

# *WANDERINGS*

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

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

*July - August 2006*

Communion Sundays - Worship Service 10:30 a.m.,  
Sunday, July 2 and Sunday, August 6

The office will be closed Tuesday, July 4 in observance of  
Independence Day.

Youth Group Car Wash at RUCC, Saturday July 8, 9 – 11:00 a.m.

Church Board will meet Tuesday, July 11, 7:00 p.m.

Women's Silent Retreat in Angelus Oaks, July 14, 15, and 16.

The Sandwich Group will meet Tuesdays, July 18, and August 15  
at 12:00 p.m. in the Pastor's office.

Stewards will meet Tuesdays, July 25 and August 22, at 7:00 p.m.

R.U.C.C. Men's Fellowship, 8:30 a.m., Sundays, July 30 and August 27.

Brown Bag Lunch and Game Day on Sundays, July 30 and August 27  
following worship service in Covenant Hall.

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

From your Pastor and Teacher, Sharon~

“I had always hoped that this land  
might become a safe and agreeable asylum  
to the virtuous and persecuted part of mankind,  
to whatever nation they might belong.”

—George Washington, 1788

At the recent Annual Gathering of the Southern California Nevada Conference of the United Church of Christ, the issue of immigration was presented and discussed. Though opinions differed, there was a sense of unanimity when it came to acknowledging our Christian responsibility to extend an extravagant welcome to the stranger in our midst.

Such seemed to have also been the case for our nation’s first president, as evidenced by the quote above. Mr. Washington hoped that the nation would be a place of respite and sanctuary for those who were persecuted or abused elsewhere in the world. He hoped that their nation of origin (i.e. their nationality) would not be a deterrent to their being welcomed here in the United States. He hoped, above all, that the citizens of this nation—immigrants who themselves had been welcomed by the native peoples—would also be welcoming of others.

Washington’s hopes, for me, lie at the heart of what makes this country great. Our greatness is not in our buildings or our inventions, though they are inspiring. Nor is our greatness in breathtaking landscape, be it the north rim of the Grand Canyon or the towering redwoods or the colorful fall leaves of the trees that line the East Coast. Our greatness is in the hopes we have, the dreams that we work tirelessly to realize, and the welcoming that we extend to those who need a home.

To be sure, our track record as a nation on this issue is not perfect. But something in us keeps trying. We keep talking and listening and reforming our own opinions. We keep open minds. We read and ponder and pray. And, in this particular congregation, we take very seriously our mandate to welcome all as God has welcomed us. I know that the influence of 150 sojourners in faith in Redlands is barely a drop in the ocean of the world’s issues around immigration. I also know that the influence of one changes another, who in turn, changes a handful more, until the circles of influence have expanded to embrace all.

I urge each of you to consider how your welcoming of folks here to RUCC translates into the national debate/dialogue about immigration. How could our voice affect the dialogue? What do we, who have experienced first-hand God’s extravagant welcome and loving embrace of us, have to offer to our nation’s leaders? There seems to be much for us to both give and to learn.

Blessings,



***"Day by Day, they spent much time together in Worship..." Acts 2:46***

July – August 2006

During these summer months we focus on some of the texts about Jesus and his earliest followers. Using the New Testament along with the newly-discovered Gospels of Mary and Judas, we shall explore what messages of Jesus translate into our time, what stories of his can inspire us as we faithfully walk the journey, and what of his ways can teach and strengthen us in our ministry together. Summer Series discussions about progressively following Christ, combined with Sunday morning worship, will offer us many opportunities to walk the path together more faithfully. Come on along, good friends are waiting...

July 2 – "One Nation, Under God" – Communion Sunday

*Mark 5:21-43; Selected Readings from John Winthrop (1630), William Penn (1693), The Preamble to the United States Constitution (1787), The Gettysburg Address (1863), The New Colossus (1883), Edna St. Vincent Millay (1924), Fannie Lou Hamer (1971), Anna Quindlen (2002), and The Rev. John Thomas' speech to the Washington, DC Peace Marchers (2005).*

Every year we are given the rich opportunity to worship on or near the actual day of our nation's birthday. Some like to do it up with flags and fireworks and lots of loud trumpets. Others prefer to give thanks quietly for the blessings our country has both received and offered to others. This year, our responses to this day are somewhere in between these extremes. We will listen and learn from voices that have engaged our national imagination from the beginnings to the present...and we will sing...a lot!

