

SAN MARINO CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
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“Never place a period
Where God has placed a comma”

[Gracie Allen]

God is still speaking,

January 27, 2008 – 10:00 a.m.

Third Sunday after Epiphany

For Reflection

“For the message about the cross
Is foolishness to those who are perishing.
But to us who are being saved
It is the power of God.”
(1 Corinthians 1:18)



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

**The asterisk indicates the times when you are invited to stand if the Spirit so moves you.
You are invited to watch the screen up front to increase your participation in worship today.*

PRELUDE & LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

*“Rain Down”

Congregation
Acolyte: Mika Cribbs

*A SONG FOR THE SPIRIT

“Let Justice Roll Like a River”

Congregation

*OPENING PRAYER

Guylaine Bouchard

Good morning, God. You have awakened us and brought us to this sacred House of Prayer. We are here to worship you. Your Name is above all names. You are wonderful! Magnificent! Glorious! Oh, how we love you. Thank you, Great Spirit, for breathing new life into our bodies. Thank you for extending your mercy and encouraging us to love one another. We have come to hear your still speaking voice. We are not here to run away from your world, but to be engaged in your mission. Our spirits are lifted up so we can inspire others to live simply and fully. We are here to proclaim your Good News and to stand as your people, makers of peace and healers of wounds. Come now, O God, and fill us with your Spirit. Hallelujah. Shalom. Salaam. RIGHT ON! Amen.

The congregation may be seated.

A SONG FROM THE HEART

Congregation

“I Sing Praises to Your Name”

OUR COMMON LIFE

A Time to Give

Guylaine Bouchard

A Time to Act

Donald Shenk

A Time to Dedicate Ourselves and Our Gifts

Guylaine Bouchard

All that we bring to your table belongs to you, O God. You are the Great Giver of everything we possess. We return to you only a portion. Bless now these gifts and those who gave. Bless those who were not able to give. Use this offering and your people for your purpose. We dedicate ourselves and our gifts to you. Amen.

TIME WITH OUR CHILDREN

Story

“Who Will You Follow?”

Pastor Cribbs

Our Common Prayer

*Children are welcome to proceed downstairs to their sanctuary at this time
for CHILDREN WORSHIP AND WONDER.
Miss Barbara is available to care for the youngest children.*

CHORAL ANTHEM *“Thy Will Be Done”* Chancel Choir
 Words and Music by Joyce Elaine Eilers

SCRIPTURE READING Matthew 4:12-23 Guylaine Bouchard
New Revised Standard Version

REFLECTION *“Called to Follow”* Pastor Art Cribbs

MUSIC OF THE SPHERES Chip Colvin, Randall Allen & Nathan York

A TIME OF PRAYER

Preparation for Prayer *“God, Fill Me Now”* Congregation
 Prayers of the People Pastor Cribbs

***SENDING HYMN** *“You Have Come down to the Lakeshore”* **NCH #173**
 Congregation – English verses 1 & 2 Gabarain/Chávez-Melo

***BENEDICTION** Pastor Cribbs

***CHANGING OF THE LIGHT** Guylaine Bouchard

***POSTLUDE** Colvin/Allen/York

Everyone is welcome to stay for our
ANNUAL MEETING
 and Potluck Lunch after today’s service!

The Christian Education department has made us aware that the Children Worship and Wonder service continues for 20 to 30 minutes after the service upstairs has concluded. They have requested that, as much as possible, conversations be held at a low volume when exiting through the parking lot or anywhere outside of the Wonder Room on the lower floor. Thank you!

We express a warm welcome to all who have joined us this morning!



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.

Next Sunday † February 3, 2008
10:00 a.m. Morning Worship with Holy Communion
Last Sunday after Epiphany/Transfiguration
“Holy Encounter” by Pastor Art Cribbs
Text: Matthew 17: 1-9 Liturgists: Ross and Allen King

TODAY: **Our Annual Meeting & Potluck**
4pm - Curtis Rhodes in concert at First Congregational Church of Los Angeles (Shatto Chapel), located at 540 S. Commonwealth Avenue, Los Angeles, 90020.

Tuesday: **12:10pm – Curtis Rhodes in concert (see above)**
7pm - SOUL FOOD - in Fireside Room.

