

The Church On The Hill



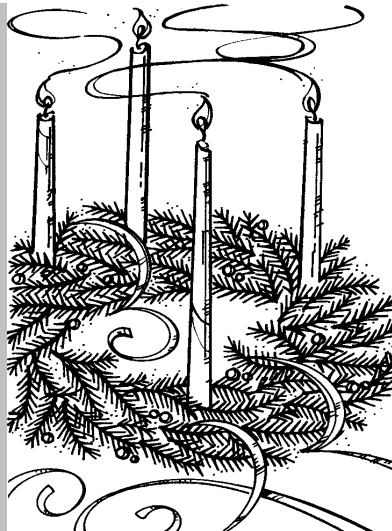
A Newsletter for members and friends of Waverly Heights Congregational, UCC

**DECEMBER 2003 NEWSLETTER
ISSUE 56**

**DAVID ZAWORSKI, PASTOR
TRISH EFFENBERGER, EDITOR**

This year the first Sunday in Advent is November 30th. In the church calendar it is Advent (the four Sundays leading up to Christmas) that is the beginning of the new year. So as we enter this liturgical new year, it's worth looking ahead, reminding ourselves of the movement of the church seasons, drawing us in and sending us out with God's Good News.

Advent is a time of waiting for the coming of Christ Jesus. It leads us inward to the mystery of Christmas – the incarnation, God present with us as one of us. In the church then, the Christmas season is only the 'twelve days of Christmas' that we sing about; it *starts* on December 25th. But don't worry, we'll be singing some carols before that. After Christmas comes Epiphany, a bit more than a month and a half of the darkest, coldest time of our year when we celebrate Jesus as the light of the world. This is traditionally a time of looking outward beyond ourselves, of focus on mission. Then the focus moves back dramatically inward with Ash Wednesday and Lent. This is a time of introspection, preparing ourselves for Easter. With Holy Week and Easter, we are knocked to our knees and lifted up again by the life and presence of Jesus beyond the cross and grave, by the Good



News of God's unstoppable grace breaking in on us and bursting out of us in joy beyond all reckoning. Fifty days later on Pentecost we celebrate the gift of the Spirit, the birthday of the church. Then we begin the long summer and fall of living out community, being the Body of Christ together, through to another Advent, another new year.

So here we are, starting Advent, waiting for Christ Jesus. In our culture, we are definitely waiting for the baby Jesus, for Christmas. But the lectionary scriptures usually reflect waiting for Jesus' coming in glory, for the full establishment of the Reign of God. And between these two, Advent is a good time, too, to wait for Jesus' coming more fully into our everyday lives. The God who is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, is also everything in between.

So we wait. We await the incarnation. We who in our humanness are created in the image of God await the revelation of perfect humanity in Jesus who is God, God with us, Emmanuel.

Joy to the world! Joy to each of you!

Your brother in Christ,

David



UPDATE



● With everything else that needs to be done at year end, here's another "thing
● to do." The church directory will need to be updated. To ensure our directory
● is as complete and accurate as possible, please check your listing. Is your e-mail
● address up to date? Has your address changed? Is there something that needs
● to be added or deleted from the Church Calendar? More importantly, are you
● even in the directory?

I know the holiday time is already hectic, soooo, if you could get any changes to Deanna Mason ASAP it will be truly appreciated. It is our goal to have the 2004 directory available as close to the beginning of the new year as possible.

A decorative border of green Christmas tree icons surrounding a central grey box. The trees are arranged in a rectangular frame, with one tree at each corner and a row of trees along each side.

Calling all Christmas Cards

The ribbon tree will be available on Dec 7th. Anyone wishing to greet their church friends with a card may bring one and put it on the ribbon tree beginning on that date.

What Happened to the Pews?

As we start the Advent season, the pews will be rearranged into a 'U' opening up toward the cross. This will be much like the arrangement we had for a fifth-Sunday service back in June, but without anyone having their backs to the cross. Many people were *very* enthusiastic about the 'U' arrangement, so the Consistory has approved this change, and we'll see how it goes. Fortunately, the pews are very easy to move around. That gives us freedom to try things out, to see what arrangement works best for our worship style here at Waverly Heights. On a related note, as part of our work to become more accessible we will be talking to some skilled woodworkers about cutting down some of the pews to half-length to give us greater flexibility in providing space for people in wheelchairs or scooters. We have lots of pews to work with, so we won't be locking ourselves into any one arrangement forever.



Waverly's book club will not meet during the month of December. However, it will resume again on Wednesday, January 7th at 10:30 am in Hyde Hall. Our next book we will read is Reflections by Barbara Bush. Interested? Please join us—All are welcome!



