



The Sea Star

Dear Friends:

The end of the year always brings our church a time of richness and depth. We are now in the midst of praying about the scope of our membership for 2011 before we turn in our covenants November 14. During the next few Sundays we will also remember and celebrate our departed loved ones and reflect upon the first Thanksgiving our Pilgrim ancestors offered in thanks to the God who called them forth from England and then delivered them through their first year in New England.

Then on November 28 we will be entering into the season of Advent. You recall this is the roughly four-week span of preparation before Christmas. The Church gets ready to receive and respond to the earthshaking fact that "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us." God, who was thought of as high above and far away, has "moved into the neighborhood" of human beings, as Eugene Peterson puts it. In Jesus the Christ, God has come to earth as a human being and bridged the great gap separating us from God. God "has come" to us, which is the etymological meaning of "advent.")

We know many around us are bearing heavy burdens—perhaps financial challenges, or broken relationships, or concerns about loved ones—which can weigh especially heavily during the Christmas season. We well know our church offers a wealth of resources to those in our community who may still feel God is far away. Most any guest who worships with us will hear inspiring music and sense a genuine welcome. (The Choir will offer their extravaganza during Worship on Sunday, December 19. Advent sermon themes will be "Hope," "Love," "Joy," and "Peace.") Those willing to stick around will come to know we don't care about their financial status or who they are or are not—that around here it's just us who need Jesus and want to do better.

The church is planning a number of new ways for each of us to consider being the "Community Church" this Advent season—and I would ask you to pray about stepping into something new in order to help others discover what we are already experiencing in Christ. Some of you have gifts of friendliness or enthusiasm—or simply the desire to invite others to join us. Our church will again be represented during the CdM Christmas Walk December 5. We will be hosting all of you and any guests for Christmas activities in Mertz Hall December 12: refreshments, a Christmas DVD, baking, gift-wrapping, etc.

Covenant Sunday is November 14, 2010

Pick up your package on the patio after service; or call the office to request your packet be mailed to you.

PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

"Many of us know we have greatly received, and we look forward to new ways to allow our faith to overflow to others."

I want to invite you to walk through "the flower streets" for an hour or two on Saturdays November 20 and 27 to offer our neighbors an invitation to worship with us Christmas Eve or during Advent, and distribute a postcard and cd of our choir's singing and two sermons.) We will all meet together in Mertz Hall for preparation and prayer, and then we'll go in pairs to homes in particular blocks. We could use your hearts and hands and feet on this one—to offer a valuable Christmas gift to people we haven't even met yet. (Our PR Committee has already been working hard to help coordinate these Advent activities. I hope you'll read (on page four) about what they are making available.

We recognize that the Holy Spirit goes before us to move in the hearts of our neighbors, just as God moved in us before we ever began to be able to take Jesus seriously. Apart from the Spirit, I don't suppose anyone is ready for anything truly important or eternal. We are not trying to coerce anyone into anything—only to be obedient followers of the One who risked His life to come into our territory, our neighborhood, in order to invite us back into relationship with God when we felt far away. (Some of you have found this church as a result of finding our booth and our enthusiastic people during the Christmas Walk; many of you have joined this church as a result of someone here having invited you.)

God has gathered us in this beautiful building on Heliotrope for a particular purpose. We are indeed the community church in this neighborhood, though many around us have no awareness of what blessing we, this church, might become for them until they enter in. (The more times people pass by the building on their way to Starbuck's, the less likely it becomes they would simply stop in to check us out—so the more important it becomes for us to introduce our church to them. How they respond is not our business.) Many of us know we have greatly received, and we look forward to new ways to allow our faith to overflow to others. Thank you for your willingness to do likewise—whether by supporting these church activities this Advent with your physical, public presence, or through the various other ways you keep reflecting the Light of the world into the lives of those around you.

GOINGS

ON...

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING THIS WEEK!

Plan to attend the Congregational Meeting immediately following the November 7th 10am worship service in the sanctuary to approve an amendment to the Church's Bylaws creating an Endowment Fund Committee. Creation of this Committee is the first step in the Church establishing a formal planned giving program in 2011. This Committee will oversee the Church's current endowment and investment funds. If the Bylaw amendment is approved, members of the Endowment Fund Committee will be approved at the Church's Annual Meeting in January. If you have any questions regarding the Committee or the planned giving program, please give Bob Underwood a call at 949.760.0520.

