

# *WANDERINGS*

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

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

*May 2005*

Wider Ministries meeting following worship service, Sunday, May 22nd

Church Board will meet Tuesday, May 10, 7:30 p.m.

Staff meeting—Monday, May 16, 10:30 a.m.

“Lectio Group” meets—Monday, May 2, 9, 16, and 23, 7:00 p.m., in sanctuary

“Dream Workshop” meets Tuesday, May 3, 17, and 24 at 7:00 p.m. in the choir room

“Sandwich Group” meets Tuesday, May 17, 12:00 noon  
in the Pastor’s office

RUCC Women’s Fellowship meets Wednesday, May 18, 9:30 a.m.  
at the home of Helen Arth

Knitting Ministry Group meets Thursday, May 12 & 26, 10:30 a.m.–12:00 noon  
in the church office

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.

Please check Sunday bulletins for changes in rehearsal times during May.

Middle school youth group (grades 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>) will meet May 1<sup>st</sup>, 15, 22, and 29, 5-7 p.m.

High school youth group (grades 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>) will meet May 1<sup>st</sup>, 15, 22 and 29, 7-9 p.m.

## From your Pastor and Teacher, Sharon~

*"This morning, as I kindle the fire upon my hearth,  
I pray that the flame of God's Love may burn in my heart,  
and in the hearts of all I meet today.  
I pray that no envy or malice,  
no hatred or fear, may smother another flame.  
I pray that indifference and apathy,  
contempt and pride,  
may not pour like cold water on the fire.  
Instead, may the spark of God's Love  
light the love in my heart,  
that it may burn brightly through the day.  
And may I warm those who are lonely,  
whose hearts are cold and lifeless,  
so that all may know the healing fire of God's Love."  
—A Celtic Prayer*

I confess that, though I am presently completing tasks and orienting our new Administrative Assistant and leading groups and attending meetings, I am really "between the worlds." My own spiritual pilgrimage to Stonehenge and to Ireland has been in the planning for several months, and, as you read this, I will probably be there on those pieces of sacred soil. Today, it feels very much like living in two places at once—the present and the future. So, when I read a newsletter from a sister UCC congregation and saw the Celtic prayer included above, my heart sang!

There are times, such as I am currently experiencing, when we are "in between." For professors and teachers, the weeks between semesters or quarters are such times. For students, the minutes between classes are such times. For those who are awaiting the results of medical tests or awaiting surgery or awaiting the doctor's phone call, the time "in between" not knowing and knowing can be excruciatingly long and painful. For the retired among us, the time between events or family visits or friendly phone calls can be times of wandering aimlessly, awaiting direction and purpose.

The Celtic prayer, which focuses our spiritual attention on the very present moment, offers an antidote for those "in between" times in our lives. Our Celtic brother or sister invites us to take a deep breath, to acknowledge the "hearth" (maybe a microwave, or toaster oven, or gas burner on the stove) that begins our day with nourishing breakfast. To take a moment to simply be attentive to the gift that is the next 24 hours... And in that moment, to open up to the reality of God's Love connecting us to our best self... And in the next moment, recognizing that God's Love connects us to each person we will meet or greet that day.

Today, may your hearth be warm and your heart warmed by the healing fire of God's Love.  
Blessings,

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Rev. Graff will be taking her two weeks of study leave for 2005 from April 25<sup>th</sup> – May 9<sup>th</sup> to fulfill a lifelong dream of visiting Stonehenge in southern England and to spend some time in Ireland. While in Ireland, she will be on a self-invited silent retreat, staying with a group of Carmelite Sisters at the Holy

Hill Hermitage in County Sligo where she will experience and study Celtic spirituality...she cannot wait to return and share her learnings! Please keep these travels in your prayers.

\* \* \* \* \*

We welcome our new Administrative Assistant, Renee Chavez to the office! Renee has done extensive administrative work in other organizations, and brings to this job her organizational skills, her efficiency, initiative, and her cheerful spirit. Renee has been married for 32 years, and they share three wonderful daughters and three grandchildren... another granddaughter is soon to be born! Renee was raised in various parts of the world, as the daughter of an Air Force family, and has lived in California for over 30 years. Please stop by to welcome her during our office hours of Monday-Friday, 9:00 am to 1:30 p.m.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Thanks to our amazing volunteers!** During the past month, our office has been blessed with a number of folks who made sure that phones were answered, bulletins and newsletters typed, meetings arranged, and that the business of the church continued uninterrupted. Many thanks to Doris Milloy (typist par excellence!), to Rosemary Whitmer (who recruited and scheduled all the volunteers), and to Dee Hodson, Shirley Marks, Eric Naftzger, Janie Hurley, Carole Wesson, Peggy McMeans, and Barbie Fiske-Phillips. If you would like to join this illustrious group—helping out in the future when needs arise—please contact Renee Chavez in the church office.

