

WANDERINGS

A newsletter for people on a journey together with a purpose

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

October 2007

Communion Sunday - Worship Service 10:30 a.m.,
Sunday, October 7

Lectionary Discussions before worship service, 9:00 a.m. each Sunday.

Bible Study 101 will meet on Monday evenings at 7:00 p.m. through October.

Church Board will meet Tuesday, October 9, 7:00 p.m.
in the church office.

Art for Heaven's Sake begins Friday, October 12 through
Sunday, October 14.

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

"Kilowatt Ours" presented on
Friday, October 19, at 7:00 p.m. in Covenant Hall.

Brown Bag Lunch and Game Day on Sunday, October 28
following worship service in Covenant Hall.

Stewards will meet Tuesday, October 30, at 7:00 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 once in October with our seminary intern, Patrick Ioakimedes. Please check The View for dates and times.

From your Pastor and Teacher, Sharon ~

"...forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

—Matthew 18:35b

* * * * *

I recently had occasion to be a first-hand witness to an act of forgiveness.

Our "pretend grandchildren"—seven-year-old Samantha and her twin three-year-old brothers, Owen and Elliott—were at home in Claremont, and John and I were visiting them for the evening. I was holding Elliott in the kitchen and together we were watching his daddy make waffles. Elliott was particularly transfixed by the "magic" of the dirt-looking dry ingredients being transformed somehow into yummy, fluffy waffles. Meanwhile, his older sister, Samantha, was carefully reviewing some artwork she had completed earlier that day in a very special scrapbook.

All of a sudden, Samantha let out a blood-curdling cry, "EEEEELLLLLLLLLIIIIIOOOOOOTTTTT." Her face instantly became as red as her hair. All other conversations ceased. For a moment, all eyes focused on Samantha and her scrapbook, which we could see was marked on two pages with pencil scribbles. Elliott stopped babbling about waffles, and the look in his eye was similar to the look of a deer caught in the headlights... He knew he was caught. He tried to change the subject back to waffles, but to no avail.

Samantha continued, "ELLIOTT, WHY DID YOU SCRIBBLE IN MY SPECIAL BOOK???" Elliott persisted with the waffle conversation. I turned his head toward my face and said to him in as stern a voice as I could muster, "Elliott, I think you need to apologize to Samantha." The waffles still called to him... Again, I gently took hold of his chin, looked in his eyes, and said directly, "Elliott, did you write in Samantha's book?" "Yeth." "Then you need to say sorry to her." "Saweee," he quietly whispered to his older sister in the next room.

I would like to report that Elliott's apology covered all the pencil marks with a layer of love, but that would be lying. Though she did lower the decibel level of her voice, Samantha was undeterred from her quest for an answer to her question: "Why did Elliott write in my book?" No answer, however logical or rational, sufficed. Carrying Elliott to where his sister stood near her book, he could now see the look in her eyes, and the sorrow on her face. Without any coaxing from me, Elliott said in his own voice, "Manthy, I sawee..." Only then did Samantha calm down.

Just a minute or two later, when the waffle adventure had begun again, and it was determined that art erasers might clear up the pencil marks, Samantha came into the kitchen, and quietly said to her father, "Daddy, I know I'm supposed to forgive Elliott, and I do, but I will not forget that he wrote in my book." Her very wise father said as he flipped a waffle, "I know, Manthy, and that's fine for now..."

In a nutshell, or rather in just two pages of a children's scrapbook, we see an image of forgiveness. Quick, clean, honest, remembered; almost like God, except for the memory part. With God, there is apparently no memory of wrongs committed. With God, done really is done. If we can only attain that first part—the forgiveness part—we shall have achieved much. To me, it is amazing how creative the thinking of a three-year-old can be...almost as amazing as the honest forgiveness of a seven-year-old sibling...which is nearly as amazing as the forgiveness and forgetfulness of our loving God.

