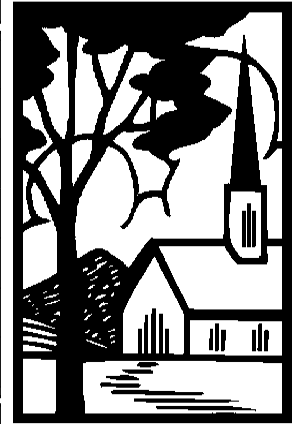


The Church On The Hill



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

DECEMBER 2004 NEWSLETTER
ISSUE 66 VOLUME 2

DAVID ZAWORSKI, PASTOR
TRISH EFFENBERGER, EDITOR

From the Pastor,

Friends, as I write this Thanksgiving is just a week away. By the time you read it we'll be into the season of Advent. This is a curious time in the church year. All around us the larger culture is jumping the gun on Christmas... which will then be forgotten after only *one* of the *twelve* days of Christmas. So Christmas preparation is inescapably part of Advent, but it is a much richer and deeper tradition than that.

In the church year "Advent" refers to the period including the four Sundays leading up to Christmas. As a simple English word, it means "a coming or arrival." We think most easily of Jesus coming to us, the divine incarnate in our own form, a newborn baby. But the traditional scripture readings for this time focus on the "second coming" of Jesus, the apocalyptic Day of the Lord.

I find this splendid. This strange juxtaposition of decorating trees and baking cookies with "wars and rumors of wars" and the final reckoning has got to give pause to any thoughtful person. The messiah was long looked for, many had scrutinized the scriptures, and folks thought they knew who they were looking for. Yet so few recognized Jesus when he came. Plenty of folk today are happy to tell you



Preparing for the Christmas Season

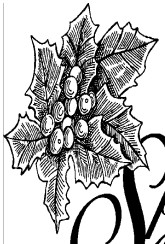
what every apocalyptic vision means and just what the end times will be like – witness the phenomenal popularity of the "Left Behind" series. But Jesus' own words are mostly of caution – don't imagine anyone knows the hour or the ways of God's judgment. Might we miss even such a momentous reality, even as most missed the momentous reality of the first coming so long ago?

Perhaps God's judgment is present now: in the moment we look away from someone homeless, or in the love we put into each spoonful of cookie batter dropped on the cookie sheet.

Whatever the reality, the call of scripture is always to live right now in the light of the coming fulfillment of God's promises. I want to focus the sermons this Advent on that calling to walk each day in God's presence and promise. To do this, I'll be doing a short sermon series based on Micah 6:8. 28 November "What does God require of you?"; 5 December "Do Justice" 12 December "Love Kindness" and on the 19th along with the Christmas pageant a few thoughts on "Walk humbly with your God." I look forward to preparing these messages for you, and to your responses.

Your brother in Christ,
David

Visit our web site @ www.waverlyucc.org



Special Offering

Christmas Fund Special Offering

This year we will receive the Christmas Fund offering at our Christmas Eve service and on the following Sunday, December 26th. 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.

In all these areas, your gift to the Christmas Fund contributes to the well-being of so 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.

Blue Christmas

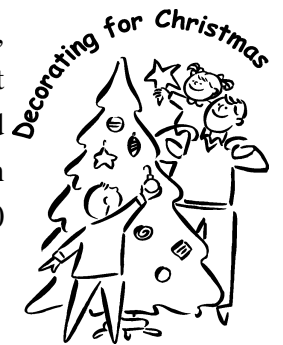
On Sunday, December 12th at 7:00 P.M. we will again hold a "Blue Christmas" service at the church. This service recognizes that for many the holidays are the hardest time of the year – a time to acknowledge our sadness and pain together in a supportive community. If you are grieving, feeling particular 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.



Potluck Dinner and Hanging of the Greens

Decorating the church in all its Christmas finery will be done by

all of us on Saturday, December 4th. We'll start with a potluck dinner and pinata at 5:00 p.m. and begin decorating by around 6:30 p.m. Come join us!



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.

"A Child's Christmas in Wales"

Bring the whole family to church on Wednesday, December 22nd to hear Dylan Thomas' classic tale "A Child's Christmas in Wales" read by members of our church. At least one genuine Welsh accent is included! We'll start with a potluck at 6:00 and have the reading at 7:00. Take some quiet time and come be transported to a little Welsh town by the sea!

2005 Waverly Directories are Coming



Plans are being made to prepare the 2005 Waverly Heights church directory in time for distribution at the annual congregational meeting in January.

