



# The Full Circle

October 28, 2009



## Flex and Flux

As I write this the Women's Lunch with Kent is in full swing. By the time you read these words we will already know the outcome of the congregation's vote on Sunday.

Have you wondered how things might change? I wonder how our roles will change with a new Lead Pastor. As you know parish members and ministers wear many hats. Missions, trustees, deacons, preachers, teachers, counselors, caregivers, worship leaders and the list goes on depending on one's creative use of language, committee, and on how the phrase "and duties as assigned" gets interpreted.

Each one of us, members and staff, has the opportunity to review our roles and our assumptions of how we are Church together. As the people called by God to be Church we need to be ready to flex with the flux of the needs of life together.

I know my role will change. As I see it, the role of the 2nd pastor, associate pastor or assistant pastor changes depending on what support the lead or senior pastor needs, and it changes with the needs of the parish.

When ministers are ordained and hands are laid upon them in a prayerful manner and when ministers covenant with a church, they are set apart. Part of this is perspective. Ministers are still human beings with all the baggage that comes with that. Called and settled pastors who may officially be a member of the church they serve are different. Their roles in the community are different, people perceive them as different, and their roles are constantly subject to change.

Roles of all community members can and do change too! Have you thought about how your role could change and how you would like your role to change? Church members covenant to be together in worship and service. But that doesn't mean they are stuck in one place or one role. People may be seen in one role, and others may try to keep them in that role. But other people's ideas of who you are do not define you.

Some people project onto the minister all of their beliefs concerning what a professional minister should be and how they should act. Every member of the congregation will have a slightly different take on or internal definition of the covenant between church and pastor.

We have covenanted to be together in transition. Times of flux are great times to flex our muscles and our roles. Sometimes being more "flex able" gives us the opportunity to grow and learn new ways of leadership, spiritual practice, and ministry.

What is your bottom line on church and ministry? For me, the bottom line on ministry is that I am a servant of Jesus who I believe to be the Christ or Messiah sent by God, and I am a servant of the Church. My role changes as the needs of the church change. While I have struggled at times with job descriptions that are not clearly defined, I have also rejoiced in the opportunity to serve as needed. Life can be dull if every day is exactly the same, with no new thoughts, no new people, and no new things to do.

But I am not the only one who will need to flex with the flux of congregational change. Each person will need to be ready for differences in worship, administration, and spiritual care. To use a technical term from systems theory, as a new member, particularly a leader/servant minister, enters the community, it creates "second order change".

In both subtle and non-subtle ways life will be different. And, God willing, we will all be able to flex with the flux and grow.

Perhaps the invitation to worship, service, membership, ministry, and prayer could become: Come, let us flex with the flux together!

Pastor Savage



## 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](mailto: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](mailto:office@fccb.net) and let us know!



KENT FRENCH, OUR NEW LEAD PASTOR

### ENDOWMENT Q & A

**QUESTION:** *How much of a given Endowment Fund can be spent each year?*

**ANSWER:** The church has directed that 4% of the principal of a fund shall be dispersed each year. Earnings above 4% are reinvested.

### 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 book-keeping 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](mailto:office@fccb.net).

### 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.

**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 November 3** will be *The Nine* by Jeffery Toobin. 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 – Friday 9:00 to 5:00 p.m. and Friday 9:00 to 1:00 p.m.). Please join us for our next facilitated walk on **November 5 from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.** when the theme will be “Harvesting Thankfulness”.

**CREATIVE CONNECTIONS:** Looking for a chance to join others in community and make new friendships while tapping into your creative side? All are welcome to join in some creative fun on Saturday, **November 7 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.** in the Mt. Baker Room. Bring a project you are working on or come be inspired as we learn a new felting craft. For more information contact Sharry 734-3720.



### Stephen Ministry

#### When You Need Someone...

To confide in...

To pray with you...

To encourage you...

To talk to...

To walk with you...

To listen to you...

