

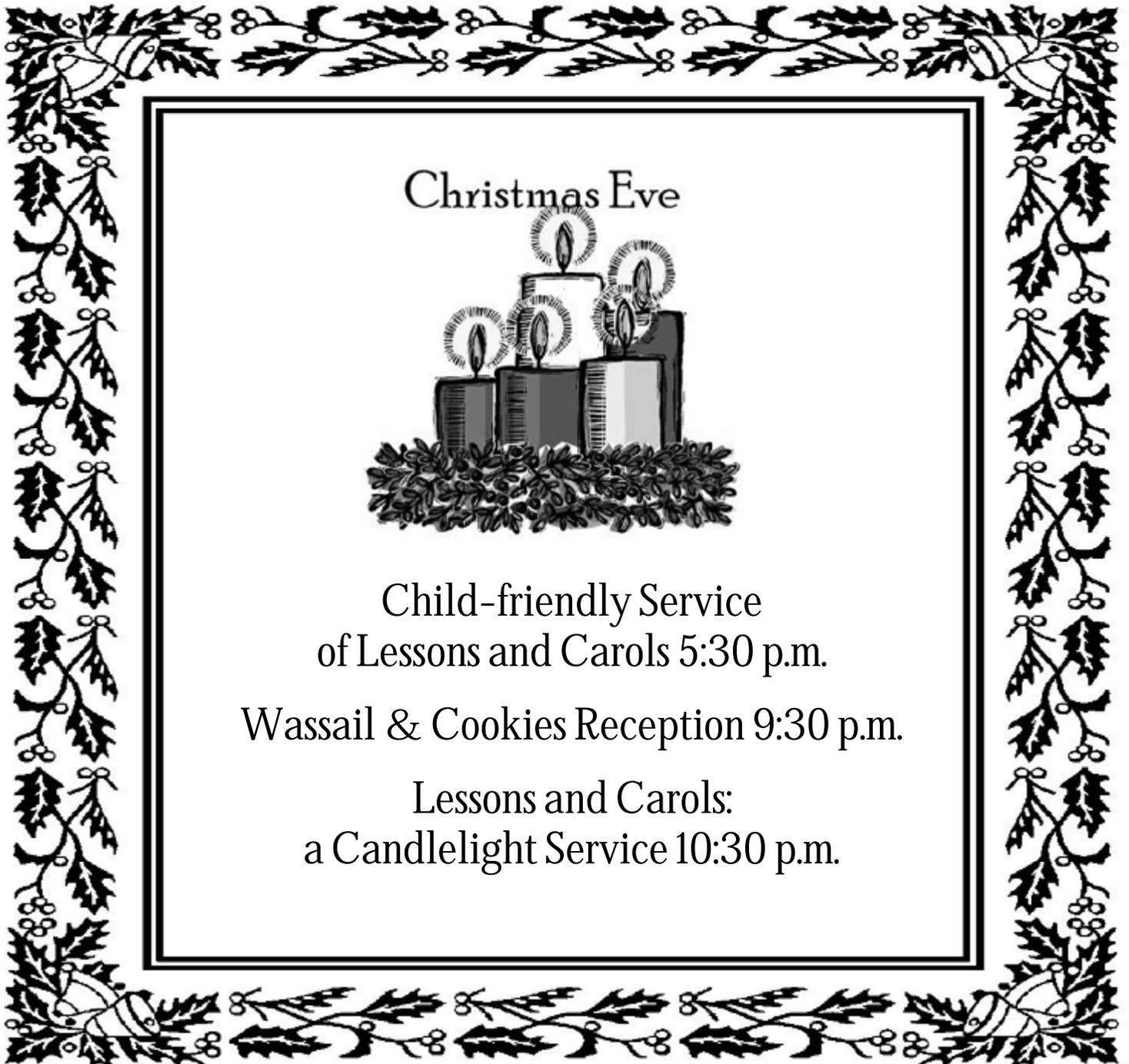


Shalom

First Congregational
United Church of Christ
700 Marion Street NE, Salem, Oregon 97301
503-363-3660 www.uccsalem.org

Reverend Dr. Janet Parker, Senior Pastor
Reverend Emily Goodnow, Associate Pastor

Rick Bingham, Moderator
December 17, 2014



Christmas Eve



Child-friendly Service
of Lessons and Carols 5:30 p.m.