If you have updated information for the directory, especially changes to e-mail addresses, please pass it along to Glen Pullen at church or send it to glenp@sba.pdx.edu.

Thanks!

FURNITURE LOOKING FOR A NEW HOME

Our dear friend and colleague, singer Ruppert Blaize, has recently been appointed Ambassador to the US by his home country of Antigua. Antigua is a beautiful tropical island in the eastern Caribbean. He is to report to the Consulate in Miami by Jan. 15th. He is giving back most of the furniture we loaned him, and I want to offer it to anyone in the church who might want it. No charge. All you have to do is pick it up from my house in Milwaukie.

The items include a nearly new, single mattress, box spring, and frame, sheets, dust ruffle, pillow, pillow case, pillow sham, dust ruffle, comforter, yellow thermal blanket, and 2 window curtains (the fluffy kind that go on top of the window.) The main colors are yellow, pink, and blue...pretty feminine. Also, there is a loveseat with hide-a-bed inside, grayish, pinky nubby fabric, also nearly new, and a stand lamp.

The items will be available by Jan. 1st when he leaves. He is driving to Miami and will not be able to take much with him. Please call me at 503-774-2511 days, or 503-353-0203 eves & weekends.

Nancy Tice

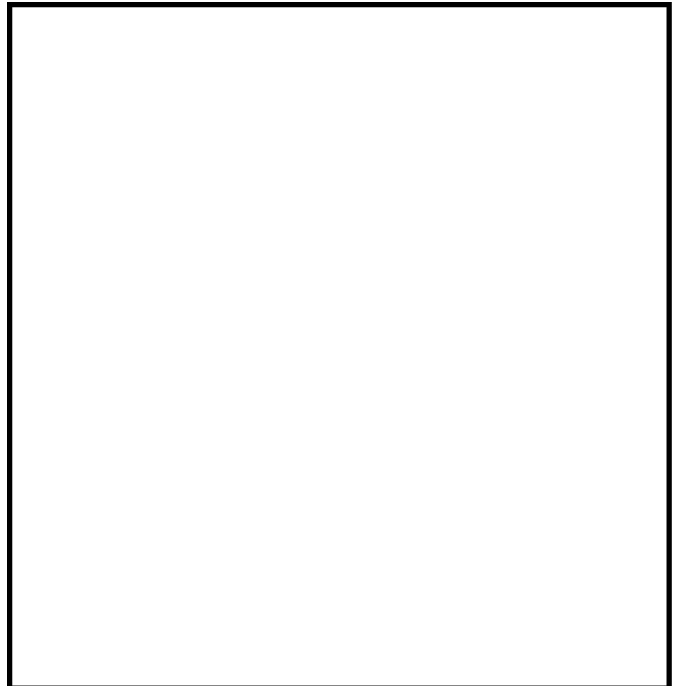


Please submit articles for the January issue no later than December 16th.

Thanks,
Trish Effenberger, Editor

IF THIS IS YOUR FIRST NEWSLETTER FROM WAVERLY...

This newsletter is about the current events of Waverly's ministry and mission. If you wish to have more information and background on Waverly, please feel free to call the church office at 503-238-1337 or email—
pastor@waverlyucc.org



The Waverly Door

On October 31st, we talked in church about Martin Luther's 95 Theses posted on the Wittenberg chapel door this day in 1517 -- a key beginning for the protestant reformation. This was a fifth Sunday, a time for something a little different, so I then invited everyone to write their own ideas of what we need to discuss, what we need to be about as a church today -- things that might need to change and also affirmations of where the Spirit is at work.

The youth passed out paper and pencils and then collected what was written and posted all on the door to our sanctuary. We read some on Sunday. Here is a complete copy of everything offered, for everyone in the church to read and, yes, I hope discuss and maybe act on! David Zaworski

All Hallow's Eve 2004

"No one is perfect so the church (people of) should not sit in judgment of others.
That is God's job."

"Continuing to reach out to this neighborhood to grow the congregation and have a bigger voice in this community – UCC has many important things to say!"

"How can we encourage more people to attend church?"

"Waverly Church should be open and welcoming to the neighborhood, and a good citizen to this community."

"Peace in the world and growth in our church."

"Reclaim Christ and his love and grace from those who think it is only for those who prescribe to a certain mindset."

"To discuss the growing inequality between the fewer and richer and the growing poorer in this country."

"World Peace"

"What does being a 'Just Peace' church mean? How do we continue that journey?"

"Love thy neighbors."

