

On the Way

January 22, 2009

CENTRAL PACIFIC CONFERENCE * UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

*Extravagant Grace * Generous Hearts * Renewed World*

... and when inspiration calls, you don't send it to voicemail, you answer it. You pick it up. You have a conversation with it. will.i.am.

Last Saturday morning, on my drive into the Interchurch Center, I caught an NPR interview with William James Adams. Adams is a rapper, the frontman for Black Eyed Peas. He performs by the name will.i.am. In February 2008, inspired by the words of Barack Obama during the presidential campaign, will.i.am created a music video that was a YouTube sensation. Titled *Yes We Can*, the video melds clips of Obama's New Hampshire speech with celebrity appearances to create a moving piece affirming the power of the American spirit to overcome injustice. If you want to view the video, paste this link in your browser: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jjXyqcx-mYY>.

You might remember that Obama's speech wasn't delivered in victory, Hillary Clinton won the New Hampshire primary. After offering his congratulations to Clinton, Obama went on to inspire his supporters with a litany of encouragement, punctuated with the now famous slogan, *Yes We Can*.

But the reason our campaign has always been different is because it's not just about what I will do as President, it's also about what you, the people who love this country, can do to change it . . . We have been told we cannot do this by a chorus of cynics who will only grow louder and more dissonant in the weeks to come. We've been asked to pause for a reality check. We've been warned against offering the people of this nation false hope. But in the unlikely story that is America, there has never been anything false about hope. For when we have faced down impossible odds; when we've been told that we're not ready, or that we shouldn't try, or that we can't, generations of Americans have responded with a simple creed that sums up the spirit of a people.

Yes we can.

It was a creed written into the founding documents that declared the destiny of a nation.

Yes we can.

It was whispered by slaves and abolitionists as they blazed a trail toward freedom through the darkest of nights.

Yes we can.

. . . Yes we can to justice and equality. Yes we can to opportunity and prosperity. Yes we can heal this nation. Yes we can repair this world. Yes we can. . . .

In his interview, will.i.am reported that he had been asked to endorse Clinton's campaign. He wanted a Democrat, but decided to wait until after the Super Tuesday primaries in February to make his decision. Then he heard Obama's speech. He began to quietly sing the words, and it gave him the chills. He said, *"I was inspired by Obama, and when inspiration calls, you don't send it to voicemail; you answer it. You pick it up. You have a conversation with it."*

The song Barack Obama sings is our song. Our UCC song – a celebration of diversity, radical inclusivity, justice for all. When I heard Obama speak after the oath of office, I said, *"That's not a speech, that's a sermon."* He even used the patchwork quilt metaphor to talk about the way we all

bring our unique gifts for the good of the whole people! In the face of the multiple challenges facing us, we need to respond with Obama's three words, *Yes we can*. In his letter to the church at Philippi, Paul writes, "I can do all things through him who strengthens me." (Philippians 4:13 NRSV). We walk the path Jesus walked. *Yes we can*.

As moved as I am by Obama's words, and will.i.am's video rendition, it's the quote that began this piece that is the focus of my thoughts: when inspiration calls, you don't send it to voicemail. We need to pay attention to inspiration, the still speaking voice of God in our lives, as we shape our ministries in our churches. In my travels through the Conference, people have shared their concerns about declining memberships and dwindling dollars. Sometimes these worries are real, sometimes they're imagined. The important thing to remember is that anxiety is not inspiration. Our fears should not shape our actions. Evangelism programs, stewardship campaigns, and strategic planning are not bad things, but they are no substitute for inspiration – hearing God's call and responding.

In the last congregation I served, most of the significant events and witness for justice came from the inspiration of individual members of the congregation. Someone expressed a passion – a call from God – and the congregation listened and responded. A congregational statement against the war in Iraq. Elder Tales affirming our mature members. Our Open and Affirming declaration. Our witness with the homeless as we hosted Tent City 4. Our support for brothers and sisters in foster care through Sibling House. Blessing of the Animals Sunday.. Holy Humor Sunday. Epiphany testimonies of the ways God has been manifest in our lives, Earth Elders. God spoke, and we listened.

