



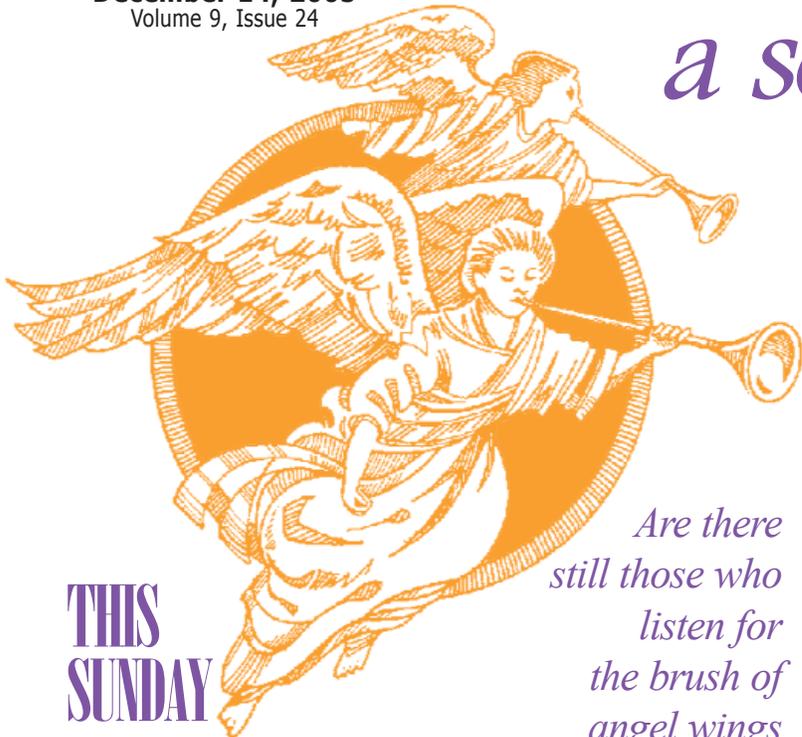
# THE CIRCUIT RIDER

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

the **E**dition

December 14, 2005  
Volume 9, Issue 24

## a season of light



**THIS  
SUNDAY**

DECEMBER 18, 2005

**WORSHIP  
10:30 AM**

**Sermon**  
Rev. Dr. Arvin Luchs

**Children's Time,**  
Rev. Dr. Lowell  
Greathouse



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.

*Are there  
still those who  
listen for  
the brush of  
angel wings  
and look for  
the stars above  
some godforsaken  
little stable?  
If there are - then,  
O Lord,  
Keep ablaze their  
flickering candle  
In the darkness of  
this world!*

Ann Weems,  
*Kneeling in Bethlehem,*  
Westminster Press, Philadelphia,  
PA, 1980

Ann Weems prayer reminds us we are called to be "Christmas People"-nurturing and tending the light of God's love in the midst of brokenness and need.

In this season of light, will you share the light of God's love with those in need this season? Our **Christmas Offering** this year is dedicated to assuring that the ministry of Christ through our mission efforts at home and abroad is fully supported. Your gift can make a world of difference! A special envelope is enclosed so that you can participate in this "extra-mile" effort. Your generous response will be greatly appreciated.

Will you open your hearts to hear again the amazing story of God-with-us as a baby born in Bethlehem-and experience the wonder and joy of Christ's coming anew in your heart?

**This Sunday**, starting at 10:30 AM in the Sanctuary, we will prepare for his coming as we share familiar **Lessons and Carols**.

**Next Saturday, Christmas Eve, at 5:00 PM**, families of all ages are invited to a very special event in **Collins Hall** as our children help us find the true meaning Christmas.

