



THE CIRCUIT RIDER

PORTLAND FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 1838 SW JEFFERSON, PORTLAND, OR 97201

the **E**dition

March 10, 2004
Volume 8, Issue 5

THIS SUNDAY

MARCH 14, 2004

10:30 am

Worship
in the
Sanctuary

Sermon

Lessons From the Garden

Children's Time

First UMC Youth

Special Music

*Sound Seekers
Veritas
juBELLation*

LENTEN SERIES

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 17

5:30 pm Soup & Salad Supper

6:15 pm This Gives Me Hope:
SERENA CRUZ

7:00 pm Lenten Classes

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24

5:30 pm Soup & Salad Supper

6:15 pm This Gives Me Hope:
KATHY OLIVER

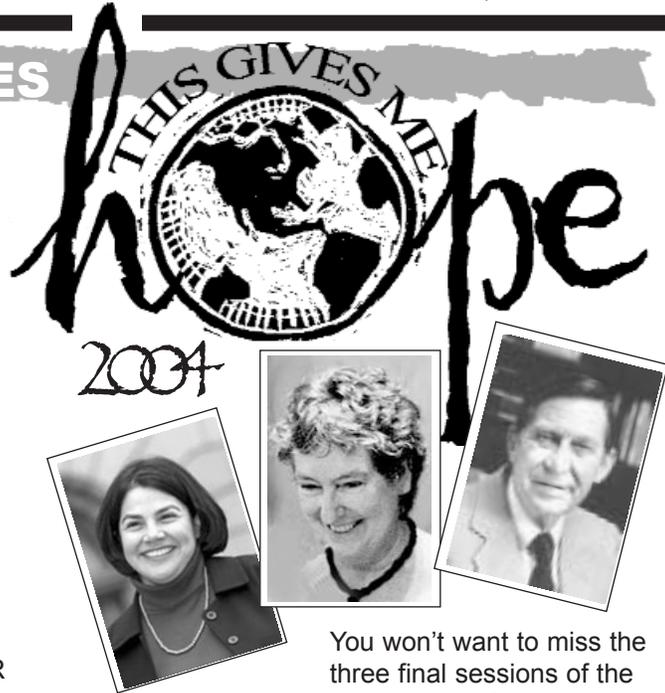
7:00 pm Lenten Classes

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 31

5:30 pm Soup & Salad Supper

6:15 pm This Gives Me Hope:
RABBI STAMPFER

7:00 pm Lenten Classes



You won't want to miss the three final sessions of the 2004 Lenten Series! Speaking on "This Gives Me Hope" will be **Serena Cruz** - Multnomah County Commissioner, **Kathy Oliver** - Outside In, and **Rabbi Joshua Stampfer**.

soup's on!

At 5:30 pm each Wednesday night during the Lenten Series, come to Collins Hall for a Soup Supper Buffet. The fellowship around tables is always "warming" too! There is a suggested \$5.00 donation for the meal.



The calendar below is an effort to keep you informed of the major events happening in the life of Portland First United Methodist Church. For a complete listing of activities at First Church, refer to our website at www.fumcpdx.org ...

Sunday, March 14

Youth Sunday

Wednesday, March 17

Church Lenten Supper

Saturday, March 20

**Columbia Symphony
Orchestra Concert with
First Church
Chancel Choir**

Wednesday, March 24

Church Lenten Supper

Wednesday, March 31

Church Lenten Supper

Thursday, April 08, 2004

Maundy Thursday Service

Friday, April 09, 2004

**Ecumenical Good Friday
Service at noon at
St. James Lutheran**

Sunday, April 11

Easter Worship at 9 & 11



Sunday, April 18

**The Discipline, the Church,
and Gay Marriage**

Sunday, May 23

Church Conference



memo

Rev. Dr. Arvin Luchs

Years ago a colleague observed, "Maturity is the ability to live with ambiguity." If that is true, this is a time that demands exceptional maturity. I am finding that clear answers are elusive-questions persist. Looking at the future there is more uncertainty than clarity. Perhaps that's always the way it is in moments of swift change. And that's what's happening these days.

