

The Pine Tree

The Congregational Church of San Mateo
United Church of Christ

225 Tilton Avenue • San Mateo, California 94401
650 343-3694 • email: info@ccsm-ucc.org • website: www.ccsm-ucc.org

Vol. 58

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Lenten Sunday Sermon Series *Discovering Beauty in Brokenness*

Third Sunday in Lent, March 15, Art Domingue
1 Corinthians 1:18-25 • *Discovering the Beauty in Foolishness*

Fourth Sunday in Lent, March 22, Penny Nixon
Angela Craft Cross, original organ composition

John 14:1-4, 1 John 4:16-21
Moving From the House of Fear to the House of Love

Fifth Sunday in Lent, March 29, Penny Nixon
John 11 • *The Beauty of Second Chances*

Holy Week Calendar

Sunday, April 5, Palm/Passion
Penny Nixon, Steve Naylor and Jerri Handy
New Members Joining • Children's Processional

Thurs. April 9, Maundy Thursday Service
Soup Supper at 6:00 p.m., Service, 7:00 p.m., Kloss Hall

Friday, April 10 Good Friday Service, 7:00 p.m.,
Reflections on the *Seven Last Sayings from the Cross*

Easter Celebration

Sunday, April 12, Easter Sunday
7:30am Sunrise Service
8:30am Continental Breakfast
9:30am Easter crafts begin
9:45am Easter Egg hunt on the lawn
10:30am Easter service

*Inspirational music and message within the joy of
community! Experience Resurrection!*



We Care!

By Trudy and Arnold Duncan

We have been listening and watching with concern as senior newcomers and members and those with special needs search and worry about finding a parking space on Sunday especially during this cold and rainy weather. Some seniors have relinquished coming for service rather than brave the difficulty of finding parking. In an effort to help all those impacted, we have created two new usher services.

Sunday Service Drop off Assistance is here. Commencing March 1st, an usher will be stationed outside, at the parking lot entrance to the Church. The usher's mission is to assist people who wish to be dropped off close to the church entrance. The usher will also be on hand to help wheelchair bound members leave their cars. The driver may leave the person who needs assistance by the door, and the usher will help her/him into the sanctuary and seat them. Please let the usher know if there is a space which is preferred for seating. The driver can then easily find her/his friend in the sanctuary.

New Handicapped Parking has been instituted. SIX new, bold handicapped parking places (Sunday only) have been established in the parking lot. These stalls are close to the entrance of the church. Please display your handicapped sign in the usual manner. However, if you have forgotten your sign or need to park close by, please do so.

For those who come early on Sunday for choir or for classes, please consider parking further in the lot or in the medical building lot across the street. (We have a parking agreement). As a courtesy to those who require a parking spot close to the building, please try to follow these guidelines.

Youth & Family News

Treasure Chest Coin Banks

The little Treasure Chest coin banks that you see in the CE Building and in the Narthex are for our **Lent coin collection**. All the Church School children and many adults will be saving their coins during Lent to benefit Homework Central. Please take a coin bank home if you wish and bring it back on April 5th, Palm Sunday. Make it heavy with coins or light filled with bills. The coin banks provide a visual reminder that we need to share our wealth and God's love each day. And they are a great place to deposit those quarters that get heavy in your pocket!

Church School Holy Week Sunday, April 5, 2009: Children's Palm Processional.

Our children and new members will be the carriers of palms this year as we recreate the joyous palm processional. Children and youth will meet at 9:45 a.m. on the loggia. If you have any palms in your yard that you could donate, please see Betty Stout or Betsy Woodward.

Easter Activities for Families

Save Easter morning for a wonderful church day! **Easter Breakfast at 8:30 a.m., Easter craft activities begin at 9:30 a.m., Easter Egg Hunt at 9:45 a.m. and Easter Festival service at 10:30 a.m.** During the Easter service, instead of Church School, there will be crafts for all the children in Kloss Hall. Infant and Toddler care will be in the Fireplace Room.

