



# The BRIDGE

## November 2009

Congregational Church on Mercer Island  
United Church of Christ



### Dear friends,

The second paragraph of the Declaration of Independence written on July 4, 1776 begins with these infamous and historical words:

*We hold these truths to be self evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.*

These words penned largely by Thomas Jefferson and affirmed by brave men and women, sparked a revolution that created a new government. In the course of time, these simple words would inspire a revolution in France and courage to people around the world. In the course of time, men and women, who were being oppressed in their homelands, either by poverty, ethnic prejudice,



religious intolerance or a ruthless government, came to seek refuge and a new life in our land. For example, roughly sixty thousand Russian citizens have immigrated to the shores of the Northwest alone. These souls looked to the United States to create a new, better life than the one they had in Russia. Can you imagine the excitement, tinged with fear, they must have felt in their hearts when their plane touched down, or their boat sailed into port. These new citizens, or visiting immigrants are granted the freedom of religion, freedom to gather, freedom to speak out and make a new life. Yet, a large number of these new citizens are working with conservative Christian groups to deny couples like Mike and me from having the same legal, civil rights that they now enjoy. I would hope that ethnic minorities and recent immigrants would sympathize with gay and lesbian couples fighting for equal treatment under the law. Their attacks on initiative R-71 that would grant gay and lesbian couples equal protection under the law sound hypocritical to me.

In 1830 the Mormon faith was born through its founder and prophet Joseph Smith. In the first few decades of their journey they experienced prejudice and hate from ignorant people. Many Mormon pilgrims lost their lives. A number of their printing presses and homes of worship were burned to the ground. But justice prevailed under our laws. The Mormon people had a right to freely express their religious beliefs. Almost two centuries later, these souls who are protected by our laws now are attacking and zealously fighting fellow citizens of the United States, to prevent them from attaining the same Constitutional rights and privileges that protect their families. I guess freedom of religion only applies to them.

Joining these two groups are long lines of Conservative, Evangelical and Fundamentalist churches and politicians who are zealously working to destroy any civil rights that would protect my family, my children, and thousands of other families like ours.

In Matthew 5:32 Jesus says "anyone who divorces his wife, except on the grounds of unchastity, cause her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery." I do not agree with these words attributed to Jesus. I do not discriminate against people who are divorced and

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**Pastor Mark's message** [continued from page 1]

remarried. You don't see people like Larry Stickney, who is leading the charge to tear down any legal rights to gay and lesbian couples, use this Biblical quote to ban all divorces in this country. The reason being, he is on his third marriage, while I am still on my first.

Michael and I have been in a committed relationship for over 19 years and it is only because God has anointed and blessed our relationship that we have managed to hold strong against the tide of bigoted politicians, ministers, and even some family members.

All Mike and I and thousands of other same-gender couples want is to have the same legal protections and rights that our heterosexual brothers and sisters enjoy. This is one of those historical moments when our faith encourages us to do Justice. Please vote Yes on R-71. Please tell your family and friends to vote Yes on this initiative. If you have a gay or lesbian child, add your voice to their struggle. If you have a gay or lesbian family member or friend, add your voice to the struggle. This is about standing up for the inalienable rights of all the citizens of the United States of America to be able to live without fear, to pursue happiness with the soul mate that God has brought together.

Please call me if you have any questions about this issue.

Peace to you all and to your wonderful families,

Pastor Mark



*Bless the God of all who has done wondrous things on earth*

## Constitutional issues

By Susan Moon, Moderator



We just voted two weeks ago to amend our Constitution. I recently ran across something that led me to look up a document called *The Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ*, which can be

found online at <http://www.ucc.org/about-us/constitution-of-the-ucc.html>. One paragraph in the UCC constitution stood out for me. Although the paragraph is talking about the entire denomination, I enjoyed thinking about the ideas as practiced just among our congregation at CCMI:

### ARTICLE III. COVENANTAL RELATIONSHIPS

*Within the United Church of Christ, the various expressions of the church relate to each other in a covenantal manner. Each expression of the church has responsibilities and rights in relation to the others, to the end that the whole church will seek God's will and be faithful to God's mission. Decisions are made in consultation and collaboration among the various parts of the structure. As members of the Body of Christ, each expression of the church is called to honor and respect the work and ministry of each other part. Each expression of the church listens, hears, and carefully considers the advice, counsel, and requests of others. In this covenant, the various expressions of the United Church of Christ seek to walk together in all God's ways.*

The book I was reading pointed out that this paragraph is placed after a paragraph discussing the autonomy of each congregation (*Theology and Identity*, edited by Johnson and Hambrick-Stowe). Article III, above, qualifies this autonomy by the idea that we are bound by mutual accountability and fellowship. I like the part from the UCC Constitution that describes decisions being made "in consultation and collaboration." That seemed to be the spirit of the Covenant discussion and

vote we just finished, and it is certainly the spirit that CCMI has always embodied for me.

