



The Communicator Lenten Journey

2010

Congregational Community Church of Sunnyvale

1112 Bernardo Avenue, Sunnyvale, CA 94087 ** 408-739-3285 * conglchurch@earthlink.net



Thoughts from the Pastor's Study

by Pastor Gen Heywood

Lent invites us to make room for God more fully in our lives. Many Christians will “give up” something during Lent. It is an ancient practice that has a purpose. If we give something up as a spiritual practice it is with the intent of letting God fill that space. It is meant to draw us closer to God.

Thus, if you give up chocolate, TV, the 11 PM news, in the place of these things, you let God have a real place with you. Maybe in silence or on a walk or in conversation. Or maybe you are giving up bigger things this Lent, things that require that you trust God more fully in your life.

On the first Sunday in Lent, we heard the temptations of Jesus that happen at the end of his days in the wilderness. Jesus is tempted to make one loaf of bread to feed himself. He is tempted to be loved by the world by becoming the ruler over all the earth. He is tempted to force God to do something,

that is to have control over God by throwing himself from a tower and forcing God to rescue him. Jesus is tempted by the desire for personal security - will he have enough food. He is tempted by the desire to be admired, loved by all. He is tempted by the desire to control, even to control God.

Jesus faces each of these desires. He knows that life is more than food. He will be fed by those who love him when he gets home from his wilderness solitude. He will have his need met. Jesus knows that you cannot please everyone, no matter the temptation to try to do so. His love must be in God and he is loved only fullest by God. Jesus is tempted to force God to act. This temptation even has scripture to argue that it's okay to force God to act. And Jesus recognizes that God alone is God. As odd as it sounds, of course we cannot be god over God.

Jesus surrenders the very human desire for security, the desire for affection, and the desire for control. Indeed, this is the experience of all of us who are fully human. We desire to create infinite security, affection, and control. In truth, the only place these desires can be fulfilled is in God.

This Lent, I invite you to continue to have the *need* for security, the need for affection, the need for control and to let God fill that need. I invite you

this Lent to give up the *desire* for these things and welcome God who alone can fully fill that need. Each time you feel yourself tempted by your insecurity, your low self esteem, your lack of control, surrender these moments over to God and let God know you are leaning on God. Talk with God. You can use this prayer or another that comes to your heart:

**Holy One, you know me better
than I know myself.**

**Give me a sense of your peace
in the storms of my life,
give to me the warmth of your love
in the coldness of being misunderstood
and misrepresented,
give to me the light of your guidance
when my way is out of my control.**

**Draw me closer to your heart
and send me into the world
with your light
made known in the living Jesus.
Amen**

With blessings,
Pastor Gen

**Join Pastor Gen in prayer
for our church
Tuesday mornings
from 9:00-9:30 am.**

Take a few minutes for prayer wherever you are
to seek special guidance for our church.

Needed:

Sunday School Teachers and Assistants

If you think you could possibly help,
please speak with Pastor Gen!

Also Needed:

Additional Member for our Preschool Board

As we are moving forward towards the sale of our Preschool we could use more thinking caps and helping hands! If you have any questions, please speak to Christel, Markus, or Ina



EASTER EGG HUNT

Worship and Community Board asks you to kindly bring in filled Easter eggs during the remaining weeks of Lent for the Children's Easter egg hunt on Easter Sunday. (We have a lot of empty plastic egg shells saved from last year - please take some home, fill them and bring them back.) Thank you!

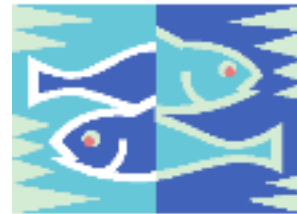


Join Us!

INTERGENERATIONAL DRUMMING CHOIR



Drumming and Children's Choir
rehearse each Sunday at 10:10 AM with
Worship at 10:30 AM - and we welcome all to
join us at 10:10 AM.



Sunnyvale FISH, our Food and Clothes Closet, at this time especially asks for donations of

- peanut butter
- cheerios and
- tooth paste
- or money.

THANK YOU!

We will miss you.

*Members of our Congregation
who have passed into Eternal Life:*

Gladys van Horn

October 12, 1913 - November 22, 2009



On March 13, 2010 at 1 PM we will celebrate the life of Gladys Ella Dorman Van Horn.

The family welcomes all to join us. We are looking for volunteers to help with the refreshment set up and clean up as well as donations of food for the reception that follows the memorial. Please, contact the church office at (408) 739-3285 if you are able to help.

Rachael Perez Hayes

April 18, 1931 to December 8, 2009



On January 23, 2010, we celebrated the life of Rachael Perez Hayes. We continue to send out love to her family. We miss her.

Prayer Flags



More beautiful prayer flags were hung during January. There is room for many more. If you have a set of flags, bring them in. If you could fill out another set, let Pastor Gen know as we surround our church in prayer!

