

tidings

Worship at HCC January 2012

Join us Sundays at 10:30

January 1

A New Heaven and a New Earth
Readings and reflections on new beginnings, including
Ecclesiastes 3:1-13
Psalms 8
Matthew 25:31-46
Revelation 21:1-6a

January 8

Epiphany
Isaiah 60:1-6

January 15

The Baptism of Jesus
Mark 1:4-11

January 22

Immediately, they...
Mark 1:14-20

January 29

A New Teaching! With Authority!
Mark 1:21-28

Tidings is published monthly by Hillsdale Community Church, United Church of Christ. The printed version is produced on recycled paper. A full-color electronic version is available via e-mail. Send a request to tidings@hillsdaleucc.org to be added to the e-mail list. **Tidings** is edited and designed by Tim Ditch.

New Year Brings First Starts on Saving Creation

by Jim Ruyle

The Back to Eden Team and other volunteers have begun important first starts in our plan for restoring nature on our property and serving as a learning center for our community.

We've made a big dent in the Himalayan blackberry along California Street (our north border) and started a native planting area along Texas Street (our south border) on the little hill at that end of the front parking lot. Under the supervision of Pat Stenaros, we laid large sheets of cardboard graciously donated by Parker Furniture Company to smother the grass and weeds that will decompose into the soil. We covered that with wood chips and mulch, and planted our first native plants through the mulch and cardboard. You can see the little plants now, but watch for new growth on them next spring. Over time, this process will transform much of the grass on our property (except where it's



Mike Van Loo and Jim Ruyle lay down cardboard while Pat Stenaros supervises.

needed), save mowing, and invite back the native insects that birds and other native wildlife depend on.

Meanwhile, we're planning educational and spiritual programs that will inspire others in our congregation to join in this joyful work, starting with a blessing ceremony led by Pastor Jennifer over our new planting area. All are invited to share their ideas and comments. This is a calling in our church life that needs the support and participation of a large part of the congregation in order to succeed.

Ministry Nights Are on the Move

Share Christ's Word, Make a Difference, Embrace All, and Worship God Joyfully: More than just our mission, these are the names of our four program areas. In 2012, consider which of these areas of church life you have the most passion for. Then, attend Ministry Night once a month to find out

what these groups are doing and how you can contribute. Ministry Night is MOVING from Tuesdays to third Thursdays from 5:30-7:00. Please join us on Thursday, January 19. Dinner is provided at 5:30, followed by Ministry Team meetings until 7:00. Child care provided.

Annual Meeting Announced

The Annual Meeting of the Congregation of Hillsdale Community Church, United Church of Christ, will take place following the morning worship service on Sunday, January 22. Members are encouraged to attend. Visitors are welcome. The meeting will take place in Fellowship Hall.

Let Your Light Shine!

The Third Annual Epiphany Talent/No-Talent Show will be Saturday, January 7. A potluck meal and an evening of goofery is a great way to wrap up the holiday season with your church family. Dust off your talent or your no-talent and prepare for a great evening!

Check This Out!

Church member Anna Bauer is featured in a short film on the *Street Roots*



website. The film is moving and inspiring, and features photos of Anna's baptism day. You can find it here until January 6: <http://streetroots.wordpress.com/2011/12/02/the-comfort-of-acceptance-a-photo-story-of-aspergers-syndrome/>

Letter from the Pastor

by Rev. Jennifer Brownell



Rev. Jennifer Brownell

"I like to come to church. I really want to come to church." someone said recently, "But I haven't been for a while. Now every time I think about it I feel guilty. So I don't come."

The weird thing is, guilt so often has the opposite of the effect we intend. That is, we think (and over the centuries, many religious movements have taught) that guilt is a great motivator. In fact, it's the opposite. Guilt has a way of stopping us dead in our tracks, unable to act at all.

In a recent blog post, Portland writer Don Miller (www.donaldmilleris.com) writes about how he encourages people he knows to serve by doing what makes them feel most joyful and what comes from the place of deepest love. The way he puts it, that is what God would want for us, because that is

how God operates. He ends the post by saying:

"If you'd like a more joyful life, start serving in the ways God has gifted you to serve... If you are teaching Sunday School out of a sense of obligation, stop. Literally stop as soon as you can. Instead, find something that gets you fired up. Who knows what that something is... Maybe it's plumbing or carpentry work, maybe it's counseling executives, maybe it's walking people's dogs or planting a community garden. Who knows, but serve in a way God has wired you to serve. He actually wants you to enjoy it, not offer it to him as some sort of sad sacrifice. Can you imagine your earthly father wanting you to be miserable all the time? Why do we imagine God would be so dysfunctional and, well, mean?"

The New Year is a time to

start over. Many people write resolutions. What if you did this instead? What if you spent some time in prayer, carefully considering each area of your life? What if, rather than making a list of all the things you wanted to guilt yourself into doing this year, you instead made a list of all the things that give you the most joy? What if you then set about seeing how you could make those things a regular part of your life?

Without guilt, you just might be living more of the life God has planned for you. Including, it's possible, coming back to church.

