

WANDERINGS

A newsletter for people on a journey together with a purpose

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

February 2007

Communion Sunday - Worship Service 10:30 a.m.,
Sunday, February 4

RUCC Area Opportunity Day
Sunday, February 4, following worship service.

The Prayer Group will meet Mondays, February 5, 12, 19, and 26
at 10:30 a.m. in the Choir Room

Church Board will meet Tuesday, February 13, 7:00 p.m.
in the church office.

Staff Meeting – Tuesday, February 13, 11:00 a.m.

Worship Staff Meeting – Sunday, February 18, 12:30 p.m.

The Sandwich Group will meet on Tuesday, February 20,
at 12:00 in the Pastor's office.

Ash Wednesday – February 21 – Taize' Worship Service 7:00 p.m.

Stewards will meet on Tuesday, February 27, at 7:00 p.m.

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

Celebration Ringers rehearsal on Thursdays, 6:15 p.m.

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

Middle school youth group will meet at 4:15 on Thursdays, February 1, 8, 15, 22
High school youth group will meet at 2:00 on Sundays, February 4, 11, 18, 25

From your Pastor and Teacher, Sharon~

“What I see is caring and loving, uncaring and unloving.”

—Noah Sforza, on his observation of the church work trip to Chalmette, LA

Truer words have rarely been spoken. The workers sent by this good congregation were sitting in a circle in the abandoned elementary school that had become our home for a week, candlelight glowing from the middle of the circle, souls and bodies weary from two solid days of mucking out houses. We were sharing our reflections, clearing our emotions, and generally enjoying one another’s presence as if we were at an expensive gala. Each person spoke with wisdom and insight—especially those four amazing young people: Sarah Fiske-Phillips, Jacob Fiske-Phillips, Domenick Sforza, and Noah Sforza—and each of us basked in the comments we were hearing. As an unlit candle-turned-talking stick made its way around the circle to Noah, he looked down at it, then at each of us in the circle, and, in response to the question, “What have you seen so far?” he said what I have quoted above.

Noah’s words keep haunting me. Not in a scary way, but in an inviting, intriguing manner. They invite me (and perhaps all of us) to ponder how one set of circumstances—in this case Hurricane Katrina and its continuing aftermath—can be both/and...both caring and uncaring...both loving and unloving. How, for example, can \$100 billion worth of government aid be anything other than a generous and necessary act of loving and caring? Yet, for thousands of NOLA citizens, still displaced, still waiting for the promised aid, that same pile of money is both uncaring and unloving. I recently heard from a Redlands resident that his cousin, who lived in Chalmette, just received his promised FEMA trailer in early January 2007... nearly 17 months after the “trifecta” of the storm, the levees breaking, and the oil spill ravaged his home. Caring? Loving? Uncaring? Unloving?

Bringing the pondering closer to home, I have wondered about the times that our actions and words, no matter how well-intended, can come across as both unloving and uncaring...when we are so certain of our “rightness” that our words and opinions can sound like steamrollers mashing the words and opinions of others. Especially during these next two years, when our national leaders will likely continue their partisan antics, I hope that Redlands UCC will continue as a bright light of loving and caring...about one another...about the neighbor... about the unknown sister or brother we will never meet. Continuing to share our opinions and continuing to learn from one another, let us be extravagantly generous in our love and through our care!

Blessings,



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Lent is coming...

The season of deep reflection and spiritual opportunities...

The season when, traditionally, people are urged to “give up” something...

Instead, let us “take on” a new practice—that of meeting together mid-week!

Please save on your calendars ~ Wednesdays, February 28 – March 28 ~ 6:00-8:00 pm

We’ll meet for dinner and discussion of our relationship with the earth,
led by members and friends of Redlands UCC.

This series will be thoughtful, provocative, and transforming...I promise!

"Make us to know your ways, O God...teach us your paths..." Psalm 25:4

February 2007

February 4 --- " It's Kick-Off Time" – Communion Sunday

Psalm 138, 1 Corinthians 15:1-11, Luke 5:1-11

Today begins UCC Women's Week. Traditionally this week is a time to recognize and honor the multitude of gifts women have contributed to the on-going survival of this earth. Come and hear the voices of women who will explore how tradition has helped them use their gifts and where tradition has hindered their giftedness. Rev. Jeanne is in the pulpit!

February 11 – "Location...Location...Location..."

