

The Church on the Hill

David Zaworski, Pastor

Waverly Heights Congregational
United Church of Christ

August 2009
Volume 2, Issue 117



A NOTE FROM THE PASTOR

I'm finding myself challenged in my preaching lately—not a new condition or a bad one! How can the words

I offer bring engagement with *the Word*, with God's transforming power and grace. How can we look honestly at the overwhelming needs of the world and still know inspiration. None of us come to church to be made to feel bad, we pretty well can manage that on our own the rest of the week. But we are not here merely to feel good for a couple hours, to get pumped up again against inevitable deflating realities of the rest of our lives. God's work in our community is to continually recreate us, more and more into the image and likeness of God's own self. We are being reshaped to more and more be able to meet every hardship and injustice, every weary grind, with hope, with love, with commitment.

So what does that mean for our worship life?

A UCC clergy colleague, Cecil Prescod, recently posted a link to an opinion piece about the departure of Rev. Brad Braxton from the position of senior minister of Riverside Church in New York City. A bit of background—Riverside has been a flagship congregation of progressive Christianity with great preachers such as Harry Emerson Fosdick, William Sloane Coffin, and most recently James Forbes. The column, by Ronald B. Neal, indicates that conflict over worship/preaching style was behind Rev. Braxton's departure after less than a year. Neal goes on to suggest that predominately white, anglo progressive Christianity is in a "persistent vegetative state" and that Braxton's style was something we can ill afford to lose. Speaking about his own similar experience as a black minister in a predominately

white church, Neal notes that his preaching was considered too "conservative." He writes:

In the Black Baptist tradition that shaped me, the triumphant side of the cross is connected to celebration and excitement, to overall enthusiasm. An enthusiastic and celebratory faith does not allow inequality, victimization, and suffering (and the seemingly unresolvable and conflict-ridden politics that accompanies them) to have the last word.

I think there's something there that we, I, need to pay attention to. God's grace is at work in us as we face the hard realities of our day—crumbling economy, lack of health care and housing, violence at home and around the world—face and fully acknowledge these realities, but know that they do not have the last word. And what is that last word that calls us out into "enthusiastic and celebratory faith?" It is God's unconditional—let me repeat that, *unconditional*—love for us and for all. Experiencing this reality of God's love, we are freed from fears, free to see all of reality and respond as people of God's love, willing and able to do our part, trusting to God's final word of who we are, who each one of us is all around the world. The Franciscan monk Richard Rohr expresses this truth:

The person who is beyond fear has given up the need to control or possess or be right. Their being is grounded in the Being of God. As St. Francis of Assisi said, "I am who I am in God's eyes—nothing more, but nothing less." A truly converted/transformed person does not need to impress anyone because they know that they are not who you think they are anyway—or even who they themselves think they are!

From the Pastor continued

Who are we? Creatures loved beyond all our imagining, God's beloved, given the gifts of open eyes and hearts, honest and generous vision, faith that transforms us and the structures of our world; given the call to enthusiastic and celebratory worship through the power of God's Word.

Blessings,

David

Strengthen the Church

During the month of August we will be receiving our annual Strengthen the Church offering. This is one of the all-UCC offerings that we make to extend our ministry in covenant with other UCC churches across the country. Strengthen the Church gifts support projects at the local and regional level through our Central Pacific Conference and at the national level through Local Church Ministries and the Still Speaking initia-

ive. Our gifts help invigorate congregations, foster new leaders, and grow the UCC's presence as a community of extravagant welcome. As with all of our offerings, there's no obligation here. Rather, we invite you to receive this as an opportunity to support the ministries you value and in which you already participate at Waverly UCC.

The Lift is installed – Let's celebrate

By: Anne Reif

The lift is almost ready for its first passengers. The restrooms are modernized and are handicapped accessible. To quote Glen Pullen, the Access Project will be completed in just "two weeks." This is a great achievement and the realization of a long-held commitment by



the Waverly Heights community.

It's time for a celebration! Mark your calendars for September 13 (the second Sunday in September) — when we will dedicate the lift and kick-off the capital campaign that will allow us to repay our loan from the Cornerstone

Fund and make other needed repairs to the church building.

The capital campaign committee has been busy with behind-the-scenes activities over the summer. Watch for a special mailing in August that will explain the goals of the campaign and how you can participate.

Daybreak Shelter Rotation August 23rd—30th

Putting the word out to Waverly that cooking, overnight host and bus drivers volunteer positions are available the week of 8/23 to 8/30 at the Daybreak shelter.

In the interest of expediency, interested parties should con-

tact Michelle Gosella directly, at kmgorsella@gmail.com.

A complete description of the program, the various job duties, address and contact information is available at:

<http://www.pdxpax.org/daybreak/>



Art Exhibit by Dana Weir on SE Division Street

Hello art lovers, I will be exhibiting new work at The Taoist Center on SE 12th and Division in August. I am very excited for this solo show! The Taoist Center is a non-profit organization run by my good friend, Madoc Yng-Wong. He is a Taoist philosopher, and a practitioner of Chinese medicine. My artwork will be reflective of my own understanding of and experience with the spiritual aspects of Taoism. Hope to see you there!