July 9 – "Rebels, Thorns, and Dust"

*Ezekiel 2:1-5; 2 Corinthians 12:2-10; Mark 6:1-13*

Today's passages speak of difficulties—difficult people, difficult burdens, difficult circumstances—and they each offer some insight into how to keep on moving and breathing in spite of such difficulties. If you've ever had to deal with difficulties (and who hasn't?), then this one's for you!

July 16 – "Running Stop Signs?"

*Amos 7:7-15; Ephesians 1:3-14; Mark 6:14-29*

Since the Apostle Paul wrote to the Ephesians that Jesus came to erase the law, does this mean that we Christians are above the law? Or can ignore the law? That didn't seem to work very well for John the Baptist, as today's gospel lesson illustrates. So what is the relationship, if any, between law and grace?

July 23 – Pastor Jeanne Favreau-Sorvillo, preaching

*Psalm 23; Ephesians 2:11-22; Mark 6:30-34, 53-56*

July 30 – “All You Have is All You Need”

*2 Kings 4:42-44; Ephesians 3:14-21; John 6:1-21*

Whether it is food or peace or strength or power or faith or understanding or love, when we are paired with God there always seems to be more than enough, or so our passages proclaim today. But can we (or do we) really live as if that is true? Perhaps our journey needs a loaf of bread and a couple of fish...

**In August** we will be stepping aside from the customary lectionary readings in order to explore the recently-discovered Gospels of Mary and Judas. These two gospels are quite short and very readable. Copies of each gospel are available in the Gathering Area, and you are urged to read them several times throughout the month. Read them as a detective, with questions and hunches. Read them as a scholar, with insights and nudges. Read them prayerfully and thoughtfully, openly awaiting God's speaking through them to you. Each Sunday of August, different sections of each of these two gospels will be read in worship—come and receive some new companions for your journey of faith!

Worship will be richer and deeper with your presence. Come and be refreshed for the journey...  
—Sharon R. Graff

Newly RUCC covenanted Tom Miller saw his novel *The Great Detective at the Crucible of Life* published last year under his pen name "Thos. Kent Miller." While the novel is at first glance a Sherlock Holmes story and a 19<sup>th</sup> century African adventure, it is really much, much more. It is first and foremost a reflection of Tom's personal spiritual journey--not so much a map of the journey so much as it attempts to throw a spotlight on some of the sign posts he has seen and experienced along the way.

For example, one of the several themes explored in the book happens to touch on the United Church of Christ's recent campaign to remind people that "God is still speaking."

While it is apparent that God speaks to people in many different ways, Tom's book tries to point out that those amazing coincidences that sometimes happen in our lives--that we tend to dismiss as "mere coincidence"--are in fact God trying to get our attention and tell us something. When the impact of such an event is unavoidable, we sometimes call the phenomenon "meaningful coincidence" or "synchronicity." Tom suggests that there are at least four categories of synchronicity: life affirming, life changing, warnings, and just plain mysterious.

Tom is hoping that his book might be the starting point for some of RUCC's members and friends to gather and share their experiences and discuss these ideas and more. As he says at the beginning of the book, "This tale has no further intention beyond providing food for thought . . . and perhaps a good time to boot!" Tom has donated several copies of *The Great Detective at the Crucible of Life* to RUCC, and they are available in the church office for a \$15.95 donation to the church. Please contact the church office to express your interest in a group discussion series with Tom!

Summer Series 2006  
Sundays, July 23-August 13  
5:00-8:00 pm

Locations:

July 23 - At the Buchanan Home  
July 30 - At the McMeans Home  
August 6 - At the Killpatrick Home  
August 13 - At the Burton Home

(All addresses are in the RUCC Directory. Color-coded maps are available in the Gathering Area and Church Office.)

*"What is a Progressive Christian?"*

Using material developed by The Center for Progressive Christianity, which offers thought-provoking information on eight values of progressive Christians, we will read, discuss, hear and discover. This is a great opportunity each week to become better acquainted with

and to learn from each other. For ALL ages, from young children to older adults!

