



The BRIDGE

September 2009

Congregational Church on Mercer Island
United Church of Christ



About our Covenant process...

Susan Moon, Moderator



It's exciting to see all the fall activities starting. As Pastor Mark mentioned in his July Bridge article, one of the things the congregation will decide almost as soon as fall starts is whether to rework the covenanting system at CCMI. For quite a while, it has been the process at CCMI that those who wish to join the church fill out a Covenant form that includes several pieces, including an evaluation of your faith journey, an opportunity to talk about your service at CCMI, and a financial pledge. As Mark discussed in July, this process has been integral to developing an intentional membership at CCMI. Why are we having discussions and voting on whether to change this process? My article this month will discuss this a little, and I hope you will also feel free to ask if you have more questions, in addition to attending the information meetings on September 20th and October 4th, and then participating in the vote on October 11th.

The question with the Covenanting process for CCMI becomes one of the ultimate aim—what are we trying to achieve? I believe that the original purpose of the Covenant was to encourage thoughtful membership—to make sure that every person was a member of CCMI because they actively wanted to be, and to give everyone a forum for reevaluating their spiritual, volunteer, and financial commitments to the church every year. That way, CCMI remains an active, thriving group, rather than one resting on commitments made years ago.

The problem can be that not everyone is comfortable writing, and the Covenant process can feel like an insurmountable barrier, keeping some from being members at all, in spite of their desire to be considered CCMI members. In addition, even those that don't typically find writing difficult can have difficulty with this document, because the Covenant requires writing about spirituality and money—two subjects that can be a little disconcerting to people to discuss, let alone set down on paper. Still, having an intentional worship community is invaluable, so that this situation is truly a quandary.

The change that is being proposed is one that would separate, just slightly, these two aims. It would enable membership at CCMI to be a very simple process—the future congregant would have to indicate that they wanted to be a member and then attend a membership class. Once a member, that membership would be retained unless the member asked for it to be invalidated. This removes any barriers to membership at CCMI—you don't have to fill out a form every year—your membership is determined by your desire to be or remain one. The Covenant is still a crucial part of the life of CCMI—it is how each individual member assesses their spiritual growth from year to year, it is how our committees and volunteer positions are filled, and how we plan our budget. That part will continue, and filling out a Covenant will still be an act of intentional care for the community of CCMI—it will just no longer be a requirement for membership. Completing the Covenant will remain an active part of the life of CCMI in the fall, and Covenant Sunday will still be a special day—a way to show that we all are willing to work actively to create the worship community we long for each year, just no longer associated with yearly membership.

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Moderator's message (continued from page 1)

This is a decision for the congregation to make. One of the joys of being in a congregational church is that we can decide and conduct ourselves as we wish. In fact, the Council itself is of many differing opinions about this issue. I invite you to discuss this with your friends, attend the information meetings, and come to your own decision about the best path for CCMI. Please always feel free to ask Pastor Mark, or any Council member if you have any questions that you would prefer not to ask in a meeting. Thank you for your time.

THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU

It's always difficult to thank people, because you are bound to forget someone crucial, so please forgive me in advance!

Thanks to **Leslie Johanson** for all the beautiful special music she helped coordinate this summer, for her flexibility when we worshipped outside, and for mowing Mark's lawn with **Evan**—truly a Renaissance woman!

There is new carpet in the library—the donors were very generous, it is truly beautiful, and it is an entirely different experience to meet in the Library now—thank you so much for your generosity!

Thanks to **Peter Laylin**, **Tom Steinbach**, and **Ron Ramuta**, along with others, who moved everything out of the library to allow installation of the beautiful new carpet.

Many thanks to the members of the congregation who moved everything back in to the library.

Much gratitude to **Jessica Howard** and the youth, especially **Tim Malcham** and **Jean Nishida**, who created a really fun worship service on Youth Sunday, and let us experience something different and joyful—we appreciate your bravery, and we had a great time!

Finally, enormous thanks to **Diane Calvert**, who has been invaluable this summer

in facilitating various components of worship. CCMI is blessed to have someone who does an important job with such good humor, and this summer's worship would have been a very different experience without Diane's coordination. Thank you so much for everything.

Children's and youth ministries

By Jessica Howard



Dear Brothers and Sisters—This is a very poignant time for my family with the loss of my husband's mother, and I want to thank each and every one of you who were praying for us and who sent letters and cards of condolences. It means a lot to me that the place I work is also a home. In more exciting news: after recovering from the disappointment of cancelling VBS, I have been working diligently on a small group curriculum for our high school students as well as planning for our first youth group meetings for the fall on September 17th for junior high and September 20th for high school.

On Thursdays from 4:30–6:30 p.m. We welcome children grades 3–5 for playtime, fellowship and team building before our junior high youth group. This will be similar to LOGOs but because of the difficulty in securing volunteers, will allow for a more independent programming. This will also allow youth with younger brothers and sisters to share their group and also welcome more families to our church. More finalized plans will be announced in greater detail next month, but I hope to start this program at the end of September.

