



So..., WHO IS WALTER BRUEGGEMANN?

Walter Brueggemann is the most distinguished biblical theologian in America today! And he is the James Wilden White Lecturer at First Congregational United Church of Christ for 2008!

He is, officially, the William Marcellus McPheeters Professor of Old Testament emeritus at Columbia Theological Seminary, Decatur, Georgia. He is, in fact, one of the most widely read, most widely quoted, most influential interpreters of the Old Testament in the Christian community. Many of us heard of him first through Jim White, in sermons and bible classes; we have found Benjamin Broadbent, too, quoting him and using his insights in varied ways, and many of us have seen him in PBS series such as *Genesis*, and on Bill Moyers' conversations with religious scholars. If you read *Sojourners* or *Christian Century*, you will have seen dozens of his articles, sermons or prayers.

Brueggemann has published 7 books in the last three years alone, bringing his total to well over 40! Many of these books are collections of papers and talks he has given in churches, colleges and universities, and workshops for clergy. They are all provocative and evoke serious reflection. His writings and presentations are of three major types: academic studies, such as "An Introduction to the Old Testament," and "The Theology of the Book of Jeremiah," extensively used in seminaries and colleges; interpretive studies, such as "The Prophetic Imagination," "Mandate to Difference," and "Deep Memory, Exuberant Hope," which show new ways of hearing and telling old stories; and contemplative guides and prayers, such as "The Spirituality of the Psalms."

A lively and engaged speaker, Brueggemann will challenge us to rethink our presuppositions and our priorities. Last fall some of you were introduced to "The Spirituality of the Psalms." Beginning March 30th, two classes will introduce you to Brueggemann's work: the Adult Forum at 10:00 a.m. and Jim White's "Christianity 102" at 11:00 a.m. The big event will be May 2-4!

On Friday, May 2 at 7:30 p.m., a free lecture open to the public will be presented in Shove Chapel on the Colorado College campus entitled "Journey to the Common Good."

On Saturday, May 3, two seminars, (registration required) beginning at 8:30 a.m. will be presented in the FCUCC Sanctuary: "Studies in the Book of Isaiah: Weeping, Fearing, Departing & The Task of Reconstruction."

On Sunday, May 4, at the 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. FCUCC worship services, Professor Brueggemann will preach the sermon, "What Does it Mean to Say Christ is Risen?"

For more information about Brueggemann-related Church activities, please see Pages 4 (Christianity 102) & 8 (Adult Forum Series) of this edition of the Communicator.

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Welcome
Wonder
Witness



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*FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
 UCC IS AN "OPEN AND
 AFFIRMING"
 CONGREGATION. WE INVITE
 PEOPLE OF EVERY AGE,
 RACE, MARITAL STATUS,
 SEXUAL ORIENTATION,
 GENDER EXPRESSION,
 MEANS, ABILITY, AND
 SPIRITUAL TRADITION TO
 JOIN US IN THE LOVE OF
 GOD AND NEIGHBOR
 THROUGH CHRISTIAN
 WORSHIP, DEDICATION TO
 EDUCATION, AND
 COMMITMENT TO SERVICE.*

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 Mike McAdams
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Planned Giving
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Plymouth Circle
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 Jerry Jordan
 Jim White

To Inform & Inspire

The Communicator invites articles, notices, and letters relevant to the life of our congregation. Submissions may be edited for length, clarity, and correctness. Opinions expressed by writers do not necessarily reflect official FCC policy. For the next installment, please make submissions no later than Friday, April 18th, 2008. Article submissions should be 500 words or less. Please use Times New Roman 12-point font and include your article as a Word attachment in your e-mail message to bjorkrobins@msn.com.

MUSICIAN APPRECIATION SUNDAY

On Sunday, April 13 we will say "thank you" to the singers, instrumentalists, dancers, and photographer who have enhanced our worship services with their talents. Through music, dance and visual art we will focus on the many people who so generously offer their time and gifts to our worship. Participants in the service will include the Joyful Noise Children's Choir, The Chancel Choir, the Out Loud Men's Chorus, The Flute Choir, Taizé Musicians, The Daytime Ringers and Advanced Handbell Choirs in addition to liturgical dance and the guitar quartet. The Music and Arts Committee will host the fellowship hour at which time we can all show our appreciation to these people who contribute so much to the life of our community.

