

## Re-introductions

*This edition of the newsletter continues an offering of short introductions of our members, young and old, new and not-so-new. Bob Dill launched this in the February issue by interviewing Karen Zeller, our Christian Education instructor. Our personal profile this month (again, with many thanks to Bob Dill) features our director of children's choirs, Joanna Newton.*



### Joanna Newton

Joanna came into this world in Beaverton, Oregon, as Joanna Compton. Both of her parents enjoyed music, with a special affinity for the music of Karen Carpenter. Joanna, who has a younger sister, attended Aloha High School before enrolling in the music program at the University of Oregon. After graduating from The UofO in 1989, she was hired to teach music in the South Lane School District. She taught at Harrison and London Schools until Measure 5 was voted in by the electorate of Oregon, causing school budgets all over the state to be reduced. As a result of Measure 5, many music teachers including Joanna lost their jobs.

Joanna taught private voice and piano and created the Cottage Grove Youth Choir to fill the void left when the school jobs disappeared. Soon after, she started a preschool music program at our church. This later grew into a music and art program. About this time, she and Larry Newton were married by our pastor, Ben Dake. Although she was not a member of our church at this time, she did sing in the choir and became director of children's choirs.

Joanna sang professionally with the Cottage Theater, starring in the role of Mable in *The Pirates of Penzance* in 1995. She later sang various rolls with The Eugene Opera over period of several years, and often sang with The Eugene Symphony Choir.

Her life was changed significantly in 1996 by the birth of her daughter, Elizabeth, and again in 2003 when Elizabeth was joined by brother Albert. Joanna has been a member of the church for many years and has been a mainstay of the music program. Her solo and ensemble performances never cease to bring worship to a new depth of meaning. She has been nursery coordinator for several years.

The South Lane School District has restored some music positions, including Joanna teaching music at Latham and Delight Valley Schools.

For relaxation, the Newton family enjoys visiting a family retreat on the Puget Sound. To broaden her musical horizons, Joanna has joined "Bark Shanty," a blues band which can soon be heard at The Axe and the Fiddle. Joanna loves to cook and when life becomes less hectic, she plans to become a master gardener. ☘