



Plymouth UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

March 2007

Pastor: Rev. Lois Mueller **Ministers:** All Members **Office Manager:** Bruce Tatcher **Newsletter Editor:** Lisse Hooker

In the Meantime...

Beloved Community,

Once again, we're allowing ourselves to become divinely disoriented in this sacred season by reconfiguring our sanctuary to reflect our Lenten journey together. We've installed a canvas labyrinth to delve more deeply into our theme of "*Detours toward Resurrection.*"

The labyrinth is viewed as a metaphor for life's journey with all of its twists and turns. There is only one path that sends us to the center and then out again by reversing our steps. The labyrinth is a spiritual tool that calls us to pray with our entire bodies and surrender to the rhythm of Divine wholeness.

You can walk the labyrinth with a question, a breath prayer, or by simply concentrating on each step you take. Some prefer to experience the labyrinth in three parts. On the way to the center, you may wish to pray about releasing whatever blocks your receptivity to Spirit. In the center, you might let a spontaneous prayer arise and become fully present to the moment. On the winding path out, you may want to pray for wholeness and integration with the Holy. There is no "right" way to approach this meditative tool. What is most important is your openness to the experience and what may unfold inside of you.

Our labyrinth comes from Omega West Dance Company. It was first in the basement of Grace Cathedral as the prototype for their famous labyrinth and has been used for dances and celebrations. We are requested to avoid walking on the labyrinth with shoes.

You are invited to walk the labyrinth before worship services, during office hours (Tuesday, Thursday & Friday, 9:30-2 pm), or when the church is open for other activities.

May you be blessed in your Lenten path within and outside of our sanctuary!

Blessings, Lois

Walking Blessing:

That each step
may be a shedding.

That you will let yourself become
lost.

That when it looks
like you're going backwards,
you may be making progress.

That progress is not the goal anyway,
but presence

to the feel of the path on your skin,
to the way it reshapes you
in each place it makes contact,
to the way you cannot see it
until the moment you
have steeped out.

-- Jan Richardson

1 Jan Richardson, In Wisdom's Path

Oakland Care Center Worship

Saturday,

March 24

3:00-4:00 p.m.

3030 Webster St., Oakland

Several people asked for this poem, which came out of one of Rev. Lois' sermons.

INTO THE DEEP

by Rev. Lois Mueller

I will go with you into the deep.

When you are singing, I'll learn the tune and sing along.

When you are sick, I will be at your side.

When you are dancing, I'll learn the steps.

When you are crying, I'll witness your pain.

When your children are breaking your heart, I'll remind you that God is their parent, too.

When you are addicted I won't let you fool yourself, but I will continue to love you fiercely.

When you are mentally ill, I will not run away.

When your illusions of self-importance and self-reliance are stripped away by the stark realities of life, I'll remind you that your value to God does not depend on your usefulness.

When I'm angry with you, we'll have a fair fight.

When you are old, I'll tell you of your beauty and
what you mean to me.

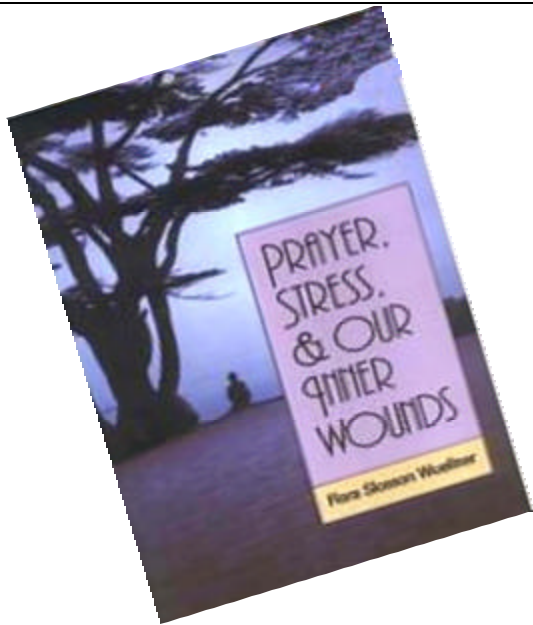
When you are dying, I will hold your hand and remind you to journey toward the light.



