



THE CIRCUIT RIDER

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

September 10, 2008

Volume 12, Issue 19

September 14

Christian
Education Sunday

September 21

International
Day of Prayer
for Peace

October 5

World Communion
Sunday and
Volunteers in Mission
Recognition

October 17-19

Fall Frolic at
Camp Magruder

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

VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT AND INTEREST SURVEY

getting to know you ...

Over the last few months a number of First Church members and staff have collaborated to create a survey—dubbed the Volunteer Involvement and Interest Survey by the press—to measure our current work in the community, to connect people around common interests, and to be more effective and grassroots in our volunteering efforts. Everyone is encouraged to complete the survey—it's fast, and entails no obligation beyond the handful of minutes it takes to complete. When the information is in, the survey will be an exciting resource for the wider church community, helping us to better understand where our skills and passions lie, and to help direct our energies in the future.

The survey will be made available on September 14, 2008 or in the Commons in Collins Hall after worship or **CLICK HERE TO TAKE THE SURVEY ONLINE NOW!** The project will be running through October 12, 2008 and we hope to have as many church members as possible participate.

Contact Adam Ortman, Community Outreach Director, with questions or comments (aortman@fumcpdx.org), as well as ideas for channeling your excitement over this awesome opportunity.

LISTEN **UP** *everyone
has a
story!*



memo

Rev. Dr. Arvin
R. Luchs

*Your tongue is like a sharp razor,
you love all words that devour.*

From Psalm 52

The nominees are in place (finally!) There's just over eight weeks to campaign before the Presidential election (less for us in 'vote-by-mail' Oregon.) This year we're offered a remarkable choice—and, given the nominees of the major parties—the outcome will make history.

Is it too much to hope that the campaigns will stay focused on the significant issues and not degenerate into mudslinging, trickery and political dirty tricks?

I am not alone in that hope. Part of the reason mega-church pastor Rick Warren invited the two presidential candidates to Saddleback was to create what he called a "civil forum" in which candidates could disagree without being disagreeable. And, for the most part, he succeeded—though the candidates were never in direct dialogue.

Stan Baldwin shares that hope as well. In fact he is adamant about it. Baldwin is a retired pastor from Clackamas who has made it his mission to organize and advocate for civility in schools, homes, churches, and, particularly, in politics. He's blunt: "Cruelty in the form of political incivility, rancor, extreme partisanship and dirty tricks threatens our very way of life as a free nation." *

He knows the scriptures are clear: civility is a moral and spiritual issue. Like the Psalmist, they recognize that people can defame, abuse and dehumanize one another by words just as they can with physical violence and cruelty.

Baldwin recounts the elections of 1988 when, in spite of George H.W. Bush's promise to create "a kinder, gentler nation," he enlisted for his campaign, Lee Atwater. Atwater was widely noted as a political "bad boy" who would stoop to anything to win. Among other sleazy tactics, he was the creator of the "Willie Horton" ads that unfairly undermined Bush's Democratic opponent, Michael Dukakis. Columnist Sidney Blumenthal noted: "Every campaign in which Lee Atwater played a role was marked by low tactics and lies." **

Two years after the elder Bush was elected Atwater faced his greatest and final battle—in 1990 he was diagnosed with a horrible form of inoperable brain cancer. (Atwater died in 1991, not long after his 40th birthday.) His agonizing physical struggle led him to spiritual reflection on his life and actions and conversion to Christianity. According to his posthumous biographer, John Brady, not long before his death, Atwater apologized to Dukakis for the "naked cruelty" of his actions, and he pleaded for campaigns to change. "I do think that we can end strident personality campaigning and that we can change the nature of American politics and make it geometrically more positive than it has been the last few years." ***

All of the major party candidates who will be on the upcoming ballot promise they will bring "change." Wouldn't "civility in politics" be a nice change?

See you in Church!