Little Ones Playgroup

We will have our spring day on **Saturday, March 28, 10:30-12:00 noon**. Families with children four and under are invited to come for bubbles, balloons and playtime! We will meet in the 1-2 grade classroom and play yard. It is a great opportunity to get acquainted with other young families. If you can come, please RSVP to Renato Floresca (Sofia and Zach's dad) so we have enough helium balloons! r_floresca@yahoo.com.

Plastic Easter Eggs Needed

One of the highlights of Easter morning at the Congregational Church is the Easter egg hunt on the lawn. We will fill 600 eggs for the many church school children, so we welcome your donations of plastic Easter eggs. **Please bring them to church by April 5th, Palm Sunday.** They will be filled by the Mid- High youth that evening!

Upcoming Mid High Dates

March 22: High School Musical 3 Movie Night:

From 6:30-8:30 p.m., we'll meet at church to watch *High School Musical 3*, munch on popcorn and goodies, and enjoy one another's company. If you have snack requests, email Joliene or Christiana!

April 5: Easter Eggs: From 6:30-8 p.m.

We'll decorate eggs together and help put eggs together for the church egg hunt on Easter Sunday! It'll be a great way to help out our church and get into the Easter spirit!

Contact Joliene (Joliene.Wade@gmail.com) or Christiana (Christiana.E.Martinez@disney.com) for more information.

Senior High Fellowship

At Senior High Fellowship on Sunday, March 8, we had an interesting evening of flipping over tables of injustice in response to Jesus' angry outburst with the money changers in the Temple. We set up a card table stacked with a pyramid of paper cups (the crashing cups created a great dramatic effect). Alex Duvivier stood up angry about the injustice he witnessed in New Orleans and flipped the table over in symbolic protest of what he witnessed. Shannon McEntee was angry about the inequality Proposition 8 and the outcome of the vote. After each table was flipped we symbolically rebuilt the pyramid of paper cups out of equality and justice.

March 22, April 5, 19 at 6:30 p.m.

Fellowship in the Youth Room.

Save The Date! Saturday, May 9th from 1-4 p.m.

We will be participating in an interfaith service project in Palo Alto.

60 Minutes with Mike Mullery

March 29, 10:30 a.m. in the Fireplace Room.

Lenten Children's Festival



Join An Affinity Group

Music and Arts Circle

Our next gathering is on **Friday, March 20, at noon**. It's drama time, as actors from Hillbarn Theatre bring us a play that explores art, religion, and the outer limits of human possibility. Meet in the Buckham Room; bring a sandwich, dessert and beverages are provided. Guests are welcome. Call Nancy Jalonen at 581-1237.

Monday Night Book Group

We will meet **Monday, March 30, 7:30-9:00 p.m.**, Fireplace Room to discuss *People of the Book* by Geraldine Brooks. It is a fascinating story. Please read the book and come join us for a lively discussion. Our April book is *Out Stealing Horses* by Per Petterson which we will discuss Monday, April 27. New readers are always welcome! If you wish to receive emails about this group, please contact Susan Stoehr. s_stoehr@hotmail.com.

Kaleidoscope Women's Group

Monday, April 6, 7:00-9:30 p.m., Kaleidoscope Women's Group has invited Lani Leydig and Karen Olson Stern to share their experiences on the New Orleans Mission trip in the fall of 2008. This was the adult Mission trip led by Steve Naylor where they were the hands, feet and face of God! Please bring a quick and easy potluck dish to share. Call Shirley McKinnie if you have questions, 650-349-3663.

Lenten Programs Continue

Lenten Adult Spiritual Ed, Sundays at 9:30 a.m.

Come and explore Adele Ahlberg Calhoun's *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook, Practices That Transform Us* with Marge Boyd.

Soup-er Sundays: March 15 & 22

Immediately following the service, there will be soup and bread in Kloss Hall for everyone who wants it (and children's activities).

Wednesday Brown Bag Bible Study

Join one of the ministers for Bible study. Bring a brown bag lunch to the Fireplace Room at **12:30 p.m.**, on **Mar. 18, 25 & Apr. 1**.

Thursday Ministry Opportunities

Thursday, April 2: for those who are interested in being readers for our services. We will learn techniques of reading in public and will practice from the lectern.