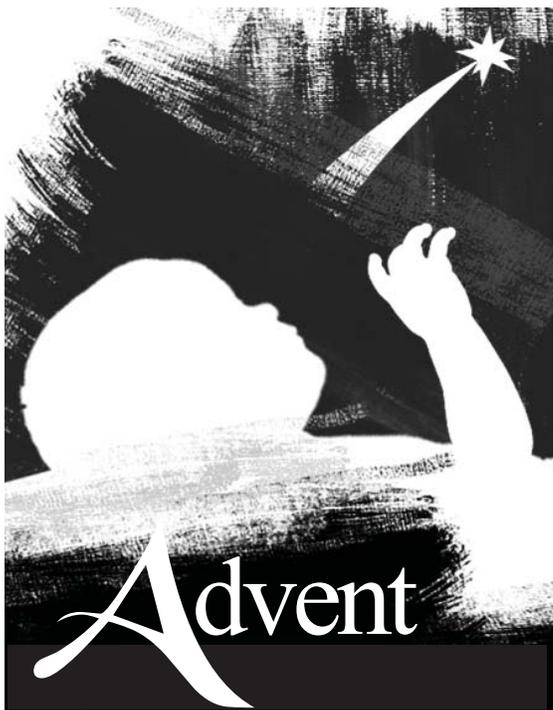
**At 7:00 and 9:00 PM** that evening the twinkling of candlelight in our Sanctuary will merge with the majestic music of the Mary S. Collins Organ and Chancel Choir to enwrap our spirits in the traditional "**Candlelight and Carols**" service.

To bring to a close this special night, at **11:00 PM** our souls will be nourished as we share in a "**Christmas Candlelight Communion**."

Then, on **Christmas morning at 10:30 AM** everyone is welcome to share a more informal and personal time of **Carols and Celebration**.

And let me extend the warmest of Christmas greetings to you from your pastors and staff. We hope that each of you will realize the light of God's grace blazing in your hearts. May the blessings of the season be yours: now and in the New Year.

In Christ's love,  
**Arvin R. Luchs**  
Senior Pastor



**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18**

- 10:30 AM **Worship:**  
**The Fourth Sunday of Advent**  
Lessons and Carols
- 12:00 PM Parent's Afternoon Out
- 4:00 PM All-Church Christmas Caroling

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 21**

- 7:00 PM Ecumenical Longest Night Service for the Grieving At First Christian Church.

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 24**

- Worship:**  
**Christmas Eve Services**
- 5:00 PM Family Christmas Eve Service
- 7:00 PM Candlelight Service
- 9:00 PM Candlelight Service
- 11:00 PM Candlelight Communion Service

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25**

- 10:30 AM **Worship: Christmas Day**  
Family Christmas Carol Singing  
No Sunday School Classes  
Church Nursery will be open.

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 1**

- 10:30 AM **Worship: New Year's Day**  
No Sunday School Classes  
Church Nursery will be open

**PARENT'S DAY OUT**

One more opportunity for Parent's Day Out on Sunday, **December 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 12:00 PM to 4:00 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. 227.) This is open to children of all ages. There will be computer activities, movies, games, and more!

**CAROLING PARTY**

On **Sunday, December 18** we'll meet in the chapel at 3:45 and depart on our caroling route by 4:10 PM. Please sign-up in the Commons or call and let Lowell know if you are planning to join us 503/228-3195. Everyone is welcome! This year we will be including two retirement centers as well as some of our homebound members.

**THE LONGEST NIGHT GRIEF SERVICE**

The Longest Night Grief Service will be December 21 at 7:00 PM at First Christian Church, 1315 SW Broadway in downtown Portland. Many of us find that the joy and celebration, which others experience at Christmas, serve only to heighten our own personal sadness or loneliness. It is for those of us who grieve this holiday season that First Christian, First Congregational and First United Methodist have combined efforts to offer the Longest Night Grief Service. Dr. Luchs will join with pastors from the other sponsoring congregations to offer brief meditations and prayers. Paradoxically it is in our darkness and loneliness that we often encounter the Christ child.

**CHRISTMAS EVE FELLOWSHIP**

First UMC invites everyone to the Fireside Room for wassail and cookies before each of the Christmas Eve services on December 24th. We will be open at 4:00, 6:00 and 8:00 PM. Drop in for fellowship.

**THE FAMILY CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE**

This year our Family Christmas Eve Service will be at 5:00 PM in Collins Hall on Saturday, December 24, 2005. The Fireside Room will be open at 4:00 PM with wassail and cookies and time for family gathering and fellowship. The service this year will be a unique intergenerational telling of the traditional Christmas story. It will feature drama, music, and scripture readings.

There will be a special rehearsal for this service on Sunday, December 18 during the Sunday School hour, 10:45 to 11:30 AM.

**CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICES**

The 7:00 PM and 9:00 PM Christmas Eve Candlelight Services have always been a highlight of the advent season at First Church. The Chancel Choir will present special music. Jonas Nordwall will be at the organ and the congregation will sing the carols of Christmas.

