

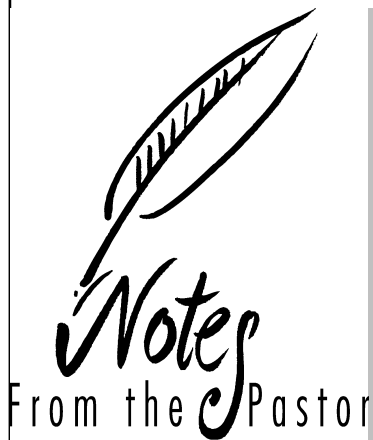
The Church On The Hill



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

FEBRUARY 2005 NEWSLETTER
ISSUE 68 VOLUME 2

DAVID ZAWORSKI, PASTOR
TRISH EFFENBERGER, EDITOR



As I begin to write this, I am sitting in the sanctuary of F i r s t Congregational B e r k e l e y , listening to the lush sound of an 80-voice c h o i r

practicing. They'll be part of the worship tonight here at the Earl Lectures and Pastoral Conference. Writing this piece, my mind is also jumping ahead to Ash Wednesday and Lent. It struck me that the richness of the big choir sound made quite a contrast with the usual austerities of Ash Wednesday and Lent. But is austerity what Lent is about, or has that just been one approach to the central realities of Lent.

The Earl Lectures this year are titled "Sex and the City of God: Intimacy

and Wholeness." We're looking at sex, gender, marriage, Bible, science, society... It's a very full program. One of the keynote speakers was Bishop Gene Robinson, the recently elected Episcopal Bishop of New Hampshire, who is also openly gay and in a committed relationship. I want to lift up right now one little line from his lecture, "I consider it an honor to be a human being, and I take it quite seriously."

Bishop Robinson was setting up a context for talking about sexuality in the church. That line also works as an approach to Lent: to remind ourselves daily that we are honored by God to be who we are—human creatures in this great and good creation; to take that seriously. It is a call to "work out with fear and trembling" what it means to be fully human.


One piece of this is that we are enfleshed, bodies. In the

Visit our web site @ www.waverlyucc.org

incarnation—God with us in Jesus—we recognize our human, bodily state as an appropriate dwelling place for God. It is a dwelling place made for relationship. This is a good work for Lent, to contemplate in humility and honor: the gift we have to be human, the call we have to be in full, equal, life-affirming relationships, the presence of God in our relatedness.

In God's Peace and Blessings,

David



February 9th
at 7:00 pm in
the sanctuary
we will
recognize the
beginning of
Lent with an
Ash
Wednesday
Service

Ash
Wednesday service here at Waverly Heights. Lent is the period leading up to Holy Week and Easter. Please plan to attend.

About One Great Hour of Sharing

Through One Great Hour of Sharing, United Church of Christ members reach out in the name of Christ to:

Build sustainable communities. OGHS supports self-help programs in more than 80 nations to build sustainable communities that enable people and communities to stand against and rise above hunger, disease, illiteracy, and other forces of injustice that deny and destroy dignity.

Respond to disaster. OGHS provides emergency and long-term assistance to people in the aftermath of hurricanes, tornados, storms, floods, tidal waves, fires, explosions, technological disasters, civil strife, war, or other natural or human-caused events. On average, OGHS responds to a disaster once every 2.5 days.

Minister to refugees. OGHS responds with advocacy and help, hope and hospitality for people who have been uprooted from their home of origin. More than 30 million of the world's people are uprooted at any given time.

In cooperation with Global Ministries, Church World Service, Action by Churches Together, Interchurch Medical Assistance, Foods Resource Bank, Oikocredit, Freedom from Hunger and hundreds of local partners around the world, One Great Hour of Sharing is part of a remarkable network of service and caring that is efficient, effective and faithful. Administrative costs are typically less than eight percent annually.

The United Church of Christ unites with Christians in eight other Protestant denominations and Church World Service in One Great Hour of Sharing, thus multiplying the effectiveness and extent of our witness many times



over.

The partnership we share with nearly 6,000 United Church of Christ congregations across the United States and Puerto Rico is where this remarkable miracle connecting UCC members to the world truly begins. The UCC annually channels more than \$3 million dollars through One Great Hour of Sharing to humanitarian needs in the world.

The One Great Hour of Sharing offering is administered through UCC Wider Church Ministries, Olivia Masih White, Ph.D., Executive Minister.

All gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing are tax deductible and 100% of designated gifts go to the designated area of response. Non-designated funds are encouraged. They allow One Great Hour of Sharing to address future hidden and forgotten emergencies around the world.

One Great Hour of Sharing offering will be received on March 6th, 2005. Please give generously.

**SOUP AND CULTURE:
Fat Tuesday
February 8th @ 6:15 pm**

The perfect celebration for Waverly Heights: FOOD! Humor. Jokes. FOOD! Masks. Music. FOOD! Join us in ridding our homes of rich meats, butter, milk, eggs the night before Ash Wednesday. Bring a f r i e n d !



Please submit articles for the March issue no later than February 22nd.

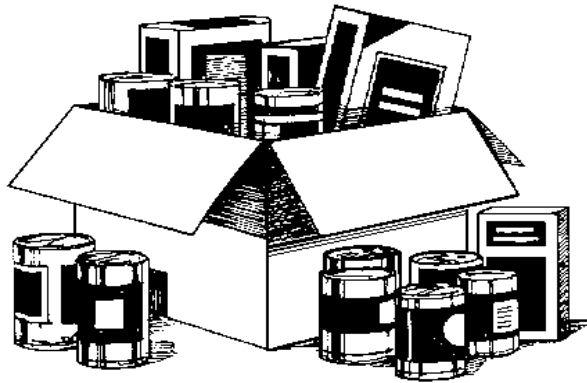
Thanks,
Trish Effenberger, Editor

**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

“SOUPER BOWL” SUNDAY

Souper Bowl Sunday is coming right up. That's right. On Super Bowl Sunday, February 6th, bring canned food items to church with you to donate to *Souper Bowl* Sunday. This is a denomination wide event, and of course, all food items will be donated to our favorite foodbank.