MISSION MEDICAL

The Next Prayer Training at Mission Medical Clinic will be Saturday, April 19th from 9:00am to 4:00pm. The Training Manual cost is \$7.00. There is no charge for the training. Please sign up at the Clinic or send an Email to Marcella Ruch marcellarejoice@juno.com if you are interested in taking this workshop. The training will help you pray for your family, others in your church, at the clinic, or anywhere. Everyone is welcome.

STEPHEN MINISTRY

As of April 20, 2008, applications to be a Stephen Minister will be available on the counter in the Church Office. A new class will be forming this Fall. If you have questions, call: Luke Cammack @ 575-0976 or Lynne Stefoniak @ 597-4684.

FOOTNOTES FROM GREGG LIBRARY

We have at least seven books by Walter Brueggemann ready for checkout in the library - some are on display and others may be on the shelves. Titles are:

- The Bible Makes Sense
- Genesis: a Bible Commentary
- Mandate to Difference
- Peace: Understanding Bible Themes
- Prophetic Imagination
- Testimony to Otherwise: the Witness of Elijah and Elisha
- Word Militant

Also available are three of Bruce Feiler's - *Where God was Born*, *Walking the Bible*, and *Abraham*. For two really good reads, try *Three Cups of Tea*, the story of one man's mission to build schools in Pakistan and Central Asia, or *Blood Brothers*, the coming of age story of Elias Chacour, a Palestinian Arab trying to present both sides in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

www.fcucc.org

PLYMOUTH CIRCLE

Plymouth Circle will meet on Wednesday, April 2nd at 1pm in the Founders' Room. Hostesses will be Miriam Giese & Dolly Eager. Devotions will be presented by Ann James. The program is arranged by Janice Simonton & will be a group of students in the Colorado Springs Youth Symphony. Come for an afternoon of joyful fellowship.

SOUL FEAST EXPLORES LIFE'S SEASONS

The Soul Feast group will begin discussion on the book, *There Is a Season*, by Sister Joan Chittister, Thursday, April 3, 9-11am.

Sr. Joan is a member and former prioress of the Benedictine Sisters of Erie, Pennsylvania, and Executive Director of BenetVision, a resource and research center for contemporary spirituality. Sr. Joan's ministry is global. She's an active member of the International Peace Council and an elected fellow of St. Edmund's College at Cambridge University. Sr. Joan is a regular columnist for the National Catholic Reporter (which can be read online) and the author of many books. Her writing is exquisite, truly a feast for one's soul.

Sister Joan was inspired to write about the verses in Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 when she saw the serigraph art work by John August Swanson, whose work reflects his study of Mexican muralists, Russian iconographers, medieval miniaturists, and Swedish folk art. His work hangs in major museums around the world.

"Glowing with light, passion and hope, this book tells us: the season is now. The time is ours. Live!" All are welcome to join us for meditation, lively discussion, and fellowship, Thursday mornings, 9 - 11am.

For further information, or to order the book please contact Julie Jones-Eddy, 593-8465 or jjones@coloradocollege.edu.

NOMINATIONS FOR MICAH 6 AWARDS DUE APRIL 13

This year's Micah 6 Banquet sponsored by the Justice and Peace Committee will be held on Sunday, April 27th at 5:00 pm. Our guest speaker, Rev. Max Hale, will share information about "Pastors for Peace" which is holding their 19th "Friendship Caravan" to Cuba in July. The group collects donations and supplies for humanitarian relief, and takes a group of volunteers every summer to learn about life in Cuba under the US trade embargo. UCC churches in Pueblo have supported this effort.

By now you should have received a communication from the church asking for nominations of 2008 Micah 6 recipients, people who you feel should be recognized for their witness of doing justice, kindness, and walking humbly to the greater community. Just a reminder that the nominations are due back to the J&P Committee by Sunday, April 13th, and they can be left in the church office. If you have any questions, contact Jim Matson who is overseeing the nominations this year.

Tickets will be sold in the Founders' Room after worship services during April; watch your bulletin for more information. Excitement at the banquet is always high. The honorees receive your joy and blessings; they help to make our church work with spirit and authenticity. For more information about Pastors for Peace, see their website, www.pastorsforpeace.org.

Save the Date!

*FCC's Seventh Annual
All-Church Camp Out!
September 5-7, 2008
Camp La Foret in Black Forest*

Save the Date!

