



The Pine Tree

The Congregational Church of San Mateo
United Church of Christ

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Sept. 13 is Homecoming Sunday

Make sure you plan to attend church on September 13, our annual Homecoming Sunday! The full choir will be back in church, the children will move up to their next grade in church school, and we'll have a big barbecue lunch to celebrate the start of a new church year. Enjoy festive music on the lawn, plus a jumper and balloon animals for the kids. This is your chance to catch up with all the friends you've missed over the busy summer months, and meet some of the many new faces that are becoming regulars at CCSM.

Pick-A-Party 2009

It's that time of year again—time for CCSM's annual "Pick-A-Party" fundraiser. The continued success of Pick-A-Party over the past decade is that it combines fund-raising with having fun and fellowship! Last year we raised over \$19,500; let's see if we can surpass \$20K this year.

If you hosted a Pick-A-Party before, we very much appreciate your past generosity, and we hope you will want to host a party again. If you have not previously hosted a Pick-A-Party, doing so can be as much fun as being a guest at a party. **Just follow these simple steps:**

Think of something you enjoy and then build a party or activity around this idea. While dinner parties and parties based on a theme are the most popular offerings, the beauty of Pick-A-Party is that we have parties of varying size and complexity. New and unique parties will help ensure Pick-A-Party stays fresh.

Select a date for the party or activity you will offer. While any date during the coming year is

fine, we require you to pick a specific date.

Submit your party offering on any upcoming Sunday during September. The deadline for parties to be offered is **September 27**.

On October 11, we will inform you of the parties that have been offered, so you can review (in advance) which parties you want to purchase.

Pick-A-Party Sunday will be October 18. Come early that day (9:45 a.m.) with your party choices in mind and your *checkbook*.

The net result? We all become better acquainted with each other by attending some Pick-A-Party events throughout the year while supporting CCSM with our financial contribution. Questions? Contact Carol Henton at carolhenton@aol.com or 571-7563.



Pick-A-Party

Notes from Penny

The motto of our republic is *E Pluribus Unum—From Many, One*. This fall at CCSM we will embark on a spiritual journey that mirrors that motto—*One Tree, Many Roots*.

The tree refers to the tree of life, featured in many religions, and the many roots refer to all the different faith paths and religious traditions that make up our world. One of CCSM's guiding principles is "evolving" and we state that we seek to be "rooted but not stuck." We are rooted in our Christian tradition—and that's a good thing. But we also want to recognize, understand and honor the different roots of other faith traditions as well.

Most of us here at CCSM were "born" into the Christian faith. Christianity is our mother tongue. There is something very enlightening about trying to learn another language. It provides a different perspective of the world and opens up venues previously unexplored.

We've undergone a colossal change in this country. I've been rereading *The New Religious America* by Diana Eck. She notes that the fountainhead of religious freedom is religious diversity. And never has America been as religiously diverse as it is today. There are more Muslim Americans than Episcopalians, and more Muslims than members of the Presbyterian Church. Los Angeles is the most complex Buddhist city in the world. Diversity can be overwhelming, but isolation is not the answer. Engagement is the answer.

On Claremont Street in San Mateo, right around the corner from CCSM, is the Buddhist Temple of San Mateo. I went over last week to meet Rev. Ryuta Furumoto who is the minister of that congregation. We had met briefly before but this time I went to the temple and he showed me around. "We're your neighbors", I said.

Continued on page 6

Church School News

Summer Church School continues through Sept. 6! Our theme is **God's Creation**. All children attending church are welcome to come to Summer Church School. After the Children's Moment, children and youth gather on the rug in Kloss Hall for stories and song. As the activities begin, older children stay in Kloss Hall and the younger children 3 years old through 2nd grade come to the 1-2 grade classroom for crafts. It's all fun and creative. Come see our Creation posters in Kloss Hall. Here are the lesson themes:

Sun., Aug 23: God created food! Make lunches for SF Urban Ministry

Sun., Aug 30: God created a wonderful diversity of people!

Sun., Sept 6: God created rainbows!

Fall Church School Teachers' Meeting

Sat., August 22, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. in the Fireplace Room. Yes, I know it is the same day as the Rummage Sale, so just come and do your buying early and then stay for the meeting!

We have an exciting Multi-Faith curriculum to discuss—*One Tree, Many Roots*. In addition, we will strategize on the best way to teach children in the classes and outreach ideas for the fall and winter. Brunch goodies and childcare will be provided. Please bring your calendar and old notebooks!! There are still a few spaces for teachers. Just find Betsy Woodward and talk it over with her.

