

## FROM THE PASTORS



Kent French

Sometimes, when you take a swimming course, they pause from teaching the crawl and the breaststroke and they just teach you how to float. They impress upon you the importance of keeping some air in your lungs.

You can lie on your back and just look up at the sky or the ceiling of the pool. You can also turn over and float on your face and stomach. It's amazingly easy. It's a survival skill.

When I took a course like that years ago, I tried to imagine what it might be like to survive a shipwreck or a plane crash over the ocean. Would I remember to float? Would I remember how easy it is? Occasionally, when I'm out on the ocean or in a lake or pond, I practice, just to remember what it means to float. And to be ready.

Søren Kierkegaard wrote, "Spiritual existence, especially the religious, is not easy; the believer continually lies out on the deep, has 70,000 fathoms of water beneath him. However, long he lies out there, this still does not mean that he will gradually end up lying and relaxing on shore. He can become more calm, more experienced, find a confidence that loves jest and a cheerful temperament - but until the very last he lies out on 70,000 fathoms of water."

*(Stages on Life's Way)*

I think what Kierkegaard meant is that the spiritual life, the practice of faith, is multi-valent and unpredictable. It has currents and streams, hot spots and cold spots that take us by surprise. It can be scary. It is not the hard, reliable rocky coastline. It requires trust amid the waves.

In his book, *The Heart of Christianity*, Marcus Borg took Kierkegaard's imagery and turned it into an effective

*Cont'd on page 2*



Tara Olsen Allen

November is the time to give thanks, right? At times, it seems a bit difficult to find things to be thankful for. It is hard to give thanks when the world seems so shaky- tough economy, tough job market, tough times in general. It is tough to find a way to give thanks in this world...

For some of us, when times get tough, our natural inclination is to go inside ourselves and withdraw from the world. What is amazing and difficult is that, as Christians, we are called to do exactly the opposite. We are asked to follow God's example walking in the footsteps of Jesus Christ; going out into the world sharing the bounty of God's love.

Instead of clutching things to ourselves and keeping material goods for our own use, we are asked to reach out and share and be generous of heart. As Joyce Rupp says, "A generous heart freely gives and can live without some of the material things we think are so desperately needed. A generous heart is also one that can give freely of the greater, nonmaterial gifts such as compassion, understanding, patience and forgiveness" (*Fresh Bread*).

I know I struggle with how to do this. How do I live without something when there isn't that much to spare? But, I am learning to trust in God and I work daily at having faith that God will provide. Usually, when I take that leap of faith and give something of myself to someone, I am rewarded tenfold and receive back much more than I put forth. God does work in mysterious ways!

I encourage you this November to reflect on the things in your life that you are blessed with; maybe you can do the exercise Kent asked us to do last month.

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metaphor for one aspect of faith – the aspect of trust. If you're out on 70,000 leagues of ocean, you have to trust that the salt and the water molecules and your body fat will keep you afloat. If you thrash about or struggle, you will make it worse. If you relax and just let the water buoy you, you will float.

We are entering a season of our church's life when we need to rely on that sort of faithful trust. We need to float with a trust in God and God's goodness.

We are entering the time of making our stewardship pledges and then fashioning a budget for the coming year. In recent memory, there's been a lot of angst about this process. It has led to a lot of scarcity thinking. This is understandable from what the church has gone through, but it has had an effect of shutting down this congregation's willingness to think in possibility. That's not where we are today. Even if the culture around us is experiencing fear and scarcity, that's not the vibe within our church.

We are now in an exciting time in the life of our congregation. New people are coming. Joy is fully present in worship and social hour. New ideas are cropping up all over the place. People are engaged and deepening in their spirituality.

We will be adding over a dozen new members this coming Sunday. Adult Ministries is busily trying to coordinate a creative slate of new educational ideas coming from both the congregation and the pastoral staff. Our Mission and Justice Board has more ideas than they can possibly act on. We are reaching out to help in our community in familiar ways and discovering new ways. This past weekend one of our denomination's foremost thinkers came and inspired us with his prophetic teaching and preaching, hopefully leading to some new initiatives and some renewed thinking.

We are swimming, all right. It's exciting. It's beautiful. It's what many of us have been waiting for. It can also be daunting.

As a result of this new energy, this year's budget promises to be even more robust than last year. This is a GOOD thing. It means God is working in us. The Holy Spirit is alive here. And our budget will reflect that.

We will be looking at expanding the Choir Director position into a Minister of Music position to coordinate better our music ministry and expand it in new directions. Many new members say that the quality of our music is what drew them to us. Trustees are asking for a church van to help bring some of our elders, as well as reach college students and provide transportation for church activities. They have also requested a new sign out

front to better represent us to the wider community. These things cost money. They require faithful intentions.