CHRISTIANITY 102 (WITH A BRUEGGEMANN OVERLAY) TRACING "THE GOOD" IN OUR FAITH HISTORY

A Four Sunday-Mornings-in-April Class in the Library, 11:00 A.M.
Taught by The Rev. Dr. James W. White, Minister Emeritus, FCC

Sunday, April 6 - The PEOPLE who make us up and their ROLES.

In his book *Testimony to Otherwise*, Walter Brueggemann focuses on Elisha the Prophet. When I was researching my book (with Brueggemann's counsel), he said I ought to contrast Ezra with Amos, among other things. He wonders, as do I, about whether the gift of Constantine in 312 CE was not a Faustian bargain. And did not Menno Simons point to a "more excellent way" than John Calvin? Well, in the class this day we'll look at some of these key players and perhaps also learn about "virgins" and "vergers" of the church.

Sunday, April 13 - CULTURES where we've lived...the CULTUS we became.

The Land by Walter Brueggemann is one of several books in which this distinguished Biblical scholar talks about the dynamic relation between our *sitz in leben* (situation in life) and our response to that situation. So it was in Egypt, on "the land" itself, in Babylon, during the Roman Empire and Barbarian Europe, under nation-states, right down to today's "consumerist, military, individualist" culture. So we've worshiped in an open air tabernacle or temple with holy of holies, in a synagogue and house church, under bishops and with monks, as persons who venerate The Word and as attendees in mega-churches. We must ask, "Is our current *cult* (FCC/UCC) a faithful expression?"

Sunday, April 20 - The "Evolution" (if any) of ETHICS.

Brueggemann was highly influenced by the work of H. Richard Niebuhr, as was I. Desert hospitality helped form what we do, as well as life in covenant relation—a Brueggemann passion. We'll look at "command" ethics, "ends" ethics, ethics of response, and virtue ethics as they have played out over the millennia. I will likely spend time sharing what Brueggemann says in his book *Peace*, a current ethical concern, one a lot more significant than what the Pope says about condoms.

Sunday, April 27 - PIETIES AND PRACTICES along the way.

Maybe I'll let class members have a hand at matching

contemporary practices with faith history happenings
(as below, drawing lines between)

lighting candles at Christmas	10 Commandments at Mt. Sinai
shaking hands at church	Jacob's rock remembrance
visiting holy shrines	escape from Egypt
having a child circumcised	tribal camp fire gatherings
saying "fiddlesticks" instead	Moses struck down by an angel
giving up something for Lent	forty years in the wilderness

I think Professor Brueggemann, author of *The Prophetic Imagination* and giver of some pretty tough tests himself, would approve of our checking on things we do "in faith."

THE FLOW OF MONEY

Money is like water; when it is allowed to flow, it is refreshing, nourishing, life-giving. Our Stewardship Committee believes Lynne Twist's book, *The Soul of Money*, develops a number of fine metaphors about money, and we invite our whole congregation to consider these ideas through an "All-Church Read." By this we envision getting lots of copies of this book into the hands and minds of lots of our members and friends.

All of the members of the church Council, the Stewardship Committee, and the Mission Giving and Outreach Committee have received copies of this book and used it as a springboard into some work we did at a recent shared retreat. These leaders of the congregation believe this text can help to stimulate some different thinking and talking about how we use money.

The church library will have a number of copies of *The Soul of Money* available for check out by members and friends interested in reading it. The book is also available from online booksellers.

We encourage all of our people to engage the questions about power, influence, poverty, and riches, and how these ideas are addressed by our faith. I look forward to hearing what metaphors you might have for these things that shape our lives.

Stephen Brown, Chair of Stewardship

SPIRIT-GIVEN GIFTS: AN EXPLORATION

"Go where your gifts are, there you will discover God. Apart from many useful and practical reasons for discerning your gifts, the most profound reason is simply that your gifts are the place where God is closest to you in your life."

This is an invitation to join an exploratory session focused on discerning Spirit-Given Gifts, and to look at how encouraging others to consider their Gifts may benefit the life of our congregation.

God has given each of us unique gifts that can help others see and experience the love of Jesus. Many of us, however, have never unwrapped or discovered our spiritual gifts. Indeed, many have not had an opportunity to intentionally explore what our gifts are, and how they fit in our relationship with daily living.

Thus, you are cordially invited to join us in a session:

WHAT: to experience a proposed "Spirit-Given Gifts" questionnaire/tool, and to dialogue on how it might be used for benefit of our members and the life of our church.

WHEN: Saturday, May 10, from 8:45 a.m. to 12:00 noon.

