

MIDWEEK MESSAGE
August 14, 2013

Words to Consider: *"Love in action is a harsh and dreadful thing compared to love in dreams."*

Dorothy Day

THE WORK OF THE CHURCH

- ❖ **THERE WILL NOT BE A COOKOUT ON FRIDAY, AUGUST 16 at 6:00 PM** as previously announced. Instead our community event for August will be the "Picnic on the Grounds" after worship on August 25.

- ❖ **HABITAT WORK DAY, Saturday, August 17, 8:30 AM to 4:15 PM.** Save this date for our annual work day with Habitat for Humanity. This year we are scheduled for a full day's work on a remodel in East Palo Alto. There are 10 work slots. Here are some further details about this home repair project:
 - The site is located at 187 Jasmine Way in East Palo Alto
 - The volunteer day is from 8:30 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. There is a 45 minute lunch break starting at noon
 - All volunteers must be at least 18 years old
 - Leave all valuables items at home or locked in your car
 - Wear comfortable clothing you don't mind getting dirty or ruined
 - Wear closed-toed shoes
 - Bring a water bottle
 - Volunteers will be working on replacing windows, repairing a garage door, and working on the exterior.

If we have more volunteers, there may also be the opportunity to help out in the "ReStore." If you're interested in participating, let Pastor Rick know. If you're not available to work, you may volunteer to help the Missions Task Team with the lunch preparation.

- ❖ **SUNDAY, AUGUST 18, 10:30, worship: *Fire Next Time*, and Sunday School** followed by Patio Hour hosted by Chip Clark and Thelma Parodi.

- ❖ **MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR DOROTHY AKER** will be **Sunday, August 18 at 2:00 PM** in the sanctuary.
- ❖ **BIBLE STUDY, Tuesday, August 20, 10:30 AM** at the Terraces of Los Altos at Janet Maxwell's apartment. The address is 373 Pine Lane, #2106, Los Altos. Let Pastor Rick know if you need transportation.
- ❖ **MEN'S BREAKFAST, 8:00 AM, Wednesday, August 21,** at Hobe's Restaurant, 4224 El Camino Real, Palo Alto. All the men from our Church family are welcome.
- ❖ **CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING, Thursday, August 22, 5:00 PM in the Parlor.**

UPCOMING AND ONGOING EVENTS

- ❖ **SUNDAY, AUGUST 25, 10:00 AM:** *Make New Friends, Keep the Old, Hymn Sing and picnic "on the grounds"*.
- ❖ **LET FREEDOM RING!** There will be a wonderful **celebration of the 50th anniversary of the March on Washington and Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech on Monday, August 26** in Palo Alto. The event will take place at King Plaza (named after MLK and Coretta Scott King) in front of City Hall at 250 Hamilton Avenue. From **5-7pm** there will be a showing of "Soundtrack for a Revolution." The official program will be from **7-9pm**. For more detail, see the flyer on the bulletin boards.
- ❖ **WOMEN'S BRUNCH** meets on the **Thursday, August 29 at 10 AM**. All women of our church community are invited. Please join us at Hobe's Restaurant, 4224 El Camino Real, Palo Alto, in the "Wine Room." All women of the congregation welcome.



Our **August Special Mission Offering** is for **HABITAT FOR HUMANITY GREATER SAN FRANCISCO**. The mission of the Greater San Francisco Habitat for Humanity is to make the dream of home ownership a reality for low-income families - a virtually unattainable dream for the majority of residents in San Francisco, Marin and the Peninsula. We urge you to give generously to this offering. Thank you so much on behalf of the Habitat families. To date we have received **\$310** toward our goal: **\$600**.