We will also need to look more seriously at our mission to help others in the community and in the world around us. How do we expand in this area? How do we fund it?

As we go into this Stewardship season, asking how we may return a portion of the gifts we have already received in ways that help the world spiritually and materially, I invite us to pray more. Let us pray that God is truly leading us. Let us listen for how God is asking us to act. How are our dreams God's dreams? Do they truly follow what God wants us to do? Are we giving of our time and our money in ways that God wants?

And let us trust. Let us trust that God will provide, just as God always does. Let us trust that there will be enough resources, both for us to give and for us to receive. Let us float some on God's enduring love and abundance. Let us honor the abundance of where we are today and move forward with grace, humility and confidence.

In trust,  
Kent

#### UPCOMING BOARD & COUNCIL DATES

##### November

Boards	November 14
Council	November 29 (5th Tuesday)

##### December

Boards	December 5
Council	December 13

#### FULL CIRCLE SCHEDULE

Deadline	Mailing Date
November 16	November 23
December 14	December 21



*From the Pastors: Cont'd. from page 1*

## ALL IN THE FAMILY

I ask you to consider giving of your time and talents, even if you feel strapped right now- who knows what you will receive from giving?

I encourage you to take some time to think about the people in your life who are special gifts to you; choose one who might need a pick-me-up and let them know how much they mean to you.

I ask you to give something away-material or non-material; something that you cherish and hold dear. Give it away with no strings attached.

And remember, in the words of Anne Frank:

“No one has ever become poor by giving.”

Hmmm: Food for thought.

Happy Thanksgiving!!!

Peace and Blessings,

Tara

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!



## WORSHIP

### POINSETTIA ORDER FORM



I/We (name): \_\_\_\_\_ would like to purchase (#) \_\_\_\_\_ poinsettia(s) at \$ 8.00 each to decorate the church for Advent.

\_\_\_\_\_ Purchased as a gift to the church

\_\_\_\_\_ Purchased in Memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Purchased in Recognition of: \_\_\_\_\_

If you wish to take your poinsettia, please do so after worship on **December 25**.

*Please return this order form with payment (cash or checks written to “FCCB: Poinsettias”) by **Wednesday, December 7th** to the Church Office or by mailing to: First Congregational Church, 2401 Cornwall Avenue, Bellingham, WA 98225.*

## WORSHIP

### INTERFAITH THANKSGIVING WORSHIP



On **Thanksgiving Eve, Wednesday, November 23**, our church will host an Interfaith Worship service at 7 pm. In addition to worship leadership of people from neighboring houses of worship, Debbie Brown will lead a community-wide choir. We encourage you to invite your friends and neighbors and join you in taking a soulful break from the holiday planning hubbub and show our solidarity with other people of faith in giving thanks. If you would like to help with this service, please contact one of the pastors.



#### HEALING SERVICE will be **Sunday, November 6**.

We will hold a healing prayer service in the Chapel directly after the worship service. You are welcome to enter this time of quiet and music to pray silently or to write a prayer. A Pastor will be available to pray with you.

**LITURGISTS WANTED:** It has been a tradition for some time in this church to have the Scripture read by a lay person from the congregation. The Diaconate Board has been responsible for assisting the Pastors and it has truly appreciated the willingness of many to participate in the role of Liturgist. The 2012 calendar is currently being organized. If you have never been a Liturgist and would like to add your name to a future Sunday, please don't hesitate to let us know. Tim Shepherd, 738-0981 or dsheply@comcast.net

#### SUNDAY SCHEDULE

<b>November 6</b>	Harpichord Dedication
<b>November 13</b>	Celebration Sunday
<b>November 20</b>	Thanksgiving
<b>November 27</b>	First Sunday in Advent

#### WEDNESDAY WORSHIP

This summer, we began a new worship experiment at our church: Wednesday worship. We met once a month for three Wednesdays and tried a more informal 45-minute service with communion, song, prayer and a short reflection. We specifically designed this worship to be more child- and family-friendly, so that all are truly welcome. We followed each service with a shared meal.

This fall, we will continue with this experiment and hold it twice a month, generally on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month.

We will begin with a shared meal at 5:30 pm. People are welcome to join in the meal whenever they are available.

Worship begins at 6:30 and ends at 7:15 pm, with more fellowship and nourishment to follow.

We invite you to be bold and come try out this new expression of worship in the life of our congregation.

Services will be:

Wednesdays, November 9  
November 30 (fifth Wednesday)  
December 14



#### DAYLIGHT SAVINGS ENDS NOVEMBER 6TH.

Make sure you remember to set your clocks back an hour **Saturday, November 5th**.

