



THE CIRCUIT RIDER

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

March 24, 2004
Volume 8, Issue 6

THIS SUNDAY

MARCH 28, 2004

10:30 am

Worship
in the
Sanctuary

Sermon

Rev. Dr. Arvin Luchs

Children's Time

Agnes Zach

*Be sure and set your clocks
ahead one hour on
Saturday evening, April 3rd.*

E *the*
edition



In my childhood Easter was associated with discovery. I could hardly wait for that daybreak to hunt the eggs my mother and I painstakingly colored--and were now hidden--and to uncover marshmallow bunnies and chocolate chicks resting in baskets of plastic "grass."

As I have grown older, I still find it is about discovery.

It is discovering once again, amid the blaze of garden color, the buds of new growth and renewed vitality that have lain dormant within the chill of winter's grey.

It is discovering, once again our faith's central message: a love that could not be stopped by cross, tomb or darkness--and is ours today.

It is discovering that hope is nurtured and supported by a community of faith. It is gathering together, singing, praying and celebrating the amazing gift of a God whose Spirit continues to renew, restore and reconcile us and our world.

I invite you to discover Easter for yourself.

Our Holy Week and Easter services are moments of growth, reflection and rejoicing.

Palm Sunday April 4, 10:30 am We journey from the procession of the palms--led by our children--through the events of the passion of our Lord.

Maundy Thursday, April 8, 7:00 pm We remember and share in the Last Supper then experience the descent of darkness through the Tenebrae.

Good Friday, April 9, 12 noon, St. James Lutheran Church. We join with our brothers and sisters in other downtown churches to remember the day of crucifixion.

EASTER, April 11, 9:00am and 11:00 am. The celebration of the resurrection! A great festival of music and inspiration.

I invite you to discover the blessings of sacrificial giving. As we re-enact Christ's offering for us all, we are stirred to share our blessings with others. This year's Easter Offerings will be used to strengthen and extend the ministries of this congregation throughout our community and our world. An envelope is enclosed for your second-mile gift.

May this Holy Season be a time of discovery for you and those you love.

In Christ
Arvin R. Luchs, Senior Pastor

@first

First Things First

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 ...

Wednesday, March 31
Church Lenten Supper

Sunday, April 4
Palm Sunday Worship
10:30 am

Thursday, April 08, 2004
Holy Thursday Service
7pm in the Sanctuary

Friday, April 09, 2004
Ecumenical Good Friday Service at noon at St. James Lutheran

Sunday, April 11
Easter Worship at 9 & 11
Easter Egg Hunt at 10:15am

Sunday, April 18
Forum: The Constitution, the Discipline, & Same Gender Marriage

Sundays, April 18 & 25
Policy Review and Discussion
9:15 am in 202



Be sure and set your clock ahead one hour on Saturday evening, April 3rd.



offerings

Rev. Brenda Sene

Last Sunday's worship service was inspirational for me. I had the privilege last summer and autumn of working with our church youth before we were fortunate to hire MyraJean as our youth director. I was nervous to temporarily lead a group of youth, but I soon found that our youth in this congregation are very spiritual and accepting and talented.

The youth prepared for much of Youth Sunday during Sunday school. They chose their scripture passage very thoughtfully from the lectionary, struggled over the possible exclusivity of the passage, and studied very carefully and thoroughly with their teachers to define a message that was faithful to the scripture and that could be brought forward to today. The chosen theme was discussed in all three of the youth classes, and the whole service was planned very carefully and prayerfully with this theme in mind. I continue to be amazed and humbled by how spiritual and scripture based these young people are.

They expressed their faith Sunday in their music, actions, and their words. Not everything in the worship service appeared polished and perfect, but then, God asks for our best, and these youth gave their best for and before God. Some of our youth are still learning to speak slowly and clearly, and our instrumentalists are developing their skills. Knowing these youth, I am eager to hear how they improve next year!

