

THE CIRCUIT RIDER

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

the **E** edition

a season of FORGIVENESS

February 21, 2007
Volume 11, Issue 04

THIS SUNDAY

February 25, 2007

WORSHIP
10:30 AM

PREACHING

Rev. Dr. Arvin Luchs

A CONVERSATION WITH OUR CHILDREN

Rev. Lowell Greathouse

LENTEN SUPPER SERIES

Lent is a season of repentance, as well as a time to prepare for the celebration of Easter. It is a time of self-reflection and renewal. We hope you will join us for First Church's Annual Lenten Suppers and Programs. This year's theme is: *A Season of Forgiveness*. Come each week for a special meal, beginning at 5:30 PM. Then enjoy a variety of programs, as each week we explore different aspects of the meaning of forgiveness in our lives and in our world. Child care will provided.

Supper is from 5:30 to 6:30 PM in Collins Hall

Program is from 6:30 to 7:30 PM in Collins Hall

*"... Be kind to one another,
tenderhearted, forgiving one another,
even as God in Christ forgave you."*

Ephesians 4:32

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." There is a suggested \$5.00 donation for the meal.

February 28 ■ The Practice of Forgiveness: Letting Go of Grudges and Resentment

Presenter: Judy Brodkey

March 7 ■ High and Low Community Dreams about Sin, Forgiveness and Justice

Presenters: Tom O'Connor, Ph.D and Tim Cayton

March 14 ■ Forgiveness After War & Genocide: The Legacy of Cambodia's Killing Fields.

Presenters: Clare E. Humphrey and Kilong Ung

March 21 ■ Forgiveness and Jubilee: "Forgive Us Our Debts ..."

Presenter: Chris Laing and Farley Maxwell

March 28 ■ Forgiveness as a Requisite to Liberation

Presenter: Tom H. Hastings

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.





memo

Annie Heart, Director of Outreach

A man out of work asked the church for help paying a late utility bill. I talked with the utility company and sent a check directly to the company to prevent interruption of service. The following week this same man called to ask if we could give him money to buy boots to wear to work. I sent him a check payable to the store where his work boots were sold. A few days later he called to say thank you because now he can pay his own utility bills.

When people are in need of assistance they often seek assistance from churches. The majority of people who come to First UMC for financial assistance truly need it. But how we help them is often a question of debate.

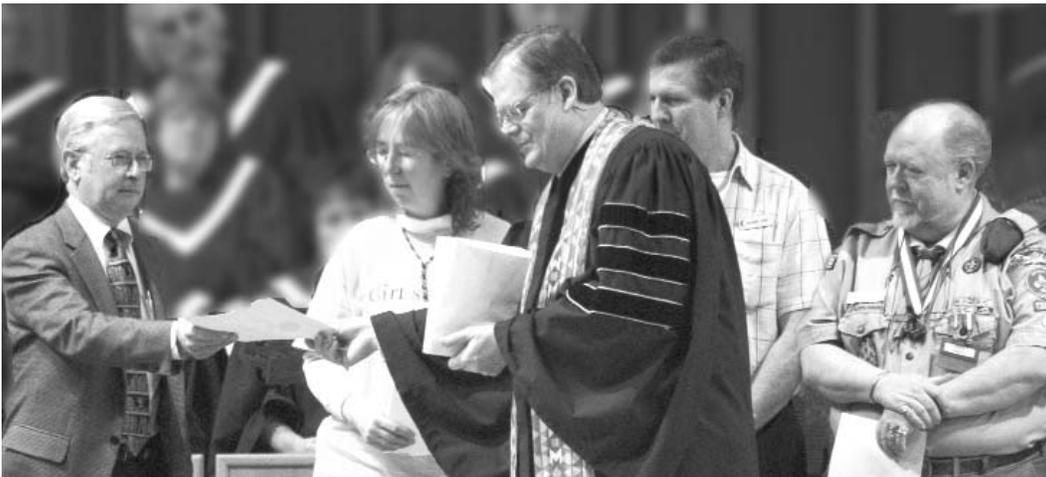
Our policy at First UMC is that we do not give people cash money. Unfortunately, we live in a world where it is not safe to carry cash or to give cash because some people have taken advantage of the generosity of others. We also want assurance that the help we give will do the most good and not cause harm.

