

The Link

First Congregational
United Church of Christ
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Volume 38 No. 4

God is Still Speaking,

February 23, 2016



Lent, the 40 days before Easter, is a time for turning and returning toward God. Some of us engage in a special Lenten practice, such as a new prayer practice or fasting from some addictive aspect of life. Here at First Congregational United Church of Christ, the mandala is a symbol for our Lenten Journey of Discovery.

The word mandala comes from Sanskrit and means, loosely, “circle.” But it’s more than just a shape. The mandala represents spiritual wholeness and balance as well as physical beauty. The mandala symbolizes our turn and return to God, and to the balance that the Divine One desires for us, and to the wholeness and completeness that we find in God. Seeking the Divine, and returning to a place of balance and wholeness is the true purpose of all our Lenten practices, whatever they may be. You are invited to color one or more of the mandalas found in the narthex to add to our beautiful, growing tree at the front of the sanctuary. In this way, we will continue to see how our faith journeys are both very unique and completely connected.

I look forward to hearing your response to the coloring of your mandala. What about this practice brings you joy? What about it brings you closer to God? I look forward to hearing from you!

Blessings,

Pastor Jennifer

WORSHIP IN FEBRUARY and MARCH

February 28, 2016 Third Sunday in Lent

10 a.m. Worship Service. Rev. Jennifer Brownell, 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 Joan and Claude Blair

Worship Leader: Leslie Chapman

Ushers: Susan Rush, Diane Ullom and Tom Renner

Lenten Series:

How We Describe Ourselves in the Present

March

March 6, 2016 Communion

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

Worship Volunteers:

Greeters: Rory, Kristin and Olivia Martindale

Worship Leader: Jerry Mathis

Ushers: Rory Martindale and Trent Corey
Wayne and Doris Fletcher

Lenten Series:

Discovering Our Deepest Passions

March 13, 2016 Fifth Sunday in Lent

10 a.m. Worship Service. Rev. Jennifer Brownell, preaching. Infant and Toddler Care available. Christian Education for children 3 yrs. – Grade 7 following worship

Worship Volunteers:

Greeters: Ray and Patty Jones

Worship Leader: Tom Yates

Ushers: Carol Pendergraft, Dwight Chapman
Darrell and Shirley Brandenburg

Lenten Series:

Exploring the Deepest Hungers in our Community

March 20, 2016 Palm Sunday

10 a.m. Worship Service Rev. Jennifer Brownell, preaching. Infant and Toddler Care available. Christian Education for children 3 yrs. - Grade 7 following worship

Worship Volunteers:

Greeters: Doraine Kohler and Barbara Ahola

Worship Leader: Jean Beary-Stolle

Ushers: Ken Rowe, Chuck Foulke, Ray Jones

Lenten Series:

Connecting It All Together

March 27, 2016 Easter Sunday

10 a.m. Worship Service. Rev. Jennifer Brownell, preaching.. Infant and Toddler Care available. Christian Education for children 3 yrs. - Grade 7 following worship

Worship Volunteers:

Greeters: Gary and Laurie Parafinczuk

Worship Leader: Laurie Parafinczuk

Ushers: Sue Rush, Diane Ullom and 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:

Joan Blair

Nita Calvert

Cordelia McBride

Harriet Anani

Anne Kamp

Charlotte Warren

Sue Benson

Marvin Benson

Josiah Renner

(Deployed to Afghanistan)

UPCOMING PUBLICATION DATES FOR “*The Link*”

Link Deadline

Link Mailed

March 06, 2016

March 08, 2016

Birthdays in March

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

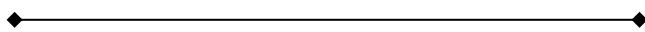


“A Not-New Car”

Contributed by Ellie Bradley

Daryl DeSilva is looking to buy a used car to replace her failing cr. She would like a 4-door, with room in the trunk or the back seat for her walker. It can be old and not pretty, but it needs to be dependable! Daryl can make a substantial down payment, followed by monthly payments. She would be grateful for a dependable car and would offer transportation to others who are without wheels.

If anyone has a car they would like to sell, or knows someone who has a car to sell, please call Daryl at 360-750-8519.



Mission and Outreach Focus For March:

One Great Hour of Sharing

Contributed by Joy Gerlitz

What is One Great Hour of Sharing?

One Great Hour of Sharing is the special mission offering that carries God's message of love and hope to people in crisis. The UCC works with international partners to provide sources of clean water, food, education and health care, small business micro-credit, advocacy resettlement for refugees and displaced persons, and emergency relief and rehabilitation. OGHS also supports domestic and international ministries for disaster preparedness and response.

Just two of examples: A sand Dam was built in Kenya to help provide water to a community. In Southeast Michigan, funds were given to help families rebuild homes after devastating floods hit the region. Here is the website for to explore for more information:
www.ucc.org/oghs

Thank you for your support.
Mission and Outreach Ministry



News from Your Search Committee

Contributed by Karen Kulm, Chair

Your Pastoral Search Committee has been meeting and we are busy completing our Congregational Profile. This is a 20 page document that will become the foundation to helping us find the right “match” for our congregation. All churches that are in the search process must complete this document and then it is placed on the UCC Search & Call website.

The whole congregation will be invited to participate in this process of describing the hopes and challenges of our church. We have already started this with our Lenten lunch activities on Sundays, so please join us for the rest of this series. We will also be doing some surveys (paper and on-line) and have opportunities for one to one conversations with Search Committee members.

All Search Committee members have made a commitment to confidentiality. Members must not share the names of individuals under consideration. Even to speak in generalities about location or experience or gender can risk folks guessing who candidates are and this could jeopardize candidate's current jobs. The Committee *will*, however, always keep you posted about where we are in the process.