Kitchen Inventory Scheduled in January

Volunteers are needed for our annual kitchen inventory to take place on Saturday, January 10th, 2004. We will begin at about 9:30 am and work until we're done.

In the past, Women's Fellowship funded the supplies for the kitchen (coffee, tea, juice, sugar, creamers, soap, napkins, etc.). However, since Women's Fellowship no longer meets, starting January 1st, we will need to ask for donations of supplies or donations of funds to purchase supplies. See Lois Lee for more details.



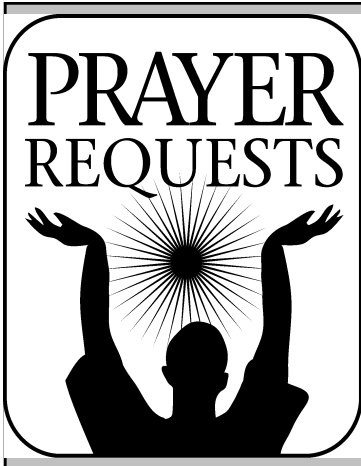
On November 23rd in worship we received and blessed our pledges of support for Waverly Heights UCC for the coming year. If you have not returned your pledge form, please do so. We recognize that some faithful supporters do not choose to pledge a specific dollar amount – the form has a place for these people to still indicate their support. We'd like to get back pledge forms from everyone who thinks of this as their church home.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE FOR JANUARY ISSUE

Please submit articles for the January issue no later than December 18th.

Thanks,
Trish Effenberger, Editor

If you have any questions, concerns, suggestions or comments regarding this newsletter, please feel free to contact Trish Effenberger at 503-698-4301, or by email at effies4@comcast.net



Prayers for *Leona Hansen* whose son, *John*, has been hospitalized;

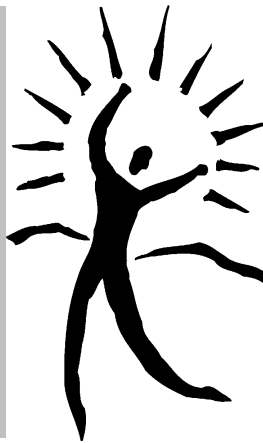
and prayers for *Waverly* as we enter another time of stewardship.



to *Julie Strayer Thoma* for her fantastic job hosting fellowship time after worship service for the month of November. Thanks again Julie!

Joys as we receive three new members to our church family on November 16th—*David Smith, Michelle Kendrick* and *Melinda Nickels*.

Also a joy—*Nancy Tice* who is excited to be in her new home!



Waverly's host for December—*Lois Lee*

PRAYER CALENDAR

December 7 — First Congregational UCC, Gaston, Oregon
Paul Carter

December 14 — First Congregational UCC, Corvallis, Oregon
Elizabeth Oettinger
Marsha Gulick

December 21 — Congregational United Church of Christ, Klamath Falls, Oregon
David & Pat Hedelman

December 28 — United Church of Christ, Beaver creek, Oregon
Art Buck (Interim)



Book Reviews – In Our Church Library in Hyde Hall

Traveling Mercies by Anne Lamott

The full title of this book is *Traveling Mercies: Some Thoughts on Faith*. Lamott sets the background for these thoughts with a brief autobiography. In plain, unsparing language she tells of her growing up in a family coming apart, her alcoholism, and the self-destructive behaviors that went with it. She shows us her little girl's understanding of her very spotty exposure to church and faith. She invites us along on her first tentative steps into adult acceptance God's unfathomable mercy. The rest of the book is made up of short essays presented in seven sections: Mountain, Valley, Sky; Church, People, Steeple; Tribe; Kids, Some Sick; Body and Soul; Family; Shore and Ground.

These essays are autobiographical reflections on God's work, love, patience, and mercy with and for us. As she spins out her stories, Lamott deals with the large and small realities of continuing sobriety, finding a church home, being a single mother, dealing with deaths of family and friends, learning to love herself as she is, as God loves her. This is a book of remarkable honesty, humor, and humanity. One word of caution, Lamott does not sanitize circumstances or her reactions so the book does contain language that may offend. That said, this is the honest voice of a woman who knows herself blessed by God even as she continues to struggle with accepting that blessing more fully. It is a blessing for us to receive this testimony to grace. – ddz