Back to Church Sunday is September 13th and I look forward to seeing parents in the downcenter after worship for a short meet-and-greet about the fall's Sunday school curriculum. We will also put out a giving tree for the nursery. Katelyn has some wish list items she'd like to collect and we would love

it if you would take a leaf or two from the tree to donate to our nursery program. Look for the giving tree in September on the youth bulletin board! —Blessings and Love

Council highlights

Submitted by Suzanne Sanderson

Mark currently plans to start preaching on September 13th, taking September 27th off as previously planned. Linda Purdy will be on call in case of emergency from now until Mark returns to work.

Talks on proposed changes to the covenanting process will occur on 9/20 and 10/4 with a vote on 10/11. Changes to the bylaws need to be sent to the congregation three weeks before the vote. November 15th will be Covenant Sunday.

FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

Our annual Back-to-Church gathering will be on September 13th — and wouldn't it be wonderful if we could also make that a Welcome-Back-Mark occasion?!!

TRUSTEES MEETING

- **Emergency Preparedness:** Drawings showing exits and fire extinguisher locations are posted in several locations on each floor of the building. New First Aid kits are located in the kitchen and the church office.
- **Trails Through “Lower 40”:** There is some regrowth of the weeds in the goat cleared area. We will rent a gas-powered weed eater for the 9/27 work party.
- **New carpet in the Library:** The installation of a badly needed new carpet in the library is complete.

DIACONATE

We are thrilled at the prospect of Linda Purdy filling in for an additional two Sundays and are thankful for those who have chosen to share their time and talents in the services they have led and/or participated in during Mark's absence. This is truly an amazing congregation of loving, caring and sharing people.

It's a potluck picnic on September 13th

By Jane Nelson



In a departure from the traditional picnic menu, we are planning a traditional potluck! It used to be called a Covered Dish, or a Hot Dish, or a Casserole, or a Main Dish.

Whatever the cook divined, it was something hot from the kitchen. And that is what this year's Back-to-Church picnic will feature—an old fashioned potluck meal with casseroles and salads, with desserts supplied by Fellowship. Make plans now so your family can stay after church on the 13th to re-connect with people you haven't seen often enough through the summer and hear the details of their summer adventures.

Sign up on the office bulletin board to bring your favorite culinary masterpiece. And we promise to have kid-friendly options (read that as mac 'n' cheese!) With good weather, we'll set up tables on our deck to enjoy sunshine, a great meal, and good company.

Guest preacher: Kirk Anderson

By Suzanne Sanderson

On September 27th, we will have an opportunity to hear from Kirk Anderson, Director of Foundation Relations and Major Gifts for Water1st.



As a Peace Corps Volunteer in Southern Africa, Kirk Anderson became aware of the many needs and challenges facing people in developing countries. His observations and inquiries led him to the conclusion that lack of clean drinking water was the critical first step toward increasing a community's quality of life.

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Kirk Anderson (continued from page 3)

In 2001, he began helping Water 1st with fundraising events, joining the Board of Directors in 2005.

Water 1st's mission is to serve families in the poorest communities in the world as they implement community-managed projects that integrate water supply, sanitation, and health education. "Providing people with safe water systems, latrines, and hygiene education is the 1st step to ending the cycle of poverty and death." Read more about Water 1st at <http://www.water1st.org>.

Please join us on September 27th to welcome Kirk Anderson to our pulpit.

Work party coming up

By Jim Marich

A work party is being planned for Sunday, September 27th after the worship service. Those who participated in the last such event, said that they had a wonderful time and they did accomplish a lot. Come to church in your grubbies, or if you wish to wear a tuxedo, bring a change of clothes.

There will be work for all, regardless of capability or perceived lack thereof. We need your help and God will bless you for whatever you can do. Put the date on your calendar. We will see you there.

Social outreach

WHAT'S NEW?

New Clothes! New Clothes! Foster children benefit from our yearly drive for brand-new school clothes, sizes infant to high school, from underwear to warm coats. Lots of good buys on school clothes now, and this is your chance to help a foster child feel happy to choose new clothes that he or she likes from the Treehouse "warehouse" in downtown Seattle. This is a population that doesn't get a lot of attention, and in a small way we can make a difference in a child's life.

Our collection basket will be in the entry way during August and September. Thank you ahead of time from some delighted child.

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:

- **Pastor Mark**—pray for continued healing of mind, body, and spirit, and a speedy return in good health to our community.
- **Sara Liberty Laylin**, successful hip replacement surgery on August 17. Pray for quick recovery.
- **Virginia Steinbach**, fell and seriously injured the muscle in her tail bone August. She will be out of commission for 6-8 weeks. Pray for complete recovery.
- **Sammy Greenwood**, former longtime member of CCMI is having open heart surgery September 16 in Cleveland, Ohio. Pray for successful surgery and speedy recovery.
- **Dana Jorgenson**—pray for continued recovery of the nerves in her right hand.
- **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.

