

THE CONGREGATIONALIST

FIRST CENTRAL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH United Church of Christ
1856-2009

421 South 36th Street Omaha NE 68131 Phone: 402-345-1533 Fax: 402-345-6212

www.firstcentral.org

Volume 15 Issue 5

September 9, 2010

Please remember in your thoughts and prayers:



Carrie Osborn's father, *Malcolm*, who died last week; *Joe & Becca (Jones) Barko*, as they celebrate their recent marriage; the *Beranek & Wiglusz* families, as they celebrate the birth of *Brooklyn Ann Marie Barnett* (proud grandparents are *Terry & Pam*); family of *Pat Severns*, who died in July; *Audrey Malena* and *Carolyn Baldwin*, both recovering at home from surgery; *Margaret Hole*, hospitalized at Methodist.

Homecoming Sunday!

Our second annual Homecoming Sunday will be held following worship on Sunday, September 26th. Join us on the patio (weather permitting) for fried chicken provided by the church. Members are asked to bring: A-N, sides or salads; O-Z, desserts. Coffee and water will be available – you may bring your own drinks, if preferred.

Music will be provided – maybe we'll even have some dancing like last year! The Board of Mission & Outreach will have information available about a variety of mission opportunities.

If you'd like to help with set-up or clean-up, sign up in the parlor. The more help, the better ☺

inCOMMON

Thanks to the generous and committed support of people like you, this month inCOMMON met the \$23,000 challenge amount needed to take advantage of the \$10,000 Peter Kiewit Foundation grant! In light of this achievement, our friends and neighbors in the Park Avenue neighborhood could have a new Community Center as early as late winter or early spring. THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

In a continued effort to raise funds for the Community Center and other inCOMMON neighborhood development efforts a couple of great Omaha organizations, Digital House (digitalhouseoma.com) and Prime Time Sporting Goods (primetimesportinggoods.com), have generously donated their service toward a new inCOMMON website donation page (www.inCOMMONcd.org) and t-shirt (maybe the coolest shirt you've ever seen). PLEASE consider patronizing these businesses and purchasing a t-shirt today!

No Ordinary Time: Save the Dates

Rev. Scott Jones

Saturday, October 2, 11:00 AM on the patio, our first annual Pet Blessing! Bring your pets or come experience the joy of other pets. Invite friends and family. We'll gather for a fun worship experience.

Sunday, October 10th at 4:00 p.m. will be my installation service. *David Ruhe* will return to First Central in order to preach at the service. We'll be joined by other special guests from the community, the Nebraska Conference, and a handful of Oklahomans traveling up for the event.

Sunday, October 17th our morning worship will be focused on children, as this is the day that many denominations and congregations set aside as "Children's Sabbath." The focus of this year's event will be child poverty, a particularly acute, and surprising, problem in Omaha. The Choristers children's choir will help to lead us in worship that Sunday.

Eves

Change in schedule: We are switching the September and October meetings. Our next meeting will be at *Peg Peterson's*, 8715 William Street, at 7 p.m. *Donna Meisbach* will present "Deepak Chopra – Unplugged."

Joint Board Meeting

Deb Kirwan

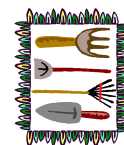
If you're a member of any First Central board, please come to a joint meeting at 7 p.m., Tuesday, September 14. We're going to discuss the proposed governance changes and their effect on the current boards. This meeting should last only 30-45 minutes, after which boards may wish to hold their regular monthly meetings (or they may not--that is entirely up to the individual boards). We hope all board members will give this meeting a high priority.

Habitat for Humanity

Fred Felger

Sunday, September 26th is landscaping day at 2100 Poppleton. Work begins at 1:30 p.m. – bring shovels and rakes, etc.

Dedication of the completed house will take place on Sunday, October 3rd.



Interfaith Relationships

My last day “on the job” in Oklahoma City, Michael and I visited the local Vedic Temple where our friend **Roshini Nambiar**, the spiritual leader, gave us a tour. The facility was filled with ornately decorated idols representing various gods of the Hindu pantheon. Roshini explained the role that the images played in meditation and spirituality for members of the Temple. And she graciously offered us fresh cherries to snack on.

I have found my interfaith relationships to be enriching of my own faith even as they have broadened my understanding of different cultures and religions.

This September can be a particularly good month to focus on relationships with people of different faiths. Judaism commemorates Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur and Islam celebrates Eid al-Fitr. Last year on Rosh Hashanah the Westboro Baptist Church visited Oklahoma City in order to protest at all of our synagogues, temples, and Jewish centers. The anti-Semitism was shocking and rallied the community. It was my privilege to attend Rosh Hashanah service at Emanuel Synagogue that night to represent the Interfaith Alliance and stand in solidarity with my Jewish friends.