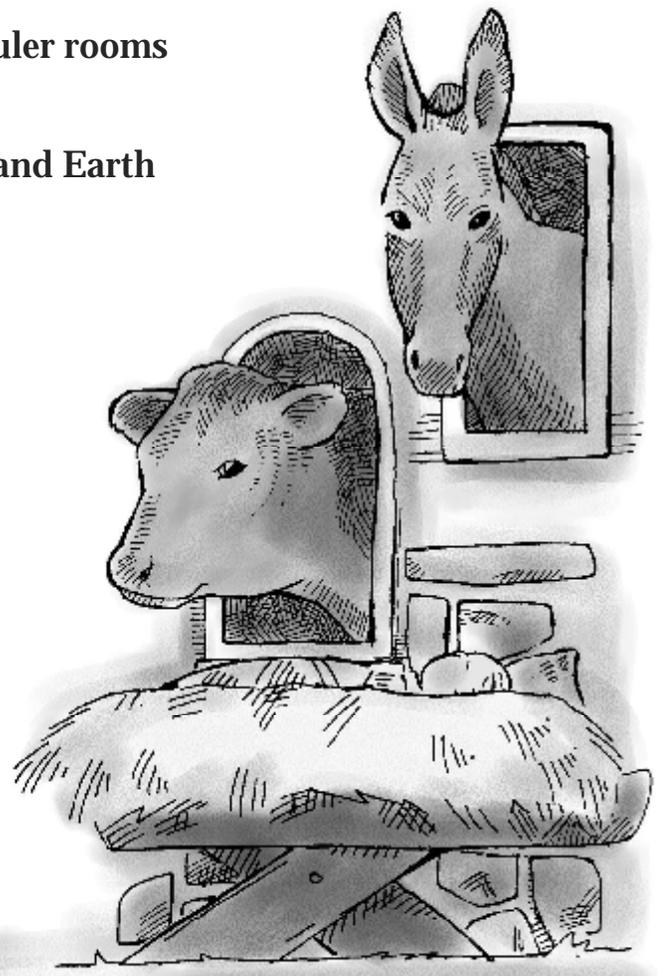
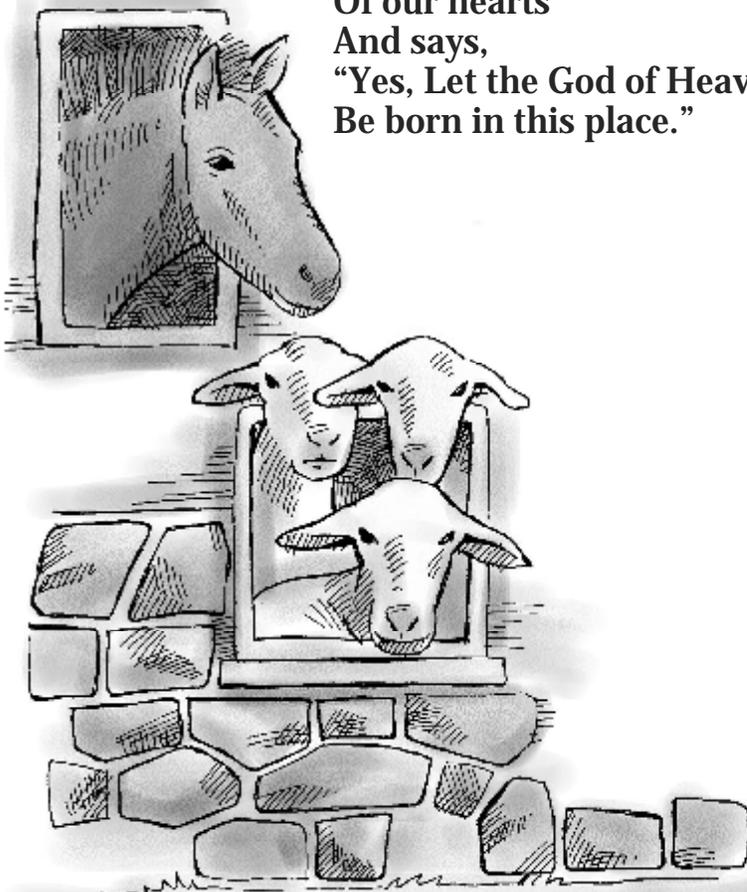
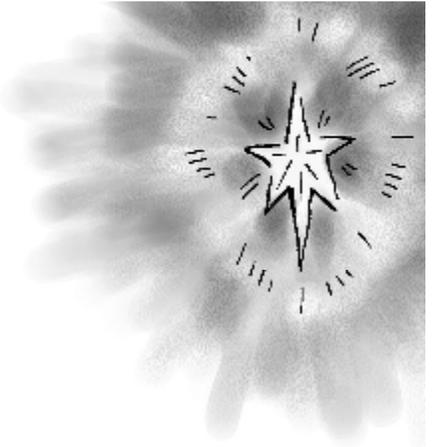
Wassail & Cookies Reception 9:30 p.m.

