



THE CIRCUIT RIDER

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

March 19, 2008
Volume 12, Issue 06

COMING EVENTS

March 23
Easter Sunday
9:00 & 11:00 AM

April 6
**Native American
Awareness
Sunday**

April 13
Youth Sunday
10:30 AM

April 13-19
**VIM Team to
Sager Brown**

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.

LIVING A VIBRANT FAITH

BELIEVING THINKING ACTING



EASTER SUNDAY 9 & 11

On Easter
Sunday there
will be two glorious
services of celebration:
9:00 & 11:00 AM.

Rev. Dr. Arvin Luchs will be preaching and there will
special prelude music by the Festival Brass and Jonas
Nordwall, organist. The Chancel Choir and Veritas
will end the service with the *Hallelujah Chorus*.

On Easter Sunday there will be Sunday School for
first grade and under at both services.

*Following each worship service there will be an Easter Egg Hunt in the Fireside Room
for children in the first grade and younger.*

2008 CONFIRMANDS





memo

Rev. Dr. Arvin R. Luchs

Though the resurrection of Christ was celebrated from the time of the apostles—it was not referred to as “Easter” for eight centuries when, according to the English historian Bede, it encountered a pagan celebration of the spring equinox named for an German diety, *Eastre*, the goddess of the east—of dawn. As has happened with other great festivals, the nature celebration was not eliminated—rather it was re-purposed—transformed—into a Christian celebration of God’s victory over death.

Jesus revealed God’s transforming power throughout his ministry and especially by his death and resurrection. As he suffered, died and was raised all humankind discovered the unbelievable grace of God to transform hatred into love, despair into hope, even death into eternal life.

At Easter we rejoice and give thanks that God’s amazing power is still at work—renewing, reforming, restoring, transforming the darkness and pain of our lives and our world into eternal glory!

Join us to celebrate this Sunday at two Festival worship services—at 9 am and 11 am in the Sanctuary. Take heart as the Candle enters symbolizing the presence of the Risen Christ. Ponder the scripture story of that first Easter Morning. Reflect on its meaning for your life. Hear the Festival Brass, the amazing Chancel Choir—and, for the first time, the powerful sound of the nearly refurbished and expanded Mary L. Collins Organ played, as no one else can, by our Organist and Artistic Music Director, Jonas Nordwall. Lift your voice in the immortal *Hallelujah Chorus!* You won’t want to miss it--invite your friends and neighbors.

We respond not only through our worship—but also through our dedication to service and our gifts. Enclosed is a special Easter Offering Envelope to enable you to bring a ‘second-mile’ gift for our ministries of compassion and service. It is amazing what our gifts—shared and blest—can do. By God’s grace, they can literally transform our neighborhood and our world.

On behalf of the elected leadership and the staff of First Church, let me wish you a happy and blest Easter!

See you in Church!

Arvin

CREATING OUR FUTURE

A Capital Funds Campaign Update

ROOFING REPLACEMENT BEGINS

On April 1 roofers will begin work to replace the deteriorating shingles over the Fireside Room and Collins Hall. The design includes adding insulation to the Collins Hall area for improved energy savings. First phases will involve scaffolding around the building and erecting fencing to isolate the work-site and provide protected space for equipment and materials. Following that the existing concrete roof tiles will be removed with particular care for safety. Finally the new concrete tiles will be installed and the roof sealed. The entire project is anticipated to take 6-8 weeks.

PARKING CHANGES ANTICIPATED

During the time of the replacement effort, safety and security fences will enclose a portion of the main parking lots—particularly the areas between the Fireside Room and Room 202 and reduce the number of parking spaces available in this lot. In addition, scaffolding around the building may force the closure of the west exit to 19th street. Construction vehicles and large trucks will need to access the site throughout the day during the work-week—so we will be seeking to keep the east entrance street (between the Conference Center and sanctuary) free of parked vehicles.

We apologize for the inconvenience and the disruption of normal patterns. We hope everyone will understand the necessity of these short-term changes. We encourage those who are able to car-pool or take the Max to make sure those who have handicapping conditions can park near the building. Church lots on the west side of 18th Avenue should not be affected by this project.