Jeremiah 17:5-8; Psalm 1:1-3; Luke 6:17-26

The familiar real estate mantra could well provide an abbreviated description of today's readings. The prophet Jeremiah speaks of wilderness and riverside flora and fauna, while the psalmist declares that those who live in and with God are like trees flourishing by the rivers' bank. Enter Jesus with his inflammatory rhetoric about blessings and curses, and you have a dramatic stage on which to engage in dialogue about location...location...location. So where do you choose to live?

February 18 – "Seeing and Believing, But NOT Speaking?"

Exodus 34:29-35; Psalm 99; Luke 9:28-36

They kept silent????!!! Imagine how you would be spilling the beans if you had been on the mountaintop with Moses or with Jesus and seen the radiance of the Divine firsthand. Yet scripture hints that silence was the most appropriate response to being in the Presence. Is this God's best advice to us as we move from the inspiration of the mountaintop into the valleys of Lent? Perhaps so, dear friends, perhaps so...shhhh...Lent awaits...

Wednesday, February 21 – Ash Wednesday – 7:00 pm in our sanctuary

Psalm 51:1-17; 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10; Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent with the first sign of God's love—the gentle divine touch of ash reminding us of our sacred humanity. Music from the Taize community in France and scripture readings that help us reflect on our values and priorities will be interspersed with periods of silence. Our friends from Mentone Community Congregational Church and First Congregational Church of San Bernardino will join us for this service.

February 25 – "Jesus: 3; Devil: zip" – First Sunday of Lent

Deuteronomy 26:1-11; Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16; Luke 4:1-13

We continue our Lenten journey with a game of sorts...a game we face on a regular basis...the game of temptation. Not something we talk much about, but scripture has a word or two to say on the subject. Come, sports fans, the word is for you!

Worship will be richer and deeper with your presence. Come and be refreshed for the journey ahead...

—Rev. Dr. Sharon R. Graff



It's "Get On the Bus" Time Again!

"Thank you for bringing peace and joy to my life by bringing my daughter here for Mother's Day. I got to make amends to her for what I have put her through with my addiction and for my being away from her in prison. But, most of all, thank you for giving me the opportunity to hold her. That meant more to me than anything in the world." Jane, a mother in prison

An Invitation from Jeanne

Once again this year, in partnership with the Step by Step Reentry Coalition of Redlands, RUCC will host the "Get on the Bus" program on Friday, May 11, 2007. Over 30 buses filled with children will travel from major cities in California to five women's prisons around the state so kids can celebrate Mother's Day with their incarcerated moms. The yearly "Get on the Bus Program", founded in 1999, has been uniting mothers and their children on this special day at the Valley State Prison for Women and the Central California Women's Facility - both in Chowchilla - the California Rehabilitation Center in Norco, the Ventura Youth Correctional Facility in Camarillo, and the California Institution for Women in Corona. The Chowchilla facilities alone are the largest women's prisons in the world, housing over 7,400 inmates, 75% of whom are mothers. These prisons are far from urban areas, so many of these children never get to visit their mothers throughout their entire sentence.

Children pay the high price of separation from their mothers. According to the California Department of Corrections, 17,760 children under the age of 18 have their mothers in prison and live with relatives or in foster care. Many of these children develop emotional and behavioral problems, and it is estimated that 30-50% of boys will be incarcerated themselves. The majority of these women are non-violent mothers from impoverished communities and have been sentenced to prison as a direct result of mandatory sentencing for drug law violations.

Like last year, our church will be sending a bus to Norco and Chino. And like last year we have a need for many volunteers to help make this a successful day for the children and their moms. Our very own Janelle Bradford has agreed to coordinate this event and we are looking for other energetic volunteers willing to join her as part of the coordinating committee. There is a need for folks willing to handle food arrangements (both a continental breakfast at RUCC and a BBQ hot dog lunch at the prison), collection of activity kits to keep kids occupied while riding the bus, publicity/fundraising, and most importantly individual child sponsors who will make contact with the children's families in order to help them complete all the necessary paperwork. Without proper documentation (birth certificates, etc.) the children will not be allowed inside the prisons.

If you would like to get involved in this meaningful outreach, please contact me at 909-647-7877 or leave a message with Renee in the office. Your help will give *"a lot of the mothers a reason to hope, to do better, and to have a renewed purpose in life."* (John T., prison staff)

Events at RUCC...