The difficulty for me is that I don't want to judge the integrity of the person in need. When someone asks for help I try to see their request through the lens of compassion and love for my neighbor. Clearly scripture tells us to proclaim "good news" to those who are poor and release to those held captive by poverty. Love for those who are poor is at the heart of the teachings of the Gospel of Jesus, and if I can help someone access the resources they seek in their time of crisis, I truly believe in my heart that this may be a turning point for them. I seldom consider whether or not we can afford to help because I have faith that God has sent this person to us, and that God will provide the resources we need to care for this individual.

First UMC has only limited funds available to assist those living on the edge with food, rent, utilities, health care, travel and other special needs. As we can help, we will send the requested funds, or a portion thereof, directly to the agency that provides the service or resource needed (as in rent or utilities) thus assuring that the person making the request actually receives the gift they request. More often we refer people to other social service agencies who may be a better resource. We keep snacks and water on hand to share with our visitors in immediate need. If helpful, we also have access to Tri-met tickets and coupons for a lunch meal at Sisters of the Road Cafe.

Poverty is a condition that often separates people from community, but it shouldn't separate them from God's family. I don't want the economics of giving to stand in the way of people knowing the Good News of the living tradition of Jesus who did not actually preach, but instead showed us how to be loving relationships with our neighbors in need. Truly we cannot assist every person in need, but we can put aside our inclination to judge; we can stand with those living on the edge, open our hearts and our doors, grant shelter, invite them to eat at our table, and like Jesus we must speak out against the social and political structures that contribute to poverty.

Annie



SCOUTING SUNDAY

Pictured is Rev. Dr. Arvin Luchs presenting an award to Steve Seymour on Scouting Sunday, February 11, 2007. Also pictured are Cynthia Aaby, Richard Gard, and Marty Martin.

adults at first

sunday classes

THE FELLOWSHIP OF SEEKERS

Sunday mornings from 9:15-10:15 AM in Room 134
How do you introduce Christians to Islam? Amir Hussain, who loves both religions, speaks of both with the candor that only love can confer in his book, *Oil & Water*. While conveying a core of basic information, this cogent, deeply personal book dodges none of the questions that most sharply divide these two religions.

CHANGING CHRISTIANITY

Sunday mornings 9:00-10:15 AM in Room 202
Changing Christianity will begin a study of: *The Last Week*, by Marcus Borg and John Dominic Crossan.

February 25:	Preface and Chapter 1,	<i>Palm Sunday</i>
March 4:	Chapter 2	<i>Monday</i>
March 11:	Chapter 3	<i>Tuesday</i>
March 18:	Chapter 4	<i>Wednesday</i>
March 25:	Chapter 5	<i>Thursday</i>
April 1:	Chapters 6 and 7	<i>Friday and Saturday</i>
April 8:	Easter	No Class
April 15:	Chapter 8	<i>Easter Sunday</i>

THE POLITICS OF JESUS: MARCH 4, 11, 18, AND 25

Join us for this study of Obery Hendricks' book *The Politics of Jesus*. Who was Jesus? How was this first-century political revolutionary, whose teachings are meant to lead the way to freedom, turned into a meek and mild servant of the status quo? How is it possible to profess a belief in Jesus yet ignore the suffering of the poor and the needy? Just how truly faithful to the vision of Jesus are the many politicians who claim to be Christian? These are the kinds of questions Obery Hendricks, a biblical scholar, activist, and minister, asks in this provocative new book.

