



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

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

September 20, 2009 – 10:00 a.m. 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time

For Reflection

“Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all.”

(Jesus – Mark 9:35b)

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 and Murray Middleman

WELCOME

Pastor Art Cribbs

***SONGS FOR THE SPIRIT**

“What A Mighty God We Serve” and “You are Holy”

***OPENING PRAYER**

Bret Naylor

Liturgist: Loving, Caring God, your people are gathered to worship you.

PEOPLE: We give you praise.

Liturgist: Your name is holy above all names.

PEOPLE: You alone are God.

Liturgist: We confess our mistakes and ask your forgiveness.

PEOPLE: Have mercy on us.

Liturgist: We are thankful for your abundant blessings.

PEOPLE: Freely we receive. Freely we give.

Liturgist: Speak to your people, O God, and teach us your ways.

PEOPLE: We are listening for your still-speaking voice.

Liturgist: Grant us courage to be peacemakers.

PEOPLE: So we will be called the people of God.

Liturgist: Open our eyes so we can see what we must do to serve you.

PEOPLE: Holy One, help us to see.

Liturgist: Open our ears so we can hear the cries of your children.

PEOPLE: Caring One, help us to hear.

Liturgist: Open our hearts so we will feel the agony of those who suffer.

PEOPLE: Merciful One, help us to feel.

Liturgist: Fill us with your Holy Spirit.

PEOPLE: We are the salt of the earth. We are the light of the world.

ALL: Help us to believe. Help us to do your will. Help us to live as Christ.

Hallelujah. Shalom. Salaam. RIGHT ON! Amen.

The Congregation may be seated.

A SONG FOR THE HEART

“Come and Let Us Worship God”

The United Voices of San Marino

**HONORING A LIFETIME OF SERVICE
TIME WITH OUR CHILDREN
OUR COMMON PRAYER
MUSIC TO BLESS THE CHILDREN**

**“Who’s Number One?”
“O God, who art in heaven...”
“Children Welcome”**

Scott Cameron
Pastor Art Cribbs

Children and Youth are welcome to join our Sunday School and Children Worship & Wonder program! After the children’s time, children aged 3 through those in 5th grade are invited to process downstairs to the Wonder Room and those in 6th through 12th grade to the Green Room. Childcare for children under age 4 is available in our nursery today with trained and certified childcare provider, Mrs. Barbara Sanchez. When these programs finish, children and youth will be brought up to social time.

SCRIPTURE READING Mark 9:30-37 Bret Naylor

CHORAL ANTHEM **“Healing River”** The United Voices of San Marino
by Fred Hellerman & Fran Minkoff, Arranged by David Chervien

REFLECTIONS **“First In Caring”** Rev. Dr. Art Cribbs

A TIME TO GIVE Bret Naylor

Computers For Ghana

A special envelope has been included in your bulletin to assist you in supporting our international partners, the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana to provide computers throughout that West African nation in order to establish an electronic communication network. This is an opportunity for us to assist this important ministry.

A TIME TO ACT Donald Shenk

A TIME TO DEDICATE OURSELVES & OUR GIFTS Bret Naylor

Great Spirit, we bring our gifts to you. Thank you for your blessings. Use these gifts to serve your people and support the ministries of this church and the United Church of Christ. Thank you for each one who has given generously. Bless them and each one who was unable to give. Be with us as we dedicate ourselves and our gifts to you. Amen.

A TIME FOR PRAYER **“God Fill Me Now”** Prayer time led by Pastor Cribbs

SENDING HYMN **“I’ve Got A Feeling”** Hymnal, #458

***BENEDICTION** Pastor Cribbs

***CHANGING OF THE LIGHT** Bret Naylor

***GOING FORTH** Instrumentalists

Everyone is welcome to the SOCIAL TIME next door in Crist Hall after the service.
Thanks to our “USC Contingent” for providing our treats today!

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.

You are welcome to contribute to the Liz Cameron Memorial Fund by using one of the envelopes provided at the Visitor’s Center. Proceeds to this fund go towards helping those in need in our community with gifts of food and clothing.



Have you ever felt great? Have you felt like you could take on the world? There is the scene from the movie, Titanic, when Leonardo Di-Caprio's character, Jack Dawson,

climbs a high pole onboard the doomed ship and screams at the top of his lungs, "I'm the king of the world." It's a captivating moment in the film as it expresses a sense of high adventure and conquest. Dawson feels the happiness of winning the heart and love of a beautiful woman. He felt great.