In order to be in a mutual relationship with one another, we need to be informed in some way. Part of this information at CCMI is from our Covenant forms. Although it no longer determines your membership, it does help fill positions for the work (and fun) in the coming year, and helps the financial people figure out our finances, as well as letting the Pastor be a true partner in your spiritual journey. In addition, it is a way for you to be clear about what you want to learn about or do this year, and what you would like to avoid. It gives all of us a head start in meeting the needs of the congregation.

The fellowship part is just as important. I believe we are lucky to be a small church. We recognize each other, and notice if something is different in a way that wouldn't necessarily be true in a group with several hundred people. World events make this a difficult time for many, and having a support system can be critical when so many other things are so challenging. Take time in the next few weeks to make a new contact, or check in with someone you haven't spoken to in a while. It is a gift that we know each other, and can really be a source of comfort for others in our congregation—or even just a source of humor. Don't be afraid to reach out—you may be exactly the person someone needs to make their day better.

We are so lucky at CCMI to have Rev Mark back from his illness, and to be moving forward into an exciting new holiday season—hopefully with little or no snow over Christmas so that we can actually hold services this year! I look forward to what we can do as we all work together, and walk together in our covenantal relationships with each other and with God.

BOO AND YAHOO!

Our 3rd Annual Haunted House is being set up as this article is being written. Thanks to everyone who makes this great event possible. Not only is it consistently one of our best

fundraisers every year, we have gained youth group members from the kids who come as visitors and are intrigued by a church that trusts the youth to put on an event this large. Thanks to **Jessica Howard** and the middle school youth group—both youth and parents—for all the work setting up, and for all of the others who will work over the next two days to make it a success.

Extra-special, superlative thanks to **Debbie, Dan, Matthew, Nicholas,** and **Connor Hanson**, who are the heart and soul of the project, and **Jeannette Eggebrecht**, who made the volunteers feel lucky to be there because she fed us like royalty. This project is a great way to get members of our community into the church that might never come in otherwise, and a great outreach to youth, so thank you to everyone who makes it possible.

## Guest preacher: Peter Drury

By Suzanne Sanderson

On November 8<sup>th</sup>, we will welcome Peter Drury to our pulpit. He is a leader who has served in board, staff and advisory roles in settings ranging from social work to sustainability, from AIDS to the arts, from interfaith relations to the PTA. He bears wisdom distilled from twenty years as executive director, development director, direct service worker, volunteer, board member, teacher, strategist and philanthropist.



Peter was co-pastor with Pastor Mark in the merger and development of All Pilgrims Christian Church in Seattle. In addition to his background in ministry, Peter has an extensive background in nonprofit leadership (particularly in human services and environmental sustainability) and is currently a principal with [DZO Strategists](#), a nonprofit management consulting firm.

## Children's and youth ministries

By Jessica Howard



October was a challenging month as the youth had many activities to be involved in. We're setting up the Haunted House with much help from the congregation and for that I thank you! Youth Sunday

on the 25<sup>th</sup> will be a lot of fun and the senior highers will have a great time at the pumpkin patch.

Our middle school group is up to 26 members including some from the UMC Church on the island as they do not have a youth program at their church. Thank you to everyone who comes to the Wednesday Bible study for their patience with our noise level.

November brings the bake sale on the 15<sup>th</sup> after church. We will be baking lots of yummy cookies, pies and brownies to sell after service. 100% of the proceeds go to benefit "Neighbors in Need," a cause that is supported by the United Church of Christ, which helps fight poverty in urban settings.

This month also marks the beginning of Advent activities for our youth and children's programs including a caroling night, Christmas sleepover and Christmas Eve service. We look forward to sharing another holiday season with each and every one of you!

### Question: What is in a name?

By Pastor Mark

**Answer: A story.** In Hebrew the name Abraham translates as "father of a multitude," reminding us of the story of how Abraham is the father of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Isaac means "laughter" telling the story of how his mother Sarah (her name means "princess") reacted when told she would be pregnant at an old age.

Moses in Hebrew means "to draw" and in Egyptian means "is born" reminds us of his journey down the Nile. The Aramaic name

Miriam "wished for child" comes from the Egyptian name Myr meaning "beloved." Moses's sister was named Miriam as was Jesus's mother. In Greek the name translates to Mary.

