



The Parishscope

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Pat McLaughlin, Editor



FELICITATIONS

So what, you may ask, do Rev. Jeremiah Wright, St. Paul, Pocahontas, Simon and Garfunkel, and the Beatles all have in common?

Here's a clue:

You think the only people who are people
Are the people who look and think like you
But if you walk the footsteps of a stranger
You'll learn things you never knew, you never knew.

(from Pocahontas, Colors of the Wind)

Here's another:

But now you must get rid of all such things – anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive language from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have stripped off the old self with its practices and have clothed yourselves with the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of its creator. In that renewal there is no longer Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and free; but Christ is all and in all! (Paul, Letter to the Colossians)

Our denomination has been besieged by negative press stemming from sound bites and some of the statements of Rev. Jeremiah Wright, past minister of Trinity United Church of Christ. Some of us are appalled by opportunistic statements about his lack of patriotism based on a few seconds from sermons taken out of context. Some of us (often the same group) are equally troubled by Rev. Wright's inference that HIV was created as a form of genocide against people of color. Whoa! Where have we gone wrong? Should we sit by quietly while people crucify Rev. Wright, a much-respected and effective minister and patriot?

Can we overlook someone who presumably thinks so poorly of our nation as to warrant black-and-white explanations for the physical and psychological plagues that afflict us? What do we condone, what do we condemn?

Alas, neither the questions nor the answers are simple. We thrive on simple "us vs. them" thinking and guilt-by-association morality. Our polarizing language is the tip of the iceberg, and the Jeremiah Wright controversy is a huge wake-up call to Christians and Americans of all stripes and persuasions. Something is clearly out-of-whack with our country and our hearts. It is time to have – as our denominational leaders have asked of us – to have a "sacred conversation on racism."

Most all of us put huge "Do Not Enter" signs in front of our heads and our hearts, leaving no room for the wisdom of a stranger (or of God). We need Pocahontas and St. Paul to teach us a thing or two about what it means to be a Christian. In fact, I believe that Paul would commiserate with Jeremiah Wright, for he continues to be maligned (both fairly and unfairly) for statements taken out of context. If you think of Paul as a misogynist and sexual prude, obsessed with chastity and dismissive of women – well, you're doing to him what the worst right-wing commentators were doing to Jeremiah Wright. (I, for one, think that, while both Rev. Wright and St. Paul have said the occasional wrong-headed statement, they were right at least 95% of the time.)

This challenge is the yeast for our summer worship series, where we will try to "marry" the modern wisdom of popular songs from the Beatles, Simon and Garfunkel, et al., with the ancient truths of Jesus as presented by St. Paul. The message is two-fold: 1) we live fuller and healthier lives when we open ourselves to others, especially people who are *not* just like us; and 2) a peaceful world is possible only when we work

on behalf of justice for all. In addition to learning from old and new prophets, we will write “letters” to those with whom we yearn to be in community.

Come join us for what promises to be an imaginative and provocative journey!



JUNE WOMEN’S GROUP

Ruth Robinson

A double treat – The ACC Women’s Group would like to invite friends and the ACC Men’s Group to come to our June meeting. Thursday, June

12, 6:30pm. We’ll have a social gathering time from 6:30—7pm, pot luck dinner at 7 and a delightful video at 7:30pm. The film, “Lost in Yonkers” is both charming and delightful. This is a peek at a life with challenges, oy, what challenges!

June 12 -- Seeing Someone Else’s Life Challenge through video – We’ll enjoy the video, which is an autobiography of Neil Simon’s childhood, called “Lost in Yonkers”. Neil Simon's *Lost in Yonkers* is the film adaptation of Neil Simon's Tony Award-winning Broadway play. Simon's screenplay, set in 1942 Yonkers, New York, is a human comedy about two young brothers, Jay and Arty (Brad Stoll and Mike Damus), who are forced by circumstances to live with their austere and demanding grandmother (Irene Worth), their loving, high-spirited, and childlike Aunt Bella (Mercedes Ruehl), and their tough-talking gangster Uncle Louie (Richard Dreyfuss). While firmly anchored in time and place, the film's strength lies in its larger view of how human differences, pain and lots of humor go into the making of a family. It's an ageless and universal theme which Neil Simon pursued with great dramatic insight to win a Pulitzer Prize.

