



# The BRIDGE

## January 2010

Congregational Church on Mercer Island  
United Church of Christ



### Happy New Year,



It was a great joy to finally be able to journey through Advent and celebrate Christmas Eve with you all, without Mother Nature shutting us down. What a year this has been. Some of us had to say good-bye to our physical relationship with a loved one. Many were hit hard and are still feeling the effects of the economic recession. Others were able to rekindle their faith. We have all worked very hard this year to be faithful to our covenants. My heart is filled with excitement as I look to the new year.

The Apostle Paul writes in I Corinthians 13:12 "For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I know fully, even as I have been fully known." Like Paul I look to the future of our ministry here at CCMI with hopeful and realistic eyes. Though we have made incredible strides in transforming the energy and future of our church, we still face some of the same challenges (as a church and as individuals) that we did last year.

The major difference this year is that we are a much stronger and a more united church. I know in my heart we will overcome the hurdles the lie in our path, the largest being our budget deficit.

We are all tired of having to rely on the incredibly generous aid of the "Angels" who for numerous years have come to our financial rescue. The church leadership is working very hard to get to a place where we will not need to ask for the extra assistance and generosity. Overcoming our financial hurdle will take time, but it is our goal. The simple fact is the church's ministry and outreach are dependent on and relies upon each person's financial, spiritual and emotional commitment.

The leadership does not want to have to make drastic cuts, but if our financial situation does not change in a year or two, we are going to have to. If you have not pledged yet, pray and please do so now. Getting out of our financial hole will take time, financial diligence and commitment. I have all faith that we will be able to renew our financial situation, so that we can spend our energies on more important life-changing elements of ministry.

Jesus shows us ministry cannot be done by one person. All must find their place and be dedicated to the mission. I give thanks and praise for your dedication and for going the extra mile when asked.

As we stand at the start of a new year, I want to lift up some upcoming services.

**January 10<sup>th</sup>** I will lead people through the annual re-affirmation of our baptism or the receiving of a blessing. You may remember this from last year. This is a service I lead every year when the scriptures tell the story of Jesus' baptism. This is not a baptism, nor a re-baptism, but simply a moment to reflect on what our baptism means to each of us.

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Pastor Mark's message [continued from page 1]

The week of Sunday January 31<sup>st</sup> through Wed February 3<sup>rd</sup>, we are asking parishioners to drop off a blanket that we can borrow for the service on February 7<sup>th</sup>, Blanket Sunday. You can then retrieve them after the following service on the 14<sup>th</sup>.

On these two Sundays we will be taking up a special offering to purchase blankets through the Church World Service (CWS) blanket program. Five dollars will enable CWS to hand out a blanket to a human being who might have no other source of warmth or protection from the elements. There will be special envelopes in our bulletins and more information about CWS.

**Wednesday February 17<sup>th</sup> is Ash Wednesday.** The worship service begins in the sanctuary at 7 pm (dress warmly because if weather permits we will end our service outside). During the season of Lent, I will be leading Sunday 8:30 am morning services of reflection. These will be very simple, half hour services reflecting on scripture and prayer. The first 8:30 am Lenten service will begin Sunday February 21<sup>st</sup> with the last one on Palm Sunday, March 28<sup>th</sup>.

Thank you for the opportunity in being your pastor and I look forward to another year of worshipping and ministering by your side.

Peace,  
Pastor Mark

## Unsung heroes

Advent is a time for reflection and gratefulness. So this month, we asked folks who they were grateful for around CCMI. We got a pile of responses, and you'll see them scattered throughout the newsletter like this:

**Unsung hero:** Mike the Mailman, who always has a smile and a cheerful word when he delivers the mail.

**Unsung heroes:** Pascale Daniel and Whitney Hines for often finding ways to help out in the kitchen on our special event meals.

## "Teamwork divides the task and multiplies the success"

By Susan Moon, Moderator



I know that organizational structure is no fun. So why am I telling you about it? Every year, we appoint a committee called the **Nominating Committee**, and these dedicated, wonderful people have the job of filling the empty spaces on our committees.

They are just starting their work, and I thought understanding their task would be helpful. It's especially important for us as members of the United Church of Christ, because the congregation is in charge of the church, so the Council works together with the minister, not underneath his leadership. The Council is made up of the officers below, as well as the chairpersons of each committee.

