



THE CIRCUIT RIDER

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

December 1, 2004
Volume 8, Issue 23

THIS SUNDAY

DECEMBER 5, 2004

8:30 am
Informal
Communion
in the Chapel
10:30 am

COMMUNION SERVICE

Sermon
Rev. Brenda Sene

Children's Time
Rev. Dr. Arvin Luchs

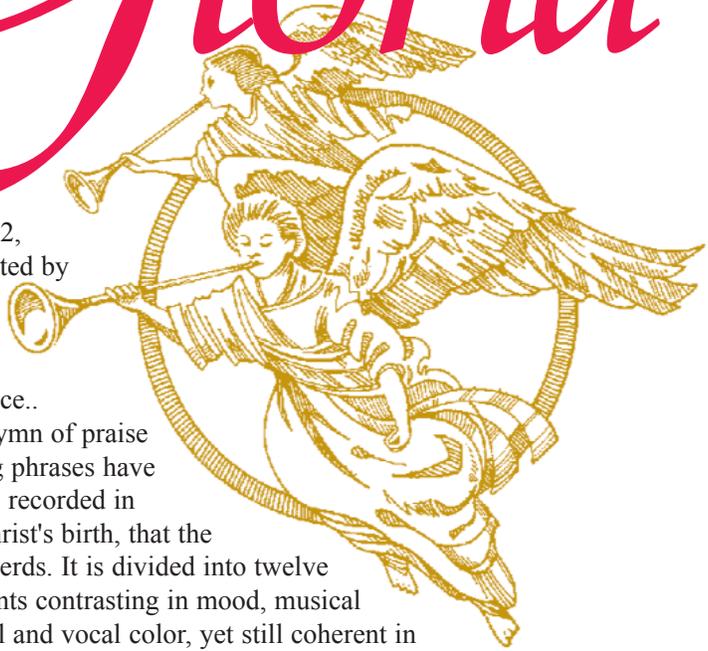
HEALING
SERVICE
11:30 am - Chapel



As a Reconciling
Congregation,
members of
First United Methodist
Church have pledged
to welcome and
support all who want
to worship with us,
regardless of race,
gender, class or sexual
orientation.

The Chancel Choir Presents Vivaldi's

Gloria



On Sunday, December 12,
the Chancel Choir, directed by
Dr. Bruce Browne,
will present Antonio
Vivaldi's *Gloria* in the
10:30 AM worship service..

The *Gloria* is a joyful hymn of praise
and worship. Its opening phrases have
their origins in the song, recorded in
St. Luke's account of Christ's birth, that the
angels sang to the shepherds. It is divided into twelve
relatively brief movements contrasting in mood, musical
texture, and instrumental and vocal color, yet still coherent in
overall musical structure. It is scored for string orchestra with continuo, trumpet and
oboe. The soloists are Deborah Benke and Carol Young, and the orchestra will be made
up of students from Portland State University and our own Rebecca and Aaron Anderson.
We encourage you to come and experience the glory of this Christmas music.

Sponsored by
Children's Ministries &
Youth Ministries

- God's Eyes
- Craft Projects
- Advent Countdown
- Christmas Ornaments
- Christmas Cookies
- Advent Wreath Making
- Crafts
- Advent Wreaths
- Scholastic Book Fair

11:30 AM
COLLINS HALL



\$3 a bowl



offerings

Rev. Brenda Sené

Five memorial services in five weeks...as I drove home from church on Sunday afternoon, after the fifth service, I prayed for the people who are grieving in our congregation this holiday season. By Monday morning, two more church families had experienced loss. Our prayers are with the

families of Roy Rogers, Jan Marshall, Ruth Morris, Leah Sawyer, Dorothy Fortune, Estella Earls, and Kenneth Anderson.

It is especially difficult to grieve through the holidays when so many people are celebrating and preparing for the perfect Christmas. The advertisements on the radio and television, and the pictures in the newspaper advertisements depict perfection...the perfect gifts for the ecstatically happy, or appropriately sentimental people receiving them. The stores wouldn't make much money if their advertisements showed tired families going through the motions of buying presents, or worried parents balancing the fixed costs of their household with their children's lists to Santa.

