

The Aftermath



THE LINK

**First Congregational
United Church of Christ**
(Temporary Location:
Congregation Kol Ami)
7800 NE 119th St.
360-693-1476
www.vanucc.org

Worship:
Sunday, 10:00 a.m.

Minister:
Rev. Jennifer Brownell
jennifer@vanucc.org

Christian Education:
Kristina Martin
kristina@vanucc.org

Office Administrator:
Kathy Woolley
kathy@vanucc.org

First Sunday, May 29—Children's time—Worship on the Labyrinth



***From
Darkness...
Light***



Closing Hymn: *We Shall Overcome*
May 29, 2016

From Our Pastor



I find it more difficult than usual to put words on the page for this, the first issue of the post-fire Link. In a way, I think it is because, on the one hand, so much has changed for us as a congregation. And on the other hand, worship and laughter and meetings and hard work and prayers and phone calls and paying bills and all the regular business of the church keeps humming along.

Well, when it's difficult to know what to say, it helps to start with the facts. So here they are. On Wednesday, May 25 we woke to the shocking news that the church building, so beloved to members of the congregation and also (I have come to learn) to many passersby and neighbors, was on fire. In the hours and days to come, we learned that the fire was the work of an arsonist, who also targeted Liberty Bible Church of the Nazarene and another, empty building. We grieved. We still grieve. We have been and we will be angry and bewildered. But that is not all we are.

Because this is also a fact. On Sunday during worship, Kristina Martin invited each of us to stand. As I looked out at the sea of faces, shining both from tears and smiles, I was amazed again, as I have been so often in these past two weeks, at the faithful resilience of this community of faith. I admire so very much the way you all rolled up your sleeves, and got about the unasked-for work that now needs doing and at the way that you have pulled together by this crisis rather than pulling apart. Maybe most remarkable of all have been the offers of support and prayers from the wider community and conference. Truly, the seeds of community involvement and care, planted by many generations of church members, leaders and pastors, are now bearing wonderfully life-giving fruit.

One of those fruits has been a renewed relationship with Congregation Kol Ami. While the steeple still burned, I heard from Rabbi Elizabeth Dunsker who, along with her board and congregation, offered space to hold both worship and offices, so that both the prayer life and the business life of the church could continue uninterrupted. We are so blessed to have this place to land for the summer, while we work toward next steps.

Throughout the summer, we have contracted for use of the social hall for worship all day on Sunday so that we can not only hold worship, but we can also have share meetings, parties, potlucks and a new summer offering, Messy Church. Office space has also been provided. In addition to desks and storage, there are also two meeting areas in the offices that are available 24/7 for gatherings of church members. Feel free to connect with Kathy to schedule use of those meeting areas.

Sharing space also comes with some opportunities to share in learning about the Jewish faith of our partners. I hope there will be many more opportunities for learning and growing in the days and weeks to come. Congregation Kol Ami keeps kosher in the entire building. In practical terms, this means that we will refrain from bringing pork, shellfish and dishes containing mixed meat and dairy into the building.

But kosher is more than a set of rules. It is primarily a spiritual practice, one that is meant to remind Jews of God's law and presence in creation not only during times of designated worship, but every-day – even in the most mundane acts of eating. Even if you do not choose to keep kosher in the rest of your life while we are guests of Congregation Kol Ami, I invite you to consider the presence of the still-speaking God in the food you prepare and eat during this summer.

I am grateful and honored to be on this journey with you.

Blessings,
Jennifer



Sunday, June 26
Wedding Remembrance Day.

On this day, we will celebrate couples who have married at First Congregational UCC, Vancouver, as we also rejoice in the freedom of all to marry. No matter where you were married, please bring your wedding pictures to share in worship that day.

Congratulations to our Graduates
Katherine Anne Walter

Katherine Anne Walter, daughter of Kent and Gillian Walter and granddaughter of Don and Judy Walter, will graduate from Mount Lake Terrace High School in Mount Lake Terrace, WA on June 17th. Katherine will attend Seattle Pacific University in the fall and has signed a Letter of Intent to be on the cross-country team. She is the recipient of several scholarships. She plans to major in business/accounting.

Amanda Slocum

Amanda Slocum, daughter of John and Margaret Slocum and granddaughter of Irma Slocum has earned her Doctor of Veterinary Medicine.

