



THE CIRCUIT RIDER

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

the E edition

March 8, 2006
Volume 10, Issue 05

THIS SUNDAY

MARCH 12, 2006

WORSHIP
10:30 AM

Sermon
Rev. Dr. Arvin Luchs

Children's Time
Rev. Dr. Lowell
Greathouse

Commission Volunteers
in Mission to
Handsboro UMC



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.



Lent is a season of repentance and a time to prepare for the celebration of Easter. It is a time of self-reflection and renewal. Join us for First Church's annual Lenten Suppers and programs.

This year's theme is: *Ministries of Compassion and Service*. Come each week for a special meal, beginning at 5:30 PM, and then enjoy a variety of programs, as each week we explore the meaning of compassion and service in our time. Supper will be served from 5:30 to 6:30 PM. Program 6:30 to 7:30 PM. Child care will be provided.

SOUP'S ON

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

LENTEN SERIES

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15

A Conversation: What Compassion and Service Means to Me

Come hear adults and youth of First Church share in a conversation as to what compassion and service means to them.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 22

A Kenyan Challenge

Diane and Ron Ray are UMC missionaries who worked in Kenya for 11 years. They will describe HIV-AIDS ministry there, as well as the challenges of teaching in a Kenyan seminary.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 29

Volunteers in Mission: Gulfport, Mississippi

Come hear the exciting report of our own Volunteer In Mission team upon their return from Gulfport, Mississippi. This team, led by Dee Poujade, will share their experiences of ministry with our partner church there.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5

Our Heritage of Compassion and Service

A look at the long history of compassion and service in Methodism and the Christian faith. Steven Lewis, who is the Program Director for the Northwest House of Theological Studies, will be the featured speaker.



memo

Rev. Dr. Arvin Luchs

A “benediction” according to Philip Pfatteicher author of the *Dictionary of Liturgical Terms** is, simply, “Imparting God’s blessing upon God’s people at the close of a service.” But a good benediction is more than that—much more. In skillful hands, those closing moments can be a sermon in miniature—a tiny gemstone of truth that glistens and beams with meaning.

The Apostle Paul knew that. His letters are sprinkled with moments of benedictions—nuggets of blessing and challenge that give his writings power and meaning. Our own Dr. Greathouse, who normally offers our Sunday benedictions, has a wonderful way of offering a few, carefully chosen words that pull together the themes of the day and send us forth with new insight and vision. Clearly last Sunday’s guest preacher, the Rev. Dr. Bob Edgar, is a master of the craft of the benediction.

As I write, I am basking in the afterglow of his visit. Dr. Edgar is, as many of you discovered, a remarkable Christian leader. An ordained United Methodist minister, six-term congressman from Pennsylvania, one-time president of the School of Theology at Claremont, he is now the General Secretary of the National Council of Churches in Christ. The NCCC has the formidable task of gathering nearly three dozen faith groups around a common table to work together in Christ’s name.

During his whirlwind stop in Portland, Edgar addressed ecumenical church leaders, spoke to the Portland City Club, inspired a day-long conference of Methodist leaders at the MFSA Spring Convocation, and preached at our Sunday service. (Edgar’s City Club talk will be broadcast on public radio, community-access television and is available, free, as an MP3 download at <http://pdxcityclub.org/forums-events/friday-forums.php#ListenOnline>)

He brought a message to those he calls “middle church”—the vast majority of good hearted Christians who are diligently and quietly worshipping in local churches across our land, conscientiously nurturing their children in the faith, active in works of charity and striving to lead decent, responsible and faithful lives. In other words, people like you and me.

Edgar is convinced that we are embarrassed by the bellicose ranting of the radical right—people like Pat Robertson and Jerry Falwell, —and are seeking a positive and inspiring vision of faith that is relevant, reasonable, balanced and careful. He sees an emerging consensus of thoughtful evangelicals, mainline and orthodox Christians who are compelled by their faith in Christ to join hands in efforts to fight poverty and hunger, combat global warming, work for peace, and advocate for the rights of all people.

He has written a book (to be published in September by Simon and Shuster) which argues that there is such great power nascent in “middle church” that if it awakened to the reality of our world, and responded to God’s call to mission, it could literally transform society for Christ.