Many people in our congregation were also inspired by the faith these youth expressed. One person wrote, "...wonderful music choices and talent-how great! Those giving the sermon had thoughtful messages and were well prepared. The optimism and faith of these kids is awesome!" Another wrote, "This is the most sacred and meaningful service I have ever attended during my ten years as a member of 1st Church...The church's continued acceptance (of youth) as capable members with an equal role to lead the life of the church needs this kind of continued staff support, parent encouragement and community love." My favorite response was from the person who wrote, "I particularly enjoyed the whole service. The singing, reading, praying, playing and all the less obvious roles worked together to show us a whole, full of the spirit and variety of gifts our youth have to share. I do not think Youth Sunday has to mimic the way grown-ups do. Keep on with the examples from your lives. I especially appreciated the instrumental part because we got a glimpse of the 'outside' lives you lead. Thanks for all your work and play."

Our congregation struggles with whether or not it is appropriate to applaud during worship. I doubt that we will ever reach a consensus. Some adults expressed concern that the congregation applauded on Sunday, and that perhaps this meant that our children and youth were performing for us. I know in my heart and in my head that our children and youth were expressing their faith, and leading the congregation in worship. Some adults may have applauded to express appreciation for the work they did, and many may have applauded to respond to something moving and spiritual...their way in our silent church of saying, "Amen!"

So again, I thank the youth of our church for expressing their faith, and for leading all of us in a very significant and meaningful worship experience. I also thank MyraJean, the choir directors, and the Sunday school teachers for teaching our youth what it means to be a faithful part of the family of God. I close with another quote from Sunday, "I am 83 years old and I found nothing to change. Keep on keeping on, you all did great."

Grace & Peace,
Brenda

friends of music

Special Benefit Concerts

Three of the ten Friends of Music Dinners have already occurred and been a great success! To date, 45 guests have heard vocal selections by two music students at Portland State University, Hungarian music by Laos Balough and a trombone quartet made up of music educators, a banker and a doctor. The food has ranged from Buffalo Steak to Cassoulet. Deserts have included Floating Isles, fruit compote and, of course, chocolate in various forms. Conversations around the tables have been interesting and lively as members and friends of First Church dine together. There is still space available at three of the upcoming dinners for those of you that have not yet chosen one to attend. The open dates are June 13, July 11, and August 8th. The dinner on June 13th will take place in Collins Hall and we are encouraging families and young adults to attend by offering a family price of \$25.00 or a single price of \$10.00. You can register for one of the dinners in Collins Hall on Sunday mornings during coffee. Try to include one of the dinners in your spring or summer plans! They are definitely worth your time and money and are supporting a vital part of the ministry of First Church.

responding to protest

Fred Phelps to Protest at First UMC

Fred Phelps, notorious for picketing Matthew Shepherd's memorial service, will be picketing Portland First United Methodist Church on Sunday, April 18, from 10:00am to 10:30am. He and his supporters will protest in Beaverton on Saturday, five downtown Portland churches and PSU on Sunday, and the Oregon Supreme Court and Portland City Hall on Monday.

The protesters usually bring very offensive and graphic banners, and say offensive things. They know the laws of the cities where they protest very well. It will be important for us to prepare our children and youth ahead of time, so that they will not be taken by surprise and be frightened. It will be very important for all of us on April 18 not to engage the protesters in dialogue or in any other way. Fred Phelps and his followers are motivated by hatred, so if we respond with anger and hatred, they will be fed and the situation may escalate. We will update the congregation as the date approaches.

policy review

Congregational Response Sought

On Sunday, April 18 and again on Sunday, April 25 at 9:15 am in Room 202 the policy statement on sexual offenders and First United Methodist Church will be introduced to the congregation. This is a sensitive but important topic. We urge the congregation and our youth to attend and participate in these sessions. Attend one or both of the sessions.

The sessions will introduce the policy statement and interpret its significance for the congregation. The session will also include a look at our Sex Offender Policy in relation to the Social Principles of the United Methodist Church and current national concerns about the sexual abuse of children and other vulnerable persons. The congregation will have an opportunity to ask questions and give input to the Sex Offender Policy Task Force. The task force is comprised of: Leif Terdal, John Henry Hingson, Janice Gratton, and the Rev. Dr. Arvin Luchs.

music

Jonas Nordwall

LET'S HEAR IT FOR OUR YOUTH

March 14th's worship service was an extra special event in FUMC's life. Our youth took the leadership reins for the service, proving that they are very mature and capable leaders.

