

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,**

November 4, 2007 – 10:00 a.m. 31<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

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

### *For Reflection*

O Lord, how long shall I cry for help  
and you will not listen?  
Or cry to you ‘Violence!’  
and you will not save?  
Why do you make me see wrongdoing  
and look at trouble?  
Then the Lord answered me and said,  
“Write the vision;  
make it plain on tablets,  
so that a runner may read it.  
For there is still a vision for the appointed time;  
it speaks of the end, and does not lie.”  
(Habakkuk 1:2-3a; 2:2-3a)

*\*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.*

**PRELUDE & LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES**  
“My God is my Light”

The Choir & The Band  
Acolyte: Arthur Cribbs

**\*OPENING LITANY (antiphonal)**

Susan Jakubowski Weiner

**Good morning, Great Spirit, Creator of all the earth and the universe; we have come to worship you and praise your Holy Name. Breathe your Spirit upon us and rain down your love and mercy. Thank you for setting aside this day as a sacred time to rest, to reflect, and to recreate our lives. Around the world, your people are gathered and through your divine presence we are one with them. We are glad to be here. Deepen our faith and give us courage. You, O God, are magnificent and wonderful. You alone are God and we are your people. Come, Great Spirit, open our eyes, our hearts, our ears, and our minds. Speak to us for your people are listening. Hallelujah, Shalom, Salaam, Right on! Amen.**

**\*SONGS OF THE SPIRIT**

Congregation

*“Here I Am”*

*The congregation may be seated.*

*“Keep Me Safe, O God”*

**OUR COMMON LIFE**

Donald Shenk

A Time to Give/A Time to Act

A Time for Stewardship

Connie James-Gililand

A Time to Dedicate Ourselves and Our Gifts

Donald Shenk

**Thank you for these gifts your people have brought to the altar. Receive them and use them as a blessing to those persons who are touched by the ministries of this congregation and the United Church of Christ. We return only a portion of what you have provided us from your abundant bounty. And now, O God, we dedicate ourselves and our gifts to you. Amen.**

**TIME WITH OUR CHILDREN**

Story "What if Jesus Comes?" Pastor Art Cribbs

Our Common Prayer

*Children are welcome to remain in worship today to celebrate Communion.  
Miss Barbara is available to care for the youngest children.*

Music to Bless the Children

**SCRIPTURE READING** Luke 19:1-10 Susan Jakubowski Weiner  
New Revised Standard Version

**CHORAL ANTHEM** "Love Never Ends" Chancel Choir  
By Allan Robert Petker

**REFLECTIONS** "WELCOMING JESUS" Pastor Cribbs

**COMMUNION HYMN** "As We Gather at Your Table" **NCH # 332**  
Congregation – Verses 1 & 2 Daw

**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** Sarah Parnicky and The Band

**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.

**A TIME OF PRAYER**

Preparation for Prayer "God, Fill Me Now" Congregation

Prayers of the People Pastor Cribbs

**\*SENDING HYMN** "As We Gather at Your Table" **NCH # 332**  
Congregation – Verse 3 Daw

**\* BENEDICTION** Pastor Cribbs

**\*POSTLUDE/CHANGING OF THE LIGHT** The Band/Susan Jakubowski Weiner

*Everyone is welcome to enjoy the coffee and conversation  
in Crist Hall following today's service.*

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!

**Next Sunday ☩ November 11, 2007**  
**10:00 a.m. Morning Worship**  
**STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY**  
**Pastor Cribbs' sermon: "Bless God's Holy Name"**  
Text: Psalm 145:1-5 and 17-21

**TODAY:** Your final chance to see **AWAITING JUDGMENT** in our Stillspeaking Theatre at 3pm. If you haven't gotten tickets yet, you can still get in at the door (cash or check only, please). Adults are \$20 and Students & Seniors are \$15. Check it out!



**Tuesday: 7pm - Everyone is invited to an evening of “SOUL FOOD,” a time to share, reflect, and discuss the integration of faith and daily experiences. Join the conversation in the Fireside Room.**

**Wednesday: 6:45pm – CHURCH COUNCIL meets in Green Room**

**Thursday: 7:00pm – CHANCEL CHOIR rehearsal**

**Fri/Sat: 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Festival at Pilgrim Place – [www.pilgrimplace.org](http://www.pilgrimplace.org)**



When is enough not enough? We work every day doing the best we can to support our families. We don't fuss over very much. We just make our way and try to lend a helping hand whenever we can. Sometimes it feels like we are not appreciated and more is always asked of us. We are not sure what else we can do. We may feel puny and unworthy. No doubt, Zacchaeus, the little man in the Gospel of Luke who scampered to see Jesus, felt something like that.

An outcast in his own community, Zacchaeus had a great need to redeem himself and pay restitution for his conduct as a chief tax collector. There are not many occupations listed in the New Testament that fall below tax collectors. They were notorious for cheating their neighbors as they went about the business of collecting money to support the Roman Empire's occupying forces in Palestine.

In addition to his undesirable job, Zacchaeus was short in stature. He stood beneath the crowds, unable to see what was happening around him. Imagine his frustration and deep pain as he made his way through the bustling streets of Jericho. He carried guilt and shame in his entire body and pounded the ground with every laden step. What could he do to overcome his miserable circumstance? He was forced to put aside his dignity as he scrambled up a tree to get a glimpse at Jesus walking through town.

There was something very special in store for Zacchaeus. Although he was not aware of it, a depth of love was readily available to him.

Zacchaeus was a busy, little man who diligently took in as many tax dollars as he could assess. He always made sure he got his personal cut and he paid the Romans in a timely and orderly way. On the streets of his neighborhood, he was seen as 'scum,' a lackey for the hated Romans. He knew what people said about him, but he did his job anyway. How could anyone love him? How could he love himself?

Sometimes we feel nobody loves us. Nobody cares about what we are going through. Have you ever been there? No matter how hard you try it's not enough. What else can you do? Unlike Zacchaeus, you have not cheated your neighbors, but that is not enough.

Zacchaeus ran and climbed a tree to see Jesus. At the same time, Jesus combed through the crowds searching for Zaachaeus. Jesus came into the world for people like Zaachaeus; tax collectors, cheats, and the outcast. Jesus was there to call him down from the tree so he could be invited into Zaachaeus' home. Jesus is calling us and waiting for us to welcome him into our hearts.

Jesus loved Zacchaeus, a chief tax collector, who became rich by extracting hard earned money from his neighbors. Zacchaeus was overcome with joy and happiness when he discovered Jesus knew his name and wanted to be with him. Ain't that good news?

Isn't it good news for us? We are who we are, doing what we do, and Jesus loves us. In fact, we are the very reason Jesus was born; so we can experience the value of life and God's love for us. There is nothing we can do to take away God's love. So, work hard, be honest, and never give up even when it seems much more is asked of you. There is still more to the brief story of Zacchaeus. Read it in Luke 19.

-Pastor Art Cribbs

## Upcoming Events...

**Next Sunday: Stewardship Sunday – please bring your pledge cards!**  
**Sunday, 11/18: Christian Ed. board meets at 9:00 a.m.**  
**Joint Service with Refiner's Fire congregation in Long Beach. Carpool leaves from the church at 3:45pm.**