

WANDERINGS

A newsletter for people on a journey together with a purpose

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

July - August 2007

Communion Sundays - Worship Service 10:30 a.m.,
Sunday, July 1 and Sunday, August 5

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

Bible Study 101 will meet at 7:00 p.m. on Mondays July 2 and 16,
and August 6 and 20.

The Prayer Group will meet at 10:30 a.m. every Monday.

Staff meeting on Tuesday, August 14, at 11:00 a.m.

Church Board will meet Tuesday, August 14, 7:00 p.m.

The Sandwich Group will meet Tuesdays, July 17, and August 21
at 12:00 p.m. in the Pastor's office.

RUCC Hawaiian Luau on August 18 at 5:00 p.m.

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

Brown Bag Lunch and Game Day on Sundays, July 29 and August 26
following worship service in Covenant Hall.

Middle school youth group will meet on Sundays, July 8, 15, 22, and 29 at 12:00
p.m. High school youth group will meet on Sundays, July 8, 15, 22, 29 at 2:00 p.m.

From your Pastor and Teacher, Sharon ~

“God’s first language is silence.”

—Thomas Keating

In the past month—which included 10 days of refreshing silence, a few days of rest at our domehome, a week of enjoying the frenetic energy of New York City, and concluded with the sacred inspiration of the UCC General Synod—Father Keating’s words have woven themselves into the fabric of my being. Yes, as my commitment to regular silent retreats makes clear, I do experience God’s speaking through silence. Yet God also speaks to me through the greens and browns of the desert landscape I called home during this year’s silent retreat. And God speaks to me through the amazing night sky, enlightened with a full moon and a canopy of bright stars that kept me awake while on retreat. And God also speaks through the 100-year-old sculptured walls and arches of The Riverside Church where John and I worshiped while away. And God speaks through the color and texture and creativity of countless artists—modern and masters—whose work we were privileged to view in the museums of Manhattan. And God speaks through the words of preachers and pray-ers and singers, through the movements of dancers, and through conversations with new friends experienced while celebrating our beloved UCC’s 50th Anniversary in Hartford. God has been busy, very busy, speaking throughout this past month. And both my personal journal and my spirit are filled-to-overflowing with ideas, thoughts, musings, poetry, prayers, and dreams for us as we continue our ministry together.

But, as I wrote in last month’s newsletter article, RUCC has grown to the point that our journey no longer depends on me as your pastor...we are moving from what church growth experts refer to as “pastor-centered” (less than 150 in worship) into a “program-centered” congregation (150-250 in worship). Thus, our ministry is increasingly a journey that depends on each of us.

During this summer, I encourage you to listen for God’s still-speaking voice—in the silence, to be sure—and also in the colors and shapes and voices and roads and airports and buildings and forests and deserts and oceans and streams and surprises that surround you. Let us pay special attention to where God is leading us or nudging us or, perhaps, even prodding us! As we heard repeatedly during our UCC 50th Birthday Party in Hartford, that familiar comma reminds us all that GOD IS STILL SPEAKING,

Shhhh...listen...look...hear...

Blessings,



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

July-August 2007

During these summer months we focus on some of the texts about Jesus and his earliest followers...texts that continue to guide us as we form and develop our own values. 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 focusing on “It’s Great to Be in the UCC!” 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 1 – “One Nation, Under God” – Communion Sunday

Galatians 5:1, 13-25; Luke 9:51-62

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 a quieter thanksgiving for the blessings our country has both received and offered to others. Still others, frustrated and discouraged, prefer to ignore the party altogether. This year, our nation’s citizens are increasingly united about issues of war and peace. Today, we will listen and learn from voices of faith that have engaged our national imagination from the beginning to the present with their words about justice and peace...and we will sing...a lot! Come to this party, whether or not you trust your party...

July 8 – “A Lifetime of Favor”

2 Kings 5:1-14; Psalm 30; Galatians 6:1-16; Luke 10:1-11, 16-20

Naaman, a foreign army commander, asks for and receives God’s healing. And Jesus both urges and cautions the disciples about ministry matters. The psalmist speaks with unbridled joy about being favored by God for an entire lifetime. IS joy more penetrating than sorrow? IS love more lasting than hatred? WILL mourning be turned into dancing? And what about the psalmist’s words that praise supplants silence...? This so-called “favored lifetime” seems more chaotic than peaceful. What gives?

July 15 – “Politics BCE/CE”

Amos 7:7-17; Psalm 82; Luke 10:25-37

We may feel as if politics is a modern phenomenon, with its nuances, big-money, and effect on people’s everyday lives. But, in reading today’s passages, we see that politics as we know it has been around since before the Common Era. Are we people of faith to steer clear of the political scene? Can we? What does God expect of us? Perhaps an 8th century (BCE) prophet, a songwriter, and a 1st century (CE) carpenter-turned-teacher-and-healer can shed some light on these questions.