Homecoming Sunday is Sept. 13th!

On that day our regular church school classes will begin again. There are classes for all the children ages 3 years through 8th grade. On Homecoming Sunday, there will be a very special Children's Moment that releases the children to their new classes. They will be greeted with "Welcome" in many languages on the church school rug leading the way. As we begin our new curriculum, Homecoming photos will be taken, and new nametags will be created for all the children. Following church our wonderful Homecoming BBQ will encourage us to share summer stories with each other. September 13, Homecoming Sunday is a great day to invite friends or neighbors to come to church.

CE Fall Multi-Faith Focus

One Tree, Many Roots:

Faith Literacy Curriculum for Children and Youth.

With the goal of integrating our children's program with the larger church focus, our fall Church School curriculum will focus on understanding our progressive Christian faith alongside Judaism, Islam and other faiths. We will frame the curriculum with our Christian concepts and then study the similarities with other faiths. This discernment will assist our children in knowing their own faith background and also having a greater awareness of the diverse faiths in their schools and community.

Church School Fall Curriculum

Sept. 13 Homecoming Sunday: Who is my Community?

Sept. 20 Sacred Spaces: Where do we find God? Where do we worship God? Sanctuaries, synagogues and temples.

Sept. 27 Many Faiths, One God: World Religions

Oct. 4: World Communion, *Family Worship*

Oct. 11: Multi-faith Creation stories

Oct. 18: The Golden Rule in many faiths

Oct. 25: Message of Peace in many faiths

Nov. 1: Multi-faith Children's Festival

Nov. 8: Practice of prayer in many faiths

Nov. 15: Multi-Faith symbols

Nov. 22: Stewardship/Thanksgiving, *Family Worship*

VBS—A Great Week!

Vacation Bible School highlights included Sara Graves visiting with a lamb, nachos made in solar ovens, lots of singing, playing with worms and even a tug-of-war game. We learned about God and ecology and just being more loving to the earth! A big thanks to all our leaders: Penny Nixon, Karen Foster, Steve Naylor, Julie Berk, Shirley McKinnie, Mary Ellen Pense, Ginger Slonaker, Liz Henton. Our terrific volunteers: Dorothy Gorman, Nancy Brock, Cristina Ashbaugh, Alyssa and Lindsay Block, Nicole Nasser, Colin and Andrew Reid, Rosemarie Pero, plus all our great lunch makers! And wonderful Trini who cleaned up after 36 kids everyday!



One Tree, Many Roots

Fall 2009 Sermon Theme:

One Tree, Many Roots, A Multi-Faith Journey

- Sunday, Sept 13 Sermon: *Where Do I Belong?*
Rev. Nixon
Homecoming; New members joining; BBQ
- Saturday, Sept. 19 Worship Workshop Live!**
- Sunday, Sept. 20 Sermon: *Where Do I Find God?* Rev. Nixon With Marcia McFee
- Sunday, Sept. 27 Sermon: *How Do I Begin Again? Is Forgiveness always necessary?* Rev. Nixon
Yom Kippur
- Sunday, Oct. 5 Sermon: *What is Right Practice?* Rev. Nixon
World Communion Sunday
1 p.m. Blessing of the Animals, front lawn
- Sunday, Oct. 11 Sermon: *Why Am I Here? What is the Meaning of Life?* Rev. Naylor
- Sunday, Oct. 18 Sermon: *What Is My Responsibility as a Human Being?* Rev. Nixon
9:30 a.m. Pick-a-Party Sunday
- Sunday, Oct. 25 Sermon: *Why Is There Suffering in the World?* Rev. Nixon
- Sunday, Nov. 1 Sermon: *Is There Life After Death?* Rev. Nixon
All Saints Day
- Sunday, Nov. 8 Sermon: *What Does It Mean to Be People of the Book?* Rabbi Jhos Singer
- Sunday, Nov. 15 Sermon: *Is Intolerance Ever Okay?* Rev. Nixon
- Sunday, Nov. 22 Sermon: *How Do I Live Authentically as a Christian in a Pluralistic World?* Rev. Nixon
- Sunday, Aug. 30 Sermon: *The Potential for Intimacy, Part 1*, Steve Naylor
- Sunday, Sept. 6 Sermon: *The Potential for Intimacy, Part 2*, Steve Naylor

Adult Spiritual Education

A Multi-Faith Learning Experience

9:30 a.m. Sunday mornings in October and November

Our guests from other faith traditions will be teaching us about their faith practices. Here are our confirmed guests:

Abdul Anwar, Imam from Islamic Center in Belmont

Sarabjit Kaur Cheema, Sikh tradition

Sister Chandru, from Brahma Kumaris Meditation Center

Sherrie Decker, Native American Spirituality

Don Frew, Wiccan Elder, Pagan tradition

A representative from the San Mateo Buddhist Temple

Pearly Masters, Zoroastrianism

Warren Jones, Baha'i faith

August 23: Welcome Our New Rabbi-in-Residence!

