

WANDERINGS

A newsletter for people on a journey together with a purpose

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

May 2006

Communion Sunday - Worship Service 10:30 a.m., Sunday, May 7
Luncheon in honor of Rich Blakley's 30th Anniversary of Ordination

Church Board will meet Tuesday, May 9, 7:00 p.m.

The Sandwich Group will meet Tuesday, May 16, at 12:00 p.m.
in the Pastor's office.

The RUCC Jazz Festival, Friday, May 19 at 6:00 p.m. in the garden.

Music Sunday – Sunday, May 21

Stewards will meet Tuesday, May 23, at 7:00 p.m.

R.U.C.C. Men's Fellowship, 8:30 a.m., Sunday, May 28
Family Brown Bag Lunch and Game Day on Sunday May 28,
following worship service in Covenant Hall.

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.

Middle school and High school youth groups will meet at various times during
May. Please check The View for dates and times.

From your Pastor and Teacher, Sharon~

*“The Lord is my shepherd...I shall not want...
...lie down in green pastures...
...leads me beside still waters...
...restores my soul...
Even though I walk through the darkest valley,
I fear no evil;
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff—they comfort me.
You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
and I shall live in God’s house forever.”
—adapted from Psalm 23*

Last year, when I traveled to England and Ireland, I was impressed by the number of flocks of sheep I saw grazing on hillsides, in fields, even in and around the ancient sarsen stones of Stonehenge. From train windows, taxi cabs, and in my many walks, it seemed that sheep were peacefully making themselves at home everywhere. These were not dumb animals, as they often are accused of being. Rather, they seemed quite able to find refreshing grasslands on which to happily feed and to go places where humans were not allowed. Perhaps, I thought to myself, it could be freeing to be a sheep.

The beloved Shepherd’s Psalm—which we shall read this month in worship—is beloved precisely because in it someone else arranges the care. It is not the sheep’s job to find the water or food. It is not the sheep’s responsibility to pour the healing oil on wounds. Nor is it the sheep’s task to find the safest path through any of the darkest valleys. Someone else—that is, the shepherd—does the work so that the sheep’s life can be pleasant and worry-free.

No wonder we love this psalm! We fill our calendars with care-giving activities, and we define Christianity as “do...Do...DO...” We long for the simple life with a field of gently-swaying grass spread as far as the eye can see...and for someone else to do the mowing! A study I read recently indicated that, even with all of our time-saving devices and tricks, we Americans are now working more hours than we ever have, taking less vacations, and consequently (to no one’s surprise) experiencing more health problems. Go into any bookstore and you will see stacks of self-help tracts, most of which offer to sell you a healthy dose of common sense.

Underneath the psalm’s obvious joy of having a shepherd provide everything you need, is the simple message: “embrace your inner sheep!” Take a nap in a grassy field... Enjoy a healing bath in a tub full of Epsom salts... Light a candle and sit in the silence for just a minute or two... Being a sheep that is smart enough to eat the healthy grass in front of its face is as important as finding (or being) a loving shepherd. This beloved psalm invites us to try on both roles...today.

Blessings,



“Day by Day, they spent much time together in Worship...” Acts 2:46
Easter tide 2006

Easter Season corresponds to new growth in our gardens and (hopefully!) in ourselves. For six weeks, we focus on growth and new life—appropriately beginning with Earth Day and continuing with the gospel stories about Jesus appearing to his friends—we even see new life in the newly emerging first-century church. Feeling old and tired, uninspired? As the Avery & Marsh song from the 1970s suggests, “...come ready to follow and explore...ready to lift your wings and soar...come as a child...” Let’s play together this Easter season!

May 7 – “Shepherding Love” – Communion Sunday

Psalm 23; 1 John 3:16-24; John 10:11-18

A shepherd’s love is not just for Jesus...it is a love that each one of us can express and experience within Redlands UCC. On this very special day, we celebrate the shepherding love of Rev. Richard Blakley that helped form this congregation some 31 years ago, even as we affirm the loving ministry in which we all have a part. This is truly a party day!