Blessings,

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Rev. Dr. Graff and her husband, John Sweeney, will be enjoying a week of vacation in Claremont, October 1-8. They will be caring for these three wonderful children—Samantha, Elliott, and Owen—as the children's parents celebrate their 10th wedding anniversary in Paris, France. Please know that many more stories from Samantha and her brothers will make their way into sermons and articles in the future!

Should you need pastoral care during Sharon's absence, you may call Rev. Dr. Bill Kintner at 335.0050 or 496.7594. The congregation will be blessed by the preaching of Rev. John Walsh on Worldwide Communion Sunday, October 7th. Rev. Graff returns to the office on October 9th.

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

October 2007

When we worship God together we experience the power of community to transform—to transform thoughts, behavioral patterns, even entire paradigms and systems. There is power in group energy when it is infused with the energy of the Divine. Jesus knew it, and also knew the potential destructive power of the group: hence his words about changing the power of systems of hierarchy, one person at a time, one breath of God at a time. At least 2,500 years ago, the psalmist voiced a similar sentiment when he/she wrote: "...make us to know your ways, God...teach us your paths." And so we continue the journey, one step, one prayer, one song, one laugh, one tear, one hug or handshake or smile at a time.

October 7 - Worldwide Communion Sunday – John Walsh, preaching

2 Timothy 1:1-14; Luke 17:5-10

While our world news is dominated by factions and fighting, while our governments seem to prefer operating out of and generating fear among their citizens, God seems obsessed with bringing disparate parties together at a common meal. Children and adults, humans and the rest of creation, females and males, God sees no partiality and offers no isolation of one from the other. Scripture is annoyingly persistent in presenting the whole of creation as just that, WHOLE, connected, intertwined. Today, of all days in the Christian calendar, is a microcosm of that connectedness, as we focus the lens of faith on the table in which millions of Christians share the same meal on the same day. A place will be set for you—be here! ***You are invited to bring an item from another country to place on the altar for the morning service.*** We will be receiving the annual Neighbors in Need offering on this day.

October 14 – "For Heaven's Sake!"

Genesis 1 & 2 Selections; John 10:10; John 15:11; 2 John 4-6

Art, for Heaven's Sake...and for ours...and for others, too! Our facilities and gardens are overflowing with creativity this weekend, so it only seems right that worship would also focus on the creative, the gifts, and the joy that emanates from our Creator God. What is your master piece—your creative work into which you have poured much energy? We all have one—perhaps it is a poem, a letter, a clay sculpture, or a child all grown up. Let us join together to thank God for all the Master's-Pieces of this special day!

October 21 – "And A Little Child Shall Lead..." – Children's Sabbath

Jeremiah 31:27-34; 1 Timothy 4:12; 2 Timothy 3:14-17; Luke 18:1-8

We will be blessed by the leadership of our children and youth, as we join in the national celebration of Children's Sabbath. The observance of this special day, established by the Children's Defense Fund several years ago, is an ecumenical and inter-religious celebration. Its purpose is to convey the needs of children and youth, and to encourage religious adults to commit to care for and protect young people by advocating, justice, and intercession. You will be moved to action by the gifts of our young people!

October 28 – Day of the Dead – "Nothing Separates Us" – Patrick Ioakimedes, preaching

Isaiah 61:1-3; Romans 8:9-11, 31-39; Matthew 11:28-30

Once again, we honor the presence of God in the lives of our dearly departed loved ones. In the tradition of Reformation Sunday, All Hallow's Eve, Samhein, Halloween, and Dias de los Muertos, we will honor those who have already crossed over. So many traditions claim this as a very special day in the cycle of the year, a day when the spirits of those passed away seem mysteriously closer, a day of giving thanks for those who paved the way for our lives. As we fondly remember what we learned from them and loved about them, this is a day to speak of death, not as the end, but as yet another beginning with God. With song and through prayer, we shall gently place these loved ones on the sacred altar, asking the Divine to continue blessing our lives through their influence. Playing and praying will be intertwined in this service, as they are in life and in death. Come to celebrate life!