Lessons and Carols:
a Candlelight Service 10:30 p.m.

Let the Stable Still Astonish

by Leslie Leyland Fields

Let the stable still astonish:
Straw-dirt floor, dull eyes,
Dusty flanks of donkeys, oxen;
Crumbling, crooked walls;
No bed to carry that pain,
And then, the child--
Rag-wrapped, laid to cry
In a trough.
Who would have chosen this?
Who would have said,
"Yes, Let the God of Heaven and Earth
Be born in this place"?
Who but the same God
Who stands in the darker, fouler rooms
Of our hearts
And says,
"Yes, Let the God of Heaven and Earth
Be born in this place."



IN OUR PRAYERS

Prayers of joy and thanksgiving for the marriage of **Jeff Standy and Ken Cook** on December 14!...Prayers of love and for healing for **Scott Taber**, who is in the ICU at Doernbecher Children's Hospital after a bad asthma attack... Prayers for healing for **Melvin Stewart**, as he continues to struggle with his knee, for **Nancy Stempek**, recovering from Shingles and a back injury, for **Marianne Sweger**, who has been hospitalized for a heart condition and will be going into a rehab facility later this week, and for **Steve Woodward**, who had hip replacement surgery last week...Prayers for strength and health for **Rebecca Ralston**, as she helps her parents move from independent to assisted living in Tennessee...Prayers for effective treatment and an upcoming surgery for **Amy Sackett's brother-in-law**, who is suffering from esophageal cancer that has spread to his stomach...and prayers of condolence for **Don Lew and Don Lundberg**, who both lost their mothers within the past two weeks. Eleanor Lundberg Milnes was 93 when she passed. Her service was held in Illinois. Don Lew's mother, Mamie, was 95 when she passed. Her service will be held at Willamette National Cemetery on Dec. 30, Pastor Janet will officiate. We keep Don Lundberg and Don Lew in our prayers as they grieve as well as celebrate the memory of their mothers' lives.

A NOTE OF GRATITUDE

Thank you to all who helped bring my home and garage out of chaos. Thank you to the many individuals of differ-

ent ages who came to sing carols to me and with me. Love, *Joy Hayhurst*.



CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP DETAILS

This year's 5:30 p.m. worship service is a Lessons and Carols service for all ages! Youth and children will read and tell the story of that Holy Night so long ago, and together we'll bring that evening to life again with story and song. The Chancel Choir will sing, including our favorite "Peace, Peace" and "Silent Night" anthem. Service is meant to be extra-friendly for children, but all are welcome to this evening of worship, prayer and song.

