

The Full Circle

September 23, 2009



A Time In Between

Have you ever been in a time in between? You know how one thing ends - it could be a job, a relationship, transition into retirement, downsizing from house to "senior housing", or any major life event - and after a while something else begins?

When I've gone through "times in between," they were also what the Celtic mystics would call "thin times": times of emotional and spiritual turmoil when the divine reality seems close by. Perhaps it is living with ambiguity, ambivalence or unknowing that is hard to be comfortable with. Perhaps it is the change. It can be really hard to change our life patterns, as it is difficult to lose things we hold dear when we can no longer carry them with us. (This is true for possessions as it is for attitudes, ideas and life activities.)

In Jewish tradition the time between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur is an intentional time in between. This time of the High Holy Days - Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, to Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement - is not a time of parties and revelry. It is instead a time of worship, penitence, listening to self and others; a time of reflection on the past year and preparation to live a better life.

On the first day of the New Year many Jews walk to the nearest river to symbolically cast off their sins by casting bread upon the water. Hopefully this body of water has fish in it so that they can reflect on how God always surrounds us and holds us as water surrounds and holds the fish. The fish are also symbolic in that their eyes never close, reminding us of how God always sees us.

During the days between, observant Jews will also ask others if their behavior has been hurtful in any manner. The observant Jew will try to learn from their mistakes and hurtful behaviors and atone for their sins against others on the Day of Atonement.

The end of this time in between is the paying for one's sins. In the ancient world it would have been the blood sacrifice of an animal to substitute for oneself. Today it might be the donation of a sacrificial amount of money.

The crucial activity during the ten days in between is self-examination and reflection. During any intentional or non-intentional time in between I find the "Examen" of St. Ignatius a useful tool. In the evening before bed try the following exercise:

Think about and write in your journal answers to the following questions:

When did I give/receive the most love? The least love?

What moment today gave me the most life? Drained life out of me?

When did I have the greatest sense of belonging to myself, others, God and the Universe? When today did I have the least sense of belonging?

As Jews greet each other on Rosh Hashanah: May God inscribe your name in the book of life for a blessed year.

- Pastor Savage



STAFF SCHEDULES

SHARRY will be out of the office from **September 26 to October 2**.



NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL

We are now sending the Full Circle by email. If you signed up to receive it by email and you aren't getting it or you would like to start receiving the Full Circle by email please contact our secretary, Kathryn, at office@fccb.net.

ALL IN THE FAMILY

This section has been sent via email to those that receive the newsletter by email.

If you would like to receive the Full Circle by email please contact the office at 734-3720 or at office@fccb.net and let us know!



THIN SOLES BUT ROBUST SOULS – A SEARCH AND CALL UPDATE

Not a soul on the Search and Call committee has removed their running shoes over the past two weeks. Though the soles of our tenny runners are thinning, our souls remain robust and bursting with excitement over our continued work of phone interviews, profile reviews, sermon listenings, and discernment, discernment, discernment!!!

The closing date for profiles approaches – September 30th. But we are seeing little slow-down in the stream of candidates applying to our church. No doubt the newly retired building debt will only create a further (and final) flurry as the word gets out.

We thank you all for creating such a wonderful church with a proud reputation! Sure makes bragging about FCCB to prospective candidates easy!

Ever grateful for this opportunity you have given us, we remain your loyal S and Cers with thin soles but robust souls.

FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

CENTERING PRAYER: Please join us the **2nd and 4th Thursdays** of each month at **7 p.m.** in the Sanctuary for centering prayer.

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY: Please join us each **Wednesday from 5 to 6:30 p.m.** in the Fireplace Room. Knitters just beginning to experienced are welcome!

DAYTIME BOOK CLUB: Do you enjoy reading? Why not plan to join the daytime book club which meets the first Tuesday of the month at 9:30 a.m. in the Fireplace Room (September – May) for conversation and refreshments, followed by a discussion of the book for the month. The book we will be discussing at our **next meeting on October 6** will be *Elegance of the Hedgehog* by Muriel Barbery. For more information contact Kathleen McGuinness 733-1251.

LABYRINTH WALK: The labyrinth is generally in the Chapel available for walking during church office hours (Monday – Thursday 9:00 to 5:00 p.m. and Friday 9:00 to 1:00 p.m.). Please join facilitator Brenda Nicholson on **October 1 from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.** for our first Thursday of the month walk when the theme will be “Go Outside”.