During construction times we urge everyone to take special caution in walking on the lot—and be especially careful that children are accompanied by adults.

OTHER PROJECTS

Already your gifts have brought a wonderful new sound system in the sanctuary and reduction of our unpaid debt from previous building efforts. On April 20, 2008 we’ll be celebrating the fourth of those projects—the dedication of the completely refurbished and expanded Mary L. Collins Sanctuary organ!

The capital funds campaign involved pledges that are to be received over a three-year period. First UMC trustees pledged not to add to our debt and fund new work only as money is available. Priority is given to gifts dedicated to particular projects. Projects yet remaining include the complete retirement of debt, additional renovation of the sanctuary, expansion of the narthex, and redevelopment of Beckham Courtyard.

We are grateful for the vision and contributions that have enabled us to tackle these improvements. It is still possible to be part of the effort. For details on “Creating our Future” and pledge information please contact Don Riggs.

adults at first sunday morning classes

FELLOWSHIP OF SEEKERS

The Fellowship of Seekers is an ongoing adult class that seeks spiritual growth through study and discussion of writings by current and historic religious thinkers. However, we will not meet as a group from March 23 through April 20, 2008. We will be combining with the *Myth and Sacred Story in the Modern World* class. Please join us after that.

CHANGING CHRISTIANITY

Join the Changing Christianity class as we study: *Letter to a Christian Nation* by Sam Harris, in room 202 from 9:00-10:15 AM.

MYTH AND SACRED STORY IN THE MODERN WORLD

March 30 and April 6, 13, and 20, 2008
in the Fireside Room from 9:15 to 10:15 AM.

We live in a world in which fact and physical reality compete with myth, sacred story and the spiritual world for our attention and allegiance. Is the world simply about facts to be learned and the physical reality we experience with our senses? Or... is it about mysteries to be discovered and a "sacred canopy" that frames our experience of life? In this series, Rev. Lowell Greathouse will help us address this and other related questions, using a variety of resources that includes Joseph Campbell, Peter Berger, Abraham Heschel, biblical references, the ancient mystics, and key framers of our modern world. We will explore how we, as people of faith, might come to terms with the various realities that shape our lives.

forum south africa 2009 preview



Following worship on Sunday, April 20, 2008, there will be a travel preview in the Fireside Room. Cheryl Luce will share the exciting plans for an international trip being to South Africa in 2009.

A light lunch will be served and child care is available.

umw the women of first church

Pat Brockman, president, 503/292-6270

NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED LEADER TO SPEAK

UMW will meet Wednesday, April 2, in the Fireside Room at 11:00 AM. Following the theme, *Enough for All*, the Rev. John Pitney, nationally recognized leader, will speak on food security and environmental justice. He will integrate his message with original music and images from both the Jewish and Christian traditions. Learn how faith communities in Eugene support thirteen local farms. Accept the challenge to live with less in this gluttonous society. Don't miss the songs: *Keeping the Garden*, *Walk Lightly*, and *The Earth Does Not Belong to Us*. All welcome, men and women, young and old. Invite your spouse, your neighbors and friends. You won't want to miss this special program. At noon in Room 202 we'll feast on local foods: pinto beans, corn and wheat breads, cheeses, and apples. The monthly unit meeting will begin at 10:00 AM. Information: Melba Rizzo 503/635-6716 or Trudy Kayser 503/292-7528.

UMW BOARD MEETING

The UMW Board Meeting will be Wednesday, March 26, at 9:30 AM in Room 110. Chair: Pat Brockman

CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

The Circle of Friends will meet Wednesday, March 26 in Room 204. Sarah Loose, Coordinator for the Portland New Sanctuary Movement, will speak on immigration issues and how Christians relate their faith to helping new immigrants in the community. An immigrant directly affected with the issue will also share her experiences. Come at 11:30 AM, bring a sandwich, and enjoy dessert and coffee. All interested persons are invited with a special invitation to board members. Information: Joanne Weiss, 503/292-5947. Chair: Hazelee Stevenson

CHURCH WOMEN UNITED

The Church Women United Spring Forum will be Thursday, April 3, at 9:30 AM at University Park United Methodist Church, 4775 N Lombard, Portland. In keeping with the theme of *Global Warming*, always remember to take a bag when shopping. The petroleum in 14 plastic bags could drive a car one mile. Contact: Betty-Lou Hare, 503/292-1773

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

May 2, 2008 will be the Spring Quilt Luncheon in Collins Hall. The book theme will be *The Secret Life of Bees*, by Sue Monk Kidd. The doors will open at 11:30 AM for quilt viewing. No photos, please. Lunch will be served at noon. Tickets for \$20 will soon be available. Fifteen dollars of this amount will benefit mission projects.

