

# WANDERINGS

*A newsletter for people on a journey together with a purpose*

## *Redlands United Church of Christ An Open and Affirming Church*

*September 2004*

Staff Meeting, 11:45 a.m., Thursday, September 2

Communion Sunday - Worship Service 10:30 a.m., Sunday, September 5

Wider Ministries Area meeting after worship, Sunday, September 5

“Begin Your Week ... Praying for Peace”  
Every Monday Evening in our sanctuary 7:00 – 7:30 p.m.

Church office will be closed in observance of Labor Day, Monday, September 6

Celebration Ringers Rehearsal on Thursdays, 6:30 p.m. Beginning September 9  
Jubilee Ringers Rehearsal on Sundays, 11:45 a.m. Beginning September 12

Covenant Choir Rehearsal on Thursdays, 7:30 p.m. Beginning September 9

Church Board will meet Tuesday, September 14, 7:00 p.m.

R.U.C.C. Women’s Fellowship will meet at 9:30 a.m. at the home of Ruth Moses,  
Wednesday, September 15<sup>th</sup>

Jerry Arnett’s 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebration, Sunday, September 26 after worship

Wedding Shower and Luncheon for Wendy Naftzger  
Sunday, September 26, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. in Covenant Hall



From your Pastor and Teacher, Sharon~

*“Every desirable and beneficial gift comes out of heaven.*

*The gifts are rivers of light cascading down from the Source of Light.”*

*--paraphrased from James 1:17*

Gifts...usually we sequester them to holidays, birthdays, anniversaries, special occasions, and the like. I happen to enjoy gifts all year long! I especially like giving gifts and watching the look on the recipient's face as he or she unwraps my carefully selected present. When I shop for a gift, I try to imagine that the intended recipient is by my side, offering much-needed advice and suggestions that help me with a successful purchase.

Some anonymous folk around here have apparently been just as focused on planning and giving gifts. Recently, I have been the grateful recipient of a beautiful storybook, a lovely candle imbedded in red rock from the sacred ground of Sedona, numerous newspaper articles that I have found very interesting and thought-provoking, a teddy bear sitting on a bright red heart, ice cream (always welcome!), and even a new translation of the Bible. My deepest thanks to the elves who have dropped these happy gifts for me to find!

The author of the tiny book of James in the New Testament suggests that all good gifts come from heaven...but I beg to differ. These good gifts may originate in heaven—in the mind and heart of the divine—but the actual act of giving is completed by us. Each time we think a positive thought about another person, it is a form of giving energy to that person. Each time we offer a prayer—however brief—it is a gift of love to another. Each time we imagine the physical health of a friend, the mental health of a family member, the spiritual health of a fellow believer, we are participating in that loved one's return to health. The energy we send out does make a difference as it spirals around those who receive it.

So gift giving is something we each can do all year long—and it doesn't have to cost us a dime! Gift giving only asks of us that we consider the needs of another, that we acknowledge our connection to that person, and that we act with wild generosity in showering them with all good gifts. As this new year of programs and activities and worship begins for us, I invite you to join me in giving and receiving extravagantly!

Blessings,



## Sundays with the Body September 2004

By Sharon R. Graff

The apostle Paul suggests several times that the body of Christ, the Church, needs to come together for praying, for singing, for listening, and for learning. Through such regular meeting, the body is strengthened and stretched, and the various parts of the body begin to work more lovingly together with efficiency and joy. Our worship services in September will continue the focus on body stories included in chapters 14 - 16 of Luke's gospel. Growth on the journey awaits you.

### **September 5 - "Life Labors" – Communion Sunday**

*Deuteronomy 30:15-20; Psalm 1; Philemon 1-21; Luke 14:25-33*

Choosing life over death, living wisely rather than ignorantly, loving and praying and acting on behalf of another, being prepared—these are all important aspects of successful laboring in life. Today marks the beginning of our Labor Month at RUCC, when we each are nudged to offer our talents and skills to take care of our church home...how can you wisely and lovingly lend a hand?

### **September 12 – "Lost and Found" – Education Sunday**

*Exodus 32:7-14; Psalm 51:1-10; 1 Timothy 1:12-17; Luke 15:1-10*

Usually, the L&F box (or cupboard) is empty at the beginning of September, but today is different. Lost and Found articles include beloved children of God, foreigners, a penitent individual, a repentant and joyful person, one sheep, one silver coin, and one sinner. Is there space for us to take our place among the found?

