

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. 59

Issue #9 • July 26-August 29, 2010

From Your Moderator, Linda Skromme

We are a growing congregation! Did you know that we have grown by 110 members in two years? No wonder you feel the excitement when we gather for worship and coffee hour. Penny has stated “the main purpose of CCSM is transformation through God’s spirit, inspirational worship and a growing community of Christians-in-progress journey together.” I believe this message is catching the attention of many people who are interested in becoming engaged in our vision.

What exactly does this mean? Is it Christians living a life of relational love for God, community, and church? Maybe it means something entirely different to you. We are the hands, face and feet of God. I try to remember this everyday when I start my daily routine. How will I exemplify this belief today?

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August Sermon Series: *Finding Your Soul’s Path*

We are all wired for God, but our needs, inclinations, and personalities are all different. We all have a spiritual DNA, those inborn qualities and personality traits that influence how we connect with God, how we find meaning, and how we experience inspiration. Focusing on four different broad paths of the spiritual journey, we’ll discover how our personalities, backgrounds, preferences and values affect the way we pray, the way we worship, and the way we express our love for God and community, and how we each can craft a path that connects us more deeply to the heart of the divine.

Sunday Celebrations

- July 25** *Love ya, See ya, Mean it!, Marge Boyd*
Musical Potpourri—music from our members
(Chris Yeh, Julie Berk, Alyssa Block and more)
- August 1** *The Path of the Mystic: Go with the flow, Rev. Nixon*
- August 8** *The Path of the Intellect: Everything has its place, Rev. Nixon*
- August 15** *The Path of Action: Just do it!, Rev. Naylor*
- August 22** *The Path of the Heart: It’s all about relationship, Rev. Nixon*
- August 29** *The Path for CCSM: ???, Rev. Nixon*

Notes From Penny

The last issue of the *Pine Tree* boldly claimed that we would have a “Sensational Summer at CCSM.” And here we are halfway through the summer months, and I couldn’t agree more! It has been a sensational summer already, and there is more to come. The worship services have been inspirational and full of life. The church picnic was a blast (even if our moderator did try to hit me with a water balloon) and the turnout blew us all away! We really have had a summer of joy, even amidst some of the losses we have experienced.

If you have been out of town, I encourage you to listen to the podcasts online or come to the church and pick up a CD. Steve, Bonnie and Greg have all preached wonderful and meaningful sermons, and the music has been terrific (thanks Lynnelle and all the folks who are sharing their gifts). Our gospel artists, Janice and Patrisha, took the roof off last Sunday. And there is more to come—Marge Boyd will preach a delightful sermon this Sunday, *Love Ya, See Ya, Mean it!* and we have a variety of special music.

In August I’ll be doing a fun sermon series on *Finding Your Soul’s Path*, which will help us each understand our “spiritual type.”

I am very excited about our Leadership retreat at the end of the summer. We will have an opportunity to discover our strengths and how to put those strengths into action in our lives. We will have the book *Strengths Finder 2.0* available at the church for a discounted price. I encourage you to pick up the book ahead of time and take the strength finder test. We will also have books available at the retreat. The

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Youth & Family News

Church School Family BBQ's

Sunday, Sept. 19, 6-8 p.m.: 1-6 graders at Betsy Woodward's home.

Saturday, Sept. 25, 5-7 p.m.: 3-5 year-olds at Jeanne Back's home.

NEW Church School Program For Parents and Kids!

Parents, please save this date on your calendar. We are trying something new. On **Friday, November 5, 630-8:30 p.m.:** 1st through 8th grade youth will meet with **Betsy Woodward** for **Church School Bible Night**. At the same time, **Bonnie Rambob**, will offer a class on **Parenting as a Spiritual Journey**. This is an introductory class that could be a longer series if parents are interested. Please talk with Bonnie or Betsy if you wish more information.

Summer Church School

Our classes will continue to focus on *The Life and Times of Jesus* throughout the summer. We have created our Jerusalem village and temple, added people and animals, tasted foods and made musical instruments. This next month, our children will learn about weaving, kite making, paper making and more. Summer is a great time to try your hand at teaching, so if you have a free Sunday in August, please talk to Betsy Woodward or Jeanne Back.