Another **big thank you** goes to Bill Buchanan who chaired the search process to find our new Administrative Assistant. Dianne Landeros, Rosemary Whitmer, and Doris Milloy assisted him—they gave many hours to the tasks of reading resumes and interviewing the candidates. Please take a moment to let each of these amazing folk know you appreciate their good (and very productive) efforts!

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

### A Note from the President

I haven't talked with Eric about the details of his routine experiences as president of this congregation, but so far I have found the job to be remarkably easy! It doesn't take much analysis to figure out why. A remarkable group of people has volunteered to serve this church, and each goes about the business of serving it with grace and humility, and on their own initiative.

Over the time Bill Buchanan has been Vice President he has quietly and efficiently handled some very complex and delicate situations, spending hours working with Sharon and others to achieve outcomes that have served the best interests of everyone involved. I'm so grateful for his involvement because he does things easily that I don't do well and often don't have time for.

The Church Board has risen to my challenge to forge goals and objectives not just for each of the areas of church life but also for the board itself. Lots of hours of brainstorming, discussion, negotiating over terminology, and sharing sudden inspirations are paying off! In the next issue of Wanderings we will publish our work and invite you to reflect on and respond to it.

There are so many others that I should mention, but you get my point.

When we returned from our recent jaunt to South America, I read somewhere that Benedict XVI had tried to relieve the concerns of some that in the past he had been exclusivist in his definition of the Church, by saying that he was ready to listen to the views of others and calling for what I understood as some sort of mutuality in belief. A man I studied with long ago, who had been a Protestant observer at Vatican II, wrote of that effort that Christians ought to be leery of efforts to create "one" institutional church. He preferred the model of confederation because it provides checks and balances against humanity's primal instinct to exercise power whenever the opportunity to do so presents itself.

I keep returning to Paul's metaphor of the church as a "body." In 1 Corinthians 12, in what may well be a tone of sarcasm, he reminds the Corinthians that "...the body does not consist of one member but of many."(verse 14) Mutuality is based in diversity of form and function. Status is not based on power, care is basic to life, and the experiences and outcomes of the life of the few are those of the Body and vice versa. At verse 27 Paul shifts his metaphor. Function is no longer biological but spiritual. "Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it." Members of the body possess the gifts of the spirit, and these gifts are functionally different.

Our denomination was born out of the ecumenical movement, but we would never insist that to be "united" in the church of Christ requires mutuality in belief and uniformity in function. We revel in diversity and invite even the atheist and agnostic to journey with us that we might figure out how best to hear and act upon the Word that God is still speaking. We also bring to the Body rich and diverse gifts of the Spirit. That is why I invite you to read the description of Pilot Projects that is included later in this issue of Wanderings. Perhaps the Spirit has been prodding you to create and implement a program for the benefit of the church. Pilot Projects gives you a way to organize and get funding to experiment with something you feel called to do. So, round up your friends – the other "eyes," "ears," "hands," and "feet" ready to do God's work – and see what The Spirit might do!

Jim Hester

## Pilot Projects

### A proposal from Jim Hester

**Purpose:** To provide a procedure whereby a group of interested church members can propose and implement, on a test basis, a project that may increase the effectiveness of the ministry of the congregation, extend the outreach of its mission, or address a need not currently identified under the committee structures of the church.

**Proposal:** I propose that the Board establish a category of ministry called “Pilot Projects” that allows for interested members to propose specific programs to be offered on a trial basis for a stated period of time. At the end of the proposed period, the Board would evaluate the effectiveness of the program and the resources needed to continue it, and then act to continue or terminate it. If the decision were made to continue it, the program would be placed in the appropriate Area and funding for that area increased to cover program costs.

**Procedures:** An individual organizes a group to come together to discuss an idea for a program, having checked with the Pastor to determine that the church is not already doing something very much like the person has in mind. If interest warrants, the group establishes a steering committee to formulate more detailed program description, assess leadership requirements, and estimate start-up costs. The steering committee also does some analysis of the potential of wider support and/or involvement of other members of the church and/or appropriate organizations in the community.

