

Good News



Community Presbyterian Church

May 2008

From the Pastor

Once or twice each decade it happens: Mothers' Day and Pentecost fall on the same Sunday. And this is one of those years. So, as your pastor, I'm faced with a dilemma

Since my first year as a pastor, I have tried to encourage a revival in the celebration of Pentecost. It is, after all, the birthday of the church and the day we celebrate God's sending his Holy Spirit into our world. We often have some sort of special decoration in the sanctuary, most people wear a red article of clothing, and we usually have a barbecue/picnic. We remember to pray for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit in each of our lives, and in the life of our congregation, and in all of Christ's church around the world. I enjoy Pentecost. And our celebration each year adds energy and life to our mission and ministry as a congregation.

But this year the day of Pentecost, seven Sundays after Easter, falls on the second Sunday in May, Mothers' Day. And Mothers' Day is sacred in a way that Pentecost is not. It would be sacrilegious to schedule an all-church picnic on this day. Sons and daughters (and husbands) are often expected to treat their mothers to at least one meal this day.

We can decorate the sanctuary in red and orange and yellow to symbolize the tongues of fire as long as we have pink bulletin covers and red and white carnations. We can pray for the Holy Spirit and for our church as long as we remember to thank God for our mothers.

Since we want to celebrate both Mothers' Day and Pentecost on the same day, it will be helpful to find some common ground between the two.

In order to do that we'll need to get past some

of our present conventions and get back to the spirit in which both of these days began.

Let me illustrate with Mothers' Day. The celebration of this day was begun **by** mothers **for** mothers and for all people. It was originally a day for mothers to gather with other mothers in order to work together to keep their sons from fighting with and killing other mothers' sons. Because of the love all mothers have for their children, a love which runs much deeper than culture, they are able to relate to mothers in enemy countries. Understanding that the grief those mothers were experiencing was similar to their own grief they were inspired to work for peace.

Over time Mothers' Day has become a day focused more on feelings than on action. It has become a day celebrated by children for their mothers. It has become a day more focused on the particular love of each mother and less on the deep common love shared by all mothers.

On the first Mothers' Day, mothers, because of a common love, gathered for common action. They worked together to break down cultural and national barriers in order to create a better world for all mothers and all their children.

On the first Pentecost, the Holy Spirit, because of God's love for all people, gathered people together for common action. The Spirit broke down cultural and national barriers to create a better world for all people.

There might well be some common ground here. Come to worship on Mothers/Pentecost Day to get to work. "God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us." (Romans 5:5)

Pastor Mark



Sunday, May 11



Birthdays

- 1 Barbara Wrobbel
- 2 Sharold Adam
- 3 Patricia Brown
- 6 Pastor Mark
- 12 Harrison Wallace
- 14 Marion Butts
- 14 Tristen Costa
- 16 Joann Lupton
- 16 Savannah Inaudi

Anniversaries

- 30 Dick and Shirley Groefsema



Our new roof is on over the entryway to the social hall.
Thank you!

Now we are "renovating" the entry to the sanctuary.
Please enter through the double doors for a couple of Sun-



“The Lord is a refuge for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble.

Those who know your name will trust in you, for you, Lord, have never forsaken those who seek you.”—Psalm 9:9-10

Lately it seems like quite a few of the people near and dear to me have had multiple “troubles” to deal with. Health concerns, financial crises, family stresses, major house and car repairs; you name it and I have pretty surely heard about it personally within the past few months. And what seems worse is the fact that several people have had multiple serious issues come at them either concurrently or sequentially.

How are we supposed to deal with it all? At times like this I sometimes wonder what is going on, and just how God is involved. Such situations seem overwhelming and unfair.

As I searched my Bible’s concordance for a verse to begin this article, under ‘trouble’ there were 51 references, and just above that was 1 single reference for ‘triumph’. That contrast spoke to me. Indeed, in this life we each will have many difficulties and trials, and why not? Even the spiritual giants of the Bible had great trials to deal with.

King Solomon, wisest of the rulers, found his accomplishments to be meaningless, but then wrote the beautiful “Time for every season” passage in Ecclesiastes 3. Job, of course lost literally everything and everyone then said: “Naked I came from my mother’s womb and naked I will depart. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away, may the name of the Lord be praised.” And

Jesus, God’s precious Son, lost his life, yet triumphed over death to bring victory to us in all our circumstances.

Even though times may and will be tough, our one resource never to fail involves inviting God into the middle of where we find ourselves. Take time to ask for His Presence which brings peace and power and strength. As the psalm writer tells us, the Lord has never forsaken those who seek him.

Not that the problems go away. Only and importantly that you and I are not alone on the journey. Now and for all time to come, Christ desires to be welcomed to come alongside each of us. Drink in His immeasurable love and comfort. Talk to Him then share your experience of Jesus with anyone else you bump into who needs Him. After all, we all do. And pray...pray.

As time passes, there will be occasion for celebrating once again—made all the sweeter by contrast to the difficult times. Psalm 30:5 reminds us: “...weeping may remain for a night but rejoicing comes in the morning”.

My heart and prayers are with all of you going through trials at this time. Please don’t try to go it alone...

With love hope and joy—

Nancy

By the way, there are approximately 270 references to joy in my concordance! Think on that!

COMMUNITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

399 Sixth Street
Gustine, CA 95322
Address Service Requested

NON-PROFIT ORG.
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: pastormark@wefollowjesusingustine.org

Web Site: www.wefollowjesusingustine.org



PROVERBS 17:22. NRSV