Joys & Concerns

Prayers of Comfort

Jane Xu, sister of Julie Lauh, died on February 14 in Shanghai. Julie's address is 1 Baldwin Ave, #414, San Mateo, CA 94401.

Prayers of Joy and Gratitude

Furman Baldwin is healing well from his fall at church.

Frances Goodrich, Carol Goodrich's mom is doing just great.

Diane Griffith is home and recovering. She and Charles are grateful for the meals and feel blessed for the support of CCSM.

Barbara Lowrie is better and is at the San Mateo Convalescent Hospital, 453 N. San Mateo Dr., San Mateo.

Martin Hanson has recovered from appendicitis and is back at UC Santa Cruz!

Evelyn and Carl Loschenkohl were back in church on Sunday!

Marilyn Manion is recovering from her fall and hopes to be back in church soon.

Norm Naegle and Clare continue to be thankful for the support of friends at CCSM.

Allen Pero, Rosemarie Pero's husband received a good prognosis for full recovery. (536 Francisco Dr. Burlingame, CA 94010.)

Linnie Williams, Vera Pitts' sister is recovering well from her broken hip.

Prayers of Healing

Sandi Blodgett has started her last rounds of intensive chemotherapy. Prayers for strength for these next few weeks.

Doris Godinez-Phillips' friend, Tina, who is in a clinical trial with intensive chemo for her metastasized cancer.

Margot Lenigk is recovering at home after a toe amputation. Cards may be sent to 5103 Admiralty Lane, Foster City, CA 94404.

Andrea Ratkowshi, daughter of **Chris Neil** and sister of **John Neil** had a stroke a week ago. Chris and John are with her. Cards to Chris at 10 Crystal Springs Rd., San Mateo 94402.

In Our Prayers

Jack Leydig (Don Leydig's brother), Barbara Apolskis, Ruth Black, Gene Boaden, Gladys Cretan, Erik and Ronnie Errichson, Ken Feldstein (husband of Nancy Feldstein), Mary Jane Foltz, Penny Gahagen, Carol Glasmann, Ruth Gowen, Marjorie Griffin, Gina (Joan Kilroe's daughter-in-law), Travis Edmonson (friend of Jon Karesh), Bridgette Jensen (Terri Litz's friend), Wolf - Joachim Lenigk (Margot Lenigk's son), Jim Lowrie, Sue Miller, Betty Niederhaus, Eleanor Norberg, Martha Osborn, Elsie Phillips, Ruth Robinson, Marie Shepard, Jim Simmons (Kibbie Ruth's father), Miranda, a ten year old friend of the Slonaker and Block families.

A Message from Moderator, Susan Stoddard-Phillips

Dear CCSM Friends,

Have you noticed how our church is growing? Worship seating downstairs is nearing capacity, we have a greater breadth of ages, sexual orientations, and personalities (to name a few elements of our diversity) participating at CCSM. With each new member of our church family CCSM grows in vitality and grace. Many people express to me that our pastoral staff, choir and musicians inspire and stretch their hearts and minds to enter into a deeper relationship with God.

Growth and change are encouraging...and yet they can also feel a little disconcerting. What should CCSM focus on in the years ahead? Can we keep the cherished "character" of our church while opening to new ways of thinking and new undertakings? How can we expand our welcome and connections and service to people of different backgrounds, races and perspectives?

These are key questions the six Ministry teams focus on as they build, implement, and assess their programming. They are also questions the Board of Ministries asks when ideas for new initiatives come to us from members of the congregation.

Over the past year, three member initiatives have arisen that involve potential changes to our campus. The purpose of this communication is to outline the vision and broad process steps for each of these proposals, all of which are in the exploratory phase.

Accessibility

The Accessibility task team seeks to bring, literally, all members and friends of CCSM through the front doors of the church, through the narthex and into the sanctuary. This is a part of our church's evolution into a congregation that truly opens its arms to everyone.

Memorial Garden

The Memorial Garden task team is exploring the creation of an outdoor sacred space in our oak "grove" for retreat, reflection, and remembering loved ones. It would include features to soothe fears and pain, invite conversations, encourage diversion from the pulls of the day, and enable families to inter ashes of loved ones. It would be structurally accessible to all and appropriately secure.

