



The Full Circle

May 12, 2010



GIVING A GOOD TIME TO OTHERS

A long time ago, when I was very little, my dad took me to the annual family picnic given by his work place. It became obvious, even to a little child, that Dad was popular. It seemed like everyone knew him and everyone liked him. Dad wasn't an executive, just a lowly salesman. But he always had a twinkle in his eye, a kind word for those around him, and a ready smile. Winsome I suppose you'd call it.

But I didn't know anyone. I was little, knee-high really, just able to reach up to the picnic table. Mom was busy visiting too. They both, in between visits with people, were working on getting food ready. They weren't about to take care of me and my big sisters were off playing, so I got bored and grumpy.

When I complained to Dad, all he said was: "If you want to have fun here, go and give someone else fun". That was it. No "I'll play with you in a minute," or "Go talk to your mother," or "Where are your sisters? They should be taking care of you."

In today's world I would feel like an inappropriate parent for not providing supervised play for the children. I suppose Dad would be considered neglectful for telling a four or five year old child to go away and give someone else some fun. Back then in the Stone Age it was an okay thing to do.

I took dad's advice, went out in to the fields and started trying to give other people fun. In the process I had a lot of fun too. So much so, I didn't want to leave when it was time to go home.

There is a very important lesson here for church people. Your experience of Church is what you make of it. Complaining to Mom and Dad won't do much good. When you put yourself out there, get involved, and give other people a good time you'll have a good time too.

Put another way, and this is an entirely different story but a similar point; wallflowers don't have much fun at the dance. It's the kids who get involved and try to give others a good time that have a good time themselves.

There are plenty of opportunities to get involved. If none of them are a fit for you then make something else happen. Every ministry and program of the church starts when someone says: "we need", or "I want to." Getting involved is always your choice and what you get out of church is your choice, too!

Pastor Savage

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!

FROM PASTOR SAVAGE

Dear Friends,

In mutual agreement with the Pastoral Transition Committee and the Church Council in discussing the process of transitioning from one pastor to the next, now is the appropriate time to end my roll as Contract Pastor. My last sermon will be next Sunday, May 16th, and my last day will be Sunday, June 6th.

I am very grateful for the opportunity to have been in covenantal ministry with all of you for the past two years. It has been a time of growth and change for all of us. When I arrived, the church community was in tumult, and I was new to parish ministry. You have seasoned me well and I am much better prepared for future ministries. The congregation has undergone a great deal of healing and growth. We each have a great deal to be proud of as we look into the future.

I have fulfilled my covenantal commitment to this church and the office of Pastor. My work here will end on May 28th. As have other pastors before me, I support ministerial ethics and after June 6th, I will no longer be a pastor of this church. As difficult as it may be, I will need to cut off all ties with the church. I will not return phone calls or e-mails. This is to ensure that when a new pastor is called, that person has a good and fair chance to begin their ministry without interference from a previous pastor.

Please know that you will be in my thoughts and prayers as I hope that you will hold me in yours.

God be with you now and always!

Pastor Savage

IN GRATITUDE

When I arrived in Bellingham in mid-January, my new colleague, Savage Frieze, was the first and only person to offer me a map of my new city. He offered not just one, but three maps, each one with a slightly different scope and style of conveying this community. What Savage did not know, at least not explicitly, is that I am a big "maphead." I love looking at the lines and intersections and boundaries and seeing how everything connects and fits together. Maps give me a sense of clarity and maybe even a more God's-eye view of the world. It was a thoughtful and insightful gesture – practical, considerate, helpful and gracious.

Savage would go on to show me other mappings: how the building works, the audio and lighting systems in the sanctuary, the practices of governance, the way we do communion, the rhythm of pastoral care. His assistance has been continuously practical, considerate, helpful and gracious.

Like you, I am deeply grateful for all of the ways that Savage has faithfully served this church over the past two years. The pastoral teamwork that he and Jane put into practice has made it much easier and smoother to enter as a new pastor. His contract started out as a short-term commitment to tide the congregation through a hopefully short transition. As that transition time has grown longer, Savage has stayed deeply committed to this church and its people, continuing to learn and improve, all while generously applying his skills in pastoral care, creating liturgy and fostering spiritual development. He has helped this church develop a better sense of itself and of its community, through the Stephen Ministry, Men's Breakfast, Taizé services, Centering Prayer, offsite retreats, Mission and Social Justice, Membership, and his many pastoral interactions with both active and homebound members.

