



The Vine

CHURCH WOMEN UNITED OF LANE COUNTY
cwulanecounty.org

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January 2012

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UPCOMING EVENTS

January 3 **Breakfast at Brails**
Tues 7-8:30am 1689 Willamette St.
(Note day change) Homeless students and their struggles

January 6 **Ebbert Memorial United Methodist**
Fri 9:00 am 532 C. St. Springfield
Homelessness of Students

February 7 **Breakfast at Brail**
Tues 7-8:30am 1689 Willamette
Obesity in Children

February 3 **First United Lutheran**
Fri 9:00 am 2230 Washington St.
Obesity in Children

JANUARY PROGRAM

Please join us for breakfast at Brails on Jan. 3 for the privilege of meeting some extraordinary youth who continue to be successful and reach their goals despite homelessness. These youth will give us insight into the realities of their struggles and how they maintain a sense of hope and we will gain a greater understanding of what homeless youth face today. On Jan. 6 we will meet with them again at Ebbert Memorial United Methodist to go deeper into their stories and have the opportunity to ask questions. See why continuing to help support them is so important. We will also be provided with a snapshot look of youth homelessness and learn more about the scope of the problem right here in Lane County.

LOOKING AHEAD TO FEBRUARY

"Laurie Trieger, Executive Director of LCHAY (Lane Coalition for Healthy Active Youth) and others will speak about the health of our young people. Among other topics, we will look at food production, including local food."

A WORD FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Phyllis Hockley

The Christmas story came to me in a totally new way this year. When I heard the gospel read about the Angel Gabriel's visit to Mary, the words, "Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God," jumped out at me and I imagined myself hearing, "Do not be afraid, Phyllis. You have found favor with God." Contemplating on those words made me quickly realize that when someone says, "Don't be afraid," there is obviously something to be afraid of. And finding favor with God? Not sure I always want to be on God's radar screen, and sometimes hope God doesn't ask too much of me in my busy busy life.

But Mary, she does some pondering, asks a few questions, and then says, OK. Here I am. Whatever you want. She could have said, "I'm only 13, how about giving me a few more years, or well, it's not too cool in my community to have a baby out of wedlock, in fact I could get stoned you know, and just what do you think Joseph will say about me having a baby. But her answer—"Here I am!"

And that really got me thinking about Mary. Her role for me at Christmas has been Mother Mary, meek and mild, draped in blue, the passive part of the nativity scene. But I am suddenly seeing a new Mary. An unmarried, pregnant teenage girl, yes, but also a woman of courage, humility, spirit and resolve, and her response to the angel Gabriel has become an important additional and meaningful part of the Christmas story for me.

As soon as the angel Gabriel leaves, Mary rushes over to her Aunt Elizabeth's house to tell her the news and Elizabeth confirms that her baby will be great, the son of God. And then Mary bursts into song!

The Lord is great! Rejoice rejoice!

Blessed am I among women. His mercy extends to all. May empires tumble, may arrogant of heart and mind be brought low,

May the humble be lifted high.

May the hungry be fed.

May the rich be sent away.

His mercy lasts forever.

Today we hear this called the Magnificat and sung in choirs around the world. But I also hear Mary's song sung today far beyond churches and great music centers. At the City council meeting related to Occupy Eugene, a young gutsy woman stood up, looked straight in the eyes of all the councilors and said, "May we please stay at this site so the hungry may be fed."

At their General Assembly at the Occupy Eugene site, we heard about how the rich must go, the humble must be lifted up, the hungry fed, and the empires need to fall.

As we enter 2012, let's keep the Mary song alive. And let's all realize that God is finding favor with all of us, and has tasks waiting for us to pick up. Yes, we have all been chosen. But whatever we will be called to do, whatever is ahead in the New Year: roses or crosses, or some of each, remember, "The Lord is with you. Do not be afraid. Nothing will be impossible with God."



**NEWS FROM
WASHINGTON DC OFFICE**
Robin Fillmore, Advocacy Coordinator

People of faith engage to speak truth to power. And if there was ever a time to engage, this seems to be that time. MLK wrote, "The church must be reminded that it is not the master or the servant of the state, but rather the conscience of the state." We are very engaged in Washington, working with a group of faith leaders concerned about where our National budget gets cut and how it affects our most vulnerable. But engagement doesn't only happen in Washington DC. Church Women United has been engaging for 70 years, particularly on the issues of protections for children and the most vulnerable in our society.

