

THE CONGREGATIONALIST

FIRST CENTRAL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH United Church of Christ

Established 1856

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

www.firstcentral.org

Volume 16 Issue 7

October 6, 2011



Please remember in your thoughts and prayers: *Laura & Tim Sjogren*, as they celebrate the birth of *Kathryn Betty Sjogren* – proud grandparents are *Scott & Kathy Hoyt*; family and friends of *Fred Wupper*, who died last week (service **October 15th**, 10 a.m. at the Lighthouse, 17600 Arbor Street); *Verda Werner*, now at home; *Janet Bouma*, now at home.

Thank you

Verda Werner

Thanks for the many cards, flowers, and visits while I have been ill.

Lectionary Texts

Week of October 8: Exodus 32: 1-14, Psalm 106: 1-6, 19-23; or Isaiah 25: 1-9; Psalm 23; Philippians 4: 1-9; Matthew 22: 1-14.

Week of October 16: Exodus 33: 12-23, Psalm 99; or Isaiah 45: 1-7; Psalm 96: 1-9, (10-13); Thessalonians 2: 1-8;; Matthew 22: 34-46.

The Next Congregationalist

Sara Sharpe

The next issue of The Congregationalist will be several days late – going out on **October 25th** and arriving in your mailbox a day or two after that, instead of going out on the 20th. Of course, the electronic version will be in your e-box on October 24th or 25th. See, the advantages of electronics ... ☺

20's- 30's+ Group

The 20's – 30's+ will be meeting on Saturday, October 22nd, 5 p.m. at Elmwood Park. Meet near the playground picnic tables, and we'll find a place to roast hotdogs and marshmallows. Bring your own drinks and a main dish to grill, and a side dish to share.

And Another New Group Forms ...

Not to be left out, the 40's – 50's+ group is feeling the need to socialize! They will be getting together at *Dave*

& *Susan Fortina's* on Friday, **October 14th** at 7 p.m. Bring your beverage of choice, and a dish to share, and come over and have a good time! Join us at 3504 Woolworth Avenue. See you there!

Amnesty International Freedom Writers

Bob Vassell

Eynulla Fatullayev, a journalist and former prisoner of conscience in Azerbaijan, answers a question posed by many Freedom/Urgent Action Writers: "Does my letter really make a difference?"

Eynulla had been fined, harassed, imprisoned and beaten with steel rods for articles critical of the government. His editor was assassinated. Eynulla said, "I am absolutely confident that it was the tireless campaigning of Amnesty supporters like you that enabled me to return to life."

For more information on this and other cases, go to AIUSA.org

SAVE THE DATE

**First Central Thanksgiving Dinner, Friday,
November 18.**

The **2011 Thanksgiving Dinner** is fast approaching! Back by popular demand, please join your First Central friends at 5:00 p.m. in the third floor Fireside Room for a Social Hour before dinner is served at 6:30 in the parlor. Reservation and ticket information will be available soon.

Please contact *Chris Steffen* (212-2129) with any questions. See you on November 18!



Musical Nostalgia

Two weeks ago the rock band R. E. M. announced that they were amicably ending their thirty years together. Hailed by many as the greatest and/or most influential American rock band of their era, they have been my favorite band since I was in high school.

I came a little late to the party, but we weren't too cutting edge in Miami, OK (at least I wasn't). I've had dear friends who were listening to R. E. M. from their earliest days together. Though I'd enjoyed some of their earlier hits, the song that really captured me was "Losing My Religion." I remember listening to it while being in Chicago on a school trip and feeling that it expressed the ambiguities, paradoxes, and uncertainties about faith and spirituality which I felt at the time.

"Everybody Hurts" was fitting for that period after Dad died.

In the late 90's I had this great group of friends. We were all in college or grad school and had no money, so we simply hung out with each other all the time and talked. R. E. M. was part of the soundtrack of those times together, and the nostalgia for friendship was expressed so beautifully in the song "Nightswimming," which though about skinny-dipping, became my favorite song of theirs.

Album after album continued to resonate with me, even when they were no longer producing hits. Their worst, and most depressing album, "Around the Sun," was released in 2004 when I was in the midst of some depression myself, so even it expressed my life.

