

# THE CONGREGATIONALIST

FIRST CENTRAL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH United Church of Christ

Established 1856

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[www.firstcentral.org](http://www.firstcentral.org)

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August 11, 2011



**Please remember in your thoughts and prayers:** *Jordan Acker Anderson*, recovering from surgery; family of **Charles Warden**, who died last month; **Ben & Heidi Beranek**, as they celebrate the birth of *Owen Louis Beranek*, born July 18<sup>th</sup> – proud grandparents are *Terry & Pam Beranek*; family of *Mary Babb*, *Shirley Jensen's* sister in law, who died last month; *Susan Robinson*, whose mother died last month; family of *Janice Beck*, who died last month.

## Sermon Videos

Thanks to *Garrett Higginbotham* and *Dave Fortina*, we are now videoing our sermons and uploading them to internet sites YouTube and Vimeo. We are still in the experimental stages and will be improving the equipment and technology. Watch when you have missed church, and pass the videos along to friends as a way of telling them about our church.

## Congregational Outreach Ministry

### Community Meal Team

*Rick Brenneman*

We are scheduled to meet our neighbors again for the Community Meal on **August 27**. We had a great time doing this in May, so expect another great Friday evening and Saturday morning. The meal is the venue to bring our neighbors together for friendship and fellowship. **We are in need of volunteers who would like to sit with the people who live near us and begin to develop relationships with them.** If we are to effectively minister to our neighborhood then we need to understand our neighbors and what they need. What we perceive as critical needs may in fact not be what they feel are priorities. If you feel called to engage in this ministry in this way, let me know.

The Neighbors United team also needs to find more security personnel to serve on Saturdays, and needs more individuals to become involved in the leadership of the Community Meals program. If this is you, then let me know and I can help you get plugged in to the program.

### Evergreen Thrift Shop

*Sam Pfeifer*

The first seven months of activity have been good. A \$1,500 contribution to the operating budget of the church

was made for July. Through these seven months, the Thrift Shop has contributed \$9,500 to the operating budget. This is a \$169 over budget!

Donations have remained at a high level. We have some very nice furniture at this time.

Our donators continue to expand. They include church members, friends of church members and even present clial. We are very fortunate. Items that do not sell are donated to Siena/Francis House, Together Inc., and First Baptist Church.

Thank you for your continued support.

## Teams of the Month:

### Children's Education Team & Music Team

We're getting ready to begin our program year – and you're invited to participate! There are lots of opportunities.

Interested in music? **Sanctuary Choir** (seventh grade and up) begins with a Choir party on Wednesday, **August 24<sup>th</sup>**, 6 p.m. at *Alice Love & David Nichols'* home. Regular rehearsals begin the following week, 6 p.m. on Wednesdays. **Choristers** (first-sixth grade) begin rehearsals **August 28<sup>th</sup>**, 9:15 a.m. in the Choir Room. **Bell Choir** will begin **September 11<sup>th</sup>** at noon. For information, contact *Stephen Bouma*.

Like to work with kids? **Grand Central Stations** needs teachers and conductors, as well as behind-the-scenes support for their many activities. **Teachers** are needed Sunday mornings, 10:45 – 11:30 a.m., and usually make a one month commitment. The children range in age from 3 years old – fourth grade, and curriculum is provided. **Conductors** are adults who stay with the children throughout the month to help the kids as needed, and assist the teachers. **Behind-the-scenes support** can be just about anything – providing ideas, expertise, or preparation. Contact *Peg Peterson* for details, or see the handout in the parlor.

## 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:

**August 14**, *Sam Pfeifer*, 402-691-8776

**August 21**, *Steve Trautman*, 402-556-4215

**August 28**, *Martin Richards*, 402-558-1214

## Elevation

In the days and weeks following the attacks of September 11, 2001, I found myself listening a lot to U2's album *All That You Can't Leave Behind*. Many of the songs seemed to speak to the moment, especially those last four songs "Peace on Earth," "When I Look at the World," "New York," and "Grace." Now, almost ten years later, I am captured by the phrase "the goal is elevation."

Knowing that we were approaching the tenth anniversary and that it would fall on a Sunday, the church Council devoted the vision and mission component of the March meeting to the topic – "What will we want on September 11, 2011?" The discussion emphasized that people had and continue to have a variety of responses to the events of September 11, 2001 and all that followed, and that people will want to respond to the tenth anniversary in various ways. Therefore, it was determined that we will provide a variety of different opportunities.

I have chosen "Elevation" as our theme for this commemoration and will make that our goal. How can we elevate our understanding, our spirits, our world?

In the weeks leading up to the anniversary we will focus on interfaith understanding and solidarity. With August being the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, this affords us a valuable opportunity to learn more about Islam and develop better interfaith relations. Look for some educational components.