### COUNCIL

The CCMI **Council** has five officers:

- Moderator
- Recording Secretary
- Treasurer
- Bookkeeper
- Financial Secretary

Their responsibilities are spelled out in the by-laws. The Moderator coordinates Council activities, is an ex-officio member of all committees, and works with the Minister.

The Recording Secretary keeps minutes at the Council meetings, and the Treasurer, Bookkeeper, and Financial Secretary handle bringing the money into CCMI, paying our bills, and planning for our future financial issues.

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**Unsung hero:** Jane Nelson--taking many turns in the kitchen *and* patiently teaching those who have never done it before!

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## OTHER COMMITTEES

The following committees are in the “Administration and Program” part of the church, and carry out all of the things that make us uniquely CCMI.

These committees include:

- Trustees
- Diaconate
- Christian Education (CE)
- Fellowship
- Denominational Affairs
- Personnel
- New Member Ministry
- Social Outreach
- Endowment/Planned Giving/Gift Acceptance.

Each of these committees reports to the Council. Trustees, Diaconate, and CE should have seven members according to the by-laws, Fellowship, Social Outreach, and New Member Ministry should have five members, and the other committees should have four members.

There are a few other committees, such as the Nominating Committee, that serve for just a few months, and the Pastoral Relations Committee, that report to the congregation and not the Council.

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

Are you still awake? Doing the math above, this represents 52 people—a large percentage of the church!

Here is the reality check: Denominational Affairs usually just has one member, who is our liaison with the conference, so that lowers the number to about 49.

The really, really good news is that we already have about 34 people committed to serve on committees. As of a few weeks ago, that was about 43% of our covenanted members—a remarkable participation rate.

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**Unsung heroes:** Jane and Jim Marich—charter members who still remain very active and are loyal members. They never miss a Sunday unless they are sick or out of town!

So, like many things, there are two conflicting ideas present at once. We are lucky with our high participation, but need more people so that “many hands can make light work.” All 34 of those people are returning from last year, a great gift to CCMI.

However, we still need several people to serve—especially in really crucial areas like Diaconate, which plans and implements all of the worship service activities, and CE, which is responsible for the education of our children and you.

So, if you enjoy Mark and would like to work more closely with him, and appreciate the repeated service of those already “re-upping” then volunteer to serve on Diaconate—CCMI needs you!

If you are grateful for Jessica’s enthusiasm and what the youth and children add to the church—volunteer for CE—CCMI needs you!

Let’s make the job of the Nominating Committee as easy as possible this year. This year is shaping up to be an exciting one, with new signs, new paint and colors, and lots to look forward to. Become part of it by helping fill in these few spots. To quote my mom (and many others): you get out of things what you put into them.

If you are interested in knowing where your talents might fit—the members of the Nominating Committee (picture halos over their heads) are: Carol Sanders (carol.sanders@comcast.net), Glenn Hall (cnghall@aol.com), and Terry Pottmeyer (pottmeyer@comcast.net).

**Unsung heroes:** Randy and Janice Leitzke for much hard work on the budget and financial planning to put CCMI in a good place.

**Unsung hero:** Carole Taylor—long time member who does an amazing job letting us know about those who are sick or need help of some kind: meals, visits, and much more!

**Unsung hero:** Diane Calvert—though she has a demanding job, she is involved in many parts of the church. She is wise, caring and bright.

## Children's and youth ministries

By Jessica Howard



January is always one of my favorite months in youth ministry because the group is just coming down from the business and excitement of the holiday season and it's time to re-evaluate programming, curriculum

and plan for the coming year.

I have high hopes for 2010: volunteering at Covenant Shores in January; a mission trip to Yakima or Spokane in the spring; and VBS in the summer.

### BUSTLING YOUTH PROGRAMS

The youth programs are thriving with 12 in the high school group and almost 25 in the middle school group!

Now is the time to reiterate the need for volunteers, especially for the middle school programming on Wednesday evenings. We need more adults for supervision as we only have two at this time and some nights I'm on my own.

I fear needing to cancel on nights with no other adults because of safety concerns so please reach out and volunteer if you feel so called!

### ELEMENTARY GRADES 3 TO 5 MID-WEEK PROGRAM

The mid-week program has been so much fun to develop! I've taken cues from Susan Moon's program in the past and added new ideas.

So far we have a small grouping of elementary school children but we've gotten a lot done. Each week we do a craft, play some games, have a snack and do a small outreach project.

In December we sent mail to soldiers in Iraq through the "Holiday Mail for Heroes" program as well as decorated the church's Christmas tree with some beautiful ornaments contributed by the Hanson family.