When we hear the story of Jesus' ministry, it's clear that he was following God's call in his life. Scholars from the Jesus Seminar describe Jesus as "*faithful, even to death*." The scriptures say that Jesus "*set his face to go to Jerusalem*," (Luke 9:13 NRSV) to challenge the oppression of Rome and the corruption of the Temple leadership.

When inspiration calls, and we answer, we are following Jesus *On the Way*.

Face-to-Face Ministry Team Meetings

Covenants Ministry Team – Saturday, January 31st, 9:00am-4:00pm, Interchurch Center, Pamplin Room, 0245 SW Bancroft, Portland

Women's Board – Saturday, January 31st, CPC Office, 0245 SW Bancroft, Portland

Nominations Committee – Saturday, January 31st, 10am-3pm, Interchurch Center, Hughes Room, 0245 SW Bancroft, Portland

Administration Ministry Team - Saturday, February 7, from 9 a.m. to noon at Cedar Hills UCC, 11685 SW Park Way at Cedar Hills Blvd., Portland 97205.

Spring Assembly set for May 1st & 2nd in Eugene, OR

The Spring Assembly of the Central Pacific Conference will be held at Eugene First Congregational UCC on May 1-2. The theme is: "*Holy Habits: Faith Practices for Transformation*." If you have a proposal for a workshop or a request for display space, now is a good time to contact the planning committee. Email Dick White at richard.a.white@netzero.net.

Spirituality Retreat – February 20th-22nd ~ Janet Scott

Come away and rest in the beautiful sanctuary of Shalom Prayer Center at Mt. Angel. You are invited to take a weekend to nourish your spirit. “Bread For the Journey” is a retreat facilitated by UCC ministers and is a feast of spiritual practices and opportunities- lectio divina, contemplative prayer, breath prayer, yoga, taize, hiking, reiki, labyrinth, and community. This is the seventh annual retreat for the Central Pacific Conference supported by the Spirituality Ministries Working Group. If you have questions, contact Janet Scott 541-345-8741 or janets@fccc Eugene.org.

Registration form is attached at the end of OTW.

You are invited to the Ordination of Lynda Clark – Sunday, February 1st

The Central Pacific Conference of the United Church of Christ and First Congregational UCC Salem request the honor of your presence at the ordination of Lynda Clark. Lynda has accepted a call to Faith United Church of Christ in Indianapolis, Indiana.

The service is scheduled for Sunday, February 1st, 2009 at 3:00 pm. The location is First Congregational UCC, 700 Marion St N.E., Salem. A reception and dinner will follow the worship service. Clergy are requested to robe and wear red stoles. An offering will be taken during the service to provide scholarships for students in care of the Central Pacific Conference.

You are invited to the Ordination of Catherine Rolling – Sunday, February 15th

The Central Pacific Conference of the United Church of Christ and Ainsworth United Church of Christ invite you to celebrate the Service of Ordination with Catherine Rolling.



February 15th at 3:00 p.m.

at a gathering of community at
Ainsworth United Church of Christ
2941 NE Ainsworth, Portland, OR 97211

Clergy are invited to robe and process.

Pastoral Changes

Jeff Barton has accepted a call as interim pastor of Casas Adobes Congregational UCC in Tucson, AZ.

Kim Cran has been called to be the pastor of First Congregational UCC, Boise, ID. She'll begin her ministry with the congregation on March 1st.

We hold these colleagues in our prayers. May God bless them in their ministries.

Still on the Calendar...

Non-Violence Workshop – First Congregational UCC, Vancouver, WA. Led by Susan Skye.
Saturday January 31, 2009 * 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

To Register – go to <http://www.churchbeta.com/#> and click on the yellow flower on the right.

Young Adult Volunteer Opportunities ~ UCC Wider Church Ministries

If you are committed to actions of service and social justice, conscientious living and spiritual reflection and are 21-30 years old, UCC Companion Communities: Young Adult Service Communities are for you. Flyer available at <http://www.ucc.org/volunteer/pdfs/Companion-Communities-Flyer-2009-2010-2.pdf>

Be part of intentional community, social justice, service and spiritual conversation. 10 month and 10 week (summer) communities are forming. June-August, 2009 and September, 2009 – June, 2010

Go to <http://www.ucc.org/volunteer> for more information or contact **Executive for Volunteer Ministries, Mary Schaller Blaufuss** blaufusm@ucc.org or **866-822-8224 ext. 3214**

Application part I is on-line and due **March 1, 2009**

<http://www.ucc.org/volunteer/companion-communities.html>

Application part II and written reference forms are due **March 13, 2009**

Notification of selection and placement by **April 30, 2009**

Housing, health insurance and small stipend for food and incidental living expenses are provided.