Stephen Ministry

Who will know...about my problem if I talk to a Stephen Minister? This is something many people ask or wonder about. Confidentiality is the cornerstone of Stephen Ministry. No one knows what is talked about in a caring relationship except the person and the Stephen Minister. If you have a burden you need to share, perhaps a Stephen Minister can help.

To learn more, contact one of our Stephen Leaders: *Donna Romjue* (752-1747) *Libby Weiss* (756-2062) and *Pat Styer* (676-2585).



CLASSES STARTING IN THE FALL

LIVING THE QUESTIONS: The Adult Study Group offering the Living the Questions studies has resumed its **2nd and 4th Tuesday** night meetings in Room 11 at **7 p.m.** These approximately one hour long meetings consist of 20-minute video presentations by well known religious scholars on faith journey questions and are followed by group discussion on the presentation content. Seven sessions have already been covered and there are 14 more sessions scheduled. Joining us “mid stream” is welcome as each video and discussion can stand alone. Contact Bob and Pat Styer at 360-676-2585 to express interest.

FAITH AND (CONTEMPORARY) ISSUES: Have you wanted to explore what your faith has to say to the issues of our day? Join us on **October 20** at **7 p.m.** for conversation with others around how what we believe influences what we say and what we do, and what we might say and what we might do. At our next gathering we will begin by focusing on Luke 12:13-21. If you have questions, please contact Sharon Camblin at 715-0933 or Pastor Jane at 734-3720.



The Board of Adult Ministries at First Congregational Church of Bellingham is sponsoring a series of hour programs on the topic of Homelessness in Whatcom County and in the state. A series of speakers from a variety of organizations will give presentations on this pervasive problem and answer questions from the audience. The Board would like to invite the wider community to join in the discussion of this important issue. The first two programs are listed below. There is no charge or donation for attending.

Sunday, October 11th in the FCCB Sanctuary at 11:20 a.m.

Speaker: Greg Winter, Director of Whatcom Homeless Service Center and Chair of the Whatcom County Coalition for the Homeless. Greg is also President of Cornerstone Strategies, Inc., a community development research and planning firm. As a consultant, Greg conducted research and facilitated the three-year planning process that led to the development of the Whatcom Homeless Service Center. His research firm has also been responsible in recent years for conducting the annual homeless census in Whatcom County.

Greg will describe homelessness in Whatcom County and how our community is changing the way it addresses the problem by using innovative, best-practice strategies. He will also describe how well these new housing services are working and some ways the community can contribute to ensure their success.

Sunday, November 15th in the FCCB Sanctuary at 11:20 a.m.

Speaker: Page Chance, Program Coordinator for LAW Advocates Homeless Disability Advocacy program. (*See the next Full Circle for more information.*)

NEW AUTHOR AMONG US

FCCB member Lisa Iversen announces the release of her first book, *Ancestral Blueprints: Revealing Invisible Truths in America's Soul*. The book is a psycho-therapist's reflections on truth, ancestry, therapy, tribe, and democracy. Lisa will be offering a reading at Village Books on Friday, October 23 at 7pm. Visit www.lisaiversen.com to learn more. Everyone from FCCB is invited!

GETTING TO KNOW YOU - LET'S BUILD CONNECTIONS!

The Membership Board would like to invite each of you to linger a little longer after the service at coffee hour on **September 27th**.

We are hoping to bring more people together over some “good eats” to meet, talk, laugh, and enjoy the company of members new to our church, or perhaps just new to you!

This “good eats” Sunday is but one idea for forming and strengthening ties among and between all members of our church family. The Membership Board would love to hear your thoughts and ideas for ways we can bring people together. Please feel free to put your thoughts in writing and place them in the box marked “Membership” in the office, or send them to Bruce Camblin (zotbc@comcast.net) or Kate Eifrig (kate.eifrig@comcast.net).

INQUIRER'S CLASS



Looking for a church home? The next Inquirers' Classes are on **September 27th and October 4th**, with being accepted into the membership on **October 18th**. Please plan on attending both of these sessions to be held in the Fireplace Room from **11:45 a.m. until 12:45 p.m.** on those two Sunday mornings. Please contact one of the pastors, Bruce Camblin, or Kate Eifrig to make your interest known.