Sunday’s benediction was a call to arms for those of us in middle church. It originated, Edgar said, in the Order of St. Francis.

May God bless you with DISCOMFORT ...
At easy answers, half-truths, and superficial relationships,
So that you may live deep within your heart.

May God bless you with ANGER ...
At injustice, oppression, and exploitation of people,
So that you may work for justice, freedom, and peace.

May God bless you with TEARS ...
To shed for those who suffer from pain, rejection, starvation and war.
So that you may reach out your hand to comfort them
And to turn their pain into JOY.

And may God bless you with enough FOOLISHNESS...
To believe that you can make a difference in this world,
So that you can DO what others claim cannot be done. Amen



Rev. Dr. Bob Edgar

See you in (middle) Church! **Arvin**

(*Trinity Press International, Harrisburg, PA 1991)

adults at first

sunday classes

THE FELLOWSHIP OF SEEKERS

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

This class is currently discussing the book: *How to Be an Open-Minded Christian Without Losing Your Faith*, by Jan Linn.

CHANGING CHRISTIANITY

Sunday mornings 9:00 -10:15 AM in Room 202.

This class is studying *Religion and Public Life in the Northwest: The None Zone*. Copies will be available for purchase.

SHORT-TERM CLASSES ...

EDUCATION, EVOLUTION, AND INTELLIGENT DESIGN: HOW BIOLOGISTS ADDRESS INTELLIGENT DESIGN THEORY

Sunday, March 12 from 9:15 to 10:15 AM in the Fireside Room
Dr. Myles Jackson, Professor of Science at Willamette University, will discuss the current issues surrounding the national debate about evolution/intelligent design theory. Dr. Jackson is the Director of Science Studies and Chair of Humanities at Willamette. He will focus on the biological approach, discuss the background of the IDT/evolution debate, with time for questions.

STREAMS OF LIVING WATER: CELEBRATING THE GREAT TRADITIONS OF CHRISTIAN FAITH

Sundays, March 19 and then April 9 through June 11, 2006
from 9:15 to 10:15 AM / Fireside Room

Using Richard Foster's award winning book *Streams of Living Water*, this class will look at six dimensions of faith and practice that define the Christian tradition. Each historical movement emphasizes a different aspect of life and faith. They include the contemplative, holiness, charismatic, social justice, and incarnational dimensions of our faith. This study will examine these movements through the stories and living examples of faithful people whose lives defined each of these "streams." Rev. Lowell Greathouse will lead the discussions.

2006 UNITED METHODIST SUMMER CAMP PROGRAM

When: Sunday, March 19 - From 9:15 to 10:15 AM

Where: The Parlor (Room 110)

Come for this special information for parents, youth, children related to United Methodist Camps. Information will include: registration materials, scholarship process, opportunities for people interested in serving as counselors, attending camps as a family and more. A representative and display from the Camp Office will be on hand. Don't wait, make your summer camping plans today!



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, March 15, at 10:00 AM in the Parlor.

The Program: *Keepers of the Church* by Debbie Morris - Devotions & Hostess: Janet Bennett. Chair: Hazel Wells

RUTH GUILD

The Ruth Guild will meet Wednesday, March 15, at noon in Room 204.

Program: *Art* by Mary Coppett. Bring a sandwich. Dessert & beverage provided. Chair: Florence Snyder

READING GROUP

The Reading Group will meet Thursday, March 16 from 10:00 to 11:30 AM in the Library. The featured book: *Earth in the Balance, Ecology and the Human Spirit* by Al Gore will be presented by Hazel Wells.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR:

The UMW Quilt Luncheon will be Friday, April 28, 2006

FOR FIRST CHURCH SINGLES

Saturday, March 11 at 4:00 to 6:00 PM in Room 202

Calling all First Church Singles ... come share food, refreshments, conversation, and fun! Whether you are 28 or 58 come to this event to help us share ideas and explore the future of a single's ministry at First Church. Here's a chance to meet others who are single. RSVP through the church office: 503/228-3195. Questions: Call Lowell Greathouse at 503/228-3195 or by email at lgreathouse@fumcpdx.org.

music notes

please take note

CONCERT A GREAT SUCCESS

On the evening of February 25, 2006 an audience of over two hundred was entertained by both piano and vocal music provided by Elizabeth Caswell, piano and Byron Wright, tenor.