The day I heard they were coming to an end, I had reconnected with one of my dearest and closest friends, though we had not spoken in seven years. She was such a big R. E. M. fan -- while in college she had a picture of them on her living room mantle. Serendipity is beautiful.

Our favorite music connects to our deep center, where our spirituality resonates, where we also connect with God. And it can narrate our lives. If I were to tell my story, particularly the story of my spirituality, R. E. M. is part of it and, through constant listening, will continue to be.

Peace,
Scott

Help Wanted!!

Drivers are still needed for our Van Team. Responsibilities include driving members to and from church once a month. You may use your own vehicle, or drive the church van. Call *Allan Bucknam*, 402-393-7092, for more information.

Sewathon Results

Arlene Luther

Sew-a-thon netted \$400.00. *Melanie Naughtin* won the pretty pink raffle apron made by *Shelley Kiel*. Participation was excellent. Many thanks to all who sewed, donated materials, tied, and purchased blankets and aprons. The \$1.00 raffle tickets were popular. Our January scarf sale is planned again as a post-holiday sale. We will have a greater variety of scarves this year. We also plan to have the kids model again. Perhaps we'll have a surprise or two for you by then!

Evergreen Thrift Shop

Sam Pfeifer

The Thrift Shop semi-annual book sale starts Sunday, **October 9th** for church members and friends. The sale will continue October 12, 13, 15, 19, 20, 22, and close on **October 23rd**. We have a very large inventory of good books (carefully curated by *Mildred Smock!*). Come and shop – and tell your friends and neighbors!

We also plan to have a large inventory of clothing items available at clearance prices. Included will be shirts, blouses, pants, and many other items. This will be our largest fall sale ever.

We were able to make a \$1400 contribution to the church operating budget for the month of September. We are slightly ahead of budget for the year.

Thank you for your support.

Many, Many Thanks

Thank you is not enough to express our gratitude to *Sam Pfeifer* for his hard work above and beyond the call of duty. Sam has been cleaning the building, with assistance from a few other folks, for the last year as we tried to figure out the best way to keep our building clean. A 3 month trial contract with Service Master was signed on Monday, and they began work here the same day. Yeah Sam!!!

Christian Education

The goal of First Central's Educational program is to provide engaging educational experiences to support each individual's faith journey. Join us on Sunday mornings. "We pray for hearts that open, minds that understand, and lives that serve."

Grand Central Stations

Children ages 4 to 12 are escorted from Worship after the Children's Conversation and returned to their parents during Coffee Hour in the parlor.

October's Theme: David and Goliath



October 9th and 16th: Meet in the Music/Drama Station to learn the story of how God helps us face and overcome big challenges.

October 23rd – No Class. Children will be participating in the Worship service in celebration of World Children's Sabbath.

Church School Teachers for this month are: *David Fortina* and *Curt Cannon*, *Nancy Schalles* and *Carol Vogt*, and *Marian Fey* and *Chris Steffen*.

Choristers

The Choristers will be singing for us on Children's Sabbath - **October 23rd** – mark your calendars to be in worship that day.

Adult Education: First Forums

Classes are held in the Fireside Room on third floor at 9:15a.m. each Sunday. For your convenience, childcare is available in the Nursery from 9:00 to 11:30 a.m.

October 9 Inclusivity – How's the Fit? With *John Campbell* & *Nikki Zimmerman* We take pride being an inclusive congregation. This forum will expand awareness and examine ways that we can more effectively reach out to our neighbors. It will increase our personal awareness of the process of inclusivity, while also examining personal blocks that may interfere with our best intentions.

October 16 The Ryan White Program: Care and Treatment for Persons living with HIV/AIDS with *Steve Jackson*. This session will introduce and discuss the Ryan White Care Act and discuss the program parameters. The Nebraska Ryan White Program covers medications, limited medical, mental health, dental, and substance abuse payments; rental, utility, transportation, insurance co-pay and food pantry assistance for persons living with HIV/AIDS. It is truly a ministry in its own right.

Confirmation

Classes are held the first Sunday of the month in the pastor's office with Co-Leaders *Scott Jones* and *Lizzie Patterson*. Lunch at 11:30 a.m., and discussion at noon.

October 15 –Scavenger Hunt – 11:30 a.m. -2:30 p.m. Discover the history of First Central Congregational Church!

