



THE CIRCUIT RIDER

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

June 4, 2008
Volume 12, Issue 11

LOOKING AHEAD

JUNE 18-22
Oregon-Idaho
Annual Conference
Salem, OR

JUNE 21
Jars of Clay
Concert,
Salem
Fairgrounds
Pavilion

JUNE 22
Laity 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.

LIVING A VIBRANT FAITH

BELIEVING THINKING ACTING

CONGRATULATIONS 2008 volunteers of the year



LEWIS HUGHES AWARD

Sonja Connor

Sonja Connor received the Lewis Hughes Award, recognizing her many years of service through our church to the community and world. Sonja is currently the chair of the Goose Hollow Family Shelter Council.

GUY WHEATON AWARD

Jim McManus

For many years Jim McManus was the leader of our Shovel and Rake Gang. He has personally given uncounted hours caring for our church building and grounds. We give thanks to God for Jim and proudly award him the Guy Wheaton Award.

WESLEY SPIRIT AWARD

Paul Nickell

Few, if any members, have served this congregation and the wider church in more ways than Paul Nickell. We awarded Paul the Wesley Service Award in recognition and appreciation for his deep and rich faith and his selfless dedication.



memo

**Rev. Dr. Arvin
R. Luchs**

There are rhythms—patterns—that govern our days and organize our lives. They are like drumbeats in our unconscious and we feel out of step when they are changed or interrupted. Biologists, for example, tell us our bodies are governed by a “circadian” rhythm. Students live in time with semesters, mid-terms, finals, and summer break. Our families evolve their own rhythms in response to birthdays, anniversaries, holidays, school and work.

The same is true of our church-life. The rhythmic tattoo characteristic of United Methodists is a four-year cycle of gatherings we call “Conferences.”

- There are “Charge (or “Church”) Conferences” in each local parish. One will convene after worship this Sunday in the Fireside Room.
- An area-wide “Annual Conference” involves congregational representatives and pastors. Ours will convene on June 18, 2008 in Salem.
- Delegates from the annual gathering participate in an “General Conference” every four years to set the direction for our denomination. It convened in late April in Fort Worth, Texas.
- Finally we elect Bishops and support regional ministries at a “Jurisdictional Conference.” We are the host church for the Western Jurisdiction starting July 16, 2008.

It’s all grown from what Methodism’s founder, John Wesley, called “Holy Conferencing.” He urged followers to gather and report on their faith, their life and their ministries. Hold one another accountable in love. Pray and worship together. And then discern the will of God for the days ahead. Through honest and open spiritual conversation, Wesley believed, God’s grace would be discovered and the Spirit’s energy released.

Over the intervening 2 ½ centuries Wesley’s vision of spiritual gatherings has sometimes degenerated into a lifeless business review or cantankerous bickering over controversial issues. Sometimes, it has seemed, the energy of the Spirit survived in spite of—rather than because of our pattern of conferences.

Thankfully, a new generation of leaders is seeking to reshape these gatherings to once again be the spiritual heartbeat of our church life.

Reports from friends who attended the recent General Conference praised planners for intentionally scheduling opportunities for delegates from around the world to share both their faith and their vision for the future in collegial conversation. They reported a sense of community that was built through times of prayer and reflection, lively music, powerful worship and dynamic preaching. The rustle of the spirit seemed to be heard as people with very different perspectives began to sense some common ground to work together. Sadly, it did not fully prevail. I’m told that once the process returned to parliamentary debate and up/down voting, much of the grace-filled possibilities seemed to evaporate into predictable conundrums. We still have much to learn about truly “holy” conferencing!

Maybe there are lessons here at home! Bishop Hoshibata, our resident leader, has been at the forefront of the revitalizing effort. He has been calling Oregon and Idaho United Methodists to “Boldly Make Disciples for Jesus Christ,” and urging us to step away from old ways to embrace the call of new possibilities for living our faith. Over the last three years he has reshaped our Annual Conference through such innovations as “Discipleship Groups” to enable us to pray together, listen and learn from each other and discern where God is calling us. Worship is not on the periphery of our gathering. It is interwoven through all we do. We not only talk about our faith—we show our faith. Last year we recessed to participate in an afternoon of community service. This year everyone, particularly youth and young adults, are invited to a gala concert Saturday night (June 21) at the Salem Fairgrounds featuring a Grammy-winning Christian rock band, *Jars of Clay*. The next day all United Methodists are welcome to share in morning worship along with Conference members.

