



The Pine Tree

The Congregational Church of San Mateo
United Church of Christ

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Ash Wednesday Taizé Service

Join us for a spiritual worship experience on **Wed., February 25, at 7:00 p.m.** in Kloss Hall.

This service is unique in that it is held by candlelight, creating an atmosphere of softness and warmth from which flow deeply spiritual prayers, meaningful meditations, and beautiful music following the Taizé tradition. The prayers are both sung and spoken, sometimes by everyone, and sometimes by readers and soloists. There are no sermons or announcements. We will have a labyrinth for all to experience if they wish.

But what in the world does Taizé mean? Taizé (pronounced tay-ZAY), is the name of the village in France where this type of service originated. Brother Roger established the Taizé Community there during the 1940's to heal divisions and conflicts between Christians. The Taizé form of worship has spread all over the world, impacting the spirituality of countless worshippers everywhere.

The Fabulous Four Return!

Join the Fabulous Four on **February 22, at 4:00 p.m.** for a fantastic festival of music for two pianos, four hands and eight hands! Our very own Bonny Armacost, Angela Kraft Cross, Vija Norkvesta and Cari Parker will present a delightful concert of music by Scarlatti, Chopin, Schumann, Shostakovich, Bach and Bizet among others. Come see the four tickle the ivories! Admission is \$15 for adults, \$10 for students and seniors.

Sunday Celebrations

Season of Epiphany: *Let Your Life Shine*

Feb. 15 Preacher: Steve Naylor
Let Your Life Shine: Your Healing Power

Feb. 22 Preacher: Penny Nixon
Let Your Life Shine: Transformation Happens
Fab Four, Piano recital 4 p.m.

Notes From Penny

Beauty, Soup, and Life at CCSM

Believe it or not, Lent starts in about two weeks. We'll begin our journey on Ash Wednesday, February 25th. If you missed the service last year, you'll definitely want to make it a priority this year. We had a wonderfully moving service with a labyrinth in Kloss Hall that will magically appear again this year for you to walk a reflective journey.

As you read through this issue of *The Pine Tree*, you'll notice many opportunities to deepen your own spirituality this Lenten season. Our theme is "Discovering Beauty in Brokenness." There are certain *strands* of the Christian tradition that focus on our brokenness, as something that separates us from God and that requires some kind of "fixing." This Lent, we are going to take a different approach. While most of us are far more "whole" than we are "broken," we all have fragments, or broken places in our lives, our relationships, and our bodies. We will seek together to journey to more wholeness while uncovering the beauty that can be found in those broken places in our lives and in our world.

During Lent, we'll also be having a variety of Sunday worship services. The first Sunday of Lent, March 1st, we will have an opportunity for people to come forward for prayer during the service and during our communion time. We'll be singing and hearing some reflective music that helps open our souls to the divine in more expressive ways. On March 22nd, Angela will be performing an original composition based on Henri Nouwen's essay, *From the House of Fear to the House of Love*. Angela and I will be preaching together that day—her speaking through the beautiful organ music, and me reflecting on the theme of fear and love as we "dialogue" together.

Each year, I look forward to the Lenten season. It provides a way for me to intentionally reflect on my life and to choose to go deeper in my journey. I hope you will take the opportunity in this faith community to do the same. Together, we will emerge transformed on resurrection day.

—Peace, Penny



Youth & Family News

All Aboard for Train Day!

Saturday, February 21, 3:30-5:30 p.m. Bring your children, neighbors and any train buffs you know to enjoy Train Day. Watch the electric trains whistling by in the Buckham Room, and enjoy Brio Trains and train crafts in Kloss Hall. All young train buffs will receive a special train bag and have first choice on the train cake! For your contribution, please bring finger food to share and invite a friend to come. Train Day is a popular event, so please RSVP to Renato Floresca. r_floresca@yahoo.com.

Sunday, March 1st: Lenten Children's Festival.

This first Sunday in Lent will be our Children's Festival Sunday, where all the children come to church school in Kloss Hall. In keeping with our Lenten theme, discovering beauty in brokenness, we will be creating beautiful crosses from small parts—sand art crosses, tissue paper crosses and more. This is a perfect opportunity to invite your children's friends to join us for church and also a great opportunity to volunteer and lead a craft. Please see Betsy Woodward or Jennifer Jacoby Yeh if you wish to volunteer.