**CHRISTMAS EVE COMMUNION SERVICE**

At 11:00 PM on Christmas Eve there will be a Communion Service in the Sanctuary. Rev. Tom Foster will be preaching.

# adults at first

sunday classes

## THE FELLOWSHIP OF SEEKERS

Sunday mornings from 9:15-10:15 AM in Room 134

December 18: Our Mission Trip to Ghana led by Melba & Bill Rizzo

December 25: No Class Session

January 1: No Class Session

January 8: We will begin a discussion of a new book

## CHANGING CHRISTIANITY

Sunday mornings 9:00 -10:15 AM in Room 202. Discussion centers on living a Christian life in a world of change. Beginning on Sunday, December 4, this class will begin a study of *The Gospel of Thomas* and continue for ten or eleven weeks. The basic text for the *Gospel of Thomas* study will be *The Gospel of Thomas, Annotated and Explained* by Stevan Davies. Copies will be available for purchase.

## SHORT-TERM CLASSES BEGINNING IN JANUARY 2006

### *Matters of Faith: The Death Penalty and Restorative Justice:*

This three-part series begins Sunday, January 15, 2005.

Recently the 1000th person was executed in the United States since the practice was resumed in 1977. As people of faith, what is our position on the use of the death penalty in our country? And what role does restorative justice play within our larger community? This three-part series will explore these and other questions through the use of video and personal presentations.

### *Healthy Children-Healthy Planet*

This eight-part series begins Sunday, January 22, 2006.

The purpose of this eight-part series is to understand how the pervasive effects of advertising, media, and our consumer culture can influence a child's view of the world, discover ways to create meaningful family times and healthful environments for children, and explore ways to develop a child's connection to nature, and to foster creativity. The sessions will deal with cultural pressures, family rituals and celebrations, advertising, food and health, time and creativity, technology and the media, and ways to explore nature.

### *An Orientation to First Church*

Our next Orientation to First Church will be Sunday, January 22, 2006.

If you would like to officially join First United Methodist Church, then this two-hour session and simple meal is for you. Learn about FUMC, what it means to become a member of this congregation, and meet others who are interested in joining. This orientation will be made available several times in 2006. For more information or to register, contact the church office at 503/228-3195.

# entertainment books

2006

## ENTERTAINMENT BOOKS 2006

Portland Entertainment Books are being sold in the Commons on Sunday after worship and in the church office for \$30.00. The Family Ministry area uses the proceeds from the book to plan family events and/or speakers in the spring. The Entertainment Book is a great way to receive discounts on groceries, restaurants and activities in the Portland Area.

# umw

united methodist women

The UMW Unit Gatherings are held the first Wednesdays of each month. All women are invited. Co-presidents: Trudy Kayser, 503/292-7528, Mary Covert, 503/652-6480.

## FAITH GUILD

The Faith Guild will meet Wednesday, December 21, at 10:30 AM. We will car pool to the home of Marion Hollenberg, 2052 NE Josephine Drive, Hillsboro Program: Seasonal music. Bring a gift to exchange (\$5 or less) Chair: Hazel Wells

## RUTH GUILD

The Ruth Guild on Wednesday, December 21, 12:00, Room 204 Program: *Christmas Joy* with Ruth Green. Bring a sandwich. Dessert and beverage provided Chair: Betty-Lou Hare

## UMW UNIT GATHERING

Come, join in an exciting adventure on Wednesday, January 4, at 10:00 AM. in the Fireside Room. Have you ever wondered, "Which Bible Shall I Read?" KJV, RSV, NRSV, NASV, NIV, JB, NJB, CEV, TLB, MSG, NEB, or WB?? These varying editions are just a start. The Rev. Dr. Al Rieke, a lifetime Bible scholar, will compare different translations of the Bible, giving us insights into this basic guide for our lives. Dr. Rieke will also have a large display of Bibles available for your browsing. In addition to many, many years of leading Bible studies, Dr. Rieke, a chemist by training, has expertise in making a careful analytical approach to Biblical writings. You'll be inspired, informed, and amazed. And here's a little secret (shhh): the first 48 attendees will receive a free Bible. You'll be surprised by which translation it is! See you there!

