

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,

April 6, 2008 – 10:00 a.m.

Third Sunday of Easter

For Reflection

“We must obey God rather than
any human authority.”
(Acts 5:29b NRSV)

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.*

GATHERING MUSIC

“Take This Moment”
Choral Music by John L. Bell

The Cathedral Singers
Recorded in 2000

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

*“Hamba, Nathi”

Congregation
Acolyte: Mika Cribbs

***A SONG FOR THE SPIRIT**

“You Are Holy”

Congregation

***OPENING PRAYER**

Liz Cameron

Good morning, God. We greet you with words of praise and glory. Thank you for waking us up and giving us enough energy to come into your house. You have provided everything we need. You threw in a few extra things to make life more meaningful, fun, and a chance for us to grow. Help us this morning to appreciate all you do. Help us right now to be more aware of all your people throughout your world. Inspire us to be peaceful. Create within us a spirit of kindness, forgiveness, and love toward all living things. We want to make this a good day for you, O God, by following Your Son, Jesus. We pray our lives will bring you joy. Lead us now as we enter into worship. We are mindful of you. Give us courage to be obedient to your Word, and to live without apology for being human as you have made us; and without shame for striving to be faithful. Hallelujah. Shalom. Salaam. RIGHT ON! Amen.

***A SONG FROM THE HEART**

Congregation

“Come to Me, Come to Us”

The congregation may be seated.

TIME WITH OUR CHILDREN

Story

“Where Is Jesus?”

Pastor Art Cribbs

Our Common Prayer and Music to Bless the Children

Children are invited to stay in worship upstairs today. Childcare for the youngest among us is available with trained childcare provider, Mrs. Barbara Sanchez

OUR COMMON LIFE

A Time to Give

Liz Cameron

A Time to Act

Donald Shenk

A Time to Dedicate Ourselves and Our Gifts Liz Cameron
We bring before you, O God, the fruits of our labor and gifts from your bounty. Receive each one as an expression of our love for you. You have provided so generously. Thank you for giving freely. As we dedicate our lives to you, direct our path and guide our steps. Let our gifts be sources of blessings through ministry and service. Amen.

CHORAL ANTHEM "Sanctus" Chancel Choir
 by David Lantz III Violinist: Laurie Niles

SCRIPTURE READING Luke 24:13-35 Liz Cameron

REFLECTIONS "Risen Indeed" Pastor Art Cribbs

COMMUNION HYMN NCH # 336
 "Here, O My Lord, I See You Face to Face" Congregation
 Verses 1, 2 and 3 only

WORDS OF INSTITUTION Pastor Cribbs

SHARING OF THE BREAD AND CUP

*All are invited to the communion table.
 If it is best that you be served in your seat,
 please let an usher know, and a Deacon will serve you.*

MUSIC FOR COMMUNION Chip Colvin, Randall Allen & Nathan York

UNISON PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING Pastor Cribbs

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.

TIME OF PRAYER
 Preparation for Prayer "God, Fill Me Now" Congregation
 Prayers of the People Pastor Cribbs

***SENDING HYMN** "Sun of My Soul, O Savior Dear" NCH #96
 Congregation McFarland/Alford

***BENEDICTION** Pastor Cribbs

***CHANGING OF THE LIGHT** Liz Cameron

***GOING FORTH** "Sent Forth by God's Blessing" NCH #76
 words on screen Congregation

Everyone is welcome to have some coffee and conversation next door after the service. Thanks to Sue & Jim Cook for setting the table for us today!



Please plan on staying after the worship service for our WORK DAY! We need 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.

Tuesday: 7:00 pm - SOUL FOOD will convene in Fireside Room.
Thursday: 7:00 pm - Choir Rehearsal in sanctuary
Friday: 8pm – PREMIERE performance of The Runner Stumbles Get your tickets NOW at: www.stillspeakingtheatre.org
Saturday 8pm – The Runner Stumbles The Stillspeaking Theatre
Sunday 9am-- Board of C.E. meets in Art Room 11:30am-- Deacons meet in Green Room

CRIBBS NOTES

on the Pastor's Message



In this Easter Season, what are we to make of the story that defines our faith in Jesus as Christ? Do we really believe he came back to life as the Scriptures describe?

There are many activities that consume our time and money. They have nothing to do with our faith, yet we spend so much of our lives engaged in things that leave us empty. Why?

When Jesus' followers experienced his return from death, they were frightened. They thought he was a ghost. Their fears quickly turned to astonishment, wonder and joy. They were nearly paralyzed by his appearance among them.

Cleopas and his companion did not recognize Jesus as they walked along the road to Emmaus from Jerusalem. Their hearts were broken and they were overcome with grief after the horrible events that ended with Jesus' crucifixion on the cross. They remained saddened even after the women had told them Jesus was alive. It was too hard to believe; so, they walked the seven miles back to their home deeply hurt and broken.