**A Stephen Minister Will Come!**

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

## FROM YOUR SEARCH AND CALL COMMITTEE

What a year, what a week, what a day, what a relief, and what a big whopping JOY! We have a new Lead Pastor!

*Your Search and Call Committee is overjoyed to announce that the Congregation of First Congregational Church Bellingham gathered on October 25, 2009 and overwhelmingly voted to call the Reverend Kent French as our new Lead Pastor.*

Thank you all for the continual and unflagging support this past year, your faithful attendance at this past week's events, the insightful questions you posed, and the warm welcome you have extended to Kent and Robert.

Kent will begin his ministry with us on Monday, January 18, 2010. His first Sunday will be January 24, 2010.

And finally ..... Kent says, "I am overwhelmed with gratitude for this call and all of the ways you have warmly and enthusiastically received us this week. Thank you. God has wonderful things in store for all of us and I look forward to discovering with you what they are."

PEACE PEACE PEACE

PEACE

"To think of Just Peace in terms of friendship does not mean that everyone should become friends with everyone else in the world or that governments should necessarily all love one another. It does mean that many of the qualities found in friendship – forgiveness and loyalty and trust and respect – are deeply necessary for peace. Justice and power make reconciliation possible, but forgiveness and loyalty make it actual."

PEACE

A Just Peace Church – page 47

PEACE PEACE PEACE

If you would like more information about "A Just Peace Church" please check out a copy from our library or visit the UCC website at <http://www.ucc.org/justice/peacemaking/a-just-peace-church-1.html>.

## IN SUPPORT OF REFERENDUM 71

The Mission Justice and Social Concerns Board endorses the approval of Referendum 71. A "yes" vote on Referendum 71 ratifies the Washington State Legislature's recent passage of Senate Bill 5688 which grants the same rights, responsibilities and obligations that legally married spouses enjoy, to state-registered and senior-aged domestic partners.

Our Church has considered the issue of equal rights for over a decade, resulting in our ONA Resolution in 1999, and our amendment to the resolution in 2008. On November 3, 2009 voters in Washington State will cast ballots on Referendum 71, which asks voters to approve or disapprove the 2008 legislature's bill noted above. The Mission Justice and Social Concerns Board encourages your support of this referendum as a reflection of the work we have engaged in as a community concerned with equal rights for all.

## Church Council Highlights October 26, 2009

Moderator Pete thanked the Search and Call Committee and all church leadership for hard work and support during search for Lead Pastor.

2010 Budget Committee will report to the congregation on Sunday, November 1.

Board of Trustees updating building use policy mindful of IRS requirements that any organization using the church for fundraising must be non-profit and 51% of the profits must be donated to the church.

### Upcoming opportunities for special offerings:

November 22 Interfaith Coalition  
December 6 OCWM  
December 20 Christmas Fund

Pastoral Relations Committee preparing a report to the congregation on the process of reviewing input and creating/implementing a support plan for Rev. Savage Frieze.

Pastor Jane's last day here will be Sunday, January 10. Let the Wild Rumpus Begin to celebrate her ministry with us.

Rev. Kent French will begin his ministry on Monday, January 18, with his first Sunday preaching January 24. Kent's installation will likely be some time in the spring.

**MSP** to return \$14,500 remaining in the building fund and any future income into that fund to the major maintenance fund. Board of Trustees has a list of items not yet completed on the original CCIII list of major maintenance and upgrade projects. Top three projects are to install office security electric door strikes, refinish social hall floor, sound-proof staff offices.

### Financial Statement September 30, 2009

Year to Date Income	\$354,887.19
Year to Date Expenses	<u>\$351,470.42</u>
Difference	\$ 3,416.77

## CLASSES STARTING IN THE FALL

**LIVING THE QUESTIONS:** Wondering how current Bible scholars and ministers are confronting ancient questions about faith, Jesus, truth and other mysteries? Join us for "Living the Questions," 20-minute DVD presentations, followed then by 40-minute discussions. Each presentation stands alone, so feel free to join us! We meet the **2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays at 7 p.m.** in Room 11.