Save the Date!

"Attic Antics"

Our variety show, starring Gal Glanville as Granny, will be on February 23 at 7:00. Please let Mary Belle Carter know what acts you would like to do ~ song, dance, skit.

Please call Mary Belle at 795-6369 after 10 a.m.

Alpha Bible Study

The Alpha Bible Study group will meet on Tuesday, February 6 at 7:00 p.m. at the home of Dorothy Landeros, 1368 Prospect Drive, Redlands. All are welcome!

RUCC All-Church Fellowship

The monthly meeting of the RUCC All-Church Fellowship group will take place Sunday, February 25, 2007 at 9:00 a.m. in Covenant Hall. They will continue to discuss the book "A Purpose Driven Life."

Meditations to heal the Body & Mind

Kelsang Rak-ma, Resident Teacher at the Dharmachakra Buddhist Center, will continue meditation classes on Wednesday evenings at 7:00 p.m. in Covenant Hall. The fee is \$10 per class or five classes for \$40. You can join any classes you like; you don't have to join at the beginning of the series.

Prayer Group

The Prayer Group meets every Monday morning, 10:30 to 11:30, in the choir room. The first twenty minutes is a beginner/refresher workshop time followed by meditation and silent prayer. All are invited!

Step by Step Coalition

The Step by Step coalition has a new meeting time. They will meet the first Tuesday of each month at 4:30 p.m. at RUCC. For further information please contact Rev. Jeanne Favreau-Sorvillo at (714) 856-4589. Everyone is invited!

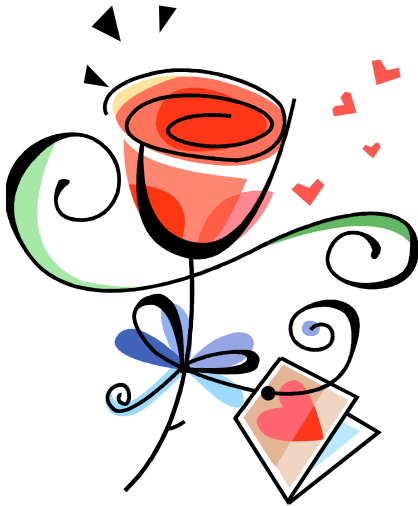
Coming in March



The RUCC Annual Rummage Sale will be on Saturday, March 3. Please contact Opal Inman at 307-0859 for further information.

FEBRUARY WORSHIP LEADERS

- 4 Sally Cummings
- 11 Floyd Orr
- 18 Ken Crowley
- 25 Colleen Kintner



FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 2 Jim Gray
- 7 Sharon Graff
- 10 Tera Favreau-Sorvillo
- 12 Paul Romano
- 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
- 28 Kent Taylor

Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteers are always welcome to support the meals program for people with AIDS at First Congregational United Church of Christ in San Bernardino. Some cook a main dish, side dish, or dessert to serve 20 people, and bring it in on Thursday or Friday before 8 a.m. You can call Millie Thomson at 885-4789 if you'd like to sign up to cook something. Or, you can come on Friday mornings between 7:30 and 9:00 a.m. to help package the meals and cook or assemble the remaining dishes. The volunteers meet in the church kitchen off the parking lot every Friday morning, 3041 N. Sierra Way, San Bernardino.

Also, tutors or reading partners are always welcome at the Afterschool Homework Center. Our center is open Monday-Thursday from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m., and walk-in volunteers are always welcome, either once or regularly. Our director, Sarah Darter, is happy to answer any questions you may have. You can contact her at 886-4911 x104.

Family Services

Family Service Association continues to serve low-income and homeless families in our community. For most it is the basic needs in life they come for: food, clothing, housing support, medical assistance, educational training programs. Using a case management based system we help families toward stability and greater self-sufficiency.

While our new facility is designed to provide these services efficiently we can't do it without the support of volunteers. The success of our daily operations is dependent on people who give their time to help us sort, organize, distribute, feed, and care for the families we serve. There are volunteer opportunities in our distribution center, support programs, and group projects. All it takes is a smile and a desire to help make a difference. Please call 793-2673 for further information.

...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.

Church Women United

Church Women United will meet Friday, February 2, 2007 at 10:00 a.m. at the First Baptist Church, 51 W. Olive Ave., Redlands. The guest speaker will be Christa McNerney from Christian Counseling Service.

