

Shalom

First Congregational
United Church of Christ
700 Marion Street NE, Salem, Oregon 97301
Also available on-line at www.uccsalem.org

Reverend Gabrielle Chavez, Interim Minister
Reverend Joanne Swenson, Interim Associate Pastor

Erik Anderson, Moderator
November 23, 2011



The Advent Season at First Congregational UCC

Advent I Sunday, November 27, 10:30 a.m. — Hope

Advent II Sunday, December 4, 10:30 a.m. Peace

The First Congo Combo will play and sing at this service.

Advent Potluck and Advent Fest immediately after the service.

Advent III Sunday, December 11, 10:30 a.m. — Joy

Advent IV Sunday, December 18 — Love

Children's Christmas Pageant 10:30 a.m. and 7 p.m.

Christmas Eve, Saturday, December 24

9:30 p.m. Wassail Reception in the Parlor

10:30 p.m. Service of Candlelight and Carols

Christmas Day, Sunday, December 25

10:30 a.m. Worship Service

No Learning Hour or Youth Groups.

In Our Prayers...

Sandra Smith and family as they grieve the loss of Sandra's husband Don, who passed away November 15. His memorial service was held here on November 18...**Marguerite Lowery**, who is in Salem Hospital after breaking her left arm and ending up in the ICU. She's now in a regular room. Cards would be appreciated...**Ken and Edna Hewit**, Ken cut his hand in a sawing accident and Edna is in a wheel chair with a stress fracture...

Rick Bingham's mother, who is under hospice care... **Jean O'Grady**, who is recovering nicely from her kidney stone...**Marianne Campbell's cousin, Marilee** who was diagnosed with a brain tumor...**Anna Jarvie**, who will be evaluated by the Stanford Liver Transplant Team this week...**Marian Nettleton**, who is recovering from foot surgery...

WE'LL MEET AGAIN

Dear Friends— We would like to thank you all for many years of friendship and great times! Since our move North last summer, we have decided to become members at the UCC in Wilsonville. But that doesn't mean we won't see you anymore. We will visit occasionally. Our church in Salem was our first experience being accepted as our whole selves in a faith community and that we will always remember! Hugs to all, *Robert Ellestad & Christian Baeff*

THANKS GIVING EXTRAORDINAIRE

Balloons at the entry, live music in the narthex, boxes and cans of food stacked on the tables. The communion table on the floor of the sanctuary with a cornuco-

pia of harvest items (thank you, Bobby Brewer-Wallin), red banners with the "God Is Still Speaking" comma on the pulpit and lectern (thank you, Connie Irwin) a packed sanctuary with special music (thank you, Michelle, Marcia, Choir, Combo, and Lessie Williams, our soloist), an extra ordinarily motivational sermon from our guest preacher to a responsive crowd (thank you, Dr. J.W. Hardy Jr.), and the chance for everyone to give a gift of food and commit support for the church's 2012 budget. Enough? No, Talkington and Huntington Halls filled with folks enjoying loud fellowship with a traditional Mexican lunch (thank you, Mujeres Progresistas Luchadoras and CAUSA). Sunday's worship experience will be long remembered. Pledge cards will be available next Sunday and then mailed to all who still need them. Pledge card is also available at ww.uccsaalem.org The financial results? Stay tuned...



FAMILY BUILDING BLOCKS GIVING TREE

This year, like many years in the past, we have a Family Building Blocks Giving tree in the narthex. Please take a tag or two to help bring Christmas to a needy

family. The gifts need to be brought back to the church no later than December 4. They should not be wrapped, but they should have the tag taped to them. Let's keep up this generous tradition. Thank you!

A TRUSTEES TRIBUTE

At its November meeting, the Board of Trustees passed the following resolution:

“The First Congregational United Church of Christ Board of Trustees hereby honors the memory of Trustee Bob Strayer. We are deeply thankful for his many years of service to the Church and his selfless dedication to our congregation.”

SEARCH...STAYING TUNED...