Sacred Space Renewal Committee

The Sacred Space Renewal Committee's Mission is to propose a renewal of the CCSM Chancel, Nave and Narthex that visually reflects our Guiding Principles, improves accessibility, supports participatory worship styles, increases flexible use and provides a more inviting space to serve our community.

It is valuable to consider what these three initiatives have to do with CCSM's overall mission and Guiding Principles: Below are a few thoughts:

We are Spiritual

"Spiritual" means we believe God is a spirit of love that can be felt and known by each one of us.

Creating sacred space that brings reflection, peace and joy in knowing the love of God is at the center of both the Sacred Space Renewal and Memorial Garden visions.

We are Diverse

"Diverse" means we celebrate differences.

Ensuring that functional areas of our church home make people of different backgrounds, races, orientations and physical abilities feel truly welcome is a core goal of all three initiatives.

We are Evolving

"Evolving" means rather than resisting change or innovation, we eagerly experiment with new ways of being faithful and new understandings

The Sacred Space Renewal task team, particularly, is focused on preserving the traditional character of our current sacred space as well as bringing a new openness to our sanctuary. All 3 projects are insisting that the character of our campus is preserved in design work.

We are Open Minded

Open Minded means we do not assume a defensive posture, but rather enter appreciatively into different points of view with the expectation of learning and growing.

Embracing the principle of being open-minded may be challenging but it can become the most rewarding in strengthening the union of our congregation. Can each of us keep our minds open in regard to all of these initiatives, actively engaging in learning opportunities and conversations with other members to listen to their stories about what changes to our campus mean to them?

A final note on the very important role of process: All three initiatives are still very much in the planning stages. Congregational input is welcome at any time, and will be sought in formal venues as the projects develop to a point of recommendation. There is good collaboration across all three committees at this stage; and as the projects develop further, there will be more. A small amount of seed money has been raised through designated gifts, Memorials and grants to bring planning to a point where you will have sufficient information to decide on whether to move forward with implementation on any or all of the campus proposals.

At this time we do not have a firm date as to when a congregational meeting will be called in regard to these projects. At a minimum, you will receive a fuller briefing at the June 14th Annual meeting. In the interim, I welcome your input on any of these initiatives or any aspect of our church life.

It is with a spirit of gratitude that I journey with you as we move forward as a church family. Please contact me at 650 342-3642 or stoddardphillips@gmail.com.

What Is Your Meaningful Work?

A 5-week Group Experience Offered Through CCSM Facilitated by Alan Roby

When: Five Tuesday night classes running April 7 to May 5, 7:00 p.m., Fireplace Room.

The Basics: one class per week for 5 weeks for 90 minutes each for 12-15 people.

Purpose: to provide support to unemployed and under-employed members of CCSM by giving them a place to gather and share, while helping them to discover work that is potentially meaningful for them. **It is NOT a job search class.**

RSVP: Church office info@ccsm-ucc.org or 343-3694.

Focus of Each Week

- Evening 1: Setting the stage: Why bother finding meaningful work? Taking 100% responsibility; decide; believe
- Evening 2: Laying the foundation of you: Standards of integrity and ideal job questions exercises
- Evening 3: What a vision means and how to create yours (Vision Workshop)
- Evening 4: Letting Go of Obstacles
- Evening 5: Wrapping it Up and Moving Ahead



Lenten Children's Festival



To Care is to Do...

Music School Scholarship Fundraiser on Thursday, March 19

Join us at **Chevy's Restaurant**, 979 A Edgewater Blvd. in Foster City, with your family for a Tex-Mex meal, 25% of the proceeds benefiting The Music School's scholarship fund.

Due to the current financial downturn, many of our families have lost their jobs and income and are unable to afford full tuition for their children this semester. We have turned no child away for lack of funds, and now need to raise \$1500. If you cannot attend our fundraiser, financial contributions for these families will be gratefully accepted. (Coupons must be presented at Chevy's and can be found by the Music School's 2nd floor entrance in the C.E. Bldg —or in the Narthex (entry to Sanctuary).

NCNC Church Leadership Day.