IN THE WORLD

Environmental racism afflicts US minorities: Between 1999 and 2009, the National Academy of Science produced five environmental justice reports showing that "low-income and people of color communities are exposed to higher levels of pollution than the rest of the nation, and that these same populations experience certain diseases in greater number than more affluent white communities." Black ethicist Emilie Townes has said that the effects of toxic waste on the lives of people of color who are relegated to live on ecologically hazardous lands are akin to a contemporary version of lynching a whole people. (Miguel de la Torre, abpnews.com, 8-13)

Income equality will empower Colombia's women, adviser says: Colombia can reduce teenage pregnancy and domestic violence by supporting women's rights and employment opportunities, says Nigeria Renteria, the nation's presidential adviser on gender equality. "We think that improving opportunities for women to earn an income can help reduce rates of violence against women because it brings them economic independence," she says. Thomson Reuters Foundation (8/13)

U.S., Russia try to move peace talks forward as Syria splinters: U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov continue to work on moving Syrian peace talks forward. As the preparations drag on, Syria is splitting up into three distinct parts, experts say. "There is no doubt that as a distinct single entity, Syria has ceased to exist," says Charles Lister of IHS Jane's Terrorism and Insurgency Centre. Al Jazeera (8/10)

"Quality of growth" is important for Africa development, AfDB head says: Harnessing natural resources and improving infrastructure, including electricity generation, must be done in a way that is inclusive and quality oriented, Donald Kaberuka, president of the African Development Bank, tells Mark Tran. Aid shouldn't be forever, either. "Aid is not successful unless it has a sell-by date," Kaberuka says, adding "If aid does not stop, it will have failed." Guardian (London) (8/8)

With innovation and microfinance, woman helps her village: A willingness to innovate and access to microfinance helped a woman named Shantha Ragunathan in Tamil Nadu, India, move out of poverty and show others how to do it, write Vijay Govindarajan and Srikanth Srinivas. "[B]y serving as a role model, she created the foundation for many more such leaders and game changers to emerge," they write. Harvard Business Review online/HBR Blog Network (8/1)

JOYS AND CONCERNS

Joys:

- ✚ Birthday joys: Jesse Tuan (August 18)
- ✚ Nana Spiridon for Lisa who has passed one of her professional exams and will have a state board exam in September
- ✚ Thelma Parodi with thanks for continued prayers for her daughter, Lee, and son-in-law, Norm
- ✚ Mary Martin for the joy of having the Hilliers visit
- ✚ Kathy Gillam with thanksgiving and hope for Julia and all the teachers who are headed back to the classroom
- ✚ Thelma Tuttle in celebration of Storm's (Lois Ville's granddaughter) first birthday
- ✚ Dan Cudworth in celebration of the 19th birthday of their daughter, Arianna, Sunday

Concerns – New:

- ✦ Laurie Cudworth for her mother, Charlotte, with health concerns and for her parents who need to move after 50 years in the same house
- ✦ Michael Holmes for safe travel as he is on the road the next three weeks
- ✦ Doug Lee for the people of Haiti, their need for clean water and the projects he is helping to develop; thanks for prayers as he and Hegene traveled there
- ✦ For Laura Garcia still recovering shoulder surgery and not yet able to drive
- ✦ Pastor Rick for his sister, Joan, who has a viral infection in the muscles around her right lung
- ✦ For Melanie Ramirez who is recovering from foot surgery
- ✦ Thelma Tuttle for the work of Ecumenical Hunger Program with children and youth
- ✦ Marilyn Hunwick for the family and friends of Maj StormoGipson, daughter of former ABC missionaries to South India, Tracy and Marjorie Gipson who died in a rafting accident on Idaho's Salmon River, July 26
- ✦ For the work of Greater San Francisco Habitat for Humanity

Ongoing:

- ✦ Bob and Lucille Towner as Bob continues at Manor Care in Sunnyvale
- ✦ Laura Garcia for Janice and other family members with health concerns
- ✦ For Joanne Jones who is suffering from back pain
- ✦ For Patrice and Richard Heath as she lives with cancer
- ✦ For Oleta Proctor with ongoing health concerns
- ✦ Yin Xu-Moore for her parents as her father lives with Parkinson's and for her own life transitions
- ✦ For Don and Mary Granholm, Ruth Clark, Earl and Virginia Knechtel, Carl Schilling, June Lee
- ✦ 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, AUGUST 18, 2013