Also a great way to introduce a friend to RUCC!

As in the past three years, the schedule will include  
swimming and visiting (5-6 pm),  
a potluck meal (6-6:30 pm),  
and study and discussion of the topic (6:30-8 pm).

Facilitated by Rev. Dr. Sharon R. Graff and others in our congregation.



## *Events at RUCC...*

### Save the date! All Church Retreat

Please save the weekend of  
September 22-24 2006  
for the All Church Retreat  
at  
Pilgrim Pines.

### **RUCC Men's Fellowship**

The monthly meeting of the Men's Fellowship group will take place Sunday, July 30 at 8:30 a.m. in Covenant Hall. Rick Sforza, an Air Force Aerial Photographer, will tell us about his recent trip to Tunisia and other fascinating places.

Also, our continuing discussion on suicide intervention is now scheduled for Sunday, August 27. We want this to be an informative, meaningful interaction. Please join us - share your ideas, listen, and learn with us!

### **Meditations to heal the Body & Mind**

Kelsang Rak-ma, Resident Teacher at the Dharmachakra Buddhist Center, will teach meditation classes, Wednesday evenings, at 7:00 p.m., beginning August 23. The classes are open to people of all faiths and belief (or non-belief!) systems.

### **Shhh...Women's Silent Retreat Friday – Sunday, July 14-16 Whispering Pines in Angelus Oaks**

Rescheduled from the snowed-out spring weekend, the Women's Silent Retreat welcomes any women who wish to spend an entire weekend in periods of extended silence. Several blessed (and perhaps, challenging) extended periods of silence will be interspersed with times to eat and chat together. To register: email Angelynn King at [angelynn\\_king@redlands.edu](mailto:angelynn_king@redlands.edu) or call the church office at 793-3520. The retreat begins Friday, July 14 at 7:00 p.m. and ends Sunday, July 16 after breakfast. Cost varies depending on selected room, and Angelynn will assist you with this information. Questions? Contact Angelynn King or Rev. Sharon Graff, facilitators.

### **Covenant Choir**

The Covenant Choir has enjoyed another season of offering worship music during the morning service. As the director of the choir, I would like to thank each member for faithful service and great singing! As of June 4, we are on a respite through September 3. We will resume rehearsals on September 7. Anyone who would like to join us, please see me, Peggy McMeans, call 798-1474, or email me @ [PGWMSing@aol.com](mailto:PGWMSing@aol.com).

Meanwhile, if you are interested in sharing music talents for special music during the summer, do not hesitate—see me about that as well!

## JULY WORSHIP LEADERS

2 Lisa Dewey  
9 Michael Dewey  
16 James Barton  
23 Beth Kolpien  
30 Gavin Thrasher



## JULY BIRTHDAYS

1 John Macomber  
2 John Drage  
3 Brooks Dierdorff  
6 Mary Fung  
Vern Jones  
Marlene Moran  
7 Suzanne Seifert  
Lisa Ruiz  
8 Andrea Schuiling  
9 Diana Waters  
Joel Wacks  
11 Sheila Campbell  
12 Kendra Killpatrick-Bolen  
14 Sarah Fiske-Phillips  
15 Rosemary Whitmer  
16 Debbie Vuocolo  
Chris Blumberg  
19 Marjorie Benz  
22 Lashawn Lee  
23 William Kintner  
Margaret Paul

## AUGUST WORSHIP LEADERS

6 Mary Belle Carter  
13 Hannah McMeans  
20 Loring Fiske-Phillips  
27 Ofelia Morales

## AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

1 Charles Wheeler  
Sorour Ehteshami  
3 Debbie Gerberich  
5 Doris Milloy  
8 Laura Palmer  
Angelynn King  
9 Stacy Kaiser  
Neil Haner  
10 Jimmy Cox  
12 Lisa Dewey  
13 Stewart Durrant  
14 Jayne Miller  
16 Steve Arth  
21 James Barton  
Larry Rose  
22 Peggy McMeans  
Domenick Sforza  
Malinda Wolbert  
25 Keith Osajima  
26 Barry Kolpien  
27 Donald Dickey  
Jeannette McNeilly  
Brent Warner  
28 Emily Kolpien  
29 Caitlin Walsh  
31 Jill Spencer

## *...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.

### **Pilgrim Pines Summer Camp**

There is a booklet hanging on the Christian Education board-- take a moment to browse through the exciting opportunities for camp this summer! Camp sessions will run the weeks of July 9-15, July 16-22, July 23-29, July 30-August 5, and August 6-12. There are programs for First Grade through High School students. Applications and further materials are located in the church office in the literature area.