## SPIRITUALITY



### Stephen Ministry

Most of us know we have many blessings to count in our lives. But many of us also have periodic times of sadness in our lives, too. Stephen Ministers are trained to be a comforting presence in these times when we just need someone to hear us work our way through these times of discomfort. If you are one of these persons, or know someone who is, contact a Stephen Leader.

Our Leaders are: Libby Weiss (756-2062); Kathleen McGuinness (733-1251); Tim Shepherd (738-0981), Kent French (734-3720 x. 103) and Tara Olsen Allen (734-3720 x. 101).

## SPIRITUALITY



**LABYRINTH WALK:** The labyrinth is generally in the Chapel available for walking during church office hours (Monday - Thursday 9:00 to 5:00 pm and Friday 9:00 to 1:00 pm) and on Sunday mornings. Please join us for our next facilitated walk on **Thursday, November 3** from **6:30 to 8 pm** themed "All Saints Walk."

**PRAYER SHAWL:** We will be forming a day time Prayer Shawl ministry group! A meeting to talk about times and logistics will be held in the Fireplace Room on **Thursday, November 1st at 10 am**. Please join us for goodies, coffee and conversation. If you have any questions please contact Sarah Jacobson at sarahjacobson@yahoo.com or 319-5104 or Sharry Nyberg at 734-3720.

### SILK PAINTING FOR FUN AND FELLOWSHIP

Come try your hand at silk painting and bring a friend. Kristen Gilje is again teaching 3 classes on Nov 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> here in the church basement. All supplies, silk dyes and hemmed silk scarf fabric, will be included for the tuition of \$70. You will finish the day with 3 beautiful scarves for yourself or for gifts.

Kristen taught many here how to work on silk and she later guided a group to make the silk banners currently hanging in the sanctuary. Whether you are a beginner just happy to spread waves of color on silk or a person taking the class for a second/third time, you are welcome. Kristen is a terrific teacher who puts all artists and non-artists at ease. As she says, you can't do wrong with the vibrancy of dyes on silk.

Dates: **November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, or 5<sup>th</sup>**

Place: FCCB church basement

Time: **9:00 to 4:00** with lunch break - bring your own lunch

Supplies needed: an apron or just old clothes

Cost: \$70 with a \$30 deposit when signing up.

Scholarships available

Sign up sheets in the office during the week and in the narthex on Sundays.

If you email the office to register, give name, phone and email address. Follow-up with deposit.

Offered by the Arts in Worship Board

### CENTERING PRAYER AT FCCB

"Centering Prayer is a simple, no-frills form of meditation in the Christian tradition. Since it was first developed by Christian contemplative monks in the 1970s, it has allowed tens of thousands of practitioners worldwide to "return home," developing an authentically Christian meditation practice which not only delivers the healing and quieting of the mind typical of all meditation paths, but also reconnects directly to Christianity's hidden treasury of mystical and transformational wisdom."

Cynthia Bourgeault

The FCCB Centering Prayer Group will meet **every Thursday morning from 10-11 am**. We will also meet on the **first and the third Thursday evenings** of each month from **6:30-7:30 pm**. If you have questions please contact Mike Hoffman at mmhoffman-76@hotmail.com or 360-201-4668 or Elizabeth Beglin at elizabethbeglin@gmail.com or 360-319-2164 and we will respond as quickly as we can. All are welcome to join us ~ no experience necessary.

### A WONDERFUL OPPORTUNITY HAS COME TO THE FCCB DRUMMING CIRCLE!

When we gathered in April, we were fortunate to have Karen Thomas join us, a woman with quite a bit of previous drumming experience. Karen has offered to do an hour of instruction before we have the drumming circle. I am so excited about this and hope you will join us if you would like further instruction on the varying techniques in drumming.

So, mark your calendars!

Our **NEXT** drumming circle will happen

**Thursday, November 10 at 7:30 pm**

If you would like more instruction in drumming, please join us in the Sanctuary at **6:30 pm** with Karen.

We do want to honor her time and so, if you could bring a monetary donation (suggested \$5 per person) to support her that would be most helpful.