At the appropriate time, the steering committee should write up a proposal to the Board asking for official approval of the project. The proposal should include such things as the names of the committee, a list of other interested individuals and organizations, a list of goals and objectives for the program, a description of program elements, an estimated start-up budget, and the proposed time-line for the project.

Should the Board approve the project, the Stewards and the Treasurer would determine sources of funding and review the project budget in the same manner as the annual budget is reviewed.

During the project trial period, the steering committee would be expected to provide updates to the Pastor and President, and solicit input from them and the Board both to insure accountability and to avoid significant deviation from the original intent of the proposal.

Theoretically, the number of Pilot Projects to be initiated in any fiscal year would be limited only by financial constraints. On the other hand, the Board should keep in mind while reviewing any proposal that ability of the church to support the program demands of a project. We would not want to be spread too thin or ask the ministerial staff to coordinate the efforts of too many steering committees.

Finally, it is important that the Board accept the responsibility to terminate any program that, in the opinion of the ministerial staff and officers of the church, has outlived its usefulness or lacks support of church members.

**“Worship God!” (Revelation 19:10)**

By Sharon R. Graff

May 2005

It's still spring and moving into summer... At this time of year where we live in Angelus Oaks, daffodils are blooming as a prelude to the California poppies and mixed spring flowers that will soon dot our yard, making this the most colorful season on the mountain. While each season has its beauty—fall leaves, winter snow, summer breezes—it is spring that I most look forward to. Perhaps the notion of new life budding out all over inspires. Perhaps it is the surprise that delights me each day when I walk outside and see a new flower, a different leaf, and/or the carpet of color ever-changing. Spring, to me, also seems more a metaphor of our congregation's life than do the other three times of the year, for spring is variegated, it is dynamic, and it is filled with color and texture and change. Our worship life has been especially “spring-like” for the past few months and that will continue through the rest of this season and into the next. Come and enjoy the season!

**May 1 – “Undignified and Unashamed” – The Rev. Dr. Jill Kirchner, preaching – Communion Sunday**

*2 Samuel 6:14-16a; Psalm 150*

Some who have been a part of this community of faith for several years will remember a young girl who grew up in Redlands. Jill Kirchner was active in RUCC as a child, youth, young adult, and then was commissioned to attend seminary—she is one of many whom this group sponsored and nurtured into ministry. Currently serving a congregation in San Diego, Jill is returning “home” to share the good news with us.

**May 8 – “Where is Julia Ward Howe When We Need Her?” – The Rev. Nan Self, preaching**

*Acts 1:6-14*

Our friend, Nan Self, will join us today to speak a good word about the creative power of women. Using Julia Ward Howe as a model—founder of Mothers' Day—we realize that the holiday is less about cards and flowers and more about peace and justice. Come join the journey—all are welcome!

**May 15 – “Touching All, Changing All” – Pentecost Sunday**

*Acts 2:1-21; Numbers 11:24-30; John 7:37-39*

The handbell choirs will lead us in celebrating the ringing sounds of Pentecost—as we remember an upper room where the Spirit surprised those early disciples. We'll also be bidding a fond farewell to our Seminary Intern, Jeanne Favreau-Sorvillo whose academic year with us has (unfortunately!) come to an end. Come for the joy...stay for the party...anticipate a visit from the Spirit.

**May 22 – “Alpha...Omega...Alpha”**

*Genesis 1:1-2:4a; Psalm 8; Matthew 28:16-20*

Ordinary time, a season of six L --- O --- N --- G --- months, begins today. We skip through various scriptures, hearing stories of growth, abundance, concern, and joy. Through it all, the Spirit moves and lives and works its magic to transform and change ideas, beliefs, doubts, and us. Beginning at the very beginning with Genesis, and including Jesus' final words to his disciples, today's worship invites us to consider beginnings and endings and new beginnings.

**May 29 – “Authority Matters”**

*Genesis 6:9-22; 7:24; 8:14-19; Psalm 46; Matthew 7:21-29*

Before the bow was seen in the clouds, Noah trusted enough to follow a bizarre set of directions. While standing knee-deep in tumultuous waters, the psalmist proclaimed that God is a refuge and strength. A Jewish storyteller from Nazareth astonishes the crowds with his authority. From where does your authority derive? In whom do you place your trust? Powerful questions asked of us today...come to ponder together.

Worship will be richer and deeper with your presence. I especially look forward to beginning this our fourth year together.