These are a few examples of how just the names of Biblical persons can tell their stories.

What does our church room U6 tell us about our faith or history? How does the identification U1 spark someone's imagination or remind them of a story? I believe that a church building, inside and out, should have artwork, symbols, and words that tell a story about our journey, our faith, and our lives. So, starting on Sunday, November 1<sup>st</sup> we are going to have a **Naming Competition**. We encourage you to come up with a creative name for two upstairs and three downstairs rooms. By each room there will be a sheet of paper on which you can write the names you propose.

We will collect all the names on November 18<sup>th</sup>, and on November 29<sup>th</sup>, the first Sunday of Advent, we will gather after church to vote for our favorite names.

### RULES

1. Names can be people, places or things found in the Bible, Christian history, or from our denominational background (such as Pilgrim, Mayflower, uptight)
2. Names can be in English, Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek or Latin
3. Names can be a name or a symbol
4. Names can't be the name of a CCMI pastor or parishioner

Once we have chosen the names of these rooms, we will in the course of time place name markers or symbols either on the door or above the door frame.

**Let the creative minds and foolery start on November 1<sup>st</sup>!**

## Diaconate news

By Diane Calvert



### 2010 COVENANT

By this time all should have received their Covenant package. If you have not and would like one, please let the church secretary, Laura, know and she will get one out to you. (You can also download the documents from the website.)

This is always an exciting time of reflection and renewal, as we spend time in prayer reviewing the past year and then discerning how God wants each of us to serve Him in the coming year in building the Body of Christ here at CCMI.

Timeliness in returning your Covenant information helps to make planning for next year that much easier for those involved in that part of the Covenant process, whether it is the financial page or the services page that tell us where you wish to serve (or not serve) or be an officer or chair a committee. And of course, if you wish to write a Covenant statement, it will be read only by Pastor Mark or the Diaconate chair.

If ever you have any questions regarding this process please do not hesitate to ask either Pastor Mark, myself or any other member of the Church Council and together we can get you answers.

### FLU NEWS

Flu season is here, and this year, of course, the H1N1 flu has been added to the list in addition to the seasonal flu. Many have asked what CCMI's plans are for serving Communion during these months.

Pastor Mark, Moderator Susan Moon and myself started discussion around this topic early in the summer (actually before Mark ever became ill with the H1N1 flu). It was decided that during these winter months we would serve communion by passing the plates of juice and bread. The juice will be in the small

plastic cups and the bread will be already cut into small cubes.

The safest thing that each of us can do is to stay home if we are coughing, sneezing, have a temperature, feel achy, etc. Sneeze into your elbow, don't put your hands to your face, and Wash, Wash, and Wash your hands.

If you have agreed to serve Communion and are not feeling well, please get a replacement, don't take the chance of spreading your germs. If necessary call me (Diane) to help you find a sub for yourself. Peace be with you.

## Covenant Sunday brunch

By Jane Nelson

While you are writing/thinking about your Covenant, don't forget that the grand finale to the annual process is our traditional brunch after church that day. Fellowship will provide most of the food, but we need plates of cut-up fruit to help fill out the menu. Look for the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board opposite the office and let us also know how many in your family we should plan for.

## Outreach news

By Terry Pepple



Atlantic Street Center's 2009 Holiday Assistance Program will happen on Wednesday, December 16<sup>th</sup>. We can all help provide a happier Christmas for less-fortunate

families by leaving donations of new toys, clothing and books for children of all ages (infants through teens) in the donation boxes near the church entrance from late November until December 14<sup>th</sup>. No used items please, and dolls should include ethnic minorities. Because of the economy, overall donations are expected to be down, so whatever we can give will be even more appreciated this year. Volunteers are also needed! It's fun to help. For more information, call Terry Pepple at 206-232-7043.

## In case of emergency

By Peter Laylin, Trustees



The Trustees have recently completed a study of emergency procedures for the congregation, and other occupants of the church building, to follow in the event of fires or

earthquakes. We have prepared diagrams of each of the three floors in the building – the main level, upstairs, and the Downcenter – and posted three diagrams on each level. The diagrams show the floor plans for the level on which they are posted, and clearly mark the location of all exits from the building at that level and the location of the fire extinguishers on that level.

We ask that everyone take a moment to look at the diagrams and become generally familiar with the location of the exits and fire extinguishers.

The emergency procedures themselves are set out on the last page of this document (electronic version) or as an insert (printed version). In reviewing procedures for fires, we decided to include a brief description of the fire detection system (there is no sprinkler system) and the emergency lighting system.