## JUSTICE

### PRAYER VIGIL FOR PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

We are pleased to inform you that the following Churches/Faith Communities offered to host the monthly prayer vigils for Peace in the Middle East, on the **18th of the month at 5.30 p.m.:**

**Friday, November 18:** Garden Street United Methodist Church, 1326 N. Garden Street, Bellingham.

**Sunday, December 18:** St. Sophia Greek Orthodox Church, 510 E. Sunset Dr., Bellingham.

**Wednesday, January 18, 2012:** Christ the Servant Lutheran Church, 2600 Lakeway Drive, Bellingham.



**DO YOU HAVE A GUITAR** at your home that no one uses anymore? If so, would you consider donating it to be used with the street youth in Seattle? Curtis Romjue volunteers at New Horizon Ministries and Youth Care providing music and teaching guitar in several places. They need two guitars (or more) to help with this program. For more information, call Donna Romjue at 752-1747 or check out [www.artsaftercare.org](http://www.artsaftercare.org).

### HELPING AT BELLINGHAM HIGH

School is key to future success. This is a message that we've heard over and over on the Homeless Task Force. So we met with counselors at Bellingham High to see how we could support struggling students.

Starting this fall, volunteers from FCCB will help students during their morning reading period, about 9:15-10:00 am. Volunteers might help students organize their work or help with homework. Bellingham High counselors will select students in need of support and match them with FCCB volunteers. Students and volunteers will work together in a resource room at the high school two or three mornings a week.

Counselors will be looking at students' fall grades to see who needs extra help. Tutoring will start soon.

Please contact Robert Guthrie, [rguthrie@yahoo.com](mailto:rguthrie@yahoo.com), or Diana Jacobs, [dianapjacobs@w-link.net](mailto:dianapjacobs@w-link.net), to become a volunteer.

## INTERFAITH COALITION

### BARBERSHOP AND DIXIELAND MUSIC FEATURED IN FUNDRAISER FOR INTERFAITH COALITION

Vocal harmony will be spotlighted at a fundraising event to benefit Interfaith Coalition's severe weather shelters on **Saturday, Nov. 5 at 7 pm.** "Cabaret of the Arts" at Lynden United Methodist Church, 500 North 14<sup>th</sup> St. in Lynden, features the sounds of Bellingham Blend, a men's barbershop gospel chorus; Casin' Treble, a women's barbershop quartet; Harmony NW Chorus of Mount Vernon; and Valley Acappella Chorus, a women's barbershop chorus, which is sponsoring the event. Also featured will be The Clearbrook Dixie Band. Tickets cost \$10 and are available at the door or by calling Jody at 360-961-3189 or Barb at 360-966-2300. Among favorite tunes you'll enjoy are "Basin Street," "Java Jive," "Operator," "Mood Indigo," "Sentimental Journey," and a finale sung in eight-part harmony by the men and women choruses. Plan to arrive early and, if you wish, you can dress in costume for the cabaret and participate in a silent auction.

### THANK YOU FROM INTERFAITH COALITION

Dear Members of First Congregational Church:

Thank you very much for your generous donation of \$1,875 to Interfaith Coalition. Your contribution helps us to provide shelter and case management in nine units of housing to families who are homeless in Whatcom County. This contribution also supports the amazing work being done at the Interfaith Community Health Center, a clinic for low-income people of all ages. Your donation will help people of all ages and from all walks of life receive the medical, dental and behavioral-health care they need.

The following are words of gratitude from a child living in one of our houses: *"Thank you for helping us when we were near homeless. It could have been rough with me and my dad living in a tiny Ford Festiva. This house gave us three more months to find a place to live which definitely paid off. Now we have a nice apartment. And if you ask me, that beats a car any day! Thank you for all your help and for caring enough to keep us from being homeless. I hope this house saves the next family like it saved us."*

Thank you for being a partner with us in our work as we reach out with compassion and respect to our neighbors in need, whose numbers continue to grow with the mounting economic challenges many face today.

In God's love,  
Laura DeRose Harker, Executive Director

# JUSTICE

## JUST PEACE CHURCH WORK HAPPENING AT FCCB!

Did you know that the church is already doing work of a Just Peace Church? Things like the **Community Meal, Homeless Taskforce, Green Team, Service Connect, Mission Trips, Bible Study, Educational Events to help us learn and grow.....** and many more things. If you are interested in Just Peace please stop by the table in the social hall and discuss it with us.

### SPECIAL OFFERING FOR NORTHWEST YOUTH SERVICES NOV. 13<sup>TH</sup>

Northwest Youth Services (NWYS) keeps youth safe, heals family relationships, reconnects youth to the community and promotes self-reliance. The Whatcom County's 2011 Point in Time Count found 57 unaccompanied homeless minors living on the street. Experts estimate that this number is only 30% of the actual number of adolescents in need of housing and wrap-around services. Young people run away from home for a variety of reasons. Due to unhealthy issues in their homes, living on the street is often a better choice than remaining at home. Without positive parental guidance this leaves vulnerable adolescents without a place to turn. The goal of NWYS is to provide safe and stable housing for youth in order to get them off of the streets. **Please give on November 13<sup>th</sup>.** The work of the NWYS is important to those youth in need and to our community as a whole. If you would like more information about NWYS PAD (Positive Adolescent Development) Project please stop by the Just Peace Table in the Social Hall. The work of the NWYS is work for *Just Peace*.