## DANA JONES HONORED

Dana Jones, United Methodist deaconess and editor of RESPONSE, the official magazine of United Methodist Women, is the church's 2005 Communicator of the Year. She received the award from the United Methodist Association during the group's annual awards banquet in Oct. Copies of RESPONSE magazine are available in our library.

## Who Are We ?

Dr. Raymond E. Balcomb

Along with many of you, I tend to sing many hymns more or less from memory. That is one of the things that happens when you have been a regular church-goer for a number of years. Besides that, an Archivist should have a good memory and be devoted to things as they were. So I experience from time to time a certain irritation. Recently, for example, I was singing lustily the last line of the second stanza of *O Little Town of Bethlehem*, "... and praises sing to God the King, and peace to men on earth." Oops! Everyone else, at least those who were singing from the hymnal, sang "... and praises sing to God the King, and peace to all on earth." As that small change indicates, our current hymnal is the first to be sensitive to the question of inclusive language for the sake of gender equality, and changes turn up in a lot of places. Take the classic hymn for Thanksgiving, which we sang recently: *Come, Ye Thankful People, Come*; (again in the second stanza) I was singing, "*fruit unto His praise to yield*," and the current words are, "*fruit as praise to God we yield*." I think that probably those things irritate many of you a little, too. And our first reaction is, "No one should be changing what the original author wrote!" You wouldn't touch up the *Mona Lisa*, would you? Poems are an original work of art, and most original authors, I suspect, would agree with John Wesley who urged his followers in an introduction to one of the hymnals he produced for the "people called Methodists," not to "mend" or "alter" what he set before them. Alas! He never practiced what he preached; he mended and altered a lot of hymns himself! And so has practically everyone else. In fact, many of the hymns you know by heart, you learned in an altered form. I knew personally Earl Marlatt, the author of *Are Ye Able*, and he was never really reconciled to the change made early on to the last line in that hymn. He wrote, "*a beacon to faith, to love, and loyalty*." We all learned and sing, "*a beacon to God, to love, and loyalty*." There is more to be said next time. In the meantime, get used to it! Changing hymns is both an ancient and honorable practice.



## goose hollow family shelter

### ANNIE HEART

If I could have but one Christmas wish, it would be for everyone to find love and joy in community with each other and that all children would have enough to eat, good health, a safe home, and that no one would be turned away. "Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me."

Please check go to our newly designed webpage (<http://www.fumcpdx.org/GooseHollowFamilyShelter/>) for more information about Goose Hollow Family Homeless Shelter, a ministry program of First United Methodist Church. Many other denominations, businesses and individuals in the Portland community combine with us to serve up to 24 people nightly, more than half of which are children. We are always in need of volunteers and other resources.

## leadership training metro district

### METRO DISTRICT LEADERSHIP EVENT

The Metro District Leadership Event will be Saturday, January 21, 2006 at Portland First UMC. The theme of this event is: *Finding the Path, Honoring My Purpose*. The schedule is as follows:

9:00 - 9:30 AM	Registration
9:30 - 10:15 AM	Worship
10:45 - 11:45 AM	Workshops
12:00 - 1:00 PM	Lunch & Cokesbury Displays
1:00 - 2:00 PM	Workshops
2:15 - 3:00 PM	Closing Worship and Communion with Bishop Hoshibata

Registration is \$10.00 and is due by January 10, 2006. If you have questions about this event, please contact Paul Staat at the Metro District Office: 503/249-1851.

## circuit rider revised schedule

Due to the Christmas holiday, *The Circuit Rider*, the First Church newsletter will not resume publication until January 11, 2006. Articles will need to be submitted by Thursday, January 5, 2006.

Also, *The Circuit Rider* published on February 22, 2006 will be a special edition. It will feature our 2006 winter/spring program guide.

If you have items to submit to *The Circuit Rider* you may email them to Dave Jenkins, the editor at: [djenkins@fumcpdx.org](mailto:djenkins@fumcpdx.org).



## *special musical guests* willamette university chamber choir

The Willamette University Chamber Choir will be singing for our congregation on Sunday, January 8, 2006 in the 10:30 AM worship service. The Willamette Chamber Choir, directed by Dr. Wallace Long, is a 40-voice ensemble open by audition to all Willamette University students. A wide variety of literature selected from the Renaissance through the contemporary periods is studied and performed each year. The group tours annually throughout the Northwest and is frequently invited to perform at music conventions and workshops held by the American Choral Directors Association, Music Educators National Conference and Oregon Music Educators Association. In the summer of 2004, the Chamber Choir toured South Africa at the invitation of Archbishop Desmond Tutu. Please come and welcome the Willamette University Chamber Choir to our service of worship.