Ms. Caswell performed works by Scarlatti, Mozart and Schubert, along with three American hymn concert arrangements. After a standing ovation, she performed *Claire de Lune* by Debussy. Mr. Wright joined Ms. Caswell for a set of Richard Strauss lieder.

We were pleased to have Captain Washington, the Salvation Army Chaplin, present to say a few words after which a free will offering for the West Women's and Children's Shelter was taken. Over \$1700 was collected.

A huge "thank you" goes to both Elizabeth and Byron from all who attended for sharing their musical talents and giving us such a delightful evening!

LEADERSHIP TRAINING IN ACTIVE NONVIOLENCE

On Tuesday, March 14, from 8:30 AM to 1:30 PM there will be a Leadership Training in Active Nonviolence at Fuller Hall of the First Unitarian Church, 1011 SW 12th Ave, Portland.

There will be an Advanced leadership session, from 2:00 to 4:00 PM

Participants will strengthen their insight and leadership skills in active nonviolence and conflict transformation. You'll learn how to help others transcend lethal myths about conflict and nonviolence, and take their next step on the way of Shalom. The facilitators are Glen Gersmehl who has led workshops for over 1000 churches and Peter Bergel, executive director of Oregon PeaceWorks. This event is sponsored by St Luke Lutheran Peace & Justice Group, First Unitarian Peace Action Committee People of Faith for Peace, First United Methodist Church, Augustana Lutheran Church, Tualatin United Methodist Church.

The fee for this workshop is \$15 to \$30, on a sliding scale, including lunch. Some scholarships are available. For more information or to register, contact Annie Heart at 503/228-3195 ext 215 or e-mail her at ahheart@fumcpdx.org.

this & that

items of note

PARKER GROUP

On Saturday, March 11, 2006 Wid Bleything will make a video presentation of his trip showing castles, cathedrals, and wine country along the Rivers Rhine, Main, and Danube. Potluck lunch at 12:30 PM. Visitors are always welcome. (Room 202)

ESPECIALLY FOR NEWCOMERS

If you would like to officially join First United Methodist Church, then this two-hour session and simple meal is for you. Learn about First UMC, what it means to become a member of this congregation, and meet others who are interested in joining. This introductory session will be offered March 19, from noon to 2:00 PM in the Parlor. For more information or to register to be a part of one of the sessions, contact the church office at 503/228-3195. Child care is available.

FOOD AND FRIENDS

Food and Friends will be meeting for their March dinner out on March 10 at the Widmer Pub on 955 N. Russell. Dinner is at 6:30 PM and there is nursery care at the church at 6:00 PM. If interested, please contact Donna Clark at dclarkio@msn.com or 503/289-3829.

MARCH 15 AND 16, 2006: 55-ALIVE MATURE DRIVING

55-Alive is a unique program for older drivers. This popular course is offered three times a year at First UMC. Each day the class runs from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM. Irene Reid, from AARP, teaches this refresher course for drivers 50 years of age and over. Pre-registration is required. The cost is \$10. Make checks payable to: AARP. Register soon as space is limited.

ALL IS READY: JOIN THE PARTY

A Weekend Retreat for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender People and their Families and Allies at Suttle Lake Camp, Sisters, Oregon - Friday, March 17 through Sunday, March 19, 2006

This retreat is an opportunity to claim more fully who you are as a child of God, to discover good news in the beloved community, and to invite others to take their place at the banquet table. It will include: community building, sharing stories, worshiping and playing in the beauty at Suttle Lake.

The retreat leader is Rev. Karen Oliveto. Fees: \$99 for each adult, \$89 for youth ages 13-18 and \$74 for children 3-12. To download a registration form go to: www.gocamping.org

FOR THE PEACE OF THE WORLD

When: Sundays, April 23 through June 4 -
From 9:15 to 10:15 AM

Where: Room 204

What does the Gospel of Jesus teach us about individual and collective peace-making in today's world? This six-week study: *For the Peace of the World*, is a Christian Curriculum on International Relations and will be taught by our Director of Outreach, Annie Heart.