Watch for a letter in your mailbox that explains the entire search process in more detail. We look forward to working with you in this process!

Please Join Us for a Newcomer's Dinner!

When: Sunday March 6, 2016

Where: Bradford Hall (Gathering Space on the Lower Level)

Time: 5-7pm

We'll enjoy a light meal and have sharing time, to get to know one another better. We will answer any questions you might have about our church.

- Please let us know if you have any if you have any food restrictions.***
- Childcare provided upon request***
- RSVP - Kathy Woolley in the Church Office By Wednesday March 2nd (360) 693-1476 kathy@vanucc.org***

SOUPER BOWL 2016

Since I began in 2008, I've been reporting 1st Congregational UCC Vancouver's totals to the national Souper Bowl organization. According to their database, 1st Congregational UCC Vancouver has donated over \$1,500, and 637 pounds of food. Well done Vancouver UCC!!! The highlights from the past 5 years' totals are:

2016: \$23.59 and 151 pounds
2015: \$195 and 62 pounds
2014: \$228 and 48 pounds
2013: \$155 and 100 pounds
2012 \$74 and 82 pounds

EASTER EGG HUNT

Please mark your calendar for an intergenerational Easter Egg hunt activity coming this Easter. It will be an all-ages activity so make sure to bring your best "hunting" skills on March 27, 2016 immediately following the service. If you happen to have empty egg cartons, please bring them to the office to provide homes for the eggs.

Thank You!

I would like to thank all those who donated money to **Vancouver Little League** in Jack English's name. You are greatly appreciated.

Marjorie English



Easter Sunday Memorials

Once again we will honor or remember your loved ones with an insert in the Easter Sunday bulletin and are suggesting a minimum donation of \$5.00 for each name on your list. Please place your requests in one of the white envelopes and leave it in the basket. Proceeds will benefit

All requests must be received by Monday, March 21st in order to be included in the bulletin.

LENTEN SERIES: 2/21-3/20

Contributed by Kristina Martin

Our first Lenten series was on Sunday, February 21st and began our discernment of who we are as a church.

The primary activity of last Sunday was the creation of a timeline for our church. We will continue our conversation and discernment throughout Lent so please join us for as many Sundays as you can. The data generated will become an integral component in our church's profile as we search for a new seated pastor.

March 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 9:00 WW 5:30 Conservation PLY 6:30 Sierra Board PLY	2 10:00 Bible 101 PLY 4:00 WW BRD 6:20 Tome Chimes CL2 7:00 Choir SAN 7:00 Bible 101 PLY	3 4:00 Pantry 6:00 Planned Pthd NFL 7:30 Fireside PLY	4 10:00 Pantry	5 8:00 Samoan Adventist
6 WHO Communion 10:00 Worship 11 & 1 MCC PLY 11:00 Lenten Series 4:30 Fireside PLY	7 6:30 VANUSA BRD 7:00 Spirituality NFL 7:30 Fireside PLY BRD	8 9:00 WW BRD 10:00 Membership PLY 6:30 CE CL2 6:30 Parish Life NFL	9 10:00 Bible 101 PLY 4:00 WW BRD 6:20 Tome Chimes CL2 7:00 Choir SAN 7:00 Bible 101 PLY	10 10:00 Prayer Shawl 4:00 Pantry NFL 7:30 Fireside PLY	11 10:00 Pantry	12 8:00 Samoan Adventist 8:30 CCMTA SAN 9:30 Women's Bkfst At the Peachtree
13 14 10:00 Worship 10:20 FP Sunday Sch. Classrooms 11 & 1 MCC PLY 11:00 Lent Series BRD 4:30 Fireside PLY	14 6:30 VANUSA BRD 7:30 Fireside PLY	15 9 & 1 Mediation CL2 9:00 WW BRD 9:30 CCMTA NFL 7:00 Diaconate NFL	16 10:00 Bible 101 PLY 1:00 Ebel Circle 4:00 WW BRD 6:00 P&F PLY 6:20 Tome Chimes CL2 7:00 Choir SAN 7:00 Bible 101 PLY	17 9:00 Mediation CL2 4:00 Pantry 6:00 M&O NFL 7:30 Fireside PLY	18 10:00 Pantry	19 8:00 Samoan Adventist
20 Palm Sunday 10:00 Worship 10:20 FP Sunday Sch. Classrooms 11 & 1 MCC PLY 4:30 Fireside PLY	21 6:30 VANUSA BRD 7:00 Spirituality NFL 7:30 Fireside PLY	22 9:00 WW BRD	23 10:00 Bible 101 PLY 4:00 WW BRD 6:20 Tome Chimes CL2 7:00 Choir SAN 7:00 Bible 101 PLY	24 Lamb dinner Prep All day in BRD 1:00 Art Groups PLY 4:00 Pantry 5:30 Lamb Dinner BRD 7:00 Maundy Thurs service SAN 7:30 Fireside PLY	25 10:00 Pantry	26 8:00 Samoan Adventist
27 Easter 10:00 Worship 10:20 FP Sunday Sch. Classrooms 11:00 Easter Egg Hunt 11 & 1 MCC PLY 4:30 Fireside PLY	28 6:30 VANUSA BRD 7:00 Personnel NFL 7:30 Fireside PLY	29 9:00 WW BRD	30 10:00 Bible 101 PLY 4:00 WW BRD 7:00 Choir SAN 7:00 Bible 101 PLY	31 10:30 Memorials PLY 4:00 Pantry 7:30 Fireside PLY		