One of the maps Savage gave me stays in my car. I consult it often as I navigate the confusing conglomerate of old towns that is the city of Bellingham. I know I will continue to consult the conceptual maps that Savage has given me to navigate the ways and rituals of this congregation. I am deeply grateful for his service to this church, his essential help to me, and the legacy he leaves with this congregation and I am glad that we will continue to know each other as colleagues in the Pacific Northwest Conference. I ask that you join me in praying that God will guide this faithful servant of Christ as he discerns his next steps in ministry and that you will join me in celebrating his ministry among us on Sunday, June 6, directly after worship.

Pastor Kent

DIAPER MINISTRY KICK-OFF

Did you know that a healthy supply of diapers can cost up to \$100 a month? And that no social service programs, including food stamps, cover the cost of diapers? For a family in crisis or transition, the cost of keeping a child in a clean, dry diaper is prohibitive. Without the means to purchase a healthy supply of diapers, families may be forced to leave their children in soiled diapers, which can lead to health problems, not to mention unhappy children - and, by extension, unhappy families.



Our new diaper ministry is up and running! Thank you to everyone who has donated diapers or money to buy diapers, time, and moral support. We will be making our first deliveries to Opportunity Council, Interfaith Coalition and Hope House later this month.

If you haven't yet had the chance to donate diapers for babies and toddlers in need - or if you'd like to donate again! - you may do so in the "Diaper Bank" collection box on Sundays in the Narthex or during the week outside the Interfaith office. If we could all donate one (or more!) packages of diapers during the month of May, the diaper ministry will be off to a great start. Sizes 2-5 are most in demand.

There have been many questions about donating cloth diapers to the diaper ministry. Our agency partners have let us know that if you would like to sponsor a family to receive cloth diaper service, they would work on matching you up with a family who would like to use the service.

If you have questions about the diaper ministry or would like to volunteer to help with this new ministry, please contact Stacey Nordtvedt at 714-8387 or bellinghamdiaperbank@gmail.com. You can also become a fan on facebook: www.facebook.com/bellinghamdiaperbank.

Thank you!

PEACE PEACE PEACE

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“The Bible presents a vision of Just Peace. It is the story of God’s people struggling for peace in many different situations and in many different ways.

The basic biblical vision is the vision of shalom, which means “peace”. But shalom means peace in a much fuller sense than the English language conveys. Shalom means wholeness, healing, justice, righteousness, equality, unity, freedom, and community.”

A Just Peace Church – page 35

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>.

PEACE PEACE PEACE

LOCAL MISSION OFFERING

On **May 23rd** a special local mission offering will be collected for the Bellingham Food Bank and the Whatcom Peace and Justice Center.

Bellingham Food Bank is Whatcom County's largest emergency food provider, and has been feeding our community since 1972. Their mission is to reduce hunger by providing wholesome foods to those in need on an emergency or chronic basis and by educating the community on the problem of hunger.

The Whatcom Peace & Justice Center works to create a voice for peace and social justice in Whatcom County through partnerships with local community and religious organizations, direct action, public witness, and education on alternatives to violence and war.

Please donate what you can on May 23rd and support these two positive and worthy organizations in our community.



CONTEMPORARY ISSUES MEETS: “Using Christian Principles in Investing Your Money” on **May 18 at 7:00 p.m.** in the Fireplace Room. All are Welcome!

Contemporary Issues meets the third Tuesday to dialog and explore how we live a Christian faith in our everyday lives. The topic for May will focus on how we can live our Christian values in the way we invest our money. Dialog topics are chosen and facilitated by members of the group. We use the Bible as an anchor for the dialog and will be investigating what it means to be a just peace church. Join us for a time to connect with each other, a time to explore the topic in a lively dialog, and a time of prayer.

Feel free to call Shantel Rapp (647-2165) or Kathy Scodeller (647-1132) if you any have questions. Call Sharon Camblin (715-0933) if you need or desire childcare.

LIVING THE QUESTIONS: This ongoing class **meets from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday evenings** of each month in Room 11. Each class session relates to one of a series of 21 Christian faith issues. Each session consists of (after a pre-reading at home of 2-3 pages) a 20 minute CD presentation of commentary on the designated issue by 6 or 7 out of 16 well respected religious scholars, including several UCC persons, followed by a class discussion relating to the commentaries and sharing of personal viewpoints.