"We need to elevate our concerns about the earth."

"The Christian Church needs to focus on inclusiveness rather than dwell on exclusiveness."

"Reclaim the term 'Christian' from ideologues."

"The church should build alliances and understanding among all generations. Especially respect for the oldsters."

"Talk more about earth and nature."

"Why is it that the public hears Christians take stands on personal issues like abortion and homosexuality and does not hear stands about war and economics?"

"Thankful to God, the church, and the support of each other."

"The Ten Commandments"

"Give what is most dear to you."

"I am praying for grace and more generosity of spirit to enter my heart in all of my interactions with people."

"Especially in these troubled times, are we not all the children of God?"

"OWLS Training Coming in January!

OWLS, which stands for "Our Whole Lives" is a health and sexuality curriculum that was developed in part by the UCC. It teaches children in 4th through 6th grade the information and skills needed to help them make healthy choices as they grow. We will provide a parent training before beginning classes. Look for more information about dates and times, but be thinking of kids and families you know that might be interested. We'll be joined by families from our W'west congregation as well.



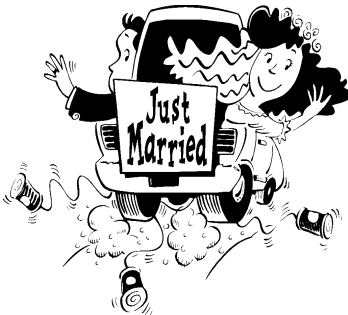
Julie Strayer Thoma for her time hosting fellowship hour after worship service for the month of November.

Our December hosts—

December 5th—*Leona Hansen*
December 12th—*Andrew & Judy Millar*
December 19th—*Lisa Kane*
December 26th—*Amy Hardin*



Glen Pullen for spearheading the once again successful Halloween carnival this year. Also, a special thanks to all the volunteers who helped in this fun event. What a fantastic job done by all!



There are still a few people at Waverly who remember Charlie Stellmon. He attended Sunday School here...walking up from home almost every Sunday from the age of 3 to 16 years. Well, he finally got married up in Seattle on October 23th, 2004 two weeks before his 35th birthday. If you'd like to see pictures of the wedding go to www.rstellmon.photosite.com

RETURN OF THE PICK-UP CHOIR

This is your opportunity to join the Waverly pick-up choir.

Long thought of as an exclusive club of fine singers, this view was recently shattered when it was revealed that former members included Stuart Ramsay and even Andrew Millar! Now that the secret is out, anyone who can hit middle C (or even an approximation of it) is welcome to join us for three rehearsals before the Christmas Pageant. We will meet for an hour before service on Nov. 28th, Dec. 5th and Dec. 12th (10:00am until 10:55) to rehearse a variety of material under the direction of Theo Burke .

*** You do not have to be present at every rehearsal to join the choir.**

As the name suggests, this is not a long term commitment, but it will be fun!

Aiko's story

November 2004

It was perhaps three years ago that I received an unexpected email from a UCC pastor in Hawaii. A parishioner of his had been a US Air Force pilot on one of the planes that bombed Sendai on July 9, 1945. He knew that the bombs had destroyed Christian churches, and that in one of the churches the pastor had been killed. The UCC pastor was inquiring whether I knew of anyone related to the deceased pastor, and whether anyone would be open to receiving a visit from this former pilot.

Three years later I had the pleasure of meeting Ms. Aiko Kochi, the daughter of Rev. Yamada who had died during that air raid. Aiko had been 15 years old at the time, and had lost both of her parents that day. I met Aiko by chance at a forum organized by Japanese politicians to discuss, "What Can Japan Do to Support the Reconstruction of East Timor?" As you may know, East Timor is the newest nation in Asia, which for 26 years had been brutally suppressed by Indonesia. Japan had not only supported Indonesia economically during those years, but had also played its part in suppressing the Timorese during the Second World War. Aiko was one of the panelists at the forum. She shared her involvement as a citizen of Japan in supporting the education of orphans, as well as the building of a library for the children of East Timor.

There is a third element to this story, which is very interesting. An elderly woman at church one day handed me a book and told me to read it. She and her friends had published this simple book about their junior high school days during the Second World War. As they watched the bombing of Baghdad on TV, they felt they needed to do something to educate the public about the horrors of war. The book is a testament of the lives of 20 Japanese Christian women, now in their mid-70s. And Aiko's story is among them.