FirstYOUth

Our YOUth meet for class on the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Sundays in the YOUth room on third floor with their teacher, *Scott Hoyt*. Lunch at 11:30 a.m., and discussion begins at noon.

Sunday, October 9 – Bag lunch in the parlor, class with *Scott Hoyt*, then participate in the CROP Walk.

Saturday, October 15 – Join the Confirmands for the Scavenger Hunt, or go on the Buddy Walk with *Grant Switzer* and his family.

Sunday, October 16 - Bag lunch in the parlor, class with *Scott Hoyt*. (No First YOUth activity)

Sunday, October 23 - Bag lunch in the parlor, class with *Scott Hoyt*. Youth Group Program activity to follow.

Good Job, FirstYOUTH!

Our recent Thank You work day was a perfect day for working outside. Ten youth and four adults worked with *Judy Bouma* for more than three hours using skills some had learned on the mission trip. Judy says that the next morning when she was looking at everything that was accomplished, she was amazed. She had lots of good things to say about how hard everyone worked and how well everything was done. She says "Thank you!" to *Jeremy Cassidy*, *Chase Day*, *Alex Gross*, *Luci Parsons*, *Isabel Kratville*, *Grant Switzer*, *Eli Sturek*, *Stone*, *Will Gustafson*, *Jarett Gustafson*, *Barb Switzer*, *Lamar Jones*, *Elizabeth Wearin*, and *Bud Cassidy*!



Sunday Mornings

Regularly scheduled events

- 9:00 Coffee in the Parlor
9:15 First Forum (Adult Education), 3rd floor
9:15 Choristers Choir
9:15 Nursery Care to 11:45 a.m.
10:30 Service of Worship
10:45 Grand Central Stations (church school for Pre-K – 6th grade) *unless otherwise stated*
11:30 Coffee Hour, Parlor

next newsletter deadline

Sunday, October 23rd

email articles to sara@firstcentral.org

“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.

Week of Sunday, October 9

Sunday, October 9

First Forum, 9:15 a.m.
Choristers, 9:15 a.m.
Grand Central Stations, 10:45 a.m.
Evergreen Book Sale begins after worship
Communication Team, 11:40 a.m., Pastor’s Study
Bell Choir, noon, back balcony
First YOUth, lunch at 11:30 a.m., class at noon; activity to follow.

Monday, October 10

Staff meeting, 1:30 p.m.
CrossOver Prison Ministries, 6 p.m., First Christian

Tuesday, October 11

Meditation and Tai Chi, 10:30 a.m., Third Floor Parlor
Ministry Support, 7 p.m., *Marilyn Hammond’s*

Wednesday, October 12

Evergreen Thrift Shop, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
“Sanctuary” spirituality group, 6 p.m., Memorial Hall
Sanctuary Choir, 7 p.m.

Thursday, October 13

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

Friday, October 14

40’s-50’s+ Group, 7 p.m., *Fortina’s*, 3504 Woolworth

Saturday, October 15

Fundraiser for **Neighbor’s United**, 8:30-11:30 a.m.,
First Lutheran Church
Evergreen Thrift Shop, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Yoga, 10 a.m., third floor parlor
Confirmation Scavenger Hunt, 11:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Week of Sunday, October 16

Sunday, October 16

First Forum, 9:15 a.m.
Choristers, 9:15 a.m.
Volunteer Appreciation Sunday
Grand Central Stations, 10:45 a.m.
Evergreen Book Sale begins after worship
Bell Choir, noon, back balcony
First YOUth, sack lunch at 11:30 a.m., class at noon

Monday, October 17

Staff meeting, 1:30 p.m.
CrossOver Prison Ministries, 6 p.m., First Christian

Tuesday, October 18

Meditation and Tai Chi, 10:30 a.m., Third Floor Parlor

Wednesday, October 19

Evergreen Thrift Shop, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
“Sanctuary” spirituality group, 6 p.m., Memorial Hall
Sanctuary Choir, 7 p.m.

Thursday, October 20

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

Friday, October 21

Women’s Fellowship, noon
Siena/Francis House, 4:30 p.m.

Saturday, October 22

Living Waters Association Annual Meeting, 9 a.m.
Ralston UCC
20’s-30’s+ Picnic at Elmwood Park, 5 p.m.
Evergreen Thrift Shop, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.