

KENSINGTON PRESS

FEBRUARY 2012

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF SAN ANSELMO
An Inclusive Community

From the Pastor

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

Every Sunday in worship, I wear wooden cross, one made by Phil Gross out of the wood from an old pew taken from our sanctuary, and patterned after the crosses made by Merritt Robinson. I wear a tiny silver cross all the time. These crosses identify me as a Christian, certainly. But when you step back and think about it, the cross was a particularly inhumane means of execution. Why is that the symbol of our faith?

Christians have developed many ways of talking about the cross over the past two thousand years. Even Scripture takes different approaches to what the cross ought to mean for our faith. Some of these approaches seem to dwell on suffering; others seem to describe God as vengeful rather than loving. The cross remains an important symbol of our faith – but what does it mean to us – to Northern Californians of relative privilege in 2012?

Lent begins this month with Ash Wednesday on February 22. This Lent our theme for worship and study is **Cross-Wise**. **Cross-Wise** means we'll be exploring and learning what the symbol of the cross means for our faith today – we will strive to grow more “wise” about the cross. The theme also points to the path Jesus took and the choices he made that put him “cross-wise” with the religious authorities of

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Georges Rouault, *Christ on the Cross* (1936), detail

Ash Wednesday

Service of Communion and Imposition of Ashes

February 22, 7:00 pm

Lent is the Christian season of preparation before Easter. Lent is a season of soul-searching and repentance – to “repent” means to turn around, so repentance means turning around to move toward God and God’s hopes and desires for us, rather than turning away from God. Thus, Lent is a season for reflection and taking stock. Lent originated in the very earliest days of the Church as a preparatory time for Easter, when the faithful rededicated themselves and when converts were instructed in the faith and prepared for baptism. By observing the forty days of Lent, the individual Christian imitates Jesus’ withdrawal into the wilderness for forty days, as described in the Gospels. Jesus came through his forty days in the wilderness transformed and ready to serve as God wanted him to serve. That is our goal as well.

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday. Ash Wednesday is like a wake-up call. We have forty precious days to open ourselves up to God, to examine ourselves in the presence of one who created us, knows us, and loves us. We have forty days to face ourselves, and learn not to be afraid of God’s loving transformation.

Some people may associate the imposition of ashes – a mark of the cross in oil and ash on the forehead – with other, non-Reformed Christian traditions. But this tradition is ancient, from the very early church before the divisions and denominations we take for granted now. It is a very physical, embodied gesture of prayer and repentance to begin the Lenten season. It is not intended for a show of piety, shame or guilt. We use ashes as a sign of God’s grace, who in Christ allows and by the Spirit enables us to turn again to be disciples. In the imposition of ashes, we pray with and for one another, and we call one another to remember our baptism.

Join the community for worship on **Wednesday, February 22 at 7:00 pm**, as, together, we begin our “Cross-Wise” journey.

Welcome Daniel Canosa, Our New Director of Music

The following interview with Daniel Canosa appears on our new website, (see page 4), and was taken by our Webspinner extraordinariaire, Martha Olsen Joyce.

Argentinian-born Daniel Canosa is a talented conductor and musician who has led orchestras and choruses in Argentina, the United States, and Europe. We sat down recently with Daniel (the Spanish pronunciation, his preference, is close to “Danielle”) to get to know him a little bit better and talk about this new step with our church.

Together We Serve: How old were you when you first knew you were destined for a career in music?

Daniel Canosa: In Argentina, we celebrate Three Kings Day on the 12th day after Christmas, and that is when children receive gifts. When I was six years old, my father gave me a guitar. I began to play classical guitar, and studied at the Conservatory. I was always interested in music pedagogy and took courses in composing, harmony, and the like. By the age of thirteen I was even teaching guitar. Once I got to high school, however, I was thinking about architecture. My father was a builder, and I had always been interested in architecture. I thought life as an architect would be somehow safer or more stable than a life in music. Sometime during high school, however, it came to me with such certainty that my true calling was music. So I switched. I had to work up my courage to tell my parents, but they too could see that this was something very real for me, and they were very supportive and understanding.

TWS: How long have you been in the United States?

DC: I first came to California as a guest conductor for the Apollo Orchestra and chorus, exchanging positions with the conductor of that orchestra who went to Argentina to work with my ensemble. I performed Mozart Symphony No. 25 in G minor in and Vivaldi's Gloria. After the concert, I was asked to continue working for them so I did, and after a year I got my green card. Some years later I connected with Nicholas McGegan, Music Director of the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra and I began taking classes with him in Berkeley of Performance Practices of the Baroque Period.

