



Community Connections

February 2010



Rev. Jeff O'Grady, Pastor

A SEASON OF RENEWAL

Two days after enjoying the Rose Parade in Pasadena this year I found myself on the ski slopes in Colorado with my son. The holidays are also “holy” days, so ministers often find time to relax after others are back in the work routine. Engaging in a physically demanding athletic undertaking like skiing is surprisingly renewing for me. It is such a departure from the normal routine of meetings, planning, emails, reading, and writing that I find it incredibly invigorating. I also find it exhausting. I resonated with John the Baptist’s observation about Jesus as I was trying to keep up with my 24 year old son on the slopes, “he must become greater and I must become less.” My days of keeping up physically with Ryan are over! Of course my wife, Lynn, could have told me that some years ago, if I “had ears to hear.”

There is a great deal of talk these days about sustainable energy. Nationally we are committed to exploring new technologies that capture and develop renewable forms of energy like wind and solar to power our communities. Individually and corporately, we daily require energy from beyond ourselves. Our bodies need food, water, and sleep in order to replenish the energy needed to meet daily tasks. Groups and communities also expend energy, which requires periodic reflection and renewal. Life demands renewal. Lent is a special annual season in the Christian life for renewal – for developing sustainable energy sources especially in our spiritual lives. It is a time for disrupting the normal routine to

reflect more deeply about our lives and where we’re headed, individually and together.

This Lenten Season the San Marino Community Church invites you to participate in a reflection and renewal series on Tuesday evenings for six weeks prior to and including Holy Week. Beginning with a meal on February 23 (to nourish us for the journey), we will meet each Tuesday evening through March 30 for 90 minutes weekly discussion and small group interaction. The book *Urgings of the Heart, A Spirituality of Integration* by Wilkie Au and Noreen Cannon will assist us in our reflections and discussion. Copies of the book will be made available through the church office for cost. If you enjoyed the “Sermon Downloads” last summer, this may be for you.

“The amazing thing is that as Christ becomes “greater” in our lives, we become not less but so much more!”

Please see the insert to this issue of Community Connections for more details

about our Lenten series as well as many other services and opportunities during this time of preparation.

Make plans to join us in Lent for the kind of reflection and renewal that keeps life moving forward in the direction of better health and greater impact. The amazing thing is that as Christ becomes “greater” in our lives, we become not less but so much more!

In Christ’s love,

Rev. Jeffrey V. O'Grady, Pastor



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Rev. Heather Williams,
February 2010 CCW
speaker

Community Church Women Present The Rev. Heather Williams: *“The Power of Praise”*

Friday, February 12, 10:30 am, Fellowship Hall
“Blessed is the one who submits to the will of God for they can never be unhappy.” - Martin Luther

All women of the church and community are urged to attend a special presentation by Rev. Heather Williams. Heather will speak about the joy of acquiescence to God’s will. She says, “There is nothing haphazard about God’s plan for our lives. Nothing, however strange or seemingly inconsequential, or painful happens to us without God’s specific consent. In our

abandonment to God’s purpose for our lives is our true freedom.”

A native of Australia, Rev. Heather Williams developed Alpha Omega Communication Company, which produces Christian animated stories for “tweeners.” She lives with her husband in South Pasadena. They have four children and ten grandchildren.

Contact the church office for reservations at (626) 282-4181 x 10 or EFarrar@smccpby.com. There is no cost.



Journey To Narnia in February

During February *The Treehouse* and Club 45 will explore the Land of Narnia through reading *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* and watching the animated movie version of C. S. Lewis’ classic tale. Children will learn about virtues as they explore together through the curriculum *Aslan is on the Move* (for *The Treehouse*) and *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe Discovery Guide* (for Club 45).

Revisit this Christian classic this month or perhaps explore it for the first time and

to share it with children. Adult Spiritual Formation for February will focus on C. S. Lewis. A special invitation is extended to the parents and grandparents of elementary school aged children to attend this Adult Spiritual Formation class so that they might be equipped to discuss the works of Lewis with their children for mutual sharing.

For more information or to join the Sunday school leadership team, contact Director of Christian Education, Jennifer Baer at JBaer@smccpby.com or (626) 282-4181, x 13.

Carols of Many Nations DVD Available

Enjoy the festive music of San Marino Community Church Chancel Choir, the SMCC Ensemble, and the San Marino High School Chamber Choir led by Weston H. Noble, Guest Conductor. Recorded Sunday, December 13, 2009, the concert featured 16 anthems/songs from a variety of nations. Suggested donation: \$10.

Contact the church office at EFarrar@smccpby.com or (626) 282-4181 x 10 to reserve a copy.



NEWS, NEWS, NEWS

All the latest activities and events

Growing Families

Sunday, January 31, 10:30, Fellowship Hall
Presenting: Mark Hastings, "Dad's Coach". Mark will speak about Five Steps to a More Reasonable Practice of Fatherhood in a discussion titled "Cut Me Some Slack". Childcare will be provided. Mothers are welcome and encouraged to attend!