Fire Next Time

Reading for the Week: Psalm 80:1-2, 8-19; Isaiah 5:1-7; **LUKE 12:49-56; HEBREWS 11:29-12:2**

Luke 12:49-56 is one of the few apocalyptic passages in the Gospels. Jesus speaks to the difficulty of God's judgment, that people will become divided because of it, even within the family, even within what is supposed to be one. Jesus has come to reconcile all people to God, but that reconciliation will cause some to reject God. There are those who cannot accept a God who accepts and loves all people. They will reject Jesus, and in turn reject the very God who loves them. And those who do reject Jesus do not understand what they are doing, they do not understand the signs of the times for them.

Hebrews 11:29-12:2 recalls the faith of the great heroes of the Bible and the prophets, and how they were rejected and killed for what they believed in, but God still had promises of hope for them, even if it wasn't fulfilled in their lifetime. These heroes of the faith, these witnesses give us strength and hope, but ultimately it is Jesus who gave himself for us, who let go of himself to die and live for us.

When we ignore the poor, when we turn away from the cries of injustice in this world, we turn away from Jesus himself. In Jesus' day, the religious hypocrites would claim to follow God's ways but had no concern for the very ones God declared concern for through the prophets. To this day, we end up being concerned more about right belief and right doctrine than how we live out our faith. When we look to the prophets and to Jesus, we see God hearing the cries of the poor, the widows and the orphans. We see Jesus eating among the sinners and tax collectors and the prostitutes. We hear the rejection of Jesus by others being a rejection of God's love for all people, but especially the marginalized and outcasts. This same rejection happens today—we fashion Jesus into being concerned about right belief, when Jesus seems clearly to be concerned with how we love one another. We continue to miss the mark, transforming a love for all, especially those on the margins, into a love for a few who are obedient to a set of rules. (Mindi Welton-Mitchell, *rev-o-lution.org/2013/08/09*).

Prayer: *God of justice, your word is light and truth. Let your face shine on us to restore us, that we may walk in your way, seeking justice and doing good. Amen.*

A NOTE FROM PASTOR RICK

Sunday was a good and busy day at FBCPA. It was great, as always, to have our old friends, the Hilliers, visiting from Seattle. Our project to provide backpacks, clothing and other back to school assistance for the children served by Ecumenical Hunger program culminated in a blessing of 15 completed backpacks, filled by our children and youth, as well as 10 \$30 gift certificates. Thanks to everyone who contributed so generously. We raised \$635 on a goal of \$500 for this project.

After worship, we held a Quarterly Business meeting of which someone (I believe it was Thelma Parodi) said "This meeting was actually fun." We thanked once more our Annex Task Team for their hard work in completing the sale of our remaining share of the building. We voted to explore giving 10% of our proceeds from the sale to missions and investing another 10% in microloans (see the item under "In the World" above.) We also voted to release the accumulated income of nearly \$55,000 (Thanks, Ron Tuttle!) for use on the Patio project and upgrades for our sanctuary sound system. The discussion for all these proposals was lively and instructive.

This Saturday, August 17, is our annual Habitat Work Day. If you're available to work (see the information above) or help with lunch, please let me know right away. Sunday afternoon at 2:00 PM, we celebrate the life of Dorothy Aker with a service in the sanctuary and a reception in the Fellowship Hall. It will be an opportunity to hold in memory and in honor one who meant much to this congregation over a long period of time.

Sunday's worship will focus on Luke 12:49-56, a difficult passage in which Jesus challenges his followers pretty severely. It is not a passage that would be among our favorites. Still, we may find something instructive in it to help us on our way. Pray that we do. We will also consider Hebrews 11:29-12:2, which may well be among our favorites as it celebrates the heroes of the faith who have gone before us and the "cloud of witnesses" that hover around, leading and guiding us.

Join us at 10 AM for worship and stay for the fellowship of the Patio Hour. Bring someone along to share the day with you. See you then.

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

Pastor Rick