Thursday: **7pm - Choir Rehearsal**

Saturday: **6pm in Youth Room – In conjunction with our Extravagant Welcome discussions The Spirit and The Screen will present, “Little Children”. This film deals with extremely mature subject matter and is not suitable for children. It’s a longer film, so we will begin the screening promptly at 6pm so there’s still time for discussion afterwards. You are invited to come at 5:45 to be ready for the start of the film.**

Saturday: **Congregational Vitality event in Ontario.**

Coming Up... Ash Wednesday Service will be held at First Cong. UCC in Pasadena on Wednesday, February 6, 2008, at 7:00pm. Several UCC congregations will participate, including San Marino UCC. Please come!

CRIBBS NOTES

on the Pastor's Message



There has been a whole lot of talk this week about money and peace. Stock markets around the world took major hits in Asia, Europe, and the United States. Some observers say it was the worst, single day drop in prices in decades. At the same time, amid fabricated efforts to bring peace in the Middle East, we witnessed an escalation in violence and soaring death rates. People feel less safe and secure no matter where they are living. By all accounts, it was a difficult week. At some point, someone must ask, "What is going on?"

Quick fix schemes are not the answer even as politicians and financial experts try to lay out plans to address deep, lingering economic problems. Skyrocketing prices for food, gasoline, housing, medicine, healthcare, education, and basic necessities have not been sufficiently addressed. Instead, stockholders demand greater dividends and corporate executives continue to receive extreme compensation packages of more than 1,000 percent of their employees' salaries.

While so-called peace talks were underway in the Middle East, arms sales were brokered and incursions into occupied territories took place along with violent attacks on settlers and innocent civilians in Israel. Refugees in sub-Saharan Africa increased in numbers in Kenya, Somalia, the Congo, and other regions on that continent as civil unrest spread across lands and violated borders. It has been a very painful week.

In the United States, we are not exempt from the brutal force of injustice and broken promises. The lines outside food banks are growing as families with women and children join the ranks of America's homeless poor. At the same time, the working poor are unable to make ends meet although they go to jobs everyday. They too are affected by an economy designed to make the rich richer and the poor poorer. Suffering knows no bounds. It does not discriminate by age, gender, race, or geography. It touches the lives of many people, even those who once knew the comfort of being middle-class. Their lifestyle has eroded.

While government leaders direct resources to wage war on multiple fronts, they have demonstrated a repeated practice of neglecting the needs of people residing in the United States. Rather than delivering aid to elevate life, they prefer to drop bombs and devastate civilizations. Something terribly wrong is happening. Even as we celebrated this past week the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who challenged our society to alter our purpose and change our priorities to enhance life, we make a mockery of his vision and prophetic voice. We sing his praises and go right on doing the exact opposite for what he sacrificed his life.

Children are paying very close attention to the actions of adults who articulate expressions of concern and compassion, but who behave contrary to their platitudes. These are dangerous times in which the inconsistencies of our words and deeds are colliding. Every act of butchery and brutality is preventable and can be avoided. The manufactured and manipulated economic bumps that send prices higher and descend human life into an eddy of worry and disappointment need not take place. Greed and insensitivity direct the motives of those faceless, unnamed personalities who reap cruel personal gains at the expense of mass humanity.

It is into this scenario Jesus calls his people to follow him. He calls us away from comfort and security to follow him on a journey of significance and purpose. We are called to listen carefully to the cries of those who are harmed by domestic and foreign policies. We are called to respond to our sisters and brothers who are near or far away desperately eking a living against the odds. We are called by Jesus to follow him into the Public Square and speak with truth and power to those who ignore God's suffering children.

This is what it means to follow Jesus: to take a stand for justice and righteousness on behalf of persons who have fallen under the grinding shaft of corrupt political and financial machines. Are you willing to follow Jesus? Will you stand up for those whose spirits have been crushed and knocked down? Jesus is calling. How will you answer?

-Pastor Art Cribbs



UCC 2008 Calendar of Prayer: **Called to Follow**



A Just Peace Church, as outlined on the UCC website, is a hallmark of United Church of Christ theological identity. For two decades, the Just Peace Church program has been a grass roots movement of UCC congregations committed to corporately naming and boldly proclaiming a public identity as a justice-doing, peace-seeking church.