### **September 19 – "Peace in a Nanosecond"**

*Amos 8:4-7; Psalm 113; 1 Timothy 2:1-7; Luke 16:1-13*

"Visualize Whirled Peas"...so read the clever bumper sticker from several years ago. To me, Whirled Peas or world peace are both overwhelming tasks to accomplish, yet today's scriptures suggest that we can make for peace one act at a time, one second at a time, one step at a time. We'll look at some of the creative work of Thich Nhat Hanh to help us take these steps.

### **September 26 – "Visions of Sugarplums"**

*Amos 6:1a, 4-7; Psalm 146; 1 Timothy 6:6-19; Luke 16:19-31*

An amazing story awaits us today—visions of a heavenly feast to beat all feasts. But, depending on where you are seated, the view will be either inviting or indicting. What really creates contentment is often not what we anticipate...a reader's theater will invite us into lessons about satisfaction and contentment.

I look forward to experiencing with you the Spirit's movement among us.

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Have you ever made a New Years Resolution? Have you ever decided to give up a bad habit, or even more difficult, have you decided to take up a new activity? Let me start a list and you can add to it as you like.

- Not to eat so much
- Quit smoking
- Loose weight
- Call family members regularly
- Be less judgmental
- Stop swearing
- Stop interrupting others
- Give more to those beggars

Have fun adding to the list

Life style changes are very hard to do. How long have you kept a resolution you made? In my job I am regularly advising individuals to make life style changes for their health. Almost all lectures I attend and educational articles I read usually mention a life style change before prescribing medications or a surgical procedure. Unfortunately, very few individuals make the appropriate changes to avoid the medications, surgery, a poor quality of life, or an early death. During some recent meditation time (walking to work and walking home from work) it came to mind that the first Christians also had to make a life style change. How was it then that a new religion was able to not only get started but to grow and last for 2,000 years? From what I have witnessed on a daily basis, very few make permanent life style changes. Did I keep a resolution for more than a week, a month, a season (Lent), or forever? When I was eleven years old I gave up sucking my thumb for Lent and never have returned to sucking. A few years ago during Lent I started eating a very good breakfast and lunch and since then that has been the rule. (I still pig out with the evening meal as you may have seen me at a potluck.) My meditation has led me to believe there is a difference between a life style change for health and a life style change for your soul. Most of you know that without a goal and support most individuals will not make the permanent change in habits. (Just look at the statistics on the number of individuals who are repeat criminals returning to jail.) Life style changes for the soul are easier since we are first forgiven; then we are sent the Holy Spirit to strengthen us; followed by Grace for the times we will fail on our journey; and finally realizing the love our Creator God has for us which is given freely. I invite you to meditate on this and let me know where I am wrong or right.

Eric Naftzger

*Minister – Rev. Dr. Sharon R. Graff*

*Choir Director – Peggy McMeans*

*Organist & Handbell Director – Kristen Cameron*

*Administrative Assistant – Rebecca Gutierrez*

*Sunday Child Care – Mariana and Mina Ryan*

*Custodian – Jay Grayson*

*Church office hours: 9 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Monday - Friday*

*Wanderings is published monthly by R.U.C.C.*

**The Interfaith Communities United for Justice and Peace  
invite us to participate in a major community event  
with music, art, and sacred ritual  
Saturday, September 11**

*9/11: Healing Journeys for Local and Global Justice  
10:30 am-1:00 PM  
MacArthur Park ~ 7<sup>th</sup> and Parkview ~ Los Angeles*

*We are cosponsors of this event,  
and are asked to provide volunteers  
to assist with the festival.  
Please contact Dianne Landeros to sign up and carpool.*

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*“Eyes on the Prize:  
High Stakes for People of Faith  
in November and Beyond”*

Convocation and Rally  
Sunday, September 12, 2004  
Ward AME Church – 1177 W. 25<sup>th</sup> Street – Los Angeles

Featuring The Rev. Dr. James Forbes, Jr.  
Arianna Huffington  
Senator Barbara Boxer  
State Senator Sheila Kuehl

For more information, please contact Progressive Christians Uniting  
(909) 397-5850 or [pcu@pcu-la.org](mailto:pcu@pcu-la.org)  
\$10 contribution requested – no one turned away

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### **Book Study Group for Women**

An inspirational, supportive, relaxed book group for all women to share  
Begins on **Friday, September 3<sup>rd</sup>, at 7:30 PM.**  
The group will meet on Friday evenings at the home of  
Cindi Donald, 246 E. Fern, #210 (Gate code #2232).  
For more information, call Cindi at 793-1462. All ages are welcome!