When Jesus met them on the road, he asked Cleopas and his companion why were they so sad. They explained what had happened to Jesus in Jerusalem. Then, still unrecognized by them, Jesus walked with them and talked about how the prophets and Scriptures foretold his death and resurrection.

What does all of that have to do with us today?

Jesus instructed those who believed in him to preach a message of "repentance and forgiveness... to all nations." That is what we must do today. We live everyday as the Body of Christ. As much as in any time in history, there is a great need for the world to know the importance of repentance and forgiveness.

It is not easy to recognize Christ in the world today. Often we are blinded from seeing the presence of goodness and mercy. We are encouraged to act in ways that demean other human beings and put the Earth at risk. Our behavior does not always represent our calling as people of God. So, we have to be reminded again about what it means to accept the cost of discipleship and bear the cross. We have to think seriously about why we have taken steps to become Christians.

There is a great need for repentance. There is a tremendous need for forgiveness. We are called to tell the truth for the purpose of helping each other have sufficient courage to stop what we are doing and turn our lives toward God. That means we have to ask difficult questions of ourselves and determine which path we will follow. At the same time, we are required to see Christ in the faces of everyone we meet. We must look in the mirror and see our authentic self and realize our own need to be forgiven.

If there are children close to us, we can discover new ways to help establish a meaningful relationship with them that inspires them to want to live without fear. When elders surround us, we can provide a loving presence that affirms their worth and appreciate their wisdom. Repentance gives us space to move in a new direction that elevates the quality of life. Forgiveness makes it possible for us to care about each other and enjoy the human experience.

Jesus gives us a model of how to be together in community. He pushes us to think of others instead of limiting ourselves to selfish motives. Jesus brings love to the world as a special gift from God. We are invited to receive the amazing generosity of divine presence and proclaim aloud the free, extravagant grace that brings new possibilities to all of us. This is the Easter Season. Jesus lives and wants us to live fully without fear.

-Pastor Art Cribbs

Next Sunday † April 13, 2008

10:00 a.m. Morning Worship

Fourth Sunday of

Easter

**We will be providing a neutral pulpit for
The Church of the Lighted Window as they seek their next pastor.
The Reverend Steve Fietz will be preaching for us**

on the topic, "A Full Life."
Liturgist: Charlotte Cunz

From the UCC Calendar of Prayer
for April 6, 2008

A Centering Prayer:

Elusive God, companion on the way, you walk behind, beside, beyond; you catch us unawares. Break through the disillusionment and despair clouding our vision, that, with wide-eyed wonder, we may find our way and journey on as messengers of your good news. Amen

There's a new professional theatre in San Marino!

The Runner Stumbles
Based On A True Story by Milan Stitt

A nun is dead, a priest is imprisoned, and TRUTH is on trial.

Stillspeaking
theatre

APRIL 11 - MAY 4, 2008

2560 Huntington Drive, San Marino
(where Del Mar meets Winston)
(626) 292-2081 ext. 7

Advance Tickets at:
www.stillspeakingtheatre.org

Want to see the show for FREE? See Cathy Kotowski, Connie James-Gililand, Kim Van Horsen, Warren Scherffius, Daryl Burns or Holly Burns to find out HOW!

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uch has been said about the United Church of Christ in recent weeks, much of it hurtful for many in our country, including members of Trinity UCC in Chicago. That is why we are eager to share the broad and diverse story of the United Church of Christ, one that we celebrate.

With all Christians, we rest in God's amazing grace and hear God's voice in the words of Scripture. Yet, the UCC is unique to some because we do not require uniformity of belief. We are a church of open ideas,

extravagant welcome and evangelical courage. Our passion for democracy extends to both government and church, where decision-making rests within each congregation. We support liberty in our pulpits, just as we affirm the individual conscience of our 1.2-million members to agree, disagree and wrestle with life's biggest questions in a spirit of love.

Our story is this nation's story. We are the people of the Mayflower. More than 600 of our 5,700 congregations were formed before 1776. Eleven signers of the Declaration of Independence were members of UCC predecessor bodies.

As early abolitionists, we came to the aid of the Amistad captives and founded hundreds of schools across the South after the Civil War. We were the first mainline church to ordain an African-American (1785), a woman (1853) and an openly gay pastor (1972). We were also the first to form a foreign mission society (1810). Our multi-ethnic membership includes persons from every immigrant group, as well as native peoples and descendants of freed slaves.

Our unity is not dependent upon uniform agreement, but in our shared allegiance to Jesus Christ. Ours is a risk-taking church, because ours is a risk-taking God.

God Is still speaking, *

Find your church. Find yourself.
UCC.ORG

**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**