Lent in Church School

Our church school children will be engaged and inspired during Lent. Each classroom will have some beach glass in their sacred space to coordinate with the sermon topics. We have chosen Bible stories that talk about brokenness and wholeness. The stories are the calling of the disciples, the lost sheep and lost coin, the prodigal son and the story of Zacchaeus. And of course, there will be the Palm Sunday Processional and Children's Easter Activities for all ages.

Outreach is also an important aspect of Lent. As we deepen our relationship with God, we also need to reach out to others in need. Each child will receive a coin bank to take home and fill during Lent. Please keep the bank on your kitchen or dining room table. Each day or each week, add some coins or bills to your bank. On Palm Sunday, please bring your banks back, and we will dedicate the offering for one of our local church ministries.

Valentines Galore!

Last Sunday, Valentines were created in every classroom, and 57 Valentines were hung on the doorknobs of Pilgrim Plaza.

Confirmation Class Mentors Wanted!

Our Confirmation class has begun, but we are in search of mentors for the youth. Each student will be looking for a mentor, a church member who is willing to spend some time in the next few months with the student and be a faith mentor. The mentor would be sharing his/her faith story with the youth, having a meal together, sitting together in church once in a while, attending one Confirmation class and being present at the Confirmation ceremony on June 7th. It could be the beginning of a wonderful relationship! If you are interested in being a Confirmation mentor, please speak to Steve Naylor or send him an email. snaylor@ccsm-ucc.org.

Mid High News

Feb. 24: 5:00-7:30 p.m.: Shrove Tuesday! Come help set up for this event and enjoy a big pancake dinner with other members of our church! We'll have fun, yummy food, and enjoy helping out.

March 1: 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.: Fellowship. We will meet at church to discuss upcoming events and spend time together. For more information, contact Christiana (Christiana.e.Martinez@disney.com) or Joliene (Joliene.Wade@gmail.com)

Senior High News

60 Minutes: February: 15, 10:30 a.m. in the Fireplace Room.

Senior High Fellowship: February 22, March 8, and 22 at 6:30 p.m. in the Youth Room.

Tahoe Ski Trip, March 13-15: We will be heading up to Kings Beach in North Tahoe. We will leave Friday late afternoon, play in the snow Saturday and Sunday, and return to San Mateo on Sunday evening. Your friends are welcome, too. We are looking for parent chaperones, so please speak to Steve Naylor or send him an email snaylor@ccsm-ucc.org if you are available.



LENT SPIRITUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Sunday Morning Book Study: *Spiritual Disciplines*

Adult Spiritual Ed: Sundays at 9:30 a.m., Begins March 1.

Spiritual Disciplines? Ee-yew! Sounds painful! Why would I want to add *those* to my already full “to do” list? I’d rather celebrate! Rest! Read! Sing! Dance! Garden! Simplify my life! Hmmm. What if those *were* Spiritual Disciplines? Would you be interested, then?

Come with me to explore Adele Ahlberg Calhoun’s *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook, Practices That Transform Us* and consider how to enhance your faith journey during this Lenten Season. I will be facilitating a five-week Sunday morning study (using Calhoun’s book as a guide) from 9:30 to 10:15 a.m. in the Buckham Room from **March 1 to March 29**.

The handbook may be purchased through *Amazon.com* for \$16. We will also have 10 books available for purchase at the church. If you haven’t been able to secure a copy before our first gathering, don’t let that stop you from coming! I’m a former teacher, so I’ll have handouts!

Join me for lively discussion and activities centering on letting our lives shine through the daily ways we W.O.R.S.H.I.P. (Calhoun’s acronym to shape “particular ways of creating space for God”).

—Marge Boyd, New CCSM Member

Worship Ministry Opportunities

CCSM offers a variety of ways to participate in the life of worship. If you are interested in praying with others, offering a blessing to people at communion, or being a reader in worship, consider attending any or all of three upcoming training events.

Jerri Handy, CCSM’s seminary intern, will be leading the following training workshops in which you can learn and practice these worship ministries. These sessions are scheduled at CCSM in the Fireplace Room on Thursday evenings from 7:30-8:30 p.m. Please let Jerri know if you are interested and she will be in touch with you.

Thursday, March 12: a workshop to learn how to pray with others. Knowing how to offer a brief prayer to someone in need is valuable. This kind of prayer does not have to come from a pastor.