In the summer, we offer two classes for children. Younger children ages 3 years through 2nd grade meet in the Kindergarten classroom. Youth from 3rd grade to 8th grade meet upstairs in the Youth Room. Here are the themes for August:

- July 25 *Weaving and Rope Making*: Olga Barbra Dehlinger, guest weaver.
- Aug. 1 *Games of Palestine: Kites and Draedels*.
- Aug. 8 *Paper Making and Scrolls*: Write Bible verse on a scroll.
- Aug. 15 *The Potter and the Carpenter in Jesus' time*: Clay lamps and crosses.
- Aug. 22 *Being Like Jesus*: Making lunches for the Night Ministry.
- Aug. 29 *Walking in the Footsteps of Jesus*: Making sandals and finishing the village.
- Sept. 5 *Sharing our Gifts*: Homework Central pencil pouches.

Vacation Bible School is August 9-13!

Would you like to visit Nepal, Mozambique and Haiti? Learn a bit about the people and culture and how we share God's love in the world? Then Vacation Bible School (VBS) is for you. Children ages 3 to 11 years are invited to join us from **9:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.** It is a spirit filled week of Bible stories, music, art, culture and energetic activities. Snacks and lunch are included each day.

The cost is \$75! Twenty-five children are already registered. VBS registration forms are now available in the office and on the CCSM website!

Church School Teachers Meeting, Sat., Aug. 21

Church School teachers please save this date for our kick off meeting in the Fireplace Room from **9:30-11:00 a.m.** Bonnie

Rambob and Betsy Woodward will be writing an exciting curriculum for the Fall—**We Live, We Love**. Our themes will be based on Bible stories of families in the Old Testament. They will match the themes in Penny's sermons! And we will begin a CCSM Caring Kids Corner to involve our children and youth in outreach. So plan on coming! Bring your ideas, a calendar and lots of enthusiasm. Betsy will bring coffeecake and Lili will be here to entertain your children.

Senior High Summer Schedule

July 28-30, Trip to Mike Mullery's Cabin

July 21 and August 4, Summer Nights from **7 - 9:30 p.m.** in the Oasis Youth Room (NOTE: ONLY the Christian Education building will be open).

REPORT:

Western Regional Youth Event

Dear CCSM,

Thank you so much for your support for our attendance at this year's United Church of Christ's multi-conference event. This was the Western Regional Youth Event, held in Billings, Montana, and hosted by the Montana-Wyoming conference. Many of the activities were at Montana State University, Billings, where we stayed in the dorms. We had more than two hundred participants from many states, including North Dakota, Hawaii, Idaho, and Washington. Ben and I attended as two of fourteen members of the Northern California Nevada Conference.

The first full day featured mission trips in the Billings area. Groups went to work with a food bank, March of Dimes, United Way, and Zoo Montana.

The following day was full of workshops. Each person could only choose three, but there were a wealth of options, such as *God in the Biology Classroom*, *Emotional Freedom Techniques*, *Choosing a Church Related College*, *Biblical Self-Defense*, *Drum Circle*, *Dances of Universal Peace*, and *Meditation*.

The last full day was day trips, where we got to experience the Billings area first hand. Sailing, museum tours, water park excursions, and a fun park entertained us as we met new friends. We had so much fun as we made good friends with many youth from all round the Western United States. It was wonderful to be able to meet so many open-minded UCC youth, and we were proud to represent our church.

Peace, Sara and Ben Graves
CCSM Youth Representatives

CCSM Summer Events Continue...

Wednesday Evening Men's Spirituality Group

David Cowell is leading a four-week men's spirituality group on **July 7, 14, 21 & 28 from 6:30 to 7:45 p.m. in the Fireplace Room**. This program is called, **Men's Roundtable: Embracing Change in Faith and Practice**. Men who participate in this program will be invited to take stock of where they are in the present and to think about how circumstances and personal identity has changed over time. Finally this group will explore ways to respond to change in the context of faith and spiritual practice. Each session is also designed to be a stand-alone unit, so men are free to leave or join at any time during this program.

