

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,

April 13, 2008 – 10:00 a.m.

Fourth Sunday of Easter

For Reflection
“The thief comes only to steal and
kill and destroy.
I came that they may have life,
and have it abundantly.”
(Jesus – John 10:10)

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” The Cathedral Singers
Choral Music by John L. Bell Recorded in 2000

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES Congregation
*“Hamba, Nathi” Acolyte: Mika Cribbs

***A SONG FOR THE SPIRIT** “You Are Holy” Congregation

***OPENING PRAYER**

Charlotte Cunz

Good morning, loving God. Your Name is above all names. You are magnificent, wonderful, and holy. Thank you for this new day, a day we have never known. Thank you for this time of worship when we call out your Name with confidence you are with us. We bow humbly before you because you are God; you are our God and there is no other god but you! Have mercy on us for our mistakes. Forgive us for our silence and complicity. Give us courage to stand up and speak out for justice, peace, truth, and righteousness. Give us courage so we will not be afraid to honor you. We are here, O God, to give you praise; to seek your ear; and to offer our lives in your service. Thank you for Jesus who gave his life so we can live. Come now into this place with your still speaking voice. Your children are listening. 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 “Celebrate Life!” Pastor Art Cribbs

Our Common Prayer and Music to Bless the Children

Children are invited to process to Children Worship & Wonder. Childcare for the youngest among us is available with trained childcare provider, Mrs. Barbara Sanchez.

OUR COMMON LIFE

A Time to Give Charlotte Cunz

A Time to Act Donald Shenk

one who nurtures and nourishes her flock. Mother as the good shepherd is clearly a more accurate image of the one who stays, provides, and protects her sheep. She sets the table and makes sure there is plenty for everyone.

Here, the image shifts to one who hosts a feast and attends to the needs of her guests. It may remind us of Martha, Mary's sister, who insists on properly preparing to serve visitors and strangers. She toils in the kitchen while Mary sits at Jesus' feet. Martha scolds Mary for failing to complete her responsibilities as a good hostess; one who provides hospitality.

For those of us who reside in a nation that is affluent and holds an abundant array of goods and wares, it may be difficult to imagine life less satisfying. Although our history includes the Great Depression and the Dust Bowl of Oklahoma, too many of us have either forgotten those hard-scrambled days or were not born during that era. Others of us may have escaped the wretched uncertainty of a next meal or an insufficient paycheck. We just don't know what it is like to lack food, water, and comfort. Still, there may be some among us who have a tremendous fear of losing our possessions or experiencing the harshness of poverty and dependency.

It is ironic Psalm 23 is believed to have been written by David, the second king of Israel, who had wealth and power. Yet, he suffered a depth of despair and anguish that required him to cry out to God. Only God could give him comfort, peace, and a sense of well being. Only God is the Good Shepherd who carried him safely to still waters, green pastures, and 'through the valley of the shadow of death.' The king who 'had it all' still needed the salvation only God could provide.

How do you read this Scripture? Does it speak to you or for you? Who is the shepherd?

While difficult moments can send us to our knees, there is never a time when we do not need the Good Shepherd. The psalmist says, "You are with me." Only a delusional person thinks s/he can make it through life alone without help. We need one another and all of us need God.

40 days of Lent begins a period of meditation that leads to the Cross. 40 days of preparation follows Christ's Resurrection and 10 more days of waiting comes after his Ascension. There is uncertainty, fear, disappointment and grief that fill the human soul throughout this sacred period that defines the Christian faith.

This is a time when Psalm 23 has particular meaning. It is a prayer of assurance amid anticipation, expectation, and anxiety. Only the Good Shepherd can bring us to that moment of promise when "God restores my soul and leads me in right paths for the sake of God's name."

Now is when we learn to know life as abundant through Jesus, our Christ. "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of God my whole life long." Amen.

-Pastor Art Cribbs

Next Sunday † April 20, 2008

10:00 a.m. Morning Worship

Fifth Sunday of Easter

Pastor Art Cribbs will preach on "Spirited Love" based on John

14:15-21

Liturgist: Daryl Burns

Mission Moment

Vision of Unity

Shortly before Jesus was arrested, he prayed for unity among believers, "that they may all be one." His prayer stated an ideal evident in the very creation of the United Church of Christ. In 1957, two Protestant denominations came together to form this new denomination. Ever since, people from various backgrounds have expanded the UCC's story—either as members, as new congregations, or as partners in ministry and mission. As many become one, there are more and more stories within the story. A UCC congregation might attract new members who are joining a church for the first time, who are standing next to others raised in Catholicism, who are standing alongside others who have been part of a very different Protestant expression. Diversity in religious background is part of the UCC story! The UCC is welcoming many Filipino, Marshallese and Samoan members into some of our fastest-

growing churches. Cultural diversity is part of the UCC story! And in the UCC's Christian partnerships, we stand together with faithful sisters and brothers who practice a variety of traditions. Through Churches Uniting in Christ we are in relationship with eight other faith communions. Uniting with other Christian churches is part of the UCC story. Jesus' words, "that they may all be one" (John 17:21) are the motto of the United Church of Christ. Your gifts to Our Church's Wider Mission help support the ecumenical and interfaith work—so critical in today's world—of the United Church of Christ.

April 2008
God is still speaking,


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!

