

**SAN MARINO CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
2560 HUNTINGTON DRIVE
SAN MARINO, CA 91108**

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**“Never place a period where God has placed a COMMA,
God is STILL SPEAKING!”**



January 3, 2010 – 10:00 a.m.

Second Sunday after Christmas

For Reflection

While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance,
Now God commands all people everywhere to repent.
(Acts 17:30)

Please stop by the Sound Booth if you wish to use a sound receiver today.

You are invited to watch the screen up front to increase your participation in today's service of worship.

**The asterisk indicates the times when you are invited to stand if the Spirit so moves you.*

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

Music provided by Albert Mendoza & Murray Middleman

WELCOME

Rev. Dr. Art Cribbs, Pastor

***SONGS FOR THE SPIRIT**

“Part of the Family” and “This Little Light of Mine”

***OPENING PRAYER**

Rev. Cathy Kotowski & Arthur Cribbs

Liturgist: Dear God, I find a new day dawning

People: with blue skies and bright sun.

Liturgist: Let me live it happily.

People: Let me remember your love for me.

Liturgist: and for your children everywhere!

ALL: Amen.

***A SONG FOR THE HEART**

“O God, I Adore You”

The Congregation may be seated.

TIME WITH OUR CHILDREN

Kana Cribbs

MUSIC TO BLESS THE CHILDREN

“Be Still and Know”

Children and Youth are invited to participate in today's worship service.

Childcare for children under age 4 is available in our nursery today

with trained, certified childcare provider, Mrs. Barbara Sanchez

SCRIPTURE READING

John 1:1-18

Rev. Cathy Kotowski & Arthur Cribbs

SONG OF PREPARATION “O, the Deep, Deep Love of Jesus”

Soloist: Sunny Kim

By Samuel Trevor Francis and Thomas J. Williams

REFLECTIONS

“Close to God's Heart”

Rev. Dr. Art Cribbs

MUSIC FOR REFLECTION

Pianist: Albert Mendoza

SERVICE OF COMMUNION

We Commemorate Words of Institution and Our Common Prayer

We Share All are invited to the communion table.
*We use **grape juice** so that everyone may feel included.*

(If you prefer to be served in your seat, please raise your hand, and a Deacon will serve you.)

We Listen Special Music for Communion by Albert Mendoza & Murray Middleman

We Give Thanks : We affirm the goodness of life and the openness of the future because our God is a God of life and love. As God comes to us in this act of communion, so let us go out to others in acts which bring healing, reconciliation and hope to our world. Amen.

A TIME TO GIVE

Arthur Cribbs

A TIME TO ACT

Rev. Cathy Kotowski

A TIME TO DEDICATE OURSELVES & OUR GIFTS

Arthur Cribbs

Loving God, you have given so generously of your bounty. We have brought back only a portion. Bless this offering and use it for the ministries to your people nearby and throughout your world. We give cheerfully with gratitude and appreciation for our ability to share these resources entrusted to us. Bless this congregation and the United Church of Christ as we dedicate ourselves and our gifts to you. Amen.

A TIME FOR PRAYER

“God Fill Me Now”

Prayer time led by Pastor Cribbs

SENDING HYMN

“Glory, Glory, Hallelujah”

*BENEDICTION

Pastor Cribbs

*CHANGING OF THE LIGHT

Rev. Cathy Kotowski & Arthur Cribbs

*GOING FORTH

Instrumentalists

Everyone is welcome to the SOCIAL TIME next door in Crist Hall after the service.

We express a warm welcome to all who are here today!

This Church is affiliated with the United Church of Christ, a denomination dedicated to spiritual growth, faith with action and social transformation. If you're visiting today, please stop by our Visitor's Center in the Entryway to sign our Guest Book, fill out a visitor card (with nametag so we can greet you by name) and receive information about everything happening here.

ELIZABETH ROSE CAMERON FOOD FIRST EVERY SUNDAY is a giving opportunity available to support families and individuals who are hungry and need help. Remember to bring canned, non-perishable foods to church every Sunday along with your extra change and place them in the basket and glass teddy bear in the Narthex.

Please note: In an effort to control the spread of any germs we invite you to utilize the hand sanitizer provided for you at the Nametag table. Thanks to our members who have provided this opportunity.



The New Year signals a time of renewal, a chance to start fresh, and a moment for a new beginning. We can reflect on the past twelve months. We can regret our mistakes and wish for other outcomes. But, we can also envision something altogether new and different. The New Year

means we don't have to carry over the past. We are liberated. It is a new day that opens the way for us to do what we may have never done before.