WHERE: The Library at First Congregational Church

WHO: Anyone interested in deepening their spiritual life!

HOW: RSVP to Luke Cammack (575-0976 or LCammack3@gmail.com).

COMMUNITY LIFE NEEDS YOU!

Fellowship is one of the energies that bind our members together. Our Community Life Committee provides many opportunities for church members and friends to gather together in laughter and spirit. In the past years this energetic group has sponsored:

Jan. - Epiphany Dinner
Feb. - Fat Tuesday
Mar. - Sunrise Breakfast
Apr. - Spring Fling
May - Mother's Day
Jun. - Father's Day
Jul. - Pridefest & Picnic
Sep. - Rally Day & 9 to Dine
Oct. - Pumpkins & Chili
Nov. - Thanksgiving Dinner
Dec. - Caroling

This event list was not received on a mountaintop etched in stone tablets. So, please come and share your soulful and high-spirited ideas for the 2008 calendar. The Community Life Committee usually meets once a month on a Sunday after services. The more the merrier- 'as many hands make light work!' Call the office or jot a note on the red fellowship pad and say you just can't wait to join this fun-loving group of church members.

*On behalf of the Community Life Committee
Jane Gazal
Council Member for Care & Fellowship*

STEPHEN MINISTRY REPORT

By *Jacque Franklin*

Our newest Stephen Leader is Kathy Sparnins who attended Stephen Leadership training in St. Louis on March 30 - April 5, 2008. Welcome Kathy to the Leadership team! The Stephen Leadership Team is responsible for recruiting, training, and matching Stephen Ministers with care-receivers. They report Stephen Ministry happenings to the Congregation. Stephen Leaders create bulletin boards, newsletter articles, and special worship services to keep the congregation informed about Stephen Ministry. Stephen Leaders also supervise Stephen Ministers twice monthly. If you are interested in joining the Stephen Leadership team, call Jacque Franklin (635-3549) for more information. Our goal is to train two new Stephen Leaders each year. Stephen Leaders already serving are: Ben Broadbent, Jacque Franklin, Luke Cammack, Lynne Stefonik, Sheryl Matthews, and Kathy Sparnins.

Our Stephen Ministers have now been through 50 hours of training. They have heard and discussed issues such as boundaries, confidentiality, listening with unconditional positive regard, and spiritual care-giving skills, just to name a few topics. They are now ready to be commissioned on the April 20th Stephen Ministry Sunday. Our new Stephen Ministers to be commissioned are: Bill Taylor, Ruth Heine, Joan Loecker, Deirdre Gilbert, Charles Kiskiras, Regina Rodriguez, Nancy Lippencott, Lisa Birnbaum, Carol Fields, and Andrea Leak. Here are some Stephen Minister comments about the training: "I use my Stephen Ministry training at work and in my every day dealings with people." "This group of people (Stephen Ministry class) has become a place of true connection for me." "Lynne and Luke are great teachers!" "I feel that Stephen Ministry is really where God is calling me right now."

"Supervision is a great way to stay connected and supported throughout our caring ministry."

As of April 20, 2008, applications to be a Stephen Minister will be available on the counter in the Church Office. A new class will be forming this Fall. If you have questions, call: Luke Cammack 575-0976 or Lynne Stefonik 597-4684 who will be recruiting new Stephen Ministers.

How does one get a Stephen Minister?

Care-Receiver are people who are visited weekly by their assigned Stephen Minister. If you feel that having someone visit you for about an hour weekly would benefit you in your faith journey feel free to call Pastor Benjamin Broadbent or Pastor Jacque Franklin for more information. Care-receivers are matched with the appropriate Stephen Minister. We evaluate the situations of care-receivers and Stephen Minister to bring about the best care giving relationship.

If you know of someone who you think would benefit by having a Stephen Minister visit with them along their faith journey, again, call Pastor Benjamin Broadbent or Jacque Franklin. Sometimes the person who needs support of a Stephen Minister is a care-giver themselves. When we hear of someone needing a Stephen Minister we contact that person and explain the program to them and ask them important questions. If they still decide on using Stephen Ministry, we allow the Stephen Minister and care-receiver to meet and decide mutually if that relationship is one that will work for them. Stephen Ministry is an opportunity to grow in our faith. Having someone who can listen to us during tough times can be healing and rewarding. We hope many will be able to ask for that help and not feel alone during life's transitions.

