



# The Pine Tree

The Congregational Church of San Mateo  
United Church of Christ

225 Tilton Avenue • San Mateo, California 94401

650 343-3694 • email: [info@ccsm-ucc.org](mailto:info@ccsm-ucc.org) • website: [www.ccsm-ucc.org](http://www.ccsm-ucc.org)

Vol. 59

Issue #1 • January 11–February 14, 2010

## Attend the Winter Congregational Meeting

By Lee and Mike Mullery Co-Moderators

Mark your calendars with a note to participate in the winter congregational meeting scheduled for **Sunday, January 31<sup>st</sup>** in the sanctuary immediately after the service.

There are three topics to be voted on:

- *First* is the budget for 2010, voted and approved by the Board of Ministries (BOM) on January 10<sup>th</sup>.
- *Second* is the call to Reverend Steve Naylor as Minister of Outreach and Youth, voted and approved by BOM on December 13, 2009.
- *Third* is a change in the by-laws to reflect the creation of the Personnel Committee as a permanent sub-committee of SFO.

Finally, there will be an update on the three projects that our church members will be asked to consider when plans are complete:

- Sacred Space, Memorial Garden and Tilton Avenue access.

So plan to be in church on January 31<sup>st</sup>, to worship, to discuss these issues and to vote. Your participation is one more way of strengthening our church and its ongoing mission.

## Sunday Celebrations

### The Season of Epiphany: To See Ourselves Anew

- Jan. 17 *A New Name*, Rev. Nixon
- Jan. 24 *A New Path of Joy*, Bishop Yvette Flunder, City of Refuge, UCC  
Faith film, Buckham room noon
- Jan. 31 *A New Savings Plan*, Rev. Nixon  
Congregational Meeting, 11:45 a.m.
- Feb. 7 Bill McKinney, President, Pacific School of Religion
- Feb. 14 *A New Body*, Rev. Nixon

## Notes from Penny

Though Christmas seems like a distant memory now that we are in a new decade, what a wonderful Christmas season we had here at CCSM! December was filled with special events: a fabulous concert, a memorable pageant and beautiful Christmas Eve services. (Over 500 people attended the Christmas Eve services.) To round out the season, we had an inspirational College Student Sunday.

Now we're approaching the third Sunday of Epiphany. The word epiphany means "a sudden, intuitive perception of or insight into the reality or essential meaning of something." This Epiphany, we are exploring a deeper spiritual understanding of ourselves as people of faith, as people who follow the teachings of this prophet Jesus from long ago.

I've already had an epiphany this year as a result of a movie and a novel. You may have had this experience too: where seemingly unimportant or common daily events converge in a way that brings sudden insight on a theme. It began with *Avatar*, the new hit movie from director James Cameron. The 3-D glasses and special effects made this a memorable movie experience, but more importantly, it was an amazing spiritual experience. Themes that are near and dear to me—the interconnectedness of life, respect for the earth, the power of intention—were depicted in creative imagery.

At the same time, I've been reading Margaret Atwood's newest book, *Year of the Flood*. Her dystopian novel reveals a future run by corporations instead of government and follows a group of people called God's gardeners who have learned to connect to and care for the earth. The future that she describes, though fictional in nature, is one that can be avoided only if we are willing to change the way we currently live.

The movie and the book have caused me to reflect more deeply on how we live and how my everyday practices either connect me to or disconnect me to the Source of Life in all things.

I hope you'll be looking for your epiphanies this season and share them with me as I have shared mine with you.



### Penny's Pick

Books I have found interesting:  
*The Hour I First Believed*, Wally Lamb  
*The Year of the Flood*, Margaret Atwood

# Youth & Family News

## Church School News

### Church School Teachers' Meeting

**Saturday, January 23, 9:30-11:00 a.m., Buckham Room.**

Church School Teachers, please reserve this time to gather for worship, planning, and brainstorming. We have a vibrant program, and we want to keep it growing! We will talk about the group site, our spring curriculum, *Godly Play* stories, Valentine's Day, Lent and Easter. Bring your calendar and call your teacher mates. Breakfast goodies will nourish you. If you need childcare, please call Betsy!