It’s a new cadence in the pattern of our life as United Methodists. I must admit, at times it’s a bit uncomfortable. It’s awkward to change pace. But a new day calls for new ways. God-willing, maybe we’ll all get in step and find in the midst of it the drumbeat of God’s Spirit.

See you in Church!

Arvin

adults at first sunday morning classes

FELLOWSHIP OF SEEKERS

The Fellowship of Seekers meets each Sunday at 9:15AM in room 134. This is an on-going adult class that seeks spiritual growth through study and discussion of writings by current and historic religious thinkers. We are studying *Creation to Revelation: A Brief Account of the Biblical Story* by James O. Chatham. Lively discussions are led by a different class member each week.

CHANGING CHRISTIANITY

Changing Christianity Class meets from 9:00-10:15 AM in Room 202. This class discusses a number of emerging issues in contemporary Christian theology.

WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?

The Faith and Public Life Series will present a special short-term class called: *Who Is My Neighbor?*, facilitated by John Coppett. The class will begin Sunday, June 8, 2008 at 9:15 AM in the Fireside Room. This four session class will run through June 29, 2008.

CLASSES COMING THIS SUMMER

Read Aloud Together: Our Town
(July 13, 20 and 27) in the Fireside Room

Faith and Public Life: Peace, Propaganda, & the Promised Land
(August 3, 10, 17 and 24) - Room 160

Read Aloud Together: To Kill a Mockingbird
(August 3, 10 and 17) - Fireside Room

Read Aloud Together: Spoon River Anthology
(August 24) - Fireside Room

learn and grow more opportunities

GOOD SENSE BUDGET COURSE

The Good Sense Budget course will be offered as a weekend workshop on July 11 and 12, 2008. Save the date for this important and helpful class. For more information, contact: Peg Cook. She will be taking registrations after worship services.

STEPHEN MINISTRY

Stephen Ministry is a program of our congregation that equips lay members to provide distinctly Christian care to those experiencing all kinds of difficulties in life. Grounded in Jesus' command to love one another, it is based on the belief that caring for each other is an intended way of life for followers of Jesus Christ. Our church currently has 14 active Stephen Ministers. A new class to train Stephen Ministers will begin in September 2008. Learn more about Stephen Ministry by attending an informational meeting on Sunday, June 22, 2008 at 11:45 AM in room 110.

umw the women of first church

Pat Brockman, president, 503/292-6270

THE READING GROUP

The Reading Group will meet Wednesday, June 18, at 10:00 AM in the Church Library. Vesma will continue the discussion of *A Hundred Years of Solitude* by Nobel prize winning author, Gabriel García Márquez. The novel chronicles a family's struggle and the history of their fictional town. Chair: Sue Fisher

THE RUTH CIRCLE

The Ruth Circle will meet Wednesday, June 18, at 12:00 PM in Room 204. Come, bring your ideas, and help plan our 2008-09 year. We're looking forward to another great year. All are welcome. Bring a sandwich. Chair: Betty-Lou Hare, 503/292-1773

UMW PLANNING TEAM

The UMW Planning Team will meet Wednesday, June 18, at 2:00 PM in Room 110. Our agenda will include the planning of programs for the 2008-09 Unit Gatherings. If you cannot attend, send your ideas to Trudy Kayser, 503/292-7528.

SCHOOL OF CHRISTIAN MISSION

Now is the time to register for The School of Christian Mission. This important summer event is held at George Fox University on July 31 – August 3, 2008. It is open to both men and women. Choose from the following studies.

Spiritual Growth Study,

text by Bishop Minerva G. Carcano

Native American Mission Study,

text by Thom White Wolf Fassett

Israel/Palestine Geographic Study,

text by Rev. Stephen Goldstein

For information and registration forms, call Trudy Kayser.

YOUNG WOMEN'S EVENT

The Sixth Annual UMW Young Women Event will be held August 1-3, 2008 at George Fox University, Newberg. All young women ages 18 and up are welcome. It will be a time of fun and fellowship, storytelling, and Bible study. Tuition scholarships are available. For information, call Melba Rizzo, 503/635-6716.



SPIRIT BREAK

Sunday, June 15 at 5:00 PM in the chapel will be the last chance to experience Spirit Break before it takes a two-month summer break (returning Sept. 21). We'll be celebrating the spirit of summer with the operatic voices of Denise Miles and Michael Millhollen accompanied by Elizabeth Caswell and backed by musician/singers Jen Graver, Richard Allan, Sam Talluto, and Todd Engle. As always, there will be fun music for the children, too, and a nursery for the youngest ones. Jim Ruyle will help us find the serious and funny sides of our spirituality, drawing further on the May issue of *O, the Oprah Magazine*, with time for discussion. Stay for refreshments or join others for supper at the Goose Hollow Tavern. Tell your friends! Spirit Break is a ministry of First Church.