Like restive magma, boiling, pushing and straining against it's earthen cap, the movement to remove legal barriers to marriage for same-sex couples seems to be erupting in communities large and small across our country--including our own. Some believe the momentum is unstoppable. Six couple in our congregation have already taken vows. For many of us it is a long overdue acknowledgment of basic human rights and dignity. For others, it is a deeply troubling change that augers the erosion of cherished values. And I ask, is this the bellwether of a new age of civility-or the harbinger of protracted conflict and acrimonious polarization?

My heart is touched and I celebrate with friends involved in deeply loving relationships who exuberantly embrace this never-dreamed-possible-day when they can be legally married. To witness any couples who, through tear-streaked eyes and trembling lips, offer their love and faithfulness "as long as we both shall live" is a tender, even sacred moment. For same-sex couples it demands an extraordinary courage. They face troubling questions: will they be able to grow old together in marriage-or will legal challenges prevail and their license be revoked? Will this day of joy dissolve into nights of despair?

I struggle with the responsibility to be a pastor to all the people in the parish. It is both a humbling duty and a precious trust to serve with you, to search with you for God's will, to laugh with you for joy, to weep with you in distress and to love you through it all. Brenda and I were ordained to do all in our power, with God's help, to provide support and counsel in such moments. Yet the same denomination, which set us to the task, appears to contradict its mandate by forbidding our pastoral care to some of our parishioners when they seek the covenant of marriage. We pray for that day when we will be able to fully participate in this important time in our parishioners' lives. I wonder: will the Spirit mediate change in United Methodism-or will the dissonance continue?

On this issue the people of Christ are deeply divided. Men and women of faith, open to discern the leading of the Spirit, have come to differing conclusions. I'm aware we do not all agree within this congregation--even, sometimes, within our own households. Tony Campolo, speaking last week to an audience in Portland, indicated that he and his wife differ--she supports and he opposes same sex marriages. It has pushed theologians to a core debate about the "authority" of the Bible: does the scripture contain "the Word of God" or is it, literally, "the words of God?" (to borrow a distinction from Marcus Borg [*The Heart of Christianity: Rediscovering a Life of Faith*, Harper San Francisco, 2003, p. 8]) Too often the debate has turned to name-calling and judgementalism. Attempts to build bridges of communication between brothers and sisters in faith too often degenerate into frustrating diatribe. I grieve: will we find both the patience and the words that enables us to dialogue and work together--or will the church-the body of Christ-be broken yet further?

The scriptures know about change. The Gospel is about God's reconciling love and about the in-breaking of God's reign. Jesus said none of us have a grasp of what the future will bring. (cf Mt 9:30, 11:37) He urged leaving it to God and living with trust in the present and not in anxiety about tomorrow (see Mt 6:25ff) The letter to the Hebrews says to be faithful is to accept that we must live hope and trust in God--not certainty. Good words for changing times.

See you in Church

Arvin

music

Jonas Nordwall



**Our Chancel
Choir to
perform with the
Columbia
Symphony
Orchestra on
Saturday,
March 20, 2004**

Saturday evening, March 20th is a very special musical evening at First UMC. The Columbia Symphony Orchestra has invited our Chancel Choir and First Presbyterian Church's Choir to combine for a performance of Franz Josef Haydn's *Mass in A Time of War*. Our Chancel Choir Director, Dr. Bruce Browne is the guest conductor for this work.

Composed during Napoleon's invasion of Vienna, this setting offers a very different, thought provoking approach to the mass text. It is also known as the *Paukenmesse* (Tympani Mass) as tympani are frequently heard.

The concert begins at 8 pm with a pre-concert lecture at 7:30pm. Specially discounted tickets for First UMC members and friends will be available

during coffee hour at the "Friends of Music" table. They will be available at the door the night of the performance at regular prices.

Also on the program is the familiar Beethoven First Symphony, conducted by John Trudeau, the CSO's conductor emeritus. This program is very listener friendly and a wonderful event to invite guests to attend.

Our Chancel Choir will be singing excerpts of the Mass throughout Lent during our Sunday services.

children

A Lenten Project

As a special Lenten Project the children of First UMC will be assisting the congregation in collecting school supplies for "School House Supplies," a non-profit organization that lets teachers "buy" supplies for their classroom without charge.