Emeritus Luncheon & Presentation

'Share my Trip across the U.S.A.'

Linda Calkins will be sharing a slideshow of the wonderful trip she shared with her dad from California to Nova Scotia. Lunch to be provided (donations accepted to cover cost of food). Please contact Chuck Hoover (949.500.8851), or sign up on the patio to reserve a spot.

November 17, Wednesday, in Mertz Hall at 12 noon.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Barbara Ranney	11/1	Ava Richey	11/14
Emma DeLaney	11/4	Anna McCartney	11/16
Tina Hoover	11/4	Cheryl Bodman	11/20
John Felicione	11/5	Bob O'Neill	11/21
Samantha Rekon	11/7	Peggy Read	11/21
Emily Ryan	11/7	Bruce Van Blair	11/21
Celeste Taylor	11/8	Rachel Johnson	11/26
Lauren Newell	11/10	Evelyn Hougan	11/27
Elizabeth McKenzie	11/11	Michelle Johnson	11/28
Heather Miner	11/11	Joanne Reynolds	11/29
Nicole Grabiell	11/13	Doreen Davis Fuhr	11/30
Amy Curtis	11/14	Samantha Nowak	11/30
Catherine Fisher	11/14		

AND

OTHERS...

Springtime in the Heartland

by Paul and Joanne Reynolds

We traveled to Nebraska in June and had time to visit two people who have left their fingerprints on Community Church.

In Omaha we visited the Rev. Bruce Van Blair. Bruce served our church from 1996 to 2006, first as Senior Minister and then as Associate Minister. At the end of last year he was called out of retirement to become Interim Associate Minister at Countryside Community Church-UCC. This 1,500 member church will have the luxury of taking their time finding a new Associate Minister because Bruce has agreed to stay until his replacement is hired. Many of the members told us that they hoped the Search Committee takes their time because they are enjoying having Bruce around. We felt that BVB is also hoping that the committee will take its time.

In Lincoln we had dinner with the Rev. James Keck, his wife Karen and their two children, Alexander and Brice. Jim was Associate Minister at Community Church from 1990 until 1993 and he and Karen were married in our sanctuary in the fall of 1991. Jim is now Senior Pastor at the 3,200 member First Plymouth Church-UCC. He preaches at the four services that the church holds each Sunday. He was fresh out of seminary when our church hired him but all who knew him felt he was going places. He hasn't disappointed us.



ADVENT

SEASON....

Catch the Christmas Spirit at *your* Community Church

Corona del Mar Outreach Our first Advent walk through the flower streets. We plan to deliver our advent postcard and a sermon cd as we take time to invite our neighbors to our church. This is an outreach event for all ages. We will begin in Mertz Hall at 9 am on both Saturday November 20 and November 27 (come to one day or both) and enjoy a light breakfast followed by prayer and a dedication of this outreach event. We will walk in pairs or families or small groups for about an hour – just one hour and perhaps one amazing encounter that could change someone’s Christmas this year – please come.

Sermon Series Uplifting messages throughout Advent on Love (12/5), Joy (12/12) and Peace (12/19)

Children’s Advent Logos Program Come with your family for an afternoon of recreation activities, a Bible lesson, music and dinner; open to all ages. Invite your friends and neighbors! 4:30 pm to 6:30 pm in Mertz Hall, Wednesday 12/1

Annual Corona del Mar Christmas Walk Join our faith family on Sunday 12/5 after the 10 am worship service, at our table in the Bandera Restaurant parking lot to greet our neighbors.

Barbecue Lunch and Ice Cream Sundaes following the 10 am service on Sunday, 12/12

Christmas at Community Church Experience an afternoon of fellowship and fun with our faith family and invited guests as we gather to watch Holiday movies, string popcorn with the kids, and offer a gift wrapping service - \$1 per gift if you wrap your own or let us do it for you for \$3-4 per gift - depending on size - we supply all the materials! Spread the word to your friends and neighbors! Sunday, 12/12

Christmas Music Program Revel in the magnificence of our full choir accompanied by an instrumental ensemble; 10am service, 12/19

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service with Choir and Children Celebrate a traditional Christmas Eve service amid the glow of warm candlelight, Friday, 12/24 at 7 pm

Join *your* Community Church to share in the wonder of Christmas!