As each class session is complete within itself, it does not require an interested person to attend each and every session. For this reason, the class wishes to welcome any interested newcomers.



2010 STEWARDSHIP: WE ARE CHRIST'S HANDS

To be a "steward" means to be a person who takes care of something for another. At the most fundamental level, we are all stewards of God's creation. When we take care of each other, when we take care of the Earth, when we take care of ourselves, we are acting as stewards.

This year, the FCCB Stewardship board has been inspired by a prayer written by St. Teresa of Avila, a 16th century mystic and Carmelite nun, and from this prayer, we have chosen "We Are Christ's Hands" as our 2010 Stewardship campaign theme. We look forward to sharing our vision of stewardship with our church family in the coming months and hope that you will be as moved by St. Teresa's message as we have been.

We invite you to take some time to meditate on this prayer, to put it somewhere that you might see it regularly, so that you can consider how God is calling you to be Christ’s hands, feet, eyes, ears and compassionate presence on the Earth.

Thank you for all your generous gifts of time, talent and treasure. Thank you for being Christ's hands on Earth and for being a part of Christ’s body here among us.

Prayer of St. Teresa of Avila

*Christ has no body now but yours.
No hands, no feet on Earth but yours.
Yours are the eyes through which He looks
with compassion on this world.*

*Yours are the feet
with which he walks to do good
Yours are the hands
with which He blesses all the world.*

*Yours are the hands,
yours are the feet.
Yours are the eyes,
you are His body.*

*Christ has no body now but yours.
No hands, no feet on Earth but yours.
Yours are the eyes through which He looks
with compassion on this world.*

Christ has no body now on earth but yours.



CHURCH COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

April 26, 2010

2010 Stewardship Campaign theme announced "We Are Christ's Hands".

PNW Conference Annual Meeting deemed inspirational and stimulating by delegates.

MSP allocate \$2,650 to contract with web designer for new website design, training and support of staff, one year of support and maintenance, participating in a Launch the Website event. Funds to come from Special Gift line item transfer to IT budget.

June 6 Congregational Meeting to highlight budget and celebrate our year thus far! (*Date changed to July 11.*)

Possible Ski to Sea booth for the Grand Parade? Depends on Dept. of Public Health requirements for food/beverage service. Not seen as a fundraiser but an opportunity for ministry and outreach. (*This will be happening*)

SAVE THE DATE!

You are invited to celebrate
the installation of
the Reverend Kent French
as Lead Pastor of the
First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ
of Bellingham, Washington
in a Vespers Service on
Friday, May 28, 2010 at 8pm.

Service in the FCCB Sanctuary with reception to follow.

FLOWERS FOR THE SANCTUARY! Help brighten up the Sanctuary by providing flowers for Sunday worship. Please sign up on the Flower Calendar on the workroom door.

FULL CIRCLE DATE FOR MAY

Deadline Date	Mailing Date
May 19	May 26

BELL RINGERS: Do you have a desire to ring the church bell? We invite those of all ages to sign up to ring the bell. The sign up sheet is on the workroom door.

RECEPTION FOLLOWING THE INSTALLATION OF REV. KENT FRENCH

We need your help with the reception following the Lead Pastor Installation on **Friday, May 28.**

Please bring your favorite hors d'oeuvres for the celebration. A sign up sheet is in the Narthex. Popular appetizers are fresh fruit or veggies, crackers and cheese, chips and dip, or whatever you think would add to this festive and sacred occasion. Call Cheryl Blair 733-0966 if you have questions. Thank you for helping to make this a very special party a special moment in the life of our church.

INSPIRATION IN WORSHIP – THE GOAL OF THE ARTS IN WORSHIP BOARD

The Arts in Worship Board seeks to provide inspiration in worship, both visually and aurally. We are blessed with a very talented group of musicians who inspire us every Sunday. Our choir directors and organist choose music that fit the liturgical and scriptural themes for each Sunday. Arts in Worship creates and installs inspiring decorative art for our worship space. We follow the Christian liturgical calendar, moving from Advent and Christmas in December, to Epiphany in January through Lent, Holy Week, Easter, and Pentecost, which is followed by Ordinary Time. We honor the color for each liturgical season: blue for Advent, purple for Lent, white for Eastertide, red for Pentecost and green for Ordinary Time.