To engage with the Washington DC office, send me a note to sign up to receive the CWU email action alerts and *Inform & Act*, the online newsletter from the Legislative Office. You may want to become involved in the campaigns with NCMEC (National Center for Missing and Exploited Children), or the Faithful Budget (mentioned above). Contact me at robinfillmore@churchwomen.org or 202-481-6929

Equip yourself with information on what is happening in your community, across the country and throughout the world and then—engage.

CHANGES TO THE 2012 YEARBOOK

Mary Sharon Moore

Church: St. Thomas More Catholic

Leslie Hall

E-Mail: lesliedhall72@gmail.com

DECEMBER ANNUAL MEETINGS

Kim Bryson-Chamley

Opened with the lighting of Advent candles.

The ladies of First Christian Church were gracious in their hosting, some having been up since the wee hours of the morning assisting with the Egan Warming Center held in the church's dining hall the night before. Eva Schultz representing the women's group welcomed us whole heartedly and reminded us to look for an alternative meeting spot next December. Watch the Vine for the new venue.

Officers for the next year were elected and installed by Alice Dugan, Past President using a theme of opening windows. "The window of Church Women United looks out onto a very wide world of people. The light must not only come in to nourish and sustain those involved in the church, but must also shine out so that the world of people can see and know that God loves them."

New and returning officers for 2012 are: President: Phyllis Hockley, Vice-President: Anne O'Brien, Treasurer: Trudie Atkinson, Recording Secretary: Jane Heidegger, Ecumenical Action Co-Chairs: Leslie Hall and Anne O'Brien, Ecumenical Development Chair: Diane Beuerman, Finance Committee Chair: Dorothy Webber, Communications Chair: Phyllis Hockley, Celebrations Chair: Rose Marie Zook Barber, Nominating Committee Chair: Diane Beuerman (the Board will act as the Nominating Committee).

Cindy Kokis and Kim Bryson-Chamley were honoured with flowers and kind words of thanks as they retired from the Board.

Katharine Hunt at Breakfast at Brails and Jane Heidegger at the Friday Forum gave presentations about their trip to Atlantic City and the 70th Anniversary Celebration for CWU. The women emphasized the importance of having a stronger connection with National and how much they learned from fellow conference participants from all over the country and guest speakers. Encouragement was given to add Human Rights Day to our celebration list and to send delegates to a National, Regional or State event. Kim Bryson-Chamley presented a Powerpoint presentation at the Friday Forum of the trip using pictures taken primarily by Katharine Hunt. Followed with Q and A. A scavenger hunt of the 2011 Annual Report and 2012 Yearbook resulted in prizes given to all.

Mary Roth and Alice Dugan led those assembled in the singing of two carols, one to light the Advent candles and Joy to the World to send us out.

Lots of laughs and plenty of joy was shared.

ECUMENICAL ACTIONS

Cindy Kokis

BANK FEES SLASHED: MISSION ACCOMPLISHED

Oregon had a contract with US Bank to distribute unemployment and child care benefits. The bank used the "Reliacard", a debit card. Unfair fees were charged. CWU joined in local demonstrations, called the state treasurer, signed petitions, and marched with Occupy Eugene. The new contract for 2012 will be fair, fees diminished and more money will be in the hands of unemployed people and single parents. Si se puede.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING ACTIONS

Lane County CWU continues its work in support of the CWU national goal to end human trafficking (page 5, 2012 Yearbook). Study began in January 2010. Forum speakers came from the ACLU. Looking Glass and Whitebird. We learned that unhoused youth are prey to traffickers, right here in Lane County. We work with ZONTA, Newman Center and the University of Oregon. Political work in 2011 led to better legislation in Oregon. We collected gifts for Station 7 (2011) and Brattain House (2011), two places serving young people without housing.

In 2012 you will hear of more actions - at forums and in the Vine. Be of good cheer. The work continues. Keep informed.

THE WAR ON THE POOR

Every society teaches its people what it takes to belong: (Freire). This was heard at a Sunday afternoon conference led by the United Way. Did your faith community attend?

Here in the United States, these are the important ideas:

1. You don't belong without material items.
2. Things get taken away.
3. Those making it are better people than you are. True? Do our policies punish, not serve? Are we ignorant about poverty in Lane County? The minimum hourly wage required to afford a two bedroom rental is \$14.73. This salary earns an annual wage of \$30,638. The minimum expenses for a family of four requires earnings of \$41,821.