Tomie dePaola's Book of the Old Testament

Children's book author and artist Tomie dePaola has selected texts to tell many of the Bible stories and accompanied them with his beautiful illustrations. The creation, the tower of Babel, the burning bush, Naomi and Ruth, Daniel in the lion's den, and many others are here. dePaola has drawn his text from the New International Version translation, but has carefully selected verses to present the stories in a more accessible way for children. (Chapter and verse citations are provided at the back of the book.) This is a beautiful book to read with children to help bring the Bible alive and begin making it a part of their whole lives. – ddz



You may have noticed that in the past month or so the church library is undergoing some changes. The library has in fact been moved from the basement into Hyde Hall where we hope it will get more use. To that end we have spent time going through the collection weeding out older materials, things in poor condition, and items heavily underlined or highlighted by their previous owners. What remains are the beginnings of our revamped library. Our intention is to provide a lending library which has materials our congregation would enjoy using. The system will reflect our community--informal and relaxed. If you wish to borrow an item please do so and then return it to the library shelves when you are done.

Over the course of the next few months, we hope you will see the library shift into its more permanent structure complete with sections (straightforward and basic) and labels. If you wish to donate items that are in good condition, not overly marked-up and will be of interest to others in the church community please talk with Julie Strayer Thoma. Marie Zaworski has already given a generous donation of a gift certificate to Barnes and Noble which purchased several children's chapter books.

Also, please take the time to thank Helen Feight for all the hard work she has done on the library in the past!



Christmas Fund Special Offering

This year we will receive the Christmas Fund offering at our Christmas Eve service and on the following Sunday, December 28th. Since 1902 the Christmas Fund (formerly Veterans of the Cross) has enabled the United Church of Christ to provide a financial “safety net” to individuals and families in need. The Christmas Fund, administered by the Pension Boards, provides: Gift checks to low-income retired clergy and their widowed spouses; Emergency assistance to clergy in financial need; and Funding for pension and health supplementation plans for low income retired clergy and lay employees.

This year’s offering theme is “Covenant Made—Covenant Kept.” You can help keep the covenant with many women and men who so faithfully served the church. Many who are in need of our support are those who chose to serve smaller churches such as Waverly Heights. Please give generously.



Christmas Eve SERVICE

Our Christmas Eve service this year will follow an old Waverly Heights tradition of being a family service at 11:00 p.m. December 24th. Families are encouraged to bring children in their pajamas. We’ll have

carols and the Christmas scriptures and candle lighting - A joyful way to bring in Christmas together in praise to God born among us.

Interim Organist

We’re pleased to welcome to Waverly our new interim organist, Gary Casciano. Gary is new to the Portland area and to the West Coast. His last home was in Jackson, New Jersey. He has played organ and served as choir director at numerous churches in New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Plan to join us in worship to share in Gary’s music, beginning at the Blue Christmas evening service on December 14th.

Blue Christmas

On Sunday, December 14th at 7:00 P.M. we will again hold a “Blue Christmas” service at the church. This service recognizes that for many the holidays are the hardest time of the year – a time to acknowledge our sadness and pain together in a supportive community. If you are grieving, feeling particular loss or stress, or for whatever reason approaching the holidays with more sorrow than joy, this service may be helpful to you. Also, if you know of someone facing a difficult Christmas, please consider inviting them, and offering to bring them to this service. All are welcome.

Daybreak

Volunteers from local churches will once again be helping some families in need of temporary shelter. The week of December 7th to the 13th is our week to help out at St. David’s church. Several people from Waverly will be providing meals, helping transport, and sleeping-in at St. David’s in an effort to extend a helping hand to people in need. If you are interested in helping, or just curious as to what is being done, please ask some of our volunteers or talk with Andrew Millar. We help out every six weeks so there will be plenty of opportunities if you feel at all interested in giving some of your time to assist families who are experiencing difficulties keeping a roof over their heads. This is a chance to really give something back to our local community.

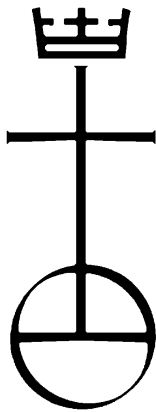
***Waverly Heights Congregational
United Church of Christ***

3300 SE Woodward
Portland, Oregon 97202
(503) 238-1337
www.waverlyucc.org

Pastor: David Zaworski

Worship Schedule:
Sunday - 11:00 A.M.

WAVERLY HEIGHTS CONGREGATIONAL



OUR MISSION STATEMENT

**Waverly Heights Congregational
United Church of Christ
Welcomes all, Honoring each individual's path**

**We invite everyone to
Worship God, Learn the love of Jesus,
Care for one another
Work for change and reconciliation
In our community and the world.**