**PROJECT WARM-UP!** is a program designed to serve those in need in our community. This program collects donations of knitted and crocheted items and distributes them throughout the community to the homeless, children who have suffered abuse, teenage mothers, new mothers with children born with Down Syndrome, and people in the Head Start program in the Lummi Nation, to name a few. Items for this year will be collected through November 11th and there is still a great need for men's and boy's hats, scarves for all, mittens and gloves, and baby booties and blankets. If you enjoy knitting or crocheting and would like to donate to this cause, please contact me, Sarah Wilke, at [crochetickadee@gmail.com](mailto:crochetickadee@gmail.com) or at (360)223-0774. If you are not one of the crafty, but would still like to help out, donations of washable, acrylic yarn are incredibly helpful.

**FOOD BANK FOOD FIRST SUNDAY:** Food First Sunday is **Sunday, November 6.**

Please bring your non-perishable food or monetary donations on Sunday. A cash donation allows the Food Bank to purchase perishable food items like milk.



## AROUND THE CHURCH

**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 am in the Fireplace Room (September - May) The book we will be discussing at our **next meeting on November 1st** will be "Still Alice" by Lisa Genova.

**MEN AND BOYS BOWLING NIGHT! Friday, November 4, 7 pm,** at 20th Century Bowling. Come enjoy strikes, spares, funky shoes and the fellowship of men and boys, fathers and sons in our congregation. If you are a father or a son, come join us! A trip to Mallards Ice Cream will follow. For more information, contact Brian Rapp ([brapp69@gmail.com](mailto:brapp69@gmail.com)), Matt Ringstad ([m4tt.ringstad@gmail.com](mailto:m4tt.ringstad@gmail.com)) or Jeff Smith ([jeffreysmith218@gmail.com](mailto:jeffreysmith218@gmail.com)).

**CREATIVE CONNECTIONS:** All are invited to join others for a day of crafty retreat while learning how to create baskets with Cheryl Smith on **Saturday, November 19th in the Social Hall from 10- 2 pm.** Lunch will be catered and basket supplies will be provided. Registration fee is \$25 and will be limited to 40 participants. Registration forms are available on the Information Table in the Narthex. Deadline November 14. For more information contact Sharry Nyberg 734-3720.

**WEDNESDAY PARISH NURSE HOURS:** Our Parish Nurse, Brenda Nicholson will hold office hours **Wednesday from 12-2 pm.**

**FCCB IN ISRAEL.** Are you interested in a First Congregational trip to Israel in 2012? We are in the planning stage of putting together a trip to Israel next spring or fall. We will have an informational meeting on **November 13th** after worship in the Chapel at **11:30 am.** Come and see about joining a group from our church. In advance, you can check out the itinerary by going to Overseas Adventure Travel ([oatravel.com](http://oatravel.com)), choose Middle East, then Israel. Be sure to read the comments from people who have recently been on this trip and contact them if you would like. This company comes highly recommend from knowledgeable travelers to Israel as offering great trips at a great value. For more information contact Barb Storms at [stormyandbarb@comcast.net](mailto:stormyandbarb@comcast.net) or Bette Keller at [btkeller@earthlink.net](mailto:btkeller@earthlink.net).

**FOSTER PARENTS:** There is need for a child to be placed in a loving home in Bellingham. If you are interested in learning more about this child and/or being a Foster Parent please contact Kris Smith at 220-4992.

## COMMUNITY

### DINING IN FAITH

Fifty-two people participated in our successful September Dining in Faith. And, now it is time to think about our next dinner coming up on **Friday, December 2nd**. There will be sign-up sheets in the narthex in the middle of November for those interested in either dining with adults only or those who wish a more intergenerational setting. Last month, we were a wee bit short of hosts - so be sure to let us know if you are willing to have folks at your home and how many you can accommodate. Dining in Faith is a wonderful opportunity to get to know people around the congregation in a more casual setting. The host sets the time of the dinner, organizes the evening around a potluck, and asks people to contribute. Each dinner party has its own flavor and a new group of diners. You can sign up through Sunday, November 27th. Hosts will be contacted by Monday and will call diners soon after.