The nursery is not staffed on Christmas Eve, but the space is open to parents if their children need to take a break from the service.

Wassail Reception at 9:30 p.m.

The Community Committee is serving wassail; the cookies and candies are **potluck**. Please bring a plate or a platter of sweet treats to share!

The **Lessons and Carols: A Candlelight Service** is at **10:30 p.m.** This lovely service features the Chancel Choir, lay readers, and a Christmas Reflection by Pastor Janet.

WORSHIP ON DECEMBER 28

We will continue in the Christmas Spirit by worshipping together, re-lighting the Advent Candles one last time, reading scripture, and skipping the sermon just this once to sing your favorite Christmas carols. Whether this Christmas Season is very merry, or a little sad, come join us for worship, music, prayer and fellowship in community together. See you in church!

STEWARDSHIP BULLETIN!



We're off to a great start, but far from the finish line. In a few days, all our members and friends will receive a **detailed letter** with a request to consider increasing their financial commitment to our church's work in 2015. We're in a challenging time as we transition back into our previous model of two full time pastors. Our Church Council knows we need to expand membership to support all we want to do both inside and beyond our walls. So they have committed to several new initiatives that will be undertaken shortly after the new year...and what you've told us you hold dear about our lives and work here will be part of the stories we'll be telling prospective members. So...stay calm, pray more, and pledge energetically!

CHRISTMAS OFFERING

All of this year's Christmas offering is dedicated to the UCC Christmas Fund. This fund provides assistance for retired and low-income clergy and

church employees who need pension supplements, health premium supplements, and emergency grants. Please mark the memo line of your check "Christmas Offering" Thank you for your donation!

PASTORAL SCHEDULE OVER THE HOLIDAYS

Pastor Janet is in town and on call during Christmas and New Year's. She will not be keeping a regular office schedule during the week between Christmas and New Year's, but if you need to reach her, she will be checking email and will be available by cell phone: 503-559-0430. Pastor Emily is away on vacation from December 25 through January 3, and at her Next Generation Leadership Initiative Fellowship from January 4—10. She's back in worship with us on January 11.

OFFICE SCHEDULE OVER THE HOLIDAYS

Our office manager, Annemieke, is away on vacation from December 18th through January 2nd and back in the office on Monday, January 5th. In her absence, volunteers will keep the office running during our regular office hours. The office is closed on December 25 and 26 and January 1 and will be opened limited hours on December 24. **Our bookkeeper, Steve, will be in the office on December 31 from 1 to 4 p.m. to process your last checks of 2014 to the church.**

HELP OUR NEW BOOKKEEPER GET SETTLED IN

Our new bookkeeper, Steve Pruett, is getting to know our congregation and its finances. During Annemieke's vacation, he'll process the church's deposit. It would be a tremendous help if you would pay extra attention to filling out the memo lines on your checks, so he doesn't have to look up/wonder/guess/ or call you to find out the intent of your giving. Thank you!



MANY THANKS FOR CHRISTMAS CHEER AND CHRISTMAS GLITTER!

Advent Fest and Christmas Caroling were both festive and bright this year! Thanks to all who baked and crafted, made sandwiches and told stories, sang songs and brought good cheer on Advent Fest. We had a church full of joy and creativity, and we're still finding glitter and balloon animals around – lingering joy from the day! Special thanks to the Christian Ed. and Community Committees who collaborated on this event – it was a fun day for all. And the decorations, still up for our Salem Interfaith Hospitality Network week, are divine.

Christmas Caroling this year was the musical adventure of the season! Two groups went out to several retirement

communities and private homes and brought joy and cheer to those who needed a little extra Christmas joy this season. We even had choir members present to sing harmonies! It was a true intergenerational event, and a success all around. Special thanks to the community committee, and Lori Ensign especially who put together caroling books and routes, and to Betty Helm and Maya Close who stayed behind to keep the chili warm and prep for game night upon our return!

