



THE CIRCUIT RIDER

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

*the **E** edition*

May 17, 2006
Volume 10, Issue 10

**THIS
SUNDAY**

May 21, 2006

WORSHIP
10:30 AM

***YOUTH
SUNDAY***

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.

**YOUTH
SUNDAY**

MAY 21



Christmas
in
Spring

Christmas isn't just for December, a once-a-year reminder in the cold midwinter. Christmas is for everyday, and for everyday Christians. God's gift of the infant Jesus -- God's presence made known to us is a message for all time, and for every moment.

Join us on May 21st for Youth Sunday when we'll be celebrating Christmas. Sing along with your favorite Christmas Carols and remember the joyfulness that Christmas brings as our First Church Youth Program presents Christmas in the Spring. We will also be recognizing our High School Seniors who are graduating this year.

The Giving Tree will be set up in the narthex as we kick off this year's Youth Mission Trip to Idaho. Please plan to take a tag from the tree and make a donation to the trip. This year we are offering two different week long mission opportunities: One in the Portland area and one in Idaho Falls, Idaho.



HONORING
our
graduates



memo

Rev. Dr. Arvin Luchs

Moral and ethical issues seldom come wrapped in crystal clear packaging tied with strings of certainty—at least the ones that matter don't. That fact struck me so bluntly when a member wondered why our church—and our conference—had not spoken boldly against gambling.

Our Social Principles certainly mince no words:

Gambling is a menace to society, deadly to the best interests of moral, social, economic, and spiritual life, and destructive of good government. As an act of faith and concern, Christians should abstain from gambling and should strive to minister to those victimized by the practice. Where gambling has become addictive, the Church will encourage such individuals to receive therapeutic assistance so that the individual's energies may be redirected into positive and constructive ends. The Church should promote standards and personal lifestyles that would make unnecessary and undesirable the resort to commercial gambling—including public lotteries—as a recreation, as an escape, or as a means of producing public revenue or funds for support of charities or government.

(The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, 2004, The United Methodist Publishing House, Paragraph 163G.)

Yet, for 14, years this state has sanctioned public lotteries and electronic gaming with a portion of the proceeds bringing revenue to help fund public education. If media reports are accurate, many restaurants and bars depend on their 'cut' from state lotteries and video poker to keep their doors open.

Native governments have asserted their sovereignty and operate casinos in several places around the state. One of the most controversial issues in this year's election is the expansion of gaming into the Columbia Gorge. In addition, backed by gaming money, tribal leaders have supported political candidates, explored building a big-league baseball stadium in Portland, and were listed as a major sponsor of Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon's annual banquet held last week at the Hilton.

I understand that a group of investors—not native American—are considering development of the old greyhound racing track in Wood Village as a casino.

Gambling addictions continue to be a major cause of personal and family problems in Oregon.

While legalized gambling has become more and more a fixture in our community, the churches' opposition has been largely confined to a paragraph in a denominational publication that is seldom spoken aloud. Is it because this seemingly straightforward moral issue masks complex questions that defy simple conclusions?

It is a shame that our state must turn to games of chance and prey on those addicted to gambling to fund basic services. But funding public services is a knotty issue. People of faith and values have not expended much energy, let alone coalesced, around meaningful alternatives to pay the cost of public education, community safety, mental and physical health, and support for the needy.

The proud men and women whose ancestors first inhabited this land have endured centuries of racism, economic exploitation, broken treaties as well as cultural and geographic dislocation. Tragically, many native nations are forced to depend on recreational gambling and its related hospitality industry for economic sustenance. People of faith and values have exerted little effort and energy to find economic alternatives—let alone seriously address the broader justice issues.

Maybe we don't speak more boldly because, at some level, we are a bit entranced by the lure of chance and "lady luck." Christendom does not think with one mind on this matter. Some communions embrace bingo and other gaming in their programs. Who among us has not yielded to the hope for a quick buck with a lottery ticket or a nickel slot machine—or a weekend in Vegas? Too often our congregations have succumbed to door prizes, drawings or sweepstakes to add a little "fun" to church events.