Come for a light hearted evening of good food, good company and a good film!



CONGREGATIONAL CONVERSATION – NEXT STEPS

Jill Bryans

The first focus group has been formed to review the data from our recent conversation. They will be

meeting on Saturday, May 31 from 8:30am – 11:30am. We still need volunteers for the second group which will be involved in planning the second congregational conversation, based on the information provided by Group One. Please let Elena or Jill know of your interest.



SPIRIT AND THE ARTS SUMMER

Michael Mansfield

3rd Annual Peace Child Summer Arts Camp

August 11-15 (16), 2008

- Dancing, Acting, Art, Music, Singing, Circus Skills, Shadow Puppets, and Much More
- One-Week Musical Theater Production Based on Themes of Peace and Kindness and Community
- Monday through Friday -- 9-1 each day with a culminating show at 7 PM on Friday (and maybe again on Saturday based on need).
- Morning snack and lunch included.

Artist Instructors:

Lisa Klein (Art, Circus Skills, and Shadow Puppets)

Michael Mansfield (Acting and Dancing)

Shanti Moorjani (Singing and Music)

- \$125 For the Week

Applications and information available at the Church office. Flyers about the Program are available in the Church lobby. Please share with friends.

For more information, contact:

Michael Mansfield 673-5150 jeangarcon@aol.com

Shanti Moorjani 843-7745

leslieshanti@yahoo.com

or

Arlington Community Church 526-9146

Website www.acc-ucc.org



SPREAD THE LOVE STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH SPECIAL OFFERING

Jill Bryans

The Board of Missions and Social Justice will be conducting a Special Offering on Fathers’ Day,

June 15 to support our denomination’s Strengthen the Church program. From funding new congregations to invigorating existing ones, from fostering tomorrow’s leaders to nurturing today’s, your gift helps to build UCC’s future. Our offerings will be directed to the NCNC Conference, Local Church Ministries, and for the first time this year, The Stillspeaking Ministry. “No matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey, you’re welcome here – God is Still Speaking.”



A CONVERSATION ON RACE

Excerpt from SF Chronicle – 05/18/08

From the pulpit of a Danville church, the leader of the 1.2 million member United Church of Christ on Sunday urged those gathered to start a national, "sacred" conversation about one of the most toxic topics in American life: race.

It is an issue that the Rev. John Thomas said has often been discussed in the unhealthiest terms since the birth of the nation. But it is an issue that has also recently engulfed the denomination after sermons by one of its pastors, the Rev. Jeremiah Wright, were used as a political tool to attack one of its parishioners, presidential candidate Barack Obama.

"The ugliness we watched on television as media manipulators tried to scare us from voting for an African American candidate by presenting a deliberately frightening caricature of his African American pastor reminded us of how ugly the conversation on race can be," said Thomas, president and general minister of the United Church of Christ.

Thomas' sermon was followed by the first in what is expected to be a series of discussions about race at the 320-member Danville Congregational Church, one of many United Church of Christ churches participating in the effort. Hymns and prayers during the service touched on themes of reconciliation and fellowship with neighbors of all kinds, with an emphasis on race. The service included a collective prayer about the issue.

"Gracious God, as we gather here this day, we are deeply aware of the sin of racial hatred and prejudice that distorts your divine plan for human life," the congregation said in unison. "You created us in divine likeness, diverse and beautiful, but too often, we have failed to see every race and every person as a reflection of your image."

Ministers around the Bay Area - including Pentecostal, Episcopalian, Baptist and nondenominational evangelicals - have said race is among the most difficult issues for their congregations to address. Churches rarely reflect the diversity of the Bay Area or the nation. That includes Danville Congregational, which is overwhelmingly white, and the United Church of Christ, which is 91 percent white.

Professor William McKinney, an ordained UCC minister and president of the Pacific School of Religion, a UCC-affiliated seminary in Berkeley, said that church is perhaps the place where society segregates itself the most. McKinney was a visitor in Danville on Sunday. "There's a paradox that in a

(denomination) that talks the talk as much as anybody that we remain divided racially," he said. Given those facts, McKinney said, "it's in places like this that the conversation needs to take place."