### All Aboard for Train Day!

It's coming again on **Saturday, January 30, 3:30-5:30 p.m.** A wonderful event for children and adults—invite your neighbors, friends, and especially train buffs! Watch the electric trains in the Buckham Room, play with Brio Trains in Kloss Hall and create train crafts. There will be train goodie bags for the young train buffs and train cake for all! If you wish to bring your electric trains, please email Renato Floresca, our train conductor. Please RSVP Renato to have spot at Train Day! [r\\_floresca@yahoo.com](mailto:r_floresca@yahoo.com).

### Church School Valentine Outreach

On the first two Sundays in February, our Church School children will be very busy creating Valentine's for Pilgrim Plaza residents (next door) and many of our older members. 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade youth will create 57 Valentines that they will hang on the doors of Pilgrim Plaza residents. Our 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade class in addition to 5-8 grade youth will make valentines for many of our older members who cannot attend church. It is a wonderful Valentine ministry that makes everyone feel happy. If you wish to buy doilies and heart stickers, please do and give them to Betsy for our Church School Valentine Outreach!

## Mid High News

**January 16-18, Mid Winter Camp.** Mid High will again enjoy a few days in the wilderness with other UCC and DOC churches! Make sure to get your registration forms in! This will be an exciting trip! We'll leave from church at 8:00 a.m. on Saturday, January 16 for Groveland and will return at about 2 p.m. on Monday, January 18.

**February 16, 5-7:30 p.m.** Mid High will be baking pancakes again for our Shrove Tuesday pancake supper. This is a fun way to get involved in the church community and enjoy a yummy breakfast-for-dinner before Lent. Come help out!

Make sure to keep these dates in mind! If you have any questions or would like information, email Joliene at [joliene.wade@gmail.com](mailto:joliene.wade@gmail.com).

## Senior High News

**Jan. 24 11:30 a.m.** Super Bowl Pizza Orders

**6:30-8 p.m.** Fellowship in Youth Room:  
*Creating Sacred Space in our Personal Lives*

**Jan. 31 10:30-11:30 a.m., 60 Minutes** with Mike Mullery

**11:30 a.m.** Super Bowl Pizza Orders  
Outreach Trip Commitment Date

**Feb. 6 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.** Make Super Bowl Pizza  
Lunch provided

**11:30-1:00 p.m.** Fellowship: *Creating Sacred Space Through Serving*

**Feb. 20 6:30-8 p.m.,** Fellowship in Youth Room:  
*Learning from Native American Spirituality*

---

## Senior High Outreach Trip 2010: We're going to "the Rez"

By Steve Naylor

This April the Senior High Youth students and leaders will work with the Oglala Lakota People on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. In other words, we are going to the Rez, as the locals call it, and working with the organization *Re-Member.org*. We are going here because through work projects and cultural immersion, we will develop a growing circle of advocates standing in solidarity with the Lakota people on Pine Ridge.

There is poverty on Pine Ridge. The poverty on Pine Ridge can be described in no other terms than "third world." It is common to find homes terribly overcrowded, as those with homes take in anyone in need of a roof over their head. Many homes are without electricity, running water, or sewers.

But that is only one part of the real story of the Oglala Lakota people who call Pine Ridge home. When we go to Re-Member, and work at Pine Ridge, we will have the opportunity to meet and work with some of the most amazing people. They are warm,

generous, giving and welcoming. Above all, they are survivors. After all they have experienced as a cultural tribe, the Lakota not only survive but they are building a stronger community. As we as volunteer we have the unique opportunity to work right beside them. Re-Member is helping address the severe housing crisis on Pine Ridge by working on homes across the Reservation. We will make current homes more secure, more energy efficient and safer, and we will build new homes as well. Re-Member is a vital part of the community of Pine Ridge and plays a leading role of providing adequate housing to everyone on Pine Ridge.

We welcome your prayers and hope that you will participate in learning about Native American culture with us as we embark on this life-changing journey.

## Join an Affinity Groups

### **The Music and Art Circle**

We will meet on **Friday, January 15 at noon** in the Buckham Room. **Amy Woolf** will present the program, ***Vietnam—A Journey Through History***. She will show slides and talk about a country that has played an important part in our recent history. Everyone is invited to attend. Bring a sandwich; dessert and beverages are provided. For information, call Pat Pepper at 343-4286.

