

The Link

First Congregational
United Church of Christ
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Volume 37 No.2

God is Still Speaking,

January 27, 2015

Does Your Mouth Ever Get You into Trouble?

Dear Church Family,

There are more than a few passages in the Bible that address the problems a mouth can cause. Psalm 141:3 declares, "Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips!" Yet, there are scriptures that realize how the mouth can be like the proverbial double-edged sword. In fact, Proverbs 12:18 declares, "Rash words are like sword thrusts, but the tongue of the wise brings healing." For our Lenten luncheon adult education series, we will focus on how our mouths can be instruments for the greater good of our relationships and our community. The title of this series is "Communication Rooted in Our Values." The subjects and the presenters for each Sunday will be as follows:

Sunday, February 22nd: *Non-Violent Communication 101*. Led by Kristina Martin, this session will feature a video clip that will introduce us to the philosophy and practices of Marshall Rosenberg, who pioneered the field of non-violent communication.

Sunday, March 1st: *Communicating with Children*. Led by Carole Greenauer, this session will present helpful tips for communicating with children in a way that reflects and embodies our values.

Sunday, March 8th: *Crucial Conversations between Grandparents and Adult Children*. Led by Alice Rowe, this session will focus on how to have conversations around important issues such as decisions related to housing, health care, loss of independence, etc.

Sunday, March 15th: *Healthy and Necessary Confrontation*. Led by myself, this session will consider how to have positive and constructive confrontations with others in our everyday lives.

Sunday, March 22nd: *Fostering and Sustaining Community*. Led by myself, this session will formally introduce a new document for our church entitled "Fostering and Sustaining Community." At its most recent meeting, the Council voted to include this document in our church's policies and procedures manual. It provides helpful guidelines for building community and addressing conflict in healthy ways.

Ultimately, our mouths can be more than instruments for good. They can be instruments of God's love. Ephesians 4:29 affirms that our mouths can give "grace to those who hear."

Your brother in Christ,

Pastor Brooks

WORSHIP IN FEBRUARY

February 1, 2015 COMMUNION

SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY

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:

Worship Leader:

Ushers: Rory Martindale and Trent Corey
Wayne and Doris Fletcher

February 08, 2015

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:

Worship Leader: Laurie Parafinczuk

Ushers: Carol Pendergraft, Dwight Chapman
Darrell and Shirley Brandenburg

LOVE IN LAS VEGAS!

Come on down to Bradford hall right after worship to celebrate love in its many forms with a fantastic buffet and high stakes excitement in the form of Bunco.

February 15, 2015

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:

Worship Leader: David Harrington

Ushers: Ken Rowe and Cory Saum-Blystone
Mike King

February 22, 2015

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. Adult Education in Bradford Hall following worship.

Worship Volunteers:

Greeters

Worship Leader: Joan Blair

Ushers: David Macko and David Harrington

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
Abigail Fazio
Gloria Ross
Verna Myers

UPCOMING PUBLICATION DATES FOR "The Link"

Link Deadline
Link Mailed

February 08, 2015
February 10, 2015

Christian Education and Lent

As a way of connecting all levels of religious education with the exciting Lenten Series, "*Communication Rooted in Our Values,*" **Bible Adventures will be held at the same time as Adult Education.** Children and their parents will gather for lunch in Bradford and then the children will attend Bible Adventures classes that emphasize communicating with one another in ways that reflect our values as Christians. During the traditional Bible Adventures time, children in grades 1-8 are welcome to stay in the service. Children from birth through preschool are welcome to visit the nursery.

Birthdays in February

February 3	David Macko
February 12	Gail Schmitt
February 12	Carole Greenauer
February 21	Simon Melton
February 25	Don Walter



Thank You

The family of Agnes Alexander thanks you all for your visits and cards during the past few months. Pastor Brooks was wonderful in his support of her and of me, as well. Thanks to Kathy Woolley for sharing a lovely goodbye note in the last Link. I am grateful for those of you who honored Agnes and supported her family by attending her memorial service in Portland. Special thanks to Pam Osborne for arranging car pools to help all who wished to be there to attend. I was blessed to be born into and to continue to be active at Vancouver First Congregational for over 51 years. This will always be my church and my church family, too.