At our last Search Committee meeting, some forward progress was achieved on the ongoing development of our church profile. But we also have come to realize that we need some additional, more specific information than was received in the parish meetings from all of you in the church family. So, we are currently hard at work developing two survey mechanisms, one for adults and one for children, that we will be bringing to you soon. We look forward to tapping into a bit more of your wisdom as we work diligently to produce an accurate and transparent profile...one that will be appealing to some strong candidates. As some smart church leaders recently said...*stay tuned!*

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON If you haven't already put the December 7th Women's Fellowship Luncheon on your calendar, now is the time to do so! The lunch will be served at 12:15 p.m., with spaghetti, bread, salad and cookies, followed by Jeff Witt's school choir program. Both the music and

the energy of this group will truly put you in a Christmas preparation spirit. Women, significant others, friends are all invited. The lunch will be delicious, the music outstanding, and the parking lot for our use only. A \$3 donation for lunch will be gratefully appreciated but is not necessary. Please call the office if you plan to attend.

USHERS NEEDED

We are in need of a few more people to usher starting in January. It is a good opportunity to greet and welcome people on Sundays. The ushers work in teams of four; your team ushers for two consecutive Sundays and then has six Sundays off. If you'd be willing to take on this responsibility, call Chris Sproul (503-364-2370).

Thanks. *Chris Sproul*



ADVENT FEST IS COMING

Advent Fest is coming! Mark your calendars for Sunday, December 4th, right after church. Come one, come all! Bring your family and friends! There will be a potluck lunch, then lots of Advent festivities and activities for everyone. Plan on coming and celebrating the Advent Season together. This is planned by the Community Committee and the Christian Education Committee.

GETTING ACQUAINTED BRUNCH

If you are new to our church and would like to get to know us better and learn what we are about, please join the Welcoming Committee for a Getting Acquainted Brunch on Sunday, December 11 immediately following the worship service. We'll be in the Talkington Hall Annex, downstairs. Please RSVP if possible.

YOUR PICTURES, PLEASE

Our church is in the process of developing an electronic pictorial church directory. The directory will be e-mailed to members and friends of the congregation. This time around, we are asking you to supply the photographs. If you are a couple or a family, we need to have one photograph of the entire family together. You may attach your photo to e-mail, bring it in to the office on a disk or other removable storage device, or as prints that we can scan into our computer. Thanks!

JOIN THE COMBO!

The Combo will be playing two songs for the December 4 worship service. If you are interested in singing with us, please join us for our rehearsal on Wednesday, November 30 at 7 p.m. in the church's choir room. Practice will be around one hour. We will also meet on Sunday, December 4th at 9:45.
Rebecca Ralston 503-949-5401

A NOTE FOR OLDER MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

If you are 70 1/2 or older this year, you may be required to take a distribution from certain retirement accounts, even if

you do not want to. This distribution is taxable. However, you can choose to have this amount go directly from your account to a nonprofit (such as First Congregational UCC!) and avoid the tax. Call the church office for more information.

SALEM INTERFAITH HOSPITALITY NETWORK —Wrapping community around people.

Joe and Alisha, recent guests at SIHN, decided to get married. This wedding stood out as an incredible picture of this young couple's love for each other, love of God and a community that engaged and invested in their life together. Joe and Alisha have known each other since middle school, but began seeing each other soon after he was released from prison last November. They lived together in Wallace Marine Park.

While camping in the park, Joe and Alisha began attending "Dinners on the Green" with SOMA church and began exploring the Bible. Joe had proposed to Alisha and they stopped using drugs last Spring. Over the past months, they began attending a church in West Salem and were baptized at the end of summer. They entered SIHN's program after finding out that Alisha is pregnant. During a meeting with SHIN Case Manager, Greg, they talked about wanting to get married. Greg offered that SIHN would help with the marriage license.

West Salem Foursquare provided premarital counseling and officiated the wedding and the gifts poured in; wedding dress and fitting, tuxedo, flowers,

decorating, photography, music, wedding cake, reception, wedding rings and a night in a local hotel. Joe and Alisha got married in an extraordinary example of how a community can support a couple in their life together

Interfaith families arrive on December 11th. Through Salem IHN we have the opportunity to serve and support families through simple, impactful acts of faith and love. I pray that you find a way to serve and be a part of expressing hospitality through serving dinner to families, spending a night as an overnight host, providing breakfast, moving the beds to the next hosting site or helping with a wedding. Please visit the narthex after service or call the church office to see where you can help. Blessings, *Jennifer Hartung*
YOUTH GROUP 411

Thank you to all the teens who participated in the Youth Olympics and Friday Lights, Big Nights. I hope you are enjoying getting to know the youth from First Christian, and thinking of ways we can combine our efforts and creativity, to help the community around us. If you have any suggestions for making our Friday Lights, Big Nights Youth Service more meaningful for you and other youth, please send me an email with your thoughts.