PRIMETIMERS

Primetimers is currently accepting registrations for the event: "Life on the Bayou Teche: History, Culture, and UMCOR Sager Brown." This event, which takes place October 19-25, 2008, provides participants the opportunity to experience firsthand the ministry of the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR). Participants will volunteer on the UMCOR Sager Brown Campus where material resources are collected for distribution around the world. Throughout the event, participants will also experience the local Louisiana context and culture. For more information and registration details, see flyers available in the Commons in Collins Hall.



2008 PRIDE PARADE

If you would like to be a part of First Church's contingent in the 2008 Pride Parade, gather in the Fireside Room at 10:15 AM on Sunday, June 15, 2008. We will take the MAX to the parade launch site. The parade begins at 11:15 AM downtown. We will have a car and banners as a part of our formation once again. The parade should conclude around 1:30 PM. Let Lowell Greathouse know if you plan to join us. Go to the Pride Parade website at www.pridenw.org for more details on this year's event.



FARMERS' TABLE TO BEGIN

Again this summer we'll gather at coffee hour after worship and enjoy fresh flowers and vegetables offered by Hmong farmer, Yua Lo, and her family. Our Farmers' Table will take place every Sunday, except the first Sunday of the month, from June 22 through August 31 from 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM, where coffee hour is held. Our Farmers' Table is sponsored by our Planet Church committee with the help of the Interfaith Food and Farms Partnership of Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon.



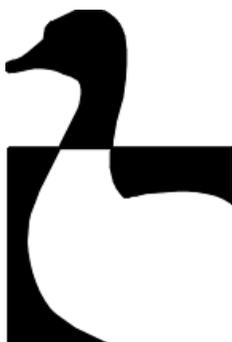
SUPPORT VIM TEAM TO KENYA

Did you know that you can help build housing for nurses at the Maua Methodist Hospital in Kenya, provide medical supplies for outpatients, and even assist in the care of AIDS orphans (some 2 million in this area alone)? You won't have to take malaria shots, endure the long flight halfway around the world, or sleep under mosquito netting. How, you ask? It's so, so easy. "Cards for Kenya," inspired by images of African textiles, were designed by Kathleen Cosgrove, a member of First Church. Kathleen is traveling to Kenya in late June, along with her husband Paul and nine others. You will find these bright and colorful packets of notecards, in ten different designs, at our coffee hour, through the month of June. Provided through our Global Missions Committee, one hundred percent of the card sales will support Kenya projects. For only \$2.50 per card or \$25 per packet, you can make a difference in the lives of people in Kenya. Plan to buy several!

GOOSE HOLLOW FAMILY SHELTER: AN UPDATE

The Goose Hollow Family Shelter just ended another successful season helping homeless families with children. We want to extend a huge thank you to everyone who volunteered, donated, or supported the shelter. Without each of you, the shelter could not operate. We helped about 60 families with children, and helped place over half of those families into permanent housing.

The Goose Hollow Family Shelter is hosting the first annual Shelter Auction Benefit at the Multnomah Athletic Club on Saturday October 25, 2008! This auction will help kick off the 2008-2009 season. We hope that you save the date for this event and join us for heavy hors d'ouvres and wine! Do you own a beach house or mountain cabin that you would be willing to donate for a week or a weekend to the auction? Please let Brandi Tuck know at 503/228-3195 ext. 215 or btuck@fumcpdx.org if you're willing to donate some time at your vacation properties for the auction.



please take note ...

upcoming events



HEALTH FAIR PLANNING SESSION

An All Church Health Fair is being planned for this fall. It would include informational booths and workshops on health related topics for all age groups. A planning/brainstorming session for this event is scheduled for Wednesday, June 11, 2008 from 7:00 to 8:30 PM in the Fireside Room. Please join us and share your ideas. Questions? Call Debby Fisher at 503/645-4802 or Suzanne Webster at 503/639-5286.



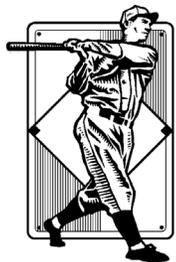
55-ALIVE MATURE DRIVING

55-Alive is a unique program for older drivers. This popular course will be offered June 11 and 12, 2008 at First UMC. Each day the class runs from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM in the Fireside Room. An instructor, trained through 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.