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***Jerry Arnett is 100 years young...  
and we are honoring him!***

Sunday, September 26

Reception after worship service  
with special awards and a few surprises!

\* \* \* \* \*

**Welcome to our Youth Director, Craig Colclough  
and our Seminary Intern, Jeanne Favreau-Sorvillo**

We are stepping out in faith...again! We are, once again, identifying ourselves with quality education. And we are repeating a long and grand history of supporting yet another student in her ministerial training. All of this, without going over budget!

After a long and prayerful search, our new Youth Director, Craig Colclough (pronounced coal-cloh) will begin his work with our youth group on October 1<sup>st</sup>. Craig is a 2004 graduate of the University of Redlands in music, and did work at the Johnston Center in religious studies. Craig has had a heart for ministry since his childhood. Growing up in the progressive Claremont Presbyterian Church, Craig was active in youth group and participated in mission work trips to a variety of places. Throughout his college years, Craig has also served as a spiritual leader on campus. He brings to the youth specifically and to our congregation in general his gifts of listening, humor, empathy, storytelling, enthusiasm, and a quest for deeper spirituality. Craig is quite knowledgeable of many religious traditions, and honors the truths that can be found therein. Additionally, Craig has experience with musical theater and other dramatic presentations, a skill that will be put to good use here. Craig's job description is multi-faceted, and is based on 10 hours of work per week. Craig is married to Amanda, also a graduate of U of R, and both are currently in the Master's program at the University. Welcome Craig and Amanda!

Our support of ministerial students takes a more formal turn this academic year, as we welcome seminary intern, Jeanne Favreau-Sorvillo (pronounced Fah-vroh Sor-vill-oh), who begins her internship with us on September 1<sup>st</sup>. Jeanne is entering her second year of seminary at Claremont School of Theology and chose us because of our progressive theology and open and welcoming spirit. She comes to us desirous of learning about day-to-day life in the church, administration in a congregational setting (her background is Roman Catholic), and the work of spiritual formation among people of various ages. She will bring gifts that are already formed and others that are in formation. All of us can become a blanket of affirmation and challenge to help her become the best she can be in ministry. Her requirements include a weekly meeting with me, working with a small group within the congregation who will serve as her Parish Support Team, and participating in as many activities and meetings of this community of faith—all of this is to be accomplished in about 10 hours a week. Jeanne is married with two teenage offspring. Welcome Jeanne!

Whether or not you are in youth group, whether or not you are part of the Parish Support Team, you play an important part in the effectiveness of these two new spirits in our midst. Please join me in welcoming them warmly. Please join me in speaking words of encouragement and listening to their words of wisdom. Please join me in learning from each of them and in praying for their respective ministries. We have been given these gifts from God...let us welcome Craig and Jeanne with joy!

## Makin' Music!

Another year,  
Another Fall,  
Its time for choir,  
She calls us all,  
Another season,  
Another reason,  
For makin' music.

With several women,  
A few good men,  
Her choir's ready,  
To sing again,  
Throughout the seasons,  
So many reasons,  
For makin' music.

Picture a Thursday evening,  
There in the choir loft,  
She has us makin' music  
Some will be loud,  
Some soft.

Its time for warm-ups,  
To find our voice,  
They sound so funny,  
But we've no choice,  
She wants us working,  
We must quit smirking,  
And make some music.

On Sunday morning,  
We're running late,  
She's looking harried,  
Its 10:08!  
But God is with her,  
The late ones enter,  
And we make music.

Soon with the Advent Season,  
Comes time for Christmas songs,  
Things are so very busy,  
She has to be quite strong.

No time to breathe,  
For it is Lent,  
Then Easter music,  
That's heaven sent,  
She's in a hurry,  
But not to worry,  
We'll have great music.

The year is closing,  
And so its time,  
For one last concert  
To make us shine,  
She's holdin' steady,  
The choir's ready  
To make great music.