Following the musical opportunities has led me to many places, including three years in the Netherlands where I was Director of Music for a church and a baroque orchestra. I have a deep love for period music, and founded several orchestras and vocal ensembles in Auburn and Sacramento. I now live in San Rafael.

TWS: You seem incredibly busy, so spare time is probably in short supply. But do you have any hobbies or outside interests?

DC: Yes I am pretty busy. I am currently the Music Director for the Mayflower Community Chorus in San Rafael, as well as the Artistic Director for the Bay Area Rainbow Symphony in San Francisco. My work tends to be seasonal, so the intensity of the work varies. But I have a lot of energy and love what I do. My work is my life; it is not categorized in blocks of time like a 9 to 5 job might be. Like any Latin person, I love spending time with my friends and family...cooking, or going to concerts. I used to paint. I would love to have a dog, but I travel too much!

TWS: What are you most looking forward to in working with our church?

DC: I think I am most looking forward to finding ways to connect Scripture with music. I find this intellectually and emotionally stimulating. Music brings a very particu-



Photo by Richard Schobohm

lar perspective to texts and ideas. It gives you a particular angle from where you can understand the text. I was recently listening to recordings of Lux Aeterna, one composed by Morten Laurjdsen and one by Palestrina. Such a difference!

TWS: Do you see music as a spiritual experience?

DC: Yes! Music makes no practical sense whatsoever. It doesn't exist...it is a series of sounds that comes and then it is gone. You can't hold it.

Over a lifetime many of us have experienced music as a connection to God, to the divine. There may be hymns that are in your bloodstream, that move you to tears for reasons you don't understand. That experience is personal and no one can take that away from you. At the same time, though we might want to, we cannot reconstruct that experience for someone else just by repeating it. All the circumstances that initiated that connection for you are personal and particular to a moment in time. What we can do is to try to create moments of beauty and truth, to allow us to be inspired again.

Music can create that moment that allows you to reach God. The music may be different or new, but the way that all beautiful music connects us to God is the same. We need to stay open to that. The essence of music is to remind people

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that there is an existence that is higher than everyday concerns. **TWS:** Where do you see your energies and talents taking our church in the future?

DC: When I interviewed with the Personnel Committee, *Libby Davis* talked about the church's musical resources as a "hidden treasure." I see in this treasure a golden opportunity to connect more broadly with the community. I envision more musical concerts and events for the Marin community beyond Sunday morning worship. But this is a vision that is much larger than just one person. We will have to get there together, and I will have a better feel for that as we go along.

TWS: If you had to race from a burning building, and could take only one record or CD with you, what would it be?

DC: Oh dear. I guess I would grab one of the last works of J.S. Bach, *The Art of the Fugue*.

TWS: How do you think you will spend your first month as Music Director at our church?

DC: I look forward to getting to know everyone! I will also, I know, be spending a lot of time organizing our church music, and building my reference tools for researching and selecting music.

TWS: We're happy to have you here and I'm sure there are more than a few people who will be able to show you the ropes!

DC: Yes, it's already starting to happen. I am looking forward to working with the staff, choir, musicians, and congregation to take the next steps in this church's remarkable musical journey.

Many thanks to the Personnel Committee and search team that brought Daniel Canosa to our church staff. Daniel can be reached at danielcanosa@togetherweserve.org.

Communications

Welcome to the Church of the 21st Century New Website Goes Live

On January 9th, we launched our new church website. Same URL, (www.togetherweserve.org), different look and feel. What's behind the change? First off, like cars and clothes, website design has a way of evolving. There are new features and capabilities we can now take advantage of, all while freshening up our look.

Our website is now better able to keep up with everything we are doing—announce new events, share news, even enable "conversations" within our community. Because our website is built using WordPress, not only will it be easier to update

Baroque Masterpiece Featured During Lent

Choir and Musicians to Perform Buxtehude's *Membra Jesu Nostr*

We know about Buxtehude, a German-Danish organist and composer of the Baroque period, through the famous story telling us that *J.S. Bach*, in his youth, walked 250 miles from Arnstadt to Lübeck to hear the esteemed master playing the organ at his post at *Marienkirche*.