If you know of any families with 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> graders who are interested in a mid-week program, please send them my way as growth in this program is definitely focused on word-of-mouth advertising. Folks with questions can drop me a line at [Jessica@ucc-ccmi.org](mailto:Jessica@ucc-ccmi.org) or check out the updated information on the youth page on the church's website.

May you all have a blessed New Year and thank you for the honor of serving our church community!

Jessica Howard

Contact Jessica: 425-239-4186

[jessica@ucc-ccmi.org](mailto:jessica@ucc-ccmi.org)

**Unsung hero:** Dick Campbell who makes signs, fixes broken coat racks, repairs lights, and does it all with a smile and a kind word.



*Justice shall flourish in his time, and fullness of peace for ever.*

## Back by popular demand!

We are pleased to welcome **Linda Purdy** back as our guest preacher on January 17. She is a chaplain at Providence Hospice of Seattle, and has had experience in parish care at numerous churches as well working as an addictions counselor for teenage girls and as a spiritual director.

She is married with grown children and loves to fish, cook, ski and paint in watercolors. If you missed hearing her preach last year, you can make up for it on January 17!

**Unsung heroes:** Jim and Jane Marich, who rescued the original documents from the early days of CCMI and had them beautifully framed so that they could be hung at the back of the sanctuary.

**Unsung heroes:** The Personnel Committee who made sure that everyone who applied for the Office Manager position got a personal e-mail thanking them for their application. Very classy!

## Council highlights

Submitted by Suzanne Sanderson

The council met on Monday, Dec 21, 2009, starting at 7:00 pm.

Tuesday Bible Study is starting up again—this time at 1:30 pm and will once again be led by Pastor Mark. There will be a reaffirmation of baptism on January 10<sup>th</sup>.

Catherine Petroff made a presentation on new signage for the church. The current sign is approved by the city as non-conforming so any changes that are made will have to be within its footprint. She suggested that the existing board with “United Church of Christ” be moved to the top of the sign to allow room for a 7' by 2' message board. It would have a frame, guides for removable letters, and lockable Lexan covers so no one could get creative with the letters in the middle of the night. Since we are allowed a sign (maximum 18 sq ft) on each street, she proposed that a new sign would be created at the south east entrance to the parking lot. We are also allowed a sign on the building (maximum 12 sq ft). Catherine suggested using the UCC logo. She also showed plans for the placement of three poles, placed in a triangular formation next to Island Crest which would support two banners facing north east and south east. Mark said there could be a rock garden around the poles. Dick Campbell will make the alterations on our current sign. There is money in the Communications budget that will be used for the signage. It was decided that Catherine, Dick, and Mark will go ahead with the plans speedily.

Randy passed out the proposed 2010 budget. Tim said that \$165,000 has been pledged so far and that we have six new pledging units. Randy had prepared the budget assuming pledges of \$175,000 which would be \$24,000 under what had been assumed in the 7 year plan. According to the 7 year plan, the parsonage would be sold in March, 2010. After discussion of the relative merits of selling or holding onto the parsonage

and borrowing \$100,000 from members as well as extending the current \$110,000 loan, it was moved that we affirm the decision to sell the parsonage in the spring of 2010. The motion was seconded and passed.

Dave said that there will be a Planned Giving Campaign in 2010 to help build the Endowment.

**Unsung hero:** Suzanne Sanderson, who worked very hard this year to make sure that the Sundays Mark was off were filled with interesting, exciting speakers, and has agreed to continue that job for the next year.

**Unsung hero:** Jania Nelson—always friendly, thoughtful and caring—in charge of Membership for many years.

## Annual Meeting

Pastor Mark has made a number of changes since he arrived here back in September of 2008 (and was made official Pastor in January of 2009).

He's changed the liturgy around and he's gussied up the church with new paint and less junk.

“The only time the church stood up to me and said ‘NO’ in capital letters was when I suggested we move the Annual Meeting,” Mark said. “They were willing to change the conditions of membership, but the Annual Meeting wasn't going to change.”

The Annual Meeting is, and always has been, on the fourth Monday in January, in the evening. This year, that means it will be on **January 25<sup>th</sup>** starting at **7:00 pm**.

There will be desserts (and, according to reports, pretty spectacular desserts, too), committee reports, and a vote on the 2010 budget.

Come for the desserts, stay for the budget!