May 16-18, 2008 will be the UMW Pacific Northwest Conference Retreat at Yakima, WA. *Rest, Rejuvenate, Rejoice* is a spiritual retreat for women of all ages. See Trudy Kayser for registration information.

the edge

thoughts
for the
journey

REV. LOWELL GREATHOUSE, MINISTER OF DISCIPLESHIP

As Lent comes to a close, consider these words from a Carthusian monk, who was a part of this traditional monastic community which was originally founded in 1084:

“There is a fasting from injurious acts, and there is a fasting from injurious thoughts....This fasting from thoughts may take the form of an interior vigilance over what thoughts we allow into our mind, rejecting thoughts of judgment, criticism, violence, and accepting those of understanding, patience, love. It is in our power, usually, to fix our attention on the good qualities of a person or a situation, and not on the less good. Our thoughts will then be thoughts of peace and our acts will follow. We can choose to counteract any movements of aggressivity towards others, by deliberately, in our minds, affirming the other who annoys us in what he is and can become in Christ. All this is within our own heart. The acts will follow. This is a form of intimate self-denial, a fast that pleases God who is love.”

*(The Spirit of Place:
Carthusian Reflections)*

banners and paraments of first church

BANNERS AND PARAMENTS

Take a second look at the beautiful banners that hang in our sanctuary and the paraments that grace the pulpit and lectern. Most were designed and sewn by members of our own congregation. Such works of art have been used by churches through the ages to lend reverence to worship areas and serve as reminders of the church seasons. That's why colors and designs rotate throughout the church calendar year

Gale Morris, a long-time member of our congregation, has designed many of them, and now he has prepared an illustrated catalogue of our collection. Through his research he has identified the creators and dates of acquisition of most. Gale asks that you contact him if you have additional information about the sources of our banners and paraments. The catalogue can be found in the church library.

Gale is an industrial engineer by training who has often directed his graphics skills toward the beautification of our church. His most recent contributions are the “fish” handles on the chapel narthex entry doors.

community volunteer week count on me

SAVE THE DATES!

Join us as we continue the tradition of Max Pew Day with First Church's **Community Volunteer Week 2008**. For one week this spring, April 25 - May 3, 2008, we will be sending small work teams into the community to do special volunteer projects. Inspired by our church's earlier Max Pew Day efforts, it is our hope to come together and live out that portion of our church framing statement that says we will be vibrant in our faith through our acting. Each volunteer opportunity (in Portland) will last approximately three hours and is family friendly for all. There will be a First Church Team Leader for each project.

2008 Projects Include:

Volunteer Team to Camp Magruder to help with storm damage clean-up:

Friday, April 25 & Saturday, April 26, 2008

Planet Church's Spruce-up Mt. Tabor Park:

Saturday, April 26, 9:00 AM to noon

A day at Oregon Food Bank:

Saturday, May 3, 9:00 AM to noon (*Pending*)

End of Season clean-up at Goose Hollow Family Shelter,

Saturday, May 3, 9:00 AM to noon

Max Pew was a Lay Associate Minister of First Church for some 17 years. For years he worked faithfully in the community serving others in need. Let us honor his memory and continue his service with this year's **Volunteer Week 2008**. Join us in making a difference and continuing the great tradition of First Church's involvement in the beloved community. **First Church ... Count on Me!**



We extend our appreciation to all those who have responded to our 5% Challenge--including four who sent new estimates of giving. We are a bit over half-way toward the additional \$50,000 the Finance Committee anticipates is needed to continue providing programs and services of our various First Church ministries.