Two weeks earlier I had attended my first *iftar*, the meal that breaks a Ramadan fast. In Oklahoma City I found the local Muslim leaders to be incredible bridge-builders and peace-makers and developed good friendships with them. I even invited one local Muslim leader to participate in my leave-taking service.

This year I am deeply concerned by the anti-Muslim rhetoric that seems to be everywhere in the media and on-line. And I’m even more troubled by recent hate crimes targeting Muslims. Surely these actions violate the fundamental human right of religious freedom which has been essential to American democracy.

But these actions also violate our Christian faith. Yes, we are called upon to witness to our faith stories, but we are also called upon to listen attentively and respectfully when others share their faith stories as well.

I hope we can all find time this September to cultivate deeper relationships with those who believe differently than we do. This makes us more humble, respectful, and compassionate – key aspects of the spiritual journeys of all the great faiths. So, in the process of living with those who believe differently, we come closer to the ideals of our own faith tradition.

On September 9, wish everyone, especially your Jewish friends, “L’shannah Tovah!” and follow it up the next day by wishing everyone, especially your Muslim friends, “Eid Mubarak!” I guarantee you that these simple acts of cultural awareness and peace-making will enrich your own faith.

Peace,
Scott

Need a Ride?

If you need a ride to church, see the upcoming driver schedule below. Please call the driver directly for the Sunday you’d like to attend:

September 19, Lamar Jones, 592-7660

September 26, Sam Pfeifer, 691-9398

CROPWALK

Joan Eddy

Please join me for the 28th Annual Omaha CROP Hunger Walk, Sunday, October 10th, at 1 p.m. at First Christian Church. Pledge sheets will be available starting September 12th during coffee hour. A special offering will be taken during worship on September 19th.

Women’s Fellowship

Joan Eddy

Church Women United Nut & Candy Sale order forms are available! Deadlines are 9/17, 10/15 and 11/12.

Trustees

Sam Pfeifer

The most exciting news from the Trustees is your response to the Deficit Reduction Program. The program was announced the last week of August. The response the first week after the announcement was very good with over \$1200 received. With the matching funds, \$2400 will go towards reducing the 2010 operating Budget deficient.

The Deficit Reduction Program continues for the balance of 2010. There are individuals willing to match up to \$10,000 monies given to First Central over and above current pledges. We hope to receive additional giving so that we can receive the total \$10,000. Be sure to designate additional giving as “Deficit Reduction” on your check or envelope containing cash.

We thank those who have already chosen to participate. It is important to First Central to further reduce our budget deficit.

Evergreen Thrift Shop

Sam Pfeifer

Sales have picked up the last couple of weeks after a slow summer. The Shop was able to make a \$1500 contribution for the month of August.

The Fall Book Sale is scheduled for members on Sunday, October 3rd, and for the public on October 6, 7 and 9. As usual our book inventory will be very large.

We are in the process of changing our clothing merchandise from summer to fall and winter and our inventory is very good. We also have a number of furniture items including a chest of drawers, an armoire, computer desks, a Duncan Pfyfe dining room table with six matching chairs and other items. Stop and shop!

Kabile

Kabile (“KA-bee-lay”) a renowned Bulgarian band, will perform in concert at First Central on September 23rd at 7 p.m. Admission is \$5. A dance party will follow in the gym.

Grand Central Stations

(Usually the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Sundays)

Fall 2010

Our Biblical themes for the children this fall:

Sept. 12, 19, 26 – Embracing Diversity – Matthew 25:40 – “And the king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.’”

Oct. 10, 17, 24 – Listening to God – Psalms 145:18 “The Lord is near to all who call on him.” Micah 6:8b “...and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?”

Nov. 14, 21 – Thanksgiving – Ephesians 5:20 “And at all times and for everything giving thanks in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God the Father.” The children will be looking at our celebration of Thanksgiving through the eyes of Squanto, a native American who helped the Pilgrims survive their first winter.

Dec. 12, 19 – Christmas - Our children will learn the Christmas stories in Matthew and Luke and how our secular celebrations relate to our faith traditions.

FIRST FORUMS

9:10 – 10:10 a.m.

held in the Fireside Room on the third floor

*Childcare is available during Faith Forums.

The Fall Forums will begin on September 19th when Rick Brenneman presents “Sustainability and Endangered Habitats.”