**FAITH AND (CONTEMPORARY) ISSUES:** We next meet on **November 17 at 7 p.m.** in Room 11 to discuss how our faith influences our choices. Please come join us for thoughtful and provocative conversation!

**STUFF:** We all have it. Some of us wonder what to do with it. Some of us harbor hopes of what our partners might do with theirs. Come join us for further conversation, strategy and laughter on **November 11 at 7 p.m.** in room 12/14 (*Please note: this is a schedule change.*)



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 second program is listed below. There is no charge or donation requested for attending.

**Sunday, November 15<sup>th</sup> in the FCCB Sanctuary at 11:20 a.m.**

Speaker: Page Chance, Program Coordinator for LAW Advocates Homeless Disability Advocacy program. The mission of the program is to provide outreach, education, and access to disability benefits for community members who are entitled to such benefits and experiencing homelessness. The majority of individuals Page serves are chronically homeless and unable to work because of serious mental illness. In May 2009, Page was honored by the Whatcom County Bar Association for her "tireless work in helping the homeless and disabled members of our community to increase access to public entitlements, such as Medicaid." Page graduated from WWU and the University of San Diego paralegal program. She has worked as a paralegal in Bellingham since 1984, and has been employed with LAW Advocates since 2007.

### WANTED: Ushers and Greeters

Something new!



Sign up for ushering and greeting in the coming months by going to the sign up sheet in the Narthex. Diaconate members will send reminders and instructions to those who request them. Look for our display!

### DIACONATE NEWS

**Want to explore serving on Diaconate?** We have several vacancies and invite you to join us to see if this is a way you would like to participate in the work of the church.

**What do we do?** Diaconate members contribute to a "Ministry of Welcome" by arranging for ushers and greeters; they assist in preparing and presiding at communion; and they cooperate with our pastors in organizing special services that minister to the spiritual interests of the church.

**Please contact** Julia Ritchie (676-0791) or Barbara Mathers-Schmidt (319-8184) to learn more about Diaconate and consider volunteering.

**HEALTH CARE: What The American System Is Not and What The Canadian System Is** with Dr. Harry Herdman and Marguerite Shepherd in the Mt. Baker Room **November 22nd** after worship.

## INTERFAITH NOTES

### FILM SCREENING TO RAISE FUNDS FOR HOMELESS HOUSING

"Where God Left His Shoes" is an award-winning film that portrays one family's struggles with homelessness. To raise funds for its homeless housing program, Interfaith Coalition of Whatcom County will show the film on **Saturday, Nov. 14**, at First Presbyterian Church, 1031 North Garden St., in Bellingham. Doors open at 6 p.m., with music by Cabin Fever NW beginning at 6:15 p.m. A Q & A with producer Michael Caldwell follows the film, which begins at 7 p.m. Tickets are available at Village Books, Community Food Co-op, and Interfaith Coalition for a suggested \$10 donation. Call 360-734-3983 or visit [www.interfaith-coalition.org](http://www.interfaith-coalition.org) for more information.

"Where God Left His Shoes" stars John Leguizamo and won the 2007 Humanitas Prize at the Sundance Film Festival for screenwriting and "its unblinking look at the desperation inherent in poverty and homelessness, for its edgy portrayal of a father and stepson trying to connect and for its implicit belief that a family can be the strongest refuge in adversity," said Humanitas Prize trustee John Horn.

### SEEKING VOLUNTEERS TO STAFF SEVERE-WEATHER SHELTERS

Can you offer a night's comfort and relief to people living on the streets? Volunteers staff Interfaith Coalition's severe-weather shelters in shifts from 5 p.m. to 8 a.m. Last winter we were open for two straight weeks during the snowy weather. We need many volunteers to help at our two sites. Faith Lutheran Church opens to men during severe weather, and Garden Street United Methodist Church opens to women and children.

