



COMMUNICATOR

News from Claremont Presbyterian Church

January 2010



JANUARY

Worship Plans

Sunday, January 3 10:00 a.m.

Second Sunday after Christmas

Service for Healing and Wholeness
at the New Year

Jeremiah 31:7-14

The Rev. Rocky Supinger preaching

Sunday, January 10 10:00 a.m.

Baptism of the Lord

Luke 3:15-22

The Rev. Karen Sapio preaching

Sunday, January 17 10:00 a.m.

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

John 2:1-11; I Corinthians 12:1-11

The Rev. Karen Sapio preaching

Sunday, January 24 10:00 a.m.

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

Luke 4:14-21; I Corinthians 12:12-31

The Rev. Karen Sapio preaching

Sunday, January 31 10:00 a.m.

Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Luke 4:21-30; I Corinthians 13:1-13

The Rev. Karen Sapio preaching

The Lent Event Is Coming

This Ash Wednesday will mark the fourth anniversary of my arrival in Claremont! Time flies when you are (mostly) having fun. In my four years at CPC I have discovered a congregation that loves their church. Many of you have shared with me that you wish we could be even MORE effective in reaching out to our community with the good news of God's love and justice. How can we do a better job inviting friends, neighbors and strangers to grow in relationship with God and explore Christian Community?

A recent study by pastor/author/researcher Martha Grace Reese had found that lots of mainline congregations – across the theological spectrum – are doing just that. What sets these congregations apart are that their members have a growing spiritual life and are comfortable talking with others about why the gospel and the example of Jesus are important to them. From her research, Martha Grace Reese has developed an all church study designed to help members of mainline churches deepen their faith and learn to talk about it with passion.

This Lent, join us for a very special, all-church study of *Unbinding Your Heart*. "This book is about untying the knots that keep us from living exciting lives" ... with God and with each other. "It's about unbinding the Good News that God loves us, everyone else and all creation and that God has shown this to us through Jesus Christ."* It's also a prayer journal with many forms of classic Christian prayer included in the daily prayers that accompany the study.

We are calling this rich small group experience The Lent Event. We would love to have you as part of one of the small groups that will be forming to meet and study *Unbinding Your Heart* during Lent. You can share in the group experience with no pressure to "do" anything other than read each week's chapter, do the daily prayer exercises and attend six meetings.

People in churches across the country are excited about what is happening in their congregations through their experiences with *Unbinding the Gospel*: deeper relationships with God, a rich, meaningful personal prayer life, and a new sense of God's activity in their lives. People are saying they can be more 'real' with others as their relationship with God grows ... and that this extends to relationships within their families and with people in every area of their lives.

PLEASE JOIN US FOR AN EXCITING 6-WEEK ADVENTURE!

Unbinding Your Heart

Small Group Sign-Ups Begin January 17th

Karen Sapio

*Quotes are from the Introduction to *Unbinding Your Heart*, page 3.

Sunday Morning at Nine - Adult Education

Hard Times Then and Now

Room 1

During the Great Depression of the 1930's, unemployment nationwide hit 25%. The theme song for the decade became "Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?" As individual need overwhelmed charities, the federal government instituted programs that forever changed American society. In the 1960's, as the Depression faded from public memory, Studs Terkel collected scores of reminiscences, highly diverse, bitter as well as sweet, from those who had survived that ordeal, and put them in a book, *Hard Times*.

Today, in our worst "recession" since the 1930's, unemployment is once again in double digits, and there are regional and demographic pockets of the nation and California where it equals that of the Depression. How did people cope then, and how are we doing now? What have we learned? In this "Coffee and a Good Book" series, led by David Menefee-Libey and Dick Johnson, we will compare the stories and experiences of an earlier generation with that of our own today. Please join us, and bring your stories.

Copies of the book will be available for purchase at the first session, January 10. Here is a skeleton of readings. Our discussions will go best if people add other selections that have meaning for them.



January 10

What's a Depression?

