

MIDWEEK MESSAGE

May 29, 2013

Words to Consider: "Justice is getting what you deserve. Mercy is not getting what you deserve. And grace is getting what you absolutely don't deserve. Benign goodwill. Unprovoked compassion. The unearnable gift."

Cathleen Falsani

THE WORK OF THE CHURCH

- ❖ **WEDNESDAY, MAY 29**, Oleta will be out of the office for medical appointments.
- ❖ **WOMEN'S BRUNCH** on **Thursday, May 30th at 10 AM**. All women of our church community are invited. Note a new location! Join us at **Country Gourmet Restaurant, corner of Fremont and Mary Avenue in Sunnyvale**. Call the church if you need a ride.
- ❖ **CHOIR REHEARSAL** this **Thursday, May 30, 7:30 PM** in the Parlor.
- ❖ **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).



Worship and Adult Spiritual Formation

June 2 - Special Guest

CATHLEEN FALSANI

Join us on **June 2** as we welcome author and religion journalist Cathleen Falsani. She will be with us for intergenerational 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.)

- ❖ **BIBLE STUDY, Tuesday, June 4** 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



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 **\$292** toward our goal of **\$500**.

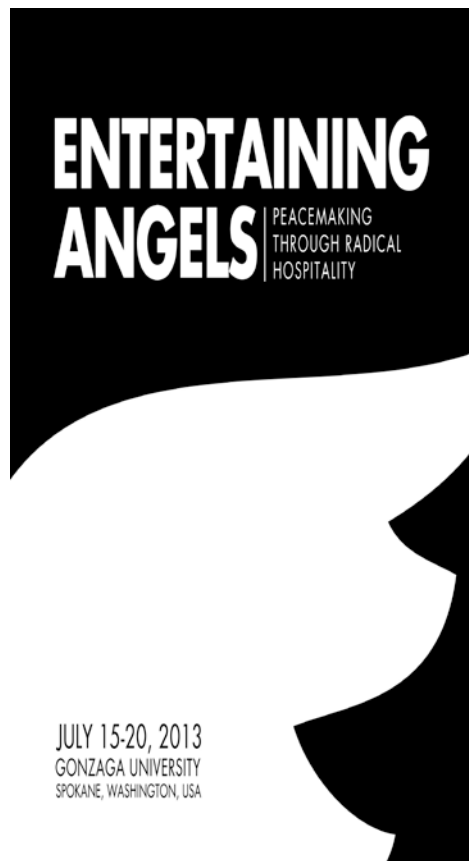
The **SPECIAL OFFERING FOR JUNE** is for **One Great Hour of Sharing**. This annual offering goes through the American Baptist World Relief Office to assist those affected by disasters in the USA and throughout the world. This year's theme is "**Sharing Brings Joy to God**." Together with 8 other denominations, our gifts nurture stronger futures... through health care, education, job training, and



tools for livelihoods. Together, our gifts bring safety, shelter, and food to refugees after circumstances have made their hometowns uninhabitable. Together, our gifts build homes, schools, medical clinics, and clean water and sewage facilities in (places) devastated by earthquakes, floods, and poverty." A gift of \$5000 has already gone from American Baptists for tornado relief in Oklahoma. Please give generously to help those in need. Our goal is **\$1000**.

The first **ABC "Mission Summit"** will coincide with our **2013 ABC-USA Biennial** on **June 21-23**, in **Kansas City/Overland Park, Kansas**. The Summit's goal is to open space for creative and meaningful conversation to advance the mission and ministry of ABC among the various American Baptist constituents. A preview of "Mission Summit 2013" can be viewed at www.americanbaptists2013.org.





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 | Gonzaga University | 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

EU allows arms shipments to rebels; Syria peace talks remain uncertain: The EU will not renew a ban on arms shipments to Syrian rebel groups, though no member countries have announced plans to supply the opposition, which is having difficulty coalescing ahead of upcoming peace talks. [The Washington Post](#) (5/27)

Ban commends Rwanda for its "brave recovery": United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon visited Rwanda this week, lauding the country for its recovery from the 1994 genocide that killed over 1 million people. "You are writing a different future. ... In less than two decades, you have reconciled and rebuilt. You stand as an example of humanity's capacity for human compassion and forgiveness," Ban said. [The New Times \(Rwanda\)](#) (5/24)

Amnesty: Refugees find quest for safety to be elusive: Refugees and asylum-seekers are seeking safety and security but instead are being met with abuses, says a report from Amnesty International. "The rights of those fleeing conflict are unprotected. Too many governments are abusing human rights in the name of immigration control -- going well beyond legitimate border control measures," says Amnesty Secretary-General Salil Shetty. [AlertNet](#) (5/23)

JOYS AND CONCERNS

Joys:

- ✚ Birthday joys: Dorothy Aker and Ann Hillier (June 4)
- ✚ Mary Martin for the presence of Ruth Owen in worship
- ✚ Ruth Owen for the joy of being here
- ✚ Patrice Heath for two weeks off from chemotherapy
- ✚ Chip Clark for prayers during his recent illness