If you're interested in learning more about the program and volunteering, please attend one of the two upcoming training sessions: **Thursday, Nov. 12 at 7 p.m.** at Faith Lutheran Church, site of the men's shelter, 2750 McLeod Road; or **Wednesday, Nov. 18 at 7:30 p.m.** at Garden Street United Methodist Church, site of the women's and children's shelter, 1326 North Garden St.

## CHURCH SCHOOL NEWS

**CHILDREN'S SABBATH:** A big THANK YOU to the Church School Teachers, Children and Youth for sharing their amazing gifts during the worship service on October 18th. With the theme "We Are the Church Together: Sharing Our Gifts" the children created prayers, shared scripture, Austin Lehn and Erin Jensen reflected on what this church means to them, the third grade class received their Bibles and special music was shared by the Kids Choir and Male Chorus.

**PENNIES FOR PEACE:** The church school community invites you to join them in collecting pennies for "Pennies for Peace" during the church school year. Money raised will be sent to help support building schools and purchasing school supplies in Pakistan and Afghanistan. The power of a penny in the United States has little worth, but in Pakistan and Afghanistan 1 penny buys a pencil, 2 pennies an eraser, 15 pennies a notebook, \$2 – \$3 provides a teachers salary for a day, \$20 a students' school supplies for one year, \$600 one teacher's annual salary, \$5000 support for an existing school for one year and \$50,000 one school building and support for up to five years. Together we can make a difference one penny at a time!

**CHURCH SCHOOL GATHERS:** on **Sunday, November 1** the church school community will gather in the Social Hall following "Time with Children" to learn more about "Pennies for Peace" our church school mission project for the year. The children will rejoin their families in the Sanctuary for communion.

**JOY JESTERS:** All high school youth are invited to an informational meeting on **November 8 at 11:15 a.m. in the Youth Room** to learn more about and begin to dream what our Joy Jester Clown ministry troupe will look like for the coming year. Please bring your creativity, thoughts and ideas and join the group. For more information call Sharry 734-3720.

## YOUTH NEWS

### MIDDLE SCHOOL (Grade 6-8):

We've got some fun things happening in November!

**November 13-14:** We're having a lock-in! Bring your sleeping bag and be ready for games and fun all evening! 8:00 p.m. Friday evening through 10:00 a.m. Saturday morning.

**November 22, 3:00 p.m.:** We're going to Creativitea in Fairhaven. Whether you want to paint pottery or fuse glass, we'll have a great time! Bring \$10-15 to pay for your piece. Talk to Angela Pahlow (youth coordinator) if the money's a problem and she can get you covered.

### HIGH SCHOOL (Grades 9-12):

Here's what's going on in youth group for November!

**November 1:** Please come and serve food with us at the Lighthouse Mission. It's a great opportunity for community service right here in Bellingham! Meet at the church at 4:00 p.m.

**November 8:** Tijuana Talk! Aimee Khuu will be coming up from Seattle to talk to us about Esperanza and Tijuana, which is where we're going for our mission trip this summer. It'll be a useful talk to hear, especially if you're still deciding if you'd like to be a part of the trip. (4:00 p.m. at the church)

**November 15:** Photo Scavenger Hunt! Come dressed comfortably and ready for a good time. (6:30-8:00 p.m.)

**PLEASE SAVE THE DATE!!** We are going on a Midwinter Retreat to Pilgrim Firs!!!  
Middle School: **January 8-10, 2010**  
High School: **January 15-17, 2010**  
More details soon to follow in the upcoming editions of The Full Circle!

**SAVE THE DATE PLEASE! November 22, 11:15 a.m.** The high school youth are hosting a pie auction to raise money for their summer mission trip to Tijuana, Mexico. It's the Sunday before Thanksgiving so you can support the youth AND get your holiday pie!