When: The class will meet on Sunday mornings in the Fireside Room from 9:15 to 10:15 AM.

fellowship

methodist hikers

SNOWSHOE HIKING

The February outing for UMC Hikers will be a snowshoe hike on Saturday, February 24, 2007. Snowshoeing is a great way to get exercise and enjoy the beautiful Mt. Hood area. Beginners are always welcome! We will meet in the Tigard UMC parking lot (9845 SW Walnut Place) at 8:15 AM to form carpools. We will do a three-mile hike in the Enid Lake area near Ski Bowl. Besides the snowshoes, poles and boots, participants should wear appropriate warm clothing and bring water, snacks and lunch. The cost will be about \$6-8 for the carpool, Sno-Park Permit and an optional snack stop on the way home. If you would like to participate or have any questions, please e-mail Paula Justice at jpaula354@aol.com or call her at 503/665.2206.

umw

united methodist women

WOMEN OF FIRST CHURCH: UMW

All women are invited to the following meetings. Note that the Unit Gathering is the first Wednesday of each month. President: Pat Brockman, 503.292.6270.

UMW BOARD MEETING

The UMW Board will meet Wednesday, February 28, at 10:00 AM in Room 110.

CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

The Circle of Friends will meet Wednesday, February 28, at 11:30 AM in Room 204. We will have a conversation with Annie Heart about the church's Outreach Ministries. Carrie is hostess and Joann will give devotions. Bring a sandwich, dessert and beverage provided. We always welcome new members. Chair: Trudy Kayser, 503/292-7528.

CHURCH WOMEN UNITED

Church Women United will have a World Day of Prayer service, Friday, March 2, at 9:30 AM at the Antioch Baptist Church, 5935 N. Minnesota at Ainsworth. Program: *United Under God's Tent*, written by the women of Paraguay. For information contact Betty-Lou Hare at 503/292-1773.

UMW UNIT GATHERING

The UMW Unit Gathering will be Wednesday, March 7, in the Fireside Room. At 10:00 AM there will be the meeting & sharing time and a Call to Prayer & Self Denial led by Mary Covert. At 11:00 AM the program will be: *Iconography – the Art of Seeing the Soul* by Chris Armstrong-Stevenson, Director of Trinity Cathedral's Iconography Institute. It will be both a reverent and beautiful presentation. For information contact Ruth Green at 503/698-8420. Lunch will be at noon. Bring a sandwich, Dessert and beverages will be provided.

new member

orientation



NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION

On Sunday, March 4, 2007 there will be a new member orientation for those interested in becoming members of First Church. This two-hour session and simple meal will begin at noon in Room 110. For information or to register, contact the church office at 503/228-3195.

forums at first

growing and learning



FORUM: JUBILEE, THE SABBATH YEAR

On Sunday, February 25, the First Church Forum will be: Jubilee, The Sabbath Year. It will meet in the Fireside Room from noon to 1:30 PM, following the worship service and coffee hour. Child care and light refreshments are provided. Jubilee is a call to cancel the debt of the world's poorest countries in Africa and Latin America. This forum will be an update on how debt relief is working in Africa from two members of the Jubilee USA delegation to Kenya and Zambia, Pat Rumer and Nancy Yuill. Pat is currently the co-chair of the Jubilee USA Network, and Nancy is the co-chair of Jubilee Oregon, the local branch of Jubilee USA.

FORUM: SIMPLY IN SEASON

The Hunger Task Force and Planet Church invite you to a forum exploring the connection between food and faith on Sunday, March 11, at noon, in the Fireside Room. Explore why choosing local, sustainably-produced and fairly-traded foods is an important faith practice. The presenters will be Cathleen Hockman-Wert, co-author of the Mennonite Central Committee's *Simply in Season* cookbook and Liv Gifford, coordinator of Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon's Interfaith Food and Faith program. A light lunch will include: crustless quiche, baked russet potatoes, apple-beet-hazelnut salad, hazelnut coffee brownies and other tasty choices from *Simply in Season*.