One Great Hour of Sharing—March 18

Together we make a world of Difference

When floods arose in Haiti and the Dominican Republic, emergency supplies were sent right away by the UCC. Because churches had already contributed to the One Great Hour of Sharing offering, the shipment of these vitally needed supplies was expedited. This is just one example of how your gifts make a difference. They go to improving lives in more than 90 countries. One Great Hour of Sharing also works with local missionary partners and international ministries such as **Church World Service** and **Churches Together** to offer even more assistance around the globe. In One Great Hour of Sharing, we can multiply the impact of our gifts together with people from other UCC congregations, partner churches of other traditions, and with experienced service agencies. So please give as generously as you can; and let us give with the assurance that life is renewed with every gift.



Join Rev Lois for an experiential
Lenten Book Study based on:

Prayer, Stress & Our Inner Wounds

By Flora Slosson Wuellner

Beginning March 1st,
For 5 Thursday @ 7:15 pm
Plymouth Fireside Room
Books are \$12.00

Please sign up for the class so we
know how many to buy.

Leave a message at 654-5300 or email Rev Lois at: revlois@sbcglobal.net

If you can't afford a book, we have a few copies to loan.

Friday Night at the Movies

March 9, 7:15 pm

Fireside Room

Quinceanera

A coming of age drama, and winner of a Sundance Film Festival award in 2006 tells the tale of Magdalena on the brink of her 15th birthday, who discovers she's pregnant. Cast out by her parents she finds a world far different from her previous middle-class life.

Bring family and friends and a snack to share. A short discussion will follow the film. All are welcome.



You are invited to share in an evening discussion on " Vietnam, then and now"

After a short presentation about her trip this past January, Theresa Freeman will lead a circle on our experiences during the Vietnam era. The circle will be run using the AA recovery model, with no cross-talk allowed. This means people can share whatever they like about their experiences and will not have to worry about being judged for their remarks.

The time period was memorable for everyone now turning sixty. The sixties had an impact whether you were a soldier, a woman who was involved with a soldier, a war-resister, or a war protester, a cleric, or a bystander...everyone is carrying a load. If you would like to 'unload', I'm inviting your comments from 5:30-7p.m. (before choir practice) in the fireside room on Wednesday, March 28. Confidentiality and respect are disciplines of healing.

Snacks will be provided, and please invite friends.

Political victims in Philippines championed: World Day of Prayer

Human rights monitoring groups report that nearly 800 unarmed citizens—clergy, journalists, human rights workers, and activists—have been killed or have disappeared in the past five years under Philippine President Macapagal-Arroyo. The dead include 27 Christian clergy and church workers, most notably Supreme Bishop Alberto Ramento, a peace and human rights advocate known as the “Bishop of the Poor Peasants and Workers.” He was found murdered in his rectory on October 3, 2006.

Numerous church groups, including the General Synod of the United Church of Christ, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A., and the Northern California-Nevada Conference of the United Methodist Church, have issued resolutions or statements condemning the killings and calling for investigations.

"The international and religious communities have given us overwhelming statements of support, but the violence has not abated," says Bishop Pascua of the United Church of Christ in the . "And so we must come to the representatives of the U.S. government to ask them to condemn the appalling human rights abuses and to put pressure on the Philippine government for independent investigations, just prosecutions, and serious leadership on this matter."

World Day of Prayer is an ecumenical movement of informed prayer and prayerful action that was begun by Christian women in the 1920s and is now carried out in more than 170s countries and regions. It is held on the first Friday of March and welcomes all people.



New Meditation Group Meeting on Tuesdays!

Looking for ways to deepen your spiritual practice? A new meditation group is forming here at Plymouth, and you are warmly invited to be part of this group! The practice of meditation has deep roots in the Christian tradition as well as many other faith traditions. Meditating together allows us to take a break from our busy schedules and simply rest in the presence of God. You don't need to have previous meditation experience.