She works the choir  
To sing their best  
She's quite relentless,  
Won't let us rest,  
She wants each section,  
To have perfection  
When they sing music.

Its 20 years  
So stand and cheer,  
And give her thanks,  
She has no peer,  
She's always willin'  
To help with fillin'  
Us up music  
And she makes music.

Note: These words were written to honor Peggy McMeans in celebration of her twenty years as music director for Redlands UCC. May she serve at least twenty more!

Sondra Hodson

## HELP INCREASE OUR COMMUNITY

Here's a very worthwhile goal for each of us in 2004: Bring at least one new guest to our church. Let them discover how much we have to offer!  
Church Growth Committee

### FFLAG MEETING

Families & Friends of Lesbians and Gays (FFLAG) meet on the first Wednesday of every month at the First United Methodist Church on the corner of Cajon and Olive at 7:30 p.m. Mary Belle Carter represents RUCC. For more information please contact Mary Belle at 795-6369.

### "ART, FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE!" TWENTY-FIVE YEARS!!

Please mark your calendar for  
October 15, 16, & 17, 2004

### "ART, FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE!"

CALLING ALL GOURMET COOKS AND BAKERS! Since our Art Show is celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year, let's start researching some extra-special, "gourmet" cookie and appetizer recipes. Of course, we want to keep all of our "tried and true" traditional favorites, but let's see if we can each find one or two exciting new treats to try. This experiment could make our elegant Friday night gala reception our most memorable yet!

Bonnie Killpatrick  
Reception Chairperson

### BLOOD PRESSURE CLINIC

Blood Pressure Clinic will be Sunday, September 26<sup>th</sup> following the worship service. Come in for a check up before you have your coffee. The blood pressure clinic will be held in Covenant Hall.

## UPDATE ON MEMORIAL FUND SCHOLARSHIPS

The Stewards established a scholarship to assist those within the church family who are actively pursuing an academic degree or professional certification by granting up to \$300 per calendar year toward the purchase of textbooks.

To continue to have funds available, the Memorial Committee invites those giving memorial donations to consider designating their donation for the scholarship fund.

The list of requirements and application forms to apply for a scholarship are available in the church office.

### SEPTEMBER WORSHIP LEADERS

5 Suzanne Seifert and Jimmy Cox  
12 Sandy Peavler  
19 Lisa Dewey  
26 Dan Wacks

### RUCC WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

RUCC Women's Fellowship will meet Wednesday, September 15<sup>th</sup>, at the home of Ruth Moses, 9:30 a.m.

### SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

1 Dee Hodson  
Diane Richardson  
2 Michael Dewey  
3 Katie Barton  
Ian Naftzger  
12 Steve Chapman  
16 Jo Dierdorff  
17 Wendy Naftzger  
19 Elizabeth Schuiling  
20 John Sweeney  
23 Mary Belle Carter  
26 Jerry Arnett  
Noah Dewey  
Sam Dickey

## RUCC RETREAT

All Church Retreat: Friday, November 12 through Sunday, November 14, at Loch Leven Campground. An opportunity for Spiritual renewal. We will provide a variety of workshops to supply “tools” for individual and corporate spiritual life. Join in a weekend of relaxation, fun, and fellowship. Reserve the time on your calendar now.

### *THANK YOU NOTES...*

**A very special “Thank You!”** to Jim Hester and Jay Grayson for their expert waxing of the floors ~ a job well done!

**“A Sincere Thank you!”** to Hannah McMeans, Shirley Marks and Betty Jacobs, Doris Milloy, and Rosemary Whitmer, who graciously gave their time to volunteer in the church office while Becky was on vacation. God Bless you ALL!!

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**A Dual Purpose Surprise Party!** Thank you all so much for the combination celebration of my 29<sup>th</sup> birthday and my first 20 years at RUCC! I truly was surprised, and saw a highly collaborative effort.

Special and thanks to Bettye for the cake, Dianne for the decorations, Dorothy for the flower arrangement, Sharon for the coordination, Sondra for the song, and the choir members that “represent” the words! And to you each and every one, from whom I feel much love and support.

*Peggy*

### **THE JOEL HAUSER COLLECTION**

The collection of polished rocks and gems that Joel Hauser assembled during his lifetime is still on display at the Hauser residence at 13097 Burns Lane.