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

By *Jacque Franklin*

THANK YOU to... Nancy Henjum, for leading the Council, Stewardship, and Mission Giving & Outreach retreat; **Carol Fields** and the **Daytime Ringers** for performance at Plymouth Circle; **Karen and Steve Brown** for hosting the baby shower for **Ryan and Alicia Taylor-Byers**; **Patti White** and **Lynn Young** for calligraphy on membership and baptism certificates; Communicator mailing volunteers **Dolly Eager**, **Jim Goosman**, **Marilyn Johnson**, **Neil Lehmkuhl**, **Betty Lindeman**, **Karen Miskel**, **Janice Simonton**, & **Sharron and George Waterhouse**; **Kandiss Horch**, **Margery Layton**, **Neil Lehmkuhl**, & **Ann Skinner** for volunteering in the church office; **Scott Huger**, **Membership Committee**, and **Sponsors** for the care of our new members (29) and their introductions on February 10th; **Jane Gazal & Sue Scott** for co-coordinating the many **Volunteers** that made **Lundi-Gras**, "Fat Monday" a success.

CONGRATULATIONS to... new grandparents, **Cathy & Jerry White** on the birth of **June Harper O'Neill Corsac** born 3/4/2008 to **Erin White & Christine Corsac**; **Justin Grebenstein** (nephew of **Richard Grebenstein** and cousin to **Julie Harris**) on his return to family and home from Iraq; **Lyn Boudreau** for accepting the position of Christian Education Coordinator & **Jeff Dodson** as our new Youth Director; **Brooke Bell** & Lead Pastor **Benjamin Broadbent** on their announcement of Brooke's pregnancy; **DeLane Bredvik**, exhibiting his art at the Smokebrush Gallery.

PRAYERS for... **Judi Nelson**, surgery; **Frederick Morris**, surgery; **Kim Schwartz** (new pastor at Vista Grande Community Church) and husband **Mark** as he is in Memorial Hospital with a stroke; **Lauren Willson**, granddaughter to **Jim and Patti White**, hospitalized; **Rick Shick** after surgery; **Emil Hokanson** and family on his rapid decline in health; **Frank**

Shelton and family as they support his father (also Frank, but age 91!) during his recovery from a mild heart attack and pneumonia; **Delrae Hokanson's** mother **Audrey Mueller** diagnosed with cancer; **Glenn Sutherland**, 10 m. old grandson of **Kandiss Horch**, now home after being hospitalized with severe RSV; **Gigi Van Egeren** healing from recent hospitalization; **Muriel Burnett** home healing from recent hospitalization; Family, friends, teachers, investigators and community of the **Gardner children**, students at Freemont Elementary, ages 8 & 9, burn victims who were hospitalized.

CONDOLENCES to... family and friends of **Doug Fox**, who died 3/2/08 while in hospice care. Memorial Service held on March 20th, 1:30pm at Shove Chapel; Family and friends of **Bette Nelson** who died 2/10/08 peacefully among her family in her home with hospice care. Memorial Service held on March 15 at 1:00pm; **Thom Andreas** and his family on the death of their grandfather; **Sharon Stine** and family on the loss of family member **Brooke Stine** on 2/9/08 in hospice care.

SERVING IN THE MILITARY... **Brent Morris** (Brent's blog on Afghanistan - <http://dbrent-nmma2008.blogspot.com/>), **John Fant**, **Brenda Bonk**, **Lance Tressler**, **Rebecca Snell**, **Justin Niemiec**, **Michael McClure**, **Thomas Robbins**, **Andrew Carpenter & Mike Franz**. Prayers of gratitude & safety surround them.

CONTACT Rev. Jacque Franklin, Pastor of Visitation, at 635-3549, or jacque@fcucc.org.

CHILDREN'S EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Children's Sunday School Program Session III will begin on *Sunday, March 30th* and end on *Sunday, May 25th*, consisting of seven (7) Sundays of regular classes for kids in Pre-Kindergarten through the 8th grade, and two (2) Children's Worship

Sundays for children Pre-K through Kindergarten. At this writing, teachers for Session III include: **Carol Bilbrey** and **Sue Wich** (Pre-K-Kind., 9am), **Ruth Roland** and **Polly Strovink** (grades 1-3, 9am), **Sue Scott**, **Casey Tencick**, **Barb** and **Mike McAdams** (grades 4-8, 9am), **Sarah Herbert** and **Gayle Jordan** (Pre-K-Kind., 11am), **Jerry Jordan** and **Rick Shick** (grades 4-5, 11am), and **Karl Mason** and **Lynn Liggett** (grades 6-8, 11am). We will continue to use the curriculum piloted in Session II, titled *Gather 'Round*. Children's Worship leaders for Session III are: **Karin Henriksen**, **Denise Ellsworth**, and **Daphne Greenwood**, with assistance from **Erik Henriksen**, **Charles Kiskiras**, and various FCC 'grandpas', including **Lee Tatum**. Sunday morning *Nursery Care* will continue to be provided by our nursery attendants **Charlotte Ady** and **Elizabeth Ash**.