## From Jeanne

Dear Friends,

I can't believe it is already May and my internship here at RUCC is coming to an end along with my second year of seminary training at Claremont School of Theology. While the summer break from school will be welcome, leaving all of you will be very difficult. You have blessed me with such an incredible life-giving and affirming experience, allowing me the opportunity to discern what I believe to be a call to ordained ministry. Words are not adequate to express my gratitude for the support and encouragement you have surrounded me with as I travel on this journey of discovery and growth.

From the day I walked in the door of this unique church, I experienced abundant welcome and encountered the beauty of kindred spirits. Each of you has nurtured my soul in your own distinct way, revealing more deeply to me the nature of the Divine.

I pray that you continue to be the voice in the wilderness crying out for those who are voiceless, seeking justice for the those who are oppressed, working for peace in a conflicted world, and sharing God's message of hope and unconditional love to all people. I ask that you keep me in your prayers so I will continue to be wrapped in the shawl of your warmth and love.

Namaste! (I bow to the Divine within each of you!)

Jeanne



### Luncheon Wedding Shower

In honor of  
Debbie Hurley  
Sunday, May 1<sup>st</sup>  
1:00-3:00 p.m.  
In Covenant Hall,  
Redlands United Church of Christ

RSVP to Margaret Barnett,  
Kathie Blakley, or  
Valerie Naftzger

### Church Women United

Church Women United will meet Friday, May 6, 2005 at 10:00 a.m. at Redlands UCC. Celebrating "*May Friendship Day*" and coordinated by Ruth Moses and Mary Jane Auerbacher, it will be a Salad Luncheon. Bring a salad or \$3.00 for lunch.

### RUCC WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

RUCC Women's Fellowship will meet on Wednesday, May 18th at 9:30 a.m. at the home of Helen Arth, 1601 Barton Road #407, Redlands. Call Helen at her home 335-5419 if you need directions.

### MAY WORSHIP LEADERS

- 1 Mary Belle Carter
- 8 Luther Austin-Brecher
- 15 Jeanne Favreau-Sorvillo
- 22 Loring Fiske-Phillips
- 29 Kate Morics

### FFLAG MEETING

Families and 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 the RUCC. For more information, please contact Mary Belle at (909) 795-6369.

### ***THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!***

Our new stove is no longer just a dream! There is now enough money in hand for the big purchase. This is due to proceeds from our recent rummage sale, which earned \$2,027.40 this year. Thanks to each of you who bought, brought, hung clothes, unpacked boxes, organized transportation, provided lunch, etc., etc., or if you just wished us well. Thanks to everyone, especially Jeff and Lani Nicholson, who took charge and the ever-present persons who set up, arranged and priced items for the sale. Women's Fellowship-Shirley Marks and Ruth Moses

**MAY BIRTHDAYS**

3	Lois Campbell
6	Bettye Wheeler
10	Carrie Schindler
12	Dan Wacks
14	Sondra Hodson
16	Floyd Orr
18	Sheldon Montgomery Chance Austin-Brecher Georgia Sforza
21	Kate Morics
23	Helen Arth
26	Susie Mayse
27	Bill Buchanan
28	Shirley Marks

**PASTOR'S OFFICE HOURS**

Our Pastor and Teacher, Sharon R. Graff, is available for appointments, pastoral counseling, meetings, and general conversation on most Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays. Evening and weekend appointments are also possible. Generally she is home on Wednesdays preparing the weekly sermon and completing other worship planning. On most weeks, she tries to take some part of Fridays and Saturdays as time off. Please know that she eagerly awaits serving you!

**CELEBRATE 100 YEARS OF SERVICE -  
LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY MEDICAL  
CENTER AND CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL**

LLUMC invites you to consider becoming a volunteer to assist with ongoing programs. For additional information, please call LLUMC Volunteer Services at (909) 558-4654, (Somebody Needs You program) or LLUCH Volunteer Services at (909) 558-8022 (Help Us Help Our Kids program).

**TWO NEW GROUPS FORMED**

In the “after-Easter respite” and in response to needs expressed in your covenants this year, two new groups have been formed with the initial facilitation of Rev. Graff.

A “Sandwich Group”—for those who find themselves “sandwiched” between the generations in their family (caring for aging parents, grown children, and/or grandchildren)—will meet for supportive conversation on a monthly basis. The next gathering will be on Tuesday, May 17th from noon-1:30 p.m. in Sharon’s office at church. Bring a sandwich and your open spirit.