Come meet Jhos Singer in worship where he will bring words of greeting, and you'll be able to meet him in coffee hour in Kloss Hall.

August 29: Retreat With Rabbi Jhos Singer Divine Paradox: Judaism 101

Join Jhos Singer for a half-day immersion into the Jewish mind and culture. Explore the essence of Judaism, which is a holy paradox. We'll also learn about the upcoming High Holy holidays. Cost: \$20 per person (included lunch) childcare provided. **9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Buckham Room.**

Big Jewish Ideas with Jhos Singer Monday evening classes in October and November

A six-week course that will deepen our understanding of *Shabbat, Mitzvah, Tzedaka, K'vod, K'dusha* and *Shalom* through study of scripture, commentary and chevruta. Each class will begin with a short chant and blessing. **6:30 p.m., Buckham Room.** Classes are free. Bring a friend.



Worship Workshop Live! with Marcia McFee **Saturday, September 19, 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. here at CCSM**

CCSM is hosting this lively and informative workshop to deepen and broaden our understanding of worship. The day will include some historical and theological background, as well as demonstrating a variety of models and experiences for worship in diverse styles, from traditional to contemporary.

Dr. Marcia McFee is a nationally recognized dynamic worship leader and workshop coach who was the keynote speaker for our UCC Asilomar conference in 2006. Penny, Steve and Jerri attended her workshop last summer. Go to

www.marciamcfee.com to learn more about Marcia and her work.

Come to learn, experience and be energized for worship on September 19th! Please RSVP to Pam Larsen at plarsen@ccsm-ucc.org by September 12th.

Free for CCSM. (donations appreciated). Non-members: \$35 per person. Lunch provided.



Affinity Groups: **Fall Is A Great Time To Join Or Start A New Group**

Fall is a great time to start out in an affinity group. Find something you're interested in and get involved. The fall is also a great time for starting a new affinity group if you have a specific interests we do not have a group for. To start an affinity group we are looking for people gathered around a cause, activity, support issues, or any collective interests. CCSM will help with publicizing information.

Here are a couple possibilities for NEW groups. Please contact Steve Naylor if you're interested in being a part of these or starting something new.

1. **Cancer Support Group.** Group for people who have or are survivors of cancer.
2. **Morning walk group with Steve.** Let's get out and enjoy a morning walk around San Mateo at 8:00 a.m.

Potluck with LGBT Group on September 25

LGBT folks who have been around a while and new folks coming in, WE NEED YOU! Now that summer has settled down, let's get together for a pot-luck, coffee and conversation! We will have two big pots of home-made-from-scratch soup, both meat and vegan. Please bring drinks, salad, bread or dessert.

Our gathering is on **Friday, September 25th from 6 to 9 p.m. in the Buckham Room at church.** We will be officially passing the leadership baton, talking about rainbow ribbons, and figuring out a new name for ourselves. Please Join Us! Please contact Robin Russell Truffa at Robin@theargentbear.net or 650 281-1373 for a quick RSVP or if you have any questions. Hope to see you there!

20-30s

Saturday, September 26th, Kickoff Dinner, 7 p.m. at Steelhead Brewery in Burlingame.

Sunday, September 27 we will make lunches for **SF Night Ministry.** Meet in CCSM kitchen at 9:00 a.m.

Kaleidoscope Women's Group

Kaleidoscope Women's Group invites you to its fall kick-off meeting, **Monday, September 14, 7:00-9:30 p.m. in the Buckham Room.**

This women's group is open to all the women of the church and their friends. Our program begins at 8:00 p.m. For this evening's program, bring 14 copies of a favorite recipe and make that recipe for your potluck dish! We will share our recipes and a bit about ourselves while we plan our year's program. If you have questions about Kaleidoscope, please call Shirley McKinnie, 349-3663.

The Monday Night Book Group

We will resume our meetings on **Monday, September 28, 7:30-9:00 p.m. Fireplace Room.** Our book is *Shakespeare's Wife* by Germaine Greer. There is still time to find the book and read it so you can add your thoughts to our lively discussion later this month. If you wish to join our email list, please email Susan Stoehr, s_stoehr@hotmail.com.