The Taoist Center is located at: 1235 SE Division St. (Suite 206)

Opening Reception: Friday, Aug. 7th, 6 - 9pm

The show runs through Aug. 28th.

Contact Dana Weir for more information: 503-975-8991

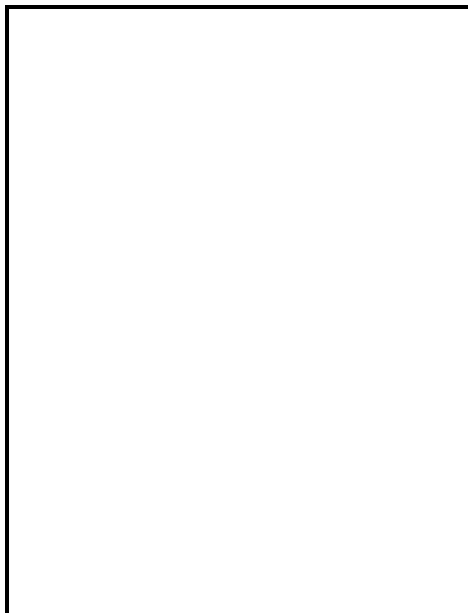
5 Low-cost Ways to Keep Yourself Healthy

The economic downturn has got most of us worried about money. Health care can become expensive, and many are losing health care coverage due to job losses or the expense of insurance policies. How can we keep ourselves healthy without breaking the bank? Join Melinda Nickels, Parish Naturopath, for a talk and discussion on this topic. Feel free to bring along any friends who might be interested!

When: Sunday, August 9th from 11:30 - 12:30 (hospitality hour).



Prayers for *Rosalind McCormick* and her family after the recent passing of her mother, *Marge McCormick*.



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 contact the church office at (503) 238-1337.

Newsletter DEADLINE

Please submit articles for the September issue no later than Thursday, August 20th.

Thanks,

Trish Effenberger,
Editor

WWW's It's High Time We Got Together!

Sunday, August 16th at 5:30 p.m. A potluck at Jeanne's house. Jeanne will make hibiscus tea and have some other hot weather food. If it is as hot as it is today, we can be inside with an air conditioner. Gather and share food and love. We can talk about a proper English tea and other ideas for the year. Bring fabric to share



for our bazaar which will be the first Saturday of December, the 5th. Mark it on your calendars. Again and always---All are welcome.

CPC Women's Fall Retreat

Women, when was the last time you went to camp? Time to mark your calendar for the Central Pacific Women's retreat at Camp Adams the weekend of October 16 - 18. Set the date and start saving your money, this year it will probably cost \$100. There are grant monies available through the Rev. Anne Smith Loan/Grant fund. It is a weekend that is amazingly rejuvenating through, song, play, prayer, and sisterly companionship. It is a great way to relax before getting into the non-stop season that is quickly approaching Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas. Contact Deanna Mason or Carol Palumbo.

CHURCH NEWS AND NEEDS

How exciting it has been to see the progress on the lift as it nears completion. We hope you have had a chance to see the lovely hall area and new bathrooms. Hooray! A joyful dedication celebration for the lift has been set for the second Sunday in September. This will also be our kick-off date for the capital improvement pledge drive chaired by Anne Reif. We must all show her what a "YES WE CAN" congregation we are. Our church needs help in another area. We have not filled the position which covers decorating the church for Sunday service and preparation for, and serving communion. We are hoping two (or more) of you will come forward and talk to David or Jeanne Clegg about helping out. We are thinking of splitting this job for now, and should you volunteer, please know that the primary task is seeing that these areas are covered. You are not expected to decorate the altar every Sunday or prepare and serve communion every month, but to see that someone does. This would be of great help to David, The consistory, and our church at this time. Think about it.



Grace to each of you, Jeanne Clegg

CHURCH CLEANERS NEEDED

Have you ever sat in church and wondered about how things get cleaned on the inside. Windows dusted, floor mopped, rug vacuumed. I know I have and Jana-King janitorial service is the company that has been doing the job. My next question was why did it not look as clean as it does at home? This I learned the hard way. The service would come once a week for a couple of hours. Given as many people who use the church a couple of hours a week wasn't enough. I came in and cleaned the narthex and the sanctuary. Dusted windows, all woodwork, wet mopped the wood floor, vacuumed the rugs, and the pew cushions. I took four hours and I could still see things that needed to be done. As the contact person with Jana-King I did a walk through with the service and we talked about what would be realistic. A very thorough cleaning once a month for the same price is the best. What I would like would be for individuals or families to sign up to pick up and or clean on the other weeks. As we get closer to the completion of the handicap access there are places I would like to start. Two people to clean the janitor's closet in the narthex. Three or four people to put Hyde Hall back in order.

Contact Carol Palumbo

**Waverly Heights
United Church of Christ**

3300 SE Woodward Street
Portland, OR 97202
503-238-1337
www.waverlyucc.org

Worship Service
Summer Schedule:
Sundays @10:00 am

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*