Every facet of our youth program was incorporated. Our musical groups - Veritas, The Sound Seekers, JuBELLation and our newly formed instrumental ensemble participated with great enthusiasm and skill. Many of our youth multitask by participating in our youth programs plus our vocal and instrumental groups.

Many people do not know that our youth groups do not have the same preparation time when compared to many suburban churches. With their busy personal schedules it is difficult for many to attend weeknight church activities. Most rehearsals happen either before or immediately following the Sunday morning service.

Their accomplishments speak highly of their directors and of each youth who makes the commitment to be as good as they can be. There are the sideline parent, guardian and friend supporters that provide transportation, nourishment and encouragement.

Many thanks go to MyraJean Marshall for her excellent coordination and leadership. She guided our youth to raise the bar another notch and we applaud and thank all of them for their achievements.

adult

Christian Education

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

SUNDAY, MARCH 28

- 9:00 am *Changing Christianity*,
Fireside Room
- 9:15 am *The Fellowship of Seekers*,
Room 134
- Interactive Study of Mark*,
Room 160

SUNDAY, APRIL 4

- 9:00 am *Changing Christianity*,
Fireside Room
- 9:15 am *The Fellowship of Seekers*,
Room 134
- Interactive Study of Mark*,
Room 160

groups

Fellowship Opportunities

The Parker Group will meet at 12:30 pm, Saturday, April 3, 2004 in Room 202 for a potluck dinner and program. Jerry Lindgren will present: "Who Wrote Shakespeare: The Greatest Detective story ever told." Jerry has followed the development of this "case" for 30 years. Recent research increasingly point to other authorship of Shakespeare's plays and poems ... so "who dunnit?"

Guests are welcome. Please RSVP to Evelyn Casey at 503/775-9356.

We have procured a dishwasher, so you don't need to bring your own table service for this meeting.

ha ha ha

Church Humor

Most of us spend the first six days of the week sowing wild oats, then we go to church on Sunday and pray for a crop failure. -- Fred Allen

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 31

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

APRIL 7

The UMW Unit Meeting will be at 10:00 am in the Fireside Room. A business meeting followed by the program: "Picture This" is the golden opportunity for getting to know all your friends in UMW-- and sharing your interests, talents, and yourself, too! Everyone has treasures, whether in your heirlooms, collections, hobbies, or pictures of your family. Bring along anything that represents YOU! Sharing will be our program of the day. Bring a friend, and a sandwich for lunch. Inquiries: Colleen Foster at 503/829-3231.

APRIL 30

The UMW Quilt Show Luncheon will be at 11:00 am in Collins Hall. The event will feature quilts designed to interpret the book, *Bless Me, Ultima*. The cost is \$12.00 and reservations must be in by April 23, 2004. This is a fundraiser for mission work of the United Methodist Women.



seniors

First Church Senior Adults

DINNER THEATER OUTING

Sunday, May 16, First Church Seniors will attend Sylvia's Dinner Theater's production of, *Moon Over Buffalo*. Enjoy a choice of three entrees for dinner, and a live theater production. *Moon Over Buffalo* is a marvelously inventive farce, set in Buffalo, New York in 1953. An acting couple hope to finally get a chance to do a Hollywood film, when they hear Frank Capra is coming to their matinee. What could go wrong? Cost: \$36.50, group rate, including gratuity. Time: Meet at Sylvia's (5115 NE Sandy Blvd.) for dinner at 5:30. The play follows, from 7:00 - 9:00 pm. RESERVATIONS DUE BY APRIL 28th, WITH \$15 deposit.

electives

Electives for Elders

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

Electives for Elders Spring Term 2004

Tuesday Mornings
April 13 - May 4, 2004
10:00 am - 12:10 pm

Two Courses Offered:
FOLDING CHAIR THEATER
with Jim Shaffer

This series of classes will show through demonstration, examination and actual readings of selected plays, how we receive inspiration, direction -- and entertainment, from great minds who have utilized theater as their medium.

Rx FOR PREPAREDNESS
with various resource people

This class will feature helping
Senior Adults be ...