GLOBAL WARMING

A SCIENTIFIC AND POLITICAL UPDATE

Sunday, April 30, 2006 in the Fireside Room
from noon to 1:30 PM.

Light snacks and refreshments will be available.

Child care will be available.

The Planet Church Committee of Portland's First United Methodist Church is pleased to present Dr. Eban Goodstein, professor of Economics at Lewis and Clark College. His talk, *Global Warming: A Scientific and Political Update*, will address what many have described as the most serious problem facing us today. Dr. Goodstein is the author of numerous books on the environment, including the 2004 textbook, *Economics and the Environment*. He has also written for *Scientific American*, *The New York Times* and *The Economist*, and has spoken extensively on the subject of global warming.

For more information, contact Annie Heart at aheart@fumcpdx.org
or 503/228-3195 ext 215.

FAMILY OF FRIENDS: FAMILIES MENTORING CHILDREN

When: Sunday, April 23

Noon to 1:30 PM

Where: Fireside Room

A large number of children in the United States are living in situations that destroy their chances of growing into healthy, productive human beings. "Mentoring in America," research sponsored by the AOL Time Warner Foundation, found that there are 17.6 million young people who need or want mentors. Families like yours can make a difference in the life of a child who is growing up in poverty and community violence. Family of Friends is a program that matches volunteer families with six-to-nine-year-old children in need. The families serve as "mentors," or "guides" encouraging the child's positive growth and development. This forum will introduce you to this wonderful, life changing program. Kersti Pettit-Kekel, First Church Coordinator for Family of Friends, and Kris Linden, Executive Director of the program, will be on hand to discuss this important program and answer your questions. The definition of family is all-inclusive. Come and learn more!

shovel
&
rake



Our mild January and early February meant that our late-winter pruning had to be done earlier than usual due to plants and trees budding out earlier. Thus, we had to rush through pruning to prevent damage to plants. The two heavily pruned Maple trees in the sidewalk on the southside of our sanctuary are not healthy and are scheduled to be replaced later this year. Their replacements will be more desirable for those spots. Plans are to widen the squares cut into concrete and use brick for filling in around the base. This new look should make that spot in our landscape more attractive.

Other landscape improvements are scheduled for this year. We look forward to replacing some plants and finishing the landscaping behind the gym, as weather and time permit. Our attendance is holding up well through the winter months. We are glad to welcome another staff member, Annie Heart, to our roster. She joined the Shovel and Rake Gang this February. You are invited to join this happy crew each Thursday morning from 8:00 to 11:00 AM.

around the parish

hahahahaha

WE CELEBRATE WITH ...

Kevin & Jennifer Scott, on the baptism of their daughter,
Kaitlyn Elora Allison Scott, baptized February 19, 2006;
David Rexford & Corey Morris, on the baptism of their daughter,
Riley Marie Morris-Rexford, baptized February 19, 2006.

CONTINUED PRAYERS FOR ...

Jim Whitcomb, Al Leonard, Agnes & Dick Clark, Tom Iverson and Bob & Virginia Anderson

thanks
our gratitude

MARILYN BEYER

Much thanks to all the people who worked behind the scenes to facilitate the memorial service for Gloria Misar: David Jenkins, Debbie Morse and Elma Benefiel. Also, thank you to the pastoral staff and Earl Riddle for their support during our time of loss.

ON GOAL SETTING ...

A young man aspired to take up the sport of archery. One day he was driving past a farm and he noticed targets painted on several of the barns. To his amazement all of the targets had arrows directly in their bulls-eyes. He stopped at the farm and sought out the amazingly accurate archer.

“How did you manage to hit the bulls-eye of every single target?” asked the young man eagerly.

The farmer smiled and said, “I pull back on the bow with all my strength and let the arrow fly! Wherever the arrow lands ... that’s where I paint my target!”

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 22, 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 or place in the *Circuit Rider* box in the office.