Family Service Association

Family Service Association of Redlands invites you to attend the 2007 Annual Meeting and Program on Thursday, February 15, in The Casa Loma Room, University of Redlands, at 11:30 a.m. The fee is \$15 per person. Please make reservations no later than Friday, February 9, at 793-2673

Christian Counseling Service

Please join Christian Counseling Service for their 29th Annual Meeting on Sunday, February 25, at 4:00 p.m. at the First United Methodist Church, 1 E. Olive Ave., Redlands. Tickets are \$25 and are available through Bonnie Killpatrick or Carole Wesson.

Dancing Through Life...

Pacific Southwest Region Disciples of Christ, in Association with Conference UCC women, present the Nineteenth Regional Convocation on Saturday, March 3 and Sunday, March 4 at the Holiday Inn, La Mirada. There will be music, a variety of speakers, and seminars. Please contact Cindy Meyer at (909)793-1090 for registration information.

Chapman University

Chapman University Founders Day Celebration will be on March 17, 2007. The guest speaker will be Rev. Dr. Alvin Jackson. As always, Founders Day will be a great time to celebrate Chapman's dynamic Disciple-related heritage and will include tours of the new building and a chance to meet all the wonderful DOC students. Registration fees are \$30 per person. For further information please call (714) 997-6760 or at www.chapman.edu.



Getting to Know You...

by Betty Jacobs

Two upper New Yorkers merged their lives in 1975 and here is the story of how they became Redlanders in 2003.

The now very poised Sally Burton claims she was the class clown in early school days. Maybe that's an asset when you become a pastor as she plans to do. She began life in Troy, N.Y. but spent her elementary and high school years in Syracuse. Then, and now, she enjoys theatre and reading. At Ohio State she was an Education Major and received her B.S. in Recreational Therapy. After graduation, she became the Recreational Director for a nursing home.

Paul, also a native New Yorker, was raised on a farm near Syracuse. Always a hard worker he did what few students do and worked full time during his last high school year – a happy circumstance as it turned out to be in the same nursing home where Sally worked. Thus they met and eventually married in 1975.

Busy as he was, Paul played drums in the high school band. His college years were spent at State University of New York in Buffalo. This was followed by working two years as a Physical Therapist. Medical school followed at Duquesne University College of Health Sciences in Kansas City, Missouri. Paul and Sally then moved to Redford, Michigan where Paul spent his one year Internship and four year Residency in Surgery at Botsford Hospital. To begin his practice they again moved – to Indiana, Pennsylvania. Yes, there is such a place! There their children were born and raised and they lived until Redlands beckoned.

Their first daughter, Sarah, is in her final semester at Emory University in Atlanta. Son Brian graduated from Cal State L.A. last year and works at the WAVE radio station and for the Rick Dees show as a Board Operator. Daughter Emily is in her senior year at Duquesne.

Their urging to come to Redlands came from an invitation from Paul's long time friend from his Michigan residency days. They now work together at Arrowhead Orthopedics in San Bernardino.

Paul has been taking flying lessons and hopes to get his license in a couple of months. And, yes, Sally is anxious to go up, up, and away with him. Sally hopes to graduate from Claremont Theological Seminary in 2008. She set out to become a hospital Chaplain but after having come to love RUCC and seen what a church of spiritual, loving, fun people can be she is contemplating becoming a church pastor. She is now a student in care in our church.

February Scripture Readings

February 4: *Psalm 138, 1 Corinthians 15:1-11, Luke 5:1-11*
February 11: *Jeremiah 17:5-8; Psalm 1:1-3; Luke 6:17-26*
February 18 : *Exodus 34:29-35; Psalm 99; Luke 9:28-36*
February 21: *Psalm 51:1-17; 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10; Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21*
February 25: *Deuteronomy 26:1-11; Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16; Luke 4:1-13*

Minister – Rev. Dr. Sharon R. Graff
Associate Minister of Outreach – Rev. Jeanne Favreau-Sorvillo
Choir Director – Peggy McMeans
Organist – Dr. Taylor Ruhl
Handbell Director – Craig Colclough
Youth Director – Craig Colclough
Education Director – Amanda Colclough
Administrative Assistant – Renee Chavez
Sunday Child Care – Youth Volunteers
Custodian – Jay Grayson
Church office hours: 9:00 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Monday – Friday
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