Sterling Roberts

Our very own Choir Director, Sterling Roberts received his Masters in Choral Conducting from Portland State University. He is now pursuing his second Masters in Music Education.

Worship in June

June 12, 2016

Worship on the Labyrinth

10 a.m. Worship Service Rev. Jennifer Brownell preaching.
Infant and Toddler Care available.

Greeters: Ken and Alice Rowe

Worship Leader: Leslie Chapman

**Ushers: Carol Pendergraft, Dwight Chapman
Darrell and Shirley Brandenburg**

June 19, 2016 Father's Day

Worship at Congregation Kol Ami

7800 NE 119th Street

Vancouver, WA 98662

10 a.m. Worship Service. Rev. Jennifer Brownell preaching
Infant and Toddler Care available.

Greeters:

Worship Leader: Linda Wear

**Ushers: Ken Rowe and Cory Saum-Blystone
Mike King and Ray Jones**

June 26, 2016

Worship at Congregation Kol Ami

7800 NE 119th Street

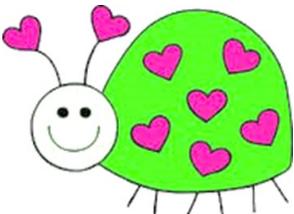
Vancouver, WA 98662

10 a.m. Worship Service. Rev. Jennifer Brownell preaching
Infant and Toddler Care available.

Greeters:

Worship Leader: Jean Beary-Stolle

**Ushers: Doraine Kohler and Diane Ullom
Sue Rush and Tom Renner**



Sunday School Over the Summer From Kristina Martin

Families of 1st Congregational - because our wonderful volunteers get the summer off from teaching Sunday school, children have a few options over the summer. The nursery is available for our youngest children. Older children may either stay in the sanctuary with their families, or they may quietly color with Kristina and listen to the service with her. On communion Sundays, the children will come back into the sanctuary to take communion with their families. Summer is a great time to be a church together!



REMEMBERING OUR FAMILY IN PRAYER

Prayer requests for:

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

CONTINUING PRAYER REQUESTS FOR:

Joan Blair
Harriet Anani
Charlotte Warren
Josiah Renner

Happy Birthday Happy Birthday Happy Birthday

Birthdays in June

June 03	Bert Martin
June 04	Elias Martin
June 07	Claude Blair
June 12	Allison Schnabel
June 12	Emily Andrews
June 12	Cynthia McNally
June 12	Al Duvall
June 12	Virginia Dunbar
June 14	Rory Martindale
June 14	Sharon Kenoski
June 16	Wayne Kamp
June 18	Kimberly Lewis
June 19	JoAnn Kersavage
June 20	Marcie Ramberg
June 28	Haydn Chapman

Happy Birthday Happy Birthday Happy Birthday

Happy Birthday Happy Birthday Happy Birthday



Happy Birthday Happy Birthday Happy Birthday

A Visit from and Dear Friend

On Sunday, April 24, former member and long time friend of this church, John (Atsushi) Kageyama visited. Besides renewing friendships, he was seeking information about this church's women's activities to take back to his church in Osaka, Japan. Special thanks to these people who helped: Joan Blair for serving coffee and providing snacks, plates, and cups, Nancy Fite for snacks, Laurie Parafinczuk for snacks and the Columbian article, and Pastor Jennifer for including John in her sermon.

Participating in the discussion were Opal Chapman, John and Nancy Fite, Arlene Arnold, Gay Angelo, Wayne and Doris Fletcher, Ruth Hammer, Karen Owen, Jo Ann Kersavage, and Connie Oppel. At the end of the meeting, John was presented two prayer shawls knitted by Mary Ellis Hannon to give to his wife Emiko.

**Do You Know?
by Shirl Zent**



Messy Church is a Thing!

This summer, CE and Pastor Jennifer is excited to worship with you in new and exciting ways! Please come to church and experience MESSY CHURCH in August. We will meet on August 7, 14, and 21st from 5:00 until 6:30 pm. These services will be designed for all ages and will end with a shared meal. Just think, you can still golf in the morning and worship that night! What a great, albeit messy idea!

**From Kathy Woolley
A Bit Bittersweet**

This edition of *The Link* was on my computer and supposed to go out on May 24th. I was asked to delay it a day for one more article.

May it be a testament to our past
and to our future!