Blessings, Ann Alexander Laskey

MISSION & OUTREACH FEBRUARY SPECIAL OFFERING IS Winter Hospitality Overflow Shelter (WHO)

In 2003, Council for the Homeless and Share partnered with the Greater Vancouver Interfaith Association to create the Winter Hospitality Overflow (WHO), a program committed to providing safe shelter during the winter months to families and individuals experiencing homelessness.

Our church will volunteer to staff the shelter March 1-7th (see related article). Even though WHO is a volunteer-driven program, the WHO incurs expenses for utilities, groceries, volunteer training materials, and salaries for professional case management staff.

Please consider giving generously to support this example of love in action by writing a check out to our church any Sunday in February and noting "WHO" in the memo line.

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., Saturday, February 14, at the Red Lion Inn at the Quay.



YOUR HELP NEEDED NOW

Sign up now for our WHO week March 1-7.

Once again we are partnering with our friends at Kol Ami. Volunteering is easy 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> **Make sure the calendar is on March** to find the shifts available during our shared week shifts, March 1-7.

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.

You can view the shift details and description before you sign up, but **sign up early** to get your preferred shift!

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

Ash Wednesday Dinner and Worship

Before our Ash Wednesday Service on February 18th, we will gather for a soup dinner in the Plymouth Room, the room on the first floor at the far end of the education wing. The dinner will begin at 5:45 pm. The Ash Wednesday service will begin at 6:30 pm. The service will feature an art display, a brief reflection period led by Pastor Brooks, special music, and the imposition of ashes upon the forehead.

IT'S TIME FOR A NEW PICTORIAL CHURCH DIRECTORY!

We are making appointments now for photos for our new church directory and hope everyone will be able to fit into the time schedule. The appointment dates are Thursday, February 19th from 1:00 pm to 8:30 pm, Friday, February 20th from 1:00 pm to 8:30 pm and Saturday, February 21st from 10:00 am to 5:30 pm. Each family will receive a complimentary professional 8 x 10 portrait and a copy of the new church directory.

After you are photographed, you will be able to view your images immediately and choose one for the directory. There will be an opportunity to purchase additional portraits if you wish, but there is no obligation to do so. Extended family members or friends are welcome to have a portrait taken even though they will not be in the directory. Also, you may include pets or props to make your photos more meaningful.

Our church will receive extra directories for our own use if people outside the church come for portraits, even if they don't make a purchase. They will also receive a free 8 x 10.

If you are unable to have your portrait taken, you may submit a photo of your own (in a vertical shape). Professionally taken photos cannot be used because of copyright laws, so we will need a photo taken with a digital camera that we can transmit to LifeTouch, the company that is doing our directory.

If you have a family member age 60 or older, all members of your group will receive a 20% discount on photo orders.

Joan Blair, Ellie Bradley and other helpers will be in the narthex after church each Sunday to facilitate the sign-ups.

Altar Flowers

A new year...a new chance to honor loved ones. A new flower chart has been hung in the narthex. Parish Life commission is now filling the chart for 2015. Please consider honoring a loved one, an anniversary, in memory of a family member or friend, or "just because celebration" by providing a bouquet or arrangement for Sunday worship services. Choose a date/s on the calendar, sign up and the reason for your donation. Honors will be included in the Sunday bulletins. Thank you!

Love In



Las Vegas

Mark your calendars for Sunday, February 8th! After worship, we will be doing things Vegas style! Before Valentine's Day, we will celebrate love in its many forms—from the budding love of new sweethearts to the enduring love of those long united in holy matrimony. Like Vegas, we will have a fabulous buffet. Like Vegas, we will have high stakes excitement in the form of bunco. And, finally, like Vegas, we will have Elvis! Elvis will be present to bless and renew vows. You won't want to miss it.

Mary Jo Ebel to Meet

Contributed by Connie Oppel

The Mary Jo Ebel Circle will meet in Bradford Hall Wednesday, February 18th at 10:30 a.m. The program will be a review of our church's 124 year history with emphasis on the women's involvement.

All women are invited to join us for a great review of the past. For more information, you may call Ruth Hammer, 360-574-7359 or Connie Oppel, 360-573-8997.

Be sure to watch for the next Link for more details and suggestions.

