



# THE CIRCUIT RIDER

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

**August 19, 2009**  
Volume 13, Issue 16

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**SUNDAY,  
AUGUST 23**

Worship at  
10:30 AM  
Dr. Earl Riddle,  
preaching

**SUNDAY,  
AUGUST 30**

Worship at  
10:30 AM  
Dr. Arvin R. Luchs,  
preaching

**SUNDAY,  
SEPTEMBER 6**

Worship at  
10:30 AM  
Sacrament of  
Holy Communion

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

Portland's First United Methodist Church

## YOUTHSQUAD MISSION TRIP



Fourteen First Church youth and their sponsors have returned from their week-long mission trip to The Campbell Farm in Wapato, Washington. The pictures below capture them in the act of "loving and serving!"





## memo

Rev. Dr. Arvin R. Luchs

Dr. Raymond E. Balcomb is my distinguished predecessor and one of the most incisive thinkers I know. He has had a remarkable career, including service as our Senior Pastor for 18 years and the Superintendent of this region. When he retired, Ray and his wife, Hazel, made First UMC their church “home.” He has written our official congregational history and is our archivist.

When a donor suggested moving the “Eternal Light” that has graced our chancel for nearly 50 years to a location in the nave, I asked Dr. Balcomb to give some historical background and reflect on the meaning of the new location. I thought you might like to read his comments ...

### THE “ETERNAL LIGHT”

A few years after the construction of our present building a gift in memory of Elmer Roy Rife was given. It was called an “eternal light” and consisted of a wrought iron framework with a red glass cylinder enclosing an “ever-burning” candle (i.e. a candle which had to be replaced about once a week.) It was hung from the ceiling and was nearly, but not exactly, over the pulpit. Its significance at the time was described this way:

“It is a living form, since fire is considered to be alive. The ever-burning flame bespeaks the Eternal quality of the Holy Spirit at work among (us)... The Light gives meaning to corporate worship and also provides a quality of spiritual companionship during times of personal meditation in the Sanctuary.”

Over the years that has proved to be true. Many people have found it meaningful and almost affectionately identify it with their First Church worship experiences. Most people, almost intuitively, find it to be a symbol of, or reminder of, the invisible presence of God.

Now an anonymous donor has paid to have it moved. Why?

If it is a symbol of the presence of the invisible God, it should be where we believe God to be above all other consideration. We believe God to be in the chancel with the clergy and particularly in baptism, the reading of scripture, the communion service, and the preaching of the Word, of course. But even more, we believe God to be in the midst of the believing congregation.

Then again, the new location prevents a misunderstanding we want to avoid. Let me explain: visitors have sometimes confused it with a similar light to be found in Roman Catholic Churches.

In medieval European Christianity such lights came to be used to signify the presence of consecrated wine and bread saved from a previous mass for later distribution to the sick or homebound. Because of the doctrine of transubstantiation that meant God was there in some way which he wasn't any place, else and that led so many into magical and superstitious ideas and practices that it were specifically rejected and forbidden by the Reformers. To this day we United Methodists have an Article of Religion (borrowed from the reformed Church of England, our spiritual mother) which specifically condemns and forbids such a practice.

It may not be out of place to note that the light has been moved before. Early on it was moved to hang directly over the fixed baptismal font then in use. In the 1985 remodeling of the chancel, that font was replaced by the moveable one we still use. But the light was left hanging where it was, so it came to be in its strange position in recent years — about half way between the pulpit chair and the pulpit.

May it, in its new location, bless every bride and groom, comfort those who are bereaved, attend the going out and coming in of us all, and focus every prayer lifted here!

Raymond E. Balcomb, Archivist and Church Historian

Thanks, Dr. Balcomb.  
See you in church!

Arvin

# looking ahead



## to September

### WELCOME HOME SUNDAY

**Sunday, September 13, 2009**

Join us on Sunday, September 13, 2009 for Welcome Home Sunday. Following the 10:30AM worship service, we'll have an "End of Summer Cookout" with hot dogs, baked beans, salads, etc. Come join the fun! Sunday School classes resume, as does the Chancel Choir and our entire Fall program.

### ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES BEGIN SEPTEMBER 13, 2009

#### Changing Christianity

9:00 AM to 10:15 AM in Room 202

#### Fellowship of Seekers

9:15 AM to 10:15 AM in Room 134

#### Faith and Public Life Series:

##### Peace Church Dialogues

9:15 to 10:15AM in Fireside Room

Look for details in the next issue of the Circuit Rider.

### FIRST CHURCH BOOK GROUPS

There are several new book groups starting at First Church. If you are interested in participating in any of them, contact Lowell Greathouse at 503/228-3195 or [lgreathouse@fumcpdx.org](mailto:lgreathouse@fumcpdx.org).

#### All-Comer's Book Group

This group is for anyone interested in participating in a book group at First Church

#### Young Women's Book Group

For women in their 20s and 30s

#### Men's Book Group

For First Church men of all ages

# united methodist women

All women are invited to participate in the following activities. We strive to develop a supportive fellowship as we promote concern for women, children, and youth at home and abroad. President, Melba Rizzo. 503/635-6716

### SUMMER PLANNING MEETING

The Summer Planning Meeting will be Wednesday, August 26, at 9:30 AM in Room 110. Chair: Melba Rizzo.

### SEPTEMBER UNIT GATHERING

The Unit Gathering of the UMW will meet Wednesday, September 9, (after Labor Day) in the Fireside Room at 10:00 AM. After our monthly business meeting, join us for "Back to School with UMW and You." Plan to enroll now in UMW 101 to learn more about our history and programs. Come prepared for an Open Book quiz. Displays about the room will provide you with the answers. Team work is encouraged. Sample question: What does GBGM mean? Come for fun and interactive games. Lunch will be served at noon in Room 202. The staff is invited. For further information, contact Trudy Kayser at 503/292-7528.

### METRO DISTRICT UMW ANNUAL MEETING

Mark your calendar: Saturday, September 19, 2009 and Metro District Annual Meeting at Wilshire UMC.

church library  
learn and grow



### CHECK IT OUT

Phyllis Tickle in her newest book, *The Great Emergence: How Christianity is Changing and Why*, says North American Christianity is presently undergoing a change every bit as radical as the Protestant Reformation, possibly even as monumental as its natal break with Judaism ... and it's right on schedule! She observes that Christianity is holding its semi-millennial rummage sale of ideas and issues a clear call to acknowledge the inevitability of change, discern the church's new shape and participate responsibly in the transformation.

Using playful images and moving stories, supported by solid scholarship, Carolyn Jane Bohler in her book, *God the What? What Our Metaphors for God Reveal about Our Beliefs in God*, challenges readers to explore new names for God that are not only more consistent with what they believe about God, but will also deepen their experience of God. This book breaks open habits and assumptions and nudges readers to consider a wide, imaginative range of images that may lead them to new ways of thinking about God.

Both books are available in the church library

### Lowell Greathouse, Minister of Discipleship

We have a wonderful library at First Church, filled with outstanding and many, many current books. The other day, I discovered one called *Longing for God: Seven Paths of Christian Devotion* that is written by two of the professors I had when I was working on my Doctor of Ministry degree at Azusa Pacific University. In the book, the authors seek to respond to the question: "How can we be shaped in such a way that our life becomes an expression of the spirit of Christ himself?" In *Longing for God*, Richard Foster and Gayle Beebe explore what we can learn from numerous spiritual guides from Augustine to Thomas Merton, from John Wesley to Teresa of Avila.