Senior Saturday

Saturday, February 6, 10:30 am, Fellowship Hall
Crown City Dixieland Band is the featured performer at the first Senior Saturday event of 2010 presented by the Board of Deacons. Join the fun which includes lunch. A freewill offering will be received to cover costs. Advance reservations will ensure enough food for all. Contact EFarrar@smccpby.com or (626) 282-4181 x 10.

Men's Breakfast

2/3 & 10: Jeff O'Grady - "The Making of a Minister"
2/17: Don Weisbrod, ICTHUS President
2/24: Dick Durant - "State of SMCC's campus"
3/3: Jack McQueen - "San Marino's Old Mill"

Next New Member Classes

February 20, 2010, 8:30 am - 12:30 pm or
May 22, 2010, 8:30 am - 12:30 pm
Those who wish to learn more about SMCC and join the church may contact Peggy Flynn at PFlynn@smccpby.com or (626) 282-4181 x 19.

Annual Meeting

Sunday, February 28, 2010

Plan to attend the annual meeting of the congregation following "The Gathering". Come for brunch at 12:15 pm (\$5/person at the door). The meeting will begin at approximately 12:45 pm. A quorum of 110 members are needed to vote on the Pastors' terms of call, elect the Officer Nominating Committee, and celebrate the year in review. The Annual Report will be available one week before the meeting.

Year Of The Bible Celebrated

Over 100 adults signed up to read through the Bible in 2009. On January 5, 2010, more than 30 came to celebrate the achievement of reading from Genesis through Revelation! They received certificates and affirmation, shared cake and wassail, as well as highlights and challenges, insights and inspiration from the Scripture. Personalized certificates are available for all others who have completed their reading. Those who have completed their reading are invited to contact Rev. Karen Berns at (626) 282-4181 x 20, or KBerns@smccpby.com.

Small Group Leader/Participant Training

Sunday, February 21, 12:30 pm, Church Lounge
Current and potential small group leaders/facilitators/participants are invited to prepare for and be encouraged for Lenten and other small groups. Lunch is provided the afternoon event. For details, contact PFlynn@smccpby.com or (626) 282-4181 x 19.

CONSTRUCTION CORNER

Do you know where the Woodpecker Wall is located? An exterior wall above the Nursery School courtyard (look northeast while in the Nursery School courtyard) has earned the title "woodpecker wall" because it has become a storage area for seeds collected by local woodpeckers. The wood has deteriorated so significantly that the holes provide excellent storage for the birds. The good news is that the damage is mostly superficial ... but not inexpensive. A plan to address this and other facility concerns is being considered by the Session. More to come ...



SMCC STAFF CHANGES



In December, the session adopted a balanced budget for 2010. Estimates of giving remained at 2009 levels but other sources of income decreased in the past year as expenses increased. To balance the budget, reductions were made across-the-board in each area of the church's life and ministry. Unfortunately, this includes staff reductions despite another year of salary freezes. The Personnel Committee chose to maintain existing commitments where possible, to reduce by not replacing departing staff (Minister of Visitation and interns), and to layoff a long-time staff member in the music program.

The Rev. Dr. R. Thomas Bousman (above left) joined the church staff June 1, 2004 shortly after arriving in Pasadena as a resident of Monte Vista Groves Homes. Tom is pastor emeritus of the Santa Paula congregation in Ventura County, where he served 41 years. Health concerns have made it difficult for Tom to remain involved in worship leadership.

Dr. Stephanie Hutchinson (left) joined the church staff in 1998 as handbell/handchime director. She has also shared her musical abilities at the keyboard for numerous special services through the years including Christmas Eve, Easter Sunrise Service, the Choir Cantata, and others.

The congregation is invited to express its appreciation to both Stephanie and Tom with words of encouragement (cards received at the church will be forwarded to both staff members) as well as contributing to a farewell love offering. Contributions marked "Bousman love gift" or "Hutchinson love gift" will be received through February in the church office.

Please note: gifts received by the church for departing staff members are considered taxable income by the IRS when paid to the staff member. Gifts given directly to departing staff members (ie. in a card) do not create a "taxable event" for the staff person.

February 2010 Edition

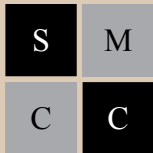
Sunday Schedule:

9:15 *Traditional Worship*

10:30 *Spiritual Formation
for all ages*

11:15 *"The Gathering"
(casual worship
service)*

*March Community
Connections Deadline:
February 8, 1010*



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COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

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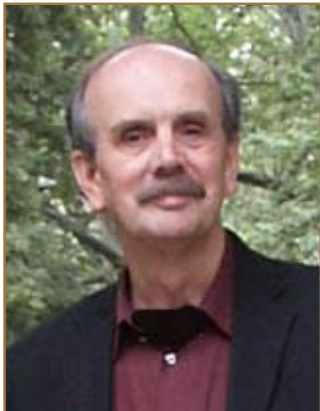
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Adult Spiritual Formation

C. S. Lewis Emphasis

February 2010 is C. S. Lewis month at San Marino Community Church! Join in Adult Spiritual Formation classes on Sunday mornings at 10:30 and grow in Christian faith through “C. S. Lewis, Making Sense of Key Christian Beliefs” taught by Rev. Dr. Nathan Feldmeth.