Arvin

* (Baldwin Stanley C., *A Funny Thing Happened on my Way to Save Civilization*, Green Press, 2007, p. 91. More on Baldwin and his "Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Humans" can be found at the group's website: <http://preventcrueltytohumans.com/>)

** *The New Republic*, April 22, 1991 quoted by Baldwin, op.cit., p. 91.

*** (Brady, John, *Bad Boy—the Life and Politics of Lee Atwater*, Addison Wesley Publishing Company, 1997, p. 298, quoted in Baldwin, ibid.)

adults at first

sunday morning classes

umw

united methodist women

CHANGING CHRISTIANITY:

The Bible: A Biography by Karen Armstrong

This group studies a variety of books throughout the year as the basis for class discussion. Beginning this fall, the class will be studying Karen Armstrong's book, *The Bible: A Biography*. The class focuses on how Christianity has changed, is changing, will change, and how we can be a part of that change. The class meets each Sunday from 9:00 to 10:15 AM in Room 202.

FELLOWSHIP OF SEEKERS:

The Haunt of Grace: Responses to the Mystery of God's Presence by Theodore Loder

The Fellowship of Seekers is an on-going adult class that seeks spiritual growth through study and discussion of writings by current and historic religious thinkers. We will be reading, *The Haunt of Grace: Responses to the Mystery of God's Presence*, by Ted Loder next Sunday. Books are available in the classroom. Lively discussions are led by a different class member each week. Sundays at 9:15 AM in Room 134.

FAITH AND PUBLIC LIFE SERIES

This adult class series will explore various public issues through the lens of our faith life. Each session will meet in the Fireside Room from 9:15 to 10:15 AM.

September 14, 21 & 28

Read Aloud—To Kill a Mockingbird

Join Marge Terdal, as she facilitates this informal reading of the classic work *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

October 5

Introduction of the "First Church Reads" Book

Join us as we introduce this fall's "First Church Reads" book, *The Omnivore's Dilemma* by Michael Pollan which we are inviting the entire congregation to read.

FIRST CHURCH ORIENTATION

If you would like to officially join First United Methodist Church or learn more about our congregation, then this two-hour session and simple meal is for you. Learn about First UMC, what it means to become a member of this congregation, and meet others who are interested in becoming a part of First Church. An orientation will be offered after the worship service on Sunday, September 28, following worship. For information or to register to be a part of one of these sessions, contact the church office at 503/228-3195. A light luncheon is served and child care is available.

President, Melba Rizzo, 503/635-6716

THE READING GROUP

The Reading Group will meet Wednesday, September 17, from 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM in the Church Library. *Clarence Darrow's Unlikely Friend, Clarence True Wilson*, written by Robert McNeil, is the story of Clarence True Wilson (1872-1939), a Methodist minister from Oregon, who was prominent in the temperance movement. All are invited to hear the story of this remarkable man as told by his daughter, Maribeth Collins. The author will also be present to share background information. The book is available for purchase in the church office. Chair: Sue Fisher, 503/223-5293

THE RUTH CIRCLE

The Ruth Circle will meet Wednesday, September 17, at noon, in Room 204. Maribeth Collins will relate stories of her childhood and tell of her remarkable father, the Rev. Dr. Clarence True Wilson, to whom our church bell tower is dedicated. Bring a sandwich. Dessert and beverage will be available. Chair: Betty-Lou Hare, 503/292-1773

METRO DISTRICT ANNUAL MEETING

The Metro District Annual Meeting will be Saturday, September 20, at Tigard UMC, 9845 SW Walnut Place, Tigard. Registration begins at 8:30 AM. The business meeting and program is from 9:10 AM to 3:00 PM. Sarah Baker will tell us of her experience at both Sager Brown, UMCOR Center, and at St. Mark's Community Center, a Women's Division program in the New Orleans French Quarter. Lunch will be a salad potluck

THE UMW PLANNING TEAM

The UMW Planning Team will meet Wednesday, September 24, at 9:30 AM in Room 110. Chair, Melba Rizzo, 503/635-6716

THE CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

The Circle of Friends will meet Wednesday, September 24, at 11:30 in Room 204. Bring a sandwich. Dessert and beverage will be provided. Also, bring your program ideas for the coming year. Chair: Ruth Green, 503/698-8420

first church's creative spirit exhibitions presents ...