A “Lectio Group”—continuing the experiential reading of scripture begun in our Lenten series—is open to all ages. Young adults are particularly urged to include this new small group as a way of moving deeper spiritually with your sisters and brothers here at RUCC. We meet Monday evenings, 7:00-8:00 p.m. in the sanctuary. Any questions about either of these new small groups may be directed to Rev. Graff in the church office, 793-3520, or by email at [pastor@uccredlands.org](mailto:pastor@uccredlands.org).

**ANNUAL RETREAT FOR LGBT  
CONCERNS**

The annual retreat for the Southern California Nevada Conference Coalition for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Concerns will gather at Pilgrim Pines on Friday, May 6<sup>th</sup> through Sunday, May 8, 2005 for their annual retreat. We will join our friends in the Disciples of Christ GLAD group. For more information, call the UCC Conference Office, (626) 798-8082.

## **Covenant Choir Music for Spring**

The Covenant Choir will present a special spring service during morning worship on June 5. Our program will feature the works of British composer John Rutter and will involve our instrumentalists as well.

John Rutter has made an enormous contribution to church music. Born in 1945 in London, his long career, beginning in the sixties, has been one of distinguished musician, but more importantly that of a minister. His compositions include small and large-scale choral and orchestral works, opera, pop and light music, music for BBC television, and a large body of church choral anthems, accessible to performer, listener, and worshiper.

The choir will sing several of his lovely and melodic anthems, and will be rehearsing these the remainder of April and May. Singers ages fourteen and over are welcome to join the choir for this program (or longer!) Please see or call Peggy McMeans at 798-1474.

## Dream Workshop

The unconscious is where God first touches us, and a careful listening to our dreams is a way to listen to God—Morton Kelsey

A dream that has not been interpreted is like a letter that has not been opened—  
Talmud

A dream is an image of our spiritual condition—Marion Woodman

### **Why come to a dream workshop?**

Dreams are facts! They exist! Dreams have a religious function!

Biblical stories tell us that God sometimes communicated with people in their dreams. The Bible knew, but some of us have forgotten that dreams and their interpretations can heal the sick soul.

Psychology also recognizes the importance of dreams. A dream reveals a psychic structure. Like an x-ray allows us to look into our physical structure, so a dream allows us to look into our human psyche.

A dream is a symbol of an inner drama. A dream is a natural and necessary expression of life force. A dream can assist the dreamer with problem solving, inspire artistic expression, shed light on psychological development, offer spiritual deepening and be used for healing. These treasures given to us by the unconscious like unexpected gifts cast to the shore by the sea, can help individuals understand themselves, their motivations, their wishes and their choices.

A six-week workshop will offer participants the opportunity to learn how to access the meaning of their dreams and utilize them to more fully develop their relationships with themselves, others, and God. Participants should be recording their dreams in a journal; bring them to this workshop as material to discuss.

Diane Eller—Boyko LCSW is a psychotherapist in Redlands. She is on staff at the Christian Counseling Service and has a private practice in Redlands. She has had experience with teaching and analyzing dreams for over ten years.

Dates: Tuesday evenings, 7:00-9:00 p.m., May 3, 17, 24  
Location: Redlands United Church of Christ  
Cost: \$50 per person for the series, payable to RUCC

Any questions may be directed to Diane Eller-Boyko at (909) 793-1078, or call the church office, (909) 793-3520.

**May Scripture Readings**

May 1:        2 Samuel 6:14-16a; Psalm 150  
 May 8:        Acts 1:6-14  
 May 15:       Acts 2:1-21; Numbers 11:24-30; John 7:37-39  
 May 22:        Genesis 1:1-2:4a; Psalm 8; Matthew 28:16-20  
 May 29:        Genesis 6:9-22; 7:24; 8:14-19; Psalm 46; Matthew 7:21-29

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Minister – Rev. Dr. Sharon R. Graff  
 Choir Director – Peggy McMeans  
 Organist & Handbell Director – Kristen Cameron  
 Youth Director – Craig Colclough  
 Seminary Intern – Jeanne Favreau-Sorvillo  
 Sunday Child Care – Mariana and Mina Ryan  
 Administrative Assistant – Renee Chavez  
 Custodian – Jay Grayson  
 Church office hours: 9:00 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Monday – Friday  
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**Redlands United Church of Christ**  
**168 Bellevue Avenue**  
**Redlands, CA 92373-4978**  
**(909) 793-3520      Fax: (909) 793-5418**  
**E-mails:** pastor@uccredlands.org  
               office@uccredlands.org  
               youth@uccredlands.org  
**Web site:** www.uccredlands.org