-free pancakes will also be available. Session 1 is from 8:30 – 9:00 and Session 2 from 9:00 until 9:30. The kitchen will close at 9:45. Again, a suggested donation of \$5.00 per person or \$20.00 per family will be collected.

Thank you so much for your continued support of the teens that are members of MAZI. This is the second of our two fundraisers this spring to help offset the cost of our registration fees and gas money to drive to Seattle for the UCC Western Regional Youth Event

Baked Potatoes For MAZI

Contributed by Kristina Martin

Please join the teens of MAZI for the third annual Baked Potato Bar on March 16th and then stay for a great Lenten activity afterwards. Lunch is baked potatoes with all sorts of "fixings". The suggested donation for lunch is \$5 a person or \$20 for a family. Proceeds will help fund the teens' registration costs for the Western Regional Youth Event this June in Seattle. Thank you for all the support you have given our teens!

Birthdays in March

My profound apologies to all celebrants for not having these in the last issue of the Link.

March 04	Marilyn Ross
March 04	Patty Yates
March 08	Christi Brittain
March 08	Irma Slocum
March 09	Garrett Ralph
March 11	Patty Ralph
March 12	Kristin Mauke-Wiswall
March 15	Emma Schnabel
March 16	Willow Wilson
March 21	Alice Rowe
March 21	Connie Oppel
March 23	Ed Frank
March 26	Sharie Lewis
March 28	Dorothea Johnson
March 30	Kathleen Williams



CPC Women's Annual Meeting May 17, 2014

The Central Pacific Conference "Women's Annual Meeting" will be held Saturday, May 17th At Kairos-Milwaukie UCC, 4790 SE Logus Road in Milwaukie, OR.

Registration will begin at 11:30 AM with Luncheon (\$10.00 please make reservations) at Noon and worship beginning at 1:00 PM.

Flyers are available in the church office and the narthex following worship.



We still have 20 open spots to fill! Many of us have already signed up for 2-3 shifts, but we are missing **YOU!** There are 3 shifts every day: Greeting shift 6-10:30pm, Overnight shift 10:30pm-5:30am and Morning shift 5:30-8:30am. Youth 13-17 can volunteer with an adult and are strongly encouraged to do so. It's a great opportunity for youth needing community volunteer hours.

The work is easy and you can read details from the "host manual" here:

<http://whoprogram.org/volunteer/volunteer-resources/> Just scroll down to the middle of the page and click on "Host manuals-St. Paul".

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

Nominations Committee

The Nominations Committee is convening to fill vacant and expiring positions within the Officers, Ministries and Committees of the church. These nominees will be presented to the congregation for voting at the Annual Congregational Meeting in April. All members of the church are eligible to serve.

You will be receiving a call within the next few weeks and we ask that you consider serving. The Committees and Ministries are vital to the health of both our ministry and our church.



How YOU Can Stay Connected

You can connect to church events by signing up to receive the bi-monthly church newsletter: *The Link*.

You can also "like" us on Facebook to stay up to date on events, actions, etc. Invite your friends to join too. <https://www.facebook.com/vanucc>

Our church is one of 47 churches of the Central Pacific Conference. Learn more by going to the conference website: <http://cpcucc.org>.

The conference has a monthly newsletter called *On The Way*. You can sign up to receive it by emailing the office at centralpacific@cpcucc.org.

The Justice & Witness Ministry Team of the conference has a blog called *Rolling Justice*:

<http://cpcjusticeandwitness.com/> and a Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/CPCUCCJusticeandWitness> .

Our denomination's website has a wealth of information at: <http://ucc.org/> . The UCC publishes a weekly e-zine called KYP – Keeping You Posted. You can sign up here:

<http://www.ucc.org/news/keeping-you-eposted/>

Once a year, you can connect with people from all over the conference at our Annual Meeting. The next meeting is September 26-28th in Pendleton, Oregon

Easter Sunday Bulletin:

Once again we will honor and remember loved ones in a special insert in the Easter Sunday bulletin. We are suggesting a minimum donation of \$5.00 per name on your list. If you would like your loved ones honored or remembered please fill out a form in the narthex, place the form and your donation in one of the white envelopes, and place in the basket on the sideboard.

The deadline for names for the insert is Palm Sunday.

The Wholistic Peace Institute

A Retreat on Hearing Your Own Still Small Voice

**“How to Hear the Still Small Voice” –
Saturday, March 22nd, 9am to 3pm
First Congregational
United Church of Christ
1220 NE 68th Street, Vancouver, Wa.**

- Participants please bring a potluck dish to share for lunch
- Donations of \$35 to \$100 suggested; but no one will be turned away; donations will also be made to the church for use of their fine space
- Taught by Gary Alan Spanovich & Assisted by his wife, Nancy Olmsted Spanovich



Love is kindness, gentleness & respect. This retreat will renew your heart and restore your soul. Today's world is unstable and you will never have control over the external world.

Meditation on the Still Small Voice of the Lord within offers you a spiritual meditation and healing practice. God talks to all of us, all the time, and the only issue is, are we listening? You will learn how to listen, deep inside, to hear your life purpose and to feel empowered to follow your unique path. Gary will teach from his book: [A Book Of Gentleness: Developing a Dialogue with God.](#)

Gary has taught for many years at Marylhurst University in the Religion Department and is also an oblate of Mt Angel Monastery. In the past he was given an office in the library to write his books by Mt. Angel Abbey.

Spiritual Growth Audio Book Group

The description for our next book reads, “Heavily tattooed and loud-mouthed, Nadia, a former stand-up comic, sure as hell didn’t consider herself to be religious leader material until the day she ended up leading a friend’s funeral in a smoky downtown comedy club. Surrounded by fellow alcoholics, depressives, and cynics, she realized: These were her people. Maybe she was meant to be their pastor.” The author of the book is Nadia Bolz-Weber, and the book is “Pastrix: The Cranky, Beautiful Faith of a Sinner & Saint.” We will meet at Tommy O’s in downtown Vancouver on Wednesday, May 14th at 6 pm. Sign up in the narthex to join us or email Pastor Brooks (brooks@vanucc.org).

Dessert of the Month for March

Contributed by Teresa Everist

Leslie Chapman is doing dessert of the month for March and it is Fancy Pound Cake. Thank you to Connie Opal for making 2 Cherry Delights for our February Dessert of the month. We made \$80.00 for February.

Our income this year will be going to our kids that attend our church and go to Camp Adams, This will help the children enjoy some of the pleasures in life of being a child, through our church and camp, and help to create wonderful memories.

We still need sign-ups for a few months in 2014 for desserts.

Thank you all for your support.

Teresa Everist
360-921-0611

For more information you may email Gary at garyspanovich@wholisticpeaceinstitute.com or call him on his cell phone at 503-314-5955

Please RSVP to garyspanovich@wholisticpeaceinstitute.com by March 20th.

Copies of the Book of Gentleness will be available for purchase at \$10