- p. 22 Lily, Roy and Bucky try to imagine a Depression
- p. 25 Michael and Tad
- p. 26 Marshall and Steve
- p. 461 Virginia Durr

January 17

The Church

- p. 301 Dorothy Day opposes New Deal, Social Security
- p. 310 Saul Alinsky – "self interest"

January 24

Finance

- p. 65 Arthur Robertson – "Suicides, left and right."
- p. 75 John Hersh – "they just sat there and took it."

January 31

Two Views of Poverty

- p. 45 Peggy Terry – keeping ahead of trouble
- p. 153 Diana Morgan – "Maybe you do have to experience those things personally."

February 7 - no class

February 14

What are the Lessons?

- p. 346 Pauline Kael – the rich don't understand
- p. 195 Nathan Ackerman – people no longer feel responsible for what happens to them
- p. 450 W. Clement Stone – "Please God, help me sell."



Reception for Susan Townzen January 10

Children, youth and their families are invited to a celebration and thank you to Susan Townzen for her two years of service as Director of Christian Education for CPC to be held at 9:00 a.m. on January 10. Please join us in Fellowship Hall for breakfast goodies and visiting with Susan. Susan's last day in this position is January 15. We are pleased that she and Mara will continue to be involved at CPC.

Sunday School for children and youth of all ages will begin on January 17.

A PYG in Winter

After caroling and partying their way through December, CPC's Presbyterian Youth Group (PYG) is perched on the ledge of an adventurous January. Special thanks to Nancy Arce, Marilyn Hamilton, and Gordon and Jane Douglass for caroling alongside us and to Susan Townzen for opening her home to the Christmas party.

Also, December produced two great fund-raising events for the upcoming work trip. Lots of thanks to Linda Silva and Kathy Croughan for their work at our bake sale during the Alternative Christmas Fair. Likewise, Rita Watts masterfully coordinated the Daisy Najarian Christmas Breakfast, so many thanks to her and to all of the volunteers who pitched in. And thanks to everyone at CPC who has already become a part of the

Gala Tenth Anniversary!

Presbyterian Women of CPC are planning a **Gala Tenth Anniversary Celebration** to honor Elaine Walker, circulation librarian at The School of Theology, for ten years of annual luncheon/book reviews. Over the years Elaine has developed an affectionate and devoted following as she has delved into writers as diverse as Barbara Kingsolver, Louise Erdrich, Gail Godwin, Toni Morrison, Sena Jeter Naslund, Anne Tyler, Sandra Cisneros, Jhumpa Lahiri and Jan Karon. These reviews, PW's only fundraiser, support representatives to the triennial gatherings of Presbyterian Women.

Our 2010 celebratory luncheon/book review will be Saturday, February 20 at 11:30 a.m. in Fellowship Hall. The book is *In the Bleak Midwinter* by Julia Spencer-Fleming. The caterer is The Broken Loaf from The School of Theology. The cost is \$15.00, tickets to be available on the patio Sundays, January 31, February 7 and February 14. It is not too late to order a book from Carolyn Kingshill at (909) 625-6069.

To repeat, Elaine will review *In the Bleak Midwinter*, a mystery set in a small town in the Adirondacks in upstate New York, featuring Episcopal priest, Claire Fergusson and police chief, Russ Van Alstyne, who, in pursuing their pastoral and law enforcement duties respectively, find themselves partners in solving crime. Sharing center stage with Elaine will be our own Karen Sapio, commenting from a pastoral viewpoint and our own John Hill commenting from the point of view of law enforcement. Should be fascinating...

Carol Williams will be handling publicity and

work project through your support and prayers.

A note for parents: an informational meeting about the work trip will be held on Sunday, January 10, at 6:00 p.m. This is the first week back for PYGs after winter break. Please come to learn the details of the trip and to have any questions answered.

The annual PYG retreat is January 16-18. This promises to be a great weekend of rest, reflection, and recreation (the three "R's" of a Retreat) at the Pilgrim Pines Camp and Conference Center in Yucaipa.

Finally, congratulations to Eric Thorndyke on achieving the rank of Eagle Scout on Tuesday, December 15th. Good work Eric!

will be seeking persons to head tables of eight. Since PW intends to do this right, we will bring out the silver service, the lace tablecloths, table decorations by Barbara Patch, an exhibit of books previously reviewed, and we encourage you to invite book lovers from the larger community.

