



A community of faith
seeking to know and serve Jesus Christ
through committed hearts, open minds and willing hands.

June 2008 Goleta Presbyterian Church Goleta, California

june TIDINGS

From Our PASTOR

CAPILLARY ACTION, GLUTEN, AND APPLAUSE

In a sermon May 18, I quoted William James that the great, lasting changes in life often happen not as the result of big ideas or programs but through the “capillary action” of many small actions. The sermon went on to say that the Holy Spirit can sometimes act like an intense, mighty wind and other times it works within us “drop by drop,” slowly, almost imperceptibly, guiding us and forming us. As I look back over May and ahead into June, I can see many different events as examples of God’s “capillary action.”

- o **John Bloomer and Suzanne Malloy** each shared their experiences in worship in the last month. John gave a powerful testimony about how he had been changed from the inside out by prayer during the months he underwent treatment. Suzanne told of her mother, and how her quiet, unassuming love left in its wake a trail of blessings and affirmation. Both experiences reflect some “capillary” action.
- o **Our Mission and Peace Committee met with Jared Warner to hear of his plans to spend a year in Ghana**, teaching math and science at the “Amazing Grace” prep school in Kumasi and worshipping as often as possible with our brothers in sisters in rural Patriensa. Having known Jared for a decade, and hearing the maturity of his faith and the clarity of his vision, I was struck by what great work Christ has been doing in his life day by day, year by year. The Committee later voted to support Jared with \$1,000 donation.
- o In April I was also meeting with **persons exploring membership at GPC**. Again, each person’s story of how they came here is a story of many, many small steps and decisions leading to a time of connection with God through this congregation. I look forward to welcoming them June 1 in worship.
- o I also attended a meeting in town of a new group known as **“Ecofaith Santa Barbara.”** This group’s genesis goes back to the gathering of Central Coast faith leaders in Washington, D.C. last October under the sponsorship of

Congresswoman Capps. Now assembling monthly to work together to share ways to “green” our congregations, we received word that the Bower Foundation had just awarded us a \$60,000 grant to support these efforts. I expect this work will bless GPC in the months ahead, helping us find more opportunities to be good stewards of our land and resources.

- o I was contacted by “BOGO Light” people in Texas, telling me that **our 200 solar flashlights** are on the boat to Ghana and should arrive soon. Back at Christmas time, many contributed to this cause and soon children in villages will be able to read after the sun goes down, women be safer when traveling, and elderly will be less likely to stumble in the middle of the night.

In addition to these moments of meaning, two issues have been discussed at April meetings – gluten-free bread and applause in worship. They may be less subtle or profound, but they still bear sharing.

As you may know, a number of people have **gluten allergies** and so cannot eat bread made from wheat. This means they cannot fully participate in communion. We are looking at simple ways to accommodate these needs. One suggestion is to have a separate pair of servers in front of the band or by the baptismal font with a cup and gluten-free bread. Be prepared for some new options in worship as we search for the best solution.

To applaud or not to applaud in worship – is that the question? Over the years it has been one of the most frequently recurring topics in our session (ruling board) meetings. Everyone agrees that it is good to applaud children who perform. Many recognize that applauding during or after upbeat jazz or gospel music seems fitting. Applauding after a postlude, when the worship service is over and people are leaving, clearly doesn’t seem a problem. But what about during a worship service for a quiet piece of music? Is that an

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affirmation or does it “break the spell” of worship, treating the experience more as a performance than an act of worship? I was recently given a copy of a bulletin from the American Church in Paris which has a note about applause. They point out that applause can indeed subtly move the focus on the skill of the individual performer instead of keeping the focus on God. Their solution? When moved, say “Amen!” which means, “So be it!” When I read this suggestion at our meeting, someone said it would take a long time to train Presbyterians to say “Amen.” But here’s an invitation – applaud for kids, jazz and Gospel music during the service, or the postlude. Otherwise, try an “Amen.” Having made that suggestion, do I hear some applause?

Steve



WALT EBY MEMORIAL GOLF TOURNAMENT SUNDAY, JUNE 1

The golf tournament returns! Great afternoon of golf and fun for those who can make eagle and those who think it is only the national bird. We’ll be teeing off at Twin Lakes at 1:00 PM. Tournament Format: 4-Person Scramble Refreshments, awards and prizes follow the tournament. Sign-ups and details please contact **Janet Evans** (682-5383) or **Roberta Eby** (685-1419) or **Steve Martin** (967-1146).



GO DODGER BLUE!

We’re all set with tickets and the bus for Saturday, July 26, game with the Nationals. The game starts at 7:10 PM and our seats are in the Infield Reserve, section 5, which is behind home plate above Vince Scully’s pressbox. Total price is \$40 for ticket and bus. We have 50 tickets including one for our personal GPC driver, Bob Ruppel. For signups and questions contact **Doug Barteld** at 964-4314 or dfbarteld@raytheon.com.

FINANCES DON’T TAKE VACATIONS !!!

You may be away on vacation or just enjoying the less hectic days of summer, but our church finances are not granted such luxury. We appreciate all those who keep their pledges current. You can mail it even if you are planning to be away.