In a few weeks United Methodists from across the state will gather in Nampa, Idaho for our Annual Conference Sessions. Among the matters under consideration is our moral witness to a state entranced by gambling. It could be a lively and engaging discussion! Are we willing to talk about it?

See you in Church!

Arvin

adults at first

sunday classes

THE FELLOWSHIP OF SEEKERS

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

This class is discussing the book: *A Hidden Wholeness: The Journey Towards an Undivided Life*, by Parker Palmer. Everyone is welcome!

CHANGING CHRISTIANITY

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

We are currently studying *Proverbs of Ashes: Violence, Redemptive Suffering, and the Search for What Saves Us*, by Rita Nakashima Brock and Rebecca Ann Parker

STREAMS OF LIVING WATER:

THE GREAT TRADITIONS OF CHRISTIAN FAITH

Sundays, Through June 11, 2006

from 9:15 to 10:15 AM / Fireside Room

Using Richard Foster's *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. (No session on 5/21 and will resume on 5/28.)

FOR THE PEACE OF THE WORLD

When: Through June 4 - From 9:15 to 10:15 AM in 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.

reconciling ministry

pride parade

PRIDE PARADE 2006

Save the date to march in Portland's Gay Pride Parade with the R +Friends group from First United Methodist Church. The parade is on Sunday, June 18, at 11 AM. There will be a contingent from First UMC that will march following the morning worship service. Watch for more details in the next *Circuit Rider*.



SPECIAL CHURCH CONFERENCE

There will be a special Church Conference at 12:15 PM on Sunday, June 4, 2006 in the Fireside Room. It will feature the annual election of officers and an update on our visioning process.

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.

QUILT LUNCHEON A SUCCESS!

The UMW Quilt Luncheon was again a great success under the leadership of the dynamic duo of Art & Trudy Kayser, along with their extended family. Tickets sales were handled by Mary Covert, Ruth Green, Joyce Hulse, Kitty Riddle, and Carrie Saito. Virginia Bender designed the table center pieces and Florence Snyder rounded up the 20+ volunteer servers. Thanks to all the volunteers who helped with food preparation, serving, and clean-up. The proceeds from the luncheon will be used for scholarships in Kenya and UMW mission projects around the world.

CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

The Circle of Friends will meet Wednesday, May 24 The program will consist of a luncheon and a visit to the Women's Prison at Coffee Creek Correctional Institution. For information contact Ruth Green or Leah Vislisel

UMW EXECUTIVE BOARD

The UMW Executive Board will meet Wednesday, May 31 at 10:00 AM in the Parlor. Come and help plan next year's programs. Send ideas to Colleen Foster or call her at 503/641-3479.

SCHOOL OF CHRISTIAN MISSION

Harvesting Peace: The School of Christian Mission will be offered:

July 13-16, 2006

George Fox University, Newberg, Oregon

July 27-30, 2006

Northwest Nazarene University, Nampa, Idaho

Three studies are available.

- 1) Spiritual Growth Study: Shalom-Peace-Salaam Why do religions ferment such violence? What is the path to peace?
- 2) Mission Study: Globalization: Its Impact on Our Lives. That which occurs in one part of the world affects people in many other parts of the world.
- 3) Geographic Mission Study: India-Pakistan This year, 2006, is the 150th year of Methodist ministry in India and Pakistan. Registration deadline for Newberg is June 29th. Contact Trudy Kayser for registrations forms.

from outreach

annie heart

peace

an ecumenical service

OUTREACH COMMITTEES

The Outreach Retreat Follow-Up Re-Connect Potluck Planning Meeting will be Wednesday May 24, 2006 from 6:15 PM to 8:30 PM in Collins Hall.

As a follow-up to the January Outreach Retreat, all outreach committees are invited to meet together again on May 24, 2006 to reconnect with our First Church Vision for Community Outreach.