The perfection depicted in these advertisements has never been the reality for most people. It certainly wasn't the reality for Mary and Joseph, who struggled to find a warm place for Jesus to be born. Every birth is accompanied by pain and struggle, which makes the gift of a baby even more rewarding. We do not expect the "perfect" birth to be pain free. We hope and expect a healthy child, and a wholeness in our hearts that comes with a new baby and a new beginning. The perfection we seek includes pain and struggle to give meaning and depth.

Several years ago, Edie Algers, who was a member of the Shovel and Rake Gang, was cleaning the Chancel for Christmas Eve. As he did the work he loved, he knocked over the Advent Wreath and broke the large and ornate Christ Candle in the center. Edie and others of the Gang tried to repair the candle with glue and packaging tape. When it was obvious that the candle could not be repaired, they sheepishly brought it to the church office. We debated that Thursday about whether or not we should search and buy a new Christ Candle, or if we should continue to try to repair the broken one. Would it be more appropriate to have a new, perfect candle? I wanted to use the broken one. It had more theological significance for me—that God would choose to become fully human, to come into a broken world to bring meaning and wholeness and hope. It was a reminder that our world is still broken, and that Christ still chooses to come into our lives to heal the brokenness and give comfort and hope. We replaced the broken candle with a new one, but I still have the broken candle in my office.

Many people this season are experiencing brokenness, from the death of people they love, from financial hardships, from homelessness, from fear, from mental illness, from sickness, from all sorts of situations. The "perfect" Christmas society pedals to us will not be a reality for most of us. But the "perfect" Christmas God offers us, one that embraces the pain and the struggles and transforms them, is a reality. Perhaps this is the Christmas, as we face the losses in our congregation, and as we face the reality of war, that we should finally use the broken Christ Candle waiting in my office? May this Christmas season bring hope and newness and depth and love to your life.

Grace & Peace,
Brenda



CAROLING PARTY

On **Sunday, December 19** join us at 2:00 PM in the Fireside Room for Christmas Desserts and a time of fellowship. We will warm up our voices and then at 3:00 PM we will spread the joy of the season by caroling to our shut-ins. Everyone is welcome!



FRIDAY, DECEMBER 24

- 5:00 PM Family Christmas Eve Service of Las Posadas
- 7:00 PM Candlelight Service
- 9:00 PM Candlelight Service
- 11:00 PM Candlelight Communion Service

adults at advent

sunday classes

DR. McGAUGHY: THE HISTORICAL JESUS & CHRISTIAN FAITH

Orthodox Christian faith has been constructed around the creeds of the early church and their focus on Jesus as the divine son of God and second member of the Trinity. Biblical scholarship since the Enlightenment has been searching for the historical figure of Jesus of Nazareth behind the creeds. Does this historical figure of Jesus have any relevance for Christian faith? If so, how would this unfolding knowledge of the historical Jesus affect our beliefs, ethics, and worship? What difference, if any, does the quest for the historical Jesus make for Christian faith?

The adult class, Changing Christianity, hosts this class featuring **Dr. Lane C. McGaughy**, George H. Atkinson Professor of Religion & Ethics Religious Studies at Willamette University.

Sunday, December 5 at 9:00 AM in the Fireside Room

THE MAGI AND THE OBJECT OF FAITH:

Must we accept the ancient worldview to be Christians?

Sunday, December 12 at 9:00 AM in the Fireside Room

THE VIRGIN BIRTH AND THE MORALITY OF FAITH:

In what sense is Jesus the redeemer from human finitude?