Lift Your Voice in Song!

We have a very special opportunity coming up in August for all of you singers and would-be singers. We are forming the first (hopefully annual) **CCSM Gospel Choir!** And we are inviting you along with folks from other peninsula churches and friends from other places to join us for **two Wednesday night rehearsals (Aug. 11th and 18th) from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. in the sanctuary**, followed by singing during the regular service on **August 22nd**.

If you enjoy singing and enjoy gospel music, then you are absolutely going to want to be part of this. We urge you to invite your friends who sing, whether they are churchgoers or not, in choirs or not, to come and participate. We are hoping to have a very large choir!

Our intention is to praise God in song, while having a whole lot of fun doing so. Be ready to connect on a soul-level with some great music, and don't be surprised if you find yourself moving as you sing. It's just that kind of an experience! For more information, contact Lynnelle Bilsey at LTBMusings@att.net or 415 271-0059.

Drop in Choir Dates for Summer: July 25, August 1, and August 22

Anyone who loves to sing (in the shower or at church) is welcome to come join us.

Commitment level—low, come just that Sunday morning; learn the music for that day and participate in the service. Consider joining us in the Sanctuary at **9:15 a.m. on the Sunday mornings** listed above.

Summer Bells

Beginning Bells - Thursdays 7/8 through 7/29

7:00-8:00 p.m. in the bell room

Advanced Bells - Thursdays 7/8 - 7/29

8:00-9:00 p.m. in the bell room.

Music & The Word - Thursdays 8/12 & 8/19

7:00-8:30 p.m. (room TBA)

A look at music & religion through the ages- a brief overview. This is open to everyone who loves to learn about music.

International Summer Speaker Series

Join us on **Sundays** for an incredible Summer Speakers Series at **9:30 a.m. to 10:15 a.m.**

The series features CCSM members who have traveled abroad and have an interesting story to share about culture, politics, and personal engagement. Programs in August will include presentations from:



July 25, Amy Woolf, Vietnam, The "Forbidden Land"

Amy Woolf has traveled throughout the world. She recently traveled to Vietnam, learning about the country, its history, and its people.

Aug. 1, Lucy & Madeline Lee, China, ABCs in the Ancestral Land

Lucy Lee is an attorney specializing in the field of immigration law. She is the managing attorney at Fallon, Bixby, Cheng & Lee, Inc., the oldest immigration law firm in San Francisco. Madeline is a student at Hillsdale High School in San Mateo and she will be entering her sophomore year in the fall. They went on the trip to China with the Chinese language class at Hillsdale High, to visit and use their Mandarin Chinese skills. Lucy accompanied as a chaperone and had to rely on Madeline to interpret for her!



Aug. 8, Pearly Masters, Pakistan: Living As A Religious Minority In A Country Where Religion Is A Way Of Life.

Pearly Masters has been the church administrator of CCSM for ten years. She has immensely enjoyed working with the talented staff and making countless friends with members. Every day is a delightful challenge and learning tool for her personal path.

Aug. 15, Mike Armacost, Afghanistan, The Obama Administration's Policy Toward Afghanistan

In his current role, as Shorenstein Distinguished Fellow Michael Armacost has been at Shorenstein APARC since 2002. In the interval between 1995 and 2002, Armacost served as president of Washington D.C.'s Brookings Institution, the nation's oldest think tank and a leader in research on politics, government, international affairs, economics, and public policy. Previously, during his twenty-four year government career, Armacost served, among other positions, as undersecretary of state for political affairs and as ambassador to Japan and the Philippines.



Aug. 22, Steve Naylor, Pine Ridge, SD: Who Owns the Black Hills?

Rev. Steven Naylor has worked with the non-profit organization Re-Member three times since they began their outreach work on Pine Ridge in 1998. He is currently the Minister of Outreach and Youth at the Congregational Church of San Mateo.

Save the Date For Fantastic Special Events!