Help for Haiti



Helping Babies in Need

Here are 16 of our 24 Baby Kits for the Haiti babies. By now all 24 are done and in the mail. Thank you to the Sisterhood of the Needle and Thread for this wonderful ministry!



Impressions from our
Church
Whale Watch Adventure
on Feb. 27, 2010...





Update Regarding Our Preschool

The Church council continues the hard work surrounding our preschool and offers this update. If you would like more information, please contact a Council member.

Owning a Preschool

1. Our Preschool business with \$1.6 million in expenses per year requires full time owners who are held ultimate responsible for all the ramifications of owning a preschool business, such as financial, legal, administrative and management aspects. Given the current staffing, volunteers that change every year or every two years are not able to do the job as it is needed by licensing regulations and the rules for remaining a non-profit organization.

2. Our Preschool business model is not sustainable. See the “Update on the Preschool Financials” below.

3. Over the last several years the Council spent almost their entire time on overseeing the preschool business at the expense of any other ministry or mission.

Finding and Selecting a Buyer

1. The Church Council sought to find a buyer of the school that would love and nurture the school into the next many years and place the preschool on the path of sustainability.

2. Since the summer 2009 the Council worked to find a buyer to start before February 2010 as the parents had made it clear they needed to know by February whether they would sign on with the new buyer for the next academic year.

3. Due to the events of December, the sale fell through and the value of the school business dropped.

The Value of the Preschool Buildings

The school buildings are church property that have value and it is the fiduciary responsibility of the leaders to practice good stewardship so that the church may fulfill its mission and ministry in this time and place.

The Value of the Preschool Business

1. The school business has value and it is the fiduciary responsibility of the Church Leadership to secure the value of the business while finding a good neighbor and a buyer who will thrive in this location.

2. The value of the preschool business was estimated at \$788,000 in September. .

Update on the Sale of the Preschool Business

1. In January, the Council terminated the relationship with the potential buyers from December. According to an email received from our business broker, those former potential buyers have now “initiated legal action against the Church”.

2. At this time, the Council has two offers to buy the business. In addition we have another interested party who has sent us a Letter of Intent for buying the business and still another party who has offered to rent all classrooms and the preschool office.

The Rental Value of the Church’s School

Property

1. The value of the annual property rental is estimated at approx. \$260,000 incl. utilities. (This is based on a current offer from a potential renter).

2. Our Preschool paid a facility usage fee of \$172,500 in the last year, 2009. The difference of \$87,500 to the \$260,000 above, is recognized as the Church’s subsidy of the Preschool operation. The Preschool lost \$28,000 in 2008 and \$38,000 in 2009. The legal fees caused by dealing with the teachers union were approx. \$93,000 in 2009 for a total Preschool loss in 2009 of \$131,000.

The Update on the Preschool Financials

1. In January and February 2010, the Preschool paid \$0 facility usage fee due to the mounting losses.

2. The preschool lost \$19,318 in January 2010. The church absorbed this loss by not requiring the facility usage fee for January 2010 and assuming the legal fees related to the operation of the preschool due in January 2010. The latest projection is that the preschool will loose \$129,000 for the period January-June 2010.

3. The Church Council has reviewed the Church budget and will absorb these preschool losses by

using funds such as the charity emergency fund, sabbatical replacement fund, professional growth fund, benefit concert fund, going green fund, building maintenance fund, church advertising, church vitality and growth and music supplies.

4. The Pastor's Fund was used to help Preschool families in financial hardship in January 2010. This charity fund paid out \$610 to needy preschool families.

5. The Church continues to pay half the tuition, \$500/month, for a Preschool parent as the parent is in financial hardship.

Moving Forward:

The Council continues to seek a qualified buyer / tenant for our church's school business / property who will establish a sustainable school in our community so that the church may go on to work on being a thriving church in our community.

In Christ's Service,

Your Church Council



Church Day March 13, 2010



**Congregational Church
of San Mateo UCC
225 Tilton Ave.
San Mateo CA 94401**

From our Worship & Community Board:

**Have you checked our
UCCSUNNYVALE.ORG website
lately?**

Deep gratitude for Ted Feely's huge contributions from planting the mustard seed to the growing of our current church website where you can find lots of information about our local and the wider church. So, log onto uccsunnyvale.org

Missed Sunday Worship?

Check our website and click on sermon and music. Thanks to Terry Shoup for recording and preserving it every Sunday!

Schedule for the day:

- 8:30 a.m.: Registration Opens.
(Come early for conversation & refreshments)
- 9:15 a.m.: Morning gathering:
Welcome, Introductions,
Announcements, Opening Worship
- 10:00 a.m.: Break
- 10:15 a.m.: Workshop Period I
- 11:45 a.m.: Lunch
- 1:15 p.m.: Workshop Period II
- 2:45 p.m.: Break
- 3:00 p.m.: Wrap up, Evaluation,
Announcements
- 3:30 p.m.: Closing Benediction

If you would like to attend, please speak with Ina, so she can register you with the NCNC office.