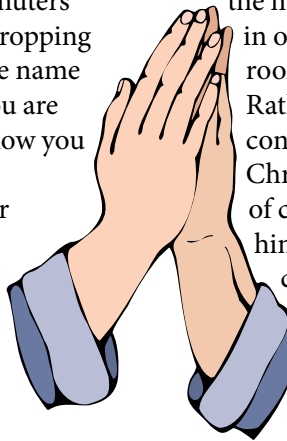
See you in church!

Pastor Jennifer

Tuesday Prayer Group

The Tuesday Commuters Prayer Group is dropping "commuters" from the name to remind you that you are welcome, no matter how you get here!

The Tuesday Prayer Group meets every Tuesday at 6:00 to pray together for whatever is on our minds. Sometimes, we like to try a new form of prayer, so in January we will be practicing Centering Prayer. Centering prayer, developed by monks in the 1960s, has been taught to thousands of lay people, and is a method for stilling



the mind and body in order to make room for Christ. Rather than a conversation with Christ, it is a means of communion with him. Even if you cannot join the group, consider giving centering prayer a try.

Detailed directions are available at contemplativeoutreach.org, or try these simple steps:

1. Choose a sacred word as the symbol of your intention to consent to God's presence

and action within.

2. Sitting comfortably and with eyes closed, settle briefly and silently introduce the sacred word as the symbol of your consent to God's presence and action within.

3. When engaged with your thoughts, or noticing any feelings or bodily sensations, return ever-so-gently to the sacred word.

4. At the end of the prayer period, remain in silence with eyes closed for a couple of minutes.

The Tuesday Prayer Group is open to all—drop in once, or come every week. You are always welcome!

EMO Summit Happens This Month

Hillsdale's Make a Difference Team has purchased a table for eight for the January 30 Earth Care Summit: Environmental Justice and Faith.

The event will include a locally-grown dinner, keynote and presentations from congregations about their greening efforts. Resource people from the community will be on hand to discuss a variety of topics on putting faith into action around environmental justice, including food justice, transit

equity and environmental health. The event runs from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. (registration and display tables at 5 p.m.) at Highland Christian Center, 7600 NE Glisan St., Portland.

EMO's Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns invites all congregations striving to care for creation and our communities to learn, share, and be inspired.

Please talk to Bob Brandon, Nayan Fleenor, or Elizabeth Karkosky if you would like to represent HCCUCC at this event.

Letter from Addis Ababa:

In our inbox from Dennis, Trudi, and Max Frengle, received on December 11:

Well, We're now in our fifth day in Ethiopia. It would be our seventh, but for missing our plane in London and having to wait two days for the next flight. In this time, we've been very busy, trying to push through lots of jetlag and lost sleep while keeping to the schedule set before losing the two days. In Friday, we went to the Hamlin Fistula Hospital, which some of you know about and some of you don't. It's a hospital opened by a husband-and-wife team of Australian gynecologists to treat women (young girls mostly) who have suffered fistulas (holes) while attempting to deliver babies too large for the mother's body to accommodate, causing continuous leakage of urine and/or feces, making the women socially worse than lepers. We took \$1,800 to

them—sufficient for six fistula operations—which will return their lives to these women, thanks to the generosity of our church, friends,



and family. Max made the presentation. *[Editor's note: \$800 of this was from the Make a Difference Team here at Hillsdale, and \$1,000 from other friends of the Frengles.]* We got a tour of the facility, which is beautiful and a great place for the women to heal both physically and emotionally after sometimes years of being outcasts and feeling worthless."

Thanks to the Make a Difference Team for their great contribution to this important work!

Youth Corner

Children and Youth Talent

The Talent/No Talent show on Saturday, January 7, is a perfect chance to show off the results of your music lessons or other interest. See you then!

Adventure and Mission for Youth and Families

Each month in 2012, Middle and High School youth are invited to gather for adventure or mission. Our first adventure will be at LaserPort in Beaverton (6540 SW Fallbrook Place) on Sunday, January 29. We'll get together after church and head over to laser port for lunch and a fun afternoon. Check out the rest of the winter and spring schedule below.

February Mission—Real. Life. Exhibit at Medical Teams International

March Adventure—Snowshoeing/Mt Hood

April Mission—Neighborhood House

May Adventure—Mountain biking/Forest Park

June Mission—Operation Nightwatch

Goodbye Misty!

Misty Town, Youth Program Coordinator, moved to Kansas just before Christmas in order to work in her father's business. We miss you, Misty, and wish you all the best in your new endeavors.

A Singing Circle of Peace: Learn, Teach, Share

What better way to learn about other religious traditions than to hear their songs, and then to sing them yourself? Save the

date of Sunday, February 26, for a very special evening of learning, sharing, and teaching the songs of many faiths.

Islam Class

Beginning Sunday, January 15, and running for five weeks, Dennis Frengle will lead a course on Islam and its connection to Christianity.

Come prepared to be surprised, and to learn much about this often-misunderstood expression of

faith. If you'd like to prepare for the class, you might want to read the book *No God But God*, available in the library. Prereading is suggested, but not required.

