

CRIBB<S>NOTE – OCTOBER 4, 2009

A new men's fellowship starts this week at San Marino Congregational United Church of Christ and it is open to everybody whether or not you attend the church. Working without a name, agenda, or stated purpose, the first meeting will provide an opportunity for men to come together and experience the value and joy of sharing stories and journeys.

The idea for the men's meeting goes back almost 15 years when a group of six men in San Francisco decided to spend an evening with a young man who was released from San Quentin Prison in Marin County on New Year's Day 1995.

That young man walked out the prison gates as a free person for the first time in more than a decade. He had determined for himself his life of crime was over and he wanted to dedicate himself to helping and serving others. The world had changed during the time he had spent incarcerated.

He was 30 years old when he left prison. Nearly half his life had been spent bouncing from one penal institution to another. Crime and prison defined who he was until he decided to change. One step on his journey to freedom and a life without crime was to start over with new and different people.

The six men who agreed to meet and talk with him discovered more about themselves than they learned from the ex-convict. Seated around a table talking and listening for a couple of hours revealed a reservoir of experiences that welled up inside each of them. They wanted more time to talk. They needed to come together again.

That first meeting resulted in forming the Monthly Men's Meeting. The six men grew into 45. They ranged in age from 15 to 75 years old. They were professional and unemployed. They were Asian, Black, Chicano, and White. They traveled across bridges, took buses, and drove to the monthly meetings. Strangers became friends. Elders mentored youth. Some created business partnerships. Once a month the men came together and shared what was going on in their lives.

Monday, October 5, 2009, at 7:00 P.M. men are invited to come together at San Marino Congregational United Church of Christ. Men will meet in the Art Room off the church parking lot on Del Mar Avenue just south of Huntington Drive.

The Monday Men's Meeting offers an opportunity to explore the world in the company of other men. Make it your intention to join the Monday Men's Meeting. Bring a friend, co-worker, partner, son, or buddy.

This week we welcome the Reverend Susan Garet back to the pulpit. Susan is a long time member of San Marino Congregational United Church of Christ. She has blessed us with her ministerial and pastoral gifts for many years. A resident of San Marino, her children attended local schools and grew up in this community. We are fortunate to have her return as our preacher and worship leader. Extend warm hospitality and offer your prayers as she brings God Word. Susan, thank you for being with us.