Update on the Situation **in Haiti by Susan Sanders, OGHS**

(Mid February 2010)

After one month in Haiti, United Church of Christ donations reach 150,000+ people

Since the earthquake hit parts of Haiti January 12, the UCC supported ACT Alliance has assisted more than 150,000 people. The majority of people are assisted with ongoing support such as water, sanitation, shelter or regular food supplies/meals. Others have received relief items such as cash, family kits or hygiene sets. Others have benefitted from medical assistance and supplies to health clinics. The ACT Alliance, working with numerous local organisations, is assisting some of the most vulnerable among the victims of the earthquake in Port-au-Prince (including Bel Air and Cite Soleil), Gressier and in Jacmel and Baint in the south.

The network of churches saved lives

Churches and other civil society networks in Haiti and in the Dominican Republic are working with members of the ACT Alliance on both sides of the border. While difficult to quantify at this time, their efforts, particularly in places not reached by international humanitarian actors, are crucial for the survival and relative well-being for tens of thousands of earthquake survivors in the cities and not least in rural parts of Haiti, where more than 450,000 people have sought refuge. In these areas local community networks and self help groups are often the sole providers of assistance. Working with them made ACT able to care for and support the survivors from the moment the earth quake hit Haiti.

200 people, one toilet

Despite weeks of efforts by local and international humanitarian actors, the needs in the earthquake affected parts of Haiti continue to be enormous. Conditions for most of the estimated 1.2 million people living in improvised camps and shelters remain unbearably cramped and poor. The United National has identified large gaps in provision of shelter and sanitation. Only 280,000 people have received some shelter material. That's less than 25% of the target. Only 120,000 have received transitory shelter, much less than the 620,000 people who need it. Equally, only 3,000 latrines have been provided to people in temporary settlements, a far cry from the 18,000 toilets needed. Often 200 people have to share one toilet.

Those who fled

Very little is known about the conditions of the large group of people who have fled to the rural areas - only a general sense that food prices are increasing dramatically and that the hosting communities have great difficulties assisting the

newcomers out of their own meagre resources. To make matters worse, nobody knows how long they have to live like this as rehabilitation of their homes and neighbourhoods appear to be a very long way off.

Within the next month, UCC supported ACT members will continue to increase the number of people benefitting from their activities with a continued focus on shelter, water, sanitation, psycho-social activities as well as food and non-food distributions.

The following ACT Alliance members are working in Haiti: Lutheran World Federation, Norwegian Church Aid, Christian Aid, ***Church World Service***, Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe, Christian Reformed World Relief Committee and Church of Sweden.

United Church of Christ Partner updates

The Rev. Felix Ortiz, Global Ministries Area Executive for Latin America & Caribbean, paid a pastoral visit to GM partner, CONASPEH, shortly after the earthquake. He is returning this weekend along with Daniel Gourdet, former GM Missionary with CONASPEH and a native of Haiti, to again visit CONASPEH and House of Hope, gather assessment information of damage and destruction to property and programs and work with CONASPEH and House of Hope leadership as they continue to develop plans for the immediate, near and long-term future. Patrick & Francois Villier, leaders of CONASPEH and Polycarpe Joseph, Director of House of Hope, have chosen to live in the out-of-doors in solidarity with the Haitian people. The Villiers and Joseph have organized community kitchens which are daily providing hot meals to 60 and 600 people, respectively. IMA World Health has shipped Medicine Boxes with medications and supplies to treat common illnesses for 1,000 people up to 2 months. Also provided have been Safe Motherhood Kits containing basic surgical supplies for childbirth.

CWS Refugee Resettlement affiliates in Miami, Tampa, Atlanta, Philadelphia, Newark, New York City and Boston are providing assistance to injured Haitian's who have been medically evacuated to hospitals in these cities. UCC volunteers are needed to assist in hosting and extend extravagant hospitality.

UCC members and friends have donated over \$1 million dollars in support of the Haiti Earthquake Relief fund, with more gifts arriving each day. Thanks to this generous outpouring of love and compassion, the United Church of Christ is now able to financially accompany our Haitian sisters and brothers on the long road to recovery.

Peace,

Susan M. Sanders

Minister for Global Sharing of Resources

Toll free: 1-866-822-8224 x-3210 sanderss@ucc.org

Thank you to all who have generously donated:
More than \$4500 have been sent from our
congregation to OGHS for Haiti!