Experts on church history said the goals of the conversation on race fit directly within the history of the denomination. It is the most liberal mainline Protestant denomination, and has often been at the leading edge of social issues.

E-mail Matthai Kuruvila at mkuruvila@sfcchronicle.com.
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FOOD & CLOTHING BARRELS

Jill Bryans

The Board of Missions & Social Justice has made the decision to sponsor the collection of food only and phase out the collection of used clothing. We no longer have a relationship with Friends Outside and GRIP no longer receives used clothing, so we are requesting that you donate any clothing or household items to Goodwill or other charity of your choice.

Please do not bring clothing or any items other than food to church. Hunger is a growing problem in the world today, and it seems we could be of better service by actively encouraging the donation of food items for the Richmond Emergency Food Pantry. Hence, we plan to have the Food Barrel out on Sundays to heighten awareness of the need. One idea - if you clip coupons, you might consider purchasing items you may not use yourself with your coupons for the food barrel. Thank you so much for your donations – both in the past and the future!



JUNE MINI-CONCERT

Shanti Moorjani

The last Mini Concert for the spring season will be Friday, June 6, featuring the Bay Area Classical Harmonies (B.A.C.H.).

Part of the concert will be classical favorites such as Vivaldi's **Gloria** conducted by Andrew Chung, and part of the music will be Armenian choral sounds, conducted by Artin Der Minassians. This organization is lauding the many musical accomplishments over the last ten years. They are outstanding musicians who are committed to challenging and sometimes rarely heard music. We are pleased to have them back.

Friday, June 6, at 7:30 in the sanctuary.
\$15 general, \$12. senior, \$5. children.



BAY ASSOCIATION EVENTS

Please plan to attend the Bay Association Ecclesiastical Council ;
Saturday, June 7, 2008 - 8:30 am to 3:15 pm

The Council will be held at Plymouth UCC
424 Monte Vista Avenue, Oakland, CA 94611-4570
The Council will open registration at 8:30 am, convene the Council at 9:00 am and continue until approximately 3:15 pm with a break for lunch.

Please RSVP to

corresponding.secty@bayassociation.org

so we know how many folks to expect and childcare needs.

It is **important** that **ALL Bay Association congregations be represented** at this important event in the life of our community. **Each congregation should have at least one delegate present.** All authorized ministers in the Bay Association are also urged to attend.

Two candidates for ordination will present their paper at this Council:

- 9:00 - 10:45 - Examination of Melissa Gardner-McBride
- 11:00 - 12:45 - Examination of Marijke Fakasiieiki
- LUNCH - 12:45 - 1:30 - Lunch will be provided by the Bay Association - with gratitude to the members of Plymouth United Church of Christ - A free will offering is requested.
- 1:30 - 3:15 - Examination of Thom Longino

Saturday June 7 - The Alameda County Coalition for Alternatives to the Death Penalty invites you to an Activist Training

Sat., June 7th - 10am - 3pm

1000 Broadway - 5th Floor

Oakland, CA 94607 (Near 12th St. BART)

Meet local activists who are working to end the death penalty. Learn more about the death penalty and how to get involved.

Hear from amazing speakers with first-hand knowledge of the death penalty.

Register for FREE. RSVP required. Lunch will be provided.

For more information, contact: 415-621-2493 or nminsker@aclunc.org

NOTE:

The church office will be open from 10:00am-noon, June 10-13 while Christy is on vacation



FALL PROGRAM

Would like input from people interested in fall programming for families – do we go to once every other week? Do we try to have a joint program for adults and children? If you have ideas and are interested in serving on a planning group, please talk to Felicity or Michael.



CHURCH CLEANUP PARTY

Russ Weeks

On a recent Saturday seven dedicated, energetic church members and two very young girls cleaned up weeds, trimmings, brush and other debris all over ACC grounds – upper patio area outside the Social Hall, Arlington-Rincon gore section, lower playground and parking area and other needy hot spots.

I want to thank each of the following seasoned, good natured men plus John Newton's two daughters, all directed by Randy Laferte.