Music And Arts Circle

Gelato and Art in Italy begins our enticing new season of meetings as Angela and Robert share their cultural and eating adventures. On **Friday, September 18,** members and those interested in visiting will meet in the Buckham room at noon. Bring a sandwich; dessert and beverages will be served. Please call Zelta Adams at 341-1644 to reserve. If you prefer to attend the program only, come at 1:00 p.m.—no reservation necessary. All are welcome!

Youth News

Mid High News

As summer comes to a close, Mid High is getting ready for a new year and welcoming our incoming 6th graders! A full calendar will be out soon, but make sure to get our first few meeting dates on your calendars! We have an eventful year ahead!

Sept. 13, Mandatory Parent Potluck, 6:30-8 p.m. We'd like to meet with Mid High parents to discuss the coming year and the ways we can make it as rewarding as possible! We will eat first and then plan. Please bring a potluck dish for 6 to share: A-C Main Dish, F-L Dessert, and M-Z Salads.

Sept. 20, Kick-Off Social, 6:30-8 p.m. We'll be meeting at church to get to know the new faces in Mid High, reunite with old faces, discuss the coming year, and (of course) enjoy a sweet treat together.

Oct. 3, World Communion Bread Baking, 10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Mid High is baking bread for World Communion Sunday again this year! We'll make some beautiful loaves to share with the congregation for a Sunday that especially celebrates the inclusiveness of God's love.

Make sure to keep these dates in mind! If you have any questions or would like information, email Joliene (joliene.wade@gmail.com).

Senior High Two Important Dates Sunday, Aug. 30, 12 p.m. after church. Parent and Student Planning meeting.

What dates are off limits? Where are we going on an Outreach trip? Can we travel on Spring Break this year? What will the fall and spring calendars look like? What issues are a must to cover in our program? What do the students want to get out of the year and what do the parents want?

Sunday, September 20th, Fall Kickoff Meeting 6:30-8:00 p.m. Kloss Hall and Youth Room.

Hear about the upcoming year, meet the newbies and the regulars.

Update Contact Information

We wish to ensure that we have current parents' and students' contact information. If you are not getting Mid-High or Senior High email and news directly, then please email Steve, snaylor@ccsm-ucc.org. We are looking for parents and students emails, cell phone numbers and Facebook information.

Joys & Concerns

Late Breaking Graduation Congratulations!

Noelia Linares has graduated from San Francisco State University.

Katie Blodgett has graduated from University of Arizona.

Sarah Blodgett has graduated from University of San Francisco.

Prayers of Joy and Gratitude

Erin (Leydig) and Chris Stallings arrived safely in Costa Rica and started teaching this last Monday.

Sandi Blodgett has successfully completed her cancer treatments and only check ups are scheduled for the future!

Judy Hemmer's daughter, Robin, is fine again after emergency surgery in July.

Karen Stern Olson's friend, Bill Tarr, is in rehab now and doing well. They are grateful for our prayers of support.

It's good to see **Diane Griffith** and **Joey** back in church.

Eleanor Norberg is home again and has been asked back to play the piano occasionally at the Peninsula Hospital Extended Care Unit where she had been staying!

Prayers of Comfort

Patty Kane, whose friend David Garrett passed away June 5, after a long struggle with cancer.

Pam Ridlehuber whose nephew, Ernie Ridlehuber died suddenly August 12. Prayers of comfort for the Ridlehuber family.

Prayers of Healing and Support

Judy Hemmer is fighting a painful case of shingles.

Tish Showen is dealing with severe pain and her friend, **Paula**, has terminal cancer. Prayers for both Tish and Paula.

Marie Shepard visited her son, Rick, and he faces many challenges. Prayers for safety and health.

Bob McCune is fighting pneumonia. Prayers for comfort.

Scotty Scott is beginning his cancer treatment now. He and Dottie appreciate all our prayers.

In Our Prayers

Edith Alvarenga, Elrae Bilsey, Lynnelle Bilsey, Ruth Black, Miranda (a ten year old friend of the Block and Slonaker families), Gene Boaden, Dan Kerans (Carol Boes' brother-in-law), John Buckham, Celeste and her family, Mary Graham (Valerie Cooper's Mom), Carla Cornaglia, Gladys Cretan, Eric and Ronnie Errichson, Ken Feldstein (husband of Nancy Feldstein), Mary Jane Foltz, Penny Gahagen, Carol Glasmann, Tina, Lily, and Ceci (friends of Doris Godinez-Phillips), Ruth Gowen, Marj Griffin, Diane Griffith, Lorraine Gustafson, Al Hanna (brother of Doug Hanna), Doris Henton (Doug Henton's mother), Lynette Kady, Jon Karesh, Gina (Joan Kilroe's daughter-in-law), Charles Levine, Bridgette Jensen (Terri Litz's friend), Carl and Evelyn Loschenkohl, Rayomond Masters (Pearly Masters' brother), Sue Miller, Betty Niederhaus, Shaun O'Brien, Martha Osborn, Trinity (Rosemarie Pero's cousin), Elsie Phillips.