May 14 – “Get Connected”

Acts 8:26-40; 1 John 4:7-21; John 15:1-8

Like grapes to the vine and vine to the branches, love connects us—to God, to self, to others. And, according to the passage from Acts, love can affect the community of which we are a part in miraculous ways. Scholars of the Jesus Seminar have suggested that the original Easter extended for several months or even a few years... perhaps Easter is still being experienced, as we love one another...

May 21 – “Make a Joyful Noise” – Music Sunday

Selections from the Psalms

Through singing and ringing, our amazingly-talented choirs will lead us in worshiping God. Associate Pastor Jeanne Favreau-Sorvillo will lead in Rev. Graff’s vacation absence. Come to make joyful noises and to hear heavenly music!

May 28 – John Walsh, preaching

Acts 1:15-17, 21-26; 1 John 5:9-13; John 17:6-19

As Rev. Graff continues her vacation in southern England, our friend and brother, Chaplain John Walsh will offer the morning message. Continue the Easter party!

Worship will be richer and deeper with your presence. Come to the Easter party...

* * * * *

Rev. Graff will be taking two weeks of vacation from May 15th-29th, returning to southern England with her sister. Watch out England! Please keep these travels in your prayers. During Rev. Graff’s absence, your pastoral needs will be very ably filled by our Associate Pastor, Jeanne Favreau-Sorvillo, and by our friend, Chaplain Al Sproull. You may reach Jeanne at (909) 647-7877; Al may be reached at (909) 335-5552.

President's Report

One of our goals for this year is to improve communications within the church – from the board to the congregation, from area leaders to their areas and the congregation, from the congregation to the church leaders. This is a goal that seems to find its way onto our annual list every year. It was a goal that emerged from a retreat in 2001 and which we have carried over...not that we haven't made progress, but clearly there is still room for improvement! We know that unless there is an open flow of information among us, we cannot fully participate in the life of the church or feel included in the church family.

We have many means of sharing information within our church. You're reading one right now – our monthly Wanderings newsletter. The View posts announcements for the week. Urgent information on upcoming major events, prayer needs and practical needs of our members are communicated by the shepherds to their flocks. Time for joys and concerns during Sunday service give us another opportunity to update the congregation on the news and needs of our friends, families and members.

Thanks to technology, we can now add email and the internet to our list of communication tools. Many of you already receive your Wanderings and View by email. If you would like to be added to the email list for these, let Renee know. And, of course, there's still the telephone.

Our latest additions to our list of communication aids are the kiosks, one of which is located in the gathering area and one in Covenant Hall. Look for postings by the various areas of the church – FaithActs, Wider Ministries, Christian Education, and the rest.

We as a board hope to communicate to you more fully on board goals, issues and decisions, planned events, finances, and facility needs. Future Wanderings and kiosk postings will include board minutes, updates on FaithActs projects, and a timeline of planned events for the year. Use the email to communicate to your church officers, leaders, and to each other. It's fast and efficient! And let us know if we're failing to communicate adequately on issues of concern to you.

We are family. Let's talk!

Dianne Landeros

Happy Mother's Day



Events at RUCC...

Please Join Us in Celebrating

Rev. Rich Blakley's

30 years of ordination as a minister
of the United Church of Christ

Sunday, May 7, 2006
Redlands United Church of Christ
Sunday service at 10:30 a.m.
with a light luncheon following.

Good Grief

In the past year, many saints have left this earth for other environs, leaving us to grieve. Others among us have recently experienced various kinds of losses or changes (job, relationship, residence, etc.), each of which is accompanied by some of the symptoms of grief. Grief takes many forms and travels various pathways...always it can be helpful to talk about the grief and to know that you are not alone. Our pastors are considering starting a grief group for anyone who would like to join. This would be a short-term series (perhaps six to eight weeks in length), and a closed group—meaning that after the first two sessions, the group's membership would remain as is for the duration of the series. If this sounds helpful and/or relevant to your current journey, please contact Rev. Graff at the church office. A schedule will be developed that is convenient for all participants.

Meditations to heal the Body & Mind

Kelsang Rak-ma, Resident Teacher at the Dharmachakra Buddhist Center, will teach meditation classes, Wednesday evenings, May 3, 10, and 17, at 7:00 p.m. The classes are open to people of all faiths and belief (or non-belief!) systems.