### AN INVITATION TO CELEBRATION SUNDAY ON NOVEMBER 13TH: SHARING GOD'S BLESSING

Stewardship is a practice that is part of our spiritual experience all year long. But there is a "season" for distributing and collecting pledging materials for the upcoming year, and that season is now upon us. Many of you have received a letter and pledge packet. If you have not, we will have packets available in the Narthex on November 6. This year's Stewardship Board asks you to reflect on how you will live into your faith in 2012.

After you have read through the pledging materials and after you have prayed about and carefully discerned your pledge for next year, please bring your pledge card with you to worship on **Sunday, November 13 - Celebration Sunday**. On that special day, we will celebrate all the pledges we make to share God's blessings. Please also plan to continue the celebration after worship in the Social Hall where we will be serving delicious sweets and savories in addition to great fellowship.

### *Moment of Witness: A Blessed Faith Journey*

by Bill Fox

First, I want to say that I don't consider myself to be strongly spiritual. I don't pray regularly and I don't read much in the way of religious literature. Yet I find our church to be a place where I definitely belong.

I didn't grow up in a church nor did my family attend any church during my formative years. My parents would periodically drop me off at a local Baptist church in Everett so that I might gain a religious experience. It didn't take long for me to realize that the Baptist experience wasn't for me.

I can thank my lovely wife, Marijo, for connecting me with our church family. She was a practicing Catholic when we were married and I would reluctantly attend Mass with her on Easter and Christmas. After several years and two children, she asked if I would consider attending church if we could find one that was a fit for both of us. Again, reluctantly, I said, "I'll give it a shot."

First Congregational Church of Bellingham (FCCB) found us in 1973 when Vince Crane was pastor. Immediately I felt comfortable and welcomed in this wonderful place where our family began our faith journey together.

Shortly after joining the church we enrolled in a Bible study, an area that was definitely outside of my comfort zone. It was here I learned that it was not only okay to challenge biblical content but it was encouraged. Needless to say my comfort zone improved dramatically.

Over the years here at FCCB I have learned lessons in compassion, peace, social justice, and mission. Too, I am continuing to learn acceptance of divergent ideas and lifestyles.

While I am a short way down the path of living the standard that Jesus has set, I am thankful every day for the role that our church plays in helping me move closer to his standard. I feel truly blessed to be a part of this church family.

## COMMUNITY

### ADULT EDUCATION

**ISLAM 101:** On **Sunday, November 6**, we will once again welcome our friends, Monem and Iman Salam of the Bellingham Association of Muslims, to lead us in a forum about Islam, directly after worship in the Sanctuary, at **11:30 am**. Childcare will be available for 5th grade and younger.



### ATTENTION: COLLEGE AGE YOUNG ADULTS!

Join us at Honey Moon, 1053 North State St., every **3rd Thursday from 5 to 7 pm** for Progressive Christian, Company, Conversation and Connection. Come join us for “Com–MOON–ion.”

## AROUND THE WIDER COMMUNITY

**NAMI FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP** a program for people whose loved one is living with mental illness. It meets twice a month, on the second and fourth Wednesday evenings at 6:30 pm at 1212 Indian Street. For Info contact: [www.healthsupporcenter.org/namiwhatcom](http://www.healthsupporcenter.org/namiwhatcom).

### MULTI-FAITH ALTERNATIVE HOLIDAY MARKET

**Sunday, November 20, 2011 from 1 – 4 p.m.**

at Assumption Catholic Church, 2116 Cornwall Ave. All ages are welcome!

Cost: 1 pair of socks (for SOS – Socks on the Street)

Support local causes, like Alternative Humane Society, Bellingham Diaper Bank, Friendly Visitors, Marianne's House, & Sean Humphrey House. And far reaching causes, like Amnesty International, Bread for the World, Church World Service, & Equal Exchange Fair Trade Foods. You are invited by your co-hosts: Assumption Catholic Church, Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship, Dharmakirti Buddhist Center, First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Islamic Society of Whatcom County, Saint James Presbyterian Church, & more to come!

## YOUTH

### YOUTH GROUP TIMES

Middle Schoolers meet from **5:30 to 6:45 pm**

Both groups meet for food together from **6:45 to 7:15**

High Schoolers meet from **7:15 to 8:30 pm**, unless otherwise noted.

**November 6th**–Youth group will meet at 11:30 immediately after worship for the Islam 101 forum with Monem & Iman. Show up with your questions—be blessed and educated by this great opportunity.

**November 13:** Stewardship Sunday! Bring your pledge cards to church on Sunday Morning.

Youth group: Both middle school and high school will meet at church and carpool to Northwest Youth Services for an amazing volunteer evening. Both groups will meet **from 5:30 to 8:30 pm** as we work on a shelter for homeless youth.

