

WANDERINGS

A newsletter for people on a journey together with a purpose

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

February 2006

Church Board will meet Saturday, February 4, 9:00 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Communion Sunday - Worship Service 10:30 a.m., Sunday, February 5
The Adult Education Class, "Spirituality of the Celts", begins this morning at
9:00 a.m. with Rev. Sharon Graff

Shepherds will meet Tuesday, February 7 at 4:00 p.m.

Staff meeting, Friday, February 17, 11:30 a.m.

Farmer Brown Goes to Town, an intergenerational variety show, will be presented
Friday, February 17, at 7:30 p.m.

The Sandwich Group will meet Tuesday, February 21, in the Pastor's office.

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

Jubilee Ringers Rehearsal on Sundays, 12:00 p.m.

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

R.U.C.C. Men's Fellowship, 8:30 a.m., Sunday, February 26

Middle school youth group (grades 6th-8th) will meet February 3, 10, 17, & 24
from 3:30 to 5:00 p.m.

High school youth group (grades 9th-12th) will meet February 3, 10, 17, & 24
from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m.

From your Pastor and Teacher, Sharon~

“...God is love, and whoever lives in love lives in union with God
and God lives in union with them...
there is no fear in love;
perfect love drives out all fear.”
—-from 1st John, chapter 4

In the calendar of the culture, February is “Love Month.” Beginning in early January, you can go into any market or department store, and you see red hearts in all sizes and textures. Even my doctor’s office was decorated a full month before Valentine’s Day. Love, or so it seems, is in the very air!

In our liturgical calendar, also, February marks a month of love—a month when we take time to reflect in worship and meditation on the loving life of Jesus. Recently, I have read and heard several times from a variety of sources that love, true love, is not sappy or sentimental in its essence. Rather, love is a gift we choose to give and to receive. It is a gift that is actually more of a verb than a noun...a verb that includes compassion, understanding, listening, praying...a verb that moves one to action based in love.

I think this is part of what the author of the first letter of John has in mind when he or she makes the case that love emanates from God who loves all creatures. God’s love permeates through the creation, like rays of sunlight dancing across the land. It catches us, sometimes unawares, and moves through us as well. It connects us to the Divine. Such perfect love does change us, for it invites us to act in love, rather than to react in fear.

Let us honor this month of love by seeking ways that we can love without fear. Let us love, sisters and brothers, for love is of God, and by loving we will know God more intimately.

Blessings,

Sharon



Looking forward... All-Church Retreat!
Friday, April 28 – Sunday, April 30
Pilgrim Pines Camp and Conference Center
More info coming soon...

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

As we begin 2006, I'm tempted to propose lots of ideas that have been floating around in my head, but I'm intentionally holding back because I know that we need to take a step back, look at the big picture, and get your input before moving forward.

Frankly, I think we're in a good place. In September of 2001, we dedicated our newly completed sanctuary and administrative wing. Now, five years later, we are close to retiring our building debt. We have an inspiring and loving pastor who has promised me that she is sticking around for a long while! Word has gotten out that we're a welcoming, open and loving congregation, so our numbers are growing. We have a number of meaningful peace and justice, community, and environmental projects that serve as vehicles for you to put your faith into action. So what do we do next? What would you like to see us doing... or being? What are your dreams for the church?

The new board will be developing a vision, a plan for the future, and goals that reflect our current vision statement. As you work with your area leaders, share your dreams and hopes for the church for the year and let's join together to make them happen. 2006 is going to be a good year – let the work, the joy, the fun begin!

Yours in Christ,

Dianne Landeros
President



WE WANT YOUR IDEAS! It's time to plan for the new year. As the church board begins its planning process, please help us by sharing your ideas with us. What would you like to see happen this year? What are your dreams for the church? How can the church better serve you and others? You can share your ideas by conveying them to a board member, your area leader, or write them on the large sheet of paper that will be posted at the back of Covenant Hall. Take a few minutes during fellowship to put in your two cents at the back wall of Covenant Hall. Thank you.

“Day by Day, they spent much time together in Worship...” Acts 2:46
—Sharon R. Graff

February 5 – “ADHD Jesus” – Communion

Isaiah 40:21-31; 1 Corinthians 9:16-23; Mark 1:29-39

A quick read of today’s three scriptures would suggest that no medication is required to curb any hint of ADHD behavior when it comes to following in the footsteps of Jesus! He flits from synagogue to the house of a friend to a deserted place and to neighboring towns, all in the span of a day or two. His activities vary: healing, teaching, praying, proclaiming, and casting out demons. Can we keep up?

February 12 – “Prizes for All”

2 Kings 5:1-14; 1 Corinthians 9:24-27; Mark 1:40-45

Healing and wholeness go hand in hand in today’s passages. A leprous foreigner is made whole through the Hebrew prophet Elisha; Jesus touches a leper and immediately the man is whole; yet the Apostle Paul writes about there being only one prize per winner. It would seem that God has a different idea in mind—and that would be prizes enough for all!