### **Monday Night Book Group**

We will meet on **January 25 from 7:30-9:00 p.m.** in the Fireplace Room. We will be discussing ***The Art of Racing in the Rain*** by Garth Stein. It is a clever book written from the perspective of the family dog, Enzo. Then on **Monday, February 22**, our discussion will be around ***The Lost Symbol*** by Dan Brown. You can find this bestseller on sale at Costco and Walgreens. Please join us for an evocative discussion.

### **Kaleidoscope Women's Group**

Kaleidoscope Women's Group's **Monday, February 1** meeting will focus on downsizing and organizing. **Danelle Rienks**, church member who works as an organizer will present some of her best tips on de-cluttering your home. As a bonus, each person can bring three useful items from your home that you would like to give away. Please bring a quick and easy dish to share for dinner. Friends are always welcome!

**The church offices will be closed on Monday, January 18 for MLK Jr. Day**

### **LENTEN PREVIEW**

- **Ash Wednesday service, February 17th, 7 p.m.** Our Lenten Theme: *An Altar in the World*: finding the eternal in everyday life. Based on Barbara Brown Taylor's book of same title.
- **Adult Spiritual Education Hour** based on theme and book.
- **Lenten Devotional** written by CCSM members. We will begin having testimonies in the worship service by CCSM members. If you are interested in sharing your testimony, please speak to Penny, or send her an email at [pnixon@ccsm-ucc.org](mailto:pnixon@ccsm-ucc.org). This is a chance for you to bless the congregation with your faith journey.

## Joys & Concerns

### **Congratulations**

**Zoe Mullery**, CCSM secretary, is in the process of adopting **Gigi Richardson**, who will be 8 years old next month. Congratulations!

**Evan Robert Yee**, son of **Michelle Fontanosa-Yee** and **Dave Yee**, was dedicated on Dec. 20, 2009. Congratulations to the Yee family.

**Yanli Mi** and **Peter Bayley** and big sister, **Georgia** welcomed the birth of **Gloria** on December 31, 2009!

### **Prayers of Gratitude**

**Michelle (Montalbano) Wright** and **Carla Cornaglia** have both finished their radiation treatments and are glad to be healing now.

### **Prayers of Transition**

Longtime member **Elsie Phillips** has moved to Walnut Creek to be closer to her niece. Elsie Phillips, c/o Atria, 1400 Montego #148, Walnut Creek, CA 94598.

### **Prayers of Comfort**

**Louisa Shaul's** beloved father, **Sam Amato**, passed away Saturday, December 19, 2009. He was surrounded by his family and our love and prayers from CCSM.

**Bruce Mitchell**, passed away the morning of December 10, 2009, at home surrounded by his family. Please keep **Adrienne** and **Mark** in your prayers.

On December 2, 2009, long time church member, **Dale Witt** passed away peacefully in San Diego.

On December 31, 2009, **Michele Moffitt's brother-in-law, Tim Spears**, passed away after an unexpected stroke.

**Fran Doran**, a friend of the church and choir, passed away on January 6, 2010. Condolences may be sent to Barbara Doran at 3517 Hillcrest Drive, Belmont, 94002.

### **Prayers of Healing and Support**

**Gay Kocmich** is in Mills Extended Care after a fall. Prayers for healing and comfort.

**Margaret Good** and her son, **Randy**, need our prayers of support as Randy faces paralysis from an accident.

**Ethel Fox, Genel Morgan's** mother, is on hospice care at home.

Continued prayers for **Alex Londgren**, son of **Jennifer and Michael Londgren**, as he fights a prolonged illness.

**Lynn Marie Coye's father, Stan Glaiser**, has been in the hospital, for several weeks with multiple organ failure and pneumonia.

**Rosemarie Pero's daughter-in-law, Brenda**, is fighting multiple myeloma. Prayers for Brenda and her family.

**Gina, Joan Kilroe's daughter-in-law**, has a possible kidney transplant match. Prayers for best outcome.

Continued prayers for **Zee and Cliff Larrew, Margi Stone, and Scotty Scott**.

## Guest Preachers

We are very pleased to announce two special guest preachers in Epiphany.