STEPHEN MINISTERS AND STEPHEN LEADERS

Mark your calendars and plan to come to the potluck

September 30th 6 to 8 pm
in FCCB Social Hall

Bring a dish to share and plan to renew friendships or make new friends
Questions? Call Pat 676-2585, Donna 752-1747 or Libby 756-2062

BUILDING LOAN PAID OFF

To the entire congregation a big high five—WE DID IT! On Wednesday, Sept. 16, a check in the amount of \$194,662.42 was delivered to Key Bank to pay off the church's building loan. What an amazing accomplishment this has been!

Nine years ago we began the project with a \$3,200,000.00 loan. That is a lot of money! In three Capital Campaigns, each one three years long, and a drive for the final \$30,000.00, we raised the money to make the 112 monthly payments, on time, every month.

We had some special help. At the beginning we accessed \$90,000.00 from the Arvilla Pehrson Endowment Fund.

What a blessing that fund has been. This year the church was the beneficiary of \$200,000.00 from the estate of Marie Kegley, another generous member who thoughtfully cared about the church and enriched the church with her love and resources.

To the whole church - **CONGRATULATIONS!** And now, the future lies ahead of us - for new ministries and new missions, with hearts grateful to God who made all this possible.

TRUSTEES MAKE APPEAL FOR TREASURER

The church has an urgent need for a Treasurer. Max Legg will soon be retiring from this post. The volunteer position will require a person interested in and familiar with bookkeeping and accounting practices to oversee the financial affairs of the congregation. Please help us to meet our duty to be fiscally responsible, satisfy State rules of incorporation, and meet a requirement of the church constitution. Please contact the church office if you have questions or if you are interested in serving at office@fccb.net.

OCTOBER IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

OPENING VIGIL: "It takes a Community to End Domestic Violence" on **Thursday, October 1 at 6:00 p.m.** in the Whatcom County Council Courthouse Chambers. The Bellingham-Whatcom County Commission Against Domestic Violence hosts the Domestic Violence Awareness month Vigil. The vigil will include music from the Kulshan Chorus, speakers from local agencies and the Sixth Annual Domestic Violence Outstanding Achievement Award will be presented.



LABYRINTH WALK FOR HEALING: on **Tuesday, October 6 from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m.** at the Bellingham Cruise Terminal. The labyrinth is a symbol that relates to wholeness. As our lives are sacred journeys about change, discovery and transformation the labyrinth represents a journey to our center and back out into the world again. All members of the community are encouraged to participate in this peaceful, contemplative labyrinth walk for healing. A full calendar of events for the month is available on the Information Table in the Narthex. For more information contact Sharry at 734-3720 or sharry@fccb.net.

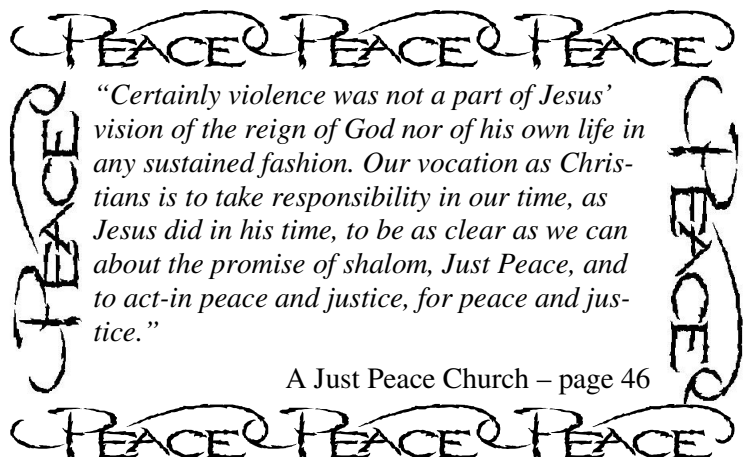


HAVE YOU NOTICED "Our Church Family: Stewardship in Action" picture frame in the Narthex? (Perhaps your picture is there right now!) The Stewardship Board would like to display a changing gallery of our church family and friends at work: in our world, our county, our city, our neighborhoods and right here at home. Please share your labeled and dated photos by placing them in the Stewardship Board box in the church workroom, or email them to the church at office@fccb.net, marked for the board with labeled information. We look forward to seeing you in Our Church Family picture frame!