Prepared for
Scams & Frauds

Prepared for
Fire & Natural Disasters,

Prepared for
Neighborhood Emergencies

TUITION: \$10.00
Registration Deadline:
April 11, 2004



PALM SUNDAY, APRIL 4

Worship at 10:30 AM

Palm Processional by the Children
Palm Sunday Craft Fair
in Collins Hall, following Worship

HOLY THURSDAY, APRIL 8

There will be a worship service at 7:00 PM in the Sanctuary. This Service of Tenebrae, or "Darkness," is based on a twelfth-century service and is an extended meditation on the passion of Christ.

GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 9

There will be an Ecumenical Good Friday service at noon at St. James Lutheran Church at 1315 SW Park, Portland, OR.

EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 11

Worship Services at 9:00 AM and 11:00 AM in the Sanctuary.

An Easter Egg Hunt for Children at 10:15 AM in Beckham Courtyard.

missions

The Global Missions Committee

GLOBAL MISSIONS NEED MEMBERS

One can serve the global community in many different ways. While serving as a missionary, either on a long-term assignment or a short-term work project (such as Volunteers in Mission or Primitimers) is one kind of service, it isn't the only way to help. For every person in the field, there is an army at home - ready to provide all kinds of practical support.

At First UMC, it is the Global Missions Committee who serves in this capacity, serving as a liaison between church members and people scattered across the globe who receive help from the church. We raise money to support full-time missionaries in Russia, Kenya, Brazil, and numerous projects in other places. We send UMVIM team members to Oklahoma and Guatemala, and Primitimers to France. We hold potlucks and prepare bulletin boards to keep members of the congregation informed about mission projects and needs throughout the world.

And we need help.

Additional volunteers are urgently needed to serve on the Global Missions committee, and to help with the planning for all of the above. The group holds an evening meeting once a month (presently on the first Monday of each month). Personal experience as a missionary -or even as an international traveler - is not necessary. The most important qualification to serve on this committee is an interest in global concerns and a desire to help our neighbors in other countries. Those who are interested can contact committee chair Pat Williams at 503-295-7879, or e-mail plwilliams62@hotmail.com.

Children
Special Activity



Everyone is invited to the Palm Sunday Craft Fair on Sunday, April 4 in Collins Hall at 11:45 AM. Crafts will include:

- Whirlygigs
- Butterflies
- Crosses and Cookies

First UMC Youth will have corn dogs available for a donation.



books
The Library Book Sale

The Library Committee would like to thank everyone who donated books to our Used Book Sale last month. Your generous efforts helped us raise over \$700 to purchase books and to make the Church Library more useful to the congregation. There are some remaining books that will be sold by donation on Palm Sunday, April 4 in Collins Hall during the Coffee Hour.



around the parish

Prayer Concerns and Expressions of Thanks

Our prayers are with:

Rick Walton, who is recovering from surgery.

We continue our prayers for:

Jane Rhodes, Jan Marshall, Harry Baker, Kitty Riddle, Doris Lavelly, and Tom Iverson.

We offer prayers of thanksgiving for:

Robin White who is celebrating the end of a challenging journey and the beginning of a new one!

Leah Sawyer, who celebrated her 100th birthday;

Caden McIlhenny's baptism, Caden is the son of Jennifer and Todd, and the brother of Isabel.

Tamara Mucha and Carla Osterle who were married on March 14.

Eric Wong and Mark Isham who were married on March 17.

our giving

First UMC Offering Update

Our Giving Through March 15, 2004

Year-to-Date Giving \$147,265

Year-to-Date Pledged (Prorated Estimate) \$170,833

Shortfall \$23,568

... etc ...

Items of Interest

CHILDREN OF UGANDA

The Children of Uganda Tour of Light will perform Wednesday, March 31 at 7:30 PM at the Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall. This is a benefit for the Black United Fund, Cascade AIDS Project, For Us Northwest, The Harambee Centre, and the Urban League of Portland. For ticket information call Ticketmaster at 503/224-4400.

FRIENDS OF TREES

Friends of Trees is sponsoring a Goose Hollow tree planting in our church neighborhood on Saturday, April 3, from 8:30 am to 1:00 pm. Planet Church encourages your involvement. For more information call Martha Connell at 503/227-0128 or email her at: cooperconnell@hevanet.com

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 April 7.

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.