

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

(626) 292-2080

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



March 7, 2010 – 10:00 a.m.

All God's Family Sunday

3rd Sunday in Lent

For Reflection (provided by Pastor Art Cribbs)

“If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, pray, seek my face,
and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sins
And will heal their land.” (II Chronicles 7:14)

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

WELCOME

Rev. Anne Cohen, Guest Minister

***SONGS FOR THE SPIRIT**

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

***OPENING PRAYER**

Peter Van Horsen & Daryl Burns

Peter: Draw near to God and God will draw near to you.

People: We come before God with praise and thanksgiving.

Daryl: God is calling you over the tumult of life's wild restless sea.

People: We will open our ears and our hearts that we may hear God's call.

All: Praise be to God!

The Congregation may be seated as the choir comes forward.

A SONG FOR YOUR HEART

“1 Saw a Tree by the Riverside”

All God's Family Choir

By Ken Medema

TIME WITH OUR CHILDREN

“What Good is a Moose?”

Scott Cameron

MUSIC TO BLESS THE CHILDREN

“Children, Welcome”

***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

1 Corinthians 10:1-13

Daryl Burns

A SONG FOR LENT

“Into the Garden”

The United Voices

Words and Arrangement by Douglas Nolan, Music by Peter Lutkin

REFLECTIONS

“The Rock of Communion”

Rev. Anne Cohen, Guest Minister

A TIME FOR PRAYER

“Come Bring Your Burdens to God”

Prayer time led by Rev. Cohen

SERVICE OF COMMUNION

We Commemorate *“Let Us Be Bread”*; 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

“We Will Magnify Thee” – Samuel Ortiz, Soloist

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

Daryl Burns

A TIME TO ACT

Donald Shenk

A TIME TO DEDICATE OURSELVES & OUR GIFTS

Peter Van Horsen

Generous God,
we have received from you more than our share of blessings.
We thank you.
Now increase and multiply our gifts, we pray,
that others may feast of your goodness through our witness. Amen.

SENDING HYMN

“We Shall Not Give Up the Fight” (#437)

A song for Amistad Sunday

Congregation

***BENEDICTION**

Rev. Cohen

***CHANGING OF THE LIGHT**

Peter Van Horsen

***GOING FORTH**

Instrumentalists

Everyone is welcome next door for the Social Time.

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.



One of the most recurring experiences I have had since moving here in 2007 has been people walking up to me and saying, “I didn’t know there was a progressive church in San Marino.”

Well, yes, there is and it has been around for a pretty long time. In fact, it is part of a progressive religious movement that dates back at least to the founding of the United States of America. Our denominational ancestors were among the signers of the Declaration of Independence. They stood in defense of African men and women who were held in bondage aboard the Spanish slave vessel, La Amistad. Many years later, Steven

Spielberg and Debbie Allen directed and produced a motion picture about the ordeal in which New England Congregationalists hired former United States President John Quincy Adams to represent the captives before the United States Supreme Court. They won their case and their freedom with help from those progressive church members.

The Congregational Church is not monolithic. It does not operate based on dogma. In the best tradition of progressive thought, it does not require its members to agree on creed, theology, or faith practices. We welcome diversity and encourage questions without the assurance of complete answers.

We believe life is a journey and our quest to know more about God is a life-long exercise.

The San Marino Congregational Church voted to join an exciting and very progressive merger of four Protestant denominations in 1957, thus forming the United Church of Christ.

Can you imagine groups of German Evangelicals finding common ground with Anglo Congregationalists following World War I and World War II? At the same time, amid the racial divide that nearly defined social life in America, White folk in the North forged strong and lasting alliances with Black people in the South, as the Southern Convention of the Christian Congregational Church was welcomed to the table where the formation of the UCC took place.

We are part of a storied tradition of challenging the status quo, questioning authority, and standing on the side of justice. Sometimes we get it wrong. Always we risk putting our lives and reputation on the line if it means being in solidarity with the poor, vulnerable, and persons who suffer.

As progressive Christians, we believe Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church. We are humbled by his human example of humility and reverence before God. We realize the Creator loves the whole world and exists beyond our reasonable imagination. God speaks to every person in ways that are clearly understood and through many traditions, voices and faith settings.

There are three mottos that inform our understanding in the United Church of Christ. The first, "That they may all be one," comes from Jesus' prayer found in John 17:21, in which he focuses on unity among the divergent members of his movement. That is who we are: a people of various backgrounds who come together with integrity and compassion for others. We step out of our boundaries to share in the spiritual journeys of people whose valid and valuable cultures, traditions and histories are quite different from us. Yet, we seek to be one; united.

The second motto, "Don't place a period where God has put a comma: God is still speaking," pushes us to consider the possibilities of conversations with God that resemble the prophetic instructions given to ancient faith leaders and the people of God. Even today, God's voice can be heard in quiet moments and with the stillness of our very busy bodies. God continues to talk to us; remains concerned about human behavior; and, intervenes in human history.

The protracted struggle to recognize the Image of God in all persons leads to the third motto that reflects a progressive perspective on human dignity. "No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here," is a statement that invites, welcomes, and receives everybody into the Household of God. That message is not only progressive; it is extreme and extends radical hospitality to everyone, including the despicable and outcast. The "unlovable" are told, here is a place where love abounds even for them.

To have such a church in our midst is an unexpected, special gift. We are not a perfect people, but we offer ourselves as a community that is open and affirming of all people who desire to experience God. We are not spectators of life. We are encouraged to live fully, boldly, and cheerfully. Our purpose is to have "courage in the struggle for justice and peace" and for others to be surprised by the joy of love, mercy, and grace.

You are invited to become a part of this progressive faith community where we are reminded to be unafraid, unashamed, and unapologetic about who we are and what God requires of us.

-Pastor Art Cribbs

What's Happening...

- **TODAY: HAVE A LITTLE TEA WITH US**, a Scripture social group, will meet in the StillSpeaking Theater following worship today. This is an opportunity to sip tea and discuss the story of Gideon as found in Judges 6 & 7. Come to the table to relax, be refreshed, and reflect on the Text to explore and discover connections.
- **TUES. 7pm – SOUL FOOD** will meet in the Green Room downstairs. (On Call for Bad Weather Shelter – please see David Crist if you're interested in volunteering.)
- **WEDS. 7pm – TRUSTEES** meet in the Green Room.
- **THURS. 7pm – THE UNITED VOICES** will rehearse in the sanctuary.
- **SAT. DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME BEGINS AT MIDNIGHT!**
Spring forward an hour.



NEXT SUNDAY:

Rev. Gene Boutilier will be preaching, and our **One Great Hour of Sharing** offering will be received. The Theatre Advisory Board will meet at Connie's house after worship.

Pastor Art Cribbs is currently on vacation, and will return to the pulpit on March 28th. If you have need of pastoral care during this time, please call the church office at (626) 292-2080 and you will be put in touch with the pastor-on-call.