Summer programming/Sunday School for children is still in the 'finalization' stages, but will, again, feature **Vacation Bible School**, a week of daily multi-art activities for children coordinated by **Frank Shelton**. This year, VBS will run the week of *June 2nd through June 6th*, from 9am - 3pm at FCC. Watch bulletin and FCC 'Email Blasts' for more information!

Adult Educational Programs:

Continuing:

The *Sunday Adult Forum*, coordinated and hosted by **Dave Seyfert**, resumed in the chapel from 10 - 10:50am on Sunday March 30th with a six-week study of Walter Brueggemann's book, "*Mandate to Difference: An Invitation to the Contemporary Church*", presented by various FCC members.

The *Sunday morning Bible Study*, facilitated by **Ted Lindeman** (473-6634), also resumed on March 30th with a study of Ezra 5 & 6.

The *Wednesday morning Bible Study* continues 9:30 - 11am in the Gregg Library; with more information available from **Paul Carpenter** (520-1668).

New:

A *Four-Sunday Bible Study* titled '*Christianity 102--with a Brueggemann Overlay*' will be taught by **Rev. Dr. James W. White**, FCC Minister Emeritus during the 11am Service in the Gregg Library, beginning Sunday, April 6th with a session titled: The People: who make us up and their Roles.

'*Northern Lights*', a Bible Study featuring a curriculum based on **Marcus Borg's** book, Reading the Bible Again for the First Time, and facilitated by **Lee Kelly** and **Sherry Walker**, will begin on *Tuesday, April 8th* from 7 - 8:30pm and continue to meet twice-a-month, every 2nd and 4th Tuesday. **Note:** The Study will meet at: 5545 Chukar Trail, 80918; and, for more information, contact **Lee Kelly** at 265-9616 or LK5163@yahoo.com.

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL YOUTH! (FCY!)

"Welcome aboard!" This is usually a term used when boarding a ship set to sail on a fantastic journey, but it is also an invitation I will use for all the youth in our congregation as we set sail over these next few months on an adventure in youth programming. The community we find here at First Congregational UCC is unique and astounding, and all opportunities to participate in this community should be taken! So this is why within the

first month of my work with the youth groups (Middle School & High School) we will be experiencing some amazing opportunities for all youth to get involved.

Middle School Youth Group is meeting now every Wednesday night from 5:00pm to 6:30pm in The Dwelling Place. We have games, fun, discussion, some serious time, and food! Middle School youth will be planning a Saturday activity for April, so please attend and be a part of the discussion!

High School Youth Group meets in The Dwelling Place every Sunday from 12:15ish to 2:00pm (after the 11:00 am worship). We will enjoy lunch, games and some thoughtful activities. Events for April include the SENIOR HIGH SPRING RETREAT at La Foret, April 18th - 20th.

Registration information will be sent out in the all-church email and will appear in the weekly church bulletins. If you have questions about the retreat, please let me know. There will be no High School Youth Group on Sunday April 20th due to the retreat. I am also looking for adult volunteers to attend that weekend. Experience working with youth is not necessary, but you will have to attend a Risk Reduction & Response Training at the church before going on the retreat.

For both Middle and High School youth: Summer camps! You may now register online for camps at La Foret this summer. Space is limited so early registration is encouraged. Early registration closes April 30th, so this is the month to sign up for camp! You may register for camps up through June 30th, although prices increase after each month. To register, please go online to: <http://rmcucc.org/camps/YouthCamps2008.htm>.