With regard to earthquake procedures, we include recommendations on staying safe in the building and not simply evacuating. Once again, we ask that members take a moment to review the procedures. We are not expecting, or asking, that this information be memorized: the trustees and other members of the church Council will be familiar with it and will be able to assist in time of emergency.

## All in the family

By Carole Taylor

The Prayer Chain team invites you to join us in praying for recovery and God's peace for the following members of our faith family:

Our thoughts and prayers are with the **Ellis Family**. Donna's father, **Arthur Sirjord Jr**, passed away October 12 (Memorial service on October 25<sup>th</sup> at Richmond Beach Congregational Church in Shoreline).

**Catherine Ferguson** fell and broke her pelvic bone October 16. She will be at the Mercer Island Care and Rehabilitation Center for a while (7445 SE 24<sup>th</sup> St, Room 110).

**Virginia Steinbach** has moved to Island House (7810 SE 30<sup>th</sup> St). Her phone number hasn't changed from the one listed in the directory. We hope she will be able to drive again soon.

**Lois Robertson** is convalescing from her broken ankle. Her doctor reports that healing is progressing well. She's at Pacific Regency in Room 207B, 919 109<sup>th</sup> Ave NE, Bellevue 98004.

**Patty Gerard**—pray for health during chemotherapy.

**Jane Koning**—pray for a kidney donor for her. She is doing very well with the overnight dialysis procedure.

**Ron Ramuta**—pray for discernment for his doctors and successful treatment of a blood disorder.

If you have any requests for prayers please call or email Carole Taylor, 425-827-3906, [tayloraskiers@comcast.net](mailto:tayloraskiers@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.

## November birthdays

November 1	Ethan Batson	November 12	John Kasonic
November 2	Cassie Benz & Amelia Robertson	November 15	John Nelson
November 8	Susan Moon	November 16	Jania Nelson
November 9	Deb Fredrikson	November 24	Hellen Fung
November 10	Hanna Parce	November 26	Alice Fenske
November 11	Jenna Warburton		

## Special groups at CCM

2 <sup>nd</sup> Saturday	7:30 a.m.	Men's Breakfast	Library
Wednesdays	7:45 p.m.	Bible Study	Library
	6:30 p.m.	Middle School Youth	U1
Thursdays	6:15 p.m.	Bible Study	U6
	7:30 p.m.	Choir	Sanctuary
Sundays	6:00 p.m.	High School Youth	Downcenter

## Stewardship thoughts for November 2009

- November 1** Supporting the Body of Christ transforms our souls.
- November 8** Everyone can contribute – time, talent, and/or treasure.
- November 15** Gratitude can lead to generosity.
- November 22** Giving thanks to God is an act of stewardship.
- November 25** Starving oneself into weakness is poor stewardship.

## November lectionaries

- November 1** **Ruth 1:1–8**; Ps 146; Heb 9:11–14; Mark 12:28–34
- November 8** **Ruth 3:1–5, 4:13–17** and Ps 127 or 1 Kings 17:8–16 and Ps 146; Heb 9:24–28; Mark 12:38–44
- November 15** **1 Sam 1:4–20** and 1 Sam 2:1–10 or Dan 12:1–3 and Ps 16; Heb 10:11–14 (15–18), 19–25; Mark 13:1–8
- November 22** 2 Sam 23:1–7 and Ps 132:1–12 (13–18) or Dan 7:9–10, 13–14 and Ps 93; Rev 1:4b–8; **John 18:33–37**
- November 29** Jer 33:14–16; Ps 25:1–10; 1 Thess 3:9–13; **Luke 21:25–36**



