

MIDWEEK MESSAGE

May 22, 2013

Words to Consider: *"Since God's essence is this three-way dance of creative, ethical, and mystical and since we are created in God's image, then we are whole, which is to say, most God-like when the creative, ethical, and mystical dance interdependently in our lives. And when the creative (our imaginative thinking), the ethical (what we do and how we decide to do it), and the mystical (how we pray) dance interdependently in our lives, then we are dancing with the Trinity."*

Kimberleigh Buchanan

THE WORK OF THE CHURCH

- ❖ **CHURCH COUNCIL** meeting, **Thursday, May 23, 1:30 PM** in the Parlor.
- ❖ **CHOIR REHEARSAL** this **Thursday, May 23, 7:30 PM** in the Parlor.
- ❖ **SPIRE deadline, Friday, May 24.**
- ❖ **SUNDAY, May 26, 10 AM** Worship, *"All Together"* and Sunday School for children and youth. **11:30 AM, Adult Spiritual Formation: "Sin Boldly,"** the third session of a three week study of Cathleen Falsani's book of the same title. In this book Falsani explores the meaning and experience of grace through story and song, quotations and photos. "Justice is getting what you deserve. Mercy is not getting what you deserve. And grace is getting what you absolutely don't deserve."
- ❖ **CHURCH OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED FOR MEMORIAL DAY HOLIDAY ON MONDAY, MAY 27.**
- ❖ **BIBLE STUDY, Tuesday, May 28** at the home of Thelma Parodi, 543 South El Monte Avenue, Los Altos, at **10:30 AM**. Let Pastor Rick know if you need a ride.

UPCOMING AND ONGOING EVENTS

- ❖ **WOMEN'S BRUNCH** on **Thursday, May 30th at 10 AM**. All women of our church community are invited. Note a new location! Please join us at **Country Gourmet Restaurant, corner of Fremont and Mary Avenue in Sunnyvale**. Call the church if you need a ride.

- ❖ **AGAPE FEAST** celebrating the life of **Susan Dickerson**, hosted by the Rev. Al Williams at Ladera Community Church, **Saturday, June 1, 2:00 to 4:00 PM**. RSVP: Al Williams (aewj1224@aol.com) or Hugh & Eleanor Satterlee (ehsattpa@sbcglobal.net).



ARE CORPORATIONS PEOPLE?

Citizens United...and Beyond present a community dialogue with special guest and moderator, **CONGRESSWOMAN ANNA ESHOO** with presentations by **TED NACE**, author of *Gangs of America: The Rise of Corporate Power and the Disabling of Democracy* and **PETER SCHURMAN**, Campaign Director, Free Speech for People, **Saturday, June 1 10:30 AM to 12:00 PM** Lucie Stern Community Center, Stern Ballroom, 1305 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto. Co-sponsored by PPJC.

Adult Spiritual Formation May 12 – 19 – 26: “Sin Boldly”

Cathleen Falsani: Join us on **June 2** as we welcome author and religion journalist Cathleen Falsani. She will be with us in worship and following worship during the Adult Spiritual Formation hour. She is an award-winning religion journalist and the new Faith & Values columnist for the [Orange County Register](#) in Southern California.