- We will begin with a potluck at 6:15 PM. Please bring a dish to share. Beverages will be provided.
- Revisit the Outreach Vision Statement
- Explore and deepen our connections related to outreach and community ministries, and discuss how to integrate our work as we think about Retreat Goals around "What we vision First Church looking like in 2006, and where we would like to be two years from now"
- Break into committees to meet and make plans for the fall. Regather to share our planning and adjourn by 8:30 PM.

If you are a member of Church and Society, Planet Church, the Goose Hollow Family Shelter, Global Outreach, the Hunger Ministry Team, the Health Care Task Force, United Methodist Women, or coming on as a new member to an outreach group you are welcome.

Please join the interfaith community as we gather to pray for peace in Iraq on Sunday, May 21 at 4:00 PM at Muslim Education Trust, 10330 SW Scholls Ferry Road, Tigard. This is a unique opportunity to join hands with your neighbors from across the city to celebrate a shared commitment to peace. A Prayer Service for Peace in Iraq: A Service of Lamentation and Hope, will conclude with Muslim afternoon prayers. Immediately following the service, there will be a potluck/barbecue. Please bring a side dish. No pork or alcohol. Sponsored by Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, Interfaith Alliance, People of Faith for Peace, Muslim Educational Trust, Augustana Lutheran Church, St. Luke Lutheran Peace and Justice, Episcopal Peace Fellowship, Tualatin United Methodist Church, Clergy and Laity Concerned About Iraq, First Unitarian Universalist and St. Andrew Catholic Church.

summer fun at first

agnes zach

VBSx2

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL X2

June 15-16, First Presbyterian Church opens their doors to a Kindergarten-5th Grade VBS: Treasure Island. This all-day VBS is open to family and friends. Cost: \$25.00 for two-days. Before/After care can be arranged and 1-day options are available for schools that finish on June 15.

June 19-21: First United Methodist Church and the Idaho Falls Mission Group present VBS for Preschool-2nd Grade. From 10:00-12:00, we will be exploring God's Word using a farm-theme. Anyone with animals or decorations--let us know! Cost is \$10.00.

A SUMMER POTLUCK

On Wednesday, June 21 at 6:00 PM join First Church families as they celebrate the summer ministry of the Idaho Falls Mission youth group! There will be a variety of family games to kick-off summer fun. Bring your potluck dish to share as well celebrate the official beginning of Summer in Portland.

ALL-CHURCH PICNIC

On Sunday, July 16 there will be an All-Church Picnic. It will be bigger, better, greener and cooler than last year's! We return to Oaks Park with a bigger location on the grass. Over 100 people enjoyed our picnic in the park in 2005, so don't miss out this year! We'll provide the main dish and beverages. You provide a side-dish, dessert and the fun! Event begins at 1:00 pm. Collins Kitchen is available to store your special dish during morning worship. Bring your outdoor games and enjoy the afternoon.



back from brazil

a report



PRIMETIMERS RETURN FROM BRAZIL

The Methodist Church of Brazil takes John Wesley's principles seriously. Its goal, according to the National Plan of the Methodist Church in Brazil (2001), is to witness God's justice, God's plan for humanity, and God's mercy. Children are a primary focus of this mission. First UMC members Pat and Cal Brockman, Colleen and Tom Foster and Dee Poujade were privileged to see the Brazilian Methodist Church in action when they recently participated in a Primetimers event, hosted by long-term GBGM missionaries Gordon and Teca Greathouse.

Shade and Fresh Water (*Sombra e Agua Fresca*) was developed to protect children who would otherwise become street children, at the mercy of exploitative adults. Because children only attend school four hours a day, the Project is designed to provide children ages 6-14 with a safe environment in which they can learn about God, receive help with their studies and participate in enrichment activities, such as music, dance, computers and crafts. The San Gabriel Community Center, started by the Greathouses early in their mission work, has become a prototype for the more than 50 Shade and Fresh Water projects that now operate throughout Brazil.

