

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](mailto:smccucc@sanmarinoucc.org) Website: [www.sanmarinoucc.org](http://www.sanmarinoucc.org)



“Never place a period  
Where God has placed a comma”  
[Gracie Allen]

**God is still speaking,**

May 4, 2008 – 10:00 a.m.

Seventh Sunday of Easter

### *For Reflection*

Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal  
that is taking place among you to test you,  
as though something strange were happening to you.  
But rejoice in so far as you are sharing Christ’s sufferings,  
so that you may also be glad and shout for joy  
when his glory is revealed.  
If you are reviled for the name of Christ,  
you are blessed, because the spirit of glory,  
which is the Spirit of God, is resting on you.  
(1 Peter 4:12-14)

*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

“Simple Gifts”  
*Music for Solo Guitar*

Christopher Parkening  
*EMI/Angel recording*

### \*LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

“This Little Light of Mine”

Congregation  
Acolyte: Faith Van Horsen

### \*A SONG FOR THE SPIRIT

“Let Justice Roll Like a River”

Congregation

### \*OPENING PRAYER

Kim and Peter Van Horsen

Good morning, Loving God. Holy is your Name. Magnificent are your ways. We have come back to this sacred place to praise and honor you. Thank you for waking us up and opening our eyes to a new day. Thank you for stirring our souls and gently nudging us to get started. So, here we are. We are not perfect but we are striving to do our best. We are not alone for you are with us. We are not alone because throughout your world, sisters and brothers are praying with us. There is plenty of work to do. People are sick and need to be healed. People are hungry and need to be fed. People are afraid and they seek peace, friendship and comfort. We do not ask you to do everything. You trust us to be faithful, obedient, and in solidarity with your people. Today, O God, inspire our imagination and give us courage to stand with the poor and give voice to those who suffer. We sing praises to your name. Hallelujah. Shalom. Salaam. Amen.

### \*A SONG FROM THE HEART

“Come to Me, Come to Us”

Congregation

*The congregation may be seated.*

### OUR COMMON LIFE

A Time to Give

Kim Van Horsen

A Time to Act

Donald Shenk

A Time to Dedicate Ourselves and Our Gifts

Peter Van Horsen

**We bring our gifts, our tithes and our offerings to your altar. Thank you for blessing us so generously. Thank you for making it possible for us to give. Receive your money and use it in the ministries of this church and the United Church of Christ in service to your people. We dedicate ourselves and our gifts to you. Amen.**

### CHORAL ANTHEM

“Soon Ah Will Be Done”  
by William L. Dawson

Chancel Choir



The mild attempt to cover up the scars of abuse, neglect, ignorance, and jaded illusions about racial tolerance has been unmasked. It is happening because a Black man is a viable candidate for president of the United States of America.

Clever people who have control of the media are very busy manufacturing storylines and dishing out perspectives with precision to create a particular social drama. In the past, the tactic was to find someone for a scapegoat and blame him for the discomfort and ills of society. One person was murdered by mobs raging against sanity and lynching the innocent unfortunate. With prodding and persistence, in very little time madness brewed a deadly atmosphere. That is where we are heading now once again in America.

It has been a very difficult week as anger and accusations flew wildly across television screens, on radio stations, and over the Internet. Fears were tapped as has been done too many times before as a means to manipulate the public. The unfinished business of America continues to hold sway. When there is doubt about what to do, the most reliable tactic to bring a situation under the control of a few is to raise the issue of racial tension.

Our ignorance about each other in this 'melting pot' makes it so very easy to produce and disseminate half-truths, distorted messages, and home-spun stereotypes about people we don't know. It is easy to get us excited and afraid to confront real issues affecting our lives. Our minds do not think beyond the convenience of simple, soft-fed lies and false impressions. Too many believe what is said. Too many take the message and run with it.

Also this week, oil companies announced profits that exceeded 60 percent as gasoline prices continued to soar. The U.S. Supreme Court said it is okay to deny citizens their right to vote if they don't have specific identification cards. While the argument was that the court intended to guard against voter fraud, the reality is most people in America don't vote. Less than half actually go to the polls. A bloc of less than 20 percent of the population can determine the outcome of a national election. Common sense in a democracy would suggest the focus should be on how to get more people involved in the most elemental aspect of a democratic society rather than conceiving new ways to keep people away and give an advantage to the ruling party.

So it goes this week in America. Complaints from anyone who feels the pinch of injustice are not acceptable and don't want to be heard by people living comfortable lives away from the fray. The Supreme Court also ruled this week

that workers who are not fairly compensated for their labors have very limited protection and must file their charges against the offender within 180 days of the act of discrimination. It does not matter that such knowledge too often can't be known until long after the offense has occurred.