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**Unsung hero:** The anonymous person/people who donated the lovely carpet in the library.

**Unsung hero:** Gail Layman—always ready to do any job plus sing in the choir

## Twelve Sundays per Year

By Suzanne Sanderson

As you know, Mark takes off twelve Sundays per year which leaves us with an opportunity to explore different worship experiences.

In 2009, we were happy to welcome back **Susan Princehouse** who will be preaching again this summer.

**Linda Purdy** has proved to be a popular preacher in 2009 and 2010. We enjoyed two Youth Sundays in 2009, and the youth will be planning worship service for May 9 (which is both Mother's Day and Hat Day) and September 26 this year.

In 2009, we also heard **Craig Rennebohm** who works with homeless people dealing with mental illness, **Kirk Anderson** of Water 1st which implements clean water, sanitation, and health education projects in the developing world, and **Peter Drury** who was co-pastor with Mark at All Pilgrims and is now a principal with a nonprofit management consulting firm.

Last June, some members of the Church put on a special worship service on "Caring for God's Creation", and in August, Social Outreach presented a program. As I am writing this, at the end of 2009, I am still marveling at the beautiful music we heard when the choir took over the December 27 worship service.

Looking forward to the rest of 2010, we will welcome our Conference minister, **Mike Denton**, to the pulpit on July 18, and on Valentine's Day, **Gary Southerton** will preach.

Gary is currently the Executive Director of Plymouth Healing Communities which provides housing and companionship to those who are homeless and living with mental illness.

From 1988 to 2003, he served as a Catholic Priest for the Archdiocese of Seattle and founded Holy Disciples Parish in Puyallup, WA. From 2003 to 2007, he was

Development Director of Multifaith Works, an interfaith AIDS service organization in Seattle.

He holds master's degrees from Columbia University and The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.

His interests include mysticism, cosmology and interfaith dialogue. His hobbies include downhill and cross country skiing, theater and music.

He also performs with the Seattle Men's Chorus. He and his partner, David Isla, live on Capitol Hill in Seattle. Come and hear Gary preach on February 14.

## Inquirers Class

The recently announced "Inquirer's Class" has been moved (slightly) and will now be held on **Jan 24<sup>th</sup>** and **31<sup>st</sup>**. The classes will be run by Pastor Mark.

Each class will begin following the Sunday service and **lunch will be provided**. The class is expected to last about 90 minutes.

The classes are going to cover the history of UCC (such as the four churches that combined to form two churches that then combined to form UCC). Mark will also cover the specific history of CCMI (founded in 1965), as well as what we believe in.

If you are interested in becoming a member of CCMI, please attend the class (and bring your questions!). If you decide to join the church, there will be service welcoming new members on February 7, 2010.

This class is also open to current members who want to know more about UCC or CCMI (or maybe have something to add about CCMI history).

These classes promise to be a fun and informal way to begin, or continue, your spiritual journey.

Please let Pastor Mark know if you plan to attend, so we can have enough lunches.

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**Unsung hero:** John Nelson—long time choir member and active member.

## Dinner with Pastor Mark

A couple of times a month, Pastor Mark needs to stay late for a committee meeting or Youth Group meeting. On those days, he likes to have dinner with members or prospective members or staff or choir or—well, you get the idea.

There's a new sign-up sheet for the dinners on the bulletin board near the sanctuary.

Basically, Mark likes to show up around 5:00 to 5:30 pm (depending on when you get off work or are available). He'll need to leave around 6:30 or 7:00 pm (depending on how far you live from church and what night it is).

It's a great way to spend some one-on-one time with Mark and get to know him better (he's very funny and you'll definitely laugh a lot). Mark also looks forward to getting to know each of you better.

## Reaffirmation of Baptism

Pastor Mark likes to reaffirm Baptisms each year, on John the Baptist Sunday (Jan 10, this year) during the service.

This isn't a re-Baptism, but a reaffirmation of your baptism.

If you have not been baptized, you are welcome to come forward for a blessing. You can also get a blessing if you'd rather have a blessing than reaffirm your baptism.

If you decide to come forward, here's the drill:

State your name.

"I am a child of God, and I wish to  
(receive a blessing | reaffirm my baptism)"

Don't worry about memorizing this, Mark will go over it again. Mark will use a glass of water for the reaffirmation.

All are welcome to come forward.

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**Unsung Hero:** Jim Marich, who comes in faithfully once a week to collect the recyclables from the church and take them to the recycling center.