Ordinary Time runs from late Spring to late Autumn. The name "Ordinary Time" implies that this Christian season is "ordinary" and not special. The word actually comes from the word *ordinal* or *ordered*, as we are counting the time until Advent. It is a time of growth: personal, spiritual, and in our call to live out our faith. In it a time when we honor graduates, we celebrate the summer solstice, we hope for renewal during vacations and we work toward the harvest of food and flowers.

The Arts in Worship Board invites you to participate in this creative process of planning decorative art. If you have an idea for the Sanctuary space, please let us know. If you are an artist with an idea, please share it with us. If you see an inspiring "art piece" or display somewhere, please tell us about it. Inspiration and a feeling of connection with God come to us in different ways. Some are touched by words, some by music, some by visuals. We are always looking for ways to nurture, enhance and inspire creativity in our shared worship. Please let us know if you have an idea to share or would like to be involved.

Arts in Worship Board – Mary Chaney, 733-0209 or maryjchaney@comcast.net



Stephen Ministry

When was the last time you asked someone, "How are you?" Were you expecting to hear, "Just fine, thank you." Or were you surprised when they gave you a long and specific answer? The Stephen Ministers at FCCB have been trained to listen to those who need to share just where they are on their journey at this time. If you, or someone you know, is in this position, get in touch with one of our Stephen Leaders, or call the church office.

For more information you can contact one of our Stephen Leaders: *Donna Romjue* (752-1747) *Libby Weiss* (756-2062) *Kathleen McGuinness* (733-1251) *Pat & Bob Styer* (676-2585).

CHURCH SCHOOL NEWS

VACATION CHURCH SCHOOL 2010: Save the date and plan to join us for an incredible week of VCS **June 21-25**. This year's theme is "Create." Registration is limited to 135 participants and open to children age 4 years to those entering the sixth grade. **Registration deadline is May 21st.** The participating churches who came together in ecumenical fellowship 30 years ago have decided that this will be the last year of Vacation Church School. Please join us for our *best year ever*, as we say good-bye to this wonderful program. Questions contact Sharry at 734-3720.

THINKING ABOUT GOING TO CAMP? There are camps for those of all ages. While making plans for the summer we hope you consider attending one of our UCC campsites for fun, fellowship and adventure. Camp brochures are available on the Information Table in the Narthex. For more information about camps or to apply for a camp scholarship contact Sharry at 734-3720.

HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR RECOGNITION: Mark your calendars and plan to join us on **Sunday, May 16** for the 10:00 a.m. worship service, when the church will honor and recognize those graduating from high school. A reception hosted by the Board of Christian Education will follow in the Social Hall. We would love to borrow an announcement and picture of each graduate to share with the congregation during Senior Recognition. Please put them in Sharry's mailbox in the office. Thank you.

YOUTH NEWS

Youth Group Activities for May

Middle school meets **4:30-6:00 p.m.** and high school meets **6:30-8:00 p.m.** in the Youth Room (#18) unless otherwise indicated.

May 14, 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 a.m. May 15: Mystery Dinner and Lock-In with the youth from the United Church of Ferndale! Bring your sleeping bag and come ready for a fun evening of group games and challenges at UC Ferndale! It's sure to be a great time, so don't miss out!

May 23: Discussion and Games with Pastor Kent!

May 30, 1:00-3:00 p.m.: Bellingham Community Meal! Join us in the gym at Assumption Catholic Church to help serve food to the homeless in our own community!

ANGELA NEEDS YOUTH EMAIL ADDRESSES! Please email youth@fccb.net with your name and email address so Angela can email youth group announcements. Thanks!

DO YOU SPEAK OR READ A FOREIGN LANGUAGE?

We would love to have you participate in the worship service for **Pentecost Sunday, May 23rd**. Please contact Kathryn in the church office at 734-3720 or office@fccb.net and let her know if you would like to participate and what language you speak. Thanks!

AROUND THE CHURCH

PARKING ON SUNDAYS: As a courtesy to folks for whom walking has become more difficult, please avoid parking in the disability lot east of the Sanctuary and those spots near the front doors in the lot west of the Sanctuary. It also helps welcome visitors if the lots are not full when they arrive. If you want to stretch your legs on a Sunday morning, please remember that you are welcome to park in the Bunk's Medical Center lot on Cornwall. Thank you for your help in extending this form of welcome!