Imagine how Jesus felt as he prayed for his disciples just before he was led to the cross. Consider the depth of his agony as he realized there was very little sympathy for those who were oppressed. Think about his pain as he knew the poor would not be cared for with compassion. "No justice/No peace!" was a cry that spread across America a decade or so ago. This week, echoes of that chant could be heard from the echelons of national government to the back alleys littered with forgotten homeless souls who have long ago been removed from the rolls of general assistance, workman's compensation, and payrolls. It's been quite a week in America. So, what do we pray for and to whom?

-Pastor Art Cribbs

**Next Sunday † May 11, 2008**

**10:00 a.m. Morning Worship**

**Pentecost Sunday/Mother's**

**Day**

**Our Interim Conference Minister, the Rev. Dr. Jane Fisler Hoffman  
will be delivering a special message for this very special day.**

**Liturgist: Ross King**

**A NATIONAL CONVERSATION ON RACE IN AMERICA** will be the focus on Sunday, May 18, 2008, here at San Marino Congregational UCC. Following morning worship, we will show the interview between journalist Bill Moyers and the Rev. Dr. Jeremiah A. Wright, former pastor of Trinity UCC in Chicago. A panel discussion on race will follow the video.

**SPIRIT AND THE SCREEN is set for Saturday, May 24 at 7pm in The Stillspeaking Theatre with a program of short films – fun for the whole family! Mark your calendars and join the fun.**

**A "CAMPERSHIP" CHALLENGE....**

Priscilla and Phil Geissal, your resident Directors at Pilgrim Pines Camp, have asked the members of our congregation to participate in a challenge to provide



special funds for “camperships” for people of all ages and abilities to attend camp at Pilgrim Pines this year.

Priscilla has challenged each family to contribute just the cost of one bottle of water at our local airports (\$3). The Geissals started the challenge by contributing the value of 200 bottles (\$600) themselves. We cannot all do that; however, as Priscilla has said, “Just the cost of one bottle of water **collectively** this week could make a **huge** difference in the lives of children and families who might not otherwise be able to attend camp.”

Pilgrim Pines Camp offers a unique camping experience not found anywhere else in the entire country. Your \$3 donation could make the difference! The Geissals, the Staff at Pilgrim Pines and all the Campers thank you for your consideration.



#### UCC Calendar of Prayer: **COMMUNITY OF PRAYER**

At Edwards UCC in Davenport, IA, we don't just DO mission. We believe that the church IS God's mission to the world. In everything we do, we seek to reach outside the walls of the church to help to care for the world and the people who are so loved by God. We serve meals each month at the Salvation Army and at the East Moline Meal Site of Churches United. We hold a Blood Drive three times a year. We collect food for the food pantries. We participate with Habitat for Humanity throughout the building season every year. We collect school supplies for needy children, send medical supplies to Ecuador, and invite donations of coats and mittens for children every winter.

We fill to overflowing more than 25 Thanksgiving Baskets each year. And that is just the beginning! Edwards UCC is a community of generosity and caring.

#### **Centering Prayer:**

*O God of glory, your son Jesus Christ suffered for us and ascended to your right hand. Unite us with Christ and each other, in suffering and in joy, that all your children may be drawn into your bountiful dwelling. Amen*

#### **Mission Moment:**

#### ***A moment from our “early” history – 1959...***

While the United Church of Christ is descended from four churches that go back several centuries, we're also celebrating our 50th anniversary as a denomination this year, making us both old and new at the same time. But in all times, our church has strived to be true to the gospel call to love, compassion, and justice. In the United Church of Christ, our General Synod speaks “to” our local congregations and their members, not “for” them. One of its first pronouncements was the 1959 “Call to Christian Action in Society” – “an attempt to discover what the Lord requires of us today.” Nearly 50 years later, it still speaks to the culture in which we live. “In the midst of...abundance, we are beset by much that is trivial, dehumanizing, and vulgar,” it reads. “We are tempted to love things and use people, when we should love people and use things.” How reminiscent this is of the prophet Micah's words, reminding the people of ancient Israel, and us today, of God's expectation that we “do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with our God.” The Call is part of the history of our church – preserved in volume seven of *Living Theological Heritage*, a memory bank of UCC traditions old and recent, published by The Pilgrim Press, our denominational printing house, which is also historic. When the Pilgrims came to these shores, they carried the first printing press, and we publish today in a direct line from that fine tradition.

*The United Church of Christ General Synod and the Pilgrim Press (of Local Church Ministries) are both supported by your faithful generosity to Our Church's Wider Mission.*

**May 2008**

**God is still speaking,**