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

—Sharon R. Graff

Hello, this is the new intern Patrick Ioakimedes, and I am writing to share an opportunity that I have been given in November to lead a 3 session/3 week 1 hour class on the subject of Fair Trade. Fair Trade is a subject that is of great importance to me and so Sharon has given me this opportunity to aim to teach a class that will be open, engaging, informative, insightful, and relevant to our everyday lives. The schedule for how the topic of Fair Trade will be analyzed and discussed is to have 3 parts divided into the issues of Justice, Relationships, and Resources along with a little food and celebration during the last session. The official date for these classes has not been set so it will be posted as soon as it is finalized, but for now this is an early presentation of what I know will be a worthwhile experience for me, and hopefully anyone who is interested will feel welcome to join in discussing and learning about an issue that as I see it, has the potential to change the world...oh yeah.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT OCTOBER 2007

I have much catching up to do with you as I haven't submitted a report in awhile. So my apologies for a long report .

First, I would like to say a long overdue thank you to Justin Caldwell and all those who helped him with last June's Youth Jazz Festival. This year's event was even more successful than last year's and it was a pleasure to see and hear such great music from today's youth. What a gift to the community! Thank you, Justin, from all of us at RUCC and from Step by Step. The \$700 raised for Step by Step is much appreciated.

Thank you also to Janelle Bradford for successfully coordinating Step by Step's Get on the Bus program in May. She did a fantastic job of organizing this event which is so meaningful to female prisoners and their children. This is a monumental job and many of you helped with it, so thank you to you also. Janelle, you are awesome!

As many of you know, the Camera Club holds its monthly meetings in Covenant Hall. They have purchased a high quality projector which will be ceiling mounted in Covenant Hall. In July, the Board approved the purchase of a screen, mount, wiring, speakers, etc., the cost to be shared by the Camera Club and Citizens Action for Peace. With this new high quality equipment, we look forward to showing films of interest to the congregation and community on a variety of topics and issues.

Speaking of films, FaithActs has spent the summer previewing films for our film series. We now have a line up of films on such topics as the Iraq War and global warming. Look for a flyer soon on the film series schedule. If you have any suggestions for the series, please let us know – or join FaithActs and help us put this together!

In July, the Board also voted to support a Congregational Covenant initiated by California Interfaith Power and Light to “protect the earth’s ecosystems, safeguard public health, and ensure sufficient, sustainable energy for all.” We were asked to pledge to support one or more of the goals listed. These included education of our congregants on environmental stewardship, conducting an energy audit, and making energy efficiency improvements, to name a few. To see the entire covenant, go to <http://www.interfaithpower.org/covenant.htm>. You can also check the bulletin board for a hard copy of the covenant. I hope you will all participate in helping us to meet these goals. Unfortunately, our hopes to install solar energy have been dashed by the experts who were consulted. Evidently, the amount of shade surrounding our church structure prevents us from benefiting from solar systems. Do you have any other ideas for how we can be more energy efficient?

Step by Step is well on its way to becoming a 501C3 nonprofit organization. The board is planning a community event at First Baptist Church on November 11, 3 pm, to bring greater awareness of the program to the community. In September, I joined Shawn in making a presentation to the City’s Human Relations Commission on the Step by Step program. Their response was very positive and they have offered to help us in any way they can. Our congregation still sponsors the bike workshop to work with parolees in repairing bikes which they then can keep. This is a popular program run by Richard Blakley, but volunteers are still needed to help with the bike repair. Workshops are held once every two months on a Saturday morning. If you can help, please contact Richard Blakley. If you are interested in helping with other projects, please contact me. It is gratifying to see the Step by Step program grow and to see the positive impact it is having on parolees.

The General Synod in June issued an immigration policy stating UCC’s position on immigration. At the September board meeting, the board decided that this was an important issue that warranted our involvement. It was agreed that we all needed more information on this complex issue, perhaps in the form of films, speakers, dialogue. Look for more specifics in the coming months.