USED WASHING MACHINE NEEDED: The Church is in need of a washing machine. If you have a working washing machine you would like to donate, please call the office at 734-3720.

COMMUNITY MEAL: This month the community meal will be on **May 30th**. This will be a meal prepared by the Filipino Community. Our shift is from **1:00-3:15 p.m.** Please sign up with Donna Romjue or on the Church Bulletin Board.

LAST MEN'S BREAKFAST OF THE YEAR on **May 21st at 8:30 a.m.** at Barkley Village Bob's Burgers and Brew! For more information contact Savage at 734-3720.

BOOK CLUB: All women who enjoy reading are invited to join the daytime book club as we gather at Village Books (1210 11th St.) **Tuesday, June 15 at 5:15 p.m.** We will meet with Chuck and Dee to learn about their current favorite books and their travels to the recent National Booksellers Conference and then go to dinner. Please RSVP Kathleen McGuinness at 733-1251 if you are able to stay for dinner.

AN INVITATION TO SUMMER BIBLE STUDY

You are invited to join Neal Nicolay, an ordained UCC minister and an advocate of Biblical spirituality, in a twelve week Summer Bible Study. The study method we will use holds that the Bible was originally written for ancient. If we are to understand (interpret) the Bible, we must first understand the intent of the authors and what the Bible meant to the people for whom it was written. Then we can ask how it speaks to us.

What can I expect from this Bible Study? 1) Learn to hear God speak to me and my faith community; 2) Understand what God spoke to Israel and the fledgling Christian Church; 3) Develop a study technique for understanding the Bible; and 4) Discover how I might connect and apply what I learn to my daily faith journey.

Do I need extensive knowledge of the Bible to participate? No. Actually, this open inquiry study method favors those who know very little about the Bible. All you need is curiosity, an open mind, and a few reference books from the FCCB library.

How do I sign up or learn more? We will meet once a week for 12 weeks. Contact Neal at clear.brook@comcast.net Indicate in your e-mail which of the following times would work best for you: 1) Thursday evening, 2) Sunday evening, or 3) Wednesday during the noon hour. This bible study will be limited to 8-12 participants.

DEBRA PEHRSON SCHOLARSHIP

Applications are now available in the church office for members or friends of the First Congregational Church of Bellingham who wish to apply for the Debra Kay Pehrson Memorial Fund. Established in 1993 by Debra's mother, Arvie, the fund awards a scholarship of \$2500.00 to a deserving student who is pursuing a career in a medical or health related field. The applications are due back in the church office by **June 1st**. The committee will review each application and make a recommendation to the Trustees for approval. The following criteria will be used in the selection process: 1) Applicants must be majoring in a health care field. 2) Applicants must be in an advanced educational track – preferably a junior or senior in college or beyond with successful academic standing, and 3) Applicants must have an affiliation with the First Congregational Church of Bellingham, Washington. If you have any questions, please call Janet Johnston at 647-2769.

First Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
An Open & Affirming Congregation
2401 Cornwall Avenue
Bellingham, WA 98225-3414

Date: May 12, 2010

CHURCH CALENDAR

May 17
9:00 AM *Shalom Circle*
5:00 PM *Exercise Group*

May 18
7:00 PM *Contemporary Issues*

May 19
5:00 PM *Exercise Group*
5:00 PM *Prayer Shawl*
7:00 PM *Stephen Ministers*

May 20
7:00 PM *Jesus Seminar*

May 21
10:00 AM *In Stitches*
5:00 PM *Exercise Group*
6:00 PM *Brown Bag Game Night*

May 23—Church School Celebration Sunday
10:00 AM *Worship/Church School Celebration*
4:30 PM *Middle School YG*
6:30 PM *High School YG*

May 24
9:00 AM *Shalom Circle*
5:00 PM *Exercise Group*
7:00 PM *Church Council*

May 25
7:00 PM *Living the Questions*

May 26
5:00 PM *Exercise Group*
5:00 PM *Prayer Shawl*

May 27
1:00 PM *Jesus Seminar*

May 28
10:00 AM *In Stitches*
5:00 PM *Exercise Group*
8:00 PM *Kent's Installation*

May 30—Memorial Day Weekend
10:00 AM *Worship*
1:00 PM *Community Meal at Assumption*

May 31—OFFICE CLOSED