Heart of Healing Heart of Light



A Six-Week Adult Lenten Study for **The Congregational Community Church of Sunnyvale**

Wednesday Nights

February 24 – March 31, 2010,

6:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Study leader: Terry Shoup

This Lenten is based on the book: “*Heart of Healing Heart of Light*” by Flora Slosson Wuellner. This book deals with encountering our God who shares and heals our pain. Although the sessions are based on sequential chapters in the book, participants can drop in and drop out of the series and still gain value from the content. Each session begins with a presentation/discussion of the reading material and ends with a guided meditation.

Flora Slosson Wuellner is a retreat leader, spiritual guide, and teacher. She is an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ and is an internationally recognized author on the subjects of healing and spirituality. She is the author of a series of books related to this topic.

Weekly Topics and Readings:

Feb. 24 The Healing Power of God.

Introduction & Chap. 1

Mar. 3 Our Pain and God’s Heart.

Chapt. 2

Mar. 10 Learning to Trust & Live.

Chapts. 3 & 4

Mar. 17 Our Anger & God’s Heart.

Chapts. 5 & 6

Mar. 24 Time for personal reflection

(no group meeting on this date)

Chapt. 7

Mar. 31 How Can We Use What We Have Learned?

Chapt. 8



Recipe Corner

This Month :



(with a wink and a smile)

From Karolyn Highsmith’s Kitchen

– Happiness Cake –

1 cup of good thoughts

1 cup of kind deeds

1 cup of consideration for others

2 cups of sacrifice

2 cups of well beaten faults

3 cups of forgiveness

Mix thoroughly. Add tears of joy, sorrow and sympathy. Flavor with love and kindly service. Fold in 4 cups of prayer and faith. Blend well. Fold into daily life. Bake well with the warmth of human kindness and serve with a smile anytime. It will satisfy the hunger of starved souls.

(found in “the pirates’ house cookbook”, by frances mcgrath, c. 1964, original author unknown)



Looking Ahead

- Please Mark Your Calendars!



**Friday, March 12, 6:30 PM
in Shephard Hall**

Church Family Movie Night

**A Fundraiser by our Sunday School
to benefit the Heifer Project**



**CELEBRATING HOLY WEEK
AND EASTER AT OUR CHURCH**

PALM SUNDAY, March 28

Worship at 10:30 with Procession of the Palms

SEDER DINNER ON MAUNDY THURSDAY

April 1, from 6:30 PM -

(Please help with set-up from 5:00 PM)

followed by the

SERVICE OF TENEBRAE

Please sign-up in Shephard Hall - Thank you!

GOOD FRIDAY, April 2

The church is open for meditation from Noon - 3:00 PM.

HOLY SATURDAY, April 3

Tentative Schedule:

5 PM Decorate Sanctuary for Easter

6 PM Light Dinner: Soup & Bread and Fruits

**If you would like to stay at church for a sleep over,
please contact the church office!**

WORSHIP SERVICES ON

EASTER SUNDAY, April 4

Sunrise Service at 6:30 AM,

followed by Easter Breakfast

Morning Worship at 10:30 AM,

followed by Easter Egg Hunt

- Please bring flowers to decorate our Easter Cross! -

Lectures with Marcus Borg:

Sunday, March 21, 2010

First Congregational Church

1980 Hamilton Avenue, San Jose CA 95125

10:00 am - Morning Worship - Presentation #1
“Lent: Following Jesus”

4:30 pm - Afternoon Lecture - Presentation #2
**“An Emerging Jesus for an Emerging
Christianity”**

- Free of Charge -

*For further information please see the flier posted in
Shephard Hall or call 408 377 7121*

From our NCNC UCC

Santa Clara Association:

SUNDAY, APRIL 18th @ 2:00 pm

Ecclesiastical Council,

Installation Council & Worship Service

First Congregational Church, San Jose

We are called to gather as a greater church body to consider, affirm, recognize and celebrate those called to ordained ministry among us. All clergy and lay members of the Association are invited to attend the the Ecclesiastical Council of Jennifer Fargo Lathrop and the Installation Council and Worship Service for Rev. T'Shala Oliveri.

Times:

2 pm: Jennifer Fargo Lathrop's Ecclesiastical Council

3:30 pm: Rev. T'Shala Olivieri's Installation Council

4:30 pm: T'Shala's Installation Worship Service

Please come bring your listening ear and thoughtful questions to these two councils. Clergy are asked to come prepared to robe for T'Shala's Installation Worship Service.

UCC NCNC

Annual Gathering at Asilomar

May 13-16, 2010

(Members of our church attending this year:

Pastor Gen, Mary Ruth, Darryl and Ina)

Communicator Deadline

Deadline for the Easter Season edition of our Communicator is Monday, March 29, 2010.

We accept submissions of texts, photos & graphics at our office, 1112 S. Bernardo Ave, Sunnyvale, CA 94087 or via e-mail (conglchurch@earthlink.net).

Office Hours: Tuesdays - Fridays 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM