

SAN MARINO CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
2560 HUNTINGTON DRIVE SAN MARINO, CA 91108
Phone: (626) 292-2080 Facsimile: (626) 292-2083
Email: smccucc@sanmarinoucc.org Website: www.sanmarinoucc.org



“Never place a period
Where God has placed a comma”
[Gracie Allen]
God is still speaking,

January 18, 2009 – 10:00 a.m.

Second Sunday after Epiphany

For Reflection

“O Lord, you have searched me and known me.
You know when I sit down and when I rise up;
You discern my thoughts from far away.
You search out my path and my lying down,
And are acquainted with all my ways.
Even before a word is on my tongue,
O Lord, you know it completely.”
(Psalm 139:1-4)

Children and Youth are welcome to join our

Sunday School and Children Worship & Wonder program!

After the children’s time, children aged 3 through those in 5th grade are invited to process downstairs to the Wonder Room and those in 6th through 12th grade to the Green Room. Childcare for children under age 4 is available in our nursery today with trained and certified childcare provider, Mrs. Barbara Sanchez.

When these programs finish, children and youth will be brought up to social time.

*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 worship today.*

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

GATHERING MUSIC

Albert Mendoza

*LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

Acolyte: Camille Cribbs

“Hamba Nathi (Come, Walk With Us)”

Congregation

*A SONG FOR THE SPIRIT

Congregation

“God of the Bible”

*OPENING PRAYER

Daryl Burns

Good Morning, Great Spirit. Blessed is your Holy Name. You awakened us to this day and allowed us to see the splendor of your glorious Creation. You trust us with the care of the earth and instruct us to love one another. You love us beyond our knowing and extend tender mercies in the midst of our mistakes. You made us in your Divine Image and filled us with your Holy Spirit. You gave us your perfect love in the person of Jesus who comes as Christ. Now, O God, open our hearts, minds, eyes, ears, and even our souls to receive your blessings. Grant us courage to step boldly into your world with a spirit of celebration and joy. Help us not to be afraid, but to go with confidence into the streets of the cities and proclaim the Good News of liberation and salvation. Lead us in your path of righteousness and inspire us to be a living testament of your love and presence in this world. Come now, O God, into this place and receive our prayers as we offer our praises to you. Hallelujah. Shalom. Salaam. Right on! Amen.

*A SONG FROM THE HEART

Congregation

“Over My Head”

The congregation may be seated.

TIME WITH OUR CHILDREN

Pastor Art Cribbs

Story

“God Knows Your Name”

Our Common Prayer

Music to Bless the Children

OUR COMMON LIFE

A Time to Give

A Time to Act

A Time to Dedicate Ourselves and Our Gifts

O God, we bring our gifts to your altar and return only a portion of your blessings. Thank you for providing us with the substance of life. Freely we have received from you; now, freely we give back cheerfully and gladly. Bless this offering and use it to build up the ministries of this church and the United Church of Christ. In this hour, O God, we dedicate ourselves and our gifts to you. Amen.

Daryl Burns

Donald Shenk

Congregation

A Time to Reflect

A Time to Pray

“Calm me, Lord”

Prayers of the People

SCRIPTURE READING

Amos 5:18-24

Daryl Burns

CHORAL MUSIC

“Freedom is Coming”

Traditional South African Melody

The United Voices

REFLECTIONS

“What Would Martin Say?”

Pastor Art Cribbs

REFLECTING MUSIC

“Abraham, Martin & John”

Alexandra Loutsion and Ann Simon

by Dick Holler

***BENEDICTION**

Pastor Cribbs

***CHANGING OF THE LIGHT**

Daryl Burns

***GOING FORTH**

“We Shall Overcome”

Congregation

NCH #570

Words will appear on screen.



We express a warm welcome to all who are here today! Everyone is welcome outside to enjoy refreshments after the service.

Thanks to MARCIA ALBRECHT for treating us 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 and a nametag and receive information about everything happening here.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS...