# November 2009

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>1</b> Communion and Sunday School 10:30 a.m.  HS Youth 6:00 p.m.	<b>2</b>  <b>FLU SHOTS</b> <b>9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.</b>	<b>3</b>  Duplicate Bridge 7 p.m.	<b>4</b> 9:00-noon BCC  MS Youth 6:30 p.m. Bible Study 7:45 p.m. (Library)	<b>5</b> 9:00-noon BCC  Bible Study 6:15 p.m. U6 Voice lessons 7:00 p.m. Choir 7:30 p.m.	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> Piano 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. Hwy Exit 9 Cleanup 8 a.m.  10:00 a.m. HAAW (DC)
<b>8</b> Worship and Sunday School 10:30 a.m.  HS Youth 6:00 p.m.	<b>9</b>  Committees meet 7:30 p.m.	<b>10</b>  Duplicate Bridge 7 p.m.	<b>11</b> 9:00-noon BCC  <b>VETERANS DAY</b>  MS Youth 6:30 p.m. OSAT Rental U6 7 p.m. Bible Study 7:45 p.m.	<b>12</b> 9:00-noon BCC  Bible Study 6:15 p.m. U6 PNWAS Rental (DC) 7-10 p.m. Voice lessons 7:00 p.m. Choir 7:30 p.m.	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> Piano 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. Men's Breakfast 7:30 a.m. Work Party 9 a.m.
<b>15</b> Worship and Sunday School 10:30 a.m. <b>COVENANT SUNDAY</b> <b>CONGREGATIONAL LUNCH</b> <b>YOUTH BAKE SALE</b> HS Youth 6:00 p.m.	<b>16</b>  Council meets 7:00 p.m.	<b>17</b>  Duplicate Bridge 7 p.m.	<b>18</b> 9:00-noon BCC  <b>DECEMBER BRIDGE DEADLINE</b>  MS Youth 6:30 p.m. Bible Study 7:45 p.m.	<b>19</b> 9:00-noon BCC  Bible Study 6:15 p.m. U6 Voice lessons 7:00 p.m. Choir 7:30 p.m.	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> Piano 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.  10:00 a.m. HAAW (DC)  RSCDS Dance 5-11 p.m.
<b>22</b> Worship and Sunday School 10:30 a.m.  HS Youth 6:00 p.m.	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>  Duplicate Bridge 7 p.m.	<b>25</b> 9:00-noon BCC  <b>Interfaith Thanksgiving Worship Service 7:30 p.m.</b> <b>NO MS Youth meeting</b> Bible Study 7:45 p.m.	<b>26</b>  <b>THANKSGIVING DAY</b>  <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>	<b>27</b>  <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>	<b>28</b> Piano 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.  Private Rental 4-11 p.m.
<b>29 ADVENT 1</b> Worship and Sunday School 10:30 a.m.  <b>NO HS Youth meeting</b>	<b>30</b>	<i>Church office hours are 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Monday through Thursday; 9 a.m. to noon on Friday.</i>				

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

Laura Gregg, 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 p.m.

Pastor's Office Hours: Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. • Other times by appointment

Church Office Hours: Monday – Thursday, 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. • Fridays 9:00 a.m. – noon

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# CCMI Emergency Procedures

## EARTHQUAKE

In case of an earthquake:

- Get away from glass windows
- Get next to an inside wall
- Drop and cover; protect your head and neck by getting under a table, chair, or other solid object
- Beware of after-shocks

After all is clear, children located in the Downcenter should meet up with their parents in the south end of the parking lot

The exits are marked with overhead lights that are battery powered and should illuminate in the event of power failure, which is likely if a major earthquake should occur. The diagrams posted throughout the building show the location of all exits from the main floor of the church building, as well as from the Downcenter.

Children in the nursery room on the upper level should be taken out of the building when all clear and joined with their parents in the southwest end of the parking lot.

If there is a gas smell, the gas line should be turned off at the meter, which is located on the lower level just outside the door leading from the Downcenter to outside. The tool for turning off the gas is attached to the meter and is clearly visible.

To treat minor injuries incurred during an earthquake, first aid kits are located on top of the refrigerator in the kitchen and on the long counter in the church office. The kits contain common, household-type first aid items. There are also two crowbars, one in the outside storage shed and one in the office to aid in freeing any persons who might be trapped due to earthquake damage. For more serious injuries, call 911. But remember that (1) 911 may not be available, and (2) there will be requests for help from many other locations on the island.

## FIRE

The church building is equipped with a fire detection system. There is no fire extinguishing (sprinkler) system. However, there are five hand-held fire extinguishers, two in the Downcenter, two on the main floor, and one on the upper level, located as shown on the diagrams posted throughout the building.

There is a separate, dedicated telephone line to the Mercer Island fire department. A fire alarm at the fire department is actuated by a signal sent on that line from any of the smoke detectors, which are located in a number of locations on all three floors. Most of the detectors are co-located with an aural alarm. The system also includes heat and duct detectors; these are not shown on the diagrams. An alarm signal will also be generated by breaking the glass seals on any of the five alarm boxes, which are located in the Downcenter and on the main floor only, as shown on the diagrams.

If possible, the gas line should be turned off at the meter, which is located just outside the southwest rear door to the Downcenter. A tool for that purpose is located next to the meter.

There are five exit doors (including the main front door) leading from the main floor to the outside, two doors from the Downcenter, and two doors from the upper level. The doors are shown on the diagrams. All the doors (except for the main door and the door leading out of the CE office) are marked with lighted "EXIT" signs. The signs have back-up battery power and will still illuminate in the event of electric power failure.

In the event of a fire, all occupants of the building should exit via the nearest available exit, depending of course on the location and direction of the fire.

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