If you have any requests for prayers please call or email Carole Taylor, 425-827-3906, 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.

September birthdays

September 1	Patty Gerard	September 12	Laura Gregg
September 3	Michael Ellis	September 14	Zachary Sanders
September 6	Mason Travis-Tomberg	September 21	Jessica Howard & Peter Laylin
September 8	Dee Meyer	September 26	Brian Harmon
September 11	Dave Davis		

Special groups at CCM

2 nd Saturday	7:30 a.m.	Men's Breakfast	Library
Wednesdays	7:45 p.m.	Bible Study (first meeting September 16 th)	Library
Thursdays	6:15 p.m.	Bible Study	U6
	6:30 p.m.	Middle School Youth (first meeting September 17 th)	Downcenter
	7:30 p.m.	Choir (first meeting September 17 th)	Sanctuary
	6:00 p.m.	High School Youth (first meeting September 20 th)	Downcenter

Stewardship thoughts for September 2009

- September 6** Our souls are the root of our personalities.
- September 13** Rejoicing in another's joy extends that joy to us.
- September 20** A healthy soul is abundantly generous.
- September 27** Generosity is the key to effective outreach.

September lectionaries

- September 6** Prov 22:1–2,8–9,22–23 and Ps 125 or Isa 35:4–7a and Ps 146;
James 2:1–10 (11–13) 14–17; **Mark 7:24–37**
- September 13** Prov 1:20–33 and Ps 19 or Isa 50:4–9a and Ps 116:1–9; James 3:1–12;
Mark 8:27–38
- September 20** Prov 31:10–31 and Ps 1 or Wisd 1:16–2:1,12–22 or Jer 11:18–20 and Ps 54;
James 3:13–4:3,7–8a; **Mark 9:30–37**
- September 27** **Est 7:1–6,9–10,9:20–22** and Ps 124 or Num 11:4–6,10–16,24–29 and
Ps 19:7–14; James 5:13–20; Mark 9:38–50



September 2009

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 Duplicate Bridge 7 p.m.	2	3 Bible Study 6:15 p.m. U6	4	5 Piano 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. Hwy Exit 9 Cleanup 8 a.m.
6 Communion and Sunday School 9:30 a.m.	7 LABOR DAY OFFICE CLOSED	8 Duplicate Bridge 7 p.m.	9 OSAT Rental (U6) 7–10 p.m.	10 Bible Study 6:15 p.m. U6 PNWAS Rental (DC) 7–10 p.m.	11	12 Piano 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. Men's Breakfast 7:30 a.m. Work Party 9 a.m. 10:00 a.m. HAAW (DC) 6:00 p.m. to midnight Private Rental
13 Worship and Sunday School 10:30 a.m. BACK TO CHURCH PICNIC	14 Committees meet 7:30 p.m.	15 Duplicate Bridge 7 p.m.	16 MS Youth 6:30 p.m. BCC Parent Orientation 7–8:30 p.m. (DC) Bible Study 7:45 p.m. (Library)	17 Voice lessons 7:00 p.m. Choir 7:30 p.m. Bible Study 6:15 p.m. U6	18	19 Piano 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.
20 Worship and Sunday School 10:30 a.m. COVENANT CONVERSATION 1 3–9 p.m. Private Rental HS Youth 6:00 p.m.	21 Council meets 7:00 p.m.	22 Duplicate Bridge 7 p.m.	23 9:00-noon BCC OCTOBER BRIDGE DEADLINE MS Youth 6:30 p.m. Bible Study 7:45 p.m. (Library)	24 9:00-noon BCC Voice lessons 7:00 p.m. Choir 7:30 p.m. Bible Study 6:15 p.m. U6	25	26 Piano 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. PNWAS Rental
27 Worship and Sunday School 10:30 a.m. WORK PARTY HS Youth 6:00 p.m.	28	29 Duplicate Bridge 7 p.m.	30 9:00-noon BCC Bible Study 7:45 p.m. (Library)			

September 1–11: Church office hours are 9 a.m. to noon, Monday through Thursday; closed on Fridays.

Beginning September 14: Church office hours are 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Monday through Thursday; 9 a.m. to noon on Friday.

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

Erich Parce, Director of Music Ministry – 425-271-7679; erichparce@aol.com

Jessica Howard, Coordinator of Children's & Youth Ministry – 206-232-7800; jessica@ucc-ccmi.org

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

Laura Gregg, Office Manager – 206-232-7800; office@ucc-ccmi.org

Web Site: www.ucc-ccmi.org

Deadlines: Sunday Bulletin, Thursdays, noon • BRIDGE, 3rd Wednesday of the month, 2:00 p.m.

Pastor's Office Hours: Wednesdays, 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. • Other times by appointment

Church Office Hours: **September 1-11**, Monday – Thursday, 9:00 a.m. – noon • Closed Fridays

Beginning September 14, Monday – Thursday, 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. • Fridays 9:00 a.m. - noon
