

MIDWEEK MESSAGE

October 30, 2013

Words to Consider: *"Consistently, Jesus sides with the ostracized, the rejected, the unclean, the impure, the (alleged) sinner, and the half-breeds. He is no crowd pleaser, he is their confounder. Even before the palm branches are stripped from the trees, and the cries of 'Blessed!' are heard, Jesus is a disturber of crowds. He does not want their praise; he wants their commitment. And they will make him pay for this, his failure to deliver what they had promised to themselves."*

Martyn Percy

THE WORK OF THE CHURCH

- ❖ **NO CHURCH CHOIR Thursday, October 31.** We will resume on Thursday, November 7 at 7:30 PM in the Parlor. All are welcome to join in song (and fun).



ALL SAINTS IN SONG

A service of music and memory

Friday, November 1 7:30pm

Join us as we welcome Ana Hernandez to our sanctuary to sing and pray with us for this very special All Saints worship service.

**First Baptist Church, Palo Alto
305 North California Avenue
Palo Alto, CA 94301
650-327-0561**

In partnership with All Souls Episcopal Parish in Berkeley, CA, we are grateful for the chance to welcome Ana. We hope you will join us. Bring an instrument. Bring your voice. All are encouraged to play and pray.

"Almighty God, you have knit together your elect in one communion and fellowship in the mystical body of your Son Christ our Lord: Give us grace so to follow your blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living, that we may come to those ineffable joys that you have prepared for those who truly love you; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting. Amen."

– *Episcopal Book of Common Prayer*

- ❖ **SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 3, ALL SAINTS SUNDAY**, 10:00 a.m. Worship: *Little Man, Big Gifts*, Communion & Sunday School for Children and Youth, 11:30 a.m. Adult Spiritual Formation: Contemplation of the book, *Pastrix* by Nadia Bolz-Weber, led by Pastor Tripp. Rev. Bolz-Weber is a Lutheran pastor in Denver, CO. Her memoir is capturing the attention of many. It is a New York Times bestselling spiritual memoir. Some suggest hers is a voice for our present time. Copies are available. (Note: the book contains adult language.)
- ❖ **BIBLE STUDY, Tuesday, November 5, 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, November 6**, at Hobe's Restaurant, 4224 El Camino Real, Palo Alto. All the men from our Church family are welcome.
- ❖ **OPEN HOUSE, Sunday, November 10 at 3:00 PM**. Soo Kim, Doug and Hegene Lee invite the congregation to join them in a celebration of their new home at 2320 Byron Street in Palo Alto. Please drop by to join in the festivity and warm their home.

UPCOMING AND ONGOING EVENTS

To date we have received \$740 toward our goal of \$1,000, for **October's Special Mission Offering**, our annual **WORLD MISSION OFFERING**.



SPECIAL MISSION OFFERING FOR NOVEMBER is for **Ecumenical Hunger Program**. Our church has been involved with this very worthwhile program for many years by contributing food, clothing and other household items. Church members volunteer their time, and we give monetary support through this annual offering. This year's goal is **\$600**. In addition to the special offering, we are again collecting turkeys, hams, roast or whole chickens as well as other items as part of

November's gratitude focus.



IN THE WORLD



FROM RAMESH KUMAR - The Present Flood Condition in Odisha, India

Scores of villages has been devoured by swirling current of rivers like Subarnarekha, Brahmani, Baitarani, Mahanadi, Jalaka, Budhabalanga, Daya, Rusikula, Hadagoda etc. Road and rail links between flood affected districts have been badly affected due to overflowing of water in railway tracks and national Highways interlinking these districts.

As reported, the calamity is much larger than expected; this is why the required materials are not reaching their destination due to communication hindrances in the affected area. Further, the recent floods have brought untold miseries to the rural people residing in the flood affected districts. More than one lakh domestic cattle have been washed away and adding further aggravating in unhygienic conditions to these areas due to stink and filth cause by death corps laying scattered all over, posing a serious threat to the lives of human being in these areas. Cholera and dysentery are spreading in these areas. If not checked on time, it will create a serious problem.

Most of the District i.e. Balasore, Mayurbhanj, Ganjamm, Berhampur, Puri, Jagatsinghpur, Jajpur District are all coastal districts in the state of Odisha. The river passes through this district causes flood. This year Phalin and heavy rain fall washed away health and wealth of Odisha. Houses, utensils, grains and other things washed out in flood water. People are taking shelter at high embankment to save their lives and they are facing problems of shelter, safe drinking water, medical care, food, and hygienic. 56.70 lakh people in 10 districts, as over 160 villages still remained marooned. Out of them 100 families of our institution (staffs and students) are severely affected and cut off from the outside world. These are the condition when mankind along with all living creatures surrenders to the nature and relief becomes the immediate need in the area. People are hungry without water, animals are dying due to lack of fodder and health conditions worsen creating more problems.



