

WANDERINGS

A newsletter for people on a journey together with a purpose

Redlands United Church of Christ An Open and Affirming Church

October 2004

Communion Sunday - Worship Service 10:30 a.m., Sunday, October 3

Wider Ministries Area meeting after worship, Sunday, October 3

“Begin Your Week ... Praying for Peace”

Every Monday Evening in our sanctuary 7:00 – 7:30 p.m.

Celebration Ringers Rehearsal on Thursdays, 6:30 p.m.

Jubilee Ringers Rehearsal on Sundays, 11:45 a.m.

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

Church Board will meet Tuesday, October 12, 7:00 p.m.

“Art, For Heaven’s Sake”

Friday, October 15, 7:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.

Saturday, October 16, 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Sunday, October 17, 11:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Spinet Concert/Fourth of July Band, Tuesday, October 19, 7:30 p.m.

R.U.C.C. Women’s Fellowship will meet at 9:30 a.m. at the home of
Sorour Ehteshami, Wednesday, October 20

Staff Meeting, 12 noon, Thursday, October 21

R. U. C. C. Hamburger Fry, and Ice Cream Social, Saturday, October 30, 5:00 – 8:00 p.m.



From your Pastor and Teacher, Sharon~

“Love your enemies...”

--Jesus of Nazareth

Several months ago, Jim Hester provided me with a collation of passages from the Synoptic Gospels—Matthew, Mark, and Luke—that were agreed upon by the Jesus Seminar scholars as originating with Jesus himself. As you know, much of the 100+ pages of the gospel record is extraneous material, added by redactors and authors as late as eighty years after Jesus lived. The original material is quite slim by comparison...just shy of twelve typed pages total. In reading through this helpful document, three words jumped off the page and into my psyche. They are “love your enemies”. Not once, but twice, in Matthew and in Luke, these three words are highlighted in red ink, meaning that they are the closest we can get to the actual, historical words of Jesus.

In our community of faith, we (thankfully!) do not spend much time listing the names of our enemies. In fact, in over two years and dozens of conversations with you all, there has been no mention of an enemies list. We progressives tend to think that, if we just get along and overlook the deficiencies of those with whom we disagree, then we are fulfilling the spirit of Jesus’ words.

But I wonder. Are there some real enemies of progressive thought and action in our world today? Obviously, the answer is yes. Those who are fighting to overturn nearly a century of increasing civil and human rights...would they be “enemies” of the causes in which we believe? Those who spew hate and fear as motivating reasons for action...would they be “enemies” of the faith we espouse, a faith based in love, respect, and compassion? If we really do have “enemies”, then Jesus’ three brief words take on added relevance for us.

Loving our enemies is full time, and very challenging, work. It means taking them as seriously as we wish to be taken. It means listening and respecting. I do not believe it means agreeing, nor does loving connote meekly allowing them to always have the last word. Loving does not mean that we will not debate the issues about which we both feel passionately, nor will we necessarily back down from our thoughtful position. Many years ago, when I was more actively involved in interfaith dialogue, I was taught that dialogue (which is a form of loving another) meant that each person entered the experience willing to be changed by the other. In that sense, “loving our enemies” means that we let down the barriers enough to see into the eyes of that so-called “enemy”. What we see there just may be a reflection of our own eyes looking back.

Please make time this month to prepare your ballot. I recommend voting absentee, to insure a paper trail. As your pastor, I urge you to educate yourself about the issues and candidates. You may find some “enemy” positions that we are called to love, and with whom we must dialogue. Please join me in seizing this opportunity to follow the unquestionably historic (and currently relevant) words of Jesus.

Blessings,



Sundays With the Body

By Sharon R. Graff

October 2004

As a covenant community, we are perhaps more aware than many of the significance of our gathering times. When we gather, we hear each other's joys and concerns, and so our community is strengthened. When we gather, we sing songs of praise and hymns of reflection, and so our faith grows. When we gather, we hear and speak about our experiences of the divine, and so our hope is kindled. October is Art Show month, a celebration of the creative artisan in each one of us. I hope you will be here in worship—your voice is needed!

October 3 – “Meanings of ‘In’” – Worldwide Communion Sunday

Psalm 37:1-9; 2 Timothy 1:1-14; Luke 17:5-10

While our world news is dominated by factions and fighting, while our governments seem to prefer operating out of and generating fear among their citizens, God seems obsessed with bringing disparate parties together at a common meal. Children and adults, humans and the rest of creation, females and males, God sees no partiality and offers no isolation of one from the other. Scripture is annoyingly persistent in presenting the whole of creation as just that, WHOLE, connected, intertwined. Today, of all days in the Christian calendar, is a microcosm of that connectedness, as we focus the lens of faith on the table in which millions of Christians share the same meal on the same day. A place will be set for you—be here! *You are invited to bring an item from another country to place on the altar for the morning service.* We will be receiving the annual Neighbors in Need offering on this day.