The class meets at 9:15 in the Library. Child care is provided.

Let Your Talent—or Your No-Talent!—Shine for All to See!

The Third Annual Epiphany Talent/No-Talent show will be Saturday January 7 beginning with a potluck at 6:00 p.m. Talents in past years have included readings of memoirs and poems, a cooking show, a Tai Chi demonstration, silly skits, and lots of music. Plan to share your talents, or just enjoy the gifts of others. A sign-up sheet



will be available that night—there's no need to pre-register! See you on the 7th!

These Stories Have Faces

The Oregon Center for Christian Voices has produced a video as part of their project, "These Stories Have Faces," which will be the centerpiece of our adult education time on Sunday, January 8, at 9:15 a.m. A digital story bank of Oregon health stories, "Stories"

serves as a forum for sharing the challenges that many Oregonians face in accessing health care. As insurance premiums continue to rise at alarming rates, many Oregon residents can't afford to purchase the insurance they need. Bring your questions, concerns, and ideas.

Friendship Builders Have Fun

On December 2, Friendship Builders met for their Annual Christmas Dinner and Auction.

Regrettably, our leader, Margaret Bronson, was unable to attend due to surgery. Our

skilled auctioneer was Donna Bestwick. There were about 30 adults and children bidding. Everything was sold and we gained \$255 to be used for church projects. It was a fun evening for all!

tidings

JANUARY 2012

Hillsdale Community Church
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Pastor **Rev. Jennifer Brownell** (jennifer@hillsdaleucc.org)

Director of Music/Administrator **Tim Ditch** (tim@hillsdaleucc.org)

Custodian **Terry Cornell**

Child Care Providers **Olivia Hinerfeld and Gracie McManus**

In Christ, we the members of Hillsdale Community Church United Church of Christ, declare ourselves to be an open and affirming congregation. We cherish and embrace individuals and families of all kinds. Believing that God's unbounded love and grace are offered to all and meant to be shared and celebrated by all, we seek to be a congregation that includes all persons, embracing differences of age, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, mental and physical ability, as well as racial, ethnic, or social-economic background. We welcome all to share in the life and leadership, ministry, and fellowship, worship, sacraments, responsibilities, and blessings of participation in our congregation. We commit to be a community of faith and spirit that works toward openness and understanding, offering justice, healing, and wholeness of life for all people. We believe that through our diversity, all can grow and practice a unity of faith that transcends our differences.

ANNUAL MEETING • SUNDAY, JANUARY 22 • 11:45 A.M.

January 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 New Year's Day 10:30a Communion Worship Service , SANC 2:00p Edgewood Downs	2 New Year's Day <i>(observed)</i> Church Office Closed 10:30p Bible Study , LIB	3 6:30a Men's Breakfast , GT 6:00p Prayer Group , PO	4 10:00a Loaves and Fishes	5 9:00a Hillsdale Hikers , LOT 7:00p Choir Rehearsal , CR	6	7 6:00p Talent/No Talent Show and Potluck , FH
8 9:15a Adult Ed Class , LIB 10:30a Worship Service and Children's Sunday School , SANC	9 Transition Projects Meal , Bud Clark Commons 10:30p Bible Study , LIB	10 6:30a Men's Breakfast , GT 6:00p Prayer Group , PO	11 1:00p Memoir Writing Group , Maria Dunlop's home	12 9:00a Hillsdale Hikers , LOT 7:00p Choir Rehearsal , CR	13	14
15 9:15a Adult Ed Class , LIB 10:30a Worship Service and Children's Sunday School , SANC 11:45a Celebration Sunday , FH	16 10:30p Bible Study , LIB	17 6:30a Men's Breakfast , GT 6:00p Prayer Group , PO 7:00p Consistory Meeting , LIB	18	19 9:00a Hillsdale Hikers , LOT 5:30p Ministry Night , FH 7:00p Choir Rehearsal , CR	20	21
22 9:15a Adult Ed Class , LIB 10:30a Worship Service and Children's Sunday School , SANC 11:45a Annual Meeting , FH	23 Tidings Deadline 10:30p Bible Study , LIB	24 6:30a Men's Breakfast , GT 6:00p Prayer Group , PO 7:00p Consistory Meeting , LIB	25	26 9:00a Hillsdale Hikers , LOT 7:00p Choir Rehearsal , CR	27	28
29 9:15a Adult Ed Class , LIB 10:30a Worship Service and Children's Sunday School , SANC 12:00p Youth Outing at LaserPort	30 10:30p Bible Study , LIB	31 6:30a Men's Breakfast , GT 6:00p Prayer Group , PO 7:00p Book Club , PO	February 1 10:00a Loaves and Fishes	2 9:00a Hillsdale Hikers , LOT 7:00p Choir Rehearsal , CR	3 Church Office Closed	4

CR=Choir Room FH=Fellowship Hall GT=Golden Touch Restaurant (SW Barbur at 19th) LIB=Library LOT=Upper Parking Lot PO=Pastor's Office SANC=Sanctuary