Some of the projects are small in scope - but all are large in heart. One that the Primetimers group visited was housed in a church of 135 members - yet it offered care for 50 children (25 each in the morning and afternoon), utilizing volunteers almost exclusively to operate its program!

During their two weeks in Brazil, the Primetimers also visited Methodist churches, schools, and a homeless shelter that serves up to 400 people every day. They also visited the colonial mining town of Ouro Preto, rode a cog wheel train to see Rio de Janeiro's famous Christ the Redeemer statue, and enjoyed the warm hospitality of the Brazilian people.

A program featuring photos and commentaries on the trip will be held after church on May 21, following a potluck lunch in Room 202. Anyone who would like more information about upcoming Primetimers events can go to www.primetimers.org.

internship

apply now

FIRST UMC INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

First United Methodist Church and Society for Social Justice are seeking a college, university student or other young adult, from First United Methodist Church, interested in participating in an Internship Program. This internship would be with a nonprofit organization, preferably affiliated with First United Methodist Church, whose mission or ministry reflects the spirit of Jesus' words, "I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you welcomed me; I was naked and you clothed me; I was sick and you visited me; I was in prison and you came to see me."

This is an opportunity to gain practical experience, under the direction of a person experienced in a profession or community service setting that reflects the interest and/or passion of the intern. This is a temporary position with emphasis on education rather than employment, the scope of which can be designed to fit the needs of both the intern and the organization served, based on the goals and desired learning experience of the Internship. This is a paid internship funded by a private grant made to First United Methodist Church.

If interested in applying for this internship position or have questions regarding it, please contact Annie Heart at 503/228-3195 x 215 or email: Aheart@fumcpdx.org for a complete description of the Internship Guidelines.

healthcare

a forum

The Inter-religious Action Network and the Vision Action Network are having a forum on *Health Care - What You Can Do?* on Thursday, June 1, from 8:30 AM until noon at Sunset Presbyterian Church, 14986 NW Cornell Rd. Reservations need to be made by May 25th. The cost is \$15 and payable to the Vision Action Network, 3700 SW Murray Blvd. Ste 190, Beaverton, OR 97005. The Program includes *20 Things Your Faith Organization Can Do*. For more information, contact Vision Action Network 503/846-5792 or email van@co.washington.or.us

around the parish

prayers and concerns

thanks

a note of gratitude

WE PRAY FOR ...

John Cobb, at Kaiser, Sunnyside, recovering from pneumonia;
Eleanor Stubbs, having surgery on Thursday, May 18 at Providence;
Julie Martell, having surgery at St. Vincent's on Thursday, May 18;
Ted Hoch, making good recovery, at Robison Jewish Health Center,
following hip replacement;
Karen Bennett, daughter-in-law of Janet Bennett, had cancer surgery in
California on Monday, May 15;
The mother of Susan Ng, now on hospice because of cancer.

CONTINUED PRAYERS FOR ...

Al Leonard, Dick & Agnes Clark, Jim Whitcomb and Tom Iverson.

FROM MARILYN WEBER

I wish to thank the church community, the pastors and members who held me in their prayers during my recent eye surgery. I appreciated the pastoral visit, phone calls, greeting cards, food and all the kindnesses extended during my convalescence. Most of all I am grateful to God for His healing presence.



FIFTIETH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY: REV. ROBERT & SARA MCNEIL

The children of Rev. Robert and Sara McNeil invite you to share in the celebration honoring their 50th Wedding Anniversary on Sunday, June 4, 2006 from 4:00 to 8:00 PM at the Russelville Park Retirement Center, 20 SE 103rd Ave at East Burnside, Portland, OR

FIFTIETH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY: REV. TOM & COLLEEN FOSTER

The children of Rev. Tom & Colleen Foster invite you to share in the celebration honoring their 50th Wedding Anniversary on Sunday, June 11, 2006 in Collins Hall, following worship.

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 **May 31, 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.