Michelle Pedersen

UPCOMING YOUTH MEETINGS:

November 27th NO YOUTH GROUP

December 4th Advent Fest for ALL: Youth are needed to help work some of the children's activities, and other event

happenings. Please contact Michelle by email to let her know if you are able and willing to help. Advent Fest starts right after service, and will probably continue to 1:30 p.m. at the latest. We will also need help cleaning up afterwards.

December 11th ALL Youth Group Meeting: 11:30 a.m. -1:00p.m.

December 18th All Youth Group Meeting: 11:30- TBA. This will be a culmination of Youth Christmas Party and Service Project. Come celebrate this joyous season!

December 25th No Youth Groups

January 1stNo Youth Groups

January 8th Both Youth Groups: 11:30-1pm

CANDLELIGHT SERVICE CHOIR!

Come sing with the Chancel Choir, and help add to the beauty of our Christmas Eve Service. We will be having a kick-off rehearsal on Saturday, December 3rd from 9:30-12 p.m. This rehearsal will help us get a head start on all the music we sing on Christmas Eve. Please let Michelle know if you are planning to join us, so that she can have a packet of music ready for you.

STILL IN NEED OF SOME BELL RINGERS FOR THE CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE.

If you are interested, please send Michelle an email. Rehearsals would most likely be scheduled for Wednesday evenings in the month of December, with one retreat rehearsal on Saturday the 17th.

CHILDREN AND TEENS ARE NEEDED FOR OUR DECEMBER 18TH WORSHIP AND

EVENING PERFORMANCE! Michelle will be tailoring this Christmas Pageant to the number of kids who wish to participate. However, she cannot start until she hears from those wanting to be involved. Please contact Michelle no later than Sunday November 27th. Thanks!

NEWS FROM THE "BUILDING & GROUNDS GROUP"

If you recently entered the church through the Marion Street entrance, you might have noticed that new doors have been installed. These doors close securely and will keep our building safe. We're in the process of painting the them. Many, many thanks to Ivan Wells who was in charge of this project and has put in many hours of labor. *Jeroen Laport, Trustee*

FIFTH ANNUAL

TALENT/NO TALENT SHOW

Mark your calendars now for a F-U-N filled evening! Saturday, February 11, 2012, 6 to 9 p.m. Start those creative juices churning now! If you have never participated in the past, this is a great way to get to know your fellow churchgoers (of ALL ages) in ways that are somewhat different than Sunday morning! This is also a fundraiser for some of our important missions. Questions? Ask Rebecca Ralston.

THE DEATH PENALTY.

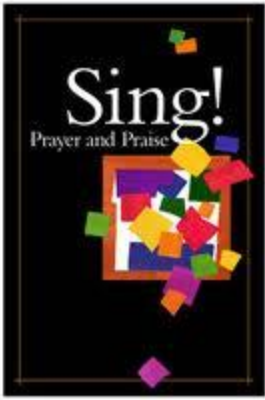
The State of Oregon will execute Gary Haugen on December 6, 2011. The Peace and Justice Committee urges our faith community to fight this. Oregonians Against the Death Penalty and many in Salem's faith communities are working

to either delay or prevent Mr. Haugen's execution. Here are ways you can get involved: Sign the OADP petition to Governor Kitzhaber. Go online to <http://signon.org/sign/moratorium-on-executions>.

Send a letter to Governor Kitzhaber through Amnesty International. Go online to <http://takeaction.amnestyusa.org/siteapps/advocacy/ActionItem.aspx?c=6oJCLQPAJiJUG&b=6645049&aid=516724>.