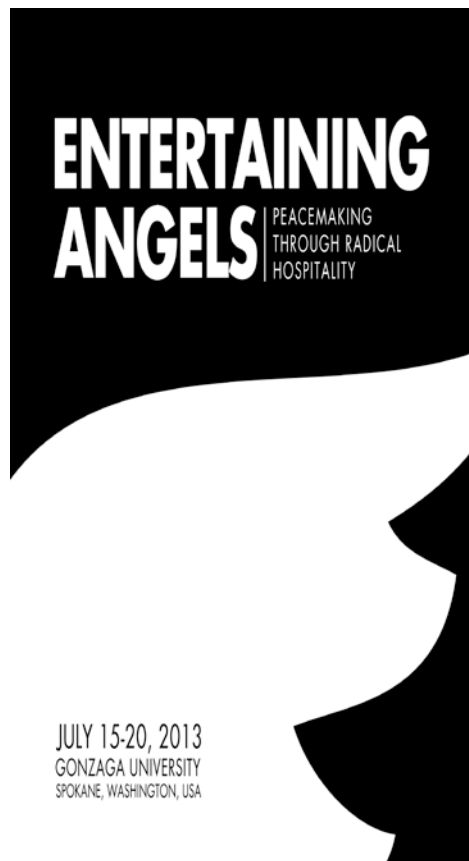
She is author of the critically acclaimed [The God Factor: Inside the Spiritual Lives of Public People](#), [Sin Boldly: A Field Guide for Grace](#), [The Dude Abides: The Gospel According to the Coen Brothers](#), [BELIEBER: Fame, Faith and the Heart of Justin Bieber](#), and the forthcoming [Disquiet Time: A Devotional for Ordinary Skeptics](#) (edited with co-author [Jennifer Grant](#) and published by [Jericho Books](#), fall 2014.)



The **SPECIAL OFFERING FOR MAY** is our annual offering for the **Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America**. We are one of the original congregational partners of BPFNA, generously supporting their important work over the years. The mission of the Baptist Peace Fellowship

of North America is to gather, equip and mobilize Baptists to build a culture of peace rooted in justice. For further information, see the website at [bpfna.org](#). Please give generously. To date we have given **\$196** toward our goal of **\$500**.

INNVISION SHELTER NETWORK recently experienced a devastating fire at one of our family shelters, displacing 50 homeless women and children. Thankfully none of the residents or staff were hurt, but over 50% of the facility suffered significant damage. **We are asking for your financial support to help the fire victims** and aid in our recovery. Your gift will aid the families affected by the fire and the staff working to support them while the shelter is renovated. While our insurance will cover most of the construction costs, donations are need to cover emergency supplies, clinical services, specialized staff, bus passes, food, and other unfunded expenses. More information in the church office or entryway. Donations may be made to the church marked for InnVision fire relief.



Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America

Summer Conference 2013

"Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares" Hebrews 13:2

July 15-20, 2013 I Gonzaga University I Spokane, WA USA

The word hospitality often brings to mind images of domestic tidiness but the gospel calls us to be radical in our welcome: to welcome the least of these as we would Christ; to seek the outcasts, the marginalized, the disempowered, the overlooked, the other; and to create community together. This year at summer conference you can look forward to exciting speakers and dynamic workshops that explore topics of hospitality, inclusion and justice. We look forward to sharing spirit-filled worship with hundreds of peacemakers as we look for ways to grow, support, and encourage each other. Participants of all ages will have opportunities for learning and for playing in community. We hope you will join us!

IN THE WORLD

Fighting continues for Syrian city; conflict threatens to spread: Syrian opposition forces continue to battle with government troops in Qusair, Syria, and are threatening retribution if the city falls. Meanwhile, Syrian rebel groups are adamant that President Bashar Assad leave office as part of any peace talks, and the conflict is increasingly drawing in Hezbollah and Israel. Bloomberg (5/21)

Reconciliation is proving to be elusive in Cote d'Ivoire: Cote d'Ivoire is successfully rebuilding infrastructure but continues to be roiled by human rights violations, political retributions and violence, writes Tamasin Ford. Marcelo Giugale of the World Bank says, "The reconstruction is relatively easy compared to reconciliation." The Guardian (London) (5/20)

Afghan economy suffers as women stay out of workforce due to harassment: The Afghan economy is suffering as many Afghan women are deterred from working due to harassment and fear of being raped, Shelly Kittleson writes. Meanwhile, a law banning violence against women failed this past weekend in the Afghan parliament. Inter Press Service (5/17)

Ending tax havens will benefit the poorest: Eliminating tax havens will result in more revenue for African countries, thus benefiting the poorest, Richard Miller writes. The upcoming Group of Eight meeting presents an opportunity to "tackle one of the biggest hidden obstacles in the fight against poverty by putting an end to tax havens," Miller writes. The Guardian (London) (5/14)