Barbara Hauser would like to invite anyone interested in seeing the collection to come to her home on Saturday or Sunday, September 18 or 19. You would be welcomed during the hours of 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. on either day.

## CALLING ALL SINGERS

It’s time for the new fall and choir season to begin! I welcome and invite all interested singers, regular choir members, and anyone thinking about joining. We will start singing in worship beginning the 12<sup>th</sup> of September. Please come to our first rehearsal, Thursday, September 9<sup>th</sup> in the sanctuary at 7:30 PM. Refreshments will be served. Anyone 14 years of age or older who enjoys singing may join us, whether you are able to commit to every Sunday or for a shorter period of time. Please consider involving yourself in our worship this way!

Peggy McMeans  
Choir Director

## A WEDDING SHOWER

You’re invited to a wedding shower and luncheon for Wendy Naftzger on Sunday, September 26, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. in Covenant Hall. Please RSVP to Galilee Glanville at 792-2890.

## CITIZENS ACTION FOR PEACE (CAP)

A Redlands-based organization dedicated to peace is now meeting in our facility each month. Ordinarily they will meet the first Sunday of each month from 1:00-3:00 p.m. in the Sunday School area to watch and discuss a video related to peace. All in our congregation are invited to join them! For more information, you may call Sharon Swan at 794-0607. The group’s monthly newsletter is also available (for free!) on our Awareness Table in the Gathering Area. The next meeting will be on Sunday, September 12<sup>th</sup>, and the video will be “1984.”

## **SEPTEMBER IS LABOR MONTH AT RUCC**

How can you lend a “hand” around the building and grounds? Perhaps you could pull a few weeds, or wash a window, or help wax a floor, or... or... or...? What gifts and skills do you utilize around your own home? Perhaps you could offer those same gifts and skills around your church home. During the month of September, paper cut our hands will be distributed in worship. You will be invited to write your household gifts and skills on the hand and attach it to a large drawing of the church buildings and grounds posted in Covenant Hall. This activity is for all ages!

## **FIRST ANNUAL F. LOUIS VALLA LECTURE ON PROGRESSIVE RELIGIOUS SCHOLARSHIP**

First Congregational Church of Long Beach, announces  
the First Annual F. Louis Valla Lecture on  
Progressive Religious Scholarship

Saturday, September 18, 2004  
9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Featuring Roy W. Hoover  
Weyerhaeuser Professor of Biblical Literature  
and Professor of Religion Emeritus, Whitman College.

Featuring four topics with questions and response:

- I. From Nicea to Nazareth  
The creedal icon returns to the real world.
- II. Excavating Jesus  
What is the evidence for the historical Jesus and where do we find it?
- III. A Profile of the Jesus of History  
What kind of figure emerges from the evidence?
- IV. Reconsidering the Significance of Jesus.  
Jesus as the Christ, Son of God, Savior, Lord: How should we think of him?

Registration for the lecture including continental breakfast & lunch is \$20.

Please register by phone, mail or email:  
First Congregational Church of Long Beach  
241 Cedar Ave., Long Beach, CA 90802.  
562-436-2256, ext. 221; firstchurchlb@earthlink.net.

Make checks payable to First Congregational Church.

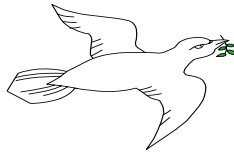
Registration deadline is September 8, 2004.

**September Scripture Readings**

September 5: *Deut. 30:15-20; Psalm 1; Phil. 1-21; Luke 14:25-33*  
September 12: *Ex. 32:7-14; Psalm 51:1-10; 1 Tim. 1:12-17; Luke 15:1-10*  
September 19: *Amos 8:4-7; Psalm 113; 1 Tim. 2:1-7; Luke 16:1-13*  
September 26: *Amos 6:1a, 4-7; Psalm 146; 1 Tim. 6:6-19; Luke 16:19-31*

**BEGIN YOUR WEEK PRAYING FOR PEACE**

Our sanctuary is open each Monday evening from 7:00 – 7:30 p.m. for quiet prayer and meditation. Please join in the hope and faith that our nonviolent and consistent actions will help to change the direction of many governments from their tendency toward retribution and vengeance towards working for more peaceful solutions. All ages are welcome. For more information, please contact Sharon Graff.



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