

MIDWEEK MESSAGE

June 12, 2013

Words to Consider: *"The perennially difficult truth of our condition is that neither our socially created divisions nor our religious commitments have any standing in the face of God's unbounded and ubiquitous love."*

Wendy Farley

THE WORK OF THE CHURCH

- ❖ **CHOIR REHEARSAL** this **Thursday, June 13, 7:30 PM** in the Parlor.
- ❖ **SENIOR CHAT, Friday, June 14, 10:00 AM: "The Miracle of Water"** will be considered from philosophical, scientific, and health perspectives. Water is essential to life and being in water is one of the best ways to keep fit or to strengthen our bodies. Some of us found appreciation for water at a young age and some of us later in life, but it is a real loss if we don't appreciate water at some point in our lives. We look forward to hearing from **Lucia Panini**, a key staff person from the Betty Wright Swim Center here in Palo Alto. This program is held in the Fireside Room of Covenant Presbyterian Church, 670 East Meadow Drive. For information, Dona Smith-Powers, Coordinator (650) 494-3093.



Friday, June 14, 6:00 PM – FATHER'S DAY POT LUCK COOK-OUT! This will be our first of the season. The church will furnish hamburgers, hot dogs, buns, beverages and condiments. You bring the rest to share. We will be grilling on the patio and afterward we will engage in a spirited but gentle game or two of volleyball. You can play or cheer from the sidelines or both. Bring some along to share in the good food and good fun.

- ❖ **SUNDAY, JUNE 16, 10:00 AM**, Worship: *Justice and Grace* & Sunday School for Children and Youth; 11:30 AM, Adult Spiritual Formation: *The Awakened Heart: Opening Yourself to the Love You Need* by Gerald May, a conversation about spiritual formation led by Pastor Rick.
- ❖ **BIBLE STUDY, Tuesday, June 18** 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

- ❖ **BAPTISTS LUNCHING TOGETHER, Thursday, June 27, Noon** – a panel of those who attended, including Pastor Rick, will bring a report on the first biennial Mission Summit. Grand Lake Gardens in Oakland. Lunch is \$8.00. For reservations contact Joan Thatcher, (510) 350-7008. If you would like a ride let Pastor Rick know.

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.



To date we have received **\$729** toward our goal of **\$500** for our **SPECIAL OFFERING FOR MAY** for the **Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America**.

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. We have received **\$567** toward our goal of **\$1000**.



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

Disruption of CAR health services threatens children, HIV patients: Health care services have been disrupted since the Central African Republic coup, leaving HIV patients without access to antiretroviral drug treatment. Aid workers are concerned that the number of child deaths will rise due to lack of food and medicine. IRINNews.org (6/11)

Global group raises \$4.15B to prevent malnutrition: The Global Nutrition for Growth Compact is being launched to combat malnutrition around the world. The organizers secured as much as \$4.15 billion in funding during a recent summit. IRINNews.org (6/10)

Malnutrition stunts people, economic growth, FAO official says: Malnutrition threatens life, stunts growth and has a lasting impact on earnings, writes Jomo Kwame Sundaram of the Food and Agriculture Organization. Malnutrition is the cause of death for more than 3 million children annually, according to a Lancet study. Inter Press Service (6/6)

Surviving in Mali can mean having to enter the sex industry: Women and girls displaced by the conflict in Mali are becoming sex workers in order to survive. "The pressure on the young women to help support their family is high, and it is not unusual for a mother or other female relative to push them into going onto the street," says Sylvia Mollet of the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. IRINNews.org (6/5)

JOYS AND CONCERNS

Joys:

- ✚ Birthday joys: Daniel Ha (June 15), Gerardy Lucero (June 18)
- ✚ Melanie Ramirez for her children, Daniel, who graduated as student of the year at Crittenden Middle School and Clara who is going with her school band to Germany and Austria this month; that both are such good people and for the help of FBCPA in making them so
- ✚ Carolyn Shepard for her 28 year old godson who is in India doing AIDS work and is preparing for medical school because he wants to make a difference
- ✚ Chuck Syverson for 6 good weeks in the Bay Area with gratitude to the Berrys and others for their hospitality
- ✚ For the presence of Marie Onwubuariri in worship with her family on her mother's 70th birthday and her parents' 45th wedding anniversary
- ✚ For the presence in worship and Sunday School of one our interns, Naomi Schulz