Thursday, April 2: a workshop for those interested in being better worship readers. We will learn the ‘how-to’ of reading in public and practice from the lectern.

A future workshop will be offered for those who want to offer the blessing at communion. We will practice ways to personalize the blessing to each person as we share communion.

Lenten Sermon Series

Discovering Beauty in Brokenness

First Sunday in Lent

March 1

Mark 8:27-38

Transforming Pain Into Power

Penny Nixon

Second Sunday in Lent

March 8

John 2:13-19

Re-memembering the Beauty of Our Bodies

Penny Nixon

Third Sunday in Lent

March 15

1 Corinthians 1:18-25

Discovering the Beauty in Foolishness

Art Domingue

Fourth Sunday in Lent

March 22

John 14:1-4, 1 John 4:16-21

Moving From the House of Fear to the House of Love

Penny Nixon/Angela Craft Cross

Fifth Sunday in Lent

March 29

John 11

The Beauty of Second Chances

Penny Nixon

Palm/Passion Sunday

April 5

The Beauty of Sanctuary

Penny Nixon, Steve Naylor & Jerri Handy

Children’s Processional

LENT SPIRITUAL OPPORTUNITIES



Three *Soup-er Sundays* in March

Here's the great news—we're growing! There were 27 people in membership class this past week. In September, November, December (and February so far), we are averaging over 300 people in worship.

Here's the challenge—how do we keep getting to know one another in this community?

Penny asked this question to Betty Stout. Betty provides the beautiful floral arrangements on many Sunday mornings and has been a member for over 50 years! When she asked Betty for her advice on how to help new people meet long-time members, Betty said without missing a beat—*food*. People love food. So, on **March 8th, 15th and 22nd**, immediately following the service, there will be soup and bread in Kloss Hall for everyone who wants it. (And children's activities) We'll sit at round tables and share food together. The only requirement—you have to sit at a table with people with whom you are unfamiliar at CCSM. Don't worry—we'll help you do that. We want to make more and more connections with one another and hear each other's stories. Here's the preview:

March 8th: Betty Stout teams up with soon-to-be member Edith Alvarenga (and more folks yet to volunteer) to provide delicious soup for all.

March 15th: CFE sports a St. Patrick's Day green décor featuring the famous CFE Minestrone (vegetarian) and bread, plus mac and cheese for kids, lemonade, and coffee.

March 22nd: The 20/30's Group will be sponsoring the Soup-er Sunday. A lot of the new people coming to our church are in their 20's and 30's, and since they are eager to be a part of this community, they are going to make sure you see them on this Sunday!

Stay for lunch on Soup-er Sundays—there are many super people here at CCSM that you haven't met yet!

Mark Your Calendars

Coming in Lent

We are in the process of putting together a program for those who are in search of meaningful employment.

Rev. Art Domingue is coming back to preach at CCSM!

Mark your calendars now for **Sunday, March 15th**. Art and Joanne will also be joining us for soup in Kloss Hall after church.

Holy Week 2009

Maundy Thursday, April 9 at 7 p.m.

Good Friday, April 10 at 7 p.m.

Future CCSM Programs in 2009

Enneagram

Spiritual Practices

Reading the Bible as a Progressive Christian

Brown Bag Bible Study With CCSM Ministers

On Wednesdays during Lent, join one of the ministers for Bible study. We'll be looking at the passages for the upcoming Sunday and reflecting on them together. Bring a brown bag lunch to the **Fireplace Room at 12:30 p.m. (March 4, 11, 18, 25 and April 1)**

Living Well with Chronic Illness Support Group

The support group will meet Monday evenings from **7:00-8:30 p.m. from March 9 to April 26** at 25 Latham Court, Hillsborough. The group will be led by Rev. Janet Bower and is offered free of charge as a gift from Lloyd Center of San Francisco. Please contact Rev. Bower to confirm your attendance, 650-342-3118 ext. 307 or jbower@sfts.edu.

Affinity Groups

20'30's Events

Remember: Wine Tasting in San Mateo! Sunday, February 15th, 2:00 p.m. meet at 750ml Wine Lounge, 227 San Mateo Dr. If you're not into wine just come for the food and friendship. Contact Steve Naylor, snaylor@ccsm-ucc.org for details.