### Bishop Yvette Flunder

Bishop Flunder

founded the City of Refuge UCC in 1991 in order to unite a gospel ministry with a social ministry. City of Refuge is a thriving inner-city congregation that celebrates the radically inclusive love of Jesus

Christ. Preaching a message of action, the church has experienced steady numerical and spiritual growth and is now located in the south of Market area of San Francisco at 1025 Howard Street.

In June 2003, Bishop Flunder was consecrated Presiding Bishop of The Fellowship, a multi-denominational fellowship of 110 primarily African American Christian leaders and laity representing 56 churches and faith-based organizations from all parts of the United States Mexico and Africa.



### PSR President Bill McKinney

How can we equip faith communities to play a vital role in public life? This question has driven Dr. McKinney's

research and education efforts in Protestant churches for more than two decades, and continues to inform his work as president at PSR. His focus is on leadership patterns in American Protestantism, congregational studies and issues in progressive Christianity. He is a sociologist and ordained minister in the United Church of Christ. His publications include *American Mainline Religion: Its Changing Shape and Future* (1987), *The Responsibility People* (1994), and *Studying Congregations* (1998).

## Mission Fundraising: Flamingo Flocking & Super Bowl Pizza!

The Senior High Youth Ministry program will be starting two fundraisers this January to help support our 2010 Outreach Trip to work with the Oglala Lakota people on the Pine Ridge Reservation. The first one is brand new for our congregation and is called *Flamingo Flocking*. Yes, you read that correctly. This is a successful and super fun fundraiser used all over the U.S. We will announce in church that the *Flocking Season* has begun and then you, as the congregation, get to donate to the Senior High Outreach Trip to have us put a *Flock of Pink Flamingos* on someone's yard. You can pay us to flock anyone you want, regardless of church attendance. You can flock relatives, church members, neighbors, friends, and foes. If you do not want to be *flocked*, then you can purchase *Flamingo Flocking Insurance*, and your lawn will become a No Flocking Zone. We even have special pots full of baby flamingos for us to flock apartments.

Look forward to hearing more details about this in church. We will start taking donations for the *Flamingo Flocking* "hit-list" this coming Sunday, January 17<sup>th</sup>. *Flamingo Flocks* will reside in lawns for 24-48 hours before flying away, and the *Flamingo Flocks* do not fly on weekends. We look forward to flocking you!

The second fundraiser we are doing is our annual Super Bowl Pizzas! We will be selling pre-made, unbaked pizzas in church on January 24 & 31. You can pick up your pizzas on February 7<sup>th</sup> before the Super Bowl begins. For details on the 2010 Outreach Trip, please see the article in this Pine Tree about "The Rez".

## Mark Your Calendars!

### February 16, 6:00 p.m., Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper!

Pancakes for supper? Yes! *Mardi Gras* or *Fat Tuesday* is when we eat up all the fat in the house before Lent. Mark your calendar and come to church for a delicious supper of buttermilk and blueberry pancakes accompanied by turkey ham and fruit. Invite your spouse or partner, your kids and grandparents and your neighbors and friends to join us. A special treat will be Lenten games during our meal!

**Saturday, March 13, we are hosting NCNC's Church Leadership Day, 9:00-4:00 p.m.** This is a wonderful day filled with workshops for lay leaders. UCC folks from churches in the area will join us for this day of learning how to make our church more vital! Workshops are designed for moderators and musicians, youth leaders and pastoral care teams.

Since we are the hosts, we are looking for a great team of volunteers to be the CCSM guides for the day to show people around our church, help them to find bathrooms and workshop rooms, and also help to set up lunch. Call Betsy if you would like to volunteer!

*The Pine Tree* • Page 4

**Lent Begins: Ash Wednesday Service,  
February 17th, 7 p.m.**



## The Pine Tree

A newsletter for the families & friends of the  
Congregational Church Of San Mateo, U.C.C.

**The Pine Tree (USPS 433-380)** is published in the interest of Christian Fellowship by The Congregational Church of San Mateo, 225 Tilton Ave., San Mateo, California, twice monthly. **Periodical class postage paid** at San Mateo, California. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Pine Tree, 225 Tilton Ave., San Mateo, CA 94401.

**PERIODICAL POSTAGE • TIME VALUED MAILING**