Calling for Advent Devotions, Christmas Traditions and Recipes

Our church seeks your input for a small book of favorite Christmas traditions and recipes; also included will be short devotions written by each family who feels so called. The hope is to have at least 28 devotions – one for each day of Advent. Although these will not be used until our Advent events next year in 2011, we want to start gathering them now as we are moved by the Spirit during this Advent season of preparation.

So please think about developing a devotion (just a couple of short paragraphs) that you (or you together with your family) write and that we can share with others next year. Also send us your favorite holiday tradition and/or cherished recipe. Now is the time to write and share as we once again experience the wonder of Christmas.

Please send your contribution in digital format to Suzanne Wyrick, who has graciously agreed to accept our contributions (suz9921@gmail.com). If you prefer you can handwrite your devotion or tradition or recipe on an index card and place it in the basket on the table on the patio beginning in November. Thank you in advance for the comforting words and special traditions we know you will share.



Building children's ministries that build young disciples

We had a terrific start to Logos this past Wednesday. The younger elementary children began a unit about the life of Jesus with Carolyn Grabel. The older elementary children started a unit on worship with Kimberly Capwell. Pastor Chip led them all in recreation, building the group into a team that knows how to work together as one body. Carol Hoppe joined us upstairs for some hymn singing and a prayer of thanks with sign language. Kip, this year's Dinner Dean, joined by Tom Grabel and me (table parents), led us in an Italian "thank the cooks" song and gave the children their choice of games. They chose "heads up, 7 up." Did I mention the cooks? Well, Jan Shea had them dressed up with white hats and mustaches to the delight of the kids. Kathi Ramming provided the first dinner and Kathy Kipp is working to find others to team up to provide future dinners.

Here's the challenge. Logos is a whole church program. It is up to each of us to pass down the faith to the next generation. One of the reasons the children love Logos is that they come to know many of the adults in church. So, you who do not have children, I wonder would you pair up with a few others to cook a dinner or perhaps share the responsibilities of table parenting? Might you contact Pastor Chip and let him know you'll plan the recreation one night so all he needs to do as Senior Pastor is to be there? Might you spend time in prayer for those mentioned above that they will continue to feel God's power and grace as they serve? Do you have a neighbor you might invite as Paul Curtis has? Or do you have a personal story you can share one night during dinner?

Logos is part of our church's mission, one very close to home, and one that makes a huge difference for the Kingdom. When our children know they are loved by so many, when they know adults take time to teach them about Jesus, Jesus is no longer part of a children's story, but is the one they choose to stay with all of their lives!

Logos Schedule:

4:30 – 5:00 Bible Time

5:00 – 5:45 Recreation

5:45 – 6:30 Music and Family Fun Time

The future Logos dates for Fall are...

November 3, November 10, and December 1*.

*Families who have had other commitments are invited to join us on December 1st where we will include a celebration of Advent.

Our Winter Season is tentatively scheduled for January 12, 19, 26; February 2, 9, and 16.

Our Spring Season is tentatively scheduled for March 2, 9, 23, 30; April 27, May 4, 11.

Your "interim" director, Pastor Heather

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service With Choir and Children, 7:00 p.m.

The Church has decided that this year we will all join together for one Christmas Eve Worship Service—at 7:00 p.m. Our deacons, our pastors and Rodger are planning different ways in which our worshipers of all ages may be involved in this Service. Those young people interested in singing at least one song with the choir will be welcome to do so, and invited to at least one rehearsal after worship one Sunday during December. More information is to come. Please contact Chip, Heather, or Rodger with questions.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The Practice of Prayer Retreat

November 19 – 21, Cost: \$245

Want to grow in your prayer life? If you are just beginning in prayer or have been praying for a long time, you are invited to spend a weekend with Pastor Heather and Kip in the beautiful La Casa De Maria retreat center in Santa Barbara. This is not prayer 101 but a combination of personal prayer (seeking God's word for you), centering prayer (sitting with Jesus), and intercessory prayer (praying for others). The emphasis will be on the practice of prayer, with gentle guidance to help you find your way. Please make your checks out to Vicki Ronaldson, our retreat coordinator.