MISSION JUSTICE AND SOCIAL CONCERNS

NEIGHBORS IN NEED SPECIAL OFFERING: Mission Justice and Social Concerns is offering an opportunity: on **September 27**, we are collecting a special offering to benefit mission. This offering will be split two ways: to benefit the local Community Meals program and to support the national UCC Neighbors in Need effort. Community Meals provides a hot, multi-course meal to anyone who comes to Assumption Church on specific days. Neighbors in Need funds help Native American ministries; they also fund grants to all kinds of agencies and groups which work on the local level to promote justice. (This year Whatcom Peace and Justice received such a grant.) Please consider a gift to this special offering.

INTERFAITH'S WINTER COAT DRIVE: Join us for Interfaith Coalition's annual winter coat drive. This successful program brings warm coats to people in need throughout the county. Please bring clean, good quality winter coats, hats, gloves and mittens to the worship services this month. Children's coats are especially needed. We will be collecting coats here October 4, 11 and 18. **Sunday, October 18** is the last Sunday to bring in items. Many people appreciate this program because they don't have to spend their limited income on a coat or go without one through the winter. Thanks for sharing the warmth!



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DON'T FORGET -On **Sunday, October 4th** FCCB will be joining other local churches in hosting the annual **CROP Walk** to fight world hunger. 25% of the money raised goes locally to the Bellingham and Ferndale Food Banks as well as the Maple Alley Inn. The remainder goes to grass roots organizations through Church World Service. We will be gathering at 2 o'clock at the Fairhaven Village Green and will set off for our walk to the sounds of the local marimba band Mhuri Marimba. Don't worry if you have not picked up an envelope yet, we will have some available at church on October 4th or just show up before 2 at the Fairhaven Village Green. Come join your friends and neighbors for a wonderful afternoon of service, fresh air, and great music!

CHURCH SCHOOL NEWS

2009-10 CHURCH SCHOOL: On Sunday September 13 our fall church school schedule began for children in Pre School through Middle School. Children report to church school following "Time with Children." Please follow the footsteps on the walls downstairs to find your child's classroom. To insure we have correct information for all children and youth please fill out a 2009-10 registration form for your child(ren) available in your child's classroom or on the table between Rooms 32 & 34.

CHURCH SCHOOL GATHERS: on **Sunday, October 4** the church school community will gather in the Social Hall following "Time with Children" to learn about our church school mission project for the year "Pennies for Peace." The children will rejoin their families in the Sanctuary for communion. Watch for more information about this mission project in an upcoming Full Circle.

CHURCH SCHOOL MISSION PROJECT: The church school children will continue to collect gently used (in good shape) and new children's books throughout the year for the Interfaith Health Clinic. Children who visit the clinic are invited to enjoy a book while they are waiting for their appointment. If they find a book they like, they may take it home with them. Many of these families have limited resources, so the children may have few books of their own. This program helps to foster an appreciation of books among the children and their families, and is a wonderful opportunity to share with those in our community. You are invited to bring books for the clinic and place them in the donation box outside Room 12/14 (near the prayer wall).

KID'S CHOIR: The Kid's Choir will start rehearsing on **October 4** after worship. We will be singing in worship on **October 18th**.

YOUTH NEWS

High School & Middle School October 4, 2 p.m., CROP Walk!

Let's join the rest of the church and walk in honor of the hungry! Meet at the Village Green.

Bowling:

High School: October 11, 4-6 p.m.

Middle School: October 18, 4:30-6 p.m.

Come go bowling with your youth group friends! Meet at the church and we'll carpool over to 20th Century Bowling Alley in downtown Bellingham. Lane rental cost is covered, but bring \$2 for shoe rental. Hope to see you there!

Progressive Dinner:

High School: October 18, 6:15-8 p.m.

Middle School: October 11, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

We will eat dinner together at several different houses! Salad at the first house, main course at the second house, and dessert at the last house. Don't miss a chance for free food and time with friends! Meet at the church. Please come on time so we can carpool together.

High School & Middle School

October 25, 6:30-8 p.m.,

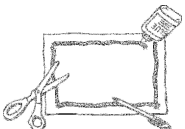
Trick-or-Treat for the Food Bank!

We will trick-or-treat around our neighborhood collecting food for the local food bank. Come hang out with your friends and help out the community! Dress warmly and bring a bag if you have one. Meet at the church.