Thank You,
Connie

Souper Bowl Sunday, February 1

MAZI, our Youth Group, will be collecting non-perishable food and cash donations from now until February 1 for Souper Bowl Sunday. Donations may be brought to the narthex any time. All proceeds will benefit **Martha's Pantry**.

**Retreat on Hearing Your Still
Small Voice;
Saturday, February 7th; 9am to 3pm;
Nettie Fries Lounge**

Learn how to hear your still small voice within. Gary Spanovich assisted by his wife Nancy (Olmsted) will teach this workshop based on Gary's book: [A Book of Gentleness: Developing a Dialogue with God.](#) Donations of \$35-\$100 suggested and bring a pot luck dish to share for lunch. Gary brought Arun Gandhi to Portland a few weeks ago and to the UCC Church; Arun told Gary "Mahatma Gandhi spoke all the time about the Still Small Voice and devoted one full day of silence each week so he could hear it". Learn how to hear your own Still Small Voice, the inner Voice that both Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King spoke of. Meditation on the Still Small Voice within offers you a spiritual meditation and healing practice. No matter what religion or spiritual path you follow; this workshop will deepen your relationship with God. You will also learn how to listen; deep inside to hear your life purpose and to feel empowered to follow your unique path. Gary has taught for many years at Marylhurst University and he and Nancy are both oblates of Mt Angel Monastery in Oregon. For more information phone Gary at 503-314-5955; or email him at garyspanovich@wholisticpeaceinstitute.com

February 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Communion 10:00 Worship SAN 11:15 MAZI TRI 11&1 MCC PLY 4:30 Fireside PLY	2 6:00 VANUSA CL 7:00 Spirituality NFL 7:30 Fireside PLY	3 9:00 WW BRD 9:30 Bible St. PLY 10:30 Staff PLY 5:30 Conservation PLY 6:30 Sierra Board PLY 6:30 CE CL2	4 4:00 WW BRD 6:30 Tone Chimes CL2 7:00 Choir SAN	5 4:00 Pantry 6:00 Planned Pthrd NFL 7:30 Fireside PLY	6 11:00 Pantry	7
8 10:00 Worship SAN 10:20 Bible Adv CL 11&1 MCC PLY 4:30 Fireside PLY	9 1:00 Membership PLY 6:00 VANUSA CL 7:30 Fireside PLY	10 LINK 9:00 WW BRD 9:30 Bible St. PLY 10:45 Staff PLY 6:30 Parish Life NFL	11 4:00 WW BRD 6:30 Tone Chimes CL2 7:00 CoalFree PLY 7:00 PC Board NFL 7:00 Choir SAN	12 10:00 Prayer Shawl NFL 4:00 Pantry PLY 7:30 Fireside PLY	13 11:00 Pantry	14 9:30 Women's Bkfst Group Quay
15 10:00 Worship SAN 10:20 Bible Adv CL 11:00 MAZI TRI 11&1 MCC PLY 4:30 Fireside PLY	16 Office Closed for President's Day 6:00 VANUSA BRD 7:00 Spirituality NFL 7:30 Fireside PLY	17 9:00 WW BRD 9:30 Bible St. PLY 10:45 Staff PLY 6:30 PCUsers BRD	18 Ash Wednesday 10:30 Ebel Cir BRD 4:00 WW BRD 5:45 Supper PLY 6:30 Ash Wed. Service SAN 7:00 Choir SAN	19 1-8:30 Directory Photos NFL, CL2, CL4 4:00 Pantry 7:00 Book Club 7:30 Fireside PLY	20 11:00 Pantry 1:00—8:30 Directory Photos: NFL, CL2, CL4	21 9:30—11:30 CCMTA SAN 10:00—5:30 Photos NFL, CL2, CL4 2:00 Knuth Memorial SAN 6:00 May Event for Gambia BRD
22 1st Sunday in Lent 10:00 Worship SAN 11:00 Luncheon BRD 11:30 CE BRD & CL 11&1 MCC PLY 4:30 Fireside PLY	23 6:00 VANUSA BRD 7:30 Fireside PLY	24 LINK 9:00 WW BRD 9:30 Bible St. PLY 10:45 Staff PLY 7:00 Communications CL2	25 10:00 Book Club offsite 4:00 WW BRD 6:00 P&F PLY 6:30 Torme Chimes CL2 7:00 Choir SAN	26 Sierra Board BRD	27 11:00 Pantry	28

