

The Link

First Congregational
United Church of Christ
1220 NE 68th Street
Vancouver, WA 98665-0508
360.693.1476
Website: www.vancouverucc.org



Volume 38 No. 6

God is Still Speaking,

March 22, 2016

Holy Week Reflection

I hope you found Palm Sunday to be as energizing, inspiring and Spirit-filled day at First Congregational as I did! The music of Lewis River Dixie set a tone of celebration that could not be contained. We began with an opening parade led by the choir and crowds of children (25 or so kiddos *feels* like a crowd to us, anyway) and ended with spontaneous dancing in the aisle led by Marnie and a small group of young-at-heart members of the church. I imagine the joy we embodied mirrored the feelings of Jesus' followers on that first Palm Sunday long ago.

As Holy Week continues, we continue to live into the emotional experience of those long-ago disciples. This Thursday at 7:00 pm, our worship service will include a one-woman play in which Patty Yates will portray Mary Magdalene at the tomb of Jesus. In addition, we will share communion with one another and then end our time together in silence and darkness, as we enter into the bleak days of confusion and grief to come.

Then, on Easter, the mood changes yet again as we celebrate resurrection day, the day on which Christ rose from the dead. I look forward to another day of celebration and joy as we receive a new member into this community of faith, share special music and hear again the old story made new. Following the service, all ages are invited to a multi-generational egg hunt in Bradford Hall.

The ups and downs of Holy week can remind us of the ups and downs of our own lives. You are invited to hold the tenderness, grief, relief, confusion and joy of this week gently in your own heart. Without judging your own feelings, notice how you respond to certain themes in our times together this week. If possible, create extra moments in which to pray, to sit with the many moods of this week, and to connect with your community of faith.

Peace,
Jennifer

Staying in touch

The Communications team, deacons, council and several other teams – as well as the staff- have been kicking around ideas for making our communications with each other more timely, efficient, cost-effective and wide-reaching. In May, we will be rolling out a new, monthly Link, perhaps with more pages, as well as a weekly email contact. If you have an updated email, please make sure that the office has it, so that we can be in touch with one another about all that is happening in our church life.

WORSHIP IN MARCH AND APRIL

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: Dwight, Opal and Haydn Chapman
Worship Leader: Jean Beary-Stolle
Ushers: Sue Rush, Diane Ullom
Tom Renner and Doraine Kohler

APRIL

April 3, 2016

10 a.m. Worship Service. Rev. Jennifer Brownell preaching. Infant and Toddler Care available. 10:20 a.m. Youth Group Meets at 11:30 a.m.

Worship Volunteers:

Greeters:
Worship Leader: John Fite
Ushers: Rory Martindale and Trent Corey
Wayne and Doris Fletcher

April 10, 2016

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: Pam Osborne
Ushers: Carol Pendergraft, Dwight Chapman
Darrell and Shirley Brandenburg

April 17, 2016

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: Bert Martin
Ushers: Ken Rowe and Cory Saum-Blystone
Ray Jones and Chuck Foulke

April 24, 2016

10 a.m. Worship Service. Special Choir Service. Infant and Toddler Care available. 10:20 a.m.: Christian Education for children 3 yrs. - Grade 7.

Worship Volunteers:

Greeters:
Worship Leader: Dwight Chapman
Ushers: Susan Rush and Doraine Kohler
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
Harriet Anani
Charlotte Warren
Josiah Renner
(Deployed to Afghanistan)

UPCOMING PUBLICATION DATES FOR *"The Link"*

<u>Link Deadline</u>	<u>April 10, 2016</u>
<u>Link Mailed</u>	<u>April 12, 2016</u>

Birthdays in April

April 3	Trent Corey
April 5	Patti Jones
April 13	Shirl Zent
April 19	Leslie Chapman
April 22	Anne McNally
April 30	Megan Bowen





All Ages Easter Egg Hunt!

Please plan on participating in an all-ages Easter Egg hunt immediately following our Easter service. In honor of our church's 125 years, church staff will be hiding 125 Easter eggs throughout the church (with the exception of the Plymouth Room and other areas used by Martha's Pantry and the MCC on Sundays). Inside each egg is a numbered slip - please write your name on the slip and stick it on the coordinating number on the timeline down in Bradford Hall. We may be 125 years old, but the Easter joy is still brand new in our hearts! Many, many thanks to Diane Ullom for filling and organizing all the Easter Eggs.

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

Do You Know?

A Time for Memories by Shirl Zent

Easter time brings us some lovely memories, especially regarding flowers. A long time tradition is the wreath we create and hang on the cross on Easter morning. The flowers are from our yards and colors and varieties of flowers is incredible-beautiful-pleasing.

When Farley Maxwell was pastor here, we did not put Easter lilies on the altar because he was allergic to them. Would you believe we have the same situation this year with Pastor Jennifer who is also allergic to lilies and probably many of this other flowers in the wreath?