The General Synod defined "just peace" as the interrelation of friendship, justice and common security from violence. The pronouncement called the church to a vision of shalom

rooted in peace with justice and placed the UCC General Synod in opposition to the institution of war.

Over the years, the Just Peace Church identity has become an important symbol for many of our congregations, as both a means of shaping congregational identity and as a theological framework for doing justice-based theological reflection.

For many Just Peace congregations, this identity has helped to underscore their ministries of direct service, legislative advocacy and courageous witness. Churches strengthened their multiracial, multi-cultural witness or developed neighborhood ministries. Being a Just Peace Church has also inspired some congregations to become "Open and Affirming" or "Whole Earth" churches.

In this season after the Epiphany, we pray for a world where there can be peace, acceptance and love.

Centering Prayer: God of blazing light, through the power of the cross you shattered our darkness, scattering the fears that bind us and setting us free to live as your children. Give us courage and conviction that we may joyfully turn and follow you into new adventures of faithful service, led by the light that shines through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

2008 Nominating Committee Report

CHURCH OFFICERS

Moderator.....Connie James-Gililand
 Vice Moderator
 Treasure.....Scott Cameron
 Clerk.....Susan Jakubowski-Weiner
 Historian.....Virginia Lashley
 Financial Secretary.....Dick Lashley
 Past Moderator.....Holly Ann Burns

CHURCH BOARDS (*Chair pending approval by Boards and Committees at their first meeting*)

Board of Deacons

Daryl Burns Holly Ann Burns Liz Cameron Cathy Burkdoll Ross King Bret Naylor
 Tanya Samuel Warren Scherffius John Stanley Sue Cook Vivi Oldknow

Deacon's Subcommittees

Social: Vivienne Oldknow, Cathy Burkdoll, Charlotte Cunz, Jeannette Guluzian

Mission & Social Outreach: Holly Ann Burns, Connie James-Gililand, Vivi Oldknow

Evangelism & Growth: Daryl Burns, Warren Scherffius, Ross King

Theatre Advisory Board: Daryl Burns, Warren Scherffius, Cathy Kotowski,
 Holly Ann Burns, Donald Shenk, Kim Van Horsen, Connie James-Gililand

Board of Christian Education

Staff: Rev. Cathy Kotowski (staff) Michelle Naylor Jacqui Cunz
 Marcia Albrecht Kimberly Van Horsen Jacqueline Benton Ross King

Board of Trustees

David Crist Daryl Burns Holly Ann Burns
 Scott Cameron Dave Van Horsen

Trustee's Subcommittees

Building & Grounds: Holly Ann Burns, Kris Cunz, Vivi Oldknow, Donald Shenk, K.D. Henderson

Personnel: Not an elected committee

Pastoral Relations: Not an elected committee

All Boards and Committees are encouraged to meet before the first Church Council meeting of 2008.

DELEGATES TO CONFERENCE AND ASSOCIATION MEETINGS

Lay Representatives: _____, _____, _____

Ministerial Representatives: Pastor Art Cribbs Rev. Jeff Utter Rev. Susan Garett
 Rev. Sharon Whittle Rev. David Harder

*Respectfully submitted by the Nominating Committee: Connie James-Gililand,
 Kimberly Van Horsen, Pastor Art Cribbs*

CHURCH OFFICERS

**PLEASE SEE SLATE ON
 PAGE 9.
 NEW OFFICERS TO BE ELECTED
 AT THE ANNUAL MEETING
 TODAY.**

STAFF

Pastor.....Art Cribbs
 Pastoral Assistant, Director of Music/Theatre..... Donald Shenk
 Preschool Director.....Connie James-Gililand
 Accompanist.....Chip Colvin
 Guitarists.....Randall Allen & Nathan York
 Section Leaders.....Sarah Parnicky (Sop); Alexandra Loutsion (Mez)
 Guylaine Bouchard (alto); Andrew Martinez (ten)
 Director of Christian Education.....Cathy Kotowski
 Childcare Provider.....Barbara Sanchez
 Ceremony Coordinator.....Donald Shenk
 Sound Technician.....Eric Stimes
 Usher Coordinator.....John Stanley
 Webperson.....Holly Ann Burns
 Interim Conference Ministers.....Revs. Jane Hoffman & 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.