Telling Our Stories, Connecting With One Another

This autumn, Penny will be preaching a series that focuses on stories from the Hebrew Bible. In our continuing effort to integrate Penny's themes and scripture readings with programming, the Ministry of Worship and Spiritual Life (WSL) is sponsoring a program that will provide members and friends the opportunity to tell stories to one another that engage themes that emerge from Penny's sermons.

Volunteers Needed

WSL is looking for individuals who are willing to host a storytelling gathering in their home in the period **September 26 to November 14**.

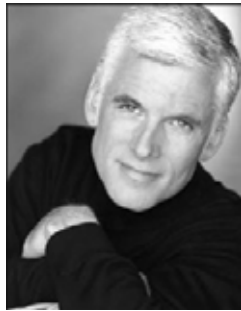
We are also looking for folks who would like to co-facilitate this program. If you are willing to be a host or facilitate, please contact David Cowell for more details. davidjcowell@gmail.com or 650 212-2710.

Leadership Retreat Sat., Aug. 28th, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Discovering Our Strengths

This retreat will be facilitated by **Dr. Greg Nelson**, a teacher, pastor, and coach for urban spirituality and life transformation.

Fly Again Coaching as a life coaching resource to empower people to take the journey into their best life, and *Second Wind* as an exciting, progressive church community program for people who are looking to excite dreams, experience belonging, extend compassion, and explore God. Both tools center around ancient and contemporary research that emphasize the importance of being in supportive and caring relationships with others as the most effective context for life growth and transformation.

Greg is a popular speaker and teacher on the subjects of exploring God and spirituality. He has pastored small and large congregations for over 30 years and brings extensive experience to helping build effective missional communities.



Rummage Sale

CCSM will be having another sale on **Friday, Sept. 24 and Saturday, Sept. 25th**. This is an important fundraiser, and we encourage every member and friend to get involved by either donating, setting up, helping out with clean up. Look for the rummage sale flyer for details.

To volunteer or for additional information, please contact Rosemarie Pero at 650-343-4219 or rsmrpero@yahoo.com.

Prayerful Paper Cutting Workshop

The Ministry of Worship and Spiritual Life (WSL) and the Liturgical Arts Team have invited renowned paper artist, **Alice Helen Masek**, to lead a day-long paper cutting retreat on **October 16**, with the intention of making large, paper banners for Advent. Alice Helen has been facilitating prayerful paper cutting retreats for several years and is eager to come to CCSM. Mark your calendars! No experience is needed for this unique workshop.

Mark Your Calendars: Pick-A-Party

Our 12th Annual Pick-A-Party listing will be offered on **Sunday, October 24**. Mark your calendars and come prepared to select from numerous party offerings and events.

Join the Blanketeers Group

Why not take a break from your routine and try a new hobby? Blanketeers is sewing on **Aug 14 from 1-4:00 p.m.** in the Buckham room. We are eager to share our quilting experiences and skills with you! Our storage cabinet is empty since we donated 14 quilts to our Hope and Home guests last month. Enjoy the rewards when you hand a child a warm and cozy quilt to keep as their own.

First Sunday Food August 1

Remember the *First Sunday Food* collection is coming up on **Sunday, August 1**. Bring your donation of **non-perishable food** (canned foods, peanut butter, pasta, etc.) to church August 1 and place it in the marked container in the narthex outside the sanctuary. Any non-perishable food is welcome. If you are looking for ideas, items in particular demand include hearty soups, peanut butter and jelly, and energy or granola bars. Working together, we can help provide food for local people in need. Thank you for your continuing generous support.

Nepal Library Book Collection/Sale

Beginning July 25th, **please donate your used children's books and cookbooks** to benefit the Shree Divya Jyoti Lower Secondary Community School in Nepal, which serves 278 low caste children. Church member Melodie Lew met local villagers and discovered their school had no money for books or basic school supplies. Working with the Ministry of Mission, Service and Justice, Melodie has helped the school establish a library and has raised money for books. However, there is still work to be done.