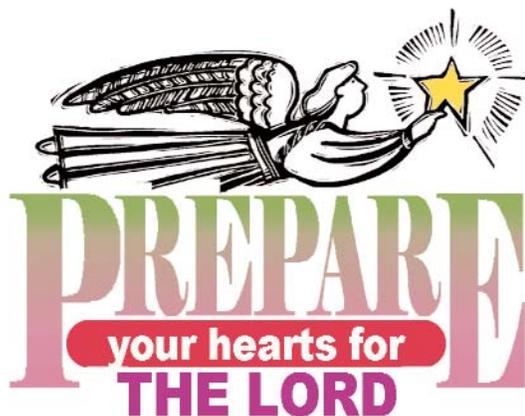
Sunday, December 19 at 9:00 AM in the Fireside Room

THE ANGELS AND THE CONTENT OF FAITH:

In what sense is Jesus the revealer of divine knowledge?

THE FELLOWSHIP OF SEEKERS

The Fellowship of Seekers meets each Sunday morning from 9:15-10:15 AM in Room 134 and has just begun a study of the book: **The Heart of Christianity: Rediscovering a Life of Faith** by Marcus Borg.



group fellowship

THE PARKER GROUP

The Parker Group will meet at 12:30 PM, Saturday, December 4, in Room 202 for a potluck dinner and program. Former members, Chuck and Gloria Kovach will start the program with Christmas music, followed by Tom and Colleen Fosters' "Prime of Life Mission in Southern France." They will share their volunteer mission to the area, as well as information about the Huguenot/Catholic conflict. Visitors are welcome. Please RSVP to Evelyn Casey at 503/775-9356.

umw

united methodist women

Co-presidents: *Trudy Kayser 503/292-7528 and Virginia Bender 503/657-1181.*
All women are welcome to attend the following UMW activities

WOMEN'S OPEN AGENDA

Wednesday, Dec. 08, Room 202
6:30 Social Hour, 7:00 Meeting,
8:00 Open Agenda Christmas Party
Information: Ruth Green, 503-698-8420

FAITH GUILD

Wednesday, Dec. 15, 10:00 AM. Parlor.
Hostess: Kitty Riddle. Devotions: June Kinney and Program: Foster Parents by Linda Manning. Bring Christmas cookies for our shut-ins. Information: Hazel Wells 503/652-6274

CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

Wednesday, Dec. 15, 11:30 AM.
Home of Mary Covert, Willamette View Manor #407, 12705 SE River Road, Portland. Members may contribute to the cookie exchange. Dessert and beverage will be served. Bring a sandwich. Information: Mary Covert, 503/652-6480

RUTH GUILD

Wednesday, Dec. 15, 12:00 PM in Room 204. Program: Christmas Music with Mary Coppett. Dessert and beverage provided. Bring a sandwich. Information: Hazel Balcomb, 503/244-0971

THE READING GROUP

When: Thursday, Dec. 16, 10:00 AM with lunch at noon. Where: Home of Sue Fisher, 3648 SW 60th Place, Portland
Program: Venus Fielder: The History of Becky Zeller's Friendship Quilt
Information: Sue Fisher 503/292-1773

THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

No UMW Executive Board in December.

parents day out

a program for kids!



On two Saturdays, **December 11 & 18**, First Church will host Parent's Day Out. We want parents to be able to take a break and do some Christmas shopping and enjoy the season while your children participate in Christmas crafts and activities. The Church Nursery will be open from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM. There is a cost of \$5.00 per child, with a \$15.00 maximum. Reservations are required. **Sign ups are available in the church nursery.** (Call Agnes Zach at 503/228-3195 ext. 229.) This is open to children of all ages. There will be computer activities, movies, games, and more!

On Sunday, **December 19**, the above program will be available from 12:00 to 4:00 PM, in order that parents and older siblings can participate in the church Caroling Party or enjoy a quiet afternoon!

Parents, are you looking for a way to shop without your children in tow? Consider taking advantage of Parents Day Out!

opportunity

the intern program

The Community Internship Program has been a vital part of First UMC's outreach program since 1968 under the Church, Society and Social Justice Committee. Max Pew, a Lay Associate Minister, envisioned the program to expose young people to service to their community and to provide interns to work in the agencies that First UMC helps fund. 118 people have been placed with agencies in the 35 years of the program.

