

# Good News



Community Presbyterian Church

November, 2009

## **From the Pastor**

It is pleasant and fitting to thank our God. Prayers of thanksgiving are a good way to begin to pray, in the beginning when we are learning to pray, as well as with each individual prayer, no matter how adept we are.

Shortly after I became a Christian I was asked to teach a church-time class for 3-5 year olds. I tried to help the kids learn how to pray using a prayer of thanksgiving. I asked them to think of something they were thankful for and then we would pray and each person would say "Thank you God for ..." and then say what they were thankful for. I have not yet forgotten what one boy, Mark, who lived out in the country said: "Thank you God for the vultures 'cause they eat the guts off the road."

That was a prayer I hadn't quite anticipated. (Of course, you never really know you'll get when you let people talk straight to God.) The other kids continued on with their own prayers as if nothing unusual had happened. But I was both amused and changed. I have never looked at vultures since then without a sense of thanks for these wonderful creatures God has created.

I thought about this story of Mark and his vultures while pondering a poem I had just read. This is a Sabbath poem by Wendell Berry from his most recent collection, *Leavings*:

Learn by little the desire for all things  
which perhaps is not desire at all  
but undying love which perhaps  
is not love at all but gratitude  
for the being of all things which  
perhaps is not gratitude at all  
but the maker's joy in what is made,  
the joy in which we come to rest.

I thought about how, sometimes, we say thank you for things we have asked for and then received. It is only polite to do this. Sometimes we say thank you for things we hadn't actually asked for but had already desired in some way or the other. We desire and then we receive and then we say thank you. There's a self-centeredness to this kind of gratitude, but it is right and good nonetheless.

Sometimes, though, gratitude wells up within us when we discover that we have received something that we hadn't desired, or didn't consciously know that we desired. This was the case for me with the vultures and the guts. Often this is the case when the gifts we have received are on a grand scale, when we receive them along with everyone else simply because we are alive on this earth. It might happen on a crisp Fall day like today when we breathe in and thank God for fresh air and another day to live and to love.

There is a cycle in our feelings that flows back and forth between desire and gratitude. And there is also a logical progression which Berry has expressed from desire to love to gratitude. Our desire is self centered; our love acknowledges that the worth is greater than its value to us; and gratitude accepts it all as a gift.

Then there is the last movement, when we recognize that our desire and love and gratitude all find their source in "the maker's joy in what is made."

This is, of course, where the Bible begins: "God saw all that he had made, and it was very good." (Genesis 1:31)

It is pleasant and fitting to rejoice together with God in all that God has made.

*Pastor Mark*



# Harvest Dinner

Saturday, November 14, 4:00 PM

We'll begin with dinner. The church will supply barbecued pork tenderloin. Bring a side dish to share. Sign up in the social hall or call Kathy Conrad (854-3263).

After dinner we will have our annual meeting to elect officers for 2010. And we'll conclude with a fun program.



## Birthdays

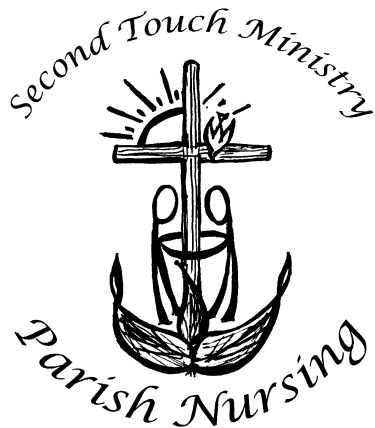
- 1 Leroy Gray
- 1 Brian Gray
- 3 Amelia Duarte
- 3 Med Hoover
- 3 Lori Ford
- 6 Tracy Escatel
- 11 Loni Azevedo
- 12 Michael Ray
- 15 Tiki Chawa
- 21 Jenna Acord
- 22 Ardyce Hedlind
- 24 Donna Krogh
- 26 Aaron Hollingsworth
- 26 Danné Hoove
- 26 John Schlak, Jr.
- 27 Jane Steckling



## Anniversaries

- 11 Richard and Med Hoover
- 18 Jim and Kathy Conrad
- 18 Bill and Sandra Hensley
- 22 Rhonda and Michael Ray





*“You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love. The entire law is summed up in a single command: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ ” Galatians 5:13-14*

Rosalyn Carter is quoted as saying: “There are only four kinds of people in the world—those who have been caregivers; those who are currently caregivers; those who will be caregivers; and those who will need caregivers.”