Vacation Adventure

Headed to the Columbia River Gorge?

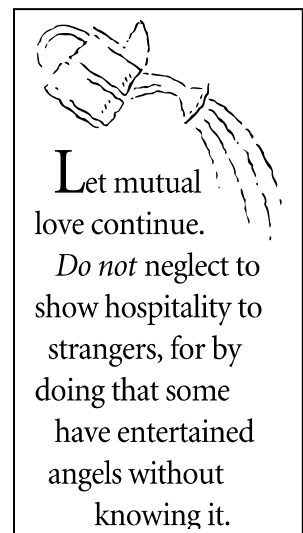
Riverside Community Church
United Church of Christ
in Hood River, Oregon

is offering church homes for

**Overnight Hospitality
WITH BREAKFAST**
Beginning in January 2009

***RATES**

\$75 Per Night Double Occupancy
\$55 Per Night Single Occupancy



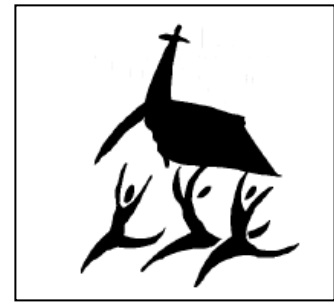
*Funds raised in this way are used to support the church and its mission

For Reservations Please Contact The Church Office:
541-386-1412 or rcc@gorge.net

Flyer included in this email as a separate attachment.

Seminary Without Walls – Nampa, ID

The Seminary Without Walls serves the church at large by training people for stronger and more in-depth leadership in the church. This winter the school is offering Systematic Theology: A Conversation between Tragedy and Eternity. Thursdays January 22nd– March 12th, 6:45-9:00pm, First United Presbyterian Church, 400 Lake Lowell Avenue, Nampa, ID. Registration form included in this email as a separate attachment.



ReStore – Habitat for Humanity in The Dalles

When members of our church in The Dalles volunteer, they jump in with both feet. Klea Espy and Corliss Marsh helped open a resale shop for used construction materials, fixtures, and appliances. Revenues from the store go directly to the cost of constructing Habitat homes in the local area.. Klea is now managing the store as a volunteer. The “ReStore” opened for business in April, 2008. It’s one of more than a dozen such stores in the state. People who are remodeling get a good deal on used materials. Habitat for Humanity gets cash to build more houses. Business is booming and plans are in the works to move to a larger space.

Winter Storm Damage at Camp Adams



Camp Adams was hit with flood and snow damage during the Christmas hard weather. A number of trees fell, though not on any buildings. The bridge between the campfire circle and the Nate Lodge was lifted by the flood and now lies in tatters on the peninsula. Interim Director Jim Doane is working with insurance to begin the process to replace the bridge. On New Years Day a car took out one of the signs at the entrance to the camp... the driver is ok, but the sign will need more than tender care.

Help Hillsdale Community UCC Celebrate Their Renovated Pipe Organ

~ Jennifer Brownell

Portland, January 15 2009 - When the congregation at Hillsdale Community Church – UCC decided last summer to put money into invigorating their worship life, they didn't do it by investing in movie screens or electric guitars. Instead, they renovated their pipe organ.

The newly renovated organ incorporates the wind-blown pipes that have existed in the church sanctuary since the 1960s with new digital technology. Not only can the organ now play a full repertoire of organ music, it can also control other instruments through its Musical Instrument Digital Interface (MIDI), allowing a virtually unlimited number of sounds.

“Just like a guitar needs the right wood for its body, an organ needs a good room in order to resonate properly. We are blessed with this wonderful room,” HCCUCC Music Director Tim Ditch says of the church's high-ceilinged sanctuary. After the 63-year-old former organ began to disintegrate and emit loud, random sounds, a three-manual Rodgers organ was purchased and installed in the church. The new console combines the original pipes with digitally sampled pipes from some of the finest organs in the world, increasing the range of possible sounds ten-fold.

