



THE CIRCUIT RIDER

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

the E edition

June 28, 2006
Volume 10, Issue 13

THIS SUNDAY

July 2, 2006

COMMUNION SUNDAY

WORSHIP
10:30 AM

COMMUNION
MEDITATION

Rev. Dr. Arvin Luchs

A CONVERSATION
WITH OUR
CHILDREN

Rev. Dr. Lowell
Greathouse

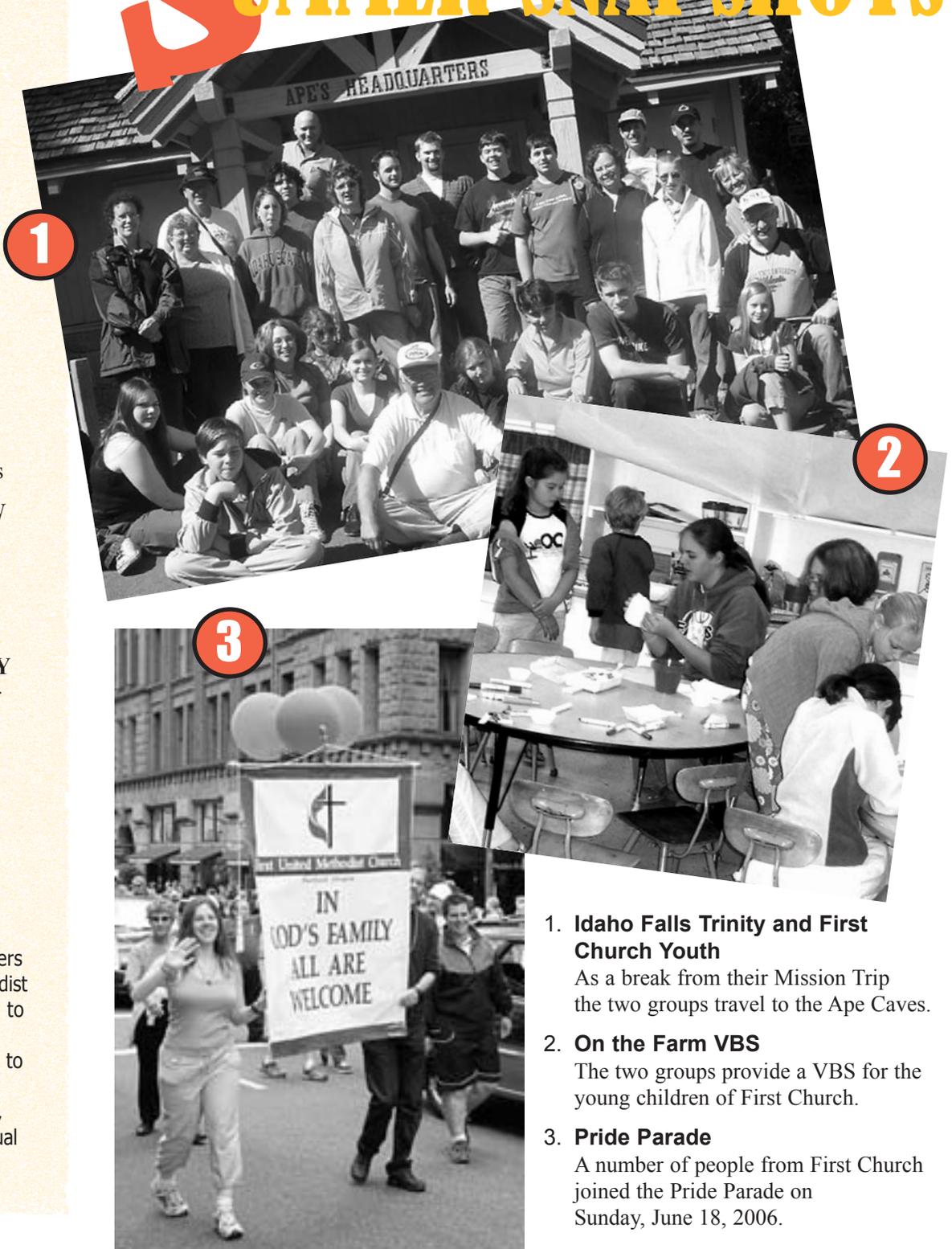
FISH SUNDAY

Bring food for
the barrels.