**November 20th:** Pie Auction right after church. This will be a fun one! If you're interested in being the auctioneer, let Hannah know.

**November 27th:** Thanksgiving weekend. No youth group. Count your blessings and give thanks!



### FROM THE YOUTH COORDINATOR

In youth group, we learned about stewardship. We came up with a couple definitions, “Doing the best you have with what you have” and “the careful and responsible protection and management of something entrusted to one’s care.” God has given us this wonderful Earth to live on and do His work. We are blessed just to be here and breathe this fresh air! We learned in youth group that it is our responsibility to nurture and protect this gift and do the very best work we can possibly do. By freely giving of our time, creativity, energy, and money—we can see our gifts at work in the church, in the community, and in the world.

I am reminded of Deuteronomy 16:17: Every man should give as he is able... As we approach Stewardship Sunday on November 13<sup>th</sup>, I encourage the Youth to consider how their gifts will enhance the love-work that we do on this Earth. Everything you give is effective. YOU are a change-maker!

Blessings,  
Hannah Tangerine

## COMMUNITY

### END-OF-YEAR BUDGET MATTERS

For the past several years, we have received many Identified Gifts in worship. This means that people who were not pledgers gave money by writing checks that *identified* who they were. Based on the amount of such identified giving in 2010, we made a projection in this year's budget that we would receive about \$30,000 in Identified Gifts this year. That is not happening. We believe this has to do with the fact that many of those identified givers from 2010 are now pledgers and their funds are already represented as Pledges in the current budget.

This lack of Identified Gifts means we will most likely have a budget shortfall of \$15-18,000 (about 2.5-3% of our overall budget) at the end of the year. If all of us who are able and feel so moved by the Holy Spirit will contribute a little more to our 2011 pledging in October-December, we will easily close this gap. For instance, if *every single* pledging unit gave an extra \$25-30 a month for these last three months of the year, it would get the job done.

Members of our Leadership Team and Pastoral Staff have already dedicated funds to help close this gap. We ask that you to think and pray about what you may be able to do and contribute as you feel led.

With gratitude,

Therese Holm, Treasurer  
on behalf of the Leadership Team

*When making an increased gift, please note the amount of the increase in the memo line of your check. Thank you!*

## CHILDREN

### CHURCH SCHOOL NEWS

**CHURCH SCHOOL GATHERS:** On Sunday, **November 6** the church school children and youth will gather in the Social Hall as a community following Time with Children. Brian Rapp will join us as we learn and rehearse a song to share in an upcoming worship service, followed by creating a Stewardship project. Children will rejoin their families in the Sanctuary for communion.

**REGISTRATION:** All church school families are asked to please fill out a church school registration form which can be found in your child(ren)s church school classroom or the church school information table between Rooms 31 and 33. This will insure we have correct information for all our children and youth. Thank you Board of Christian Education

**CHURCH SCHOOL CURRICULUM:** this year our church school community (Pre School - High School) will be using a new UCC curriculum "Faith Practices". Through the year we will be exploring four faith practices: Giving and Receiving Hospitality, Stewardship, Sabbath and Playing and Living Joyfully. Each practice will be explored through three activities: exploring and engaging, discerning and deciding and sending and serving. Which includes the things we do and ways we live out each exploration that helps us move into practicing our faith, experience and understanding. During the year there will be opportunities for all of us to experience and explore Faith Practices through adult education, intergenerational activities and worship.

**SAVE THE DATE: Christmas Presence December 4,** following worship ALL are invited to join the CE Board for some fun and time to connect as we gather to celebrate the beginning of Advent sharing a simple meal, music and the building of amazing gingerbread creations. Watch for details.

**HIGH SCHOOL CHURCH SCHOOL:** We are now offering a High School Church School class on Sunday mornings in the Fireplace Room on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month. We meet after the Time with Children. Join us to listen, discuss, learn and explore your faith with other High School youth. For more information, contact Scout Mitchell at 927-5431

**EARLY RELEASE CLUB:** All middle school youth are invited to join Nancy Fayram and Dominic Garguile on school early release days once a month for a time to do homework, organize notebooks, read and play games. The next gathering will be **Wednesday, November 2** from **12:30 to 3:30 pm**. The youth will be creating a spaghetti lunch (and will NOT need a brown bag lunch) with Dominic and Nancy. Youth will need to provide their own transportation to and from the church. To ensure safety: all youth will need to sign up ahead of time and parents will need to fill out a participation and medical release form so we know who to expect. Forms are available on the Information Table in the Narthex. For more information contact Sharry Nyberg at sharry@fccb.net or Nancy Fayram at dfayram@yahoo.com to sign up or call the church office 734-3720.