The Artists of First Church: The Fourth Annual All-Church Exhibit

September 7-28, 2008 in Collins Hall ■ Viewings on Sunday Morning or by Appointment

- First Church Artists Featured in this Exhibit -

Francis Adams ■ Mary Coppett ■ Joe Delaney ■ Ruth Green
Marion Hollenburg ■ Page Kracke ■ Bill MacDonald ■ Alice Stephens

children and family ministries

items of
interest

LUNCHEON BABY PARTY

Sunday, September 21, 2008 there will be a Luncheon Baby Party for all new parents or those with children under age three! We are gathering to meet each other, develop, and establish relationships between parents and children. Lunch will be provided. Please RSVP to Megan Humphreys-Loving, Director of Children and Families Ministry, if you plan to attend 503/228-3195 x 227 or by email mhumphreys-loving@fumcpdx.org.

FOOD & FRIENDS FALL GATHERING

Friday, September 26, 2008 will be the Food and Friends: Fall Gathering. Here's an opportunity for fellowship among First Church parents! Drop the kids off at the church nursery (\$5 donation suggested) and head out for dinner at one of Portland's fine restaurants. Please RSVP to Megan Humphreys-Loving, by September 10 if you plan to attend at 503/228-3195 x 227 or by email mhumphreys-loving@fumcpdx.org.

ACOLYTE TRAINING

There will be an Acolyte Training on Sunday, September 21, 2008 at 9:15 AM in Room 110. Acolyte Training is for children fourth grade and above wishing to assist with worship.



YOUTH SQUAD BACK-TO-SCHOOL LOCK-IN

The Youth Squad's Back-to-School Lock-In will be September 12 and 13. All Middle and High School Youth are invited. We'll watch movies and play games, have crazy races, and might even bake brownies before it's all over. It lasts all night at the church. Bring a sleeping bag, but plan to sleep in your street clothes. The Lock-In begins at 7:30 PM Friday night and ends at 8:00 AM on Saturday.

youth
ministries
the youth squad



Christian Education
Sunday

Sept. 14, 2008
for adults

Each year we take a Christian Education Offering. The offering taken next Sunday will help provide resources and supplies for our children and youth. This offering will help us maintain a program committed to teaching and learning the love of Christ.



learning opportunities at first church

for adults

A FALL FORUM AT FIRST CHURCH

A First Church Fall Forum will be held on Sunday, October 5, 2008 after worship in the Fireside Room. A light lunch and child care are provided. The Fall Forum will examine the upcoming Oregon Ballot Measures with Kevin Finney. Kevin is the Public Policy Director at Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon.

FLOWER ARRANGING 101 CLASS

Join Marty Martin, First UMC's florist extraordinaire, and learn how to arrange flowers for display. The class will be offered Sunday, September 21, 2008 from 11:45 AM to 2:00 PM in Room 204. Bring flowers from your garden, a vase you'd like to fill with your bouquet, and a lunch. (If you don't have flowers, extras will be provided). We are asking a \$5.00 to help cover costs. We'll provide flower arranging ideas, oasis for holding flowers in vase, and extra flowers. You'll go home with a lovely arrangement and an idea of how the altar bouquets are created each week. RSVP to the church office at 503/228-3195 or email Lowell Greathouse at: lgreathouse@fumcpdx.org.

ELECTIVES FOR ENRICHMENT: WORLD WAR II AND THE LIVES IT TOUCHED

World War II changed the course of history and profoundly touched the lives of those who lived through that era. Come to these special Monday morning sessions to hear members of the First Church community, a Holocaust survivor, and others share their stories of how the events of World War II shaped their lives, changed who they are, and affected their faith.

When: Monday mornings, October 6, 13, 20, and 27, 2008 from 10:00 AM to noon

Where: The Fireside Room - Cost: \$15 for the four week course, individual sessions are \$5 per week. Snacks and refreshments will be provided.

**Lowell Greathouse,
Minister of Discipleship**

This summer I had the privilege of hearing Rafe Esquith share his thoughts on education. For over twenty years, Rafe has taught fifth grade in a public school in a rough Los Angeles neighborhood, plagued with violence. The school is made up of children living in poverty and few speak English as their first language.