July 22 – “Stealthy Wealth...Healthy Wealth”

Amos 8:1-8; Psalm 52; Luke 10:38-42

If we are wealthy—and, by today’s world standards (according to a study released in December 2006 by United Nations University), any person who has \$61,000 or more in assets is in the top 10% of the world economy—then we may have a problem with some passages of scripture. God seems to have a “preferential option” for the poor, the outcast, the homeless...and expects the wealthy to use their wealth in healthy ways to equalize these inequalities. Come and hear some new thoughts on this old issue from our biblical friends Mary and her sister Martha, an unnamed songster, and a prophet with a basket of fruit.

July 29 – “And Lead Us...” – Synod Sunday

Psalm 85; Luke 11:1-13

Today in worship we sing songs, hear voices, and imagine scenes from the UCC's 50th Anniversary Bash, as they are shared with us by our RUCC delegation—Kathie and Rich Blakley, Sally and Paul Burton, Rev. Dr. Sharon Graff and John Sweeney. All will be interwoven with the scriptures of the day...God is Still Speaking,...and Leading...and Loving us into our future! Plan to stay after worship for a Q&A time about Synod spirit and business...’twas fun and we cannot wait to share it with you!

In August we will be stepping aside from the customary lectionary readings in order to explore your questions and to meditate on your selected passages of scripture. I will offer meditations based on questions of faith you have or specific scriptural passages you wish to hear more about. Stay tuned for the inspiration that you have provided ~ Many thanks for participating in creating meaningful worship experiences for us all!

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

—Sharon R. Graff

The General Synod and 50th Anniversary Celebration of the UCC in Hartford was meaningful and memorable. RUCC was represented by **Rev. Richard and Kathie Blakley, Sally and Paul Burton, Rev. Dr. Sharon Graff and John Sweeney.** It was great to see RUCC's former Associate, **Rev. Jeanne Favreau-Sorvillo**, and the rest of our UCC Southern California-Nevada Conference, too.

Wanna relive the golden moments?

Here is the Synod video archive – it’s all good: <http://www.ucc.org/synod/video-archive.html>

The “Significant Speeches” archive is here: <http://www.ucc.org/news/significant-speeches/> (The Bill Moyers speech is really great, as are each of the speeches offered to our whole church!)

Watch the View for the date of your representatives' report...we will try to illustrate with our words and our enthusiasm the Spirit of this historic Synod!

Summer Series 2007
Sundays, August 5 -August 26
5:00-8:00 pm

"It's Great to Be in the UCC!"

August 5 - Buchanan's Home
August 12 - Naftzger's Home
August 19 - Burton's Home
August 26 - Wesson's Home

In light of our recent conversations about RUCC's witness within the UCC, and with so many folk joining our congregation from other denominations, it seems time to discuss our UCC identity. We will read, discuss, hear and discover how we at Redlands UCC act and speak as witness to God's radical love for all. When do we step out? When, if ever do we stay silent? 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, 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).

Please bring a main dish, salad, or desert to share, and table service for yourself.

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



Events at RUCC...

Save the date! RUCC Luau

Please join us on Saturday,
August 18 at 5:00 p.m.
in the RUCC gardens
for authentic Hawaiian
food, dancing, and music.

Summer Music

The Covenant Choir has taken the summer off! I would like to again express my thanks to the very faithful and dedicated choir members, who provide music for us throughout the year.

Now we have a couple of months during which they and other members of the church may want to contribute some music, as solos or ensembles. If you sing or play an instrument and would like to offer this, please see, call or email Peggy McMeans at 798-1474 or PGWMsing@aol.com. If you will need accompaniment, please see Taylor or Peggy.

Please be looking ahead and thinking about fall as well! If you would like to join the choir, as a year-long or seasonal commitment, please see Peggy! More to come in upcoming issues of *The View* or *September Wanderings*!

JULY WORSHIP LEADERS

- 1 Floyd Orr, James Barton, and Hannah McMeans
- 8 Michael Dewey
- 15 Paul Hodson
- 22 Gal Glanville
- 29 Bettye Wheeler



JULY BIRTHDAYS

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

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Charles Wheeler
Sorour Ehteshami
3 Debbie Gerberich
5 Doris Milloy
Julianne Adamik
8 Laura Palmer
Angelynn King
9 Stacy Kaiser
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



BIRTHDAY BASH!



Join in the fun, the first Sunday of each month following worship service, to celebrate the birthdays for the month.

Building Needs Assessment

Over the last few years, our church has grown in numbers, but, alas, the size of our building has stayed the same. Is it time to think about a new building plan to accommodate our past and projected growth? Do we need more classroom space? More office space? More storage space?