In 2012, let us all resolve to listen and hear from the other person's perspective. Then, let us speak truth to power. This is an election year.

A time to work for justice.

**CELEBRATING 70 YEARS IN
ATLANTIC CITY
Jane Heidegger**



**Holding some of the Ribbons of Tangible Hope.
Getting ready to go in the procession for the opening service.**

You sent Katharine Hunt, Kim Bryson-Chamley, and I to Atlantic City, New Jersey to represent our unit at the National CWU Assembly celebrating Church Women United's seventy years of existence. Katharine and I thank you for the financial assistance which made the experience possible. Kim, as a young woman, received a grant to cover her expenses. (Kim insists that she is a younger woman, having experience and knowledge that a young woman would lack.)

Freshly home from this conference, I struggle to express the essence of it. You might ask "Why Atlantic City?" CWU had its beginning there, a few days after World War Two began, in the very hotel where we stayed, the Dennis. (Although Bally's has taken it in and built around and over it.) We learned much about that beginning and what has taken place in the years since during our time in Atlantic City.

There were practical, up to date things to absorb. I went to three workshops: Finance from A to Z, How to Stir Things Up For Good led by Robin Fillmore, CWU's representative in Washington DC, and The United Nations and CWU. Wonderful speakers gave us some insight on the poverty of women and children worldwide, on the flaws in our immigration system, and other topics vital to CWU.

A tacit, underlying theme, though, is what impacted me most. Everything—the speakers, the workshops, the liturgy and songs in the plenary gatherings said to me that we are not through. We are older, sure, but viable and able and wise, and we are needed—not to act in the same old way, but to look for new ways, new ideas. On the last day of the conference the Reverend Dr. Barbara Lundblad delivered a message entitled "More Than Memories." She said that our memories have their place. They tell us where we've been and who we are, but that the time comes when memories must be put aside so that we are freed to move into the future. She was speaking to that very familiar scripture from Isaiah 43: "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?"

So it appears that we are to keep on keeping on, not in the same old ways, but being open to that "new thing." God bless us and keep us as we move ahead.

**"A LEGACY AND A LIGHT"
CELEBRATING 70 YEARS OF CWU
UNITED COUNCIL OF CHURCH WOMEN DEC. 11-12, 1941-
CHURCH WOMEN UNITED DEC.1-3, 2011
ATLANTIC CITY, NJ
WORKING FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE THROUGHOUT WORLD
KATHARINE HUNT**

It was a privilege to represent CWU of Lane County along with Jane Heidegger and Kim Bryson-Chamley at this important mile-stone gathering. Thank you for your support.

During our time in Atlantic City I kept thinking about the gathering in 1941 which took place in the same hotel (Dennis) and wondered if the women then had been surrounded by casinos. We had to walk through the Bally Casino every day to attend our meetings. I felt that with our large names tags we were being a witness to others as we greeted those people either working in the complex or visiting. I also kept thinking about the courageous women of 1941 who forged ahead to form our racially, culturally and theologically inclusive Christian women's movement to celebrate unity in diversity and work for peace in the world. They stood up for justice and peace despite the fact that their country had just entered WWII.

I was really impressed with all the speakers including 3 young women from "Sojourners". Their talks were biblically based and they discussed such issues as immigration and how it can break up families, the environment and climate change, the US Budget Debates and how it impacts women and girls worldwide, and how there needs to be a redistribution of wealth and solidarity otherwise nothing will change. It was good to hear from younger women and learn about their ministries. They kept reiterating how important CWU is and how we can use our voice for change. We have been at the "hill" for 70 years and we continue to be a voice for women and children. Our new DC office person is Robin Fillmore robinfillmore@cwu.org and she would like to hear from you. Also we have a voice at the United Nations as we are one of the original NGO's. A mother and daughter, Vivian Lovejoy and Janet Jones have volunteered there for CWU since 1980! We were encouraged to help send a young women from our area to the Status of Women conference at the UN in February.



Those of us in attendance (10) from NW Region managed to squeeze in a meeting to organize our next regional event. It was proposed that we hold the 2014 Regional Event in the Tacoma/Seattle area in early August. The theme will be Legacy and Light Continuing Journey.

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