RUCC Men's Fellowship

The monthly meeting of the Men's Fellowship group will take place Sunday, May 28 at 8:30 a.m. in the church office.

MAY WORSHIP LEADERS

- 7 Richard Blakley
- 14 Karen Walsh
- 21 Loring Fiske-Phillips
- 28 Julie Phillip

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
Paul Hodson
- 23 Helen Arth
- 26 Susie Mayse
- 27 Bill Buchanan
- 28 Shirley Marks
- 30 Aurea Nuñez

...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.

Mayor's Prayer Breakfast

Please reserve Thursday, May 4th for the Mayor's Prayer Breakfast. The breakfast will be held at 7:30 a.m. at the Orton Center, University of Redlands. The theme for the breakfast will be "A Community Prepared." For further information, please contact Gal Glanville.

Church Women United

Church Women United will celebrate May Friendship Day on Friday, May 5th, 10:00 am at RUCC. The theme is "Signs of Growth" and will include the recognition of the 50th Anniversary of the Fellowship of the Least Coin. Those who have been saving their coins may bring them this day for dedication. There will be a Potluck luncheon hosted by RUCC. Please bring a salad or pay \$3.00.



*The office will be closed
Monday, May 29th*

Citizen's Action for Peace

Citizens Action for Peace will continue their Film and Speaker Series on Sunday, May 14th at 1:00 p.m. at RUCC. They will be presenting two short films, "Mother's Day at the Air Show" and "Images of the Enemy."

Guide Dogs of the Desert Graduation Ceremony

The dogs in the Guide Dog program will be graduating on Saturday, May 20, and we want to be there to help them celebrate! Our Sunday School kids have been saving their pennies, and with the congregation's help, they have achieved their goal of \$250-- the cost of one dog harness.

There will be a tour of the Kennel facilities at 1:00, followed by the Graduation Ceremony at 2:00.

The festivities will be at the Guide Dogs of the Desert facility: 60740 Dillon Rd., Whitewater CA. Directions can be found on their website:
www.guidedogsofthedesert.com

San Bernardino County Museum

If you're looking for something the family can do on Memorial Day, the museum will be open from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Discover something old, learn something new at the "If These Buckets Could Talk" exhibit. Admission is \$6 for adults and \$4 for children 5-12.

Church Life needs you!

As most of you know, Church Life helps coordinate food needs for various RUCC functions. The annual meeting luncheon, Easter breakfast and Hamburger Fry are some examples. We need more volunteers for our committee! We usually need help in the following areas: Baking or cooking, serving, cleaning up, organizing and planning.

Remember....

- You do not have to help with every event. Some members are only able to help out once or twice a year. And that's fine!
- You can be very specific about how you'd like to help. We have one volunteer who will bake cookies as needed. Another volunteer likes to help serve.
- We would like to plan new events. If you have ideas about new ways we can get together and socialize, we would love to hear them.
- It really is fun and a great way to meet other church members!

We would like to have more volunteers on our committee so that there will be less work for everyone! If you would like more information or would like to volunteer, please contact me at the phone number or e-mail listed below.

Hoping to hear from you soon,

Beth Kolpien, Church Life Leader
335-9505
bbkolpien@aol.com

Our Associate Minister for Outreach, Jeanne Favreau-Sorvillo is graduating with her Master of Divinity Degree! The commencement ceremony will be Saturday, May 13, 8:30-10:00 a.m. on the outside quad at the Claremont School of Theology (1325 N. College Avenue, Claremont). You are most welcome to attend and/or to keep Jeanne in your thoughts and prayers on this happy occasion!

Our friend and sister Cindi Donald is moving to New Mexico, and her new address is 610 Camino Santa Ana, Santa Fe, NM 87505. Cindi wishes to thank this whole community of faith for the incredible support and love during these past couple of years and she sends much love to all.

May Scripture Readings

May 7: *Psalms 23; 1 John 3:16-24; John 10:11-18*
May 14: *Acts 8:26-40; 1 John 4:7-21; John 15:1-8*
May 21: *Selections from the Psalms*
May 28: *Acts 1:15-17, 21-26; 1 John 5:9-13; John 17:6-19*

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.



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