With Love and Pride
Kathy

About forty years ago our church was part of the Washington/North Idaho Conference. To go to a Conference was across our state, either to the east or the north, or to Idaho. I remember two such meetings vividly. I was impressed with the hymn singing...mostly deep male voices. Mostly men pastors and men attending the conference. It stuck with me. One of the conferences I attended was in Walla Walla and I traveled with Laura Emerson and two of our youth, Margie New and Ken Graham. We were almost to Umatilla Oregon when we met up with a steer who had wandered onto the highway. Our car was totaled but fortunately no one in the car was injured. However, the steer did not fare so well and did not survive. The State Patrol took us and our luggage to a café in Umatilla. We parked parallel to the road in front of the café and as the officer opened his door a semi zipped by and the suction ripped off the door of the patrol car! So...in less than an hour we had our names on two police accident reports. A man in the café offered to take us to Walla Walla (for a nominal fee) and we attended the conference for the rest of the weekend. A good Samaritan attending the conference took us to Portland where our families collected us.

Another year, another conference, this one in Seattle. Our delegation had decided that we would take in a play or a musical in the big city before we returned to Vancouver, we decided to go see HAIR. The music was outstanding, the play up to date about protesting the war and energetic. We had great seats, main floor, right in the middle section. Center. Pastor Bill Graham was seated immediately to my left. On the stage, singers, dancers, big number, it may have been Aquarius and then I realized this was not the best musical to be attending when you are with your minister and your church friends. Enough said...just ask me if you want further information!

Do You Know" is a monthly column of First Congregational remembrances and history provided by Shirl Zent.

Babies in Need



The Baby Shower for Babies in Need has been postponed until the Fall. Stay tuned for more information.

A Note from Dorothy Mathews

Hi All!

I miss all of you so much. I am attending the Holy Cross Lutheran Church here in Salem and am singing in the choir. I don't have my car any more so I go where the bus from the home takes me...but my heart is there in Vancouver every Sunday.

Dorothy

**Congregational Meeting
Scheduled for June 12.**

We will be holding an informational Congregational Meeting this Sunday, June 12th on the Labyrinth. John Greenauer, who will be overseeing the restoration of our building, will be talking about where we are, where we're going and when we might be there.

An Open Letter from Sue Benson

Dear Carole and Adina,

I am so grateful. I took the Bible 101 class because through Adina I learned the two of you were including the historical perspective of when the bible was written, and Marvin was interested in taking the class with me. After the first class, I was ready to quit as it was way over my head. We did biblical research and bought and used the Harper Collins Study Bible - New Revised Standard Version in order to review the Biblical text analysis. Coming from a Catholic background, growing up I did not read the Bible or study it. I went to Catholic school where we attended daily mass most years. In the Mass, scripture is read throughout within the different parts of the Mass and the scripture changes as the day of the week and the calendar changes.

As an adult I have read the Bible twice from stem to stern and yet so much I did not understand. I never knew the Bible was a library of ancient writings with many authors or as a record of faith or of people's search for God. Now having taken your class it seems to me my New Revised Standard version of the Bible with apocrypha seems to be more of a "community" of believers than the New Jerusalem version. It made more sense. I appreciated learning from the perspectives of theologians like John Dominic Crossan, Marcus Borg and Elaine Pagels.

I did know the Bible was a source of strength and courage, and had been for centuries.

Marvin was shocked to learn that David and Solomon were not great or mighty kings. The movie of Mahalia Jackson singing "Joshua fit the battle of Jericho" at a Martin Luther King Jr rally showed me how the metaphorical meaning of biblical passages touches people.

From this class I have learned more of the Jewish understanding of Old Testament scriptures, that the Jews read the Bible metaphorically rather than literally. Jesus as a 1st century Jew must have had the Jewish perspective. The Jewish perspective with halakah (your behavior) and mitzvohs (helping someone joyfully and gratefully and that helping others helps us and that in it, God helps us) and Tzedekah (charity and giving with gratitude) has helped me understand what Jesus meant about living a good life. Just as the Jews believed you were to take halakah and apply it to every situation, so must I do the same.