¿HABLAS ESPAÑOL? Is anyone in the church fluent in Spanish? I just moved back to the US from Spain this summer and really miss speaking Spanish. So if you speak it, please let me know. I would love to get together for coffee and chat. Angela Pahlow, Youth Coordinator (Angela.Pahlow@gmail.com)

HOLA HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH AND PARENTS!

I am excited to tell you that we have chosen Tijuana, Mexico as the destination for our summer mission trip. We will be working with an organization called Esperanza to build houses with the Mexican community. An informational meeting will be held on **October 11** right after worship. Hope to see you there! Please feel free to contact me with any questions, issues, or concerns you may have. ~Angela Pahlow, Youth Coordinator



CREATIVE CONNECTION RETREAT: Come join us on **Saturday, October 17 from 10-2 p.m.** for a time of "Nurturing Your Creative Spirit". We will join together for some creative craft fun, laughter and play while connecting with other women in our community. Registration fee of \$20 covers craft supplies and catered lunch. Childcare will be available upon request. Registration forms are available on the Information Table in the Narthex. For more information contact Sharry Nyberg at 734-3720.

AROUND THE CHURCH

PLEDGE ENVELOPE NOTE: As the Fall Pledge Campaign begins, you will have the opportunity to check on your pledge card whether you would like to receive offering envelopes. These envelopes can function as a reminder to pay your pledge; they can ensure we have your correct giving number; but they also mean an expense for the church. Please mark clearly on your card whether you would like giving envelopes. Thank you!

ADULT DAY HEALTH: To celebrate National Adult Day Services Week Ms. Erika Stanley (with Ellie & Bob Chamberlain) will present an illustrated session in the Chapel on **Sunday, Sept. 27 after worship** to familiarize this community with Adult Day Services (St. Joseph Hospital) in Bellingham and ways you can participate.

FOOD FIRST SUNDAY: Food First Sunday is **October 4th**. Please bring your food or monetary donations on Sunday. A cash donation allows the Food Bank to purchase perishable food items.

AROUND THE COMMUNITY

GAZA PRESENTATION: Dara Wells Hajjar is a graduate of Fairhaven College. She visited Gaza in March 2009 with an international peace delegation organized by "Code Pink: Women for Peace," on the occasion of International Women's Day. She will speak on **Tuesday, September 29 at 7 p.m.** at Whatcom Peace and Justice Center, 200 East Maple Street (Old Foundry Building, one block down from Farmer's Market) This event is sponsored by "Voices for Peace in the Middle East" Tel. 647-5334.

COME CELEBRATE our furred and four-footed friends! On **October 11** at First Christian Church "A Blessing of the Animals" service will be held at **2 p.m.**

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY AUCTION: You are invited to join us for Habitat for Humanity in Whatcom County's 7th Annual *Raise the Roof Auction* on **Saturday, October 17, 2009 at 5:30pm** at Semiahmoo Resort, Blaine, WA. Tickets are \$50/person. Please RSVP by October 5th. For ticket and more information contact Habitat for Humanity at 360.715.9170 / 1385 Admiral Place, Ferndale.

Donate your gently used winter coats...



October 4, 11 and 18!

CHURCH CALENDAR

September 28

9:00 AM *Shalom Circle*
5:00 PM *Exercise Group*
7:00 PM *Church Council*

September 30

5:00 PM *Exercise Group*
5:00 PM *Prayer Shawl*
6:00 PM *Stephen Ministers Potluck*

October 1

6:30 PM *Labyrinth Walk*
7:00 PM *Jesus Seminar*

October 2

10:00 AM *In Stitches*
5:00 PM *Exercise Group*

October 4

10:00 AM *Worship/Church School Gathers*
11:15 AM *Kids' Choir Rehearsal*
11:45 AM *Inquirers Class*
2:00 PM *Crop Walk—High School & Middle School YG*

October 5

9:00 AM *Shalom Circle*
5:00 PM *Exercise Group*

October 6

9:30 AM *Book Club*
7:00 PM *Pilgrim Circle*

October 7

5:00 PM *Exercise Group*
5:00 PM *Prayer Shawl*

October 8

1:00 PM *Jesus Seminar*
7:00 PM *Centering Prayer*

October 9

10:00 AM *In Stitches*
5:00 PM *Exercise Group*

October 11

10:00 AM *Worship/Church School*
11:15 AM *Kid's Choir*
11:20 AM *Adult Ministry Series—Homelessness*
4:00 PM *High School YG*
6:30 PM *Middle School YG*