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.

SUMMER SNAPSHOTS



1

2

3

- 1. Idaho Falls Trinity and First Church Youth**
As a break from their Mission Trip the two groups travel to the Ape Caves.
- 2. On the Farm VBS**
The two groups provide a VBS for the young children of First Church.
- 3. Pride Parade**
A number of people from First Church joined the Pride Parade on Sunday, June 18, 2006.



conference with a difference by Paul Nickell

If there's a word to sum up the 38th annual gathering of the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference, held June 6-10 in Nampa, Idaho, that word might be "change."

For the first time in memory, small covenant groups called "Discipleship Groups" met daily to engage in worship, Bible study, prayer and discussion using a structured guide. This new way of "holy conferencing," instituted by Bishop Hoshibata this year, is actually patterned after an old way of doing business. Holy conferencing, one of the hallmarks of Methodism, harks back to John Wesley's "United Societies." Other changes this year were plenary sessions that were recast as "Living Into the Connection," and periods for studying two important social issues, gambling and immigration. In all that we did, the bishop vigorously challenged conference members to ask of themselves, "Are we giving our very best to God?" As one observer put it: "Well, this is a conference with a difference!"

First Church had a number of representatives there. Here are snippets from their reports. Read the full version of these reports online at www.fumcpdx.org.

CHERYL BITTLE, Lay Member

Celebrating 50 years of women in ministry in the Methodist Church was an extraordinary experience. It used various quotes from past women leaders as well as a delightful video interview with the Rev. Grace Weaver, retired, one of the first ordained women Methodist ministers. She shared very positive comments about her efforts and achievements and was most pleased to be labeled a pioneer.

MARY COVERT, Lay Member

The high points of conference were the encounters with thoughtful, concerned people, some of whom I had never met and some of whom I had known about before. The conference speaker, the Rev. Elaine Stanovsky, was very energetic, very much concerned with the church, and full of ideas, delivering a memorable sermon on the concept of togetherness and apart.

MARILYN OUTSLAY,

Representing the General Board of Pension & Health Benefits

I personally very much enjoyed the two laity workshops I attended that were presented by Troy Plummer, national executive director of the Reconciling Ministries Network. Our bishop was very gracious in introducing Troy to the conference session and allowing him to speak. This would not have happened in most of our conferences around the nation.

JOHN ALLAN, District Youth Representative

For me, the most impressive thing about Annual Conference was the connectional system. The Oregon-Idaho Conference is a huge network of people and friends, and everybody knows everybody (not exactly, but it certainly seemed that way). Even I, a first-timer youth representative, knew a few other youth as well as a number of other lay and clergy. Along with this sense of community came a strong emphasis at conference on working together rather than working for one's own goals. ... We weren't at Annual Conference simply so that we could have one more vote for our position on our pet issue, we were there to try and do what was best for the church and for all God's people.

A memorable highlight for many came on the final evening as we witnessed the ordination of our former youth director, Darcey Gritzmacher, to be a clergy elder in full connection. It was a moment that reminded all of us of our deep connection with one another, as individuals and as congregations. And that, praise God, is one thing that hasn't changed.

sprc
a farewell



FROM THE STAFF PARISH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

We regret to announce the resignation of our very able Church Administrator, Debbie Morse. Debbie has felt the irresistible lure of family and grandchildren living in Texas and decided to move nearer to them. Debbie has been with us over five years and has been superb in her care for both the building and administrative support. We will miss her wonderful skills and great spirit in that important role.

While she has asked that there be no farewell gatherings, I know that you will join me in wanting to say goodbye with cards and gifts. They may be addressed to the church office in care of Shirley Blalock. Gifts may be directed to First United Methodist Church clearly marked for Debbie Morse's Farewell.

The leadership of the SPRC has been in conversation with Rev. Luchs and the staff to define a process for seeking Debbie's successor. More will be announced later.

Trudy Kayser, Mary Sagara,
SPRC Chairpersons.

adults at first

sunday classes

THE FELLOWSHIP OF SEEKERS

Sunday mornings from 9:15-10:15 AM in Room 134
Using Ron Miller's book, *The Gospel of Thomas: A Guidebook to Spiritual Practice*, this class is discussing an alternative Christian theology with an emphasis on translating its principles into daily practice. Anyone is welcome at any time during the course of the class.