JARS OF CLAY CONCERT

The Oregon-Idaho Conference of the United Methodist Church will present the contemporary music group, Jars of Clay, in concert on Saturday, June 21, 2008 at 7:00 PM at the State Fairgrounds Pavilion in Salem, OR. Admission is free, but you are asked to bring two cans or packages of food for a food drive.



FIRST CHURCH FAMILY DAY AT PGE PARK

Take me out to the ball game on June 29, 2008 with First United Methodist Church! Let's celebrate summer fun and community while cheering on the Portland Beavers! We have 20 tickets, behind home plate for the Portland Beavers vs. Colorado Springs Sky Socks on Sunday June 29, 2008. The first pitch is thrown at 2:00 PM. All are invited. Tickets are \$10 each for an afternoon of great fun with First UMC! Get your tickets by calling the church office or contact Megan Humphreys-Loving, Director of Children's and Family Ministries: mhumphreys-loving@fumcpdx.org or 503./228-3195 ext.227.

LOVE MAKES A FAMILY

A Photo-Text Exhibit of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender People and Their Families

"A family is a bunch of people, or not so many, who love each other," explains seven-year-old Liza Styles, who has two moms. Liza's family is one among twenty families in *Love Makes A Family*, a touring photo-text exhibit created by the award winning Family Diversity Projects. With interviews by Peggy Gillespie and photos by Gigi Kaeser, this exhibit features diverse families with gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender adults, dads or moms, grandparents, and teens. Together, the words and images in *Love Makes A Family* make visible, in a positive way, the love and caring in these families.

This exhibit will be on display at First Church in Collins Hall from June 1 to 14, 2008. Please take some time to view this important display. It is sponsored by the Reconciling Ministries program.



REV. LOWELL GREATHOUSE, MINISTER OF DISCIPLESHIP

Recently, I had the privilege of going with a group from Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon to visit with the leaders of the Great Vow Zen Buddhist Monastery in Clatskanie, Oregon. It was a wonderful opportunity to have a dialogue with thoughtful, faithful individuals from another tradition. During our conversation, one of the younger monks asked us this question: "How do you keep your religious practice during the week?" It is a great question, and in many ways the fundamental question of faith: How do I maintain my faithfulness in daily life?

Perhaps Sri Nisargadatta's comment about the purpose of meditation is an insightful observation in this regard: "We know the outer world of sensations and actions, but of our inner world of thoughts and feelings we know very little. The primary purpose of meditation is to become conscious and familiar with our inner life. The ultimate purpose is to reach the source of life and consciousness." (*Essential Spirituality* by Roger Walsh, page 181)

*the
edge*
thoughts
for the
journey

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 June 18, 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

PRAYERS OF CONCERN FOR ...

Ruth Smith and her mother Muriel Gragg, Muriel suffered a massive stroke on Saturday, May 31, 2008.

CONTINUED PRAYERS FOR ...

Douglas Ederwein and Lynn (Kinney) Whitehead

ABOUT OUR PRAYER CONCERNS

Due to their number and length, beginning this month, we will list ongoing prayer concerns for only one month, unless there are extenuating circumstances. If there is a significant change in the person previously mentioned, they will be included again. If you wish to be included in the prayer concerns or want to have a family member or close friend included, please contact Pastor Tom Foster at 503/228-3195 ext 233.

COMMUNION TO HOMEBOUND MEMBERS

If you, or a family member, are homebound and would like to receive communion on a regular basis, please contact Rev. Tom Foster, Minister of Pastoral Care at 503/228-3195 ext 233. Also, if you would enjoy and be willing to take communion to homebound members please let Tom know.

thanks caring & sharing

PRAYERS FOR THOSE SERVING IN THE MILITARY ABROAD:

Jared Bomberger
Daniel Bomberger
Margaret Walton
Craig Kubala

FROM MARILYN WEBER

Thank you for your prayers, cards, wishes, phone calls, food and pastoral and personal visits during my convalescence after hip surgery. Knowing I was in your prayers had a very calming effect and aided in my healing. I am grateful to God, the Great Physician. Thank you First Church, for all you do. I'm glad I met you!

In Christian Love,
Marilyn Weber



Please remember to keep your pledges up during the summer months. Here is a "snapshot" of our year-to-date giving:

Received:	\$289,158
Expected:	\$351,524
Shortfall:	\$62,366