Each year the books we choose meet three criteria: a woman writer, a culture to be explored and some faith dimension – religious, spiritual, ethical, theological. The Claire Fergusson/Russ Van Alstyne mysteries (six thus far with a seventh out in April) are rich in suggesting all of the latter, as they involve their characters in the grittiness and grace of life lived.

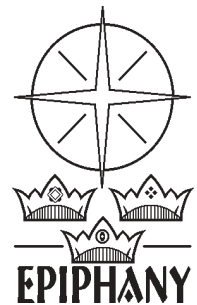
Calling All Scientists

Are you a scientist: A physicist? A mathematician? A science teacher? A biologist? An astronomer?

Is science what you do for full-time employment or full-time leisure?

Then Scott Randles and Pastor Rocky would like to invite you to a conversation among scientists at CPC. The first instance of that conversation will happen on Tuesday, January 19 at 7:00 p.m. at the Randles' home. Bring nothing but your experience of life as a scientist who worships at CPC.

Questions? Call Scott Randles.



People in the Church: What I Have Learned

Allan Hunter, well-known pacifist and Pilgrim Place resident, would always open a conversation with me by asking, “What have you learned?” From that experience I learned two things: 1. I never had an adequate answer, and 2. it was an important question to ask. Looking back at the 2009 *Communicator* articles, let me ask, what did I learn? The lessons were many and varied.

When I interviewed Wadie and Rita Alkhouri I wanted to tell their story of living in three cultures: Syria, the Syrian-American group in Southern California, and the rest of American culture, which includes CPC. Their three remarkable children stand out in my memory. Quite young, they know how much they are loved. As they grow up they will have the example of their own parents’ sense of value and commitment. My hopes for our future get buoyed by the promise of what those children will become, and what they will contribute to the lives of all God’s creatures.

In the family of John and Rita Watts I saw the wisdom of parents, and the wisdom of young adults as well. Kahlil Gibran’s *The Prophet* reminds us that “your children are not your own,” rather they are people entrusted to your care for awhile. John and Rita seemed to live that admonition, making sure that their children had the opportunity to develop a deeply grounded faith, yet encouraging their maturing children to make their own decisions. Each child made a somewhat different decision. John and Rita respected and affirmed them all.

Eric and Teresa Bernal came from very strong church experiences in the Philippines. Their commitment to CPC amazed and impressed me. “Work, family, and church” are the three important essentials of their lives. They are a sterling example of the kinds of families that sustain and guide CPC.

Rizek Abushaar, a Palestinian Christian, like the Alkhouri family and many members of Pilgrim Place and Westminster Gardens, brings a valuable international perspective to CPC. I especially appreciated his willingness to educate us about the lives of Palestinians today and his efforts to promote justice as well as peace.

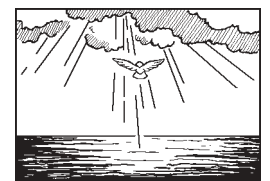
Despite a non-stop busy year trying to keep up with all the requests to speak about John Calvin on the 500th anniversary of his birth, Jane Douglass did not neglect CPC. She provided us with a film and discussion about Calvin, and somehow carved out time to indulge my desire to interview her. In 90 minutes I took 11 pages

of notes. Whew! Then Jane, respectful both of CPC and of Calvin, reviewed and corrected my draft. How I wish more of my professors had been like her.

When I have used the word “ritual” I have often put “meaningless” before it. Jay and Elsie Harber taught me the importance of ritual, especially as one approaches the end of life. The repetition of deeply held feelings and meanings provide a kind of home where fears and doubts are somehow kept at bay. The oft-repeated prayer, the morning greeting of God’s day, grace at the meal, an evening recollection of blessings – all these things give life purpose and joy, while giving us connection to a life after this one.