- Write your own letter to: Governor Kitzhaber 160 State Capitol, 900 Court Street Salem, OR 97301

Join OADP and people of faith on the Capitol steps on December 6, 2011 in a peaceful demonstration against the death penalty and the execution of Mr. Haugen. *The demonstration begins at 5 p.m. with speakers every 15 minutes to 7 p.m., the time at which Mr. Haugen will be put to death.* Join our own Pastor Gabrielle and Tom O'Connor for a panel discussion in Cone Chapel at Willamette University on Nov. 30, 2011 at 7 PM. Rev. Charlie Wallace of Willamette University will facilitate a discussion by a panel that includes Pastor Gabrielle and other Salem religious leaders. It promises to be an active and vibrant conversation about the death penalty. Rev. Wallace will urge the audience to participate. For more information contact Tom O'Connor 503-559-5752 or Lewis *Littlehailes*: littlefull@aol.com



SING! PRAISE AND PRAYER HYMNAL
 It's not too late to order one or more of these hymnals that we are going to use in addition to our New Century Hymnal. Having the actual

hymnals in the pews will eliminate the need for photo copying these hymns that we have already been singing for years. So, help save some paper and donate a hymnal! They are 30% off until Dec. 31, reducing the price to \$10.50 each. Let Annemieke know if you would like to dedicate your hymnal(s) in honor or memory of someone. *Thanks.*



This Sunday, Nov. 27 is the last day to place your pre-paid order for a Christmas Wreath from MLP. They are \$30 each and will be delivered to our church on Sat. Dec. 3 at 10:30 a.m. Pick up until 12 noon.

Poinsettia Order Form

Please fill out this form if you wish to order a poinsettia to grace the sanctuary during Advent. Place the form (with payment attached) in the offering plate or put it in the file on the office counter. They are \$10 each and may be taken home after the Christmas Eve Candlelight Service.

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Number of poinsettias: _____

In honor of:

In memory of :

Check/Cash enclosed in the amount of \$_____

First Congregational Church
700 Marion Street NE
Salem, OR 97301-3829

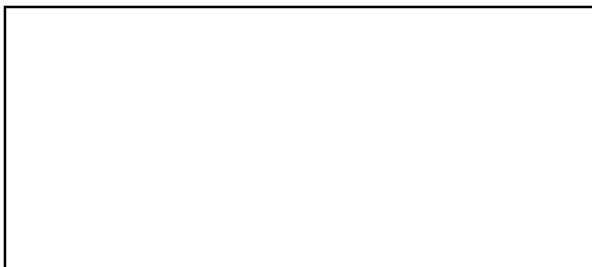
Phone: 503-363-3660

Email: office@uccsalem.org

Return Service Requested

BR Number 95189-000

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U.S. Postage
PAID
Salem, OR
Permit No. 28



CALENDAR

Wednesday, November 23

Thursday, November 24

Friday, November 25

Tuesday, November 29

Thursday, December 1

Friday, December 2

Saturday, December 3

5:30 p.m. Taizé Contemplative Prayer Service
Thanksgiving — Office Closed
Office Closed

7:00 p.m. Search Committee

5:45 p.m. Community Committee meeting

7:30 p.m. Confluence Choir Concert

9:30 a.m. Deacons decorate the Sanctuary

9:30 a.m. Choir Retreat for Christmas Music

Mujeres Luchadoras Progresistas will deliver their wreaths to our church on Saturday at 10:30 a.m.. Pick up until 12 noon.

Sunday, December 4

Monday, December 5

Tuesday, December 6

Wednesday, December 7

Thursday, December 8

Sunday, December 11

9:30 a.m. Acolyte Training

11:30 a.m. Advent Potluck and Advent Fest

6:30 p.m. Woman Spirit meets at Bev & Jenny's

7:00 p.m. Search Committee

10:30 a.m. Women's Fellowship Board Meeting

12:15 p.m.. Women's Fellowship Luncheon

5:45 p.m. Mission and Outreach Committee

5:30 p.m. Peace and Justice meeting

11:30 a.m. Youth Groups

11:30 a.m. Getting Acquainted Brunch

Salem Interfaith Hospitality Network families arrive

Monday, December 12

Tuesday, December 13

Thursday, December 15

6:30 p.m. Trustees meeting

7:00 p.m. Search Committee meeting

6:15 p.m. Deacons meeting