Eco-Justice Group

Join us on the 3rd **Tuesday, Feb. 17, 7-8:00 p.m.** for our Environmental Justice group. Our first major project is greening CCSM and we are starting with cleaning supplies and an energy audit. If you care about making our church, community, and those connecting to our community GREEN then please join us.

Music and Art Circle

We will meet at noon in the Buckham Room on **February 20**. Jean Chamberlain will give a presentation on printmaking, the history and methods. This includes wood block, etching, serigraph and lithograph. Bring your sandwich—beverage and dessert are provided. Questions? Call Nancy Jalonon at 581-1237.

Monday Night Book Group

Monday, February 23, 7:30-9:00 p.m., Fireplace Room. We have chosen three good books so join us for a lively discussion! **Feb. 23:** *Exile* by Richard North Patterson: **March 30:** *People of the Book* by Geraldine Brooks: **April 27:** *Out Stealing Horses* by Per Petterson. Contact; Susan Stoehr. s_stoehr@hotmail.com.

Kaleidoscope Women's Group

Monday, March 2, 7:00-9:30 p.m., Buckham Room. Our March meeting is focused on poetry! We have many poets in our church, and often poetry can open our spirits to the presence of God. Bring a few favorite poems to share and a potluck dish! Contact: Shirley McKinnie at 650-349-3663.

Blanketeers Project

Blanketeers will be sewing a quilt project on **Saturday, March 7, 1-4:00 p.m.** in the Buckham room. If you would like to learn to sew a simple four patch quilt (lap size) email linda.skromme@gmail.com. Bring your sewing machine, fabric and quilting materials. We will all sew the same pattern together and learn new techniques.

LGBT Affinity Group

Join us for Contra Dancing at the Humanist Hall in Oakland on **Saturday, March 7th, 7-10:00 p.m.** Detail in next *Pine Tree*. In the meantime, check out their website at: www.lcfd.org. Contact: Annlee McGurk, 707 718-8597(c), annleem@comcast.net or Jon Karesh, 650 572-2621, jon94404@aol.com.

Joys & Concerns

Joy and Gratitude

Pierce McCoy Phillips was born on February 1, 2009 to Jeff and Mandy Phillips. (61-561 Pohaku Loa Way, Haleiwa, Hawaii 96712.) Congratulations to grandpa Julien Phillips.

Erin Leydig and Chris Stallings are excited to announce their engagement. After their wedding this summer, they will be leaving for a two-year teaching assignment in Escazu, Costa Rica!

Ryan Schwandt is fully recovered and back in school.

Betty Niederhaus is back home after a week in the hospital. Cards would be wonderful to Betty at 955 S. El Camino Real #212, San Mateo, CA 94402. Note her new room number!

Prayers of Comfort

Andi Daschbach, daughter-in-law of Joan Daschbach, passed away on Monday, January 26, 2009. Joan is back home from being with grandsons Lyle and Cooper and her son, John. Cards and visits would be welcome at The Peninsula Regent, 1 Baldwin Avenue #509, San Mateo, CA 94401.

On **Thursday, February 12**, at 11:00 a.m., a service of remembrance and celebration was held for **Charlotte Hunt** who passed away in December 2008.

Prayers of Healing

Sandi Blodgett's surgery was successful. She is home now and gathering strength for more chemotherapy.

Diane Griffith requests additional prayers. A new surgery date is February 27.

Travis Edmonson, friend of Jon Karesh, fighting with courage a painful bout of shingles before he begins his cancer treatment.

Norm Naegle at home in hospice care. He and Clare are grateful for all the prayers and love being sent their way.

Steve Dugas, Bob and Caroline Reinke's son-in-law, recovering from an auto accident Jan. 26.

Joan Kilroe had successful eye surgery. Prayers for a quick healing before more surgery is scheduled.