On **August 29** we will hold a **Used Book Sale** in Kloss Hall to raise money for new books and other educational materials for the school. Gently used children's books and cookbooks can be placed in the box in the Narthex or dropped off at 1506 Kalmia Street, San Mateo (The Londgren's) or 694 29th Ave, San Mateo (The Lee's) any time between July 25th and August 28th. Please email Jennifer Londgren at jplondgren@yahoo.com with any questions.

Melodie will present CCSM's donation to the school's staff during her trip to Nepal this Fall.

Join an Affinity Group Monday Night Book Group

We are taking a vacation until **Monday, September 26**, when we will discuss *Cutting For Stone* by Abraham Verghese. In the meantime, why not go to see the movie, *The Girl Who Played With Fire*, now playing at the Guild in Menlo Park. It is the second movie in the Dragon Tattoo series of books. Keep reading! Have a great summer, and we will see you in September. To be included in the email list, please email Susan Stoehr. s_stoehr@hotmail.com

July CCSM All Church Picnic

Did you take photos at the picnic? If you did please send your best shot to Steve Naylor at snaylor@ccsm-ucc.org. We will post the best one on the CCSM website.



Angelic barbecue. Our hot dogs were cooked by a man with a halo.



Office Staff Schedule:

Rev. Penny Nixon will be away from the office July 26 -30 on a teaching and preaching class at the Pacific School of Religion

Pearly Masters will be on vacation from Aug. 2 to Aug. 6.

Zoe Mullery and Pam Larsen will help as substitutes until her return.

Joys & Concerns

Prayers of Joy and Gratitude

We have two nonagenarians in July. **Allen Shelton** turns 92 on July 20 and **Ruth Robinson** will be 92 on July 23. Congratulations!

Carl and Evelyn Loschenkohl will celebrate 69 happy and contented years of marriage next week. What a record! Congratulations Carl and Evelyn.

Proud parents **Amy and Jon Kingsley** and **Grandma Pam Riddlehuber** welcomed **Hannah Grace Kingsley** into their lives on Friday, June 25.

Summer Lane Torres came into this world on Monday, June 28. She is beautiful, healthy, and enjoying being the star of all the attention of her parents, **Abi and Brian Torres**, and **Grandma, Laurel Torres**.

Moving

Sandi Blodgett has sold her house and her new address is 302 Barcelona Drive, Millbrae, 94030. She doesn't have a new phone number yet and the old one works for now.

Joan Kilroe will be moving back east to be close to her family. She is leaving on July 31. So be sure to be here on Sunday to wish her safe journey (in a 13 year old car clear across the USA!). Prayers are needed!

Prayers of Comfort

Joyce Whealon's husband, **Jack Snell**, passed away unexpectedly on Tuesday, July 6, 2010. Jack and Joyce were very active members for many years. Jack was CCSM's treasurer for several years. Cards may be sent to 40289 via Calidad, Murrieta, CA 92562.

Pearly Masters' beloved cousin, Dr. Kaiyan Kaikobad, passed away on July 1, 2010. Pearly was able to visit him in England before his passing. On July 16, Pearly's gracious **mother-in-law, Loretta Gutierrez** passed away peacefully.

Jeff Winters, a faithful longtime member since 1948 passed away peacefully on July 10.

Prayers of Healing and Support

Elrae Bilsey is recovering quickly from hip replacement surgery and will soon be given the green light to leave the house!

Tish Showen had cancer surgery at Kaiser last week. She was in church on Sunday! Visits are welcome, please call ahead, 650 568-0836.

Prayers for **Louisa Shaul's cousin's family, Michelle and Jeff Baker**. Twins **Michael and Brooklyn** are holding their own. Brooklyn is home while Michael is still in the hospital.

Gina, Joan Kilroe's daughter-in-law, is still looking for a new kidney. Positive prayers are requested.

Prayers for **Doris Godinez-Phillips, Margi Stone, Zee Larrew and Cliff, Lynnelle Bilsey's friend, Ron B, and his wife, Coli, and Deanna Riding's friend, Dennis Ciocca**, as they travel their different journeys with cancer.