CHANGING CHRISTIANITY

Sunday mornings 9:00 -10:15 AM in Room 202.
We are beginning a study of *Misquoting Jesus* by Bart Ehrman.

NEW SUMMER ADULT CLASS: READER'S THEATER

Join this six-week summer class at 9:15 AM in the Fireside Room and read three different plays together as a group. Plays to be read include:
July 9 & 16 *An Inspector Calls* by J.B. Priestley.
July 23 & 30 *Inherit the Wind* by Jerome Lawrence & Robert E. Lee.
August 6 & 13: *Song for a Sanctuary* by Rukhsana Ahmad.

youth & children

summer schedule

SUMMER SUNDAY SCHEDULE FOR CHILDREN

Welcome to Summer! The nursery is open each Sunday by 9:30 am. It is open during worship for children 3 years old and younger. A summer Sunday School class for children ages 4 through First Grade is available in Room 206. Class begins after the Conversation with Children in Worship. All other children are invited to participate in worship with their families.

SUMMER SUNDAY SCHEDULE FOR YOUTH

For the summer the Middle and High School Sunday School classes will be combined and meet at 9:30 AM in room 201. Also beginning June 18 evening youth groups will be using a bi-weekly meeting schedule. Middle School at 5:30 PM, UMY Dinner (both groups) at 6:30 PM, and High School UMY at 7:00 PM. Remember to check the website every week. The youth group schedule will be posted on the main page at <http://www.fumcpdx.org> starting every Monday for the following Sunday and on the youth bulletin board at church.

FIRST CHURCH ALL- CHURCH
PICNIC, SUN., JULY 16
OAKS PARK

BASEBALL



PORTLAND BEAVERS BASEBALL / FAITH NIGHT AT PGE PARK

On Wednesday, August 23, 2006 come cheer on the Portland Beavers against the Las Vegas 51s on a warm summer evening in August. There will be a pre-game concert, featuring Christian bands, beginning at 5:00 PM, talks by some of the players and then the game, beginning at 7:00 PM. Plan to park and meet at the church, it's a short walk or MAX ride to PGE Park. Bring the family! Cost: \$10.50, includes concert and the game. Deadline for registering: July 15, 2006

umw

united methodist women



UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

The next UMW Unit Gathering will be held the first Wednesday in September. All women are invited. President: Pat Brockman, 503/292-6270.

YOUNG WOMEN'S EVENT

Facets of our Spirit, Incorporating God in Our Daily Lives will be August 4-6, 2006 at Collins Retreat Center, Eagle Creek, OR. Young women ages 18 and up are welcome. Cost: \$100. Scholarships are available, plus subsidy for home childcare. Childcare is also available on site for children age two and younger. Contact Gloria Marple at 503/281-9020 or at g.g.marple@att.net for information. The registration deadline is July 20, 2006.

SCHOOL OF CHRISTIAN MISSION

Hurry, get your application from Trudy Kayser for the mission studies at George Fox University. You can sign for July 13-14 or July 15-16 or for all four days of study. The deadline is very near. Men and women are invited.

QUILT LUNCHEON MISSION GIVING

Thanks again to the Kayser family and the many volunteers who made the Quilt Luncheon a great success. Peggy Cook, UMW treasurer, reported a net sum of \$2760, all of which will go to support mission work for women, children, and youth in our country and around the world.

here I am, Lord

stewardship 2006

"Here I am, Lord ..."

These four words, the response a servant would give to his master, seem simple. Yet the Bible shows us time after time that when God's people respond to his call with this simple response, amazing things happen.

When God called Abraham, Abraham's obedient reply was, "Here I am, Lord." Abraham responded with faith and service.

At First United Methodist Church, we, like Abraham have been called and are blessed. In the past year, God has taken our financial offerings and our gifts of service and multiplied them to reach and touch the lives of many people.

By stewardship through faith, First United Methodist Church will continue to fulfill God's plans. May all of us be good stewards and answer the call.

Bev Graver, Stewardship Committee

REMEMBER!