TRIP INTERRUPTED from the journal of *Nzungu Mabudiga, Kihomi Ngwemi* May 20, 2013 (American Baptist Missionaries in Haiti who oversee the pigs for kids project)

Greeting. Friday May 17, was a day Kihomi was supposed to meet with the women of North East in the city of Terrier Rouge for the micro business training. She left the house early to get there on time. When she arrived in the city of Trou du Nord, she saw a miles long line of vehicles that could not go through the city of Terrier Rouge. Why? The people in Terrier Rouge are mad for not having good water and have barricaded the road to force the government to give them clean water in the city. They would not let even those on foot go by. The Terrier Rouge people picked the day when the border market with the Dominican Republic is open to help Haitians buy whatever they need. By blocking the road on the market day, they sent a clear message that the issue is very serious. Kihomi will be back next Friday to meet with her women.

When we think of clean water we can only praise God for His goodness to us. We have provided good water in several cities. We wish you all were here to witness how much we appreciate having water close to homes but having clean water. Thank you, thank you again for your support.

JOYS AND CONCERNS

Joys:

- ✚ Birthday joys: Bryce Johnson (May 28)
- ✚ Mary Martin for the presence of Ruth Owen in worship, for mothers and for Ron
- ✚ Joanne Jones for the delight of having all 5 of her daughters plus other family in worship and fro 25 years of playing with the Palo Alto Philharmonic (on her retirement)
- ✚ Thelma Parodi for Joanne's beautiful music ("I heard the angels sing this morning")
- ✚ Virginia Herbert for the most beautiful and natural thing in the world, the mothering instinct, for mothers and for her daughter, Maureen's presence in worship
- ✚ For Bunmi Ashaolu and family who send their greetings from Minnesota
- ✚ Thelma Parodi for her granddaughter Lindsay who is graduating this week from SJSU

Concerns:

- ✚ For all those affected by the tornadoes in Oklahoma
- ✚ Lois Ville for her granddaughter, Storm Dewall, who is ill
- ✚ Marylea McLean for Eileen Conover who fell and injured her heel
- ✚ For Joanne Jones who is suffering from severe sciatica
- ✚ For PPJC Board Member, Stephanie Reader, who is recovering from surgery
- ✚ Lucille Towner for Bob who is recovering from surgery
- ✚ For Paul and Sachiko Berry as they travel to Paris for 6 weeks
- ✚ For Chip Clark who has not been feeling well
- ✚ Omar Ramirez for his pet lizard, Beans, who is sick
- ✚ For former pastor, Mike McGuire on the death of his father, Sam, in Colorado
- ✚ Pastor Rick for his friend, Michael, in treatment for melanoma; for his nephew, Max, who is going through a rough patch
- ✚ For Pastor Tripp and the family and friends of his aunt, Ann Watlington, as they mourn
- ✚ For Oleta Proctor with ongoing health concerns
- ✚ For Patrice and Richard Heath as she continues to receive chemotherapy for cancer
- ✚ For Don and Mary Granholm
- ✚ For the work of the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America
- ✚ For Dan and Sarah Chetti and their mission work in Lebanon
- ✚ For Dan Buttry and his mission work as a global peace advocate
- ✚ For Ruriko Uda's congregation, Izumi Parktown Church, in Sendai , Japan
- ✚ For Ramesh Kumar and the ministry of Balasore Technical School in India
- ✚ For our sister church in Corinto , Nicaragua
- ✚ For those affected by indiscriminate acts of violence and for the adoption of measures to heal our communities of all the many ways it makes us less safe and less free
- ✚ For the well-being of our church: wisdom and guidance for our leaders and its future
- ✚ For the economies of which we are a part (global, national, state, local)
- ✚ For the care of the earth
- ✚ For the peoples of the world striving for freedom and dignity
- ✚ For peace in a war-torn world, food for the hungry, homes for the homeless, justice for the abused and oppressed, and hope for the future



SUNDAY, MAY 26, 2013

Trinity Sunday

"All Together"

Lectionary Readings for the Week: Psalm 8; Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31; John 16:12-15; Romans 5:1-5.
(The focus scripture is in bold.)