If there has been a resurgence of interest in organ music in recent years, one thing that does not change is the love that people from many walks of life feel for the majestic and powerful sound of the pipe organ.

“We really feel that organ music helps create a worship experience that is so moving and so unique,” says organ committee member Bob Brandon. “The builders of our church gave us a legacy when they built this sanctuary and this instrument. We just want to pass that legacy on to future generations.”

The newly renovated pipe organ at HCCUCC will be dedicated in a special worship service at 10:30 and a concert by organist Tim Ditch at 4:00 on Sunday, February 22. The concert will include pieces by J.S. Bach, Seth Bingham, Leo Sowerby, and the Pacific Northwest premier of two pieces written especially for Mr. Ditch by San Francisco composer and organist David Hegarty. The concert is free, and donations toward the organ fund will be accepted.

Hillsdale Community Church UCC * 6948 SW Capitol Hwy * Portland OR 97219
503-246-5474 * officeadmin@hillsdaleucc.org

On the Way is a Work in Progress...

Yesterday I meet with the Willamette Valley Clergy Cluster in Corvallis. During the conversation, one pastor commented on the importance of *On the Way* as the primary means of communication in the Central Pacific Conference and urged that it be sent out on a more frequent basis. I promised to try, but I need your help. If you have material you would like to have included, send it to me at wjboris@gmail.com. Please put “*On The Way*” in the subject line to make it easier for me to locate when it comes time to compile the e-newsletter. If I have trouble with space, font, or format, I may have to modify what you send me.

Some of the Ministry Teams are making plans to provide a regular column for *On the Way*. If you feel moved to submit an article for the enlightenment of the Conference, please do. Past issues are now available and archived on our Conference website: www.cpcucc.org.

Thanks to webmaster, Dale Bowman, for completing all the recent updates.



Write Way to Wellness: A Journal Writing Workshop

Date: Wednesday, January 28, 2009

Time: 7:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Location: Cedar Hills United Church of Christ
11695 SW Park Way, Portland

To register or for further information about registration fee call the church office at 503-644-3838

"This was a most welcome introduction to discover some practical ways that keeping a journal can be a useful companion in being present to one's health and wellness." - Cathy Pierzina, Luther Midelfort Hospital, Eau Claire, Wisconsin

"It was wonderful to have you come and offer your workshop which I have heard nothing but enthusiastic comments about from those who attended." - Linna Thomas, Coalesce Book Store & More, Morro Bay, California

"Your workshop was very beneficial to all who attended. Thank you for showing us some practical ways to let writing in a journal assist our own healing journeys." - Ruth, participant, Windsor Hospice, Windsor, Ontario, Canada

"Thank you for your practice of presence as you lead these writing workshops. You gave us the information we needed and offered the permission to write with freedom to gain clarity, creativity and confidence as we wrote." - Sally, participant, Sacred Heart Medical Center & Children's Hospital, Spokane, Washington

In Write Way to Wellness, Ray McGinnis brings a splendid range of carefully chosen, well-crafted series of questions, story invitations, techniques and evocations that will place your pen on a healing path. You'll discover how writing in a journal can be a powerful ally for anyone on a healing journey, whether adjusting to physical, emotional, mental or spiritual health challenges and transitions. Discover journal writing approaches for self-care, whether managing stress, grief or loss, or charting a new path to recovery. Explore how qualities such as love, forgiveness and compassion can accompany the healing process. This workshop is offered with an invitation for both seasoned journal keepers and those who have never put pen to paper to join in an enriching and affirming experience of self-discovery.

Ray McGinnis is a poet and has written in journals all his life. Author of *Writing the Sacred*, he has taught over 8,000 people how to write poetry, prayers, provide inspiration and motivation for keeping a journal, all the while guiding them to bring their whole heart, mind, and spirit to the process. Ray has been a workshop presenter at various health-care settings including mental health units, hospices, cancer clinics, bereavement groups and hospitals. For more information about his workshops visit www.writetotheheart.com

Resources from the National Religious Campaign Against Torture

~ Floyd Emerson, The Dalles

Interfaith Prayer for an End to U.S.-Sponsored Torture

**PRAYER FOR AN END TO U.S.-SPONSORED TORTURE
JANUARY 2009**

O God, you have created all people in your image, each one of us with dignity and worth, sacred in your sight. Help us this day and everyday to hold that truth in our hearts and to honor it in all we do, treating every person as your beloved child.