Summer 2004 interns were: Ciera Shelton, who worked at Sisters of the Road Cafe and Phoebe Keever, who worked at Portland Nurse Practitioners Clinic.

The Internship Program is open to youth age 16 through senior adults. Many of our interns have been college students seeking summer employment opportunities since a stipend is included. If this rewarding work is of interest to you, please pick up an application at the church office.

Applications for the Summer 2005 Internship Program are due by January 31, 2005. Interviews will be held in December for college students. The final selection of interns will be based upon the potential of that person to provide direct and meaningful service to people in the Portland community. If you have questions regarding this program, please call Joanne Ruyle at 503/223-8838 or Bill Connor at 503/226-0529.



library notes

books at the christmas faire



To celebrate the season, the First Church Library will present a table of holiday titles at the Christmas Faire in Collins Hall after church on December 5th. There you can view our selection and check them out as well. Church librarians will be on hand to help first-time users through the check-out process. Adults, children and families are welcome.

this & that

PASSAGE QUILTS

Providence St. Vincent Medical Center is initiating a "passage quilt" program to provide beautifully crafted bed quilts to dying patients. The quilts are later given to the families as loving symbols of remembrance of their loved ones. If you have a quilting talent and a desire to share your blessing with patients of St. Vincent Hospital, contact Dorothy Sandoval, Director of Pastoral Services, Providence St. Vincent Medical Center at 503/216-2261.

THE PORTLAND SYMPHONIC GIRLCHOIR CONCERT

The Portland Symphonic Girlchoir announces its Annual Jingle Bear Family Concert, to be held Saturday, December 4th at 10:30am. The concert will be held at the First United Methodist Church, Southwest 18th and Jefferson (Goose Hollow stop on the Westside Max). Tickets for the concert are: \$10.00 for adults and \$8.00 for students/seniors. For reservations or information please call 503.226.6162, e-mail us at singer@girlchoir.com or visit our website www.girlchoir.com.

alternative christmas

a project of global missions



2004

Does Dad really need another tie? Does Mom need another bottle of perfume? How about giving the gift that can make a difference? The Global Missions Committee has the perfect gift for everyone's shopping list - Alternative Christmas. For the four

Sundays of Advent (beginning November 28), First UMC members and friends can shop at the Alternative Christmas table in Collins Hall, choosing a project that reflects the recipient's (or giver's) view of how to best make a difference.

Alternative Christmas projects for 2004 are:

- The Goose Hollow Family Shelter
- The Medical Clinic Salud y Paz in Guatemala
- Southern Philippine Methodist College (scholarships)
- Pastoral Support in Lithuania

Donations in any amount may be made to any or all of these projects, which are described in more detail in the literature that will be available at the table. And shopping couldn't be simpler - just write a check (or hand over some cash), and receive a gift card that can be used to notify the recipient of your gift! And move over, Santa!

missions

guatemalan gift items

A sale of Guatemalan gift items, sponsored by the Global Missions Committee and Los Amigos de Los Romeritos, will take place during Coffee Hour on Sunday, December 12. This sale is a means of providing financial assistance to Los Romeritos, a Guatemala City day care center that is supported by a number of UVMIM teams. Both Pat Williams and Dee Poujade visited this ministry last winter; Leif and Marge Terdal will be visiting it on their trip to Guatemala this winter.



CHILDREN'S PROCESSIONAL

On **Sunday, December 19**, children will process in worship. Families are asked to bring their quarter Advent collection and a small gift for a child. Children ages two through sixth grade will meet in their Sunday School classrooms at 10:15 AM and then process into the sanctuary and place their gifts under the tree. Money will be donated to the Heifer Project and the small gifts to West Women's Shelter.