"...how important is it to explain the mystery of God revealed to us in three distinct ways? Mysteries explained cease to be mysteries, don't they? Perhaps the doctrine of the Trinity challenges our secret wish to know God fully and eliminate all mystery. This, after all, was the burning desire of our first parents in the Garden, a desire that ultimately caused them to fall from grace. Does this temptation to dispel all mystery still burn within us?

It seems to me that instead of to explaining how these three things are really one things, we must try to do what the doctrine of the Trinity was originally formulated to do: give words the faith. As Christians in mission, we must be ready to witness to others about what we believe and why we believe it. The early Christians, living in a hostile world, needed to put some definitive language to what they believed Christ had revealed to them. For the sake of unity they needed a. common language, a common confession. In our hostile world, our witness demands the same thing.

To speak of the Trinity, the One God who is made known to us as the Creator of all, the redeeming Christ and the life-giving Spirit, is to use a shorthand way of expressing the depths of the faith. Without the Trinity holding us accountable, we might be tempted to worship a one-dimensional deity. This full view of God lifts up a God who is more than a Creator who made the world out of nothing, more than the God of the big-bang theory who began the universe and then left it to run on its own.

We do not worship a process, but a provider who continues to create and move among us. Each day is a new day, thanks to the Spirit of God in our midst. God's work in Jesus is the prime example of God's continuing creative and redeeming work among us and despite us. The Trinity gives language to our strongest belief that our God is not merely a God of history, performing mighty acts only in Bible times, but a powerful, on-the-move God of the present and of the future. That's what the Trinity wants us to understand in our heart of hearts."
(Mary W. Anderson, "So Explain It to Me", *The Christian Century*, May 20, 1999, religion-online.org).

Prayer: *God of heaven and earth, before the foundation of the universe and the beginning of time you are the triune God: the Author of creation, the eternal Word of salvation, and the life-giving Spirit of wisdom. Guide us to all truth by your Spirit, that we may proclaim all that Christ revealed and rejoice in the glory he shared with us. Glory and praise to you, Creator, Christ, and Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.*

FROM PASTOR TRIPP

Here is a link to an article from the Sojourners, "The Christian Inferiority Complex" by Stephen Mattson, who writes, "The church's failure over the last few years, decades, centuries, and millenniums has resulted in a current generation of Christians that are constantly apologizing, denying, overcompensating, and self-criticizing. But there is hope."

<http://sojo.net/blogs/2013/05/20/christian-inferiority-complex>

A NOTE FROM PASTOR RICK



We had a "spirited" day last Sunday as we celebrated Pentecost. Thanks to everyone who helped make the service "go" and to all those who attended for their flexibility. We are still experimenting with what makes for meaningful worship for our cross-section of folk, including our children and youth. Maybe we will always be experimenting to some degree as the Spirit continues to "blow where it wills." It's great to have a community of people who are willing to go along on this journey, especially when it takes us out of our comfort zones. It is delight to have colleagues like Tripp and Jan and Oleta as journey partners in planning and executing what it is for us to be a worshipping community.

In Adult Spiritual Formation, our consideration of Cathleen Falsani's book, *Sin Boldly: A Field Guide for Grace* is going quite well, with some spirited sharing and discussion. We will continue the conversation this week and then on June 2, we will be privileged to have Cathleen with us for worship and Adult Spiritual Formation.

This Sunday is Trinity Sunday. In worship we will focus on God, the “three-in-one.” The ancient concept of the Trinity is really not mentioned in the Bible per se, though we see signs of it in the different faces of God that are shown. It is a very human construct trying to make sense of the complexity of God, which is ultimately beyond our grasp. What it does show us, though, in a significant way, is the relational nature of God. It says something about the need for us to be in relationship with one another, as well as with God, in the practice of our faith. So, invite a family member, a friend or neighbor, colleague or stranger to come along for our celebration of the Trinity as well as our exploration of grace. See you Sunday at 10.

May God’s new thing flourish within us and among us.

Pastor Rick