## New directories coming!

Robert will be updating our church directories in a few weeks (target date: Annual Meeting).

If your address or phone number has changed *please* let him know (office@ucc-cmi.org or 206-232-7800). You can also update e-mail addresses and birthdays (you don't have to give us the year—just the month and day, so we can wish you a Happy Birthday).

If you're not sure whether we have the correct information, give a call/e-mail and we'll check. Better to be sure than not.

Try to get the information to Robert by mid-January or so, as he'll be pretty busy making copies like crazy for the Annual Meeting.

**Unsung hero:** Debbie Hanson who brought the lovely gingerbread houses to the church and added another level of festivity to our holiday decorations.

## Staff retreat on Jan 4

Our staff (Erich, Jessica, and Robert plus Pastor Mark) will be having a "retreat" on Monday, January 4, so the office will be closed all day.

The "retreat" won't be at a spa featuring hot tubs and back rubs. It'll be in the Down Center and feature cookies and cheesecake we scrounge from the kitchen refrigerators.

The purpose of the retreat is two-fold: to get to know each other better (we have a new Office Manager) and to engage in some strategic planning for the upcoming year.

As Pastor Mark pointed out, this is a "make-or-break" year for the church: we need to get firmly started on the road to growth or things will get very grim.

All the staff here loves their jobs and their ministries, and we're sure that if we put our heads together (and engage in some intense praying) that we'll come up with some great ideas and strategies.

## Gifts of the Wise Men

There's an old joke: How do you know the Magi were men? Because they showed up late and brought impractical gifts.

While a passable joke, it misses the point. The gifts the Magi brought were symbolic and the symbolism was very plain at the time.

### GOLD

Gold seems like a pretty obvious choice for a gift—it's valuable, right? A gift fit for a king. But have you ever stopped to think *why* it has value?

Gold is the ultimate luxury item. Because it's a so-called "noble" metal<sup>1</sup>, it doesn't react with much of anything, and so retains its luster for a long time.

It's very soft, so it's lousy for tools or swords or shields. The main practical uses of gold are in electronics and dentistry, both industries that were non-existent in 0 AD.

### FRANKINCENSE

Frankincense is the dried sap of a tree that grows in rocky, harsh terrain. It's been traded in Arabia for over 5000 years. When it's placed on a piece of burning charcoal, it emits a fragrant smoke.

It appears in Exodus and Leviticus as ingredients in incense offerings to God.

It was also very expensive, worth more than its weight in gold. In Biblical times, its use was reserved for the very rich (such as royalty).

For many years, it was considered a cleansing smoke, both in the spiritual and the medicinal senses. Filling a room with frankincense smoke was sure to drive out all the evil spirits that caused disease.

Even today, frankincense is used in some "High" church services, and it's really something to see. Just don't sit near the front, as the smoke can get pretty thick!

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<sup>1</sup> It's not really a Noble element like Helium, Neon, and Argon, which don't react with anything. But it reacts very slowly with most other elements.

### MYRRH

Myrrh is also a resin collected from a tree grown in Eastern Africa and is reddish in color.

Myrrh was used by the Egyptians to preserve mummies and thus has an association both with death and with preservation.

This is what writers call "foreshadowing"—even as they celebrate Jesus' birth, the gift reminds us all of what lay ahead.

In John 19:39, Nicodemus shows up with myrrh and aloe to wrap Jesus' body for burial.

Like frankincense, myrrh was costly and precious and a present fit for a king.

### SUMMARY

The gifts the Magi brought honored a king (gold) and a deity (frankincense) who would conquer death (myrrh).

Maybe not too practical, but very poetic.

**Unsung heroes:** Deb and Hans Fredrickson, Mark Travis and his parents, and the others who have done such a beautiful job painting the inside of the church.

## Holiday Tree Chipping

Starting December 26 and going through January 10, the City of Mercer Island will be offering its annual holiday tree chipping service. Bring your undecorated Christmas tree to the City's Maintenance Shop at 9601 SE 36th St. and it will be chopped into useful materials for the City's parks, trails and open spaces.

### Details:

- No flocked trees or artificial trees.
- Please remove stands.
- Remove all ornaments and lights.
- Deliver your tree only during daylight hours.
- Christmas trees only, please.

For more information about tree chipping, please contact the City's Maintenance Department at 206-275-7608.

**Unsung hero:** Catherine Petroff, Dick Campbell, and Bob Wiley, for their diligent work to update our outside signage and still be within the good graces of the city.

