

The Link

First Congregational
United Church of Christ
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Volume 36 No. 13

God is Still Speaking,

July 8 , 2014

A Divine Summer

Dear Church Family,

In a poem, Walt Whitman once wrote, “As to me I know of nothing else but miracles.” Whitman then proceeds to enumerate miracles found in places as diverse as Manhattan streets and shoreline beaches. He sees miracles everywhere from the work of honeybees on a summer afternoon to “the exquisite delicate thin curve of the new moon in spring.” Whitman summarizes his thoughts in declaring:

To me every hour of the light and dark is a miracle,
Every cubic inch of space is a miracle,
Every square yard of the surface of the earth is spread with the same.

Whitman spoke of miracles in conveying a sense of gratitude for the divine gifts that greet us everyday. In the spirit of Walt Whitman, this upcoming Sunday four members of our church will help us to see and recognize the gifts of the summer season. More specifically, they will be speaking on the theme “God Made the Summer.” Andy Allensworth, Jerry Mathis, Cheryl Lowe and Jeff Schnabel will each share a reflection on special summertime memories and moments that inspire them to give thanks to God. This week I invite you to reflect upon your own summer experiences. Which ones fill your heart with gladness and gratitude? Which ones jump onto our list of miracles and gifts from God?

Your brother in Christ,

Pastor Brooks

WORSHIP IN JULY

REMEMBERING OUR FAMILY IN PRAYER

July 13, 2014

Summer of Gratitude: Property and Finance

10 a.m. Worship Service. Andy Allensworth, Jerry Mathis, Cheryl Lowe and Jeff Schnabel speaking. Infant and Toddler Care available.

Worship Volunteers:

Greeters: Virginia Dunbar and Joanie Nelson
Worship Leader: David Harrington
Ushers: Carol Pendergraft, Dwight Chapman
Darrell and Shirley Brandenburg

July 20, 2014

Summer of Gratitude : Pastoral Relations

10 a.m. Worship Service. Rev. John Boonstra, preaching. Infant and Toddler Care available.

Worship Volunteers:

Greeters: Kaye Kipp and Dorothy Mathews
Worship Leader: Sue Benson
Ushers: Ken Rowe, Cory Saum-Blystone
Mike King, Duke Charpentier

July 27, 2014

Summer of Gratitude :Communications

10 a.m. Worship Service.
Infant and Toddler Care available.

Worship Volunteers:

Greeters: Leslie, Dwight and Opal Chapman
Worship Leader: Harriet Anani
Ushers: David Macko and David Harrington
Tom Renner

All Church Picnic at Hazel Dell Park Immediately following worship

Join the Fun...

Contributed by Susan Ross

...at our Annual Summer Picnic following services on July 27th at Hazel Dell Park.

We'll have good fellowship, good food, and good fun. Games for the young and young at heart. Sign-up sheets are in the narthex for you to choose from Hot Dogs, Brats, or Polish Sausages. Gluten free items will be available. Bring your favorite side dish or dessert to share. If you are interested in helping coordinate the picnic, please contact Susan Ross or Claudia Martin. See you there!

Women's Breakfast Group

All women of the church are invited to celebrate sisterhood, fellowship and friendship when the **Women's Breakfast Group** meets at 9:30 a.m. this Saturday, July 12th, at the Red Lion Inn at the Quay.

Prayer requests for:

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

CONTINUING PRAYER
REQUESTS FOR:

Farley Maxwell
Joan Blair
Nancy Phelps
Gloria Ross
Virginia Ebersole
Peggy Hilliard

UPCOMING PUBLICATION DATES FOR "The Link"

Link Deadline

July 20, 2014

Link Mailed

July 22, 2014

Link Deadline

August 10, 2014

Link Mailed

August 12, 2014

VBS

AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UCC

We are super excited to offer the VBS "Workshop of Wonders" in a new format this year. VBS starts on Thursday night with an intergenerational dinner, and then on Friday the children return for a full day of VBS.

- **Thursday Night: 6 pm -8 pm.**
Intergenerational supper and activities. Bring a side-dish. (We are providing hot dogs.) Donations accepted to offset cost of hot dogs.
- **Friday: 9 am-4 pm.** Children in grades Kindergarten thru 8th. Bring a sack lunch and a water bottle. \$15 VBS fee.
- **Please register for both days at <http://2014.cokesburyvbs.com/firstcongregationaluccvancouver> so we know who to expect for what is sure to be a fun event! If you have questions, please call Kristina at (360) 635-1075 or email her at kristina@vanucc.org. Thanks!**



We Read Summer Books 2014 Prophetic Action

Our Prophetic Action task force is recommending two books for your summer reading pleasure. One is a recent best seller, and the other is a classic.