A great memory for many of us is the time we got ready for our Palm Sunday processional and had a special guest! As we gathered in the narthex, Loren Kersavage appeared dressed in appropriate biblical garb and riding on a live donkey. They went up the center aisle and were the highlight of the day. Unfortunately, none of us can remember how Loren and the donkey got back down the aisle, we can only assume it was down one of the side aisles. No one seems to remember what year.

As a reminder, I need your memories. Please send them to me as soon as you can. Don't remember dates? Get as close as you can. I really need your help!



Uke Lessons

WOULD YOU LIKE TO LEARN TO PLAY THE UKULELE? I have had several people voice an interest in learning to play the ukulele and I would love to teach a beginning ukulele class. Playing the uke is so much fun and it is easy to learn. In no time you will be playing tunes and singing along. If your not a singer, that's okay because we will also learn how to play melodies. If you are interested, please call or email me. Claudia Martin: 360-624-0038, bemcrruth@gmail.com

Your Pastoral Search Committee

Contributed by Shirl Zent

This week we will meet 'the guys' who are members of the Search Committee.

Let's start with David Slocum who estimates his length of time as a part of this church at fifty-eight years. Dave's entire family was and is a big part of our church family. He is a marginally retired veterinarian and Dr. Dave's involvement with the homeless and with the Heifer Project is well known in our community. Dave sings in the choir and enjoys his work with the Diaconate.

Dave is married to Judy, is the father of David (Penny), and Molly (Adam) and dotes on his several grandchildren. He likes to ski, golf, garden and work on old cars and tractors. Dave is completely honest. When asked why he wanted to be on the Search Committee, he answered:

"I got tired of hearing myself complain about the previous pastor so I figured I should put my money where my mouth is!" How's that for honesty?

Now we'll move on to Tom Renner. Tom is a retired RN. He is single, the father of six, and grandfather of 18. He has been a part of our church for six years and is currently a member of the Property and Finance Ministry. Tom likes to collect and restore trucks. He also likes camping, wine tours, pub crawls and gathering with family and friends. He wanted to become a part of the Search Committee so he could have a part in getting the best possible Pastor for us.

Jeff Schnabel has been here for four years. He is married to Cindy and has daughters Emma and Allison. Emma has captured our hearts with her wonderful vocal solos. Jeff is a Stormwater Infrastructure Manager for Clark County. He says his position oversees Capital planning, inventory, inspection and maintenance of public storm systems.

Jeff is a member of Property and Finance and some of his favorite activities are spending time with family, traveling, golf, gardening, camping and fishing. He wanted to be on the Search Committee so he could have a chance to give back and support the church in its continued good works. He sees the UCC as a unique, progressive and vital voice in the community and his hope is to see our church continue to grow and expand its reach.

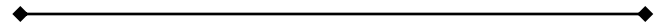


CAMP ADAMS CAMPER-SHIPS Mission & Outreach Special Offering for April

Camp Adams is a 210-acre, forested recreational retreat center located 35 miles south of Portland near Molalla. Camp Adams provides a spiritual haven from the hectic pace of everyday life. Many of you may have fond memories of summers spent at church camp and then finally becoming a counselor when you were older.

This year we would like to send as many youth as possible to the various youth camps throughout the summer. **Please consider making a donation to our camper-ship fund by writing "Camp Adams" in the memo line of your check and placing it in the offering plate throughout April.**

Registration for summer camp is now open, and you can contact Kristina Martin, CE Coordinator for more details.



Easter Flowers

With the spring-like weather we've been having, there should be flowers from your garden to bring to church on Easter Sunday to decorate the wreath for the cross. Please bring your flowers by 9:45 AM. This is a wonderful tradition!!

Thank You For Participating

As we enter Holy Week and our 40 days of Lent wind down, please accept my thanks for participating in the 5 weeks of the Lenten Series. Many of you participated all 5 weeks and your presence made the experience all the better. We finished the Lenten Series by making mandalas representing our visions for how we Journey Together and Discover the Future. I'll be hanging them in the Narthex for your viewing pleasure. In addition to the information Pastor Jennifer and I collected over the past 5 weeks, the Pastoral Search Committee created a survey they need each member and household to complete. Hard copies are in the office as well as the directions for completing it online.

During this holiest of weeks for us, I am reminded why I joined this church in 2005. It is here that we not only welcome everyone, but we invite others to journey into the future beside us. I am so grateful that of all the wonderful things we've done over the past 125 years, our most important accomplishment was to grow a community that looks toward the future more than the past. Here's to a bright future together!



Again this year we will be observing one of the most moving days in the liturgy of our church with a special service of Prayer and Meditation at 7:00 p.m., Thursday, March 24th.

The Choir will present the moving "Nocturn of Grace" from *Whispers of the Passion* by Joseph M. Martin and the meditative monologue, "The Night is for Hiding" by C. M. Tanner will be presented by Patty Yates.

Come share the Last Supper.



Dear Church Family,

Marvin and I are very grateful for all your caring prayers, the prayer shawl, concerned phone calls, cards, and gifts as Marvin and I prepared for his prostate surgery on February 3rd. Marvin's prostate may have gone to the dark side, however, having the lymph node pathology results come back negative for cancer was certainly good news.