Each Sunday School class is doing something special to assist in this project: **The 2s, 3s, and 4s** will decorate boxes for collecting supplies in the narthex; **Kindergarten and the Second & Sixth Graders** will handwrite letters to church members asking for help; **First Graders** will make posters for the project to display in the church; **Third Graders** will hand out flyers on March 14 to remind the congregation about the project; **Fourth & Fifth Graders** will work at sorting and packing the supplies for delivery.

On April 9, children in the Third through Sixth Grade will be invited to work at School House Supplies from 10:00 am to noon. They will deliver supplies collected at First Church and start living their mission.

Agnes Zach,
Children's Ministry Coordinator

history & archives

Dr. Raymond E. Balcomb, History & Archives, Chair

More than fifty years ago, at our Centennial in 1948 to be exact, First Church inadvertently stirred up a little Methodist (we were not "United" then, apparently in more ways than one!) controversy here in Portland. We published some materials which said we were the "first" church to be founded in Portland. Our sister congregation in St. Johns took exception, and said they were the first. I looked into the whole thing as carefully as I could before (in an appendix to my book *Portland's First Church / Sesquicentennial History*) I laid out all the evidence and thought I demonstrated pretty conclusively that our claim in 1948 was correct.

I have continued to think about the matter (as I understand, have some people in St. John's Pioneer, which lists its pastors, gives a blanket term for the period "1846-53, Circuit Riders," as though that generic term could be used to cover persons unknown, who freelanced around the countryside. The fact is, however, that we *know by name* who the Methodist Circuit riders in Oregon were in that period, and we have Conference records which signify exactly where they were appointed. St. Johns nowhere appears on that. It was not uncommon for circuit riders to visit "preaching places" that weren't churches, to be sure, and therefore not named in the appointments and some of those places became churches. But the geography of the appointments in 1846-1850 implicitly includes the peninsula between the Willamette and Columbia Rivers where James John took up his homestead. For example, in 1848 there were four circuits: Oregon City, which included Clackamas and Portland; Salem; Yamhill; and Calapooia (both sides of the Willamette River, south of the Santiam and Rickreal rivers). Thus, any Methodist "circuit rider" who would have preached at St. Johns would have been the same one based in Oregon City but also preaching at Portland and Clackamas. In 1849 the circuits were Oregon City, Yamhill, Salem, Astoria and Clatsop, and "principal of the Oregon Institute" (the predecessor of Willamette University). You see what I mean.

adult Christian Education

For class descriptions and details, see the Adult Education brochure available in the Narthex.

SUNDAY, MARCH 14

- 9:00 am *Changing Christianity*,
Fireside Room
9:15 am *The Fellowship of Seekers*,
Room 134
6:30 pm *Choices for Sustainable Living*,
Rm 210

SUNDAY, MARCH 21

- 9:00 am *Changing Christianity*,
Fireside Room
9:15 am *The Fellowship of Seekers*,
Room 134
Interactive Study of Mark,
Room 160
6:30 pm *Choices for Sustainable Living*,
Rm 210

CHANGING CHRISTIANITY SPECIAL LECTURE Sunday, March 28

Changing Christianity will feature a special lecture on Sunday, March 28 at 9:00 am in the Fireside Room. Professor David A. Kerr, New College University of Edinburgh, Scotland will speak. Dr. Kerr is Director of the Center for Study of Christianity in the Non-Western World. His special expertise is Islam. For 18 years he was Director of the Hartford Theological Seminary, which was the principal place in the U.S. that brings Moslems and Christians together. His general topic will be: A Response to *Islam Crisis*, by Bernard Lewis. The class has recently study this book. All are invited to attend this special lecture

A SPECIAL LECTURE
Dr. Dick Rohrbaugh & Dr. John Elliot
Issues of Translating the Bible
Sunday, March 21 at 2:00 PM
First Presbyterian Church
1200 SW Alder, Portland

senior Adult Ministries

Senior Adult Ministries. All are welcome!
Information: Cheryl Luce at 503/228-3195.