What is less known is that **Dietrich Buxtehude** (ca. 1637-1707), was one of the greatest composers of his generation and an important influence on other composers. His artistry includes not only well-developed compositional techniques (in the realms of counterpoint and harmony), but most importantly, it was characterized by his ability to translate the most intimate spiritual feelings into the language of music.

Membra Jesu Nostr (BuxWV 75), Buxtehude's expressive and poignant masterpiece, represents the peak of 17th century German vocal music, and is considered to be the first Lutheran oratorio.

Composed in 1680, *Membra Jesu Nostr* is a cycle of seven cantatas, each a meditation on a different part of Christ's body: the feet, the knees, the hand, the side, the chest, the heart and the face. The text, *Salve Mundi Salutare* – also known as the *Rhythmica Oratio* – is a poem, formerly ascribed to Bernard of Clairvaux, but now believed to have been written by the medieval poet Arnuf of Louvain. Biblical words from Nahum, Isaiah, Zachariah, Song of Songs, 1 Peter, and the Psalms frame the mystical contemplations on the body of Christ.

Led by **Music Director Daniel Canosa**, the choir, soloists, an instrumental ensemble will be performing one cantata at each of the Sunday worship services during Lent, beginning on February 26th and concluding on April 1st.

and maintain, but we'll be able to support comments from viewers, very similar to what you may already be doing with Facebook or other blogs.

Home Page. The home page is really designed for the first time visitor. Who are we as a faith community? What time is worship on Sunday? What might make this a place for me or my family? These are the answers we try to paint clearly and simply on the home page. All the navigational tools and links stay at your fingertips on every page in the website.

Sermons. You can easily find the archive of Sermons but clicking the link "Sermons" at the top of any page. If you prefer to print sermons for easier reading, simply click the title of the sermon. Once it is open on your screen, "right click" to print (press the right mouse button for a list of options, one

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Small Group Ministries

Play Reading Group...Save the Date

On Saturday March 31st at 7pm, the Play Reading Group will host a theater party.

The Barn in Ross, home of the Ross Valley Players will be performing a comedy, *Twentieth Century*. (See promotional information below.)

Food and wine will be provided by the play reading group from 7 to 7:30. Tickets \$18 (advanced purchase).



TWENTIETH CENTURY

By Ben Hecht & Chris MacArthur
Adapted by Ken Ludwig

Turn the writer of *Lend Me A Tenor* loose with a screwball comedy from the 1930's and you get the best of both worlds.

Ken Ludwig has tightened and crafted a version of this classic set on the Twentieth Century Limited that is "the perfect escape" (*S.F. Chronicle*).

Oscar Jaffe is an egomaniacal theatre producer, but his career has slipped and he cannot get a backer for his next show. Lily Garland, previously a chorus girl who Oscar had wooed and who has become a Hollywood star, could save the show if she agrees to star in it.

By chance they occupy adjoining compartments on the way from Chicago to New York aboard the Twentieth Century Limited.

"A thrilling funhouse ride." *The New Yorker*
"A Hoot." *Wall Street Journal*

Sunday Seminars

God Does Not Punish

The Rev. Dr. Herman Waetjen
February 5, 12 and 19

New Testament scholar **Herman C. Waetjen** will lead a three-part Sunday Seminar series entitled *God Does Not Punish*, beginning Sunday February 3, and continuing the following two Sundays.

Course Description

Dr. Waetjen writes, "The Old Testament abounds in prophetic denunciations of Israel's disobedience and faithlessness, accompanied by pronouncements of punishment. In our first session on Feb 5, two sets of Old Testament passages will be examined. First, various pre-exilic texts will disclose Israel's continued violation of God's law and the prophetic vision of a divine resolution in the future, and, secondly, various post-exilic texts will reveal a more radical way in which God will resolve the human condition of sin and transgression. That will lead into the unexpected enunciation of the Apostle Paul in Galatians 3:15-19 that God is not the author of the law that was given to Israel at Sinai, but it was nevertheless incorporated into the testament of inheritance that God had established with Abraham. The third and final session will be devoted to passages in Paul's letter to the Romans which make it very clear that God does not punish human beings, and the law, that the angels constituted at Mount Sinai, was intended for no other purpose than to make human beings aware of their infection of sin and prepare them for God's salvation, a salvation that is primarily intended for this life in the world, but with the bonus of everlasting life."