SEMINARY INTERN - SUZANNE MALLOY

After a whirlwind of significant life events, I found myself suddenly taking a deep breath, finally taking the time to see a moment in God’s gift of time. And with my *seeing* came a sense of divine comfort. I was seated in a petite canoe that spun easily around in the compelling, yet almost imperceptible current of Lake Los Carneros. Although my mother and I had walked around the lake many times in the past, I had never viewed the lake from its center; and here I was, surveying the banks from the perspective of the wildlife! In the center of the lake’s stillness was a seedling of peace, a “sabbath” moment that invited itself to sprout into my awareness, inviting me to replace my frenetic thoughts with the peace of creation. A great blue heron and I were equally surprised to meet as I approached the reeds on the south side of the lake; ten minutes later, two large turtles hurriedly slid from the north side bank into the pollen-shrouded water. Red-winged blackbirds trilled in the brush, while a common loon stretched and preened as it floated casually against the current. Heavenward, a soaring turkey vulture drew large circles in a shimmering haze, while a pair of angry mockingbirds dive-bombed a drafting red-shouldered hawk.

As I *listened* to the water gently lapping against the wooden canoe hull, I could actually *feel* the calming of my own heartbeat. I thought of the words of Quaker poet John Whittier: “Drop thy still dews of quietness, Till all our strivings cease; Take from our souls the strain and stress, And let our ordered lives confess The beauty of thy peace.”

I was taking an overdue respite, a brief time of sabbath. In my precarious perch on the water, I couldn’t afford to lose myself in thoughts or abruptly depart from the emerging peace, without tipping the balance (quite literally!). We all share an essential need for a sabbath time of rest, a sabbath time of beauty. “When we observe a day especially set apart for beauty,” Marva Dawn writes in *Keeping the Sabbath Wholly*, “all the rest of life is made more beautiful. The sabbath becomes a garden park in the midst of the technicization of life...”

Where do you find beauty in the rest of your sabbath? Most people equate sabbath with “church-going.” Certainly, our worship of God rescues us from our self-absorbent thoughts. The sanctuary flowers so carefully arranged each Sunday lend to our Sabbath time of beauty and peace. So do the artfully crafted stained glass windows, the cleanly constructed furnishings, and the carefully assembled sermon message. But when you leave the service, do you carry a sense of the sabbath away with you? Do you take the time to absorb the beauty of God’s creation? Do you find the beauty of the Holy Spirit’s presence within the smiles of your family members? Can you replace the busy-ness of your mind with the peace of Christ?

The God of peace be with you all!

Suzanne



BOOK REVIEW

Three Cups of Tea: One Man's Mission to Promote Peace..One School at a Time
by Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin

On a beautiful day in September 1993, seven days after leaving K2, the world's second highest mountain, American mountaineer and nurse Greg Mortensen, separated for days from his climbing partners, exhausted, cold, starving, and disoriented, was welcomed at the outskirts of Korphe, a tiny remote mountain village, by the village chief, Haji Ali. Despite extreme poverty, the chief and his family cared for and nursed Greg back to health over several months. Not long after arriving in Korphe, Greg told Haji Ali that he would like to visit their school. After some protests, the chief led Greg to an outdoor site where 82 children, only four of whom were girls, were gathered, writing their lessons with sticks in the dirt. They began their school day as usual by singing the national anthem, and then settled down to work. No teacher was present that day—the government provided a teacher only every other day. Seeing the children working so solemnly, with such devotion, with so few resources, not even a building and without a teacher present, Greg was filled with amazement. He promised the chief he would return from the United States and build a school for the village. Thus began a huge change of course, a life's work for Greg. *Three Cups of Tea* tells the story of the years it took to build the first school and how this work has led to building dozens of schools in the remote areas of Pakistan and later in Afghanistan, where either no school exists or no school exists that girls are allowed to attend. The story of Greg's persistence, despite hardships such as fundraising requirements, long separations from family, physical hazards, cultural barriers, kidnapping by the Taliban, two fatwas issued against him, and hate mail from Americans after 9/11, makes a riveting tale. *Three Cups of Tea* is available in the church library or on the library cart.

Reviewed by Margie Clark

SUMMER TIDINGS

The summer issue of Tidings combines July and August and is usually mailed the second or third week of August. If you have information you would like included please be aware of the scheduled delivery time.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWS

MANY THANKS TO OUR SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS

who have taught our children preschool through 5th grade all year. They will be taking time off this summer and we hope others in the congregation might consider taking a Sunday and enjoy the children of the church. The teachers who will be honored June 8 for their commitment are:

Preschool - Second Grade

Lorraine Crotzer Chris Grant
Betty Kilb LuAnn Miller

Third, Fourth and Fifth Grade

Craig Fry Marilyn Gross
Mary Ribet Sub: Dawn O'Bar

LIFT Teachers

Lorraine Crotzer Curt Crotzer

Some of our teachers will not be returning in the fall. Please be in prayer as to whether teaching might be an area of service for you in September. If you would like to be considered please contact **Anna Lazzari**.

SUMMER SUNDAY SCHOOL

If you would be willing to teach just one Sunday during the summer - lessons preplanned and organized for you - please see **Anna Lazzari**. It's a great way to get to know the children and is appreciated by both parents and teachers.

FIFTH GRADERS RECEIVING BIBLES

The following fifth graders will be presented with their own inscribed with their name on June 11:

Anthony Burre	Michael Libera
Allina Copley	Ben Lietz
Max Davis	Paige Mathison
Desmond Pelletier	

NURSERY

Brianna Craft and **Aria Jacobson** are our two full time nursery caregivers. They appreciate it when parents check in with them if their children will be on the church campus for supervision during the coffee hour and the 2nd hour until noon. Please let them know so they can do the best job caring for your children. Thank you! **Remember:** During the summer months nursery care is available only during worship since there is education hour that follows.