Jim Cottle

Lowell Etzet

Charlie Fender

Ilhami Karaca

David Liao

John Newton and
Daughters.

The work crew was small in number but big in production.

It was reassuring to have John Newton and his two daughters join us in this worthwhile endeavor.

MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR BILL LAURIE

Saturday, June 7th at 11:00 am we will celebrate Bill's life. We need a few volunteers to act as ushers, or servers for the reception following the service. Please contact the office if you would like to help.

A BILLBOARD TO REMEMBER



ACC Calendar - June 2008

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 8:45 AM Adult Study(CE) 8:45 AM Choir Warm-up 10:00 AM Worship	2 4:00 PM Children Choir 7:30 PM Bell Choir	3 7:00 AM Prayer Group (Kelleys)	4 5:00 PM *Yoga (SH) 7:30 PM *Folk Dancing 7:30 PM Choir Rehearse	5 9:00 AM Senior Center (SH)	6 7:30 PM Mini Concert - B.A.C.H.	7 11:00 AM Bill Laurie Memorial
8 8:45 AM Adult Study(CE) 8:45 AM Choir Warm-up 10:00 AM Worship 10:30 AM Staff Meeting 11:30 AM Knitting Ministry 11:30 AM Worship Planning	9 4:00 PM Children Choir 7:00 PM Deacon's Meet 7:30 PM Bell Choir	10 7:00 AM Prayer Group (Kelleys) 7:30 PM Church Council(FR)	11 5:00 PM *Yoga (SH) 7:30 PM *Folk Dancing 7:30 PM Choir Rehearse	12 9:00 AM Senior Center (SH) 6:30 PM Women's Potluck & Program(SH)	13	14 Flag Day
15 Father's Day 8:45 AM Adult Study(CE) 8:45 AM Choir Warm-up 10:00 AM Worship	16 4:00 PM Children Choir 7:30 PM Bell Choir	17 SOUPER CENTER 7:00 AM Prayer Group (Kelleys)	18 PARISHSCOPE 10:30 AM Staff Meeting 5:00 PM *Yoga (SH) 7:30 PM *Folk Dancing 7:30 PM Choir Rehearse	19 9:00 AM Senior Center (SH)	20	21
22 8:45 AM Adult Study(CE) 8:45 AM Choir Warm-up 10:00 AM Worship 11:30 AM Missions	23 4:00 PM Children Choir 7:30 PM Bell Choir	24 7:00 AM Prayer Group (Kelleys) 7:00 PM Trustees	25 5:00 PM *Yoga (SH) 7:30 PM *Folk Dancing 7:30 PM Choir Rehearse	26 9:00 AM Senior Center (SH)	27 6:00 PM Bridge Potluck & Play(SH)	28
29 8:45 AM Adult Study(CE) 8:45 AM Choir Warm-up 10:00 AM Worship	30 4:00 PM Children Choir 7:30 PM Bell Choir					

Arlington Community Church

United Church of Christ
 52 Arlington Avenue
 Kensington, CA 94707

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SUNDAY June 1	SUNDAY, June 8	SUNDAY, June 15	SUNDAY, June 22	SUNDAY, June 29
8:45am - Adult Study 10:00am – Worship Felicity Wright Preaching	8:45am - Adult Study 10:00am - Worship Felicity Wright Preaching	8:45am - Adult Study 10:00am – Worship Felicity Wright Preaching	8:45am - Adult Study 10:00am - Worship Felicity Wright Preaching	8:45am - Adult Study 10:00am - Worship Felicity Wright /Michael Mansfield Preaching

THE NEXT DEADLINE IS JUNE 18TH FOR PUBLICATION IN THE JUNE 24TH ISSUE
 [Send *Parishscope* email to: pat@patricia-mclaughlin.net]

SPECIAL EVENTS		
Friday, June 6	7:30pm	Mini Concert – B.A.C.H.
Saturday, June 7	11:00am	Bill Laurie Memorial Service
Sunday, June 8	11:30am	Worship Planning
Tuesday, June 17	10:00am	Souper Center
Friday, June 27	6:00pm	Bridge Potluck & Play