HOSTING SIHN CHRISTMAS WEEK

Please visit with the good folks at the SIHN sign-up table in the McDougale Narthex before and after worship on Sundays in Advent to find out what their needs are for hosting the SIHN families in our church during Christmas week. There are many opportunities for you to be part of this ministry. Read on...

SIHN CHRISTMAS YOUTH PARTY Monday, December 22 @ 7 p.m.

We're hosting the Salem Interfaith Hospitality Network families this year over Christmas, and our youth groups are coming together on the 22nd to throw them a party! All hands are needed to come give out stockings, sing Christmas carols, decorate the tree, eat cookies, paint ornaments, and make the season bright for the families staying with us. Volunteer opportunities also available on the evening of December 23, if you'd like to come back – contact Pastor Emily if you'd like to come make gingerbread houses with our guests.



Christmas Dinner

CHRISTMAS DAY DINNER @ 1 P.M.

All are invited to a Christmas meal with the SIHN families on Christmas Day at 1 p.m. in Talkington Hall. The turkey and ham are provided.

There are sign-up lists in the McDougale narthex for sides and desserts, before and after worship on the Sunday before Christmas. RSVP to Susan Bearden 503-409-8560

SIHN STOCKING STUFFER

About the SIHN stocking stuffers to bring to Advent Fest. As of this printing, there are two boys ages 4 and 10, and one girl age 6. (This information is different from what we printed before because families moved into housing and new families entered SIHN). We'd love to have stockings, too; so, if you have extra, please consider donating them to the church.



WARMING SHELTER UPDATE

We're ready to go! If we need to open a warming shelter here in Salem, our church is prepared and excited to offer space for this important ministry. The shelter is a collaboration between organizations, churches, and individuals around Salem, with Community Action Agency as the backbone agency. The

shelter opens when we have a weather forecast of 29 degrees or below for 72 hours or more, or an inch of snow predicted. Community Action Agency and the Emergency Manager for the City of Salem collaborate to make the decision on whether or not to open.

When they make the decision to open, we are one of three churches prepared to offer space – First Presbyterian and First United Methodist Churches have also agreed to offer space, though both have limitations on their ability to offer space. At this time, we do not know what their limitations are. Currently, we have no limitations on offering our space – we will open if asked, unless we are a SIHN host site at the time. The goal is to rotate opening by weather event. Meaning, for example, that if we take a 5-day cold snap in December, First Presbyterian would take a 3-day snow storm in January, and First United Methodist would take a cold snap later in January. Not knowing the other two churches' limitations or the weather for this winter, it's hard to guess whether we'll open once or five times.

The shelter is open to any adult. We have kennels for pets, couples are welcome, people may be under the influence. So long as people are not a danger to others or themselves, they are welcome. We've kept the design simple – it's truly a space to get warm. We have hot broth and decaf coffee available, and mats and blankets if people would like to rest or sleep. We send them away with our Emergency Lunch Bags in the morning. We do not pro-

vide anything else – no clothes, no meals, no entertainment. We are structured around the Union Gospel Mission meal times – our hope is that folks will eat dinner and breakfast there, and warm in our shelter in between.

This past Sunday, we organized a group of FCUCC leaders willing to serve as Site Hosts for these events. At any time when the shelter is in our space, we will have a trained church member on site with a set of keys and knowledge about the building to support and assist the shelter volunteers.

We expect to continue learning and growing each time we open, and are already light years ahead of where we were last year when we opened in that weather event in February. If you have questions or concerns, or would like to get involved, please don't hesitate to reach out. The Homelessness Task Force, and new chair Pamella Watson especially, are very involved with this project and are happy to answer any questions, as is Pastor Emily. Thanks to you all for making this happen – it is a real dream come true for so many of us, and a real need we're meeting in our community.

OREGON CLIMATE DECLARATION

Thanks to those of you who recently signed the Oregon Climate Declaration at the tables in the narthex. If you haven't yet had the chance, we encourage you to go to:<http://campaigns.350.org/petitions/oregon-climate-declaration-uccsaalem> and sign it there!