We pray for the courage, as a nation, to confront the abuses authorized and committed in our name – the use of torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment – in the effort to make us safe.

We grieve, knowing that inflicting injustice and cruelty on even one person scars and diminishes all of us. Our nation's use of torture has degraded victims, perpetrators, and policy makers, and has damaged the soul of our nation itself.

We rejoice in your healing and redemption and in your promise that that which is broken, you will make whole. May we faithfully participate in your repairing of the world.

We pray, Merciful God, that in the coming days, our government will end the use of torture and begin to heal our national soul. In these days before our new President takes office, we ask for your blessing on him and his staff. Give him the courage and wisdom to end the use of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment – without exceptions – and to lead us in restoring the goodness and integrity of our country.

And let us say: Amen.

**Countdown to End Torture: Ten Days of Prayer
January 11 to January 20, 2009**

At about 11:30 a.m. EST on Thursday, January 22, 2009, President Obama signed an executive order rejecting the use of torture and requiring all government agencies to adhere to the Army Field Manual.

With thanksgiving, we have stopped the clock marking the hours since the start of his first workday.

For more information, go to: www.nrcat.org

Stewardship Resources from the UCC written by Maren Tirabassi

2009 Monthly Stewardship Messages <<http://www.ucc.org/stewardship/stewardship-messages/>>

In tough times giving can be difficult for people.....even people of faith. Use these monthly messages to offer inspiring, biblically-based reflections in your newsletter, on your bulletin board, website or as a Sunday bulletin insert.

Author Maren Tirabassi is Pastor of Union Congregational UCC of Madbury, NH. Her most recent book is *God in My Life: How and Why We Share Faith Stories*.

A Personal Note . . .

I needed the snow days at Christmas after spending my first 5 months with you learning my way from local church ministry to Conference Ministry. You all have your own opinions about how well I'm making the transition. But from where I stand, we feel like a good match!

So far, I've preached at 12 of our churches. I've visited 37 of the 47 churches of the CPC – 14 for worship, most of the rest for potlucks, congregational committee meetings, or clergy clusters. Two or three of the visits have been for conversations with the pastor. I'm still planning to visit with members at all of our CPC churches in my first year with you. August 1, 2009 is the deadline! If you have a special time – worship, dinner, etc – when you'd like me to be with you, let me know. I'll do my best to fit it into my schedule.

I got an i-phone for Christmas! I've got internet access and can check my email on the fly. Next task is to give up my desk calendar and keep all my appointments on my phone. That was the motivation for the new phone. I'm sure it will take awhile for me to learn. But eventually, I'll be able to link my phone calendar to my computer, and the office will know what I have scheduled.

Yours in Christ, walter john

**The Rev. Dr. Walter John Boris – Conference Minister
Central Pacific Conference * United Church of Christ
Interchurch Center
0245 SW Bancroft Street, Suite E
Portland, OR 97239-4258**

wjboris@gmail.com (O) 503-228-3178 (M) 206-235-3801 (H) 360-314-2497

Spirituality Retreat



Bread for the Journey

*Friday, February 20 evening through
Sunday, February 22 mid-day*
At Shalom Prayer Center in Mt. Angel, Oregon

Facilitators: Janet Scott, Associate Minister at First Congregational in Eugene janets@fccc Eugene.org and Micki Shirey, Chaplain at Sacred Heart Medical Center mshirey@peacehealth.org.

We will all share and experience together ways of practicing the presence of God in our everyday lives—including all or some of the following—centering prayer, lectio divina, labyrinth, creating worship spaces, breath prayer, simplicity, sabbath, yoga, taize service. Feel free to bring items for an altar. We will not be fully scheduled, allowing time to practice, nap or walk.

Registration of \$150 includes:

Lodging: Friday and Saturday nights

Please indicate special needs: _____

Meals: Saturday breakfast lunch and dinner and Sunday breakfast

Please indicate special needs: _____

At extra cost: Massage or Reiki session.

Name: _____

Congregation: _____

Home address: _____

phone: _____ e-mail: _____

(return form and check to Janet Scott, 1050 E. 23rd, Eugene. OR 97405 by February 10.)