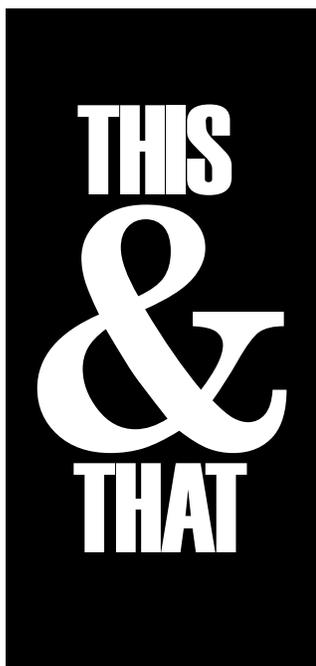
Mindfulness about eating has always been a part of this season of reflection and preparation. Join us as we learn ways to purchase fresh, local foods in all seasons and further explore the connection between food and faith.



55-ALIVE

Wednesday and Thursday,
March 21 and 22, 2007

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 9:00AM to 1:00 PM in the Fireside Room. A teacher, trained through AARP, teaches this refresher course for drivers 50 years of age and over. Pre-registration is required. The cost is \$10.00. Make checks payable to: AARP. Register soon, class size is limited to 30 students and there have been waiting lists in the past. To register call the church office at 503/228-3195 or sblalock@fumcpdx.org



NEW 2007 CHURCH DIRECTORIES

New 2007 Church Directories are now available in the church office. A \$1.00 donation is requested to defray printing costs.

CREATIVE SPIRIT EXHIBIT

Have you seen the wonderful exhibit of photographs in Collins Hall? The Creative Spirit Exhibit of the photographers of First Church will be extended through April 6, 2007. The exhibit is open on Sundays following worship.

ENERGY & CLIMATE STEWARDSHIP

What: Interfaith Energy and Climate Stewardship Advocacy Day
When: Monday, February 26, 2007, from 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM
Where: Salem First UMC, 600 State Street, Salem, OR

The keynote address, *Clean Energy, Climate Change and Oregon's Future*, will be given by David Van't Hof, the Sustainability Advisor for Governor Ted Kulongoski. A variety of workshops will also be offered, as well as legislative visits. For details, go to: www.emoregon.org.

ACCIDENT REPORT

Would anyone witnessing or having information about bumper damage to a car parked in the main church lot during worship on Sunday, February 11, 2007 please contact the church office. Thanks!

JOIN A HANDBELL CHOIR

Are you between the ages of 9 and 99? Are you interested in handbells? Then Genesis Ringers is for you! This beginning handbell choir is looking for more participants. The group meets on Wednesday evenings from 6:00 to 7:00 PM. You do not need to read music in order to join. If you are in third grade and already read music, you are also welcome to join the group. For more information, contact Karin McDonough at 503/297-2914.

CIVIL RIGHTS CRUSADER SUSAN B. ANTHONY PORTRAYED

On March 17 at 7:00 PM at Christ United Methodist Church, noted actress Melinda Strobel will present a one-woman drama on the life and extraordinary accomplishments of Susan B. Anthony. This interactive performance will be held at Christ United Methodist Church in Cedar Mill, 12755 NW Dogwood Street, Portland and will include a question-and-answer time with the actress in-character. For tickets or further information call 503/646-1598.

FROM THE SPRC

The Staff-Parish Relations Committee of First Church invite you to join in honoring Gene Balcomb at the Coffee Hour on Sunday, February 25, 2007, following the church service. Gene has volunteered for years as our sound system coordinator. Although we have recently hired Gordon Frost as the Sound Technician for First UMC, Gene will continue to work with Gordon in this area. The church wants to take time to thank Gene for all he has done for us in the past and show our appreciation for his expertise.

SPRC would also like to inform you that Josh Yaklin is leaving his position as custodian by the end of February. Josh has served us well in this position. You are invited to send any gifts or cards of appreciation to the church office.

THE PARKER GROUP

The Parker Group will have a potluck luncheon and program on Saturday, March 3, 2007 at 12:30 PM in Room 202. All are welcome. Bring a dish to share, table service will be provided. John Hood will present the history of the American flag.