In Our Prayers

Terri Litz's friend, Bridgette Jensen, Barbara Apolskis, Ruth Black, Gene Boaden, Gladys Cretan, Elmer (Erik) and Veronica (Ronnie) Errichson, Ken Feldstein (husband of Nancy Feldstein), Mary Jane Foltz, Penny Gahagen, David Garrett (Patty Kane's friend), Carol Glasmann, Frances Goodrich, Carol Goodrich's mom, Ruth Gowen, Marjorie Griffin, Gina (Joan Kilroe's daughter-in-law), Amy Handy, (Jerri Handy's niece), the family of Paul Handy (Jerri Handy's beloved uncle), Dorothy Henson's family (daughter Cheryl Pierpont), the family of Sandy Kirk (Scotty Kirk's mom), Wolf - Joachim Lenigk (Margot Lenigk's son), Evelyn Loschenkohl, Barbara and Jim Lowrie, the family of Jean Mawdsley, Sue Miller, Eleanor Norberg, Martha Osborn, Allen Pero, Rosemarie Pero's husband, Elsie Phillips, Linnie Williams (sister of Vera Pitts) and Denis Cambell (friend of Vera's), Ruth Robinson, Jim Simmons (Kibbie Ruth's father)

Sunday Lunch Brigade Benefitting San Francisco Night Ministry!

Rev. Valerie McEntee has inspired us! Each Sunday afternoon, SF Night ministry holds an Open Cathedral worship service in San Francisco. They serve lunch afterward to 70 people. Kaleidoscope Women's Group would like to help coordinate a monthly sandwich brigade for the Night Ministry. It would mean people or groups volunteering to make lunches one Sunday a month. This would directly benefit the folks that Valerie serves. If you would like to help with this project, please call Marilyn Cintel, 650-343-7072 or the church office 650-343-3694.

NCNC Church Leadership Day, March 21

Our Northern California Nevada Conference is sponsoring this Church leadership day at Orinda Community Church. There are five major focus areas: Church Moderator Training, Stewardship and Finances, Summer Children's Programming, Youth Programming, and Young Adult Ministries. The cost is \$25 per church, so we can send as many people as wish to go! If you wish to attend, please talk with Betsy Woodward.

Sanctuary Accessibility Committee

This committee is focusing its attention on making the front entrance to our sanctuary accessible to those in wheelchairs and walkers. The committee will be reviewing architectural plans drawn in previous years and other options. The committee also plans to visit other churches with accessible entrances, explore financing and come up with a plan. The next meeting of the Accessibility Committee is Sunday, February 15, 12:00 noon in the Fireplace Room. You are welcome to attend. Please see Mike Mullery if you wish to join us for this meeting.

Stewardship Update

This year our stewardship committee, chaired by Joyce Montgomery, completed their task with excellent results. Notwithstanding the economic downturn, members continued to commit their finances and services to CCSM. We received total pledges of \$486,955 and new pledges are still coming in. The number of pledging units totaled 211, the highest number since 2003.

We are extremely pleased that 49 new members and friends pledged for the first time-the highest in the last 8 years. Their new pledges totaled \$65,920. Thank you to all friends and members who have shown their support to our ministries, mission and to the principles we stand for.

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

Tuesday, February 24, 6:00-7:00 p.m. Pancakes on Tuesday? You bet! Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper is our opportunity to eat up all the fat in the house before the beginning of Lent. It is also an excuse to have pancakes for supper! Look forward to delicious buttermilk and blueberry pancakes along with turkey ham and fruit. Invite your spouse or partner, your kids and grandparents and your neighbors and friends. Enjoy a delicious Pancake Supper along with Lenten activities and games for everyone.



CCSM Office: The church will be closed Monday, Feb. 16 for President's Day.

Oops! Resend Emails to CCSM

In the last few weeks, the church offices experienced technical difficulties with online services. We believe we may have lost some emails. If a staff member has still not replied to a personal email, she/he may still not received it. Please RESEND. We apologize for the inconvenience.

Spring Concert: Gloria Squared

The CCSM Festival Choir will present both the Vivaldi *Gloria* and John Rutter's *Gloria* for our spring concert on **May 17 at 10:30 a.m worship service**. Music is about contrasts. These are two very different settings of "the greater doxology" which is sung or recited at every mass *except* during the seasons of Lent and Advent.

In addition to the two *Glorias*, we will premier Donna Spencer's exquisite and moving setting of *Dona Nobis Pacem*.

Members of the CCSM orchestra will accompany all three works. Please join us in singing these marvelous works.

Sign-up Now For e-Pine Tree

Receive *The Pine Tree* hot off the press at our church website, ccsm-ucc.org! To participate you need Adobe Acrobat Reader on your computer, and you must be able to handle downloads. Send Kay Harris (kay@communi-ks.com) your request for the **e-Pine Tree update notice** via email. She'll put you on the list and you can download at your leisure!



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