RUCC has joined in coalition with other churches and concerned community members to form the Redlands Good Neighbor Coalition. This group is currently involved in opposing the construction of a new Wal Mart supercenter. Because of the low wages and poor treatment of their employees and the environmental effect of such a large center on the community, we consider this a matter of economic and environmental justice. If you are concerned about this, please get involved – join the Coalition!

The board continues to discuss how we can improve our communication with you. We believe that it is important to keep you informed and involved and to keep the communication going both ways. What can we do to improve communication with you? Your suggestions are welcome.

There is always much to be done. We at RUCC continue to speak out against injustice, to take action to help our brothers and sisters in the local and greater community, and to welcome all. Please join us in putting your faith into action. There is much to be done.

Blessings to all,

Dianne Landeros
President

Events at RUCC...

Save the date!

Feastings at RUCC

Please save Friday
December 14, 2007
for this festive event.

Gathering of the Greens

The Church Life Committee will renew an old RUCC family/all church tradition. "Gathering of the Greens". It will be a fun filled afternoon, making Christmas decorations, wreaths, garlands, Advent logs, Gingerbread houses, followed by a spaghetti dinner and the first of the Advent family services. You will be able to take home all of your decorations and enjoy them for years to come. Watch the view for more information.

Dear RUCC ~

We wanted to send our heartfelt thanks and appreciation for the lovely shower that was thrown for us. We couldn't have hoped for a better send off as we prepare for our married life. Having that opportunity to share stories of everyone's lives and marriages was an honor that we'll carry with us always. In God's Love, Ben & Annie

Lectionary Discussions

Please join us on Sunday mornings at 9:00 a.m. in Covenant Hall to study and discuss the lectionary passages for the day. (Hint: the lectionary is a 3-year cycle of readings, usually utilized by our pastor as the basis for her sermon/meditations.) Discussing the morning's passages before they are read in worship will enhance your worship experience, as well as deepen our shared understanding of scripture. Facilitated by Eric Naftzger. All are welcome!

OCTOBER WORSHIP LEADERS

- 7 Floyd Orr
- 14 Luther Austin-Brecher
- 21 Patrick Ioakimedes
- 28 Karen Walsh



OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Douglas Ray Childers-Benz
- 2 Doug Macomber
- 3 Colleen Kintner
- 4 Noah Sforza
- 5 Genevieve Wolbert
- 6 Lauren Barton
- 11 Eric Naftzger
- 12 Dianne Landeros
- 13 Kathie Blakley
D. Hester
- 18 Denise Cain
- 21 Beth Kolpien
- 23 Fred Nicoloff
- 24 Loren Barnett
Thomas Miller
- 26 Joanna Schroeder
- 27 Mina Ryan
- 28 Lisa Arth
Loring Fiske-Phillips
- 29 Whitney Sforza
- 30 Lora Hall
Rick Sforza

Reverence for All Persons

RUCC is an open and affirming, multicultural, multiethnic, peace and justice congregation. Nearly ten years ago, we voted to become an open and affirming congregation (ONA), which in UCC means that we are especially mindful of and welcoming to gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender persons. Many of us have stories to share about ONA ~ so let's get together to listen and learn from each other! We will meet in homes on Sunday evenings, October 21 and 28 and November 4 from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. Please let Pastor Sharon or Mary Belle Carter know if you could open your home for about 30 or 35 persons to gather. All ages are welcome!

FaithActs Film Series

FaithActs invites you to a new film series: "First Friday Films" which will feature films relevant to our intent to live our faith in action. The first "First Friday Film" will be *Kilowatt Ours* and will be shown at RUCC on Friday, October 19, beginning at 7:00 pm (yes, we know that's NOT the first Friday...!). This is a documentary on energy sources, their effect on the environment, and urges us to change our routines so as to reduce our energy usage. Second in the series will be shown on November 9th (yes, also NOT the first Friday...be patient!). The third in the "First Friday Films" will be on (drum roll, please...) Friday, DECEMBER 7th! Thereafter, each First Friday of the month will feature another relevant film ~ please mark your calendars and plan to participate in this important new program of RUCC! Questions? Please contact Dianne Landeros, or any of the FaithActs committee members.