Our Fall 2010 Forum Fare includes: *Dr. Rick Brenneman* on Sustainability and Endangered Habitats, *Dr. John Schalles* discussing the impacts of the Gulf of Mexico Oil Spill, *Shane Kotok* on Ethical Wills and a Legacy of Values, pastor Scott Jones will present four weeks on *The Curse of the Self: Self-Awareness, Egotism, and the Quality of Human Life* by Mark R. Leary, *Deb Kirwan* will facilitate three sessions of *The Historical Jesus*, lectures by Bart Ehrman, *Dr. Kent Kirwan* will discuss Andrew

Jackson – American Lion, and *Scott Hoyt* will continue his conversations about Bill Moyers’ *Genesis: A Living Conversation*.

Quote for the week: John Lennon

“GIVE PEACE A CHANCE”



CE Pancake Breakfast September 12

Join us for breakfast before church – 9:15 til 9:45. The Board will be highlighting the various educational offerings which will be presented this fall for all of our church family from pre-schoolers to octogenarians: Bible study, faith development, environmental issues, ethics, human psychology, American political history -- all viewed through the lenses of our faith journeys at First Central. Please join us for some food and fellowship.



Thoughts from Bud

This will be the last message I write as the Interim Director of Christian Education at First Central. This job is a little bit like making an omelet while juggling squid, riding a unicycle blindfolded, but it is fun! Put together a good deal of volunteer recruitment, a dash of curriculum development, a smidgen of program coordination, a pinch of planning, and voila! you have the successful and important resource First Central’s Christian Program is. Your Board of Education works hard at making our programs relevant and fun and important to our lives. Someone new will be on board soon. Thanks!

Sunday Mornings

Regularly scheduled events

- 9:00 Coffee and Conversation, 3rd floor
9:00 Coffee in the Parlor
9:15 First Forums, 3rd floor
First YOUth Forum, YOUth Room
9:45 Nursery Care to 11:30
10:30 Service of Worship
10:45 Grand Central Stations (church school for 3 year olds – 6th graders)
unless otherwise stated
11:30 Coffee Hour, Parlor

next newsletter deadline
Sunday, September 19th

email articles to sara@firstcentral.org

Week of Sunday, September 12

Sunday, September 12

Christian Education Kick-off and Pancake Breakfast,
9 a.m., parlor

CUE offering taken during worship

Governance Task Force presentation, 11:30 a.m.

First YOUth, 6 p.m., parlor

Monday, September 13

CrossOver Prison Ministries, 6 p.m., First Christian

Eve's, 7 p.m. at *Peg Peterson's*, 8715 William

Tuesday, September 14

Meditation, 11 a.m., third floor parlor (free)

Tai Chi, 11:30 a.m., third floor parlor

All-Board Meeting, 7 p.m., third floor parlor

Black/White Dialogues, 7 p.m., parlor;
pre-registration required.

Wednesday, September 15

Computer Classes, 9:30 & 10:30 a.m.

Evergreen Thrift Shop, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Yoga, 6 p.m., third floor parlor

Hiking Club, 6 p.m., Memorial Hall

Sanctuary Choir, 7 p.m.

Thursday, September 16

Evergreen Thrift Shop, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Friday, September 17

Women's Fellowship, 11:30 a.m., Red Lobster

Siena/Francis House, 4:30 p.m.

Saturday, September 18

Evergreen Thrift Shop, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Young Adult camping trip

Week of Sunday, September 19

Sunday, September 12

First Forums, 9:10 a.m., Fireside Room

Choristers, 9:15 a.m.

CROP offering taken during worship

Church Chat, 11:40 a.m., Pastor's Study

First YOUth, 6 p.m., parlor

Monday, September 20

CrossOver Prison Ministries, 6 p.m., First Christian

Tuesday, September 21

Meditation, 11 a.m., third floor parlor (free)

Tai Chi, 11:30 a.m., third floor parlor

Wednesday, September 22

Computer Classes, 9:30 & 10:30 a.m.

Evergreen Thrift Shop, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Yoga, 6 p.m., third floor parlor

Sanctuary Choir, 7 p.m.

Thursday, September 23

Evergreen Thrift Shop, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Kabile, 7 p.m.

Saturday, September 25

Evergreen Thrift Shop, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Yogha, 10 a.m. and noon, third floor parlor

Sunday, September 26

First Forums, 9:10 a.m., Fireside Room

Choristers, 9:15 a.m.

New Members welcomed during worship

Homecoming Sunday, 11:30 a.m., patio

“THE CONGREGATIONALIST” (USPS563-160) is published semi-monthly
from August 1 through August 1 by: First Central Congregational Church,
421 S. 36th St., Omaha, NE 68131

POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to First Central
Congregational Church, 421 S. 36th St., Omaha, NE 68131.

Periodicals postage paid at Omaha, NE.