A new ad hoc committee, the Building Needs Assessment Committee, will be asking just these questions. In the next few months, we will be surveying many of the church staff and area leaders to get their ideas and opinions. Although we can't formally survey the entire church membership, any and all members are welcome to provide their input. Please see any of the committee members (Bob Barton, Fred Nicoloff, Rosemary Whitmer and Sandy Peavler) if you have ideas or suggestions you'd like the committee to consider. You may also call or e-mail Bob at 794-5867, RBarton707@aol.com

...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.

Citizen's Action for Peace

Citizen's Action for Peace will present the Academy Award nominated documentary "Jesus Camp" on Sunday, July 8, at 1:00 p.m. at RUCC. The film is a first-ever look into an intense training ground that recruits born-again Christian children to become an active part of America's political future.

Ordination Celebration!

The congregation of Mentone Congregational UCC is pleased to invite you to the ordination and installation ceremony of their called pastor, the Rev. Steven Jacobsen. The services will begin at 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, July 29, and will include spirited gospel music, as well as their famous barbeque feast afterwards. Mentone UCC is located at 1205 Beryl Avenue, Mentone. If you plan to attend this joyous occasion, please RSVP to the RUCC office at 909.793.3520 no later than Wednesday, July 18.

Volunteer Opportunities

Are you looking for a fulfilling way to get involved in your community?

The Loma Linda Ronald McDonald House is a non-profit organization that exists to provide a "home away from home" for families of critically ill and/or injured children receiving medical treatment at local area hospitals.

We're looking for compassionate, energetic and self motivated individuals to volunteer 2 to 3 hours a week for various House projects. Please visit www.llrmh.org for more information or contact Jennifer Rugless at (909) 558-8333 or jrugless@llrmh.org.

AFS Intercultural Programs

AFS Intercultural Programs, a nonprofit, volunteer-driven high school exchange organization, is looking for families interested in hosting international students. Their mission is to promote peace through intercultural understanding, and what better way to do so than to host a student from one of the 54 countries with which they do exchanges. Students will stay for six to eleven months and attend school. For more information, please contact Andrew Riley at 1-800-876-2377 x. 1583. He would be happy to put you in touch with local volunteers and share information about the students in need of host families. Thank you very much for your support!

Getting to Know You...

by Betty Jacobs

Sharon has dubbed her St. Helen of Arth. And through the years, she has been that to the young, the middle “young,” and the elder “young.”

Helen was born on a dairy farm three miles from Newcomerstown, Ohio. The Moravian Missionaries, for revenge of the killing of a Moravian family, killed the Indian tribe in the area and took the land for themselves.

Being dairy farmers before modern farming methods, her parents were hardworking outdoor people. It was a wonderful childhood in the days when kids made their own fun – fishing, picking violets, constructing a play house. Helen even learned to milk a cow but only the ones called “dry ups.” The depression years made life more difficult for everyone.

Social life revolved around the Grange which had community activities and parties. Being three miles from school, Helen rode the bus to school. The school was small with just fifty students in her graduating class.

At the same time Helen was growing up, Aaron Arth was living and working on his family’s nearby farm. He and Helen knew each other from birth, especially from Grange activities. One of the activities there was a play they both were in. That was when cupid “flew in.” Eventually three couples from the play married, including Helen and Aaron.

Aaron had many Arth relatives in Redlands and when his family was moving here he persuaded Helen to come. They were married in 1937 and in 1940 moved to a big old grove-surrounded house on San Bernardino Ave. where they live for 28 years.

Helen was a wonderful mother, excellent seamstress and cook. Look around the beautiful church grounds and thank her. Most of the landscaping was either physically planted by her or designed by her. Friends all over Redlands have been recipients of her plant sharing. Herbs were her favorites.

Aaron and Helen’s second home was on Highview Dr. where she and Aaron took care of orange trees and gardens. A few years after Aaron died Helen felt it was time to leave her home of 35 years but it was still kept in an RUCC family. Sondra Hodson and husband Pete now tend it lovingly. Helen has more time now for one of her favorite hobbies – reading, especially mysteries and historical books.

For all of us RUCC is our second family and Helen is, as Aaron was, a very beloved part of us.

July and August Scripture Readings

July 1: Galatians 5:1, 13-25; Luke 9:51-62.
July 8: 2 Kings 5:1-14; Psalm 30; Galatians 6:1-16; Luke 10:1-11, 16-20
July 15: Amos 7:7-17; Psalm 82; Luke 10:25-37
July 22: Psalm Amos 8:1-8; Psalm 52; Luke 10:38-42
July 29: Psalm 85: Luke 11:1-13

August Selected readings inspired by the congregation.

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