October 10 – “Two Transforming Words”

Psalm 111; 2 Kings 5:1-3, 7-15c; 2 Timothy 2:8-15; Luke 17:11-19

In the delightful musical, “My Fair Lady”, Eliza Doolittle pines, “...words, words, words, all I hear are words...” Sometimes we, too, weary of words. Yet words are one of our most effective modes of communication, and there are two words that are especially important in the life of our growing community. I would even say that these two words are essential. What are they? Come and hear.

October 17 – “A Genesis Week”

Genesis 32:22-31; Psalm 51:1, 7-12; Luke 18:1-8

In a modern translation of the Bible, the psalmist asks God to “make a fresh start in me...and shape a Genesis week from the chaos of my life.” It is all too true that creativity is often chaotic business, but out of that creativity comes something (and someone) better. Art, for Heaven's Sake presents us with an annual opportunity to focus on our partnership with God in the creative process. Our facilities and gardens are overflowing with creativity this weekend, so it only seems right that worship would also focus on the creative, the gifts, and the joy that emanates from our Creator God. Let us join together to thank God in the beauty of this special day!

October 24 – “Living Libations”

Psalm 84; 2 Timothy 4:6-8; Luke 18:9-14

Webster's defines “libation” as “the act of pouring out a liquid as a religious offering; the liquid offering itself”. The apostle Paul suggests that we are libations—now you know why you sometimes feel like a little puddle! Actually, we are offerings, and we are also the ritual leaders who offer the offerings. Without being completely spent, let's look today at how and why we libate.

October 31 – “Circles of Life”

Isaiah 26:19; Romans 8:31-39; 1 Corinthians 15:50-55

Reformation Sunday...All Hallow's Eve...Samhein...Halloween...Dias de los Muertos ...so many traditions claim this as a very special day in the cycle of the year, a day when the spirits of those passed away seem mysteriously closer, a day of giving thanks for those who paved the way for our lives. Today, with the help of our seminary intern, Jeanne Favreau-Sorvillo, we will honor our ancestors with some of the traditional aspects of the Mexican holiday, Day of the Dead. This holiday has its origins in the mythology of the ancient Aztec people who believed the souls of the departed remained on earth in the form of butterflies and birds. So with the return of the Monarch butterflies, who migrate to Mexico for the winter, the souls of the departed were welcomed home. Perhaps we'll have a special visit from some of our more well-known "butterflies"!

Worship will be richer and deeper with your presence. I look forward to sharing these times with you.

Remember that our new Youth Director, Craig Colclough (pronounced "coal-clō") will be starting his ministry with our youth this month. Craig is a 2004 graduate of the University of Redlands, with a double focus in music and religious studies, and he is continuing on in the masters program in music. Craig's resume includes extensive work with young people in both programmatic and recreational venues, and his lifelong membership in the Claremont Presbyterian Church nudged him toward the ministry path. We are delighted that he and his wife Amanda have chosen to walk the path with us and with our congregation's youth! Please welcome Craig on his first Sunday with us, October 10.

Redlands Citizen's Action For Peace (CAP) Film Series presents "Stonewalk: The Journey", October 3rd at Redlands United Church of Christ, from 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. This video tells the story of a cemetery headstone honoring the civilian casualties of war. On July 5, 1999, a team of people from The Peace Abbey in Sherborn, Massachusetts took the one ton stone, mounted it on a "caisson", a cart that was made just for this purpose, and pulled it 500 miles to Arlington National Cemetery. As the caisson went through the cities and communities of the east coast, towns people joined in, either by cheering the walkers on, by offering them water, or by joining in, taking a handle and helping to pull the stone. The stone made it to Arlington, but once it arrived, it was not allowed into the cemetery. Now the stone is on a mission to travel the world, bringing its message to communities everywhere that have been touched by the effects of war. This journey beyond the United States started on July 5, 2000 in Ireland and it continues today in the United States.

All are invited to a showing of the controversial movie "Outfoxed", which examines media empires and provides an in-depth look a Fox News and the dangers of ever-enlarging corporations taking control of the public's right to know. Please meet at Dianne Landeros' home (1368 Prospect Drive, Redlands) on Sunday, October 3rd, at 4:00 p.m. Discussion and potluck will follow. Please bring food to share. An RSVP to Dianne at (792-4839) is helpful but not required.

