

# Good News



Community Presbyterian Church

January, 2009

## **From the Pastor**

One of the presents I received this Christmas was a kitchen scale. It will help since some of my favorite cookbooks often use weights for the fresh ingredients. It is digital and comes with some fancy features. And, of course, it includes a clock.

So that makes five clocks in our kitchen. The others are on the stove, the microwave, the coffee-maker, and the phone. When daylight-savings-time comes I will be springing forward more than a day—if you multiply one hour times the 25 clocks I'll have to reset in our home alone.

Does this seem a little much? Are clocks multiplying in your home as well? Is this a good thing, or should we be worried?

I started thinking about all the different activities that clocks make possible. In a very short time I was able to come up with a sizeable list. Then I divided that list into a few categories:

- as integral parts of other machines (the coffee-maker, the computer)
- as a means to sequence and organize activities (a daily schedule)
- as a way to compare similar events (track records, baking times)
- as a means to get people together (appointments, start times)

It is this last category that interests me here. Clocks allow us to meet together for a great variety of purposes without having to go from house to house gathering people up. They let us work together without having to live together. They make large scale social events possible with a minimum of communication. I can watch the beach volleyball competition at the Olympics in China together with a million other people. As

long as each of us has access to a clock, none of us has to talk with any of the rest of us for all of us to watch the same event at the same time.

Which brings me to my point: while it is sometimes good to do things together, or at least simultaneously, without having to physically be together, sometimes it's better just to be together. Sometimes it is good to use the clocks to bypass the social networking that would otherwise be necessary to get together. But sometimes the social networking itself is good.

I was brought up in the modern industrial age and have adapted fairly well to the global computer age; most of my life I run by the clock. Generally I like to know when things are going to start and when they will finish. I tend to get anxious easily when I find myself running behind schedule. And the flip side: I'm not very adept at gathering people together to do something when we are all good and ready.

Yet sometimes I long to have some time that is not clock-time, when things begin when we are ready for them to begin (and the beginning itself may be a gradual, hazy process) and end whenever it seems good.

A few years ago I lost my watch in an attempt to move in this direction ... but then I got a cell phone. I no longer pay attention to time once we begin our Sunday worship and time in not a consideration in the length of my sermons. And I am trying to let go of my anxiety when I'm behind.

But this clock multiplication is beginning to worry me. It makes me want to go off the clock entirely for say, one day a week, a sabbath or something like that. God might have been right after all; there may be some good in it for me, and for us.



## ANNUAL MEETING

Sunday, January 25  
**Following Worship**

It's time to look back on 2008 and plan for 2009. We'll review the annual report for 2008 and the proposed budget for 2009, approve the terms of call for the pastor, and address any other business that is presented.

Annual reports forms need to be returned to Med Hoover by January 15.

### Birthdays

16 Shirley Groefsema  
17 Janette Hudson  
21 Alice Schlak  
23 Valerie Arnold  
25 Richard Hoover  
27 Gerald Richman  
30 Nicole Costa

### Financial Report

November income	\$ 4,310.00
November expenses	\$ 5,137.12
Checking acct. balance	\$ 376.39

### Anniversaries

26 Vern and Jo Fisher



### Times of Praise

We have added a time of praise to our regular worship and, for now, are dividing it into three areas of praise:

- \* Blessings and answers to prayer
- \* Wonders of God's creation
- \* God's work to make us like Christ

Check out the blog: [stepsofpraise.blogspot.com](http://stepsofpraise.blogspot.com)



*“Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever, Amen” Ephesians 3:20-21*

Happy New Year!

Instead of a suggested Health Topic, I'd like to start this New Year by thinking together 'outside the box' with you. Rather than reminding us all about choosing to eat and exercise and live healthfully, which are important; let's kick off 2009 from a different perspective. We can choose to nourish a sense of expectation and openness to God's presence which allows us to relinquish control and welcome the unexpected.

Let me begin by sharing a story of a recent blessing I believe God surprised me with:

For quite a few years now, I have hosted the Bag Ladies' Bible Study group Christmas lunch at our house. This joyful occasion has become an incentive for me to trim our tree and set out decorations and have the house ready for company.

This year, a new member of our group offered to host our celebration instead. I happily accepted her kind offer.

Then I had an unexpected day off work December 18<sup>th</sup>; our youngest grandson Emilio's first birthday, - which was also the day before the luncheon. Since I didn't need to clean and prepare this year, in a blink of a gnat's eyelash I decided to drive up to the Bay area for the birthday party. I was also invited to spend the night and attend Alfonso's school program Friday morning as

well. I breezed into Gustine 15 minutes before the party in fine time and with a happy heart, full of precious family memories. I thank Sandy and God for making that special opportunity available.

My point is this: usually I would have declined the offer for another person to host our luncheon citing tradition, and all...and it would have been a fine time at our house once more. But, then I would never have known the blessings both with my family as well as my church family. I treasure the wonderful time we had in Sandy & Bill's home, complete with delicious food, beautiful decorations, her Nativity collection from world travels, and singing together around her piano.

There was a split second to decide one way or the other. Not a life and death decision, or even a dramatic moment, but a gentle little nudge inside my heart. I believe that our God routinely holds out his hand to offer each of us the chance to exchange the familiar and routine for the unexpected and unanticipated; the surprises He has ready for us, if only we can trust enough to accept them.

**GOD**

May we be brave enough to let out of the box we have kept Him in.

May we be attentive and ready for the surprises and blessing he has for us in 2009.

*Happy New Year, indeed!*

Blessings and Peace

*Nancy*

# COMMUNITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

399 Sixth Street  
Gustine, CA 95322  
Address Correction Service

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U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
Permit No. 12  
Gustine, CA 95322

Sunday School, 9:00 AM — Worship, 10:30 AM

Pastor — Mark Hollingsworth

Treasurer — Patricia Brown; Choir Director — Jim Conrad

Secretary — Med Hoover; Parish Nurse — Nancy Hollingsworth

Office Hours — 9:00-Noon, Wednesday, Thursday and by appointment

Telephone: (209) 854-6772; email: [emark@inreach.com](mailto:emark@inreach.com)

Web Site: [www.wefollowjesusingustine.org](http://www.wefollowjesusingustine.org)

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