An important note—I know that for some the cost is prohibitive. But prayer is essential to growing in faith individually and growing together as a church. So I have support from leadership to hold some spots for half the cost. P l e a s e make your intention to come known ASAP...isn't it time to pray?!

Heather

Mission Prayer with Daniel Okabe

November 4, 18; December 2; 6pm - 7pm

You are invited to join our Ugandan friend Daniel to pray in our sanctuary at least these Thursday evenings (Nov. 4 and 18, and Dec.2, from 6pm to 7pm, with more dates possible depending on when Daniel leaves us for Africa.)

Daniel comes from a Christian culture which values and practices corporate prayer—gathering together to pray silently and out loud, as the Spirit might lead—and if you know Daniel, you know it is inspiring to be with him and to pray with him. During these times together we pray for Christ's Church and for the work God calls us to do: in Mexico, in Uganda, in Orange County, and wherever else you would like.

Mission and Outreach

Working with Daniel an enthusiastic group of children, youth and adults put together a very large care package to send to Uganda. The package is intended to brighten the spirits of the children who are in the care of *Impact Ministries Uganda*. Mary gathered candy, toys, sporting equipment to be sent along with the hand crafted cards and well wishes.



MUSIC

NOTES



I'll try not to be too long-winded here this month. But I do want to let you know that our Advent/Christmas music plans are in full swing.

We're rehearsing hard on the very challenging cantata, *Canite Tuba*, which we'll sing/play on Sunday, December 19th in the 10am service. An instrumental ensemble comprised of seven brass and two percussion players will join the Chancel Choir. I'll try to keep it all

together
a west coast

from the organ. I'm not sure about this, but I think it might be 'premiere' of this fine work. I need to check with the composer, Donald McCullough, on that. It's definitely a piece that demands high musicianship, and I'm proud of the work our choir is doing to prepare the cantata. I hope you'll all be there to hear it. We'll supplement that major work with other great music utilizing the fine instrumental ensemble.

Before that time, we'll enjoy singing music for Thanksgiving, that most commercially forgotten holiday in America. I love the hymns and anthems written for Thanksgiving, and we'll sing them together in worship. Then, on Christmas Eve, enjoy the Candlelight Service with Choir and Children at 7 pm. At this time, the plan is for the kids to sing one or two songs on their own, and one with the adult choir. What better time to hear children's voices in song than at Christmas.

I recently had the Allen organ technician from Church Organs, Inc. in Pasadena (from whom we purchased our instrument) come out and re-voice our organ. After a memory loss due to a failed battery several months back, the organ had lost its voicing settings, and was sounding quite harsh. The technician, Tom Anderson, was able to re-capture those settings, and instruct me how to do some changes I hadn't known about. I'm delighted to have what feels like a 'new' organ again, one that is much better suited to our sanctuary in terms of size and acoustic. Thanks again to all of you who made the acquisition of the organ a reality several years ago.

That's about it for now. I hope you're enjoying your autumn months. Plan to spend your Sunday mornings with us in worship.

God bless,
Rodger

Trustees News

What a pleasure it is to walk onto our beautiful church campus. We may not have towering glass reaching up to heaven or parking lots that require attendants but this place does have the Spirit. We truly have been entrusted with a grand set of buildings. This summer we had been busy with some changes that many may not have noticed but do make a difference in our "image". Our thanks to the committees who advised and executed (or are in the process of executing) the following:

- Redecorating Classroom #4
- Shutters on all windows facing the courtyard
- New Windows and window coverings on Hougan Hall
- Carpet in Classroom #1
- Landscaping improvements

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sundays

8:00 am Closer to the Cross

9:00 am Adult Sunday School

10:00 am Traditional Worship with
Full Choir

10:00 am Children Sunday School



Thank you to the Richeys, Taylors, Fishers, Barbara Ranney, Mary Anderson, Susan Monroe and Claudia P! Without you the Publicity Committee would still be digging in the sand!

Community Church, Congregational

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