## AROUND THE CHURCH

**BOARD REPORTS** for the Annual Report are due to Kathryn by **December 9th!**

**CONGREGATIONAL MEETING:** **Sunday, November 1st** after worship. We will be looking at the Budget for 2010 as well as getting an update on the 2009 budget.

**WE WANT YOUR QUILTS!** We'll be changing the quilts hanging in the Social Hall on November 1st. If you have a quilt you would like to share for the next 3 to 4 months drop them by the office before the 1st. Contact Joan Roley at 734-8041.

**PLEDGE ENVELOPE NOTE:** It's pledge card time. On your pledge card is the opportunity to say, "yes, I'd like pledge envelopes!" or "no, I don't use them." Pledge envelopes are an expense to the church. If they help you remember to contribute, then please mark "yes." If you don't use them, please be sure to mark "no" on your card...and know that your choice helps us to be a little more "green." Thank you!

**FLU SEASON:** When you come to church, please share your ideas, your dreams, your questions, your smiles...but not germs! Let's remind one another to wash our hands, cover our mouths when we cough or sneeze, throw tissues out after one use...and stay home if we're not feeling well. (There are posters on the Parish Nurse board with information about immunizations and other wise health practices.)

**THE PRAYER SHAWLS** that decorated the Sanctuary were all given to people during their time of need—loss of a loved one, illness or surgery. They were made by one or more members of the Prayer Shawl Ministry group, that meets weekly. Prayer shawls are a meaningful way we can share the comfort, love and prayers of our faith community. Thank you to those who shared their prayer shawl.

### GET YOUR PHOTO TAKEN!

Help Kent get to know us! We will be gathering family photos together to help Kent get to know our congregation. Photos will be taken **November 15, 22 and 29th** after worship.

### UPDATING THE CHURCH DIRECTORY

We are in the process of updating the church directory. If you have any changes to your contact information please email the church at [office@fccb.net](mailto:office@fccb.net). We will have copies of the directory out in the Narthex to be corrected **November 15, 22 and 29**. Please look at them and make sure to mark any changes to your information. Thanks!

# WE HAVE CALLED A NEW LEAD PASTOR!

The Rev. Kent French has been called as Lead Pastor  
of First Congregational Church.

✧ You can check out an audio CD from the library to hear the service from October 25 or go to our website and click the link to hear Kent's sermon. We will have DVDs of the service in the library soon.

✧ Rev. Jane Sorenson's ministry will conclude on January 10th. Details on celebrating Jane's ministry with us will be forthcoming.

✧ Rev. Kent French's first Sunday will be January 24th.

## CHURCH CALENDAR

### **November 2**

9:00 AM *Shalom Circle*  
4:00 PM *Exercise Group*

### **November 3**

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

### **November 4**

4:00 PM *Exercise Group*  
5:00 PM *Prayer Shawl*  
7:00 PM *Conversation Café—MJSC*  
7:00 PM *Stephen Ministers*

### **November 5**

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

### **November 6**

10:00 AM *In Stitches*  
4:00 PM *Exercise Group*

### **November 7**

10:00 AM *Creative Connections*

### **November 8—STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY**

10:00 AM *Worship/Church School*  
11:00 AM *Fancy Pie Celebration*  
4:00 PM *Mission Trip Talk Back*

### **November 9**

9:00 AM *Shalom Circle*  
4:00 PM *Exercise Group*  
7:00 PM *Board Meetings*

### **November 10**

9:30 AM *Discovery Circle*  
7:00 PM *Living the Questions*

### **November 11**

4:00 PM *Exercise Group*  
5:00 PM *Prayer Shawl*  
7:00 PM *Stuff Group*

### **November 12**

1:00 PM *Jesus Seminar*

### **November 13**

10:00 AM *In Stitches*  
4:00 PM *Exercise Group*  
8:00 PM *Middle School Lock-In*

### **November 15**

10:00 AM *Worship/Church School*  
11:00 AM *Homelessness Program*  
6:30 PM *High School YG—Photo Scavenger Hunt*