## Farestart dinner coming!

It's a church dinner and you don't even have to cook anything. Farestart is a restaurant in Seattle (7<sup>th</sup> and Virginia) that serves as a training grounds for homeless and disadvantaged folks.

We all know the frustration of "How can I get experience if nobody will hire me?"

Farestart provides training and real-world experience so that folks can learn a good solid trade (even in bad times, people still eat).

And here's where you come in: a bunch of folks from CCMI are going to make reservations for the third Thursday in January (Jan 21, 2010). A sign-up sheet will be posted soon.

Good food for a good cause—what could be better?

Oh, and remember to tip well!

**Unsung heroes:** Charles Nishida and Catherine Petroff for creation of the beautiful Advent banner, and Robert Gidley and Mark Travis for hanging it up in the rain. (And Catherine Petroff who came by the next day to fix our goofs!)

## High School Youth Mission

By Jessica Howard

It's still in the planning stages, but this spring brings the opportunity for a mission trip with our high school students.

I'm looking into working with our conference and other local UCC youth groups to plan a trip to Yakima.

If you have other ideas for our mission trip, I look forward to hearing them, please drop me an email. Also, if you have time in your schedule to help plan and execute this trip, please let me know, we'll need at least one other adult for the trip.

**Unsung hero:** Thanks to those responsible for the beautiful altar arrangement during Advent. The flowers, candles and banner blended beautifully from my vantage in the balcony.

## Middle School Youth Group Overnighter

The Middle School Youth Group had an overnight event on December 11 in the Down Center.

At the same time, the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society (RSCDS) was having a Christmas dance party upstairs in the Sanctuary.

And our new Office Manager, Robert Gidley, was also the Master of Ceremonies for the RSCDS party. Mix all these together and presto! You get a Youth Dance Scottish Celidh!

The Youth Group joined the Scottish dancers for a turn on the floor. The youth acquitted themselves right nicely (doing better than some grown-ups) and were the darlings of the regular dancers, who were thrilled to have their youthful energy.



The first four couples in this set are dancing together. You can see Robert in his kilt at the middle bottom. He's dancing with three couples you can't see. In the top set, one of the youth is "dancing up the middle" with his partner into second place.

**Kids these days:** At the end of the dance (11:00 pm), a bunch of the kids ran up and asked breathlessly "Can we help clean-up?" and were soon scurrying everywhere putting away chairs and sweeping the floor.

## Burns Night

On Saturday, January 23<sup>rd</sup>, starting at 7:00 pm, the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society will engage in a Burns' Night celebration.

Robert Burns is a celebrated Scottish poet (you may have heard his poem, "Auld Lang Syne" recently) and Scottish people everywhere celebrate his memory on or about Jan 25 (his birthday).

His memory is celebrated by reading of his poetry, tasting some haggis (it's like spicy pate—really quite yummy!) accompanied by his poem "Address to a Haggis." There's also some neeps and tatties (turnips and potatoes prepared Scottish style).

And lots and lots of easy dancing.

You don't have to be Scottish, you don't have to have a kilt, you don't even have to like haggis (but how could you not?).

Everyone is invited to attend, listen to live music and engage in some fun, social dancing. And to reflect on "the best laid plans of mice and men."

The suggested donation is \$12.



*Robert Burns*

**Unsung hero:** Terry Pepple and the Outreach Committee who each year work on the drive to support the Atlantic Street Center.

**Unsung hero:** Erich Parce has done a fabulous job leading the choir all year and always has substitutes when he can't be there. The music has been extraordinary.

## All in the family

By Carole Taylor

Today we give thanks for everyone during the Advent season, and especially the Unsung Heroes you'll find throughout this issue of The BRIDGE. And a special thanks to Pastor Mark for all of his sermons and enthusiasm, to all of our wonderful choir and to the people who faithfully serve coffee and goodies.

The Prayer Chain team invites you to join us in praying for the following members of our faith family:

- † **Patty Gerard**
- † **Karen Kasonic**
- † **Lois Robertson**
- † **Elinor Smith**

If you have any requests for prayers please call or email Carole Taylor, 425-827-3906, [tayloriskiers@comcast.net](mailto:tayloriskiers@comcast.net). We are now using email for those who have it and telephone for those who don't. We have 3 teams of 5 members each and would love to add more to the chain.