November is National Family Caregivers Month, organized annually by the **National Family Caregivers Association (NFCA)** in order to thank, support, educate and empower family caregivers. NFCA reaches across the boundaries of diagnoses, relationships and life stages to help transform family caregivers’ lives. Family caregivers include: family, friends, partners, and neighbors. This year’s motto is “Speak Up”—with the emphasis on protecting the health and safety of your loved one while doing the same for yourself.

The NFCA speaks for the 50 million Americans who are caring for a loved one with a chronic illness, disability or diminished capacity due to old age. By connecting with other caregivers, you become part of a very large community who can help foster hope and provide guidance as well as emotional and spiritual support as you face issues of every day care giving.

FREE resources the NFCA offers include : membership; quarterly newsletter (with archives back to 2001); healthcare information; care giving resources, an online store, a story bank, and a Pen

Pal program to connect you with other caregivers. There are also hundreds of websites and resources for insurance, training, respite, specific disease information, and Medicare information.

**PLEASE NOTE:** On November 12, 2009 there is a free Webinar, Safe and Sound: How to Prevent Medicine Mishaps. You will find answers to questions such as: What can I do to minimize risks associated with medications? What are the questions I should ask doctors and pharmacists? You can participate by phone or online. Sign up at [www.thefamilycaregivers.org](http://www.thefamilycaregivers.org) or call 1-800-896-3650.

**“Connecting caregivers”**—Check out the website above for the Caregiver Community Action Network; the Caregiver Story Project; E-communities; and Caregiver Message Boards.

NFCA’s Four Core ‘Caring Every Day’ messages to caregivers:

1. **BELIEVE** in Yourself—to maintain a positive attitude you need to recognize your strengths and limitations; then set goals and boundaries for yourself and your loved one.
2. **PROTECT** Your Health—it’s critical to maintain both physical and emotional health; it is your greatest gift to your loved one.
3. **REACH OUT** for help—This is never a sign of weakness. Rather it demonstrates strength and awareness of your sense of self.
4. **SPEAK UP** for Your Rights—Being informed about your loved one’s diagnosis and treatment helps you advocate and attain the best possible quality of life for you and your loved one. NFCA recognizes the difficulty of constantly juggling responsibilities and maintaining one’s autonomy. It requires adequate support, information, education and training to maintain and continually meet the needs of your entire family.

To you loving spirits who are devoting your time and energy to caring for your loved one, please know that you are doing a very wonderful and difficult work. Your church prays for and appreciates you. May the resources given here uplift and empower you.

Blessings, *Nancy*(former caregiver)

# COMMUNITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

399 Sixth Street  
Gustine, CA 95322  
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**PAID**  
Permit No. 12  
Gustine, CA 95322

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

Pastor — Mark Hollingsworth

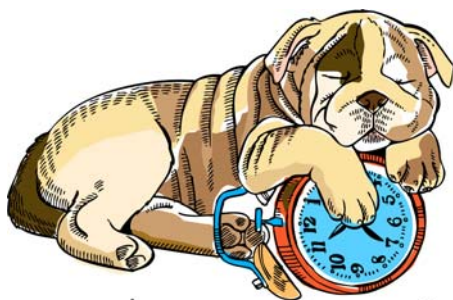
Treasurer — Dorothy Gray; Choir Director — Jim Conrad

Secretary — Med Hoover; Parish Nurse — Nancy Hollingsworth

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

Telephone: (209) 854-6772; email: [cpc-gustine@earthlink.net](mailto:cpc-gustine@earthlink.net)

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



Daylight-Saving Time Ends

**Be sure to set your  
clocks back on  
Sunday, November 1**