Peg Cook and Bev Graver, *For the Financial Stewardship Committee*

this and that

PLEASE TAKE NOTE



JOHN PRENDERGAST TO SPEAK ON THE CRISIS IN DARFUR

John Prendergast, co-founder of the ENOUGH Project, who has worked as an advocate for Darfur and other African issues for over 20 years, will share his insights, experiences and vision to end the crisis in Sudan's Darfur region at a public presentation on Saturday, April 5. The event will be held at 8:00 PM at Portland First United Methodist Church. Admission is free, but donations to cover costs are welcome.

John Prendergast is considered one of today's foremost voices on Africa. He served as Assistant Secretary of State for Africa during the Clinton administration, and then worked as a senior advisor for Africa with the International Crisis Group. Though his expertise reaches throughout the African continent, the crisis situations in Darfur, Northern Uganda, and Eastern Congo compelled him to do more. In 2006, he co-founded the ENOUGH Project to focus on the abolishment of genocide and mass atrocities. For more information about this event call 503/295-6761 or 503/880-5626.



CAMPING INFORMATION

Oregon-Idaho Conference camp information is now available in the Commons after worship and in the church narthex. It's not too early to begin making plans for the many types of camps made available through the conference. Please contact Rev. Lowell Greathouse for information on camp scholarships.



ELECTIVES FOR ENRICHMENT

The 2008 Spring Electives for Enrichment will be: *Christians and Empire*. This five-session course will be offered Mondays, April 21 - May 19, 2008. Jesus and Paul confronted the empire of Rome with a new realm ... the reign of God. These sessions explore that Biblical tradition and ask, "How should Christians live in the face of empires today?" It will be facilitated by Rev. Dr. Arvin Luchs, First Church Senior Pastor. Sessions will be held in the Fireside Room from 10:00 AM to noon beginning Monday, April 21, 2008. (Cost: \$15 for series, \$4 per session)

Deadline: April 11, 2008.



OREGON FOOD BANK CHARITABLE CHECKOFF

First UMC's Hunger Ministries team is helping to collect signatures of registered voters so that the Oregon Food Bank can appear on state tax returns as a charitable checkoff. This would allow Oregon taxpayers to direct a portion of their refund to the Oregon Food Bank. Taxpayers are under no obligation to give, but those that choose to will find it easy to do as they fill out their tax return forms.

10,000 signatures are needed to place the Oregon Food Bank in Oregon's Charitable Checkoff program. This effort is not a ballot initiative or financial solicitation. More than half of the signatures required have been gathered. You can help finish the task before the June 1, 2008 deadline by signing the petition at the Hunger Ministries table in the Commons after worship.

Thanks for your help, The First UMC Hunger Ministries Team

Publication Deadlines

Articles for The Circuit Rider are due no later than 10:00 AM on the Thursday before publication the following Wednesday. The next Circuit Rider will be published on April 2, 2008.

Bulletin insert information

is due no later than 4:45 pm on **Wednesday**.

Sunday service participant

information for the Sunday bulletin is due no later than noon on **Wednesday**.

E-mail:

office@fumcpdx.org

The Circuit Rider Online or by E-Mail

See the latest and past issues of **The Circuit Rider** in color at <http://www.fumcpdx.org/newsletter>

The Circuit Rider can be e-mailed to you. E-mail the church office at office@fumcpdx.org to request it by e-mail.

our prayers prayers and concerns



Add to
your
prayer
list

PRAYERS OF CONCERN FOR ...

Mary (Schuberg) Penniecooke,
the daughter of Robert and
Marilyn Schuberg, has been
diagnosed with stomach cancer ...
Judie Carpenter, was hospitalized recently
with an infection ...
Charlotte Cridlind, who is recovering
from heart surgery ...

CONTINUED PRAYERS FOR ...

Robert Anderson
Patrick O'Brien
Dick Clark
Diane Hall
Jim Jozwiak
Judy Rogers
Sadame Tsunenaga
Eloise Matlack
Nell McManus
Marilyn Ringquist
Elizabeth Walton

PRAYERS FOR THOSE SERVING IN THE MILITARY ABROAD ...

Jared Bomberger
Daniel Bomberger
Michael Panck
Vanessa Walton
Craig Kubala
Steven Johnson

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to
Yvonne Williams who
was named among the
"Leaders Who Have
Made a Difference In
Portland."