Background: As you all know, our

church, along with the larger Central Pacific Conference of the UCC, has decided to focus on climate change. The Peace & Justice Committee has been hard at work discerning how best to help everyone in the church to engage this important issue. The Oregon Climate Declaration is a fast and easy opportunity for you to urge Oregon's Governor and Legislators to a) cease investing in fossil fuel companies; b) divest from ownership in these companies; and c) prioritize a carbon tax that would help fund alternative (renewable) energy development. We appreciate your assistance!
Peace and Justice Committee

ADULT LEARNING HOUR ON SUNDAYS

Adult Education will be on hiatus for the rest of December and will resume on January 11 with an exciting new offering "Lessons of the Spirit from Our Church Mothers" by our own Rev. Dana McBrien at our normal start time of 9:15 a.m. You may have heard of the "Church Fathers," those church leaders, writers and theologians from the first four centuries like St. Augustine, Ambrose, Gregory of Nyssa, or Ignatius of Antioch. You may have heard of St. Jerome. But what do you know about the women of the early church, our "Church Mothers?" Come to Adult Education hour January 11, 18, 25, and Feb. 1 to find out. Rev. Dana McBrien will share their stories, then we will talk about our own lives in light of themes in theirs. Jan. 11: Helena; Jan. 18: Macrina and Nona; Jan 25: Marcella and Paula; and Feb. 1: Monica.

**MONDAY NOON BOOK
DISCUSSION GROUP CHOOSES
“ZEALOT” AS ITS NEXT BOOK**

Starting Monday, January 12, the group will discuss Reza Aslan’s book “Zealot”. Controversial and challenging, this book will push us to consider a new approach to Jesus’ life. From an interview with the author. Preaching the sole sovereignty of God, zealous Jews wanted to throw off the yoke of Roman occupation and cleanse the Promised Land of all foreign elements. Although there is no evidence that Jesus of Nazareth was himself a violent revolutionary, Aslan asserts that Jesus’ actions and his teachings about the Kingdom of God indicate that he was a follower of the zealot doctrine, which is why he, like so many zealots before and after him, was ultimately executed by Rome for the crime of sedition. Sign up in the Church office to order a book (\$18.00 from Book Bin) and join us. We will place the order on December 22.

**2015 TALENT / NO TALENT SHOW
DID YOU SAVE THE DATE?**



Saturday, February 28, at 6:00 p.m. is the time for fun. The Annual Talent/No Talent Show is a great way to have fun and get to know another side of your fellow

members. For two amazing hours, we will enjoy music, dancing, comedy, and who knows what else. For two amazing hours, we will enjoy tasty

treats. As a bonus, we have the opportunity to help Congregations Helping People and Marion-Polk Food Share by making donations.

If you have talents that you would like to share with our members, sign up will begin after the first of the year. However, it’s not too early to start practicing. Space is limited. We will also have a list for you to volunteer to bring food to share, if that is your talent.

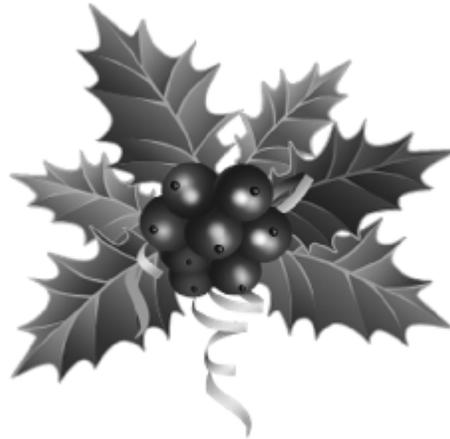
In case your talent is enjoying others’ company, laughing, and applauding, we also are recruiting an audience. For the low, low price of a can or box of food, you can display those talents. No sign up required.

So, save the date of February 28 and start practicing any of your talents listed above!

