

# Good NEWS

Community Presbyterian Church

October, 2008

## From the Pastor

God is real. And each of us can experience God, talk to God and listen to God. Each of us can call out to God. And God can call each of us by name.

God is real, yes, but God is also invisible. And sometimes we humans unconsciously treat things that we cannot see or touch or grasp as if they were abstract. We think they need to be explained or illustrated and in that process we lose our relationship with the things themselves. I experienced this in seminary. I've heard it from preachers. I have caught myself doing it now and again.

The current credit crisis has reminded me of the dangers of making things more and more abstract. Let me explain.

Our country has borrowed its way into a real financial mess. Some of the problem can be blamed on greed, some on lack of regulation, some on bad policy, and some on short-term thinking. But part of the current credit crisis is due to the creation of new instruments of credit and debt such as mortgage-backed securities. These new instruments increased the distance (in space and time and every other way) between the borrower and the lender. They added layers of abstraction by treating previous abstractions as if they were real.

I remember months ago when the chief financial reporter for *The News Hour* tried to explain the mortgage crisis by using some simple props (fish bowls, Monopoly houses, etc.). It all seemed so simple because you could see the props. Only later did I realize that his illustration hadn't worked because the financial system, as it is now practiced, doesn't deal with a single layer of abstraction but with abstractions of abstractions of

abstractions. Here is a simplified picture of three levels of abstraction related to real estate:

house → mortgage → mortgage-backed security →  
insurance on mortgage-backed securities

It was the second level of abstraction that brought down Washington Mutual and other banks and the third that led to the demise of AIG.

In this current financial crisis, I have seen the danger of making things more and more abstract. And it has become a warning for me to beware of abstractions in my thinking about God, and in my preaching and teaching.

It may take our country a long time and much pain to find our way out of this mess of financial abstractions we have created around us. But it is relatively simple (though not necessarily quick or painless) to find our way out of the abstractions we use to surround God.

There are two important practices which will help us to know the real, invisible God.

The first is prayer. Prayer which builds a real-time relationship with the one who created us. Prayer which waits and listens for God to call our name.

The second is getting to know the real Jesus of Nazareth, what he did and what he taught, how he died and how he rose from the dead.

I've been consistent in practicing the second but I have come to realize that I need to put more time and commitment into the first.

How strange. This financial crisis is pushing me to pray more (not pray for more), and to seek a stronger relationship with my God.

May we, together with our sisters and brothers in Christ, seek the real, invisible God with all our heart.

*Pastor Mark*

# SHOWER FOR KRISTEN & TOMMY'S NEW BABY

Come and Join Us For an Afternoon of Fun!

Date: Saturday, October 11, 2008

Time: 2 PM

Place: Gustine Presbyterian Social Hall



## Classes for Children & Adults

9:00  
Each Sunday

### Birthdays

- 5 Kathy Mendonca
- 6 Mike Azevedo
- 9 Gloria Avila
- 13 Sandra Hensley
- 16 Michael Mendonca
- 21 Jerel Steckling
- 30 Joel Hollingsworth

### Anniversaries

- 5 Mark & Nancy Hollingsworth
- 8 Ron and Valerie Arnold



Pastor Mark will be leading an enquirers' class for people interested in joining our congregation, or simply knowing more about our church. We will begin a series of three sessions in October. Please contact him if you are interested, 675-0728



*“A righteous man may have many troubles but the Lord delivers him from them all; he protects all his bones; not one of them will be broken.”*

Psalm 34:19-20

When Mark and I were newlyweds he took me to meet his Great Aunt Molly, a diminutive and spunky lady. As we drove to Glendale I heard about how she fractured her vertebrae opening a bus window while on a European vacation. Several years later I witnessed a delightful lady in our Dixon church fall and break her hip on spilled coffee on our slick fellowship hall floor. Most of us know someone who has broken a bone because of loss of bone density, a process known as osteoporosis.

October 20, 2008 is “World Osteoporosis Day.” See [www.iofbonehealth.org](http://www.iofbonehealth.org). World Osteoporosis Day 2008 will launch a two-year campaign which seeks to change osteoporosis healthcare policies. The goal of this international focus is to spread the message that more needs to be done by national governments and health insurers to promote early detection and offer reimbursement of much needed therapy for those with osteoporosis.

Osteoporotic fractures are a major cause of suffering & disability in our older population and their costs to healthcare services exceed those of many other major chronic diseases. Furthermore, because of the increasing number of elderly people in the population, the number of fractures due to osteoporosis is set to increase two- to three-fold over the next few decades. This imminent increase poses a major challenge to healthcare systems throughout the world.

- In 2005 in the USA, there were a predicted 2 million fractures costing \$17 billion. Non-vertebral fractures represented 73% of total fractures and accounted for 94% of total costs. The majority of costs are incurred by inpatient care (57%) and long-term care (30%) vs. 13% by outpatient care.

Men accounted for 29% of fractures and 25% of the total cost burden. 70% of fractures and 87% of costs are incurred by those over 65 years of age. By 2025, annual fractures and costs are projected to increase by 50% and \$25 billion, respectively.

- The National Osteoporosis Foundation in the USA reported that by 2010, about 12 million people over the age of 50 are expected to have osteoporosis and another 40 million to have low bone mass. By 2020, it is expected to increase to 14 million cases of osteoporosis and over 47 million cases of low bone mass. This increase in cases could cause the number of hip fractures to double or triple by 2040.
- It is estimated that 80% of those who are at high risk of osteoporosis, and have suffered at least one fracture, have neither been identified nor treated for the disease.
- Many health insurance schemes (private and public) will not cover diagnosis and treatment prior to the first fracture – even when it is cost effective to do so.
- 1 in 3 women over 50 will experience osteoporotic fractures, as will 1 in 5 men.
- Between 1990 and 2000, there was nearly a 25% increase in hip fractures worldwide. The peak number of hip fractures occurred at 75-79 years of age for both sexes; for all other fractures, the peak number occurred at 50-59 years and decreased with age.
- Physical inactivity, heavy alcohol use, smoking, and prolonged use of steroids are all risk factors leading to bone fragility.
- Osteoporosis also has a large genetic component; if you have relatives with this problem, you are more likely to develop it as well.

In summary, please consider getting a bone density test if you are over 50 years of age, and discuss bone health with your physician. It is then up to you to follow the advice you receive in order to stay healthy and have strong bones. Stay as active as you can; eat a healthy diet, and use your prescribed supplements to build and maintain strong bones. You'll be glad you did!

With renewed commitment to take my daily Calcium + D,

----- Nancy

# COMMUNITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

399 Sixth Street  
Gustine, CA 95322  
Address Correction Service

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

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