John B. Cobb, Jr. *God, Bless America: How to Pray for Our Country. A Perspective from Process Theology.* October 3, 2004 at the Brea Congregational Church, UCC, 300 E. Imperial Hwy., Brea, CA 92821, 714-529-3014. Program begins at 6:30 p.m. with refreshments, followed by lecture and discussion at 7:00 p.m.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

What's happening? Plenty! Coming down to the final days before Wendy's wedding; cleaning house and preparing the grounds for house guests; I am recovering from the notorious West Nile Virus; and plans are all falling into place for retirement after the first of the year. Is there time for anything else to happen in the world? When one's life is so full of events and plans it is difficult to see that someone else or a church may have their own activities which fill up time and emotions.

Since this is the church's newsletter and I am still the President I have to leave my own personal events and report about what is happening at RUCC. Much is going on. The Church Board approved to bring on a seminary student intern for nine months. Jeanne has already started and is participating in many areas. She is to spend ten hours a week with us and will be concentrating on worship, FaithActs, and church administration plus meeting regularly with Sharon and an advisory committee. Jeanne comes with a very impressive background in many church related activities.

At the same meeting the Church Board authorized the hiring of Craig to be our Youth Director. Craig is a graduate student at the University of Redlands. He brings excitement and enthusiasm to this very much needed job we have been looking to fill for several years. With the talents and gifts that our youth have this appears to be a natural match up. On top of that we are able to bring Jeanne and Craig on staff and still be under budget for this year.

The regular programming is already well underway and going well. Just look around and you will see that every one has a special task or is being asked to help with one of many of our ongoing activities of the church's daily life. One of the personal changes I have seen and I am very pleased to share is about Sharon. I now see her a matured Senior Minister. Her activities are varied and much sought after. When she first came on board she was always checking with me and others about many different ideas and changes but now she has grown into her own ministry which is a joy to see and assist with. Soon she will have the challenge of breaking in a new President.

Eric Naftzger

Church Women United will meet Friday, October 1st at 10:00 a.m. at University United Methodist Church, 940 E. Colton Avenue, Redlands. CWU begins its new year with our guest speaker Phill Courtney, who will speak on "Environmental Challenges." Mr. Courtney, a native Californian, honored educator and author, is a political activist. His Riverside County Almanac is an annual presentation exploring the world of sociology and politics through a numerous collection of skits, writing and music. Following the program, a luncheon will be served under the direction of Jo Tyler. Because it is a catered meal, reservations are required no later than Wednesday, September 29th. Please make your reservation by calling Jo at 792-4468 or Carmen at 793-7605.

Minister – Rev. Dr. Sharon R. Graff

Choir Director – Peggy McMeans

Organist & Handbell Director – Kristen Cameron

Youth Director – Craig Colclough

Seminary Intern – Jeanne Favreau-Sorvillo

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.

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!!

October 15, 16, & 17, 2004

“ART, FOR HEAVEN’S SAKE!”

CALLING ALL GOURMET COOKS AND BAKERS!
Since our Art Show is celebrating its 25th 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, October 3rd and October 31st 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.

FROM OUR SEMINARY INTERN

Thank you all for the warm welcome you have given me as I begin my nine months of internship. As Sharon noted in the last newsletter I will be working 10 hours per week observing, learning, and participating in the life of this congregation. Since I have already had the pleasure of meeting many of you and hearing about your families I thought I would take this opportunity to share some of my own story. I was born in Los Angeles and now live in Buena Park. I have been married 23 years to a wonderfully supportive husband, Frank, and we have two delightful children who continue to challenge and bless us. Tera, our daughter, is a sophomore in college and Bryan, our son, is a sophomore in high school. Since I am in my second year of seminary I guess I could be considered a “sophomore” as well. The three of us have challenged each other to see who will earn the highest GPA! So far mom is ahead but that may not last since the other two are very close behind!

My background includes 10 years of teaching social justice and peace studies at a private girls high school as well as founding and directing a non-profit organization called Third World Handarts. I have a master's degree in Feminist Spirituality and am especially interested in spiritual journey work. (This might be an interesting topic for a small group discussion.) Coming from a Roman Catholic tradition my own spiritual journey has had many twists and turns throughout the years.

This is only a brief glimpse but I will be happy to share more as the year goes on. I hope that if you are comfortable you will also share your stories with me. I look forward to seeing you at worship and fellowship time on Sundays. I can also be reached through email at jfavorsor@hotmail.com. I am very excited about being with you and truly grateful for your generosity and support. I ask for your prayers, blessings, patience, and insights as I seek to discern a call to ordained ministry.

Jeanne Favreau-Sorvillo

WOMEN'S NITE OUT

Every Friday 7:30 p.m.; an inspirational, supportive, relaxed book group for ALL women to share. Our first book is *Something More*. If you've got a leaning, you can purchase the book for \$10 at Cindi's house when you come. You're welcome even if you haven't "read" beforehand. What a deal, huh! Cookies, chocolates, tea, laughter and confidentiality. Every age welcome, any time. Come to the home of Cindi Donald: 246 E. Fern Avenue, #210 (call Cindi or church office for gate code). Do you want to know more? Call 793-1462.