Biography

Herman C. Waetjen received his Doktor der Theologie from the University of Tübingen in 1958. His writings in biblical scholarship include four books: **The**



Photo by Richard Schlobohm

Gospel of the Beloved Disciple: A Work in Two Editions (T&T Clark International, 2005), **Praying the Lord's Prayer: An Ageless Prayer for Today** (Trinity Press International, 1999), **A Reordering of Power: A Socio-Political Reading of Mark's Gospel** (Fortress Press, 1989), and **The Origin and Destiny of Humanness, a Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew** (Crystal Press, 1976). He also has contributed articles and essays to numerous journals, as well as exegetical resource material to the **New Proclamation, Year A, 2004-2005** (Fortress Press, 2004).

After 3 years at the School of Religion at University of Southern California, he became Professor of New Testament at San Francisco Theological Seminary in San Anselmo and at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, where he taught for 34 years. From the early 1970s, his interest in the issues facing the developing world drew him into regular periods as a visiting scholar and professor at several African institutions of higher learning: the University of Nairobi, Kenya (1972-73); Federal Theological Seminary in Edendale, South Africa (1979-80); the University of Zimbabwe (1986-87); and the University of Namibia (1993-94). He also taught briefly in South Korea and Russia.

Retiring in 1996 as the **Robert S. Dollar Emeritus Professor of New Testament**, Herman continues to teach and write. He resides in San Anselmo, California with his wife Mary, who is a member and elder of First Presbyterian Church of San Anselmo. Both Herman and Mary are active participants in our congregation's ministry.

Lenten Sunday Seminars

How God Saves Us

Dr. Gregory Love

The Christian faith claims that God “saves” us; in particular, it says that Jesus “died to save us from our sins.” But how does Jesus’ torture and execution save others from their guilt? This Lenten series begins by looking at the most popular answer to this question in the American Christian tradition that Jesus took our punishment on the cross. It then looks at this theory’s problems, and the alternatives offered by these sharp critics. Beyond the positions of penal substitution and the sharp critics, the series then presents a view which describes God as non-violent, yet as saving us through Jesus’ actions, including the cross. If you’ve ever wanted to make sense of the New Testament, come join us!

This six-week series is based on Professor Gregory Love’s recent work, **Love, Violence and the Cross: How the Nonviolent God Saves Us through the Cross of Christ**. The book can be purchased through wipfandstock.com, or Amazon.com (including a Kindle version). Reading the book before, or concurrent, with the series will greatly enhance what you get out of the classes, though you can get plenty from just attending the series.

Class Schedule and Description

February 26 “Jesus, the Reconciler of Justice and Mercy.” We’ll begin by looking at the most-common view of the cross in American Christian piety—the idea that Jesus died to take the punishment for sin that we deserved, thereby allowing a just God to forgive us and reconcile with us. We’ll look at the strengths, and problems, of this model. (Chs. 1-2 of Love’s book.)

March 4 “Jesus, the Light and Guide.” This week, we look at one alternative view of how Jesus saves us, offered by the sharp critics of penal substitu-



Photo Courtesy of San Francisco Theological Seminary sfts.edu

tion theory. Specifically, we look at the view of NT scholar Marcus Borg, and of mysticism. We’ll look at the strengths, and problems, of this model. I will then suggest my own way forward. (Chs. 3-6.)

March 11 “Jesus, the Power of Life over Death.” The first of my own four models presents the oldest Christian understanding of how Jesus’ death saves us. Through a painful, costly struggle, Jesus defeats the forces of evil arrayed against God’s beloved creation. (Ch. 7.)

March 18 “Jesus, the Hospitable One.” Many hymns sing of “Jesus’ blood covering my sins.” Yet the language of ritual sacrifice, so common in ancient cultures, is foreign to us today. In this second model, I reconstruct the meaning of sacrifice in a Biblical, yet surprisingly practical, way. (Ch. 8.)

March 25 “Jesus, the Just One.” The concept of divine justice is a problematic theme, because it has historically brought a very judgmental view of God, which harms the human psyche and justifies human violence. But it cannot be discarded from Biblical faith, and in fact, holds the deepest understanding of hope. In this third model, I reconstruct the view of Jesus paying the price for human sin and evil, and overcoming both, opening up

the new world of peace. (Ch. 9.)