Here are some of the insights that they share from the brilliant English poet and pastor George Herbert (1593-1633). Looking at Herbert's poem "Colossians 3:3," they say: "In this poem Herbert introduces the idea that the Christian life is lived on two levels ... On the horizontal level, we mark our life by various experiences. But on the vertical level, which is hidden, our spiritual life is being conformed to the image of Christ over time." (p. 71)

Here is Herbert's wonderful, two-dimensional poem:

My words and thoughts do both express this notion,  
That **Life** hath with the sun a double motion,  
The first **Is** straight and our diurnal friend,  
The other **Hid** and both obliquely bend,  
One life is wrapt **In** flesh and tends to earth,  
The other winds towards **Him** whose happy birth  
Taught me to live here so, **That** still one eye  
Should aim and shoot at that which **Is** on high:  
Quitting with daily labor all **My** pleasure,  
To gain at harvest an eternal **Treasure.**

### STEPHEN MINISTRY TRAINING

A Stephen Minister is a caring Christian lay person, trained to walk with a person during a time of need. A Stephen Minister's goal is to listen and understand with a Christ-grounded, objective, non-judgmental heart, giving the hurting person an open, yet confidential, environment in which to examine and wrestle with the problems. Stephen Ministers are ever mindful the God alone is the source of healing. It is their hope that persons in need might be enabled to search for the presence of God's grace and love in their lives, and through that search to find encouragement, spiritual growth and renewal. A new class to train Stephen Ministers will begin on September 22, 2009. For more details, please contact one of the Stephen Leaders: Joan Jozwiak – 503/848-6509, Mary Jane Hendrickson – 503/639-7775 or Marge Terdal – 503/244-5714.

## covenant missionaries

serving Christ  
throughout the world

### WHAT'S A COVENANT MISSIONARY RELATIONSHIP?

by Colleen Foster, for the Global Mission Committee

In recent issues of the Circuit Rider, you've seen articles introducing you to "Our Covenant Missionaries" or have seen the bulletin board display in the narthex that has names and pictures of our covenant missionaries:

Janet Lahr-Lewis, serving in Palestine

Clara Biswas, serving in Cambodia

Gordon & Teca Greathouse, serving in Brazil

We hope their stories have given you insight into who these amazing people are, the impetus that led them to these places, and just a glimpse of the mission work and outreach each is doing in the world today. The challenges they face daily, and their incredible devotion, are somewhere between mind-boggling and jaw-dropping for most of us.

What is a "covenant relationship" with these missionaries? It is a partnership, a dynamic relationship between our congregation and these missionaries. We maintain fairly frequent communications, and both the church and the missionaries pray for one another often and regularly.

On occasions, when they are back in the U. S., we have the opportunity to meet them face-to-face, and become aware of the struggles and rewards out in the field. Also, there are opportunities for anyone who can to visit them in their mission locale. In June 2010, Gordon & Teca will host and guide a group of twenty individuals from our congregation and other area UM churches in the Amazon region, which will be led by Dr. Lowell Greathouse.

As Covenant Missionaries, each year we provide a portion of their financial support, committing ourselves to send them at least \$2500 in mission funds. Additional gifts to support special, exciting projects are always welcome. Our Covenant Missionaries have, from time to time, also been designees for our Alternative Christmas giving.

Our covenants are for a three year time period. At the end of those three years, your Global Missions Committee reviews overall priorities, and recommends either ongoing or new relationships to our church leaders. Your input is always welcome. Do take time to get acquainted, through letters and pictures, with these remarkable friends, and keep them in your prayers. As one United Methodist missionary said, "Being a missionary wouldn't be possible without the support of generous, mission-minded UMC members."

# staff transitions



## Megan Humphreys-Loving will become the Interim Director of Youth Faith Development and Nurture

### FIRST CHURCH STAFF CHANGES ... NEW DIRECTIONS FOR OUR YOUTH PROGRAM

Paul Adams has resigned as First Church Youth Director after serving in that role for four years. While he will be greatly missed in this program, we are excited to announce that Megan Humphreys-Loving will become the Interim Director of Youth Faith Development and Nurture. She will add this responsibility to her current job as Director of Children and Family Ministries, meaning that she will be on staff at First Church full-time.

We will be using this “interim” time from September 1 to December 1, 2009 to evaluate our staffing in these areas and determine the best way to resource and support our work with youth, children, and their families in the future. Please take time to welcome Megan to this new role and step forward to volunteer with our children and youth programs and give us your thoughts about how best to enhance our work with all ages at First Church.

You can contact Megan Humphreys-Loving at: 503/228-3195 or [mhumphreys-loving@fumcpdx.org](mailto:mhumphreys-loving@fumcpdx.org).