THIS WEEK:

- **Today:** A 2009 Budget discussion will take place after church. This is a time to discuss the proposed 2009 budget for our church prior to the Annual Meeting on January 25th when it will be voted upon.
- **Mon.** Martin Luther King Jr. Day – Preschool & Offices Closed
- **Tues.** SOUL FOOD meets in the Pastor's Office.
- **Thurs.:** United Voices Choir rehearsal.
- **Fri:** SPIRE newsletter deadline.
- **Sat.** 7pm – The Spirit and the Screen presents, “Persepolis” (PG-13) in the Stillspeaking Theatre. Come for dinner & discussion!

NEXT SUNDAY, January 25, 2008
“FOLLOW ME”
Pastor Art Cribbs speaking on Mark 1:14-20
Our ANNUAL MEETING & POTLUCK will follow the



ANNUAL MEETING

Please see the enclosed report from the Nominating Committee which will be voted on at the meeting next Sunday

COMING UP:

A **Church Vitality Conference** presented by our local UCC offices will be held on January 30th and 31st. We can pay for your registration! Please let Donald know if you are interested in attending as soon as possible so we can purchase your registration package for you.



It is good to be back with you after traveling a great distance to be in covenantal relationship with our global partners in Christ's ministry. My son, Arthur, and I return with hearts filled with love and joy as our brothers and sisters in Ghana extended warm hospitality. We shared your expressions of greetings as we exchanged the gift of one people in the Spirit of Christ.

There is a special feeling in the air these days. It feels like the dawning of new history. For people across this nation and around the world, this is a moment that has been very slow in coming. While we do not know what is going to happen, we can attest to the shifting tide and changing winds that usher an era of hope and expectation. Are we putting too much of ourselves into the hands of a politician who speaks the eloquence of displaced persons? That is possible, but I believe there is much more to this moment in which so many of us believe change for the better is coming.

The public role of religion in society is being redefined to include voices that have been muted for a long time. Faith communities like our congregation have voluntarily silenced ourselves and hidden our gifts. We have been timid about speaking on behalf of the poor, disenfranchised, weak, and discarded souls in our country. Too often, we have depended on others, including insensitive and careless politicians, to do what was right. And, just as often, they have failed us. Now, it is time for us to do more.

When we take inventory of our resources, we discover an abundance of talent, funds, and unrestricted opportunities to be the change we so desperately desire. God has blessed us unconditionally. In many ways, our sacred space is

like so many silos filled to the brim with commodities that could be used to relieve suffering and feed the hungry. This is the moment in which we can free ourselves and end our dependency on callous, unconscious politicians and public figures who refuse to address the needs of the most vulnerable.

Our sisters and brothers in the international community have faith in the good people of the United States and the United Church of Christ to do more to bring real change to the world. We have the capacity to make a significant difference to elevate the hopes of those who suffer. That is what this particular moment is all about. This is the time we have been waiting for to act with courage and demonstrate God's love and Christ's healing touch.

God calls each of us by our given names. God has appointed us to go peaceably into the world with a spirit of justice and goodwill. In fact, God has anointed us with oil to be a balm among people who are hurting.

As we await the inauguration of our president in the next two days, we celebrate the cries for change. One who has sat in the pews for 20 years of our sister congregation in Chicago will take the oath of office to lead this nation. This is more than a casual event. With God's grace, this is the commencement of an epoch of fantastic unfamiliarity.

God is still speaking and we are lulled to listen intently. God speaks to call us into repentance. God speaks to inspire us to renew our Covenant. God speaks so we will be attentive to the needs of all peoples and forge peace where there is war, brokenness, and strife.

God speaks and calls us by name as we are known. Today, we speak as well as we offer prayers of mercy and ask God's guidance and protective hands to surround our president in these terrible and troubled times.

Change has come. Are we ready?

-Pastor Art Cribbs



Welcome Home to
Pastor Art and Arthur!
It's so good to have
you back!

From the UCC Calendar of Prayer
for January 18, 2009:



KNOWN AND LOVED

“Believe. Care. Do.” describes the theology of many of the church members at the Congregational Church of San Mateo, CA. Our congregation serves as an extravagant sign at both the local and national levels, working for justice and peace, hoping to create a more compassionate world. At the Congregational Church of San Mateo there are many tangible ways we put our faith into action. Our church is part of Peninsula

Interfaith Action, a coalition of congregations on the Peninsula working together to address pressing issues in our community. With the help of PIA we were able to create an after-school tutoring program at three sites in the city. Currently, our Local Organizing Committee (LOC) is addressing the critical issue of the lack of "affordable housing" on the Peninsula. Seeing this as a justice issue, we go to city and county meetings, speak with "those in the know and with power," to gain insight into the issues at hand helping others to be known and loved.