April 1 “Jesus, the Securer of Meaning.” The human condition is burdened not only by sin, but also by great suffering and even tragedy. If God is to save us, God must overturn not only our sin, but also tragedy. This last model, which is my own creation, I show how God overcomes tragedy in Jesus, thus providing the promise of meaning in the midst of our loss and despair. (Chs. 10-11.)

Biography

The Rev. Gregory Anderson Love, Ph.D., is Associate Professor of Systematic Theology at San Francisco Theological Seminary. Prior to teaching seminarians, Dr. Love taught college students at St. Olaf College. Also a Presbyterian pastor, Dr. Love brings together the best of contemporary Christian theology with the issues of Christians in the pews. He is married to Julie, a Parish Associate here at FPCSA. Their daughter Claire was recently baptized here by full immersion. Dr. Love’s most recent book, *Love, Violence, and the Cross: How the Nonviolent God Saves Us Through the Cross of Christ*, looks at different understandings of God’s salvation in Christ.

God’s sovereign love is a mystery beyond the reach of the human mind. Human thought ascribes to God superlatives of power, wisdom, and goodness. But God reveals divine love in Jesus Christ by showing power in the form of a servant, wisdom in the folly of the cross, and goodness in receiving sinful men and women. The power of God’s love in Christ to transform the world discloses that the Redeemer is the Lord and Creator who made all things to serve the purpose of God’s love.

~Confession of 1967 (9.15)

Church & Society

Entering a New Year in the REST Program

by Joy Snyder

On a serious note, for those of you who have never participated in a Shelter Night. I've been thinking about sharing some little known facts about some specific homeless guests. Not sure if any of you might realize that we have more than one of the men we serve battling cancer or other very serious illness, or are in a 12-Step recovery program. Or maybe they are dealing with the breakup of their families before, during and/or after becoming homeless. As we move about Duncan Hall each week, listening and sharing, or just being present to our guests, we discover that many stereotypes about homeless continue to be proven generally untrue.

Elsewhere in this edition of the KP, you will notice a blessing, written by Bond Francisco, and delivered on our first Friday of the New Year in Duncan Hall. Its message applies throughout the Shelter Season and, for that matter, throughout the year ... for our guests as well as the many other "invisible" homeless or those who are precariously housed.

On a lighter note, we are grateful for the gradual and constant expansion of our volunteer cadre. We have already welcomed a new family (of 6) into the ranks, as well as 3 other new "community" (non-member) volunteers who have served (or plan to) more than once. We're also excited about the involvement of our Mid-High Youth (with a couple of mentoring High Schoolers), who served the Shelter on Friday, Jan. 20th. See a first-hand report about their experience in the "News" section of our website. (www.togetherweserve.org.)

Other news that will be "old" when you get this, includes a first-time ever "Seminary Serves the Shelter" night, held on Jan. 27th. Our intern, Chris Schilling, oversaw the marketing for this event, supported by Rev. Scott Clark. And, we have already benefitted from 6 seminary student volunteers (and counting!) who have served more than once. So, the community awareness of the Shelter (and, therefore, our support) is growing. Now, if only we could make the NEED go away!



Photo by Richard Schlobohm

Keep Hope Alive: Walt Gets Mail

Dear Baha and Walt,

I will be sending money for another 26 trees. They are in memory of the late **Dr. Maurice Bisharat**, who was born in Jerusalem, and like so many, was never able to return to his family home in West Jerusalem. I have seen the home when I was able to go.

Dr. Bisharat, among his many other talents, was a violinmaker! Recently, one of his violins was given to the **Said Music Conservatory** in Ramallah through his widow, **Mary**. Mary was able to bring the violin to **Miriam Said**, the widow of **Edward Said**, last June. Mrs. Said saw to it that the violin made it to Ramallah.

Dr. Bisharat made 26 violins in total. The one that was sent to Ramallah was his favorite. One of the members of our Sister City group is donating 26 trees in his memory and in honor of this violin's "return." You can expect the check in the mail in a few days.

On another bright note, Saturday we planted an olive tree in one of our community parks as a symbol of our Sister City friendship with Bethlehem. Our group was instrumental in getting the city to set aside some land to create a Sister City grove.

When seeds are planted, fertilized, and watered, they produce great fruit!



At right: the late Dr. Maurice Bisharat Below, Mrs. Mary Bisharat (right), with Mrs. Miriam Said, and violin #17

Photos courtesy of Patricia Daugherty



Buildings and Grounds

Thank You Mow and Blow Team!