Rotating Shelter Volunteer Opportunities August 15-21

By Linda Kilby

CCSM is again hosting the rotating shelter for **Home and Hope** from **Sunday, August 15 through Sunday, Aug. 22**. I know we just finished hosting July 4. Those of you who were out of town can now take your turn to sign up for one or more of the following 75-80 volunteer slots:

Aug. 15, 11:30 a.m., (2-4 people) Bring supplies (some heavy) down from over the stage in Kloss Hall, including 2 armchairs, sheets, blankets, pillows, lanterns, and children's toys.

Aug. 15, 1:30 p.m., (6-8 people) Unload rotating supplies (tents, aerobeds, etc.) from the Home and Hope van, set up tents, inflate and make up aerobeds, etc.

Aug. 15 through 21, 5:30 to 7:00 p.m.: (2 people) Prepare and serve the evening meal to guest families and CCSM volunteer hosts. (Guests arrive at 6pm.)

Aug. 15 thru 21, 6-8:30 p.m.: (2 people) Eat and interact with the guests. Call CCSM coordinator or Home and Hope contact person with any questions or issues.

Aug. 15 thru 21, 6:30-8:30 p.m.: (2 adults, children welcome) Help children with homework and/or facilitate children's activities.

Aug. 15 thru 21, 8:30 p.m. to 7:15 a.m.: Two people to spend the night (on aerobeds, probably in the Buckham Room) with the guests. Clean kitchen and restrooms and take out trash before leaving.

Aug. 22, 11:30 a.m.: (4-6 people) Dismantle tents, deflate and fold aerobeds, and take rotating supplies to the back door. Take CCSM supplies (chairs, linens, pillows, toys, etc.) up the stairs to the room over the stage.

Aug. 22, 11:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. (1 or 2 volunteers) Take bed linens to be washed. (Return them inside the building before the next rotation. Notify coordinator and/or Pearly.)

Aug. 22, 12:45-1:00 p.m.: (2-4 people) Load rotating supplies (tents, beds, etc.) into the Home and Hope van to go to the next congregation.

Sign up in Kloss Hall after the service, or contact Linda Kilby (kilbyl@sutterhealth.org, 299-1531). We are also developing an on-line signup process with a Google document created by Rebecca Judd; more information about that is coming.

You and your children can make a difference in the lives of these families during their temporary difficulties.

Other ways you could help this effort besides volunteering for the above slots include:

- Take signups on weekends when I am working (every 3rd).
- Help coordinate CCSM teams for the October 2 "Lope for Hope" at Coyote Point with other participating congregations. (This is one of CCSM's interfaith efforts.)
- Serve as a co-coordinator of our participation in this program. Attend periodic coordinator meetings with other congregations and get on Raj Rambob's mailing list! He has a lot of wonderful ideas.

Notes from Penny

Continued from page 1

retreat will be a fun day of getting to know one another and getting to know ourselves better. But, even if you don't get the book ahead of time, this retreat is still for you. By the end of the retreat, Greg, our facilitator, will help us discover CCSM's core strengths as well. People and communities who focus on their strengths are known to be full of life and purpose.

Each year at the leadership retreat, we build more bridges to one another and solidify the foundation of our beloved community. It is a wonderful opportunity to get to know each other. We will have a concurrent children's program, so we are really hoping that families will come out in big numbers!

Moderator continues...

Continued from page 1

Positioning our church for continuing this momentum is an ongoing challenge. Do we have enough staff to pastor to larger numbers and handle larger worship services? Does our facility have the capability to sustain increased use? How do we reach out to others looking for a non-traditional spiritual life? These questions and more keep me engaged on a daily basis. I ask you to consider how you can participate and become engaged in traveling this journey together as a loving congregation.

See you in church, Linda



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The Pine Tree (USPS 433-380) is published in the interest of Christian Fellowship by The Congregational Church of San Mateo, 225 Tilton Ave., San Mateo, California, twice monthly. **Periodical class postage paid** at San Mateo, California. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Pine Tree, 225 Tilton Ave., San Mateo, CA 94401.

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