### JOB OPENING: DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY OUTREACH & VOLUNTEER SERVICES

Adam Ortman left his position as Director of Community Outreach back in June. As a result, First United Methodist Church is seeking applications for the position of Director of Community Outreach and Volunteer Services. This part-time (15 hour per week) position will be responsible for developing and facilitating the outreach ministries of FUMC and coordinating First Church volunteer engagement in the community. A full job description can be found at our website: [www.fumcpdx.org](http://www.fumcpdx.org). Letters of application and resumes are due by September 15, 2009. For more information contact Lowell Greathouse at 503/228-3195



Here is an example of what can go in to a Youth Essential Supplies Kit for Secondary School:

- 4 pens
- 1 solar calculator
- 1 ruler or protractor
- 4 notebooks (8 1/2 x11)
- 1 NIV or RSV Bible

### LOVE TO LIBERIA ~ KIDS IN MISSION A SUMMER SCHOOL SUPPLIES DRIVE

Last Christmas, First UMC raised money for clean water wells in Liberia, and keeping with that special relationship, we will have a school supplies drive to benefit Operation Classroom, a non-profit program which partners with the United Methodist Church, and schools in Liberia and Sierra Leone. We will be collecting supplies throughout the summer, ending on Welcome Home Sunday, September 13, 2009.

Through the 2009-2010 school year kids will be learning about what it means to do mission with the church. They will learn about Liberia, and work with the Global Missions Committee on connecting our church and our work, globally! If you have questions about this project or want to volunteer with Global Missions education, please contact Megan at [mhumphreys-loving@fumcpdx.org](mailto:mhumphreys-loving@fumcpdx.org)



### PHOTOGRAPHERS: AN OPPORTUNITY TO SHOW YOUR WORK

The Creative Spirit display in The Commons in Collins Hall for September and October will be photographs taken by First Church members/attendees. If you have a photograph you wish to share with the congregation, please contact Larry Sawyer as soon as possible. He may be contacted at 503/771-1616 (cell with voice mail) or by e-mail at [larry\\_sawyer@comcast.net](mailto:larry_sawyer@comcast.net). Pictures must be framed.

Pictured at the left are “Camera” by Bob Anderson and “Butterfly” by Kaylene Kirchem

### **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 September 2, 2009.

### **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 CELEBRATION FOR ...**

*Paul Ingram and Michelle Evertt*, who were married on August 8, 2009 ...

*Dan Hernandez & Doug Johnson*, who are proud grand parents. *Aaron Marcus Johnson* was born to *Steven and Jessica Johnson*. Steven, Doug's son, is currently serving in Afghanistan ...

### **PRAYERS OF CONCERN FOR ...**

*Marilyn Rinquist*, who is recovering after a brief hospitalization ...

*Roland Clarke's brother, Elvis*, who is recovering from surgery ...

*Diane Hall*, who is recovering from a herniated muscle in her leg ...

### **CONTINUED PRAYERS FOR ...**

*Eloise Matlack* ..

### **PRAYERS FOR THOSE SERVING IN THE MILITARY ABROAD ...**

*Karl Alger, Jared Bomberger, Daniel Bomberger, Steven Johnson, Ian Kalgren, Steven Johnson, and Michael Panck*

## a note of thanks and gratitude

### **FROM PASTOR TOM FOSTER**

Many thanks to those of you who sent cards and kept me in their prayers for recovery from my herniated disc. Your prayers and concerns were very helpful!

*Pastor Tom W. Foster*

## can you help? making connections

### **FROM THE CARPENTERS**

Art and Judy Carpenter are in need of study bunk beds that are suitable for adults and one or two dresser/chest of drawers that are approximately 72 inches wide. If you have the above items, please call Art or Judy Carpenter at: 503/466-0262.

### **THE PRAYER CHAIN**

The First Church Prayer Chain is an important way of supporting each other in the life of the church. If you are currently on the Prayer Chain or would like to serve on it, please call Janet Bennett at 503/239-3222 or Nan Schueler at 503/642-2495.