...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 on Friday, October 5, at 10:00 a.m. at the First Baptist Church, 51 W. Olive, Redlands. Their guest speaker will be Mrs. Jane Roberts, co-founder of the 34 Million Friends of the United Nations Population Fund and 2005 Nobel Peace prize nominee.

Working With Mentone UCC!

Many will fondly remember our strong relationship with our sisters and brothers of the Mentone UCC congregation. To build even stronger friendships, we, your pastors, are proposing two gardening workdays in our respective gardens! The first at Redlands UCC on Saturday, October 6th, 8-10 am, and the second at Mentone UCC on Saturday, October 20, time TBA. Bring food to share for a mid-morning snack and plan to experience these two gardening days as "blissful and productive!" --Revs. Steven Jacobsen and Sharon Graff

Apple Pie Day at Pilgrim Pines

Please join us on Saturday, November 3, for a brand new approach to "Apple Pie Day." Sports, crafts and camp pleasure start at 2:00 p.m. The evening will begin with a great feast topped with fresh organic Oak Glen apple pies. Vespers will follow with the installation and celebration of the new Executive Director and Camp Program Director. A fireplace concert and group sing will conclude the days festivities. Registration forms are available in the Gathering Area or by calling (800) 616-6612 or (909) 797-1821. RSVP's must be received by October 21, 2007.



Family Service Association

Help support the Family Service Association of Redlands with a visit to Barnes & Noble. Simply present a bookfair voucher at the time of purchase from October 1 – October 7 and a percentage of the net sale will be donated to Family Service. Bookfair vouchers can be found in the Gathering area or in the church office.

Getting to Know You...

by Betty Jacobs

It must be some kind of a record to be a 92 year old Redlands native. Except for two years of college life at Pasadena Junior College, Barbara Hauser is just that. This year she was one of eleven class members at the 70th University of Redlands Reunion.

Barbara grew up on Washington Street near the original Lugonia School which has since burned down. In high school she was active in the Drama Club, the Scholarship Society, and in athletics – although there were limited opportunities for girls then. Then came two years at Pasadena Junior College where she lived with a family friend and was an English major. It was Depression time and this was the answer to her desire to go away to college.

Her last two years of college were as an English Literature major at the University of Redlands. While there, she worked in the school library where she learned the Dewey Decimal system the hard way – by hand printing on tapes and attaching the correct numerals to the spines of the books.

Joel became a part of her life while she was a sophomore in high school. For teenagers in the 1930's Redlands had two main activities: the movies and the Contemporary Club's dances. The dances were held one Saturday night a month. Choir rehearsals were held earlier that night so that the kids would already be dressed up for the dance. (Dress up for choir rehearsal!?) Joel eventually joined the choir where Barbara was a member. The rest is history.