Aiko and her parents had been in the parsonage next to Hosanna Church when the whole neighborhood went up in flames. Her father ran into the church to retrieve his precious English Bible. Aiko and her mother tried to escape the flames and found a bucket full of water big enough to help one person. As Aiko jumped into the water, she saw her mother's clothes catch fire. She wrote, "It was painful to hear my mother blame herself in the face of death. She cried out saying that this was certainly God's punishment for her own lack of faith. My mother was second generation Christian. I never heard her speak ill of others. For her, those flames represented the fire of God. However, I disagree. To me, that fire was the work of a random killer who preyed on the weak in society such as my parents. It was the fire that consumed the elderly, the children and the sick. It's only that the weak and dying could not see the face or figure of the killer who was so distant from them."

Last month when I shook Aiko's hand, I told her about the email I had received from Hawaii. She replied by saying, "Don't bother to come to Japan. Instead, let's work together to stop the US from dropping bombs on the weak and helpless. Also, please translate and share what I wrote in that book, an article entitled, "Remembering Hell."

Sixty years have passed since the war in the Pacific. Now the war in Iraq is stirring the souls of many in Asia, Europe and the Middle East who know that the scars of war run deep for both the victims and the victimizers. I will never forget a question I received this year from one Japanese Christian woman who asked me; "For Americans, what is the underlying emotion related to war in general? For us Japanese, war means mourning, sadness and loss." I wondered how to respond to her. How would you answer her question?

Jeffrey Mensendiek

Jeffrey Mensendiek serves with the Council on Cooperative Mission, assigned to the Gakusei (Student) Center in Japan. He serves as Director of Gakusei (Student) Center in Sendai, Japan.

Open Letter from Church Member Carol Ingersoll Palumbo

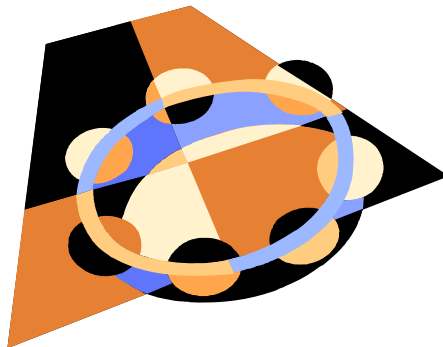
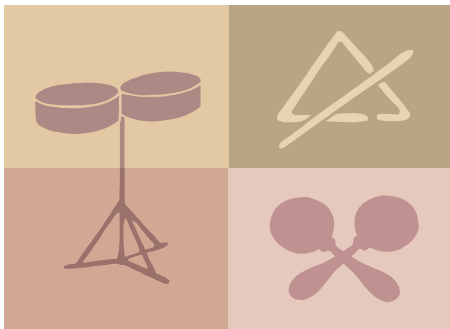
Following the November 2, 2004, National election, I was disturbed that 11 states including Oregon choose to put into their state constitutions a description stating marriage will be defined as that of one man and one woman. Making this a moral dictate prescribed by the electorate. The President of the United States and his Vice President see this as a mandate of how this country should be governed by the conservative, moral Christians.

Citizens have responsibilities and one of those responsibilities is to safeguard the rights of others. If you abuse or allow others to abuse another citizen's rights, your rights might also be at risk someday. With that in mind I question the conservative moral Christians as to how they can selectively pick and choose which Biblical laws to follow?

I looked at the Ten Commandments and the one that is not followed by so many is the one that tells us to observe the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, as the LORD your God commanded you. To me that means that from sunset Friday to sunset Sunday, should be observed as the Sabbath. We can not discriminate which religion, is right. We should not be shopping or buying in any stores, shops, gas stations or exchanging money of any kind for profit. Really, how moral are you? How many weekends can you not spend money or actually keep one day out of seven holy as the LORD your God commanded you to do.

I know I can keep from sunset Friday to sunset Sunday holy and I have done it since the election. Again you can not pick and chose which laws and commandments to follow. Some will claim that not spending money will have an economic impact. Good. Another law broken of making money an idol. Morals are morals you have them or you don't, you can not pick and choose.

Carol Ingersoll Palumbo



Do you have any percussion instruments at home?

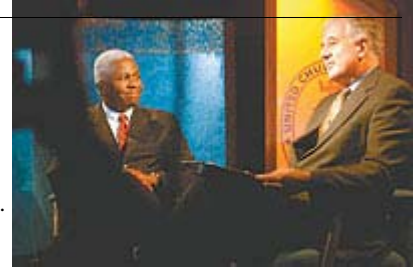
(...or do you know where we could borrow some from?)