FIRST SUNDAY FISH SUNDAY

Don't forget to bring food for the FISH Barrels on Sunday, July 2nd. There are people in need of food even in the summer!

health care

why health care reform?

Former Oregon Governor John Kitzhaber's led Archimedes Movement has recently agreed upon a Vision for a new health care system in Oregon that "maximizes the health of the Oregon population by creating a sustainable system which reallocates the public resources spent on health care today in a way that ensures universal access to a defined set of effective health services."

Why is this important? Most people in Oregon agree that the current system of health care in Oregon is broken. Health care costs are rising four times faster than the rate of inflation with more money spent funding Medicaid than any other public service in the state and yet 600,000 Oregonians are still left out of the healthcare system. The Archimedes Movement is not a plan, but a process currently underway to reach agreement on how best to reach the vision. It is expected that the resulting plan will be ready this winter and introduced into the Oregon State Legislature in January of next year. At the same time, it will be written as a state ballot initiative and signatures will be collected. This is a two-pronged concurrent approach

If this is going to succeed it must have strong public support in: (1) acknowledging the need, (2) providing "feedback" to the Movement regarding the emerging plan, and (3) supporting the approach by signing on to the movement through its web site www.ArchimedesMovement.org. Together we can make a meaningful change!

If you have any questions or comments about any the above, or what is going on elsewhere in health care, call me at 503/223- 4285 or email me at odpomeroy@msn.com.

Dick Pomeroy, First UMC Task Force Leader on Health Care

farmer's market

summer 2006



Later this summer, every Sunday after worship, we'll be able to purchase vine ripened tomatoes, green beans, onions, potatoes, and more. As soon as the organically grown vegetables are ready to harvest, refugee Meskhetian Turkish farmers who have settled here in Portland will bring their freshly picked produce here to First Church. Not only will we be enjoying the flavors of fresh organic produce, but we will be helping to support and encourage two families of refugee Meskhetian Turkish farmers who arrived in the Portland area last year. They are among the Meskhetian Turks who formerly inhabited Meskheta (Georgia), along the border with Turkey. They were deported to Central Asia in 1944 by Josef Stalin and settled within Kazakstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan. After having been relocated several times, they were dispersed over a number of countries of the former Soviet Union. In 2004, in cooperation with the governments of Russia and the United States, a resettlement program was begun to bring some of the Meskhetian Turks to the United States. Here in Portland, Mercy Corps is working with those who have settled here. Since they farmed in Russia for 16 years, they are eager to bring their produce to us on Sunday mornings, and to the Portland Farmers Market as well. Thanks to Mercy Corps, EMO, and our Planet Church and Hunger Task Force for organizing this opportunity for us to enjoy fresh produce and support these newcomers to Oregon! We're hoping for the Farmers Market to begin in late July. Watch for the announcement when the produce is ripe and ready for us to savor.

please note items of interest

FORUM: HOST AN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT?

Want to host a high school exchange student from Brazil, China, Germany, Japan or Korea? Students from these countries will arrive in Portland to participate in a cultural exchange by living with an American host family and attending an American high school. Learn more about participating in this wonderful opportunity. Will Romaine, from Education, Travel and Culture, will be in the Fireside Room at noon on Sunday, July 9 to discuss the program and answer questions.

ADULT TRAVEL:

TRANSITION PROJECTS: JEAN'S PLACE

On Tuesday, July 11, travel to Jean's Place, a homeless shelter, transitional shelter, and transitional housing program for women. Since 1969 Transition Projects has helped thousands of people transcend the streets of Portland. TPI offers a unique mix of services to help people overcome barriers to stable housing and employment. These services include: job training, continuing education, alcohol, drug and mental health counseling. A donation of \$5 for the Transition Projects, Inc. is recommended. Meet at the church to carpool at 10:00 AM. The deadline for reservation: July 1, 2006. Call: 503/228-3195 for reservations.

ADULT TRAVEL: WASHINGTON COUNTY AG

On Saturday, July 22 enjoy an educational tour of local farms. The tour bus is air-conditioned. A box lunch is included, as well as a summer picnic buffet on the deck at the new Tillamook Forest Interpretive Center. Bus departs promptly at NOON from Intel Jones Farm campus and returns at 8:00 PM. Cost is \$50 per person. Deadline for reservations is July 1, 2006. Call Debbie Morse at 503/228-3195 ext 222 for reservations.