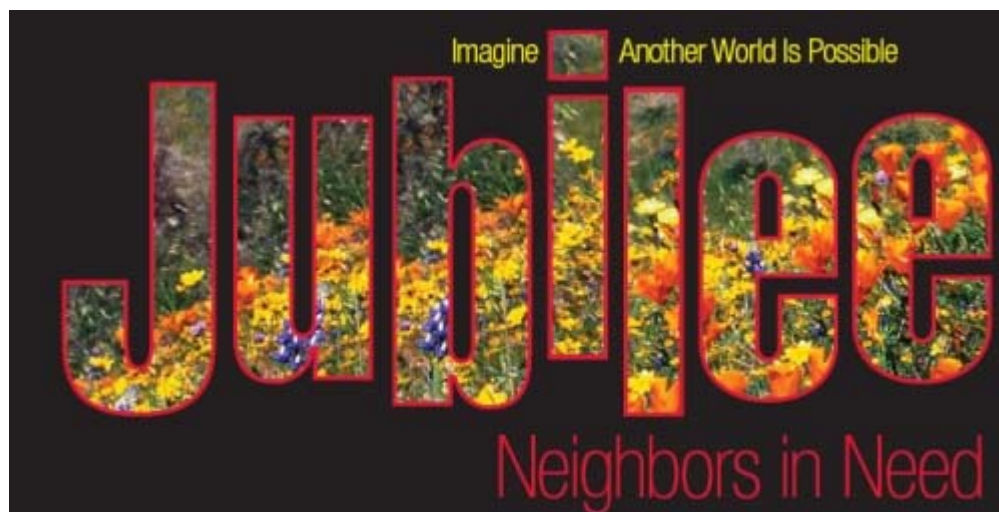
Joel and Barbara were married in the Redlands Congregational Church in 1937. Their first home where their four boys were raised was on Eureka Street. Thirty-nine years ago they moved to their beautiful home overlooking San Timoteo Canyon.

Joel's mom told Barbara that when she washed his overalls she always found rocks in his pockets. He bought his first car so that he could go rock hunting. This revealed shades of things to come. In the basement of their house, Joel had a wonderful room constructed. It houses one of the largest private rock collections in the western states. Joel contributed specimens to the San Bernardino County Museum and to the World Museum of Natural History in La Sierra. One of his large petrified rocks is in the cactus garden on the hill behind the church. A polished slab is in our church hallway.

Barbara enjoys writing and some years ago she wrote an article called "On Being Married to a Rock Hound" which was published in a hobby magazine. She has also written a history of our church formation. Barbara also became a member of the Forum Club where members present papers every two or three months. Besides writing, she has beautiful gardens including spectacular cacti both inside and outside of her home.

Joel's working years were all spent with IBM when it was a fledgling company. Three of their boys began their careers with IBM. David is now retired in Baltimore. Alan is still with IBM and lives in White Plains, N.Y. Phillip is a "headhunter." He places applicants for jobs in companies where they are needed. Steve is a Defense Attorney in Santa Monica.

Joel was a Scoutmaster for thirty years and all four boys were Eagle Scouts. Those of us who knew him miss him. Both Joel and Barbara were charter members of Redlands United Church of Christ. Our thanks to Barbara for the many ways she has added to the spiritual and concrete life of RUCC.



Neighbors in Need(NIN) is a special mission offering of the UCC that supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. One-third of NIN funds support the Council for American Indian Ministry(CAIM). Two-thirds of the offering is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries(JWM) to support a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects.

Redlands United Church of Christ will receive the NIN offering on October 7, 2007 as part of their World Communion Sunday observance.

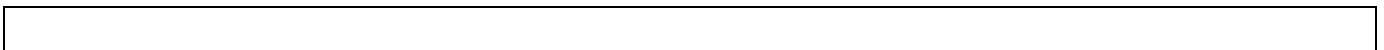
Come and enjoy the 28th Annual



Art, for Heaven's Sake!

Friday, October 12th 7-9pm
Saturday, October 13th 10am-5pm
Sunday, October 14th 11:30am-5pm
Bring a friend, and enjoy the show!

Art – Music – Food – Fun!



October Scripture Readings

October 7: *Job 1:1, 2:1-10; Hebrews 1:1-4, 2:5-12; Mark 10:13-16*
October 14: *Genesis 1 & 2 selections; John 10:10; John 15:11; 2 John 4-6*
October 21: *Isaiah 53:4-12; Hebrews 5:1-10; Mark 10:35-45*
October 28: *Isaiah 61:1-3; Romans 8:9-11, 31-39; Matthew 11:28-30*

Minister – Rev. Dr. Sharon R. Graff
Choir Director – Peggy McMeans
Organist – Dr. Taylor Ruhl
Handbell Director – Craig Colclough
Youth Director – Craig Colclough
Administrative Assistant – Renee Chavez
Seminary Intern – Patrick Ioakimedes
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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