**Unsung hero:** Erich Parce and the choir for the great musical service on December 27<sup>th</sup>. It was splendid!

## Room names

Room names have been decided! Here's the official list:

**Cana:** the room formerly known as the Bridal Suite, it's the one on the second floor, above the kitchen. Remember that Cana is where Jesus performed his first miracle (turning water into wine at a wedding).

**Upper Room:** the room that's directly above the office.

**Down Center:** The entire area downstairs (I think this is what it was always called, but now it's official).

**Mayflower & Speedwell:** The two side-by-side rooms downstairs, along the north side. Our long ago ancestors were the Puritans who left England because they were fed up with the snotty Anglicans running everything. (The UCC is a direct descendent of the Puritans.)

The Mayflower we all know as one of the ships that brought them here. The other ship was the Speedwell. It didn't get far, though. It sank as it was leaving the harbor and everybody piled onto the Mayflower.

**Ark:** The big room downstairs. The word "Ark" only appears in two contexts in the Old Testament. There's Noah's Ark and the Ark of the Covenant (the one Indiana Jones found).

**Forum:** The smaller room downstairs. The forum in ancient Rome was a public gathering place that hosted political discussions, meetings and so forth. Today, "forum" also refers to on-line discussion groups. And the room downstairs.

## Cleaning for a Reason

If you know any woman currently undergoing chemotherapy, please pass the word to her that there is a cleaning service that provides **free** housecleaning, once per month for four months while she is in treatment.

All she has to do is sign up and have her doctor fax a note confirming the treatment. *Cleaning for a Reason* will have a participating maid service in her zip code area arrange for the service.

<http://www.cleaningforareason.org>

Please pass this information on to bless a woman going through treatment. This organization serves the entire USA and currently has 547 partners to help these women.

Plus, we checked it out through Snopes.com and it's a legit offer.

### MASTHEAD

The BRIDGE is a monthly publication of the Congregational Church on Mercer Island. It typically comes out electronically the last week of the month.

If you no longer wish to receive The BRIDGE, please send an e-mail to [office@ucc-ccmi.org](mailto:office@ucc-ccmi.org) and we'll remove you from the mailing list.

Contrariwise, if you'd like to be added to the mailing list, shoot us an e-mail, and we'll add you.

And feel free to forward this to anybody you think might appreciate it. But don't forward it to people who won't appreciate it, because we want to try and *increase* the appreciation level in the world.

Can you believe it's 2010? That always seemed so far in the future. Where's my jetpack? I'm tired of walking to work.

Editor: Robert Gidley

Introducer of mistakes into articles written by other people: Robert Gidley

Writer of articles with no bylines: Robert Gidley  
Except for the "Unsung Heroes" thing. Those really were sent in by other people.

**Including this one:** Robert Gidley, please add your own name! You have kept us all up on what is going on and put out great BRIDGES!!

## January birthdays

January 6	Bettie Romppanen	January 8	Carrie Hall
January 8	Connor Hanson	January 9	Carolyn Hall
January 10	Lori Gelzer	January 18	Pat Braman
January 20	Laurel Benz	January 20	Gabrielle Kasman
January 30	Dee Smith		

## Special groups at CCM

2 <sup>nd</sup> Saturday	7:30 am	Men's Breakfast	Library
Tuesdays	1:30 pm	Bible Study with Pastor Mark	Library
Wednesdays	7:45 pm	Bible Study	Library
	6:30 pm	Middle School Youth	Cana
Thursdays	6:15 pm	Bible Study	Upper Room
	7:30 pm	Choir	Sanctuary
Sundays	6:00 pm	High School Youth	Downcenter

## Stewardship thoughts for January 2010

- January 3** A new year provides new opportunities to serve God.
- January 10** A church absent a lively congregation is just a pile of building material.
- January 17** How much have you earned with your talent? One? Five? Ten?
- January 24** God is still speaking! Are we listening?
- January 31** Approaching life with a generous attitude builds spiritual riches.