GIFTS FOR HOME BOUND MEMBERS

On **Sundays, December 12 & 19** the fourth through sixth grade Sunday School classes will meet in Room 202 to make cards, ornaments and a holiday food item and decorate Christmas baskets. Baskets will be delivered during the church Caroling Party on December 19.

who are we ?

Dr. Raymond E. Balcomb

The Rev. Stanley Andrews was our Associate Minister forty years ago. He now lives in Boise, Idaho and a few weeks ago he delivered to our pastor a "pulpit chair" which he said was from our building at SW 12th and Taylor. It had been given to him when he left here. I imagine he is "downsizing" his possessions, and pulpit chairs tend to be on the bulky side. At first, I was skeptical of the idea that it had come from our immediate-predecessor building. The building at SW 12th and Taylor had a built-in bench, as its plans and a few pictures attest. But then I found a picture which showed a number of persons on the platform, and one of them was in a chair which appears identical with the one Stan has given us. So at least at times, when extra seating was necessary, this chair must have been so used. But a question remains. Who gave the chair to Stan? I was pastor at the time and I don't remember any such official presentation. In fact, I don't remember ever having seen it before he returned it. So I doubt if it was among our "official" memorabilia. What I think must have happened is that some member of the church came into possession of it, saved it, when the former building was abandoned and demolished. We have some stained-glass windows and some door-pulls which were similarly saved by parishioners. And then that family, or its heirs, gave the chair to Stan in appreciation for his ministry here. Is there anyone out there who can give me information about this? If so, I would be glad to hear from them.

Archives and History Committee.

around the parish

prayer concerns and expressions of thanks

Our prayers are with ...

Shari Anderson, Blake and Ellen; Kenneth Anderson died Monday, November 29.

The family and friends of Estella Earls, who died on Sunday, November 28. A memorial service will be held at the church on Saturday, December 11, at 1:00 PM. In lieu of flowers contributions may be sent to the following: Portland First UMC Ed Allen Music Intern Fund or the Jonas Nordwall Organ Fund. Contributions may also be sent to Special Olympics or the charity of your choice

The family and friends of Greg Nelson, who died on Friday, November 19; *Arvin and Sue Luchs, and Olive Luchs*. Olive's brother and Arvin's uncle,

Garfield Rohn died on Wednesday, November 24, in Tacoma;

Rick Fortner, recovering from surgery;

David Poindexter, recovering from surgery;

Marilyn Ringquist, recovering from surgery.

We continue our prayers for ...

Agnes Clark, Jane Rhodes, and Tom Iverson.

Congratulations to Gram Mary Bywater Cross and Grandpa Newman on the arrival of Brendan William Stephan Cross to adoptive parents Steve and Laura Cross of Everett, WA. He was born November 9th in Vancouver, Washington.

correction

please make note

Lela Lawrenson is celebrating her 100th birthday with an Open House from noon to 8:00 PM on Saturday, December 4th. Please come and visit. No gifts, but cards for her scrapbook would be welcome.

Please note the corrected address for the birthday open house:

4627 SE Francis Street
Portland, Oregon 97206
Telephone: 503/777-6080.

Ha

Don't let your worries get the best of you. Remember, Moses started out as a basket case.

Some people are kind, polite, and sweet-spirited, until you try to sit in their pews.

When you get to your wit's end, you'll find God lives there.

SEE PAGE SEVEN FOR YOUR POINSETTIA ORDER FORM!

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 December 15, 2004.

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.



POINSETTIAS

It is time to order poinsettias to prepare our sanctuary for the Christmas season. This year poinsettias or azaleas are \$11.50 each. Use the below form to indicate if the poinsettia is in memory or honor of someone and return the form to the church office with your check for \$11.50, **by Sunday, December 12, 2004**. Indicate: POINSETTIA in the memo portion of the check.

Also indicate if you are picking your plant up after the 9:00 PM Christmas Eve Service. Please note that the earliest that plants can be picked up is after the 9:00 PM Christmas Eve Service.

POINSETTIA AZALEA

Your Name

Name In Memory In Honor

I will pick up plant.