February 19 – Guest Speaker

Isaiah 43:18-25; 2 Corinthians 1:18-22; Luke 6:17-26

Our own Associate Minister, Jeanne Favreau-Sorvillo, will be delivering this morning’s message!

February 26 – “A Time to Keep Quiet”

2 Kings 2:1-15; 2 Corinthians 4:4-6; Mark 9:2-9

Elisha asks the prophets from Bethel to keep quiet. Later he asks the prophetic guild from Jericho to be still. Jesus commands the disciples to keep silent. Why is everyone supposed to be so quiet? Are you? Am I?

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

Getting to Know You...

On Sunday, January 8th as our congregation was celebrating Elvis' 71st birthday with Elvis music I felt like a celebrity myself – I rubbed shoulders with the world's two greatest Elvis fans, Sharon Graff and Mike Moran! Mike is one up on Sharon though as he has actually seen Elvis in person – the *real* Elvis. Three times! He also has all of Elvis' records which, thanks to modern technology, he has put on tape.

Mike was born and raised in Spokane, Washington. His interest in school were in sports, but especially football, baseball, and softball. After two years at Spokane Community College, he worked for twenty-five years for the same company. The company sold farm machinery all over the US.

Vern Jones and Mike were friends from high school days, so when Mike resigned from his company, Vern convinced him to come to Southern California. Here work life for Mike took a turn he never dreamed of but that has turned out to be perfect for him. He works for an agency called Exceed. The agency works closely with adults who have physical or mental disabilities. They have two centers, one for teaching work skills, and one for teaching living skills. The work is often one on one which Mike loves. The agency has approximately 700 clients in Riverside and San Bernardino counties. Mike has about 60 clients.

Every bowler's dream is to bowl a 300 game. Bowling three times a week, Mike accomplished that last year. He also plays golf occasionally. I don't know if he finds them, or they find him, but lost and abandoned animals are lucky if they do meet because Mike either keeps them or finds homes for them. Five cats now have a home with Mike and Vern.

Mike left Spokane but hasn't deserted the Spokane Cougars, watching them in person when possible or on television. Mike is very happy that he and Vern found RUCC, and we are too!

Betty Jacobs

Events at RUCC...

Adult Education Class

Led by Rev. Graff

"A Familiar Journey: The Spirituality of the Celts"

On Sundays, February 5, 12, and 26, from 9:00-10:00 am in Covenant Hall, you are invited to learn about the ancient Celtic peoples and the spirituality that fueled them. Believing that God is active and obvious in all creation, the Celts have contributed much to the spiritual stream from before Christ to the present day. Rev. Graff will facilitate the discussion, sharing from her studies last year in Ireland. All are invited!

Farmer Brown Goes to Town...

...and oh my! What he hears and the sights he sees you'll never know unless you come to Covenant Hall, Friday, February 17th, at 7:30 p.m.

This is an intergenerational variety show with many interesting "characters." Please buy your tickets early so we will know how many to plan for. Tickets are \$3.00 per person or \$10.00 per family. Proceeds will go to Wider Ministries and Christian Education. Tickets will also be available at the door.

For more information, please contact Mary Belle Carter, Coordinator,

FEBRUARY WORSHIP LEADERS

- 5 Barb Lord
- 12 Eric Naftzger
- 19 Bettye Wheeler
- 26 Maryann Stanson



FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 2 Jim Gray
- 7 Sharon Graff
- 12 Paul Romano
- 13 Don Kleckner
Jacob McMeans
Bailey Dickey
- 15 James Hester
Amanda Colclough
- 16 Deb Austin-Brecher
- 18 Carole Beswick
Andrea Morics
- 22 Maryann Stanson
- 23 Sarah Schuiling
- 26 Paul Burton

Blood Pressure Clinic

Blood Pressure Clinic will be Sunday, February 26, 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.

RUCC Men's Fellowship

The monthly meeting of the Men's Fellowship group took place Sunday, January 29th. The group discussed aspects of Dr. Graff's meditation concerning Dr. Martin Luther King. Among other things, it appeared to the group that the concept of Justice should pave the way for peace, not the other way around. The next meeting is scheduled for Sunday, February 26th at 8:30 a.m. in the church office. For further information, please call Sheldon Montgomery at 794-3822.

Got Anger? Meditate!

Kelsang Rak-ma, Resident Teacher at the Dharmachakra Buddhist Center, will teach meditation classes, Wednesday evenings, at 7:00 p.m. The classes will be based on a Buddhist poem from the 8th century AD called "Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life." Chapter six of the poem is dedicated to the discussion of anger – what it is, why we are attracted to it, how it doesn't really help us, and how to deal with it in an effective way. The classes will go through basic meditation techniques then dive right into our problems with anger. What fun! The

classes are open to people of all faiths and belief (or non-belief!) systems.

World Class Rummage Sale!

(With your help)

When: Saturday, April 1, 2006
from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Where: RUCC Covenant Hall
What: Clean Rummage (almost anything)
Why: Community Service

Needed:

Workers to help in setting up from Monday March 27th through Saturday, April 1st. Come when you can, leave when you must.