Joshua, the young apostle of Moses, stood before his people and declared, "As for me and my house, we will serve God." That is an emphatic statement without ambiguity. He clearly expressed the priority and desire of his heart. He said no matter what others do or think, God is first and worthy of praise. That is an incredible resolution.

The start of a new year brings many temptations. We may be tempted to make big promises and announce "New Year's resolutions." We may have the best intentions to do something to improve our health, lose weight, make more money, or spend more time with our children. There are so many things that require our attention. We may resolve to adjust our lives to accommodate many of the demands pressed on us.

Whatever we decide is the most the important item that deserves our utmost care I truly like the clarity of Joshua, "We will serve God." There is no better choice.

The determination to serve God begins the process of properly ordering our lives. Instead of chasing the elusive buck to increase our bank accounts, placing God above everything allows us to realize the true value of life. We pause in the midst of our pursuit. We take time to experience the glorious array of Creation. We discover time to share with loved ones, neighbors, and friends.

Putting God first is a great beginning to improve the quality of life. It makes us more aware of God's love for us. Even when challenges assault our tranquility, there is a more profound peace that envelops our inner-being. It is almost inexplicable but no less real and reassuring. The countenance on our face reflects a calm that is not easily dismissed. Others notice a difference in us upon approach. There is no need to fret over losses; instead, a more relaxed response is automated and we go forward with a sense of ease and greater awareness.

Our decision to serve God changes every aspect of life. We take seriously our actions that can break human ties and damage relationships with other people. We offer apologies for our missteps and we become available to receive expressions from people who have their own need to re-build and repair broken bonds. We can renew what were once lost friendships. We begin anew. It is God's love for us that makes it possible to see ourselves as vessels of peace and good will. And, we recognize the potential in others to promote understanding. There is hope for the future.

This New Year is an excellent time to repent. That may seem like an arcane term, but it provides a specific intentionality to not repeat our past mistakes. We can dedicate ourselves to clean up the air, purify our water supply, protect the Earth, and honor the sacredness of human life. We can work to limit systems that produce war and destruction. We can take time to look after our neighbors and ensure the welfare of the most vulnerable and neediest among us. We don't have to do things the same old way. We can expand our vision and increase our efforts to touch the lives of children and preserve the lives of the elderly.

It begins with an acknowledgement that God cares about every human being and loves us without condition. All that is asked of us is to care and love each other. This New Year we can show mercy and extend forgiveness. We can believe in the possibility of goodness, justice for all, and kindness. That is a New Year's resolution worth working toward and one that we all can celebrate.

-Pastor Art Cribbs

What's Happening...

- **TODAY De-Greening of the Grounds.** Your help is needed to take down and store all the Christmas decorations. Please meet at the front of the sanctuary after grabbing a quick nosh at the Social Time. Facilitators: Tree-Eric Stimes; Other Indoor Décor: Holly Burns; Outdoor Décor: Pastor Art.
- **TUES. 5:45pm - Cold Weather Shelter** – Volunteers: please meet in parking lot to carpool over.
- **THURS. United Voices Choir rehearsals resume.**
- **SAT. 10am – All Church Retreat Planning Team** meets at Van Horsen Ranch

NEXT SUNDAY:

COMING UP:

Sunday, Jan. 10 – TAB meets at Oldknow home after worship service.

Sunday, Jan. 17 – CONGREGATIONAL CONVERSATION after worship.

Weds., Jan. 20 - PASTORAL RELATIONS TEAM meets at 6:45pm in Pastor's Office.

Friday, Jan. 22- SPIRE newsletter deadline.

Sat., Jan. 23 - THE SPIRIT & THE SCREEN presents the movie, "UP" in the Stillspeaking Theatre at 7pm.

Sat. Jan. 30 - SACRED CONVERSATIONS begun at the last Central Association gathering will continue at 10am (until 1pm) here on our campus. Everyone is invited whether or not you attended the initial gathering.

Sun., Jan. 31- OUR ANNUAL MEETING & POTLUCK will take place after our service of worship. Many very important issues need to be decided for 2010. Your input and attendance is requested.

4pm – LEE DOMANN folk concert. Nashville recording artist, Lee Domann, will present a concert of his amazing music. A Love Offering will be received in lieu of selling tickets.

HOSPITALITY MINISTRIES for everyone attending San Marino Congregational United Church of Christ. We will be given an opportunity to worship God through the service of hospitality. As new people worship with us every Sunday, we have an opportunity to extend our worship service to the parking lot and sidewalk as greeters to receive our sisters and brothers. In the coming weeks, look for more information about this wonderful opportunity to serve and worship just before and right after church.