MARK FEBRUARY 12TH ON YOUR CALENDARS

We will be planting three Katsura trees in the parking strip in front of the parsonage. Bring your friends, and have them bring their shovels. The trees are free to us, donated by Richmond Neighborhood Assn. and Friends of Trees. The actual planting time will probably be around 9:30 a.m. Watch for more info in the Sunday bulletin.



Thank You for Helping



Special thanks to *Vi Hyde, Beryl Sellens, Helen Feight* and *Margaret Hyde* for sharing the responsibilities of hosting social time after worship service during the month of January.

Thanks again ladies!

Our hosts for February—
Jean Hodges
and
Leona Hansen



Three Local Stations to Air Controversial Church Ad

BY CHRIS HAMILTON

NEWS TRIBUNE STAFF WRITER

Three Northland television stations have agreed to air a controversial advertisement that promotes the United Church of Christ.

The 30-second spots will run on WDIO-TV/Channel 10; KBJR-TV/Channel 6; and KDLH-TV/Channel 3 for about two weeks, beginning on Wednesday, said John Fochs, a spokesman for the Duluth's Pilgrim Congregational, Peace United Church of Christ and the Minnesota Conference of the UCC.

In mid-December, about two dozen local UCC congregation members sang outside the KBJR-TV offices in Duluth's Canal Park to protest the refusal of national networks to air it.

At the time, local station managers said they simply had not been approached about running the ad. And KBJR officials said they would be willing to air the ads if they were asked to.

The Rev. Charlotte Frantz of Pilgrim Congregational called the decisions particularly meaningful since they represented a response to requests from members of the local community.

The spot depicts a couple of burly men acting as bouncers outside a church. The men are shown turning several people away, including a young black woman and a male couple. Meanwhile, a group of white men and women are allowed into the church.

The commercial includes the message "Jesus didn't turn away people and neither do we." The spot implies other congregations aren't as open to people of diverse backgrounds and sexual orientations.

"We felt it was an appropriate ad for us to run," said Dave Jensch, KBJR's station manager. "It was being run in other places, and we did not feel it was a violation of anything."

The church groups are paying for the air time, Jensch said.

SpongeBob receives 'unequivocal welcome' from United Church of Christ

By J. Bennett Guess
United Church News

Jan.24, 2005

CLEVELAND -- Joining the animated fray, the United Church of Christ today (Jan. 24) said that Jesus' message of extravagant welcome extends to all, including SpongeBob Squarepants - the cartoon character that has come under fire for allegedly holding hands with a starfish.

"Absolutely, the UCC extends an unequivocal welcome to SpongeBob," the Rev. John H. Thomas, the UCC's general minister and president, said, only partly in jest. "Jesus didn't turn people away. Neither do we."

For that matter, Thomas explained, the 1.3-million-member church, if given the opportunity, would warmly receive Barney, Big Bird, Tinky-Winky, Clifford the Big Red Dog or, for that matter, any who have experienced the Christian message as a harsh word of judgment rather than Jesus' offering of grace.

The UCC's welcome comes in the wake of laughable accusations by James C. Dobson, founder of Focus on the Family, that the popular SpongeBob and other well-known cartoon characters are crossing "a moral line" by stressing tolerance in a national We Are Family Foundation-sponsored video that will be distributed to U.S. schools on March 11, 2005.

Later, an assistant to Dobson called SpongeBob's participation in the video "insidious."

Thomas said, on the contrary, it is Dobson who is crossing the moral line for sending the mistaken message that Christians do not value tolerance and diversity as important religious values.

"While Dobson's silly accusation makes headlines, it's also one more concrete example of how religion is misused over and over to promote intolerance over inclusion," Thomas said. "This is why we believe it is so important that the UCC speak the Gospel in an accent not often heard in our culture, because far too many experience the cross only as judgment, never as embrace."

Dobson, despite his often-outrageous viewpoints, is arguably one of the most oft-heard religious voices in popular culture today. Through his Focus on the Family media empire, Dobson produces daily commentaries that appear widely on television and radio stations across the United States, often times as "public service announcements."

Meanwhile, the UCC's recently released 30-second paid television commercial - produced to underscore the denomination's belief that Jesus didn't turn anyone away - has been rejected by two major television networks for being "too controversial."

"Resistance to our message is formidable," Thomas says, "because we're cutting against the prevailing grain of a society that is afraid of the stranger, suspicious of difference and easily seduced by narrowly defined theological boundaries."

The 1.3-million-member United Church of Christ, with national offices in Cleveland, has almost 6,000 local churches in the United States and Puerto Rico. It was formed by the 1957 union of the Congregational Christian Churches and the Evangelical and Reformed Church.

For more information on the "We Are Family" children's video, visit www.wearefamilyfoundation.org.



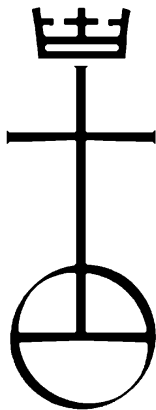
The Rev. John H. Thomas, general minister and president of the UCC, welcomes SpongeBob Squarepants to the UCC's national offices in Cleveland. [January 2005] Randy Varcho/UCC Photo

*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.



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.**