# LOOKING AHEAD TO 2006

### **CONFIRMATION CLASSES**

Confirmation classes for First UMC youth will begin Sunday, January 8, 2006 at 9:30 AM. In confirmation we will learn about and discuss our relationship with God; various aspects of worship, including the rituals and traditions that are a part of the Christian life; the meaning of Jesus' life; the importance of spiritual practices and disciplines; what it means to be a United Methodist today; and the various expressions of a life of faith. There will be six confirmation class sessions, followed by two sessions in which each student in the program will be matched with a mentor from the congregation. Confirmation Sunday will take place on March 19, 2006. If you are in the 7th/8th grade or older and would like to participate, call the church office 503/228-3195 or contact Paul Adams at [padams@fumcpdx.org](mailto:padams@fumcpdx.org).

### **PROGRAM GUIDE**

Look for new program offerings in the January Circuit Rider. In 2006, there will be new classes for adults, the formation of new Breaking Bread Groups, First Church Orientations for newcomers, Confirmation classes for youth, special after church forums, as well as the start-up of the 2006 Edition of Sunday School for all ages, youth group programs, our wonderful music program, and a variety of other opportunities. Look for details after the holidays.

### **ESSENTIAL SPIRITUALITY**

*Essential Spirituality: Exercises from the World Religions to Cultivate Kindness, Love, Joy, Peace, Vision, Wisdom and Generosity* is an eight-part series begins Wednesday, January 11, 2006.

Using Roger Walsh's book, *Essential Spirituality*, this eight-part series will examine seven central practices involved in awakening the heart and mind. Integrating the spiritual principles of Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, and Taoism. This material looks at how to integrate the spiritual practices from these traditions into one's daily life. Filled with stories, exercises, meditations, myths, case histories, prayers, and practical advice, we will utilize Walsh's insights to enhance our own spiritual journeys. Cost: \$25 for the book. Call the office by January 6th to register. Sessions will be held on Wednesdays from 9 to 10:00 AM.

# around the parish

## OUR PRAYERS ARE WITH ...

*The Rev. Ben Owre*, following a cardiac problem on Sunday;  
*John Zuidema*, who is at Meridian Park Hospital  
for treatment of an infection;  
*Joan Hill*, now home from the Rehab Center;  
*Chuck Currie*, who is scheduled for surgery;  
*Agnes Zach and Nancy Fortner*, as they grieve the death of  
a good friend, *Connie Hossfeld*, who died in a traffic accident  
in Montana;  
*Julie Martell*, receiving treatment for MS at St. Vincent's Hospital;  
*Hal Carey*, upon the death of his wife, *Lorna Woodmansee-Carey*.  
Lorna was a former member of this church.

## CONTINUED PRAYERS FOR ...

*Jane Rhodes, Al Leonard, Jim Whitcomb, Bob & Virginia Anderson,*  
*Gloria Misar, Agnes & Dick Clark, Tom & Erik Iverson, Beth Iverson,*  
*and Janet Bennett.*

CHURCH  
READER  
BOARD  
QUIP

*"If God carried a wallet ...  
your picture would be in it!"*

### 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 **January 11, 2006.**

**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](mailto:office@fumcpdx.org) or place in the *Circuit Rider* box in the office.

# thanks

words of appreciation

## LYLE AND BETH IVERSON

We are trully grateful for the many prayers, heartfelt messages, flowers and food sent on our behalf during my recent illness. I am especially grateful to Terry Connell and Dr. Bill Guyer for taking me to the hospital so quickly. Thanks again to all of our church family for your many kindnesses.

# update

a new address

Tom & Colleen Foster have a new address:  
14170 SW Bonnie Brae St., Beaverton, OR  
97005-4331, Home Phone: 503/641-3479,  
email:[tcfooster2@verizon.net](mailto:tcfooster2@verizon.net). Rev. Tom Foster  
is our Minister of Pastoral Care. Tom's regular  
office days are Monday, Tuesday & Thursday.  
Office email: [tfoster@fumcpdx.org](mailto:tfoster@fumcpdx.org), phone:  
503/228-3195 ext. 233.