The people who met to consider the topic of death, by reading Studs Terkel’s, *Will the Circle be Unbroken?*, brought a rich wisdom to the subject. Denial of death is strong, especially in America. According to the group, we tend to do an especially poor job of sustaining others in the year following a significant loss. Seen from a different perspective, I wonder how many of us have asked, “how will I reach out to others for support and consolation following the loss of a loved one?” Honestly, the thought never before occurred to me.

This past year the PYGs’ service project took them to Tucson and Nogales. They saw people seeking refuge in the United States. They were “illegals,” and they were also people, very desperate people. What should one do? They struggled with that question. I was reminded of the story of a young man, making good money, who volunteered to do charity work in a poor section of town. He told Robert Coles, “I go to church every Sunday, and I listen to that minister talking about Jesus and what He said and how He lived, and I look around in the church ... and, well, wonder what Jesus must be thinking about all of us down here, sitting in those comfortable pews, living our comfortable lives.... The trouble is, if you keep going to [the poor section], you end up not being able to shrug off those folks, the millions of them, as surplus labor, or as the underclass....” For some of the PYGs, I suspect this is a chapter in their lives that is not yet complete. Moments like these provoke the question, how should I live my life? Rocky Supinger’s sermon of September 6th – on borders and what they mean, how they change our perspective, and how Jesus crossed



Those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty.

— John 4:14

(see **Learned** on page 6)



Let us kneel before
the Lord, our Maker!
Psalm 95:6

Learned (cont. from Page 5)

borders – superbly met the challenge of offering a framework that PYGs could use to explore the meaning of their experience. Ask Rocky for a copy.

Interviewing the Deacons and Elders toward the end of the year was yet another wonderful experience for me. Each person I interviewed felt that they had been useful and valued. You know of course where they get that: from you and other people in our congregation. It reminded me of the conclusion to Robert Coles' book, *The Call of Service*, when he presses people with the question, "why do you perform these acts of charity?" They respond by telling him: "look at the people we help, and what they do for us – have you no idea what they mean to us?" So it's ultimately thanks to the people of the church – you – for making service so rewarding.

Researching last month's article on Harry Brunger, I looked up some quotes from his good friend, William Sloane Coffin. Take a look at the statement below and tell me what you think – did Coffin teach this to Harry, or did Harry teach this to Coffin? It sounds so quintessentially like Harry Brunger. It also seems a good way to end this article and start 2010.

"Hope is a state of mind independent of the state of the world. If your heart's full of hope, you can be persistent when you can't be optimistic. You can keep the faith despite the evidence, knowing that only in so doing has the evidence any chance of changing. So while I'm not optimistic, I'm always very hopeful."

~Dick Johnson

Conscientious Projector

The third Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the Old Packing House in Claremont the Conscientious Projector invites the entire community to view and discuss a film relating to current social issues. Wednesday, January 20 the film will be *American Casino*.

Thank You for Service

Thank you to our class of outgoing officers who have faithfully served Claremont Presbyterian Church. Retiring Elders are Jean Cochran, Dean Derleth, Mary Ida Gardner, John Hill and Nora Quinn. Deacons who have completed their term of service are Margaret Artino, Kirk Bernal, Gwen Bray, Sally Lopez, Patricia Maine, Delight Slotemaker de Bruine and Carol West.

February 6 Concert for Orchestra and Organ

The Presbyterian Performing Arts Committee is pleased to announce that on February 6, 2010, the Pasadena Community Orchestra under the leadership of Alan Reinecke, Musical Director, will be appearing at Claremont Presbyterian Church with Tabitha Henken, Organist, for an evening of Organ and Orchestral Music. The program will range from the Baroque to Neo Classical. In October 2009, Ms. Henken performed at First Congregational Church on the World's largest Church Pipe Organ. Mr. Reinecke is in his second season as Musical Director and Conductor of the Pasadena Community Orchestra. This is a must see concert to hear our glorious pipe organ in an orchestral setting. The Performing Arts Committee is soliciting donations which can be listed in the program to help offset this community wide event. Bring your music lover friends and neighbors. There will be a free will offering during an interlude of the concert. Don't miss the splendor of the evening's music making.