EXCHANGE BOARD UPDATE

In addition to the offerings of firewood, haircuts, computer support and sewing, we now have computer accessories, and writing and editing. We now have two needs that are the need for a handyman and a night caregiver. Please check out the board for details on these items and services. It is located in Talkington Hall, where we have Fellowship Time.

*GOOD TIDINGS TO YOU AND
ALL OF YOUR KIN....
WE WISH YOU A
MERRY CHRISTMAS
AND
A HAPPY NEW YEAR!*



*PASTOR JANET
PASTOR EMILY*



*MARCIA HAUFF
RAY ELLIOTT
ANNEMIEKE LAPORT
JEFF STANDY
STEVE PRUETT*

Weekly Recurring Events

Sundays

8:30 a.m.

Contemplative Prayer Group,
Conference Room

9:15 a.m.

Adult Learning Hour,

Adult Education Classroom

(Note: Adult Learning Hour is on hiatus in December and resumes January 11. See article.)

10:30 a.m.

Worship Service & Children's Learning Hour (No Children's Learning Hour on Dec. 28)

11:45 a.m.

Fellowship Time, Talkington Hall

Mondays

12 noon

Adult Book Study meets in Parlor

The group is on hiatus in December and resumes January 12. Their new book selection is Reza Aslan's "Zealot." Don Lundberg is the group's facilitator. Order your copy in the office now; the order will be placed on December 22.

7 p.m.

Bell Choir rehearsal, Huntington Hall Stage--until 8:30 p.m.

Tuesdays

3:30 p.m.

Meet up with Pastor Emily at the Ike Box until 5 p.m. Note: no meetings between December 24 and January 11. Resumes January 13.

Thursdays

7:15 p.m. **Chancel Choir rehearsal with Ray Elliott, director.** New voices are always welcome. Join!

Monthly Recurring Events

Third Mondays at 6:30 p.m. **Woman Spirit** bevnjenny@comcast.net for more info.

2nd Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m. **Reiki Share Circle** until 8:30 p.m. Talkington Hall.

4th Wednesdays at 5:30 p.m. **Taizé Prayer Service** in the Mayflower Chapel (Not in December)

1st Saturdays at 8:05 a.m. **Men's Breakfast** at McGrath's Restaurant (downtown location)



You are invited to join any group at any time. All are welcome!

Calendar

Wednesday, December 17	1:30 p.m.	Women's Fellowship Circles meet: Day Circle meets at Marge Covey's Former Evening Circle meets at Louise Putman's
Thursday, December 18	7:00 p.m.	Christian Education Board meeting
	7:00 p.m.	Pastoral Relations Committee meeting
	7:15 p.m.	Chancel Choir rehearsal
Sunday, December 21	10:30 a.m.	Worship Service and Pageant
	11:45 a.m.	Chancel Choir rehearsal
Monday, December 22	5:00 p.m.	SIHN families arrive for a week's stay
	7:00 p.m.	SIHN Christmas Party
	7:00 p.m.	Bell Choir rehearsal
Wednesday, December 24	5:30 p.m.	Child friendly Lessons and Carols Service
	9:30 p.m.	Wassail and Cookies reception
	10:30 p.m.	Lessons and Carols: A Candlelight Service
Thursday, December 25	1:00 p.m.	Christmas Dinner with SIHN at church RSVP to Susan Bearden 503-409-8560 Office closed
Friday, December 26		Office closed
Sunday, December 28	8:00 a.m.	SIHN families leave
	10:30 a.m.	Worship Service
Wednesday, December 31		Bookkeeper is in the office until 4 p.m. to process your last minute 2014 giving to the church
Thursday, January 1		New Year's Day — Office closed
Monday, January 12	12 noon	Adult Book Study resumes
Tuesday, January 13	6:30 p.m.	Reiki Share Circle
Wednesday, January 21	10:30 a.m.	Women's Fellowship Circles meet jointly in Talkington Hall
Sunday, January 25		Annual Meeting Day
Wednesday, January 28	5:30 p.m.	Taizé Prayer Service



First Congregational Church
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