A loyal group of volunteers again took on the job of mowing and trimming the lawn at the church this year. Work started in April and continued into December. Each week, two team members mow the lawns, trim the edges and sweep the sidewalks so that the lawns look well-tended for Sunday morning. This year's team included Mike Joyce, Al Flood, Stan Bluhm, Jim Cunningham, Jack Spears, David Jones, Ron Vestal, Steve Bicknell, John Duys, Tom McAfee, Matt Swalberg and Carl Basore.

In 2004, a group of eight volunteers began taking care of our lawns. The group has now grown to twelve members, which makes the job an easier one for all. If you would like to make this contribution to the church even easier, and at the same time get to know a Mow and Blower, the welcome mat is out. Talk to any of the above people or call **Carl Basore at 456-0965**

Photo by Richard Schlobohm



With unbounded enthusiasm, Jack Spears blows the lawn clippings from... the roof?

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Hey Buddy, Can You Spare a Mug?

If you have been putting off cleaning out your cupboard and want to pare down your odd collection of coffee mugs, this is a great time to help us replace our chipped mug collection. Simply bring them to the kitchen in Duncan Hall with a note for **Audrey Mahler**, our Sunday Sexton.



http://www.flickr.com/photos/mudster/29411159/

Membership & Outreach

New Member Class

March 11th, 11:30-2:00 pm

An Inquirer's Class will be offered on Sunday, March 11th, for the purpose of exploring the possibility of membership in our congregation. We will meet at 11:30, and conclude our time together about 2pm. **Child care can be provided** if we know ahead of time. The class will take place in the Fireside Room, the room just to the right as you enter the church.

There will be several presentations about our congregation's activities—within our own church community, in the larger community, and in the world.

After a light lunch, our pastor, **Joanne Whitt**, will lead us in a discussion of what the Presbyterian Church in general and ours in particular stands for. Some of the questions that have been raised in a class such as this include:

- What does it mean to be a Presbyterian?
- What is the history of the denomination and this church in particular?
- Why does one choose to become a member?
- Can one participate in all that this church offers and not join the membership?
- Where and how can I get involved in this church?

At this time also other members of the congregation will share something about their own experience in this faith community. We hope that as we reach the conclusion of our time together, all of us will know a little more about one another and about our church. Put this date on your calendar. You are more than welcome to join us for this informational and exciting session. Questions? Contact **Phyllis Schlobohm**, 388-3082 or **Mary Waetjen**, 456-8783.

In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit,
 we strive to serve Christ in our daily tasks
 and to live holy and joyful lives,
 even as we watch for God's new heaven and new earth,
 praying, "Come, Lord Jesus!"
 ~ A Brief Statement of Faith (10.4)
 Book of Confessions, PC(USA)

Happy 100th Birthday, Dorothy Houston!



Born on February 17th, 1912

*Please join us in celebrating
Dorothy's birthday
during coffee hour on February 19th
There will be cake!*



Our All-Church Valentine

Elder Robin Sparks introduced us to the practice of a Presbyterian Church in Monterey of sending a “Valentine” saying thank you to everyone in the church who has contributed his or her time and skills over the past 12 months. We will be publishing our Valentine in mid-February. We need the help of everyone in the church to gather the names of those who helped scrub, organize, shepherd, staple, teach, sing, play, rake and everything else ... all who helped by participating in the small and not-so-small tasks that keep our church thriving and faithful to the ministry to which God has called us. Please get your names and tasks to **Kathleen McCalla** by **February 3**.



Intergenerational Valentine Tea

The **Older Adults and Children and Youth Committees** will hold their annual Valentine Tea on Saturday, February 11th at 2:00pm in the Fireside Room. Everyone is welcome at this **formal English tea**. We will have supplies to make Valentines for those who wish and will enjoy delicious food and teas. Please mark your calendars and plan to join us for fun and fellowship. Watch the bulletin for sign ups or call **Martha Spears** at 342-2578 or 459-0267 to reserve your spot.



Session News

In this article we keep you up-to-date with what Session is working on. It's been a while since my last article, so there is a lot to catch up on!

Our December meeting was shared with Deacons. We had a brief meeting, followed by a time of fellowship and holiday conviviality in the Fireside Room.

Highlights from the approved September Session meeting minutes: Our church receives letters from time to time that are read aloud by Jean Holm, our Clerk of Session. Among them this month was a letter from Taylor Crouch, whom many of you may remember. He thanked us for the prayer blanket given to him and to all graduating Youth earlier in the summer. It was a joy to hear how his life is unfolding since moving away.