Flight Behavior by Barbara Kingsolver. In what may be the first novel to realistically imagine the near-term impact of “global weirding,” Barbara Kingsolver sets her latest story in rural Appalachia. In fictional Feathertown, Tennessee, Dellarobia Turnbow--on the run from her stifling life--charges up the mountain above her husband’s family farm and stumbles onto a “valley of fire” filled with millions of monarch butterflies. This vision is deemed miraculous by the town’s parishioners, then the international media. But when Ovid, a scientist who studies monarch behavior, sets up a lab on the Turnbow farm, he learns that the butterflies’ presence signals systemic disorder--and Dellarobia’s in-laws’ logging plans won’t help. This book gracefully, urgently contributes to the dialogue of survival on this swiftly tilting planet. Available at your local bookstore or Amazon print or Kindle.

Silent Spring by Rachel Carson. This book was first published in September 1962, and the outcry that followed its publication forced the banning of DDT and spurred revolutionary changes in the laws affecting our air, land, and water. Carson’s passionate concern for the future of our planet reverberated powerfully throughout the world, and her eloquent book was instrumental in launching the environmental movement. It is without question one of the landmark books of the twentieth century. Available at your local bookstore or Amazon print or Kindle.

Kids - During the Summer...

...please remember to pick up your pouches before worship begins. That way, you’ll have them handy for the new token. Then, please hang them back up on the proper hook after worship.
Thanks - Kristina

Mission & Outreach Special Offering For July is



The Community of
Welcoming Congregations
Providing a Voice for LGBTQ & Allied People of Faith

The Community of Welcoming Congregations (CWC) engages in advocacy and education, providing resources to congregations & individuals. They have helped coordinate a public religious voice in support of lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, and transgender (LGBT) legislation in past years and will continue this important work. Over 100 different faith communities in SW Washington and Oregon comprise the CWC and our congregation is a member. CWC helped coordinate churches across Oregon during the campaign to win the freedom to marry and helped with our efforts in SW Washington in 2012.

To donate to this important work, write your check out to our church, but **designate “CWC” in the memo line** and place in the offering plate any Sunday in July.



SATURDAY IN THE PARK – JULY 12TH

VANCOUVER
PRIDE
CELEBRATION

Esther Short Park
11 AM – 5 PM

Saturday In the Park, Vancouver’s annual Pride celebration will take place on July 12th and is celebrating its 20th anniversary! Our church will once again have an informational booth at the event. A sign-up sheet for volunteers will be available in the narthex or you can contact Karen Kulm at 360-991-5774 or lk.kulm@gmail.com.

This is a fun, family friendly day in the park with entertainment, music and plenty of room for picnics with foods chosen from the adjacent Farmer’s Market. This is another chance to be a witness in our community for LGBT rights and for equality. Although we are grateful for the freedom to marry in Washington, and now Oregon, there is still much work to be done.



From Your Moderator:

One of my goals as church moderator this year is to provide communication to the congregation on what is going on with council, and the ministries and committees. Rather than only informing everyone at congregational meetings or when there are specific issues. I will keep you up to date via articles in The Link.

The Property & Finance committee has been active this spring. The education wing was re-roofed in June, including repair of siding over the entrance to the building. By the time this article is published, the exterior of the building will be prepared for power washing and then painted. A contract has been approved to replace the carpet in the upper and lower hallways, elevator, stairs, classrooms, choir room, Nettie Fries Lounge and the offices. The first phase of carpet replacement will start on July 14. The second phase will begin July 21st. All of these projects were made possible with the funds raised by the Capital Campaign. On the horizon, but not funded by capital campaign funds, is the remodeling of the front entrance to the Sanctuary. We have received a donation that will allow for the purchase of windows for the east, south and west side of "shed", moving the entrance to the south side and replace the rock that is currently in place with a hard surface.

The May financial report shows that we are still ahead of budget on income and below budget on expenditures, however that can change, particularly during July and August. As you may remember when the budget was approved, we announced that we would not ask for a supplemental pledge and would operate spending only what we had, and if necessary, we would "borrow" funds from reserve funds. As of this date we have not had to do that, but that doesn't mean that we won't have to at some point this year. Property & Finance will continue to study the budget and look for ways to save expenses and increase building rental use if possible.

Karen Kulm reported for Mission & Outreach, that the church was well represented at Portland Pride. Vancouver Saturday in the Park is on July 12 and the church will have a booth again this year. The Vancouver Peace Fair is on September 13th.