Nation Youth Event - July 24-28, 2008, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tennessee

The UCC National Youth Event, held every four years, provides an opportunity for over 3000 youth (ages 13 to 18) to gather for

worship, workshops, faith, fun and fellowship. It is planned by the collaborative efforts of national staff and a National Youth Event Planning Committee comprised of a diverse group of UCC youth and young adults. (<http://www.ucc.org/youth/>)

If you are interested in attending the National Youth Event this summer (highly recommended!) please let me know! There will be fundraising involved as the Rocky Mountain Conference is planning to fly this year to Tennessee. Cost for the event is \$345.00 by April 30th plus transportation costs. After April 30th the cost rises by \$20.00. If you have questions or need more information, please contact me. I would love to have as many youth attend as possible, as this is a great event to see and feel the national movement of youth within the United Church of Christ.

“Wow,” you may be saying to yourself, “so many wonderful youth events are happening!” And it’s true! But the biggest component of these events is you! The youth! At times this world can seem to be insurmountable: school, grades, friends, bullies, work, parents, and even faith. However, we live in a world that is bubbling over with life and beauty; and a simple grace that can fill us when we feel depleted is a grace that you are invited to experience. Life is anything but simple, and sometimes the questions are hard. So I hope you find yourself here at FCUCC, a home where together we ask the questions, and listen to our Still Speaking God.

Peace out! -Jeff Dodson

ADULT FORUM SERIES

Studying Walter Brueggemann’s Mandate to Difference: An Invitation to the Contemporary Church

Sundays, 10-11 a.m. in the Chapel

March 30 “The Counterscript”
(Chapter 11 - Some Theses on the Bible in the Church)
Benjamin Broadbent

April 6 “Building the New City with Tools that are not Permitted”
(Chapter 2 - Weeping & Hoping in Jerusalem)
Deidre Schoolcraft

April 13 “The Good News of Regime Change”
(Chapter 1)
Lyn Boudreau

April 20 “A Welcome for the Others”
(Chapter 4)
Deborah Saxon

April 27 “Can we Hope? Can Hope be Divided?”
(Chapter 6)
Joe Pickle

May 4
Walter Brueggemann speaks at both Services at FCC
(Forum will not meet today so that all may attend the full 9 a.m. or 11 a.m. Service - be sure to arrive early to ensure seating.)

APRIL BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

April Birthdays

4/1 Spencer Hallenbeck
 4/1 Emerson Hauber
 4/1 Casey Houtz
 4/1 Susan Johnson
 4/1 Steve Jones
 4/1 Alexandra Macy
 4/1 Christine Simmons
 4/3 Don Dodson
 4/3 Ramsey Haefner
 4/3 Teri McCabe
 4/3 Robert Murray
 4/4 Eileah Morris
 4/4 Chris Occhiuto
 4/5 Abigail Bean
 4/5 Dakota Malacara
 4/5 Kathy Murphy
 4/5 Tucker Vana
 4/6 Jim Brooke
 4/6 Aelias Brown
 4/6 Muriel Burnett
 4/6 Bill Knapp
 4/6 David Maher
 4/6 Harriet Raymond
 4/6 Maylea Williams
 4/7 Emma Bregman
 4/7 Theresa Estebo
 4/7 Janeal Jordan
 4/8 Emely Carman
 4/8 Louis Hoffman
 4/8 Derek Krehbiel
 4/8 Joe Pickle
 4/9 Lydia Downs
 4/9 Michelle O'Neill
 4/10 Lily Foster
 4/11 Lisa Bailey
 4/11 Karl Mason
 4/11 Judith Rice-Jones
 4/12 Sharon Beltracchi
 4/12 Lois Benson
 4/12 Colin Clark
 4/12 Tom Cross
 4/12 Natalie Morris
 4/12 Dalila Walker
 4/13 Todd Beltracchi

Birthdays (Continued)

4/13 Colin Downs
 4/13 Ellie Hoffman
 4/14 Joshua Bridgmon
 4/15 Rachel McLaughlin
 4/15 Doris Schwandt
 4/16 Peter Burghart
 4/16 Emily Elkins
 4/16 Terri Owens
 4/17 Eydie Elkins
 4/17 Wilber Fulker
 4/18 Karol Finch
 4/18 Amanda Johnson
 4/18 Christian Malacara
 4/18 Barry Olesen-Phelps
 4/19 Laurel Ashburn
 4/19 Katie Tougas
 4/20 Beth Reasoner
 4/21 B.J. Clark
 4/21 Joan Hance
 4/21 Tim Tougas
 4/22 Shannon Pease
 4/23 Michael Haven
 4/23 Emil Hokanson
 4/24 Don Allred
 4/24 David Nath
 4/24 AJ Olesen-Phelps
 4/24 Gordon Riegel
 4/26 Greg Baker
 4/26 Cole Bennett
 4/26 Ralph Everett
 4/26 Lorna Kautz
 4/26 K E Peace
 4/27 Marianna Fox
 4/28 Julie Andrews
 4/28 Deena Bennett
 4/28 Judy Pickle
 4/28 Karin Tollefon
 4/28 Lance Tressler
 4/28 Don Wick
 4/29 Brooke Bell
 4/29 Julian Ciampa
 4/29 Lily Gibb-Morgan
 4/29 Amelia Kemp
 4/29 Marty Wolf