As school begins once again, my thoughts turn to one of the many thoughtful stories that frame Esquith's teaching approach: "In my early years, I actually planned to frighten the kids the first day of school. I wanted to make sure they knew I was boss ... then one day, many years ago, I watched a fantastic video featuring a first-rate special education teacher who told a story about his son and the Boston Red Sox. He had inherited a priceless baseball signed by all the players of the legendary 1967 Sox. When his young son asked to play catch with him, of course he warned the boy that they could never use that ball. Upon being asked why, the teacher realized that Carl Yastzanski, Jim Lonborg, and the rest of the 1967 Sox meant nothing to his son. Instead of taking the time to explain, however, he simply told the boy they could not use the ball 'because it had writing all over it.' A few days later, the boy once again asked his father to play catch. When his father reminded him that they could not use the ball with the writing, his little boy informed him that he had solved the problem: He had licked off all the writing! Of course the father was ready to kill his own son. On second thought, however, he realized his boy had done nothing wrong." Esquith concludes this story by saying: "... When teaching or parenting, you must always try to see things from the child's point of view and never use fear as a shortcut for education."

(Teach Like Your Hair's on Fire,
page 5-6)



SPIRIT BREAK

Bill Schonely joins Jonas Nordwall to kick off our fall Spirit Break series on Sunday, September 21, 2008 at 5:00 PM in the Chapel. Come find your spiritual self in the secular world with Jonas' music and Bill's engaging stories. There's always special music for the children, so bring them too. Child care is available. Jonas will lead a tour of the new organ in the sanctuary afterwards. And invite your friends. Spirit Break continues the third Sunday of each on October 19 and November 16, 2008

PLEASE SAVE THE DATE FOR THE SHELTER AUCTION

The Goose Hollow Family Shelter's First Annual Fund Raising Silent Auction will be held on October 25, 2008 from 5:00 to 8:00 PM at the Multnomah Athletic Club. We will have refreshments, substantial hors d'oeuvres, and live music for you to enjoy while perusing the great selection of auction items. We will also have Multnomah County Chair Ted Wheeler speaking about his commitment to the Goose Hollow Family Shelter and the homeless families in Multnomah County. We will also hear from a formerly homeless family who stayed at Goose Hollow last year. Tickets are \$25 and will go on sale October 1, 2008. Please contact Brandi at 503/228-3195 x215 or btuck@fumcpdx.org for more information or to reserve tickets. Tickets are limited, so please be sure to reserve yours early!

We are also still looking for items to auction off at the event, such as beach houses, hand-made items like cakes or quilts, gift baskets, gift certificates to restaurants or theaters, or services such as fishing trips or interior decorating. If you are willing to donate an item to be auctioned off, please contact Brandi by October 1, 2008. Thanks so much for your support, and we look forward to seeing you!

TRANSITIONS IN THE MUSIC DEPARTMENT

We have received a letter from our tenor section leader, Byron Wright, which in part reads: "My new services that I am providing at another location are on the same day and at the same time of those at First UMC so, unfortunately, I will not be singing with First UMC ... this year. I will truly miss the members of the choir and of the congregation."

Byron has sung with us for 18 years and will be missed, but we wish him well in his new endeavors. The position of tenor section leader has been posted and we will be interviewing and auditioning applicants in the near future. Aaron Weller will lead the section during the interim.

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 Sept. 24, 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 SYMPATHY FOR ...

The family of Esther Setterberg, Esther died August 26, 2008.

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING FOR ...

Laura Laney, who is home after a successful surgery in California ...

PRAYERS OF CONCERN FOR ...

Sandra Wood, who is at OHSU undergoing treatment ...

Crystal Irwin, who is dealing with medical problems ...

Michael Whipple, who requests prayer for healing and reassurance of God's presence ...

Lois Johnson, who is in critical condition in California.

She is the sister of Rosemary Dodds ...

Bob Fulton, who is in rehab following a broken hip ...

The Rev. Barbara Bellus, whose daughter is missing in New York ...

CONTINUED PRAYERS FOR ...

Douglas Eberwein, Nell McManus, Mary (Schuberg) Pennicooke, Joan Hill, Mildred Davidson, and Rev. Larry Monk



In our
thoughts
& prayers

PRAYERS FOR THOSE SERVING IN THE MILITARY ABROAD:

Jared Bomberger

Daniel Bomberger

Margaret Walton

Craig Kubala

Mike LeClair (grandson of

Dee Poujade)