CPC to Host Presbytery January 30

Claremont Presbyterian Church will be hosting the stated meeting of San Gabriel Presbytery on Saturday, January 30th from 9:00 a.m. until noon. Please speak with one of the Pastors if you would be interested in helping out with hospitality for this event.

Financial Highlights

CLAREMONT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH AS OF 11/30/09	ACTUAL	BUDGET
Pledges	\$469,251	\$499,583
Reserves	0	0
Other Income	65,286	62,792
Expenses	(573,898)	(594,619)
VARIANCE	(39,361)	(32,244)
CHILDREN'S CENTER AS OF 11/30/09	ACTUAL	BUDGET
Income	\$468,107	571,883
Expenses	(500,843)	(589,551)
VARIANCE	(32,736)	(17,668)

A more complete financial report is available in the church office.



The *Communicator* is published monthly (except in summer) by Claremont Presbyterian Church. Submissions are subject to editing for content and length. To submit an article or item for the monthly calendar, please contact the church office by the 15th of the month by telephone at (909) 624-9693, email jcolclough@claremontpres.org or fax to (909) 624-4743.

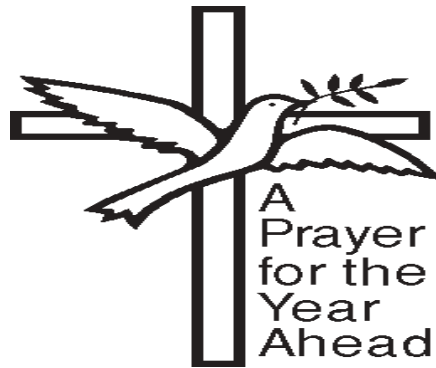
Editor: Jo Colclough

Pastors
Karen Sapio
Rocky Supinger

Church School
9:00 a.m.
(Except in Summer)

Worship
10:00 a.m.

Nursery Care
available both hours



Holy One, forever new and ageless,
we who live in space and time
begin the new year
of 2010
desiring that it - and we - be truly new.
O God who makes all things new, help us
to be new creations.
New Year's broom, sweep clean our home
of the old year's
grudges, mistakes, angry words...and unkindness.
Sweep clean our home of old 2009's
dusty, dull routines, ruts, and patterns
which keep us from a greater love of one another.
New Year's broom, sweep from our hearts all fear,
angry memories, and broken dreams.
May we see clearly again the beauty and blessings
of the history we share,
the bonds that unite us.
May our hearts, now swept clean.
have room for new dreams and new beginnings,
so that we, and the year 2010, can be truly new.
Amen
(Anonymous)



Welcome New Officers

We welcome the new officers who begin their term of service to Claremont Presbyterian Church and thank them for their commitment. New Elders in the class of 2012 are Tim Bovard, Ruth Currie, Jane Dempsey Douglass, Jeanne Master and Scott Randles. The new Youth Elder who will serve a one year term is Jess Croughan.

Joining the Board of Deacons, Class of 2012, are Bernadine Greenwood, Julie Lee, Daric Lopez, Tiffany McHugh, Jean Perry, Janet Siedschlag and Rita Watts. Nicole Kohnen will be the Youth Deacons for 2010.

COMMUNICATOR



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Deadline for next issue of the *Communicator*: January 15

Did You Know?

Eric Thorndyke, son of Earl & Sue Thorndyke has earned the rank of Eagle Scout, the highest advancement rank in scouting. He was honored December 15 at a meeting of Troop 403 which meets at Claremont Presbyterian Church.

Eric is an active member of the PYGs and an honor student currently in his junior year at Claremont High School. He is a member of the varsity water polo and swim teams and recently traveled to Germany with the CHS German Club.

Save the Date!

- February 5 - 7 Annual Interfaith Interchange with Temple Beth Israel
- February 7 Souperbowl of Caring
- February 17 Ash Wednesday

Annual Reports Due

Annual Reports by all Commission, Committee or Board Chairpersons are due by January 10. Please send your report to Joan Leibeck, CPC Office Manager. You may email your report to joan@claremontpres.org or bring it on disk or hard copy to the church office. For more information, call Joan at the church office at (909) 624-9693.

Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Congregation will be held Sunday, January 31 immediately following worship.