## January lectionaries

- January 3** Jeremiah 31:7-14 or Sirach 24:1-12; Psalm 147:12-20 or Wisdom 10:15-21; Ephesians 1:3-14; **John 1:[1-9] 10-18**
- January 10** Isaiah 43:1-7; Psalm 29; Acts 8:14-17; **Luke 3:15-17, 21-22**
- January 17** Isaiah 62:1-5; Psalm 36:5-10; 1 Corinthians 12:1-11; **John 2:1-11**
- January 24** Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10; Psalm 19; 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a; **Luke 4:14-21**
- January 31** Jeremiah 1:4-10; Psalm 71:1-6; 1 Corinthians 13:1-13; **Luke 4:21-30**



# January 2010

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1 <b>New Year's Day</b> <i>(Office Closed)</i>	2
3 Communion & Sunday School 10:30 am  HS Youth 6:00 pm	4 <b>Office Closed</b> <b>(Staff Retreat)</b>	5 Bible Study (Acts) 1:30 – 2:30 pm  Duplicate Bridge 7 pm	6 9:00-noon BCC  <b>Epiphany!</b>  MS Youth 6:30 pm Bible Study 7:45 pm	7 9:00-noon BCC  Bible Study 6:15 pm (UR) Voice lessons 7:00 pm Choir 7:30 pm	8	9 Piano 9 am – 1 pm Men's Breakfast 7:30 am Work Party 9 am  HAAW Rental 10-12:30 DC
10 Worship and Sunday School 10:30 am <b>Reaffirmation of Baptism</b>  HS Youth 6:00 pm	11  Committees meet 7:30 pm	12 Bible Study (Acts) 1:30 – 2:30 pm  Duplicate Bridge 7 pm	13 9:00-noon BCC  MS Youth 6:30 pm Bible Study 7:45 pm OSAT 7-10 pm (UR)	14 9:00-noon BCC  Bible Study 6:15 pm (UR) Voice lessons 7:00 pm Choir 7:30 pm	15  Evening: English Country Dance Party	16 Piano 9 am – 1 pm  HAAW Rental 10-12:30 DC
17 Worship and Sunday School 10:30 am  HS Youth 6:00 pm	18 <b>MARTIN LUTHER</b> <b>KING DAY</b> <i>(Office Closed)</i> Council meets 7:00 pm	19 Bible Study (Acts) 1:30 – 2:30 pm  Duplicate Bridge 7 pm	20 9:00-noon BCC  <b>JANUARY BRIDGE</b> <b>DEADLINE</b> MS Youth 6:30 pm Bible Study 7:45 pm	21  Bible Study 6:15 pm (UR) Voice lessons 7:00 pm Choir 7:30 pm	22	23 Piano 9 am – 1 pm  4 to 11 pm <b>Burns Night</b>
24 Worship and Sunday School 10:30 am  HS Youth 6:00 pm	25  <b>Annual Meeting</b> <b>7:00 pm</b>	26 Bible Study (Acts) 1:30 – 2:30 pm  Duplicate Bridge 7 pm	27 9:00-noon BCC  MS Youth 6:30 pm Bible Study 7:45 pm	28  Bible Study 6:15 pm (UR) Voice lessons 7:00 pm Choir 7:30 pm	29	30 Piano 9 am – 1 pm  HAAW Rental 10-12:30 DC
31 Worship and Sunday School 10:30 am HS Youth 6:00 pm						

*Church office hours are 9 am to 2 pm, Monday through Thursday; 9 am to noon on Friday. (UR = Upper Room)*

Congregational Church on Mercer Island  
United Church of Christ  
4545 Island Crest Way  
Mercer Island, WA 98040-4443

#### **Statement of Purpose**

The purpose of the Congregational Church on Mercer Island is:  
to nurture all seekers on their paths to know and serve God.

#### **Congregational Church on Mercer Island Staff Directory**

Mark Travis, Pastor – 206-232-7800; [mark@ucc-ccmi.org](mailto:mark@ucc-ccmi.org)

Erich Parce, Director of Music Ministry – 425-271-7679; [erichparce@aol.com](mailto:erichparce@aol.com)

Jessica Howard, Coordinator of Children's & Youth Ministry – 206-232-7800; [jessica@ucc-ccmi.org](mailto:jessica@ucc-ccmi.org)

Katelyn O'Keefe, Nursery Care Coordinator – 206-232-7800

Robert Gidley, Office Manager – 206-232-7800; [office@ucc-ccmi.org](mailto:office@ucc-ccmi.org)

Web Site: [www.ucc-ccmi.org](http://www.ucc-ccmi.org)

Deadlines: Sunday Bulletin, Thursdays, noon • BRIDGE, 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month, 2:00 pm

Pastor's Office Hours: Tuesdays, 10:30 am to 4:00 pm • Other times by appointment

Church Office Hours: Monday – Thursday, 9:00 am – 2:00 pm • Fridays 9:00 am – noon