

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,

July 22, 2007 – 10:00 a.m. 16th Sunday in Ordinary Time

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

For Reflection

“But I am like a green olive tree
in the house of God.
I trust in the steadfast love of God
forever and ever.”
(Psalm 52:8)



Picture of an olive tree from www.apostolicbiblestudy.com

**The asterisk indicates the times when you are invited to stand if the Spirit so moves you.*

WE GATHER

PIANO PRELUDE
WELCOME & OUR COMMON LIFE

Chip Colvin
Scott Cameron

WE WORSHIP GOD

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

Music by Dylan Gentile

Acolyte: Allen King

*OPENING PRAYER (unison)

Scott Cameron

Here we are, O God, your people are gathered to listen for your Word. It has been a long week and we need to be encouraged to do your will. So, we have come to feel your Spirit and know your Truth. We bow humbly before you. We submit ourselves to you. Come now, O God, and speak to your people. Thank you for your love and mercy. Thank you for restoring us back to you. Forgive us for our mistakes. Touch us and make us whole. Speak, O God, for we are listening. Amen.

*OPENING HYMN

“I Must Tell Jesus”
Congregation

NCH #486
Hoffman

The congregation may be seated.

TIME WITH OUR CHILDREN

Offering *(the children’s plate is passed to collect their offerings)*

Story “A Time to Listen or A Time to Work” Pastor Art Cribbs

Our Common Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

All children are invited to process to their summer session at this time.

Music to Bless the Children

“Children Welcome”
Edwards, arr. Fitch

Refrain: **Children welcome in the name of Jesus.
Children welcome in the name of love.
All are welcome in the name of Jesus.
All are welcome in the name of love.**

**Children offer us gifts for living, with hearts opened wide, clear eyes to see,
Minds full of wonder, hands full of helping, joy as we follow where they lead.**

WE OFFER OUR GIFTS

Call for the Offering

Scott Cameron

Offertory

Chip Colvin

*Congregational Response

NCH #780
Ken/Bourgeois

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Christ, all creatures here below;
Praise Holy Spirit, Comforter;
One God, Triune, whom we adore. Amen**

*Dedication of Ourselves and Our Gifts (unison)

Scott Cameron

Receive these gifts we have brought to your sanctuary. From your bounty we have freely received. To your ministry we freely give. Accept our offering, O God, as they are presented to you. Bless and multiply these gifts so your ministry will go forth into your world. Now, O God, we ask you to receive and accept us as your people, dedicated to serve as we have been called by you. Amen.

The congregation may be seated.

WE EXPERIENCE THE WORD

SUMMERSONG

Music by Dylan Gentile

SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 10:38-42

Scott Cameron

New Revised Standard Version

Pew Bible page 87

REFLECTIONS

“Faithful Listeners”

Pastor Cribbs

WE RESPOND WITH OUR PRAYERS

A TIME OF PRAYER

Preparation for Prayer

“God, Fill Me Now”

Congregation

**God, fill me now, fill me with your Holy Spirit.
You give me life, and you draw me to your presence.
Here before you now; see, my hands are empty.
God, fill me now with you.**

Prayers of the People

Pastor Cribbs

***SENDING HYMN**

“I’ve Got Peace Like a River”
Congregation

NCH #478
African-American spiritual

***BENEDICTION**

Pastor Cribbs

***POSTLUDE/CHANGING OF THE LIGHT**

Chip Colvin/Scott Cameron

*The flowers on the altar today are donated by
Raj and Lalitha Samuel and are given in thanks for Pradeep’s recovery.*

**Everyone is welcome to enjoy food, beverages
and conversation in Crist Hall following the service.
Thanks to Liz Cameron for providing our refreshments today!**

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.

VISITORS: 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 the exciting things happening here!



Have you ever had an experience that you didn't want to end? A delicious meal? A wonderful conversation? A dear friend who dropped by after a long absence? There is something about the quality of a great moment that makes us want to extend it beyond its temporary reality. Sometimes we try to replicate the event only to discover there is nothing like the first time. The true, authentic, singular occurrence has no double. We become absorbed by the rush and excitement created in a flash of surprising joy.