### **Guide Dogs of the Desert 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Summer Fling**

Please join us on Saturday August 19, 2006 at the Guide Dogs of the Desert Training Center for an evening of fine food and entertainment. The cost is \$30 per person and reservations must be made in advance. All proceeds benefit Guide Dogs of the Desert International. For more information, or reservations, please contact Donna Hunter at (909) 792-1464 or (909) 793-3024, or by email at [dlhunter@earthlink.net](mailto:dlhunter@earthlink.net).

### **The Jesus Seminars**

Did Christianity begin with the resurrection, with Paul, with Pentecost or with Jesus? That question will form the agenda of the Jesus Seminar on Christian Origins at Westar's Fall meeting in Santa Rosa, California, October 18-21, 2006.

Program details and registration information are available in the church office along with a schedule of Fall 2006 Jesus Seminars on the Road. These are rich opportunities to keep current on the latest in Jesus studies.



## *Getting to Know You...*

by Betty Jacobs

It's twenty some years later and here I am interviewing a man my daughter knew in high school...how time flies!

Pam and Kerry Dunn were welcomed to our church family with our recent covenanting members. Pam was born in Las Vegas but in her early years moved often with her Air Force family. The family settled in Redlands in 1966 where she finished junior high at Cope and high school at Redlands High. In those early years she enjoyed sewing and reading. Always knowing that she was going to become a teacher, she left for Portland, Oregon's Lewis and Clark University to study in its teaching program for two years before transferring to USC for both her Bachelor and Masters degrees. Pam has taught in Germany, Los Angeles, Ohio and now California, thirty years collectively.

Kerry is a Redlands native and attended Crafton Elementary where his dad was the Principal – which could be both a blessing and a curse. His seventh and eighth grades were spent at the old Redlands Junior High. Some of us will remember that the wrecking ball found it was almost impossible to knock the building down so that it could be rebuilt to be earthquake proof! The buildings are now part of the RHS North Campus. In ninth grade Kerry was in the first class at Moore Junior High. He played saxophone in fourth through ninth grades but in high school came the choice between music or sports, basketball won out.

After high school, he was an economics major at Claremont Men's College. Then it was ten years working for the Federal Government. Eventually, teaching won out over his original major. He first taught fifth and sixth grades at the old Mission Elementary school but has been at Bryn Mawr Elementary since then. Bryn Mawr is a very ethnically diverse school with students of twenty-seven different language backgrounds.

Pam and Kerry met while student teaching at Calimesa Elementary. It has been nineteen very good years together. Pam's two girls are out of the nest now. Lynne is an archeologist in Kazakhstan and Laura is in her last year at the Design Institute in San Diego and also doing an internship in Los Angeles.

The instant answer from both Pam and Kerry when asked what they enjoy now in their leisure time was, "travel." They've been to England and Ireland but have mostly driven throughout the western United States and Canada. A love for Pam is gardening.

Pam and Kerry already have ties to several of our members, and it's a real pleasure to have them join our family.

**July and August Scripture Readings**

July 2:        *Mark 5:21-43; and Selected Readings from U.S. History and Literature.*  
July 9:        *Ezekiel 2:1-5; 2 Corinthians 12:2-10; Mark 6:1-13*  
July 16:       *Amos 7:7-15; Ephesians 1:3-14; Mark 6:14-29*  
July 23:       *Psalms 23; Ephesians 2:11-22; Mark 6:30-34, 53-56 – Pastor Jeanne Favreau-Sorvillo, preaching*  
July 30:       *2 Kings 4:42-44; Ephesians 3:14-21; John 6:1-21*

August        Selected readings from the Gospels of Mary and Judas.

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  
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