OCTOBER WORSHIP LEADERS

- 3 Floyd Orr
- 10 Hannah McMeans
- 17 Craig Colclough
- 24 Lora Hall
- 31 Jeanne Favreau-Sorvillo

RUCC WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

RUCC Women's Fellowship will meet at 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, October 20, at the home of Sorour Ehteshami, 805 Pacific Street, Redlands.

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Douglas Ray Childers-Benz
- 2 Doug Macomber
- 3 Colleen Kintner
- 6 Lauren Barton
- 11 Eric Naftzger
- 12 Dianne Landeros
- 13 Kathie Blakley
Darilyn Hester
- 18 Denise Cain
- 24 Loren Barnett
- 27 Mina Ryan
- 28 Lisa Arth
- 30 Lora Hall

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, October 3rd.

CHRISTIAN COUNSELING SERVICE

C. C. S. invites you to join the staff on Wednesday, October 6, for an Open House from 8:30-9:30 a.m. It will include a tour of the facility and continental breakfast. C.C.S. Director and Board members will be on hand for any questions. Free workshop 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Parent Child Interaction Therapy. Learn about this innovative treatment, discover local training and referral resources. Workshop will be facilitated by UC Davis.

Please RSVP by October 1, by calling 793-1078 or www.ChristianCounselingService.org. C.C.S. is located in the southwest wing of the First Baptist Church of Redlands.

BEST-SELLING AUTHOR OF "THE QUESTION OF GOD",

Dr. Armand M. Nicholi, Jr., a practicing psychiatrist at Harvard University, will speak on "C. S. Lewis and Sigmund Freud Debate God, Love, Sex, and the Meaning of Life", on Thursday, October 7, at the University of Redlands Memorial Chapel, and on Friday, October 8, at Loma Linda University Gentry Gymnasium. Dr. Nicholi is co-author of one of the leading textbooks on psychiatry used throughout the world. Both programs begin at 7:00 p.m. and are free and open to the public. For directions, call (909) 793-0949.

HELP WANTED

“ART, FOR HEAVEN’S SAKE!”

Art for Heaven’s Sake will be held on Friday, October 15th, Saturday, October 16th, and Sunday, October 17th.

This is our 25th year for the Art Show so we are all celebrating! At the Friday night reception we are asking everyone to dress in black and white or silver. We will be selling T-shirts in black with a silver emblem on the front. It takes all kinds of volunteers to put the Art Show together. Every year we turn some artists away as we can only handle 52 – 55 artists every year.

This year we are lucky, as we have a group of Boy Scouts from Troop 11 who will be putting up the fencing and taking it down. They will be doing this Thursday evening at 4:00 p.m.; adult help is needed for this. We need volunteers in the following areas:

- Friday morning help is needed with easy-ups and organization.
- Workers for Friday Evening Reception from 7:00 – 10:00 p.m. Serving food or helping in the kitchen (you may sign up for 1 – 2 hour shifts).
- Greeters at the door on Friday evening from 7:00 – 8:30 p.m. and 8:30 – 10:00 p.m.
- Saturday, October 16th greeters and helpers from 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. and 1:00 – 5:00 p.m. May work in 2-hour shifts. Helpers need to be ready to go around and relieve the artists while they have a break.
- Sunday, October 17th greeters and helpers from 12:00 – 2:30 p.m. or 2:30 – 5:00 p.m. may work in 2 hour shifts greeting and taking the artists’ place while they take a break.
- Clean up on Sunday at 5:00 p.m. The Boy Scouts will be here but need some adult supervision.
- We need volunteers to make cookies and appetizers.
- Several people to donate card tables.
- Someone to be in charge of the artists’ room to keep the artists supplied with drinks and cookies, etc.

The sign up sheet for all of these areas is located in the Gathering Area at the Church. Please give the Art Show Committee your help and support!

October Scripture Readings

October 3: *Psalm 37:1-9; Timothy 1:1-14; Luke 17:5-10*

October 10: *Psalm 111; 2 Kings 5:1-3, 7-15c; 2 Timothy 2:8-15; Luke 17:11-19*

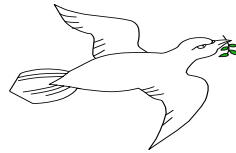
October 17: *Genesis 32:22-31; Psalm 51:1, 7-12; Luke 18:1-8*

October 24: *Psalm 84; 2 Timothy 4:6-8; Luke 18:9-14*

October 31: *Isaiah 26:19; Romans 8:31-39; 1 Corinthians 15:50-55*

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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