April Anniversaries

4/2 Rosemary & Richard DeBacker
 4/2 Cindy & Jack Donovan
 4/2 Kathy & Burl Kreps
 4/3 Jeannine & Jim Bramwell
 4/6 Karen & Ezra Moreland
 4/9 Cyndy & Jeff Kulp
 4/10 Marni & Scott Huger
 4/10 Becky Johnson & Gary Sheppard
 4/11 Barbara & Robert Carlton
 4/13 Nancy & Tomas Dawson
 4/13 Lynn Liggett & Karl Mason
 4/15 Heatherlyn & Louis Hoffman
 4/18 Theresa Estebo & Allen Burns
 4/20 Susan Johnson & Ted Grubb
 4/21 Pam & Lee Lehmkuhl
 4/22 Rick & Blake Purinton
 4/30 Nancy Briley & Lisa Poffenberger

Birthdays (Continued)

4/30 Kennan Cole
 4/30 Larry Cutter

SHEKHINAH: A MOVEMENT MINISTRY OF FCC

The mission of Shekhinah is to embody the healing love of God through movement.

The Moving Word, Saturdays, 9 to 10 am, Founder's Room, Childcare provided. We will come together, pray, read scripture (currently, the Beatitudes) and then we dance (we are deeply inspired by the 5 Rhythms™ of Gabrielle Roth) together for the rest of our hour together. Through this practice, we reclaim the mystical, vital nature of the Bible, in a community where there is great division around Christianity and how it is lived out. We hope, through this offering, to bring people together in body, to dance the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. No registration required. No dance experience necessary. All are welcome!

Note: CommuniDance is now its own community group and is no longer affiliated with First Congregational Church. To learn more about what is happening with CommuniDance, please visit www.communidance.com.

*The Shekhinah Committee
 Jenny Finn, Jenny Glick, Jean Archer
 Please contact Jenny Finn at 291-3120 with any questions.*



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

April Worship - Sunday Services at 9:00 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.	
<p>As we approach the close of our church's program year (May 25), there is much to celebrate and appreciate. The Easter season is a time of unchecked joy, a time to give thanks for the community that sustains us.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">April 6 - 3rd Sunday of Easter</p> <p>Today Holy Communion is celebrated in both services. We highlight the Summer Camping program through the Rocky Mountain Conference, United Church of Christ. A baptism is celebrated at the 11:00 service. Rev. Broadbent preaches on Luke 24:13-35 a sermon entitled, "Hearts Burning."</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">April 13 - Music & Arts Appreciation Sunday</p> <p>On the 4th Sunday of Easter, we recognize the gifts of those who share musical and artistic talents, including the Chancel Choir, Handbell Choirs, Joyful Noise Children's Choir, Flute Choir, Liturgical Dance, Guitar Group, and Photography. Rev. Broadbent and Frank Shelton preach a sermon in voice and on organ based on I Corinthians 14:6-17 entitled, "For the Purpose of Building Up."</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">April 20 - Stephen Ministry Sunday</p> <p>On the 5th Sunday of Easter, we commission the first class of Stephen Ministers. Each of these church members have completed 50 hours of orientation to offer one-on-one spiritual companionship to care-receivers of diverse ages and spiritual needs. Minister of Visitation, Jacque Franklin, preaches a sermon on Acts 6:1-7 entitled "The Spirituality of Waiting Tables."</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">April 27 - Teacher Appreciation Sunday</p> <p>On the 6th Sunday of Easter, we recognize leaders of Sunday School, Children's Worship, Youth Group, Our Whole Lives, Adult Education, and other programs who give their time and energy lovingly for the sake of others. The Christian Education Committee and Education Coordinator, Lyn Boudreau, will present olive wood crosses that Rev. Broadbent brought back from Bethlehem. Rev. Broadbent preaches on Acts 17:22-31 a sermon entitled, "Offspring of God."</p>