# CHURCH CALENDAR

## **November 1, Tuesday**

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

## **November 2, Wednesday**

12:00 PM Parish Nurse Hours  
12:30 PM Early Release Club  
5:30 PM Prayer Shawl  
7:00 PM Stephen Ministers

## **November 3, Thursday**

9:00 AM Silk Painting  
10:00 AM Centering Prayer  
6:30 PM Centering Prayer  
6:30 PM Labyrinth Walk

## **November 4, Friday**

9:00 AM Silk Painting  
10:00 AM In Stitches  
7:00 PM Men and Boys Bowling Night

## **November 5, Saturday**

9:00 AM Silk Painting

## **November 6, Sunday**

10:00 AM Worship/Church School  
11:30 AM Islam 101  
11:30 AM Healing Service

## **November 7, Monday**

9:00 AM Shalom Circle

## **November 8, Tuesday**

9:30 AM Discovery Circle  
7:00 PM Lettered Streets Assoc. Meeting

## **November 9, Wednesday**

12:00 PM Parish Nurse Hours  
5:30 PM Wednesday Worship Meal  
6:30 PM Worship

## **November 10, Thursday**

10:00 AM Centering Prayer  
1:00 PM Jesus Seminar  
6:30 PM Drumming Circle Instruction  
7:30 PM Drumming Circle

## **November 11, Friday**

10:00 AM In Stitches

## **November 13, Sunday – Celebration Sunday**

10:00 AM High School Church School  
10:00 AM Worship/Church School  
11:30 AM Celebration Sunday Fellowship  
11:30 AM FCCB in Israel Meeting  
5:30 PM Youth Group

## **November 14, Monday**

9:00 AM Shalom Circle  
7:00 PM Board Meetings

## **November 16, Wednesday—Full Circle Deadline**

12:00 PM Parish Nurse Hours  
5:30 PM Prayer Shawl  
7:00 PM Stephen Ministers

## **November 17, Thursday**

10:00 AM Centering Prayer  
5:00 PM Honeymoon  
6:30 PM Centering Prayer

## **November 18, Friday**

8:30 PM Men's Breakfast at Barkley Village Bob's  
10:00 AM In Stitches

## **November 19 Saturday**

10:00 AM Creative Connections Retreat

## **November 20, Sunday**

10:00 AM High School Church School  
11:30 AM Thanksgiving Potluck  
12:30 PM Pie Auction

## **November 21, Monday**

9:00 AM Shalom Circle

## **November 23, Wednesday—Full Circle Mailing**

12:00 PM Parish Nurse Hours  
5:30 PM Prayer Shawl  
7:00 PM Interfaith Thanksgiving Worship

## **November 24, Thursday—Thanksgiving**

OFFICE CLOSED

## **November 25, Friday**

OFFICE CLOSED

## **November 27, Sunday**

10:00 AM Worship/Church School

## **November 28, Monday**

9:00 AM Shalom Circle

## **November 29, Tuesday**

7:00 PM Church Council

## **November 30, Wednesday**

12:00 PM Parish Nurse Hours  
5:30 PM Wednesday Worship Meal  
6:30 PM Worship



# Thanksgiving

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

Date: November 2011

Non-Profit Organization  
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Permit No. 8



**THANKSGIVING POTLUCK:** On **Sunday, November 20**, after worship, we will join together in thanksgiving as a faith community. Please sign up in the Social Hall, beginning October 30.

**PIE AUCTION:** The Youth Groups will be doing their annual Pie Auction fundraiser after the Thanksgiving Potluck. They are raising money to help with the cost of their mission trip this summer. Please come prepared to **BID BIG** on your favorite pie!

**SHARING THANKSGIVING:** Do you have extra seats at your table this Thanksgiving? Are you looking for people to join at Thanksgiving? Sharing the Thanksgiving meal is a great opportunity for members of our congregation to get to know one another. If you answered yes to either of these questions, please sign-up in the Narthex and share your Thanksgiving meal with other people in our community.



**First Congregational Church of Bellingham  
United Church of Christ**

Open & Affirming Congregation  
2401 Cornwall Ave., Bellingham, WA 98225  
Phone: 360.734.3720 Email: [office@fccb.net](mailto:office@fccb.net)

**STAFF DROP-IN HOURS**

Our pastoral staff is in and out of the office throughout the week. You are welcome to stop by during their drop-in hours or make an appointment that fits your schedule.

Please call the church office at 734.3720.

Kent—Monday 4-6 pm and Wednesday 12-2 pm.  
Tara—Wednesday 3-5 pm, and Thursday 10-12 pm.  
Sharry—Monday 11-1 pm and Thursday 3-5 pm.