We are looking for bells, triangles, tambourines, drums, chimes and the like, to add to the musical experience of the *Children's Christmas Pageant* on December 19th. If you think you can be of help with this request please contact Andrew Millar

(adjmillar@comcast.net or 503 234-8634)

ON THE AIR

By J. Bennett Guess
November 2004



It's official—the UCC's first-ever, television advertising campaign will debut nationwide on Dec. 1.

That's the word from the Rev. John H. Thomas, the UCC's general minister and president, who made the definitive announcement Oct. 19 on the UCC's website ucc.org during a live video "web-streaming," also the first of its kind for the denomination.

"This is a very exciting time in the life of the United Church of Christ," Thomas told more than 1,500 viewers during the 15-minute online announcement. "Just this last weekend, our Executive Council authorized us to move forward in the airing of a commercial as part of our 'God is Still Speaking' campaign."

The 30-second spot, produced at-cost by Gotham, Inc.—a major advertising firm in New York City—will air for 26 days on network and cable stations, explained Ron Buford, national coordinator of the UCC's Still Speaking Initiative, speaking with Thomas in an interview format.

"We will reach 60 percent of the population who will see the commercial four to five times," he said.

The initial media buy will cost \$1.5 million and will be funded by designated contributions from across the church. Although substantially smaller than the originally planned, \$4-million, six-week launch, the out-of-the-gate effort is still ambitious, Thomas said, and hopefully it's just the beginning. A second installment of ads—utilizing a different 30-second spot—is expected to air in February, during Lent, if UCC members and congregations come through with the necessary financial support.

"Airing this commercial is not going to be free," Thomas said, while he and the Rev. Sara D. Smith, pastor of Kenilworth UCC near Buffalo, N.Y., made an online appeal for support.

"This is something [the church is] doing together, because there are people who need to know that God is working in their lives," Smith said, indicating she's made a personal contribution and has urged members of her church to do the same.

Megan Hoelle, a member of Oregon's Lake Oswego UCC and a young adult member of the Executive Council, says the campaign will help the UCC rebound from years of "stagnation and decline."

"'Still Speaking' has really become a movement in the church, and it's catching on," said Hoelle, an intern with the Still Speaking Initiative.

The initial advertising spot—commonly referred to as the "bouncer ad"—attempts to drive home, in dramatic fashion, the feelings of alienation experienced by many non-churchgoers who say they have felt excluded or unwelcomed by institutional churches for a variety of reasons.

In the ad, two burly "bouncers" stand outside a picturesque church and decide which would-be worshippers are allowed inside. The disturbing scene fades to black where, in silence, written words declare, "Jesus didn't turn people away. Neither do we." A sudden shift in mood and music underscores images of friendly UCC members, while an announcer proclaims, "The United Church of Christ—No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you're welcome here."

More than 2,000 congregations have "opted in" to the initiative, Buford reported to the Executive Council, meaning they have made an intentional decision to be active in the campaign by attending and facilitating trainings designed to prepare them to welcome new visitors, provide better hospitality, claim the UCC identity and reach out more boldly.

The opt-in churches represent a "diverse demographic and geographic spectrum," Buford told United Church News. Thirty-five percent are former Congregational Christian churches, 32 percent are former Evangelical and Reformed churches and 30 percent are "UCC originated," meaning they were formed after the UCC's founding in 1957.

The web-streaming announcement was not without its glitches, concedes the Rev. Robert Chase of the UCC's proclamation, identity and communication ministry, "but it was a successful first attempt."

"While we acknowledge that some people experienced technical problems, we are excited about venturing into this new medium," Chase said. "These problems will be resolved, and we believe this will prove to be an effective, new way to deliver information to our members."

In a live webcast, UCC executives Ron Buford and John Thomas unveil specifics about the church's first-ever, national advertising campaign. W. Evan Golder photo.

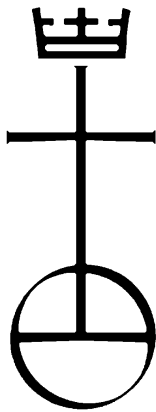
***Waverly Heights Congregational
United Church of Christ***

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

Pastor: David Zaworski

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

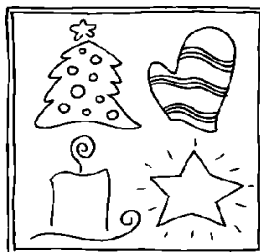
WAVERLY HEIGHTS CONGREGATIONAL UCC



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.**



DECEMBER