We voted as a Session to send the Marriage Overture to the Pres-

bytery of the Redwoods, which will then vote on whether to send the Overture to the General Assembly in 2012. We also approved the use of the new Sunday School curriculum of **Godly Play**.

Highlights from the approved October Session meeting minutes: During this meeting, we talked about “work about work” – and how time-intensive it can be to serve on Session and on other committees. We brainstormed ways that we, as a Session, can do a better job communicating with each other, and in particular how to leverage new web-enabled technologies to do so. We were visited by Dani Hamilton, and by her Liaison to Presbytery, Richard Schlobohm. Reverend Bell shared with us that 18 care packages, that the middle schoolers helped put together, were sent to our undergraduate college students.

The complete September and October minutes are available to all in the Church Library. Questions? Please contact me at marols@leapgroup.com. —**Martha Olsen Joyce**



Families, Children, & Youth

Youth Connection

02/05 – Super Bowl Party! (tbd)

02/12 – Coffee House

Bring your instruments (voice/guitar/violin) and/or your favorite sheet music and we'll create a joyful noise together.

02/19, 02/26 – We're taking these two weeks off because it's Ski Week.

Mark your Calendars for a **Mission Trip/Weekend April 27-29th** at Westminster Woods.

Families

Valentines Day Tea on Saturday, February 11th (*more information on page 8*)

Sunday School is off and running for preschool-5th grade during the Sunday morning services. Thank you to all of our teachers.

Another HUGE round of applause for everyone who participated in the **Family Christmas Eve Service** (aka pageant)! It was a wonderful experience from start to finish. Our youth and children led basically the entire service of Biblical readings and live nativity scenes. Readers, well done! Travelling magi, sheep, angels, and holy family, you were great! Lights, sets, props, costumes, and wranglers, couldn't have done it without you.

We had a wonderful turnout and even ran out of costumes for our friends to wear. It's time to create some new angel and sheep costumes this year so even more children may participate. Do you have ideas of how we might incorporate more theatre and young voices into our worship? I'm all ears...



Worship

Worship in February 2012

February 2

The Service for Healing in Community

Thursday, 6:30 p.m.*, the Sanctuary

Quiet Prayer, Taizé Music

*** Note: This is a new day and time**

February 5

5th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Communion

Wings Like Eagles

Isaiah 40:21-31

The Rev. Dr. Joanne Whitt, preaching

February 12

6th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Divine Healing

Psalm 30

Mark 1:40-45

Christopher Schilling, Seminary Intern, preaching

February 19

Transfiguration of the Lord

Help My Unbelief

Mark 9:2-29

The Rev. Diana Bell, preaching

February 22

Ash Wednesday

Communion and Imposition of Ashes

Psalm 51:1-17

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

Cross-Wise: Restore to Us the Joy of Your Salvation

The Rev. Dr. Joanne Whitt, preaching

February 26

1st Sunday in Lent

Cross-Wise: Beloved

Genesis 9:8-7

Mark 1:9-15

The Rev. Dr. Joanne Whitt, preaching



Eric Gill, *Anointing at Bethany* (detail)

The Service for Healing in Community: New Name, New Day and Time

In December, a group of interested folks met to discuss our service for wholeness and healing, including the relative drop in attendance and whether it's time to change or eliminate the service. In particular, we raised four questions:

- Is this service a good "fit" for our congregation?
- Might it be better attended if it were held at a different time?
- Might a different format or different music work better for us?
- Does the service suffer from lack of publicity or from a lack of understanding of its purpose?

In the course of this conversation, it emerged that there is a considerable amount of devotion to and interest in the service, and the ½ hour format, based on resources from the *Iona Community* and using *Taizé* music, seems to fit our congregation well.

There was, however, a willingness to reschedule the service if it would boost attendance. Several choir members said that if the service were the same night as choir rehearsal, they could attend. So we are moving the service to 6:30 p.m. on the first Thursday of each month, beginning in February.