Rummage Sale on August 22 All Hands on Deck Please!

After an absence of a few years, the rummage sale is back! Don't forget the date, **August 22, and time, 9:00 to 2:30 p.m.**, and come and find some hidden treasures.

We are looking for volunteers for **Friday setup from 9 a.m.-2:30 p.m. and Saturday clean up after the sale.** We also need vehicles to take the leftover items to Goodwill.

If you are able to help, even an hour or two, meet us in Kloss Hall. For more information, contact Rosemarie Pero, 343-4219 or rsmrpero@yahoo.com.

Rev. Naylor's Coffee Shop Hours

Starting in September, Steve Naylor will be available for anyone who wants to stop by while he's at **Pet's Coffee (B St. & 3rd) every Tuesday from 3-5:00 p.m.** No appointment necessary and you can talk about whatever you'd like.



A Note From Penny

Continued from page 1

In our post 9/11 world, there has sprung up a blossoming and burgeoning interfaith movement. As progressive Christians, who see Jesus as A path to God, I believe that we can deepen our understanding of our own faith by honoring and learning from the wisdom of other traditions. It helps us understand what is distinctive and compelling about our own faith. We discover where we share common ground and where we come together. We also are truthful about our differences and seek to understand what is meaningful to one another.

In an age of rising fundamentalisms that fuel religious conflict all over the world, it is crucial that we link arms with people who are seeking peace and justice from every tradition. We must be people who respect other's journeys and learn from the wisdom they bring to us and we bring to them.

There is a great deal of misunderstanding about other faiths, particularly in a time where violence and terrorism peppers the daily news. However, the biggest mistake we can make is to generalize anyone's tradition or religion. We know how easily offended we are when someone assumes we are "that type of Christian." In the same way, we want to learn more about people's faith practices so that we in turn do not generalize. Religions are not static. They are more like rivers than monuments. As we rub shoulders with people from diverse faith backgrounds, we are changed. Christianity is changed.

This fall we have a great opportunity as progressive Christians to deepen our understanding of the multi-faith and interfaith religious world. We will look at the big spiritual questions that all human beings ask and tap into the spiritual wisdom from other traditions as well as from Christinaity. We will learn from our rabbi-in-residence. And we will learn from our guests from different faith traditions who are willing to open themselves up and share their faith with us over the coming months.

You'll see many opportunities to be involved and I hope that all of us will open our hearts and minds as we learn what it means to be an authentic Christian in a pluralistic world.

The Pine Tree • Page 6

CCSM Hosts Family Shelter

We are again hosting the IHN rotating homeless shelter **August 30 through September 6.** We need to fill the usual 75 volunteer slots:

On the first Sunday 8/30, 2-4 people to bring down supplies (some heavy) at 11:30 a.m., and 6-8 people to unload/set up tents and beds at 2 p.m.

Each evening 8/30-9/5: 2 people to provide the evening meal (5:30-7:30 p.m.), 1-2 people to interact with adults (6:30-8:30 p.m.), 1-2 people to do homework/activities with children (6:30-8:30 p.m.), and 2 people to spend the night with the guests (8:30 p.m.-7:15 a.m.).

On 9/6, the last Sunday, take down tents and beds (4-6 people) at 11:30 a.m., meet/load the van (2-4 people) at 1:00 p.m., and 1-2 people to take sheets and pillowcases to be washed and returned.

Sign up in Kloss Hall after the service or contact Linda Kilby, 299-1531, kilbyl@sutterhealth.org or Joan Kilroe, 346-7230, joroe42@yahoo.com. Your participation blesses both the guests and you. *You are the hands, feet, and face of Christ.*

Membership Class

New members will be joining the church **September 13th** in our Homecoming service. *If you missed the last class we will be holding another membership class **Saturday, August 29, from 2-4:00 p.m.** for those who would like to join CCSM on Homecoming Sunday.* If you are interested in taking the step of membership, please contact the church office by Friday, August 28th, and we will add your name to the list.



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A newsletter for the families & friends of the
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