JOYS AND CONCERNS

Joys:

- ✚ For our sound engineer, Mark Miller and family on the birth of a baby girl
- ✚ For Mary Granholm who received the 70th Anniversary Chapter Legacy Award from the Mid-Peninsula Chapter of the United Nations Association of the USA
- ✚ Ron Fredlund for Mark Hillier who received his second PACCAR Award for Excellence in Teaching at the Foster School of Business, University of Washington, Seattle
- ✚ Melanie Ramirez with thanks for the pumpkin-carving potluck

Concerns – New:

- ✚ For LeDayne McLeese Polaski (of BPFNA) whose father died this week
- ✚ Carolyn Shepard for Yin Xu-Moore whose father died last week
- ✚ Naomi Schulz for her brother, Mark, who is recovering from a traumatic brain injury
- ✚ Melanie Ramirez for the family and friends of Ysobel (Daniel's first soccer coach) whose husband died recently
- ✚ Pastor Rick for his sister, Joan, who is hospitalized with breathing difficulties
- ✚ Lynn Hunwick for the people of Balasore and Orissa, India, in the aftermath of a severe cyclone and flooding
- ✚ Janet Maxwell for Lee Weaver who is in hospice care at the Terraces
- ✚ Pastor Rick and Dan Cudworth for Patrick Hosfield, assistant conductor of The Choral Project, recovering from a stroke
- ✚ Douglas Ha remembering Christians in Vietnam
- ✚ For our American Baptist missionaries serving all over the world through the Board of International Ministries, especially Dan and Sarah Chetti and their mission work in Lebanon and Dan and Sharon Buttry who work as a global peace advocates

Ongoing:

- ✚ For Bob Towner at Manor Care in Sunnyvale and for Lucille
- ✚ For Patrice and Richard Heath as they continue to live with the affects of her cancer
- ✚ Laura Garcia for Janice and other family members with health concerns
- ✚ For Oleta Proctor with ongoing health concerns
- ✚ For Don and Mary Granholm, Ruth Clark, Earl and Virginia Knechtel, Carl Schilling
- ✚ For the residents of the Terraces at Los Altos as they go through a time of transition
- ✚ 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 the work with the homeless of the Opportunity Center and InnVision
- ✚ 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, NOVEMBER 3, 2013

“Little Man, Big Gifts”

Lectionary reading for the Week: Psalm 119:137-144; Habakkuk 1:1-4, 2:1-4; **LUKE 19:1-10**;
2 Thessalonians 1:1-4, 11-12. (Focus scripture for this week is in bold.)

Zaccheus would not have been one to care about the concerns of the 90 % who served the empire; he was there to benefit from them, collecting their taxes for Rome, padding on a little extra for himself. He had great job security in working for the Empire.

But then he starts listening to this Jesus. Maybe he’s been hearing about the new life that Jesus invites his listeners to enter. Maybe he is wondering about that new kingdom he’s heard about. Maybe he is beginning to question the kingdom he serves, the empire. Maybe he feels that he’s backed into a corner, he’s had enough, he’s up a tree. We don’t know. We just get Luke’s story in outline about this short little man who climbs up in a tree so that he can see Jesus enter Jericho.

He makes this one move to see Jesus, and his life turns upside down. Jesus sees him up there in the sycamore, and throws out a radical challenge. Jesus says he will eat with him. He will break all the political and social rules about who could eat with whom, and he will come to dine at the table of a despised collaborator, one who collects the taxes that keeps the boot of Rome on the neck of Israel.

Zaccheus responds in kind; he goes way overboard and promises from this day forward to give away half of his goods to the poor. And furthermore, he offers to make good *fourfold* on the money he has stolen from his compatriots.

And that kingdom that Zaccheus might have wondered about, that life with God? It’s right here, Jesus announces, right now.

“Salvation has come to this house”--this is what the kingdom looks like, this is how it is with God. The lost, the miserable ones, up a tree like little Zaccheus, are welcomed, no matter what they’ve done, no matter who they are. All gather around the same dining table. The new reign of God says God cares for the least among us, cares with profligate generosity.

With this news, Zaccheus' heart breaks, it breaks right open and a new way of living breaks in. He learns how to love. (Anne Howard, “Crazy Love,” 10-28-2013, beatitudessociety.org).

Prayer: *God of unfailing light, in your realm of glory the poor are blessed, the hungry filled, and every tear is wiped away. Strengthened by this vision, may we follow in the way of holiness that your Son made known in life and death. Amen.*

A NOTE FROM PASTOR RICK

We had two great creative events this weekend – Friday’s potluck and pumpkin carving. Thanks to Pastor Tripp and the interns for organizing the festivities. The creativity was “scary.” Then on Sunday, Naomi led us in an excellent Advent-to-Epiphany Worship Brainstorming Party. About 20 people participated. We came up with some exciting ideas for this year’s Advent worship. It was great to have so many join in. It will surely enrich our worship experience during this special season of the church year. Thanks to Naomi and everyone who participated. If you have further input, don’t hesitate to let one of the pastors or interns know.

Please plan to come out Friday night for our very special service of “All Saints in Song,” led by the wonderful Ana Hernandez. This will be another opportunity to exercise your creativity, this time in a devotional setting. We are very blessed to have Ana with us. Invite friends, family, colleagues, neighbors, seekers and strangers to join in this worship experience.

Sunday’s service will focus on one of everybody’s favorite Bible stories. The tale of Zaccheus and the tree is one of the first many of us encountered in Sunday School, probably because children can identify with Zaccheus’s small stature. But Zaccheus also had a big heart that was more than generous in its moment of repentance and transformation. In adult Spiritual Formation, we will begin a study of *Pastrix: The Cranky, Beautiful Faith of a Sinner & Saint* by Nadia Bolz-Weber. It is a fine spiritual memoir in the tradition of Cathleen Falsani’s *Sin Boldly*.

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

Pastor Rick