We cherish those times that capture our heart and soul. Often, they are filled with small matters that have no significance to anyone except you and one other person. Its impact is heightened when shared with a special somebody in your life. You may find yourself breaking out in laughter at the slightest suggestion of a humorous thought. In an instant, you are carried away from the drudgery of everyday chores and sent swirling in an elevated consciousness of unusual delight. You want it to go on and never stop.

Imagine the last time you were in a rare space that enveloped your whole being. What was it like? Where were you? Who was there with you? Were you able to resist the urge to blurt out the overwhelming desire to express what you felt in that precious moment?

Such an experience is re-lived when we tell somebody about it. In fact, we discover it is nearly impossible to keep such a wonderful gift to ourselves. It bubbles up and flows from our mouths with exact precision so as to retrace every aspect of its lingering touch. Our enthusiasm becomes a source of inspiration to

those who hear our story. In turn, they have a vicarious adventure of happiness, love, and refreshing life. Those who hear what happened become faithful listeners.

Of course, every good tale requires an audience. A well written book has no value among an illiterate people. A great drama has no meaning in an empty theater. A superb teacher is worthless in a vacant classroom. Thus, our event loses its power when hidden in a vault of memory that is never opened to others.

Consider the possibility of a new society emerging in which everyone told the story of a sacred period that changed a person and shaped a new start. What if we dedicated a specific time and place for open expressions of life's events? On the one hand, storytellers would come forward and spin a yarn for others to hear. Then, listeners would give their undivided attention to the details of each story. The only requirement is that whatever is said must be true, positive, and assured to transform the audience into agents of change. Every story is uplifting. Imagine what might come of that.

When Jesus entered the home of Martha and Mary, he created time and place for stories that made a difference. He attracted the attention of Mary while her sister, Martha, was busy fulfilling her obligation to provide hospitality. It was her cultural duty to serve her guests. But that meant missing the story. She really wanted to be with Jesus, but hospitality was required. She was stuck in the kitchen.

Many of us may be stuck somewhere and are missing the story as well. We may be so busy that we can't hear what others are saying. We want to know. We want to listen but we are locked into doing what needs to be done. Jesus calls us out of the kitchen. He calls us away from our jobs. He invites us to come in, sit down, and listen.

Do you have a story to tell? Are you ready to listen to others who have their stories to tell? Come. Listen. Be a faithful listener.

-Pastor Art Cribbs

Next Sunday * July 29, 2007

10:00 a.m. Morning Worship

Sermon: "Prayerful Disciples"

Text: Luke 11:1-13

Liturgist: Dave Van Horsen

This Week...

Monday: 6:45pm The Stillspeaking Theatre Advisory Board will meet in The Green Room downstairs.

Tuesday: 7:00pm Bible Study - meets in Fireside Room

Weds.: 6:45pm Church Council meets in The Green Room downstairs



Compassionate Neighbors

They were brothers, just 8 and 12 years old. As new Bethany Children's Home residents, they were in our storeroom to get much needed new clothes and sneakers. Bethany's storeroom manager, asked the 8-year-old what toys he would like. He said, "I'd like a gun." Certain she had misunderstood, she asked, "You mean you'd like a toy gun?" "No, I'd like a gun." With that, the older boy put his arm around his young brother and said, "You don't need that now. Don't worry, you're safe here."

Located in Womelsdorf, Pennsylvania, Bethany Children's Home has worked with churches of Pennsylvania and the eastern United States, including the United Church of Christ Penn Central Conference, to help boys and girls in need since 1863. Today, we offer "at-risk" boys and

girls a haven of safety and provide structure, security and guidance. We are a place where children can experience the simple joys of growing up, many for the first time in their lives.

Please pray for our boys and girls that they can build lives of character, wholeness and success.

Join us on August 17, 2007 for our 144th Anniversary Day and Community Festival. For more information about Bethany Children's Home call 610-589-4501 or check out our website at www.bethanyhome.org.

PRAYER:

Almighty God, you give the holy law to your people so that it will always be near us and our children. Through our Lord Jesus who has fulfilled the law in every way, grant that we may love you with heart, soul, strength, and mind, and our neighbor as ourselves. Amen.