Sunday morning of September 11, 2011 we will provide a variety of different opportunities for reflection, including a labyrinth walk, silent meditation, and a forum for storytelling and discussion. Our worship will incorporate resources developed by the UCC and the National Council of Churches. Congregational Outreach will be planning a service component to follow upon the day of remembrance. More details of all these events will be forthcoming in the next Congregationalist.

You may want to explore the resources developed by the UCC, which can be found at <http://www.ucc.org/911remembrance/>.

As this anniversary approaches and the wider culture addresses it, we may experience grief for loss, thanksgiving for the sacrifice of rescue workers, courage and hope in the face of terror, peace-making in a world of division, or a variety of other emotions. I hope that the church can provide a spiritually reflective place for all of us.

Peace,  
Scott

## Music

*Stephen Bouma*

I want to mention a couple dates for your attention. On **August 21<sup>st</sup>** we are having a hymn sing during our Sunday morning worship. We will be emphasizing the old and the new. Both modern and traditional hymns will be featured. I welcome input at my e-mail address,

[belvinito@yahoo.com](mailto:belvinito@yahoo.com). If you have a request or any comment, please write. On the **August 21<sup>st</sup>** we will also have sign-up sheets for anyone interested in participating in any music group at First Central, from 1st grade on up. Choristers will begin the following week, **August 28<sup>th</sup>**, at 9:15 a.m. in the choir room by the office. We welcome children from 1st through 6th grades.

**August 24<sup>th</sup>** at 6 p.m. the Sanctuary choir will be having a party at the home of *Alice Love & David Nichols* to start our fall season. Anyone interested in singing is welcome. We are a welcoming group of people who like to sing together. Our mission is making music in a supportive family setting. Very little talent is necessary. All you need to bring is joy in singing.

**September 4<sup>th</sup>**, we are welcoming a Christian bluegrass ensemble to our morning worship. *Flickertail Holler* will be presenting music for us in the morning, and then they will be giving a concert in our sanctuary at 3p.m. There will be a free-will offering taken to defray expenses.

Music shared is a gift for everyone.

## Human Rights Campaign Bus Tour

HRC is announcing a 12 week, nationwide bus tour to advance equality. The tour will spread the message of equality by educating the American public and empowering LGBT people to become advocates for themselves and their families. HRC will also offer a variety of workshops and educational seminars with particular emphasis on workplace and healthcare equality, schools and bullying issues, and religion and faith. The bus will be in Omaha and Lincoln **August 19-21**.

## Women's Fellowship

*Jenny Pfeifer*

Women's Fellowship ladies met July 15<sup>th</sup> at the Joslyn Art Museum. Following lunch, *Beth Howard* conducted a tour of the "Art Well-Traveled, Rarely Seen" exhibit. It was enjoyed by all.

On **August 19<sup>th</sup>**, the group will tour the gardens at *Jan & Don Riegenbach's* home. We will meet at 10:00 a.m. in the Church parking lot. *Sam* will drive the church van to Riegenbach's home in Glenwood. It promises to be a very special occasion.

## Human Rights and Freedom for GLBT People of Uganda

First Unitarian Church of Omaha, 31<sup>st</sup> and Harney, invites you to a lecture by *Rev. Mark Kiyimba*, discussing human rights and freedoms for LBGT people of Uganda. At 7 p.m. on Saturday, **August 20<sup>th</sup>**, Rev. Kiyimba will discuss the proposed anti-homosexuality legislation in Uganda. The proposal goes beyond the borders of Uganda, as it includes penalties for individuals and organizations that support LBGT rights. This event is free; a reception will follow in the social hall.

## Christian Education

The Education Ministry is hosting an **Open House** on Sunday, **September 18<sup>th</sup>** during the church homecoming weekend to showcase our new classrooms and fall programs. Now is a great time to join one of the education teams (as described on page one) to share your talents with our young people or create environments that maximize learning. Get involved today!

### Adult Education: First Forums

*For your convenience, childcare is available in the Nursery from 9:00 to 11:30 each Sunday.*

**August 14 at 9:15 – Refugee Resettlement: Renee Overbeek** of Lutheran Family Services. As part of our **Focus on Mission** series, we will learn about how refugees from all over the world find their way to Omaha and the help they need to start a new life here.

**August 21 – Nourishing the Congregation: Patrick Sharp**, professional chef and church member, will share his tips to prepare tasty, healthy food for your family and guests and how to accommodate special dietary needs.



**August 28 – Interfaith Relations, the Mission of the Church, and the Post 9/11 Context - Scott Jones, Sr. Minister.** In preparation for the remembrance of 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of 9/11, we will explore the question of how devout and faithful people can live in a world made of many different religions.

### FirstYOUTH: Mission Trip

Our 2011 mission team did a wonderful service on July 31<sup>st</sup> and shared what they had learned on the mission trip. If you are already inspired to be part of the 2012 intergenerational Pine Ridge group, please sign up in the parlor.

We also welcomed four new teens to the First YOUTH group: *Maurice Druliner, Isabelle Kratville, Mitch Fey, and Evan Dimon.*

### Confirmation Cometh

First Central Church offers education for confirmation every other year. Co-Leaders *Scott Jones* and *Lizzie Patterson* are currently planning an exciting and educational curriculum for the coming school year.

If you are interested in having your teen participate in confirmation, please be sure to attend a **Confirmation Information Meeting** for parents of confirmands on Sunday, **August 21<sup>st</sup>** at 9:30 in Memorial Hall.

## Grand Central Stations

### Have you met our new friends?



We have new pets in Grand Central Stations! If you have not met them yet, please come to church school and say hello. You can also help us name the gerbils and sign up for a week to take care of them at church.

### We are the Church together

During August we are learning about our traditions and how church services happen.

**August 14<sup>th</sup> – Our Traditions: Sacraments: Jenny Pfeifer and Val Himes** will teach us about how the church prepares for sacraments: communion, baptisms, weddings, and funerals.

**August 21 –Our Traditions: Music:** A visit to the choir room, seeing how the organ and bells are played, and making some music of our own will help us understand the long tradition of music at First Central. *Judy Bouma and Nicole & Jessica Day* will teach.

**August 28<sup>th</sup> - Our Traditions: Worship:** All the children of Grand Central Stations will gather in Memorial Hall to learn about the parts of a worship service and then do their own service with Ministers *Jeanne Bates* and *Fred Felger.*

### Classroom Improvements

Thanks to *David Fortina* and *Evan Milton* for moving the music and drama equipment, while *Shelly Kiel* and *Rachel Higgenbotham* are making new curtains for the new Music/Drama Station. Also thanks to *Carol Vogt* for organizing all the learning materials and to *Michael Cich-Jones* for hanging decorations in the new Elevated Track Classroom. Also, the *Ladwig* family (Jim, Blake and Carolyn) have cleaned the Nursery for fall.

I am still looking for volunteers to help decorate the downstairs hallway, check library books, and organize the worship bulletins used on Sundays. If any of these tasks match your interests, please contact *Peg* at 402-345-1533.

## Sunday Mornings

*Regularly scheduled events*

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

**next newsletter deadline**

**Sunday, August 21<sup>st</sup>**

email articles to [sara@firstcentral.org](mailto:sara@firstcentral.org)

## Week of Sunday, August 14

### Sunday, August 14

- First Forum, 9:15 a.m. “Refugee Resettlement”  
Children’s Team, 9:15 a.m.  
Grand Central Stations, 10:45 a.m. “The Sacraments”  
Evergreen Thrift Shop open after worship

### Monday, August 15

- Staff meeting, 11:00 a.m.  
CrossOver Prison Ministries, 6 p.m., First Christian

### Wednesday, August 17

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

### Thursday, August 18

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

### Friday, August 19

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

### Saturday, August 20

- Evergreen Thrift Shop, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.  
Yoga, 10 a.m., third floor parlor

## Week of Sunday, August 21

### Sunday, August 21

- First Forum, 9:15 a.m. “Nourishing the Congregation”  
Confirmation Parent Meeting 9:30 a.m. Memorial Hall  
Grand Central Stations, 10:45 a.m.  
Communication Team, 11:40 a.m., Pastor’s Study  
Education Ministry, 11:40 a.m.

### Monday, August 22

- Staff meeting, 11:00 a.m.  
CrossOver Prison Ministries, 6 p.m., First Christian

### Tuesday, August 23

- Council, 7 p.m., Fireside Room

### Wednesday, August 24

- Evergreen Thrift Shop, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
Choir Party, 6 p.m., *Alice Love & David Nichols’* home

### Thursday, August 25

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

### Friday, August 26

- Neighbors United Community Lunch Team, 7 p.m.

### Saturday, August 27

- Neighbors United Community Lunch Team, 9 a.m.  
Evergreen Thrift Shop, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.  
Yoga, 10 a.m., third floor parlor  
Lecture at First Unitarian, 7 p.m. (see article)

## Sunday, August 28

- First Forum, 9:15 a.m. “Interfaith Relations”  
Choristers, 9:15 a.m.  
Grand Central Stations, 10:45 a.m. “Planning Worship”  
*Mike Godfrey* Recital, 2 p.m. Free admission;  
reception to follow  
Interfaith Solidarity Meal, 6 p.m., Parlor. Potluck.

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