Some suggested that the word "wholeness" might be confusing; still others speculated that those who have never attended the service may be confused about its purpose. The purpose of the service is to join as a community in sung, silent, and spoken prayer, for healing for ourselves, our loved ones and our world. "Healing" in this sense goes beyond healing of body, mind and spirit to include shalom, the Hebrew word that encompasses well-being, justice, fairness, and peace, for individuals, for societies, and for the world. You don't need to be sick, or know someone who is sick, to participate in the service. All you need is a desire to bring to God the concerns of your heart, or even to join with others in their concerns. As a result of these conversations, the name of the service has been changed to the Service for Healing in Community.

The service includes anointing with oil. In our conversation, people were adamant that we retain anointing, at the same time that they understood this might be the most unfamiliar element of the service. Anointing is symbolic. We do not believe it accomplishes some magical form of healing. During the service, the minister always says, "The use of oil as a symbol of healing and comfort is ancient and nearly universal. The laying on of hands is a Christian symbol of the power of the Christian fellowship to transform our lives. Both of these symbols point beyond themselves to the grace and power of God." No one at the service is required to receive anointing. All are encouraged to participate in the laying on of hands, because of our emphasis on the community aspect of prayer.

Please join us in the sanctuary at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, February 2, for the **Service for Healing in Community**.



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his day, at odds with them, eventually leading to his death.

We'll explore the cross through music. Each Sunday during Lent we'll hear one of a cycle of cantatas by Dietrich Buxtehude about the passion of Jesus, entitled *Membra Jesu Nostri*. Our new music director, *Daniel Canosa*, and the choir, are very excited about this lovely, stirring music. (Story on page 3)

We'll explore the cross through art. In addition to liturgical art being developed, we're inviting anyone who chooses to create a cross using materials signifying a crisis; an obstacle which has been overcome or which has not been overcome; a hurt; a hope; a prayer. I'm imaging crosses made of pencils, divorce papers, rainbows, photos ... your imagination is the only limitation. We will figure out how to use and display these crosses during the season, but we'll make sure they can be displayed with or without the name of the artist, if the struggle reflected in the cross is too personal.

We'll also explore the cross in the Sunday Seminar series led by SFTS professor of theology, Dr. Greg Love. (Story on page 5) Dr. Love has published a highly acclaimed book on atonement, the theological word we use to describe what we mean when we say "Jesus died for our sins," or that we are "saved by the cross." Dr. Love explores the old way of thinking about these beliefs and then offers new theories of atonement that affirm God's persistent love and grace. The Sunday Seminars will be Sundays after worship, beginning February 26, and continuing through Palm/Passion Sunday.

As I write this the wheels of our imaginations are still turning. I am excited. The point of Lent is that by Easter, we will have arrived at a different place than when we started – we will have become different people than we were on Ash Wednesday. Join me at the cross for the Lenten journey.

Together We Serve,
Joanne Whitt, Pastor

Pat Mallinson (1930-2008),
Station IX (woodcut; detail)



Continued from Page 3
of which will be to print).

Latest News. Every page contains a scrolling list of the five most recent news items. It's easy to find out new things that are taking place within our community, or topics that are of interest.

Upcoming Events. The home page will feature 3-5 upcoming events of interest to the broader community. This is in addition to the more detailed calendar—it makes it easier to check out what's happening at church. You can also see the entire list of featured events in the News & Events section. Want to promote your event? Contact Kathleen McCalla or Martha Olsen Joyce. (details below)

We hope that the website becomes an extension of our community and our life of faith, with information and resources that keep you connected beyond Sunday morning. Don't forget to take a moment to complete a brief online survey so we can know how we are doing and quickly address any questions or comments. Go to this link: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/6WCK7Q> ~ **Martha Olsen Joyce**

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ADULT BIBLE STUDY

9:00 a.m.

SUNDAY WORSHIP
& SUNDAY SCHOOL

10:00 a.m.

(Nursery Care)

The Rev. Dr. Joanne Whitt
Pastor and Head of Staff

The Rev. Diana Bell

*Associate Pastor for Families,
Children & Youth*

The Rev. Julie Love

Parish Associate

The Rev. Doug Olds

Parish Associate

Daniel Canosa

Director of Music

J. Carolyn Johnston

Business Manager

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Office Administrator

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Ring of Hope, from an original photo by Richard Schlobohm

A Blessing ... For Our REST Shelter Nights

**We gather at the destination of whatever paths
have led us to this place.**

We do not solicit what we have not,

but offer grateful praise for what is,

**And for what we have to share with each other
as brothers and sisters.**

May whatever spirit guides you

continue to accompany you

in your travels and your travails

And show you peace.

~Bond Francisco