Communications will produce two portable A-Frame signs to be used on Sundays. One will be placed at the church entrance and will provide worship starting times and locations for our church and that will include Metropolitan Community Church which meets in in the Plymouth Room. The other will be placed at the intersection of Highway 99 and 68th St and will direct people to our church. The committee is also planning to look into a new church website design. Mike King, chairman, said that volunteer input is welcome.

Christian Education reports that Vacation Bible School will be held August 7 & 8. Sunday school Kick-off will be September 7, with the youth participating in the service that day.

Parish Life is planning the church picnic for July 27th after worship. The picnic will be held at the Hazel Dell Park, 2300 68th St., just east of the church. As has been previously announced, Daryl DeSilva and Marnie Wright are stepping down from the Liturgical Arts committee after many years of dedicated service. Parish Life is looking for two individuals to take on this responsibility.

The Diaconate will have a training session for all of its members for communication, visitations, dealing with loss and how to write cards. They are also re-working the prayer chain.

Membership reports that there are plans for a new member orientation and meeting in the fall.

Brooks will be on vacation the week of July 13 and a study leave the following week. Members of the congregation will conduct the church service on July 13th. On July 20th John Boonstra, recently the Pastor at White Salmon UCC and now doing environmental work, will preach.

Brooks and the Stewardship committee will be working on plans for launching the 2015 pledge campaign that will culminate in late November. A task force will be assembled, since the committee only has one member. (Anyone that would like to join this task force is welcome to do so, it isn't too late).

Darrell Brandenburg and Ed Frank are stepping down as coordinators of the Men's Breakfast, so we are looking for someone who will take on the responsibility of finding programs once a month on the third Saturday of every month (except July and August).

The next Council meeting will be July 24th at 7:00. I should also remind members that anyone who wishes to attend these meetings is welcome. If you have a particular agenda item that you would like to present to council, just let me know prior to the meeting.

Respectively submitted
Ken Rowe, Moderator

Despite being a Beatles fan, there are **not** 8 days in a week as indicated in the calendar in the last Link.
 Cut and paste does not always work!!! This is the real calendar as of this moment.

July 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 9:00 WW BRD 9:30 Bible Study PLY 6:30 CE CL2	2 10:30 Staff PLY 4:00 WW BRD	3 5:30 Conservation Grp. CL2 Sierra Club NFL 6:00 Planned Pthd NFL 6:30 Sierra Brd. CL2 7:30 Fireside PLY	4 Office Closed	5
6 Gratitude: Stewardship 10:00 Worship SAN 11 & 1 MCC PLY 4:30 Fireside PLY	7 Brooks Vacation Thru 21 7:00 Spirituality NFL 7:30 Fireside PLY	8 LINK 9:00 WW BRD	9 10:30 Staff PLY 4:00 WW BRD 7:00 PCUsers Brd NFL 7:00 Coal Free PLY	10 10:00 Prayer Shawl NFL 7:00 Membership CL2 7:30 Fireside PLY	11	12 9:30 Women's Bkfst Group Inn at the Quay
13 Gratitude: 10:00 Worship SAN 11 & 1 MCC PLY 4:30 Fireside PLY	14 7:30 Fireside PLY	15 9:00 WW BRD 6:30 PC Users BRD	16 10:30 Staff PLY 4:00 WW BRD	17 7:00 Eve. Book Club NFL 7:30 Fireside PLY	18	19
20 Gratitude: 10:00 Worship SAN 11 & 1 MCC PLY 4:30 Fireside PLY	21 7:00 Spirituality NFL 7:30 Fireside PLY	22 Brooks Back LINK 9:00 WW BRD 9:30 Bible Study PLY	23 Kathy Vacation 10:30 Staff PLY 4:00 WW BRD 6:00 P&F PLY	24 1:00 Art Group PLY 7:00 Council CL2 7:30 Fireside PLY	25	26 Wedding—Labyrinth
27 10:00 Worship SAN 11 & 1 MCC PLY All Church Picnic Hazel Dell Park 4:30 Fireside PLY	28 7:30 Fireside PLY	29 9:00 WW BRD 9:30 Bible Study PLY	30 10:30 Staff PLY 4:00 WW BRD	31 7:30 Fireside PLY		

Did You Hear the Organ on Sunday?

Submitted by Jeff Osborne, Chair, Organ Committee



Pastor Brooks blessed the new organ during Sunday's service and our organist, Dr. Christopher Schindler, used it frequently during the service.

Our new 3-keyboard Johannus Opus 370 organ was installed on July 1st by Mr. Tom Britanyak.

After a few weeks of experience with the sound we will work with Mr. Britanyak to make adjustments that will bring out more of the organ's potential for great music. Stay tuned...

Please direct any questions or comments to the Organ committee through me at jeffo@vanucc.org.