Prayer: *Insistent God, by night and day you summon your slumbering people. So stir us with your voice and enlighten our lives with your grace that we give ourselves fully to Christ's call to mission and ministry. Amen.*

A story from your Global Ministries

JANUARY
2009

“I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, thankful for your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.” PHILIPPIANS 1:3-5

Giving Abundant Thanks

We have much to be thankful for this year, write Doug and Liz Searles, missionaries to Poland; as we walk with the church in Lodz and in ten other cities in Poland. We are giving thanks for all of you. It is you who have gifted us with work that we feel uniquely called to do.



DOUG
SEARLES



ELIZABETH
SEARLES

We are newly arrived and it is great to be where worship matters – really matters. Attending worship in the past had been a political and sometimes very dangerous act. Even now it can be difficult. The Evangelical Reformed Church is a marginalized denomination in a country where less than 4% are Protestant. This means that those who worship other than in the Catholic Church may have their patriotism questioned. Protestant youth are treated differently in school. Therefore, church camps, youth events and music (!) are crucial to the future of the Evangelical-Reformed church in Poland.

Individual U.S. churches are beginning to gift us with bells, choir music, Sunday School materials, “karaoke” CDs of back-up for gospel and other Christian music, and more for the tiny new church starts in the Polish cities. We ask you most importantly, for your prayers. Please pray:

- for continued tenacity and energy for language study — challenging for both of us;
- for doors to open as we walk with the church, seeking to serve their desire to become a more missional and inviting denomination in a very challenging environment;
- for positive and nurturing mutual connections to develop with our partners in ministry in the U.S. in Poland, and worldwide.
- for our children in the U.S., Mackenzie (20) and McCleary (16) and for the challenges our work in Poland brings to our relations as a family.

And may God's Peace and Joy be yours this New Year no matter what your circumstances may be!

Doug and Elizabeth Searles serve with the Evangelical Reformed Church in Poland as mission workers for church growth and outreach.



You make the difference . . .

The prayers and help you provide through your local congregations make possible the work and witness of GLOBAL MINISTRIES, which is supported by Disciples Mission Fund of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) of the United Church of Christ.

WWW.GLOBALMINISTRIES.ORG

CHURCH OFFICERS

**New Church Officers to be elected at
THE ANNUAL MEETING
to be held January 25, 2009
(see insert for Nominating Slate.)**

STAFF

Pastor..... Art Cribbs
Pastoral Assistant, Director of Music/Theatre..... Donald Shenk
Preschool Director Connie James-Gililand
Accompanist Albert Mendoza
Guitarists..... Randall Allen & Nathan York
Section Leaders Alexandra Loutsion (Mez); Guylaine Bouchard (alto);
Ann Simon, (sop); Benjamin Cortez (ten); Adrian Rosales (bass)
Director of Christian Education Cathy Kotowski
Childcare Provider Barbara Sanchez
Ceremony Coordinator..... Donald Shenk
Sound Technician Eric Stimes
Usher Team Gary Henville & John Stanley
Webperson..... Holly Ann Burns
Interim Conference Ministers Rev. Jane Hoffman
Rev. June Botwell

Our Mission: “In response to God’s all-encompassing presence and unconditional love, we at San Marino Congregational United Church of Christ, a worship-centered community, are spreading the Good News of God’s love to all, working to heal human divisions, and striving for peace and justice.”

We are an Open and Affirming (“ONA”) church. We affirm the rich complexity of God’s creation, which includes every person and many forms of family. We welcome into our open communion and community God’s beloved children of all ethnicities, nationalities, ages, genders, sexual orientations, physical or mental limitations, economic and family circumstances, and faith backgrounds. We affirm and celebrate all loving and committed relationships. We commit ourselves to the defense of the spiritual, civic, and human rights of all people, and to the promotion of their well being in our Church and communities.