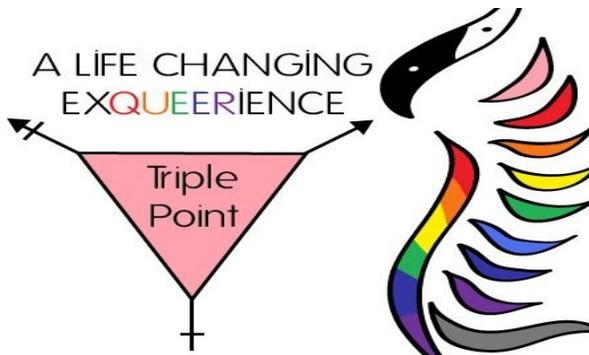
In praying our Lord's Prayer I now "think" 'basaleia' rather than kingdom. The word 'basaleia' means empire. It isn't just our church, it's our world. In the ancient world it was the Roman empire and it was different from the basaleia of God because the basaleia of God is all-inclusive and communal. In it, all people are truly equal and no one is marginalized. Because I am a child of the Light (God), I choose to walk in the Light and live in God's world empire.

I was surprised to learn about the Gospel of Thomas. Had the Gospel of Thomas had been included in the Bible, Christian theology would have developed differently. To Thomas, we are all children of the light. Matthew, Mark and Luke do not refer to the "Trinity." The Gospel of John is the only one with references to the Trinity.

In closing, after this year in your class my next reading of the Bible will be more devotional. And as such I will create an altar and begin my study of the bible by offering a **centering prayer**, prior to **reading** the chapter. I will **reflect** based on what I have learned from annotated information and finally I will **journal**. After all the point to studying scripture is to connect with God rather than to finish reading the bible within a specific period of time.

I have learned many points that I will ponder.

In gratitude,
Sue Benson



**Mission & Outreach June Special Offering
Triple Point Youth Group**

Triple Point is a local youth group for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, questioning, and straight ally youth, ages 13-18 years old. They provide a safe space, support, education, information, and referral services through Children's Home Society of Washington (CHSW.) Triple Point also provides youth with a meal and structured activities during each meeting. The Vancouver chapter currently meets at the CHSW building at 1112 Columbia St, downtown Vancouver, but they are in the process of planning and fundraising for their own building. We have supported these wonderful youth for a number of years, and now our support is even more vital as bullying has increased due to an upsurge in homophobic and transphobic rhetoric in the media.

Please consider making a donation to this wonderful group of youth by writing a check to our church and noting "Triple Point" in the memo line.

No Pride Without YOU!

Join the churches of the Central Pacific Conference UCC as we show an extravagant welcome during the Portland Pride Festival June 18-19. Sign up here to help at our UCC booth G – 3 near the Pine St. festival entrance at Waterfront Park.

To sign up to volunteer at our festival booth, go to Volunteer Spot: <http://vols.pt/dwJSxK>

Join us for the parade on Sunday, June 19th. Step off time for the parade is 11AM, Line-up is in the North Park Blocks. Join the fun and help carry our church banner! We will have two vehicles in the parade, so limited seating for those unable to walk is available. Please contact Karen Kulm at lk.kulm@gmail.com if you have any questions.



Going Forward



At the emergency Church Council meeting held on June 5th, we began the process of dealing with the chaos from the fire and deciding how to ensure that the congregation is kept abreast of everything. These are the new Task Forces formed to make this happen **Restoration and Building Oversight:** John Greenauer, *Chair*, Sharie Lewis, Joan Blair, Ken Rowe, Bert Martin, Rory Martindale, Richard Trefren, Arlene Arnold and Karen Kulm.

Media and Information: Leslie Chapman, Kathy Woolley and Rev. Jennifer. This committee will deal with the website, Facebook page, and *The Link*. *The Link* will go to a monthly full version sent electronically and mailed to those who do not use computers. There will also be weekly updates sent electronically with print copies available on Sundays. **Fundraising:** Linda Wear, Shirl Zent, Richard Trefren and hopefully Patty Yates and Virginia Dunbar. **Acknowledging Donations and Contributions:** Joan Blair and Jean Beary-Stolle will send notes to all recorded donors. **Relocation Search:** Alice Rowe and Kristina Martin are making headway in finding a place for us after August 31st. We cannot thank Congregation Kol Ami enough for providing a haven us during this transition time. **We are on our way!!!**

**Directions to Congregation Kol Ami
From First Congregational UCC**

East on 68th Street to St. Johns Rd.

Turn Left on St. Johns Rd.

go 2.96 mi.

Turn Left on to NE 72nd Ave to 119th St.

Turn Right on 119th St.

Kol Ami is on the left with a left turn from the median.

Large granite sign.