Concerns:

- ✚ For all those affected by the tornadoes in Oklahoma
- ✚ Carolyn Shepard for Dorothy Aker who was hospitalized last week
- ✚ For Ruth Owen who is gradually losing the fine points of her vision
- ✚ Mary Martin for grace to learn to live with limits
- ✚ Alan Plessinger for his friend, Mike Callahan, who has returned from Hong Kong for medical treatment
- ✚ 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
- ✚ Lucille Towner for Bob who is recovering from surgery
- ✚ For PPJC Board Member, Stephanie Reader, who is recovering from surgery
- ✚ 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
- ✚ Lynn Hunwick for the well-being of all those participating in various sporting events this week
- ✚ 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



Dear Church Family,

It was a great surprise to us to receive so much attention at the end of the service today, May 26, 2013! To receive your thank you litany with so many gracious comments and your generous gift of a digital picture frame to make it easy to share our life with others, we are indeed grateful. On top of that, we enjoyed a cake decorated especially for us, as we also remember many others on this Memorial Day weekend. Thank you also for the many kind comments in your card. We know that many of you in Congregational Life and others worked hard behind the scenes in the planning, writing, compiling pictures, printing, buying the gift, getting the cake and all the other little details needed for this event. Our sincere thanks to each for your special efforts and also for being present

for us. Some of you such as the Hunwicks we have known since 1960 when Lynn visited us when we first arrived in Palo Alto and he invited us to join the Hearthstone group at the church. Others we have known more recently. We are a diversified group. Some have stronger opinions than others, but we try to respect and accept each other. We do have a deep compassion and concern for each other as we personally are moving through different phases of our life together. We currently have some good and faithful volunteers in various aspects of our church life. But some of us are now slowing down and do welcome more volunteers willing to help or share with some of the tasks that need to be done for the church.

We are both happy to be a part of this loving and understanding church family as we experiment and explore what might work for us as a church now and in the days to come. **Thank you very much for this memorable recognition time,**

Jin and Jane

SUNDAY, June 2, 2013

Feast of the Visitation

"Story = Grace"

Reading for the Week: Luke 1:39-57.

Cathleen Falsani says, "Sacred friendship is grace, holding space for one another as Mary and Elizabeth did, John and Jesus did." To be a soul friend (anam cara) may be a calling for all Christians. To be friends with Jesus is to have and be a soul friend.

"Mary, as the gospel of Luke goes on, clearly is open to the word...[still] it is my sense that her yes was unsure and that it was out of mercy and kindness that the angel Gabriel before flitting off said: Oh, by the way, your kinswoman, Elizabeth, great in age and barren, is about to have a child, and she is in her sixth month. The subtext was: Maybe you should go to see her. Indeed, we are told in the gospel that Mary rushed in haste to be with Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child in her womb leapt, and Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit, cried out: "Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb." Blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord" (Luke 1:42).

Hearing those words Mary said, I do believe, and a deeper surrender occurred at that moment. Out of that more complete yes, provoked by the very human encounter with her kinswoman Elizabeth, Mary was able to sing: "My soul magnifies the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Savior" (Luke 1:46). The meeting of Mary and Elizabeth teaches us that as the personal identifying word finds a home in us or draws us out of some place of safety and protection into the wildness of God's own desire and imagination. We need human friends who are companions along the way. They are not always friends, for sometimes critics speak the word more deeply than friends -- but they are fellow travelers. They show up to confirm the word we think we are hearing, which invites us to a deeper fidelity." (Frank T. Griswold, "Listening with the Ear of the Heart," *Cross Currents*, www.aril.org.)

Prayer: *O God of Elizabeth and Mary, you visited your servants with news of the world's redemption in the coming of the Savior. Make our hearts leap with joy, and fill our mouths with songs of praise, that we may announce glad tidings of peace, and welcome the Christ in our midst. Amen.*

A NOTE FROM PASTOR RICK



Sunday we spent the morning with the Trinity and with grace. The children and youth decorated the hallway with their artistic comments on the Trinity as we wrestled with it in worship. God in relationship inspires our efforts to be in relationship – not only with God but also with one another as children of God. At the end of the service we all gathered back in the sanctuary to celebrate Jane and Jin Chin for the wonderful work they do as volunteers for FBCPA. We are deeply grateful for the way they look after our finances, provide a photographic record of our “family” and otherwise keep track of our life together – past, present and future! If you didn’t get to see the “Chin picture board” Oleta made, we will have it again Sunday.

This coming Sunday we are privileged and delighted to have Cathleen Falsani share the morning with us. We have been reading and discussing Cathleen’s beautiful book, *Sin Boldly: A Field Guide to Grace*, the past three weeks in Adult Spiritual Formation. Now we have the opportunity to engage her in person. She will be featured in an intergenerational worship service on the theme “Story = Grace” and will lead the conversation in Adult Spiritual Formation. This is a rare opportunity for us to engage a significant and talented Christian thinker and writer. I hope you all will make a point of being here and will bring along others to share the experience with you. See you Sunday at 10.

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



TRINITY SUNDAY

