

Volume 2009: September

August 25, 2009



CHRIST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Reflector

A Note From Your Pastor

Dear Christ family,

Recently, a close friend of mine passed away unexpectedly in a horrible accident. It reminded me how precious life is—and how fleeting. I gave a sermon recently with this in mind and wanted to share the highlights of it with you. May you be blessed every day to remember life's wonder, as well as God's provision and faithfulness.



Excerpt (Scripture was Romans 12:1-2)

All of this got me thinking this week about what is really important. Because although it is not for us to dwell on, every so often it is helpful to remember the only moment that is guaranteed is the one that we are in right now. The only day we are promised is today. And the question we must ask ourselves is "How are we manifesting Christ to those we love?"

Every day, each moment is a precious gift. But, there are many things that don't want us to remember that. If we listen to the world, we hear and see messages that keep us busy, frazzled, and stressed out. We hear about all the things we ought to be doing—to be successful, to be more respected, to have more stuff. We feel the pressure of knowing there aren't enough hours in the day to get it all done. We are taken aback by the to-do list and never make the time to key in and focus on anything in particular—much less to prioritize what might be most important.

Here's a little piece of wisdom. You can't do it all. You never could. You never will. You weren't meant to. But, what you can do is more than enough to fulfill your needs and the needs of those God has given you to care for. What needs to be done to get from point A of stress and worry to point B of peace and joy is the commitment to the renewing of your mind. There needs to be a change in attitude. Instead of holding on to all those things that are dragging you down, stressing you out, or otherwise dampening your joy for today, dare to present your whole self--body and mind--as a living sacrifice to God. Dare to reach out in faith to a God who can replace your fear and feelings of scarcity with hope and the life of abundance that God aches to give you. When each of us does this, then the body of Christ begins to function as it was meant to—each one doing the best they can to give glory to God each day, exercising the gifts God has given each of us, and trusting God to do the rest.

We need to remember the things that matter the most—our relationships. First, we must focus our relationship with God. We cannot be transformed or renewed without it. We must wake up every day with a spirit of gratefulness for the gift of another day to spend here being the person God has created us to be. We need to remember that we are not granted any promise of a moment beyond the one we are in and praise God for the opportunity to have the moment, the day, and the experience. I know that you have been doing your prayers every day at home, and I encourage you to keep it up. As you pray, please don't forget to go to God with a spirit of gratefulness. And if you are not feeling particularly grateful, ask the Holy Spirit to fill your heart with gratefulness. Offer yourself up as a living sacrifice. Sacrifice your pain, heartache, grudges, and sadness. Sacrifice your stresses, worries, and grief. Sacrifice your ought-tos, your should have beens, and your wanna-bes. Sacrifice all of those things and open yourself up to being renewed and restored into the person God wants you to become.

Take on the values that the Holy Spirit offers instead. Be transformed into the image of Christ. Be transformed into someone who sees the joy in each moment.

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Suzie's Info Column



Our deepest sympathy to Emily Mori and family on the passing of her dear husband Joe. Joe & Emily have been long time friends of ours. Akiko Miyake-Stoner spent many summers with them and when her parents were transferred to Denver she continued to see them whenever possible. She called them her grandparents. Also, our heartfelt sympathy to Mitzi Kleinfeldt on the passing of her son's wife's father - they are residents of Florida.

Young Moon's daughter, Joyce Lee, who departed a month or more ago to teach English in Hana Seoul, Korea is truly enjoying her assignment and especially the variety of Korean food they have to offer.

Fred & Sachi Kumagai are settled in their new home in Pleasant Hills, Iowa. Their daughter, Lynn, is currently residing in their home in Santa Maria.

Many Thanks to Jim Nishimori of Nishimori Landscaping and Design for donating and planting the beautiful Japanese maple tree on the east end of the education building to commemorate our 80th Anniversary. Jim is the 'top-notch' landscape artist on the Central Coast as attested to by many of his clients here.

Happy Anniversary to Merv & Sachie Thomas (58 years), Hitoshi & Kathy Yamada (45 years), Dan & Alyce Schwab (28 years), and Mark & Young Moon (13 years). May each couple have many more years of blessed times together.

My grandson was visiting one day when he asked, "Grandma, do you know how you and God are alike?" I mentally polished my halo while I asked, "No, how are we alike?" "You're both old," he replied.

Was good to see Karen Inouye & children at our August 16th worship. Karen's husband is Dr. Warren, son of Emi. They were spending part of the summer visiting with Emi.

Celebrating birthdays during August are Erwin Maas who admitted to turning 85. One good news is that the spots they discovered on his lung and bones were not cancer so he and Kathy said prayer is powerful and thanked everyone for their thoughts and prayers. Plus, other birthdays, Yoshiko Tachibana, Kathy Yamada, and Fran Motzer. May they all have many more years of 'special days'.

Thanks to Alyce Schwab on creating the beautiful prayer book which will be placed in the narthex for those who would like to have friends or family to be remembered in prayer.

Toby & Maribeth Newell became parents of a baby girl on August 20th. Toby grew up in our church and proud grandparents are our long time friends and supporters Randy & Jeni. And, Lola Dority, also our long time friend and supporter, was honored as volunteer of 2008 and 2009 by Allan Hancock College for working to catalog and organize the Hancock estate archives, a collection of more than 10,000 photographs, files, pamphlets and other historical material from the estate of Capt. G. Allan & Marian Hancock. Lola also has been volunteering for the Santa Maria Library for many years in their catalog department.