A NIGHT AT THE BEACH & THEATER PARTY

Outstanding rates have been secured at The Elizabeth Street Inn on the beach in Newport for April 16 & 17—a lovely, comfortable place to stay. Each room faces the ocean, with a balcony and fireplace. The Porthole Players will be doing *Damn Yankees* at the Performing Arts Center, and excellent seats are reserved. Transportation details are being confirmed. Watch for details soon!
Time: Friday morning until Saturday afternoon. Cost: \$98 per person based on double occupancy. Cost includes: lodging, transportation, one lunch, one breakfast, one dinner, theater tickets and gratuities for the drivers. Register by March 21, 2004. There are still a few openings for this trip.

groups First Church Hikers

FUMC Hikers: celebrate the arrival of Spring with our first regular hike on Saturday, March 27th. We will be doing a five-mile round trip hike at Cape Falcon at Oswald West State Park on the Oregon Coast south of Cannon Beach. The hike features mammoth evergreens and spectacular ocean views with a good chance of sighting some whales! The group will meet in the church parking lot at 8AM to form carpools. Hikers should bring a sack lunch, snacks, water, comfortable hiking boots and dress appropriately for the spring coastal weather. The cost will be \$5-8 for the carpool and an optional snack stop on the way home. Please e-mail Paula Justice at jpaula354@aol.com or call her at 503/524-3737 to participate or if questions.

Monthly hikes will be held on the fourth Saturday of each month through October. Details for each hike will be published in the Circuit Rider prior to the hike.

umw United Methodist Women

The UMW Unit Meetings are held the first Wednesday of each month. Information: Trudy Kayser 503/292-7528 or Mary Covert 503/246-5603

MARCH 17

The Faith Guild will meet at 10:00 am in the Parlor. Hazel Wells will present the Exodus program from the 2003 School of Missions

The Ruth Guild will meet at noon in Room 204. Hazel Wells will present the Exodus program

MARCH 31

The UMW Executive Board will meet at 10:00 am in the Parlor

Circle of Friends will meet at 11:30 am in Room 204. The program will be the annual Baby Shower for FISH.

UMW WESTERN JURISDICTIONAL QUADRENNIAL MEETING

The UMW Western Jurisdictional Quadrennial Meeting will be March 12-14, 2004 in Oakland, CA. Dr. Joceyln Elders, former U.S. Surgeon General will be the keynote speaker. Ruth Green from First UMC will be attending.

metro Special Class Offered

The Revs. Minerva Carcano and Amy Overton-Harris will lead the "United Methodist Heritage" as a part of an Advanced Lay Speaking Class. It begins at 9:00 am and goes to 3:00 pm on April 3 and April 24. To find out more information about this class or to reserve your place contact: Steve Frantz at 503/777.7222 (day) or 503/556.2228 (evening). You can email Steve with your reservation at: sfrantz@yahoo.com.

learning to
speak the truth
in love



GOOSE HOLLOW FAMILY SHELTER TO EXTEND ITS SEASON

The Goose Hollow Shelter Board, First UMC, our interfaith partners, the Shelter volunteers and contributors have agreed to do more this year to help homeless families. The decision was made to extend our Shelter operations by one month. Goose Hollow Family Shelter has the support of the screening service, Guidelines, Inc. and the cooperation of the Salvation Army Harbor Light Day Shelter.

This extension of operations will require additional funds. We will need to pay for extended screenings services and a month of day shelter services. There will also be additional wages to the paid staff of the Shelter. This is a first step in moving toward the Goose Hollow Family Shelter operating year round. Thank you for your continued financial support of the Goose Hollow Family Shelter.

We congratulate **ELAINE JONES**, who was nominated by Legacy Visiting Nurses for 2004 Home Health Nurse of the Year.

JESSICA HALE is starring as the lead female role in the Madison High School play, *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*. Her sister, **ELISE HALE**, is also in the play. Performances are this Thursday through Saturday.