I have had more than one mobility concern and after the right knee replacement in June, getting the cellulitis infection in January in my right leg (after dental work) was very worrisome. The treatment is for the leg to be elevated and the person is not to walk or bear weight on the affected side as it can lead to blood clots. Since I was already using the knee walker and not bearing any weight on the left leg I was in quite the predicament! I have never been able to stand on my hands nor walk on them! Your prayers were helpful and the infection cleared and I was given the okay to stop using the knee walker. I was ready and able to care for Marvin (and yes with the help from family and friends he was able to care for me!)

Since Marvin's surgery many of you know that our daughter Chelsea and her Korean husband Gihyeon came home to visit. I am certain your support and prayers offered us just what was needed as we were indeed ready for her visit and the wedding reception that we hosted on March the 5th.

Please know we daily give thanks for you!

With love, Marvin and Sue



Updates From Your Search Committee

Contributed by Karen Kulm, Chair

The search committee has been gathering information to complete our church profile by talking with the congregation and having our Lenten lunch small group sessions.

At the March 20th session, two all-church surveys were handed out for people to complete. Each family unit should complete one Family Survey, and each individual adult and youth should complete one Individual Survey. If you did not yet get a paper survey, copies are available in the narthex. If you are a member of this church or a regular visitor to this church, you can also go on-line to complete the surveys. Here are the links:

- Go here for the FAMILY SURVEY and complete one per household:
<https://survey.zohopublic.com/zs/iZDXrq>
- Go here for the INDIVIDUAL SURVEY and complete one for each adult and youth in your household:
<https://survey.zohopublic.com/zs/ABDX1D>

Note: complete the surveys by paper **OR** on-line. The surveys are anonymous, so please spend some time reflecting on your answers. Search committee members will continue to be available to take comments and questions from you. Your participation in the process is essential in order for us to find the right pastor for our congregation.

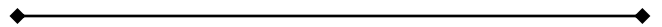


Dear Friends,

Spring is springing and that means it is time to start thinking about keeping our church grounds looking their most beautiful. Enjoy the great outdoors, work with friends, and create places of beauty when you sign up to help maintain one of our garden areas. A sign-up sheet is in the narthex.

In gratitude,

Ed Martin



Please change your directory

**Lynn Renner
Josiah Renner**
131 NE 76th Street
Vancouver, WA

HOLY WEEK



April 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 10:00 Pantry	2
3 Communion 10:00 Worship 11:15 MAZI TRI 11 & 1 MCC PLY 4:30 Fireside PLY	4 6:30 VANUSA B/O CLC, CL2, BRD, SAN 7:00 Spirituality NFL 7:30 Fireside PLY	5 9:00 WW 12:00 Mediation 5:30 Conservation PLY 6:30 Sierra Board PLY	6 10:00 Bible 101 PLY 4:00 WW BRD 7:00 Choir SAN 7:00 Bible 101 PLY	7 4:00 Pantry 6:00 Planned Pthd NFL 7:30 Fireside PLY	8 10:00 Pantry	9 8:00 Samoan Adventist 9:30 Women's Bkfst Group at the Peachtree
10 10:00 Worship 10:20 Sunday Sch CL 11 & 1 MCC PLY 4:30 Fireside PLY	11 Rev. Jennifer gone 6:30 VANUSA B/O CLC, CL2, BRD, SAN 7:30 Fireside PLY	12 LINK 9:00 WW 10:00 Membership PLY 6:30 Parish Life NFL	13 10:00 Bible 101 PLY 4:00 WW BRD 7:00 Choir SAN 7:00 Bible 101 PLY 7:00 Coal Free CLC	14 10:00 Prayer Shawl NFL 4:00 Pantry 7:30 Fireside PLY	15 10:00 Pantry	16 8:00 Samoan Adventist
17 10:00 Worship 10:20 Sunday Sch CL 11:15 MAZI TRI 11 & 1 MCC PLY 4:30 Fireside PLY	18 6:30 VANUSA B/O CLC, CL2, BRD, SAN 7:00 Spirituality NFL 7:30 Fireside PLY	19 9:00 WW 9:30 CCMTA NFL	20 10:00 Bible 101 PLY 1:00 Ebel Circle 4:00 WW BRD 7:00 Choir SAN 7:00 Bible 101 PLY	21 4:00 Pantry 6:00 M&O NFL 7:30 Fireside PLY	22 10:00 Pantry	23 8:00 Samoan Adventist
24 10:00 Worship 10:20 Sunday Sch CL 11 & 1 MCC PLY 4:30 Fireside PLY	25 6:30 VANUSA BRD 7:30 Fireside PLY	26 9:00 WW 4:00 WW BRD 6:00 P&F PLY 7:00 Choir SAN	27 10:00 Bible 101 PLY 4:00 WW BRD 6:00 P&F PLY 7:00 Choir SAN 7:00 Bible 101 PLY	28 10:00 Book Group 1:00 Art Groups 4:00 Pantry 7:00 Council CL2 7:30 Fireside PLY	29 10:00 Pantry	30 8:00 Samoan Adventist