Hope to see you all on October 18th at our 80th Anniversary Celebration.



People in Our Prayer List

- ✦ Rev. Claudia Genung-Yamamoto and her family for their missionary work in Japan.
- ✦ Rev. Tim Boyle and his family for their missionary work in Japan.
- ✦ Mary Hyosaka (cancer) ✦ Jose Auyeung (cancer) ✦ Mindy Garcia (tumor)
- ✦ Chiu-Hong Shih (son) ✦ Erwin Maas (medical procedures)
- ✦ Families of those recently passed away:
 Doug Kirchner Tim Nelson Joe Mori



PLEASE LET US KNOW YOUR CURRENT PRAYER REQUESTS. Persons who are on the prayer list will rotate off after four weeks unless someone asks to continue them on the list. Thanks for your continued prayers for those in need!

Be transformed into appreciating the beauty of the day and the wonder of life itself. Be transformed into someone who sees the good in people. Be transformed into seeing the possibilities, not the prejudices. Be transformed into remembering that you are precious and loved, and you have the ability to love others like no one else in the world can do in quite the same way. Be transformed into holding onto those things that are life-giving, not life-taking. Be transformed into the person who treasures others more than things, new opportunities for today more than lost moments of yesterday, and lives in faith rather than fear.

What will you do with the day God has given you? How will you make the most of it? How will you live Christ's love every moment? These are the questions we must ask ourselves as we seek the Holy Spirit's will in our transformation. We never know how long we have. Will your friends and family be able to say that you made the most of your days, loved with all of your might, and saw the world through the transformed eyes of God's miraculous light and love? I pray you may be

able to say fully and wholeheartedly....YES! Say yes to today! Say yes to God's grace living through you! Say yes to being a living sacrifice who seeks to shine with the transformation that only God can give! Say yes to holding a new perspective! Say yes to giving up all the ought tos and shoulds---replacing them with all the simple glorious moments that make life worthwhile! Hug your family and friends. Tell someone how much they mean to you. Reach out to people in need. Make a difference in the lives of people around you. Live every day in the way you most want to be known today and remembered tomorrow. In all these things, give glory to God by following the path of love Christ has shown us. God bless and keep you this moment and every day. Know you are loved very much by God and by all here. Peace be with you. Amen.

God bless you and keep you,

Pastor Anna



80th Anniversary Celebration Update



I can't believe how close we are getting to our 80th Anniversary Celebration, to be held on Sunday, October 18, 2009! We have finalized a lot of our plans for that day. The Worship Service will be held at the regular time, 10:30 AM, at the church, with Bishop Sano presenting the sermon at that service. Many of the previous pastors and friends of our church will be attending. Immediately following the service, we will all go out to the parking lot for a brief dedication of a new red Japanese Maple tree planted in honor of our 80th Anniversary (our sincere thanks to Nishimori Landscaping for the donation of this beautiful tree), and for a group photograph. And then, we will travel a few blocks to the Veterans Memorial Hall

for a wonderful Santa Maria Style Barbecue, with the meats prepared by our own Merv Thomas. The rest of the meal will be catered. We had to move the luncheon off our church campus because over 120 people have now said that you want to attend the celebration. Many will be traveling many miles to join old friends that day! What a blessing! And there is still room for more, so please let us know if you would like to join us.

Luncheon tickets are now available for that day. Through the support of the Church budget, and with the help of a generous donation from a church family, we have been able to keep the cost to \$5 a person. You may purchase these after church on Sundays, or we can mail your tickets to you. Please call Kay Moreland at (805) 937-1740 for more information or with any questions, or send your check for \$5 for each ticket to the church address with a note that the money is for lunch tickets, and we will mail your tickets to you or, if you prefer, will have them available for you to pick up at the church on October 18.

We would also like to remind you of the 80/80 challenge. It is our hope that individuals, families, or groups of friends will consider donating \$80 for supporting the missions of our church. Even if you will not be able to attend, please consider joining us as we support the good works of Christ United Methodist Church in our home community, our District Church, and in our overseas missions, especially in our support of Japanese Methodist Ministry. Please send your donations to the church address, and note "80/80" on the comment line of your check.

If you have any questions, please call Kay Moreland at 937-1740 or Margaret Lau at 937-7530.

REFLECTOR

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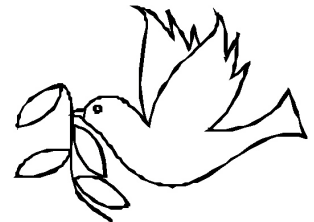
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Japanese Language: Rev. Mark Moon

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Our Mission is to be --
"A Church for All People"



Our Vision is --
We seek to grow in the love of God through meaningful
worship and serving, and to grow in the love of all our
neighbors by making everyone truly welcome, and by
helping our neighbors near and far.

Worship & Regular Programs:

- Sunday Worship Service, 10:30 am
- Sunday School, 9:30 am (Adults)
10:30 am (Children)
- Bible Study & Sharing Group, Wednesday 7:00 pm
- Japanese Worship Service, 1st Saturday 11:00 am

Visit us on the internet at <http://www.smchristumc.org>