MERCY CORPS

On Tuesday, July 25, 2006 join us for a trip to Mercy Corps. Based in Portland, Mercy Corps exists to alleviate suffering, poverty and oppression by helping people build secure, productive and just communities. The agency's programs currently reach 7 million people in more than 35 countries. Since 1979, Mercy Corps has provided over \$1 billion in assistance to people in 81 nations. Mercy Corps is a nonprofit organization with headquarters in Portland, Seattle, Cambridge, Washington, D.C. and Edinburgh, Scotland. A donation of \$5 for Mercy Corps is recommended. Meet at the church to carpool at 10:00 AM



golf & tennis RESCHEDULED

The Golf and Tennis Tournaments sponsored by Friends of Music and originally scheduled for Saturday, July 15, 2006 will be rescheduled for September 2006.

who are we ? Dr. Raymond E. Balcomb

The church has recently received a handsome gift in memory of Franklin Street Akin and his grandson, Franklin Street Akin II. It is a Communion Service from the former Grace Methodist Episcopal Church. (Grace M. E. was "spun off" from First M. E. in 1885 and it built a building at SW 12th and Taylor. When the two churches were reunited a generation later, the combined congregation used the newer building until our present building was built in 1957.) Franklin S. Akin was a Trustee, and apparently Communion Steward of Grace Church. I say "apparently" because that would be the logical way for him to have been the custodian of the communion ware. It was handed down in the family to his grandson whose widow, Dorothy Akin, now of Hood River has given it to us. We have a service from the First M. E. Church (which was at SW 3rd and Taylor, the "Taylor Street Church") which also was held by a church family for a couple of generations. Why such "furniture" was stored in private homes and hands, I have no idea; but possibly it was because the church buildings themselves had no suitable place for such storage and it became part of the Lay Communion Steward's responsibility to care for it. We already have a larger service which was used at Grace Church, so it may be that the service now given to us is the older (original?) one and fell into disuse when the larger one became necessary. By striking coincidence, Maribeth Collins (a member of our History and Archives Committee) is a grandchild (on her mother's side) of Franklin Street Akins. It was through her that Dorothy Akins arranged to give the gift. We expect that it will be on display from time to time and will probably be used on historically appropriate occasions. Thanks be to God!

around the parish

prayers and concerns

this & that

please note

WE PRAY FOR ...

Liz Caswell, in Iowa with her father, James Caswell, who is in ICU at the University of Iowa Medical Center;

John Cobb, and his family, as John continues his stay at Kaiser Sunnyside, and his wife, Betty, completes moving in to their new house;

Gene Fifield, home recovering from surgery;

Hilary Purtle, recovering from surgery at Good Samaritan;

Eleanor Stubbs, recovering from surgery and broken arm at home;

Alexandra Smith, home healing from surgery and preparing for dialysis;

Shirley Blalock's daughter, whose surgery is planned for July;

Allison Anderson's family, as they cope with a family death, life transitions, and cancer diagnosis of a close friend;

Nancy Beth Davis, celebrating her 60th birthday;

Tyler Joki and Teresa Barber, who were married June 24, 2006.

WE PRAY FOR THOSE WHO ARE GREIVING ...

Sandra Wood on the death of her father on May 31, in San Diego;

Carol Young on the death of her aunt, Alice Remlin, in Los Angeles;

Erin Riley on the death of her mother, Melba Riley, who died on May 29, here in Portland

Peggy Rockwood whose mother, Ruth Rockwood, died on May 27, in Tacoma, Washington.

A THANK YOU

We wish to thank the congregation for the many congratulatory and good wish messages sent for their 50th Wedding Anniversary. Elma thanks our minister, Arvin, and the UMW for honoring her for her service of wedding and memorial receptions for many years! It was a highlight in my life that I will long remember!

- Bob & Elma Benefiel

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Angelo Honjas upon his completion of requirements in attaining a Master of Science in Teaching - Music from Portland State University.

CONTINUED PRAYERS FOR ...

Janet Bennett, LaVonne Hawes, Al Leonard, Jim Whitcomb, Tom Iverson, and Dick & Agnes Clark

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 **July 12, 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.