C. S. Lewis was an Irish-born British novelist, academic, medievalist, literary critic, essayist, lay theologian and Christian apologist. He is renowned for his fiction, especially *The Chronicles of Narnia*, *The Space Trilogy*, and *The Screwtape Letters*. Lewis was a close friend of J. R. R. Tolkien, and both authors were leading faculty at Oxford and in the informal Oxford literary group, the “Inklings”. Owing to the influence of Tolkien and other friends, at the age of 32, Lewis came alive in his Christian faith. His conversion had a profound effect on his work, and his wartime radio broadcasts on the subject of Christianity brought him wide acclaim. He died on November 22, 1963 – the same day that President John Kennedy was assassinated. Lewis’ works have been translated into more than 30 languages and have sold millions of copies over the years. The books that make up *The Chronicles of Narnia* have sold the most and have been popularized on stage, TV, radio, and film.



Dr. Feldmeth will present the following topics. Pre-reading is encouraged for extra enjoyment and insight.

February 7: “The Gospel in Children’s Literature: The Chronicles of Narnia.”

Read: *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe*

February 14: “Science Fiction and the Theology of Sin”

Read: *Perelandra*

February 21: “Theodicy: Why does a good God allow evil and pain to afflict us?”

Read: *The Problem of Pain*

February 28: “Lewis on the Afterlife: Heaven, Hell and Purgatory?”

Read: *The Great Divorce*

Rev. Dr. Nathan Feldmeth is assistant professor of church history and director of faculty development for regional campuses in Fuller Seminary’s School of Theology, where he has taught since 1982. He also taught for years at Polytechnic School. Nate earned his PhD. at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland. He authored *The Pocket Dictionary of Church History* (2008) and contributed to several dictionaries, including the *Dictionary of Christianity in America* and *A New Dictionary of Christian Theology*. He authored Fuller’s *Individualized Distance Learning Course on Early Church History*, as well as teaching Medieval Reformation Church History, American Church History, Christianity and Science in Historical Perspective, and Women in Church History and Theology. Youth Director, Paul Blakesley, says Nate Feldmeth was his favorite Fuller Professor, and Revs. Karen and Don Berns rejoice that the congregation will get to know and appreciate their dear friend.

Childcare is provided in the lower courtyard.

The C. S. Lewis emphasis will also be reflected in youth and children’s ministry throughout the month.

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Lent 2010 at San Marino Community Church

Join the church family for a time of preparation and reflection during the 40-day season of Lent.

Ash Wednesday Service

Wednesday, February 17, 2010, 12:00 pm & 7:00 pm, Christ Chapel

Join the church family to mark the beginning of Lent with a service of prayer and confession. This service will be led by Rev. Jeff O'Grady and Rev. Karen Berns.

Lenten Reflection and Renewal Class

Tuesday Evenings, February 23 and March 2, 9, 16, 23, & 30, 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm, Fellowship Hall

Church family members of all ages are invited to participate in this six-week series. Each evening will begin with a time of reflection and learning as Rev. O'Grady, Rev. Karen Berns, and Martha Williamson explore themes from *Urgings of the Heart: A Spirituality of Integration* by Wilkie Au and Noreen Cannon. As part of the time, small groups will meet for discussion and fellowship. Youth and children will explore the Great Commandment (also the church's mission statement) in special small groups. Childcare and Children's activities will be available.

RSVP for the class kick-off dinner on *Tuesday, February 23 at 6 pm*. (Cost: \$5/person, \$4/children 2-13, under 2 free). Contact the church office at (626) 282-4181 x 10 or EFarrar@smccpby.com.

Maundy Thursday Service

Thursday, April 1, 7:00 pm, Sanctuary

Communion is celebrated as Christ's passion and death are remembered. Join this service of reflection and remembrance as the Sanctuary moves from light to darkness.

Good Friday Quiet Afternoon Apart

Friday, April 2: lunch 12:30; meditative afternoon 1:30 - 4:30

Enrich the experience of Easter by setting apart time to reflect on Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. Come for a simple lunch and fellowship. Please stay and experience quiet, readings, music, and art designed by the Rev. Karen Berns. Walk with Jesus through Biblical "stations of the cross" beginning in Christ Chapel at 1:30 pm. \$5 for lunch. \$5 for handouts. Contact the church office at (626) 282-4181 x 10 or EFarrar@smccpby.com for reservations to guarantee enough soup and resources are available for all. Please pre-register!

One Great Hour of Sharing

The Lenten outreach focus is One Great Hour of Sharing - a time when Christians unite for a common cause and share with those in need. Funds collected are used for disaster relief, refugee assistance, and development aid throughout the world. "One Great Hour of Sharing" envelopes are available in the pew pockets. Fish banks and sharing calendars are available in the Sunday school classrooms and at the information center. Envelopes and



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