Concerns:

- ✚ Nancy Syverson for Paul Tuan who is at home recovering from surgery
- ✚ Ron Fredlund for the The Terraces, Los Altos, as they search for a new chaplain
- ✚ Kathy Gillam for her husband, Dick, who is recovering at home from knee surgery
- ✚ Bob and Lucille Towner as Bob continues to recover from surgery at Manor Care in Sunyvale
- ✚ Laura Garcia for Janice and other family members with Health concerns; for herself as she faces shoulder surgery the end of the month
- ✚ For Joanne Jones who is suffering from back pain
- ✚ For Patrice and Richard Heath as she lives with terminal cancer
- ✚ For Oleta Proctor with ongoing health concerns
- ✚ For Don and Mary Granholm
- ✚ 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 refugees and all victims of war and disaster everywhere
- ✚ 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
- ✚ For those affected by indiscriminate acts of violence and for the adoption of measures to heal our communities of all the many ways these make us less safe and less free

SUNDAY, JUNE 16, 2013

"Justice and Grace"

Reading for the Week: 1 Kings 21:1-21a; Psalm 5:1-8; **LUKE 7:36-8:3**; Galatians 2: 15-21.

Once again we see Jesus' persistent refusal to distance himself from us. From the hungry, from the sick, from those who have lost their way, from the outcast, from those burdened by the labels and names and roles laid upon them: Jesus refuses to turn away. And not only does he resist turning away; he welcomes those who risk making their way to him. He recognizes and elevates those who push beyond the barriers and boundaries and rebuffs: the woman, so long bleeding, who reaches out for the hem of his robe; the children who gather around him; the women who, in every gospel, come to anoint and bless him, who see him as no one else does.

In this passage from Luke, in this woman's lavish gesture, we see how love pours itself out: not in self-abnegation, but in an offering that springs from the depths of who we are. Love makes its way past the labels, breaks through the burdens of prejudice and stereotype and bias. This woman who has been set free by Jesus, and who now comes to anoint him: she knows this. She knows how love looses us, how it bridges the distance between us, how it calls us to recognize and respond to the holy in our midst. With such clarity and grace, she illuminates who Jesus is. With his response, Jesus illuminates who we are: not defined by the sins of the past but by the love and grace of the present. (Jan Richardson, "A Needful Extravagance," *paintedprayerbook.com*).

Prayer: God of compassion, you suffer in the grief of your people, and you are present to heal and forgive. May the sun of your justice rise on every night of oppression, and may the warm rays of your healing love renew each troubled mind; for you are the God of salvation and new life, made known to us in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A NOTE FROM PASTOR RICK

Pastor Tripp just left for three weeks in Virginia. We will miss him while he is back East teaching at Virginia Theological Seminary (Episcopal) but we are delighted that Naomi Schulz, one of our interns for the coming church year is able and willing to step in. She will be with us for the first cookout of the season and will work with education for children, youth and adults for the next two Sundays and then one more Sunday in August. We are grateful to have such a delightful fill-in while Pastor Tripp is gone.

This coming Sunday our theme is "Justice and Grace." We will focus on Luke's version of the woman who anoints Jesus' feet. It is a powerful story, one of my favorites. The drama includes a religious leader who thinks he has things all figured out, a woman of questionable reputation with a great and expanding soul, and Jesus who sees through them both, calling the first to accountability for his neglect of hospitality and offering the second forgiveness and healing as she practices both repentance and hospitality at a remarkably deep level. The lack of love closes Simon, the Pharisee, to the miracle of grace being enacted in his dining room; her openness to love transforms the woman's life and makes her whole.

In Adult Spiritual Formation we will consider some of the work of the eminent psychiatrist and spiritual director, Gerald May (brother of Rollo May.) One of the texts for my program in Spiritual Direction is his book, *The Awakened Heart: Opening Yourself to the Love You Need*. In this book he writes about the ways in which love is foundational to our human existence and how the best of our living flows from that source when we let it.

Come Sunday at 10 AM and bring someone along to share the morning with you.

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