SARAH GOFF is in the vocal ensemble in St. Mary's Academy production of *Kiss Me Kate*. Performances are this Friday through Sunday.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG STORIES FROM 16 INSTITUTIONS

At the February Organizing Team meeting of Metropolitan Alliance for the Common Good delegates listened to stories on prescription drugs from our member institutions. While they were not surprised that the rising costs are a major issue for many of our families, listening to all of the stories turned knowledge into anger. "You can feel the anxiety and fear people in our institutions have over this issue just reading the stories," said E.V. Armitage, a leader from Central City Concern and MACG Co-Chair. "I was surprised by two things," said Stan Aschenbrenner, a leader from Lake Oswego United Methodist Church and MACG Co-Chair. "One, the incredibly high costs per month people are stretching themselves to pay, and second, the sheer number of different types of prescriptions individuals are taking."

A few of the patterns in the stories were high costs are making families choose between needed medications and other necessities - food, shelter, transportation; rising costs of drugs and co-pays are stretching senior citizens beyond their limits, often hampering their ability to contribute money to their congregations; the uninsured are hit the hardest, and many people mentioned the pressure they feel to do anything they can to keep their insurance because without it they could not afford medications. For example:

A single person with \$12,000 annual income has drugs costing \$250 /mo, with about half covered by insurance. Paying \$125 out of pocket is so hard, she/he considers stopping medication. But that would again lead to debilitating depression.

A 72 year old retired teacher with drug costs of \$400 / mo no longer can afford to live alone in her home.

A couple went to Canada to buy a year supply of four drugs and paid \$722, for what was costing \$1422 at Costco.

"Our next action is to bring our core teams together on March 25 to begin figuring out what the opportunities are for local actions that will alleviate the pressure our people feel about prescription drugs," says Valerie Chapman, pastoral administrator at St. Francis and MACG Co-Chair. "We need to imagine ways to both reduce costs and lower consumption." Core teams are asked to keep gathering these stories and their institution's health care story in preparation for the March 25th Core Teams Assembly. In addition to prescription drug stories, the Organizing Team approved the Health Care Dialogues proposal and the addition of Ron Williams (First United Methodist) as a new Co-Chair.

(Reprinted from the February 2004 *MACG News for the Common Good*)

The MACG Core Team from First UMC will continue to collect stories through Sunday, March 21st. We will have a table during Fellowship Hour in Collins Hall each Sunday where members can obtain forms. Completed forms may be turned in to the church office or returned to the MACG table. Thank you to those who have already returned their stories. Questions? Contact Debby Fisher 503/645-4802 or Ron Williams 503/228-3195 ext. 215.



around the parish

Prayer Concerns and Expressions of Thanks

Our prayers are with:

Doris Lavelly who is recovering from a stroke.
Kenneth Anderson who is recovering from surgery.
Al Rieke who will be having surgery this Friday.
Karin McDonnough who has pleurisy.
Alden Mickel who has pneumonia.

We offer prayers of thanksgiving for the recent marriages of:

Bruce Hegna and Doug Norseth
Doug Johnson and Dan Hernandez
Rebecca Kenney and Beth Moore
Bill Birge and David Perkins
Vicki Sloss and Marsha Cook
Bruce Gaffield and Michael Whipple

We offer prayers of thanksgiving for:

Lauren, a new grandchild for John & Ferol McClure.
Lauren is the daughter of Elise McClure.

Steve and Heather Mansberger welcome a new daughter, Allison, who joins her big sister, Katelynn.

The baptisms of: Parker Hubbard, son of Laura and Brant Hubbard and that of Jessica Hale.



concert

Portland Sym. Girlchoir

The Portland Symphonic
GIRLCHOIR
present
AN INFORMANCE/TEACHER
APPRECIATION
CONCERT

Monday, March 15, 2004
at 7:00 PM at First UMC

This event is designed for talented girls in the community and their parents, who are interested in learning how Girlchoir works during rehearsal. Potential singers will be able to "sit in" among Girlchoir singers as they rehearse.

Publication Deadlines

Articles for *The Circuit Rider* are due no later than 4:45pm on the Thursday before publication the following Wednesday. The next *Circuit Rider* will be published on March 24.

Bulletin insert information is due no later than 4:45pm on **Wednesday**.

Sunday service participant information for the Sunday bulletin is due no later than noon on **Wednesday**.

E-mail: office@fumcpdx.org or place in the *Circuit Rider* box in the office.