Former world heavy weight boxing champion Muhammad Ali dubbed himself, "The Greatest," as he fought his way to the top of the boxing world. He announced publicly, "I am the greatest." Although he was referring to his incredible feats in the ring knocking out one opponent after the other during the prime of his career, many of his critics began to see him as more than an athlete with Olympic-class skills. He became the most recognized person in the world because of his humanitarian contributions. Few people have been so bold as to put such a moniker on themselves like Ali.

There is the temptation to believe our success is attributed to a special ability we have that cannot be duplicated by others. We might feel we are special; great. Individually, we may mask such feelings about ourselves, but as a nation we proclaim our sense of superiority loudly and frequently. In fact, as school children we participate in a daily ritual of reinforcing the idea that 'America is the greatest country in the world'. If someone were to challenge that idea, it would be paramount to treason; an act of ingratitude or worse.

Having a sense of greatness is valued and encouraged, but it also carries a depth of responsibility that is not easily attained. To be great means more than a pronouncement. It requires acting in a manner that is consistent with the highest ideals and morals. It includes a standard of living that is above the norm. It sets aside expedience and avoids traps that lure selfishness.

That is the point Jesus made to his disciples who were arguing among themselves about which of them was the greatest. From the outside, it appeared at least three of them had earned the title. After all, Peter, James and John had been to the mountaintop. They had witnessed the blinding light radiating from Jesus' face as the Voice spoke through the clouds and told them to listen to God's "beloved Son." They had healed the sick and walked with Jesus. Surely, there was greatness in them.

When Jesus heard them making claims about their feats, he pulled them aside and caused them to ponder deeply the true meaning of greatness. To be great means to be humble. It is putting yourself last after all others have been served. It means you are left behind as others go ahead of you. Jesus turns the tables upside down with his teachings and definition. Perhaps his disciples had other ideas. They may have thought being great allowed them to sit in the best seats and receive honors from the public. They did not think being great meant becoming a servant. They thought it would put them first and up front ahead of everybody else.

Whether it is a person or a country, to be great means you must have compassion and care for the welfare of the poor, the least and the most vulnerable. It means acting in a way that the greatest good is achieved. It means humbling ourselves with the knowledge that God's love is given freely to everybody. As the motto of Rotary International reminds us, greatness is measured when we put "service above self.

-Pastor Art Cribbs

Please note: There will be no Sunday Adult Bible Study meetings during September. The group will resume in October on the first and third Sundays.

- **TODAY:** - **BABY SHOWER** - We are thrilled to welcome Maya Alysia Naylor to our church family next Sunday, September 20th, with a baby shower to be held during coffee hour.
-**3pm - SECRETS OF A SOCCER MOM** in StillSpeaking Theatre
- **TUESDAY:** **7pm - SOUL FOOD.** Explore the Word of God and share your life's journey in a safe, open environment. Feed your soul and strengthen our congregation by attending SOUL FOOD.

- **WEDS.:** 6:45pm – **TRUSTEES** meet in the Pastor’s Office.
- **THURS:** 7pm – **The United Voices choir** meets in the sanctuary for rehearsal.
- **SATURDAY:** 8pm - **SECRETS OF A SOCCER MOM** at StillSpeaking Theatre.
- **SUNDAY:** 3pm - **SECRETS OF A SOCCER MOM** at StillSpeaking Theatre.

These and other important announcements are available to you in the weekly e-mail, “About Our Folk.”

Send an email to: smccucc@sanmarinoucc.org if you would like to be included on the list.

Please note: Pastor Art will participate in a study trip to Mexico and attend a UCC Task Force meeting and will not be in the office or the pulpit from Sept. 25 through Oct. 5. During his absence, pastoral care is being provided by the Rev. Gene Boutilier (September 27 through Oct. 1) and the Rev. Susan Garet (Oct2-5). Please contact the church office for contact information for either of these pastors.

Coming UP:

- **Member Orientation Mtg.** 10am to 1pm on Saturday, Oct. 17
- **Emergency Preparation Seminar** at 6pm on Oct. 20
- **Central Association Meeting** at Arcadia Congregational UCC on Sept. 24th beginning at 9am.
- **The Spirit & The Screen**, Saturday October 24th at 7pm in the theatre – ***The 7 Faces of Dr. Lao.***