FAITH AND FAMILY NIGHT WITH THE BLAZERS/ SAT., MARCH 3, 2007 AT 7:00 PM

Come to this fun-filled evening at the Rose Garden, which includes a game between the Portland Trail Blazers and the Sacramento Kings and is followed by a post game concert with recording artist Chris Rice. Meet at the church at 6:00 PM to ride MAX over together. Cost: Tickets are either \$13 or \$25. Deadline: February 28, 2007. To register, call Shirley Blalock at 503/228-3195 ext. 225.

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP, WOMEN & ENRICHMENT

Samaritan Counseling Center presents a one-day conference: Women in Leadership, Women & Enrichment on Saturday, March 10 from 8:00 AM to 2:00 PM at Portland First UMC. This conference is designed to help women forage their way through change and challenge by rising as leaders and advocates. The cost of registration is \$49.00 and this includes a continental breakfast and lunch. For more information call: 503/281-3318 or to register, visit their website at: www.sccpdx.org/events.html.

VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED TO HOST HOMELESS FAMILIES

Goose Hollow Family Shelter, an outreach mission of First UMC, provides temporary housing for homeless families with children. This week we had 15 children sleeping at the shelter. We currently have many volunteer opportunities open for February and March. If you would like to bring a light dinner meal to the shelter, facilitate kids time activities, serve as an extra hand or volunteer to be an overnight host, please visit our website at www.fumcpdx.org/goosehollowfamilyshelter, or sign up in Collins Hall on Sunday after worship. We are not taking donations of clothing items at this time, but do need Max Tickets, juice and fresh fruit. Thank you for your support. For more information, contact the Shelter Director, Annie Heart at 503/228-3195 x 215 or email: aheart@fumcpdx.org.

*the
edge*
thoughts
for the journey

Rev. Lowell Greathouse, Minister of Discipleship

I often return to the words of Howard Thurman for guidance and direction in my life. More than anyone else, he has taught me about the nature of the inward journey. In his reflection, *The Inward Sea*, Thurman writes, "There is in every person an inward sea, and in that sea there is an island and on that island there is an altar and standing guard before that altar is the 'angel with the flaming sword.' Nothing can get by that angel to be placed upon that altar unless it has the mark of your inner authority. Nothing passes 'the angel with the flaming sword' to be placed upon your altar unless it be a part of 'the fluid area of your consent.' This is your crucial link with the Eternal."

(Meditations of the Heart, by Howard Thurman)

our prayers

prayers and concerns

thanks

expressing gratitude

PRAYERS OF SYMPATHY ...

The family of Al Leonard, who died February 7, 2007.
His memorial service will be Friday, March 2, 2007
at 2:00 PM in the sanctuary;

PRAYERS OF CONCERN ...

Sadame Tsunenaga, who is at Friendship Health Care
Center, suffering with diabetes and kidney dialysis;
Nell McManus, who is at St. Vincent's Hospital, following
emergency surgery;
Florence Snyder, who is confined at home with the flu;
The Rev. Asa Mundell & Gwen, they are now in a care
facility in Keizer, OR;
Margaret Bove, who fell and broke her leg a few weeks ago.

CONTINUED PRAYERS FOR ...

*Robert & Virginia Anderson, Dick Clark, Lettie Schulz, and
Bryan Smith*

PRAYERS FOR THOSE IN MILITARY SERVICE ABROAD ...

*Daniel Bomberger, Jared Bomberger, Michael Panck, and
Keith Bullock*

FROM THE BARNES FAMILY

Dear First United Methodist Church Staff and Church
Members,

We cannot even begin to express to you the
tremendous support we feel through prayer, thoughts
and deeds. Thank you for listening. You have truly
been a God send! We cannot imagine what it would
have been like without you.

We know that James is progressing remarkably
physically, mentally, and emotionally because of your
actions. We have always heard about the "power of
prayer," but now we *feel* the "power of prayer!"
Thank all of you.

Don, Jean, Liz and James Barnes

FROM BRUCE HENDRICKSON

Thanks for all your cards, prayers, thoughts and visits
during my recovery from hip surgery.
Bruce Hendrickson

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 7, 2007**.

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.