Transportation:

Yours primarily, mine if necessary (we can arrange for pick up and moving of large objects.)

Please make plans now to participate in this annual RUCC community event! For further information please call Sheldon Montgomery at 794-3822 or the church office at 793-3520.



...and around town

FFLAG Meeting

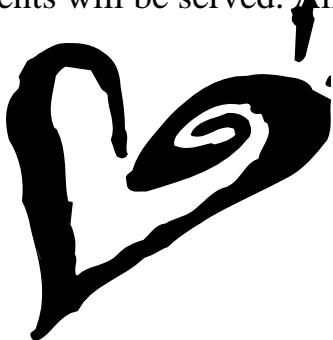
Families & Friends of Lesbians and Gays (FFLAG) meet on the first Wednesday of every month at the First United Methodist Church on the corner of Cajon and Olive at 7:30 p.m. Mary Belle Carter represents RUCC. For more information please contact Mary Belle at (909) 795-6369.

Family Enrichment Workshop

Christian Counseling Service will present a workshop designed to help families address conflictual issues in a safe environment. The workshop begins on Thursday, February 2, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the First United Methodist Church. Classes will continue each Thursday evening for eight weeks. For further information, please call 793-1078.

Church Women United

Church Women United will meet this morning at the First Baptist Church, 51 W. Olive Ave., Redlands. The guest speaker will be Chief of Police, Mr. J. Buerman speaking on "Youth at Risk." Refreshments will be served. All are welcome!



Pancake Breakfast Benefit

Please join the Redlands Area Interfaith Council on Saturday, February 4th, from 8:00 to 10:00 a.m., at the Islamic Center of Redlands, 11210 Alabama St., Redlands, for a delicious pancake breakfast to benefit the Islamic Center. The new mosque has been vandalized several times. The proceeds from the breakfast will be given to the mosque for lights and other anti-vandalism items. Please contact Galilee Glanville at 792-2890, or Renee in the office, for tickets or further information.

Benefit Concert

Contemporary Christian recording artist John David Webster will perform Friday, February 10, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. at The River Christian Reformed Church, located at 459 E. Highland Ave., Redlands. The concert will benefit Joseph's Storehouse, a Redlands food bank and resource center. Free tickets are available at SoundTheology, Loma Linda ABC, and Colton Berean. For further information, please call 793-5677.

Citizen's Action for Peace

Citizen's Action for Peace presents guest speaker Blasé Bonpane on Sunday, February 12th at 1:00 p.m. at RUCC. Widely recognized for his commitment to peace and social justice, Mr. Bonpane

hosts the radio program “World Focus”
on station KPFK. For further information,
please call 792-1294.

SUNDAY SCHOOL GUIDE DOG FUND-RAISER

The kids in Sunday School have been saving their pennies for a few months now; and, with help from the congregation, they are now halfway to their goal of \$250—the cost of one Guide Dog harness. What an achievement! Thanks to all who have contributed. If you would like to add some money to the jar, it should be located in the gathering area next to the FaithActs table. If you’d like to contribute puppy supplies like dog biscuits and bones, there is also a box in the gathering area to collect those donations. Whatever help you can give will be greatly appreciated!

We would also like to make a field trip out to the Guide Dogs of the Desert for one of their graduation ceremonies. We’ll keep you posted when we know the exact date. If you have any questions about this project, contact Barbie Fiske-Phillips or Andrea Morics.



RUCC 2006 OFFICERS AND AREA LEADERS AND CO-LEADERS

Officers

President: Dianne Landeros
Vice President: Bill Buchanan
Treasurer: Rich Blakley
Clerk: Rosemary Whitmer

Area Leaders and Co-Leaders

Church Growth and Enrichment:	Rick Sforza
Church Life Co-Leaders:	Beth Kolpien
Christian Education Co-Leaders:	Andrea Morics and Barbie Fiske-Phillips
Shepherds Co-Leaders:	Carole Wesson and Carol Buchanan
Stewards:	Loring Fiske-Phillips
Wider Ministries:	Julie Phillip
FaithActs:	Dianne Landeros
Worship:	John Walsh and Kathie Blakley
Board Advisor/Member at Large:	Galilee Glanville

February Scripture Readings

February 5: *Isaiah 40:21-31; 1 Corinthians 9:16-23; Mark 1:29-39*

February 12: *2 Kings 5:1-14; 1 Corinthians 9:24-27; Mark 1:40-45*

February 19: *Isaiah 43:18-25; 2 Corinthians 1:18-22; Luke 6:17-26*

February 26: *2 Kings 2:1-15; 2 Corinthians 4:4-6; Mark 9:2-9*

Minister – Rev. Dr. Sharon R. Graff

Associate Minister of Outreach – Jeanne Favreau-Sorvillo

Choir Director – Peggy McMeans

Organist – Dr. Taylor Ruhl

Handbell Director – Dennis Wolbert

Youth Director – Craig Colclough

Administrative Assistant – Renee Chavez

Sunday Child Care – Mina Ryan

Custodian – Jay Grayson

Church office hours: 9:00 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Monday – Friday

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



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