On **Saturday, March 21, 9:00-3:00 p.m.**, church leaders can take a Saturday off to hone your leadership skills. Our Northern California Nevada Conference is sponsoring a Church leadership day at Orinda Community Church. There are five major focus areas: Church Moderator Training, Stewardship and Finances, Summer Children's Programming, Youth Programming and Young Adult Ministries. The church will pay the registration fee; you just need to pay for lunch. If you are interested, please let Betsy Woodward know by Monday, March 16.

San Francisco Night Ministry Sunday Lunch Brigade!

On **Sunday, March 22, 9:00 a.m.**, Kaleidoscope Women will begin making lunches for San Francisco Night Ministry Open Cathedral services. We will meet in the Church Kitchen with the goal of making 70 lunches. *Anyone* interested in helping with this project can call Marilyn Cintel who is coordinating the lunch teams. (650-343-7072)

Adopt A Box : Food Donation for Easter

Record breaking numbers of families and individuals in our community are in need of assistance this year. The ministry of Mission, Service and Justice is working together with CALL (Christian Action Life Line) to distribute extra food to those in need this Easter. Please help us fulfill our commitment. Each box **must** contain all the items listed on the sheet we have placed in the box. Approximate cost of each box is \$45.00 (including the \$20 gift certificate). There are two ways to participate. **You may pick up an empty box in Kloss Hall on Sunday, March 22 and return your filled box to the church on Sunday, April 5.** Volunteers will deliver the box for you. Alternatively, you may fill your own box (pick up a list of the items from MSJ in Kloss Hall) and take it to the CALL offices at 139 Primrose Ave, Burlingame by noon on Monday, April 6. Prior to delivery, please contact CALL (contact@callprimrose.org) or via phone at 650 342-2255 and ask for Mary) to let them know how many boxes you will be bringing. The CALL Center is open weekdays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. This is a great opportunity for groups of friends and families to join together to help people in our local community.

Date set for Habitat for Humanity: Building on Faith Day

June 6th has been set as the date for the annual **Building on Faith** day sponsored by Habitat for Humanity Greater San Francisco. The construction will take place at the Whitney Young Circle development in the Bayview neighborhood of San Francisco. We have asked Habitat to hold 10 spaces for members of CCSM. This will be the fourth year we have participated. Details will be available as we learn more. Sign ups will be taken at a later time. Please mark your calendar if you are interested in participating.



(L & R) Habitat for Humanity: On June 14, 2008 there was a second All Faith Build Day for Habitat for Humanity in Redwood City and the Cintels and Leydigs joined forces to represent CCSM.

Questions may be directed to Anne Fuller, 650-340-1479 or afuller@fullerthaler.com.



Above: Mid Highs making Shrove Tuesday pancakes
Below: Mid Highs eating pancakes

Easter Lilies Builds Arts Program

The Ministry of Worship, & Spiritual Life (WSL) is once again planning to fill the church with the beauty of Easter lilies showing appreciation for all the wondrous things The Creator has brought us. Your donation of \$20 covers the cost of the lilies. Contributions over \$25 help to fund CCSM's sanctuary weekly floral arrangements, candles, unique sanctuary decorations, and liturgical art workshops. Please be generous and support our efforts to enhance the worship experience.

Your contribution is a wonderful way to remember those members of your family and close friends who are no longer with us. Or, perhaps you would like to honor someone special with a donation.

Please carefully fill in the form below before **Monday, April 6th** to insure accuracy when the Donor List is published for Easter Sunday.

If you would like to help deliver these lovely lilies to our shut-ins and bereaved, contact Pam Ridelhuber at 579-7835.



CCSM New Worship Fund Donation:
(please print)

Your Name/s: _____

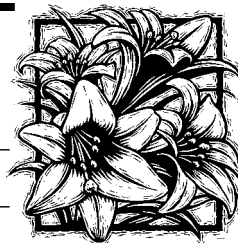
In Memory of: _____

Or

In Honor of: _____

Gift Enclosed \$ _____

Please make check payable to CCSM-NEW WORSHIP FUND and place in offering plate, mail, or leave in church office.



The Pine Tree

A newsletter for the families & friends of the Congregational Church Of San Mateo, U.C.C.

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