Please join us:

**Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m.
Fireside Room
Plymouth Church**

**(2nd Tuesday of the month only,
we'll meet in Pastor Lois' office)**

If you have questions, please speak with Lisse, Kate, Betty, or Amie. This group will be a different experience altogether from the two scripture meditation groups already in place at Plymouth; the focus will be a more quiet, sitting meditation.

MARCH 2007



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Scripture Meditation, Fireside 6 pm Lenten Class 7:15 Fireside	2	3
4 11:00 am Worship with Communion New Members Join	5	6 Yoga with Yofe 9:30 am Meditation Group 6:30 pm	7 Scripture Meditation, Fireside 1 pm Choir 7 pm	8 Fellowship Lunch 12noon Scripture Meditation, Fireside 6 pm Lenten Class	9	10
11 11:00 am Worship Birthday Sunday	12	13 Yoga with Yofe 9:30 am Church Council 7 pm	14 Scripture Meditation, Fireside 1 pm Choir 7 pm	15 Scripture Meditation, Fireside 6 pm Lenten Class 7:15 Fireside	16	17 St Patrick's Day
18 11:00 am Worship with Communion	19	20 Yoga with Yofe 9:30 am Meditation Group 6:30 pm Healing Service 7:30 pm	21 Spring Begins Scripture Meditation, Fireside 1 pm Choir 7 pm	22 Scripture Meditation, Fireside 6 pm Lenten Class 7:15 Fireside	23	24 Oakland Care Center Worship 3:00 pm 2929 Webster Oakland
25 11:00 am Worship	26	27 Yoga with Yofe 9:30 am Meditation Group 6:30 pm	28 Scripture Meditation, Fireside 1 pm Choir 7 pm	29 Scripture Meditation, Fireside 6 pm Lenten Class 7:15 Fireside	30	31

March Birthdays

- March 2** Bernard Lubin
- March 6** Melissa Gardner-Mcbride
- March 11** Shirley Fifield
- March 14** Kate Diepenbrock
- March 25** Lisse Hooker
- March 27** Yofe Johnson
- March 29** Betty Foote



For a unique Lenten Spiritual deepening practice, you are invited to walk the labyrinth in our sanctuary before service on Sundays or whenever someone is in the office.

LENTEN SPIRITUAL

DEEPENING OPPORTUNITIES

Group Meditation –

Tuesdays, 6:30-7:30 p.m., Fireside Room
Beginners welcome!

Scripture Meditation –

Wednesdays, 1-2:00 p.m.
Thursdays, 6:00 p.m. Fireside.
Soul-nourishing contemplative
Scripture practice.

Book Study: *Prayer, Stress & Our Inner Wounds* by Flora Wuellner

Thursdays, 7:15 p.m., Fireside Room
Five Part Series: March 1, 8, 15, 22, & 29.
Book costs \$12.00

Friday Night at the Movies

March 9th -- 7:15 p.m.
Quinceanera, Fireside

Healing Service

Tuesday, March 20th, 7:30 p.m.
Service of hands-on healing, music & prayer
in the sanctuary.

Oakland Care Center Worship – Saturday,

March 24th, 3 p.m.—4 p.m.
2929 Webster St., Oakland
Come share the joy!

HOLY WEEK

Palm Sunday Worship – April 1st

We'll remember Jesus' entry into Jerusalem through movement and drama as we begin our own Holy Week Journey.

Maundy Thursday – April 5th

7:00 p.m., Fireside Room. Contemplative service of Tenebrae, Hand washing and Holy Communion.

Good Friday – April 6th

6:45 a.m., Witness for Peace at Lawrence Livermore Lab, Corner of Vasco & Patterson Pass Roads

Ecumenical Good Friday Worship, 12:15 p.m.

*Taylor Memorial United Methodist Church
1188 -12th St., Oakland*

Easter Sunday – April 8th

*6 a.m. – Sunrise Easter Service
Skyline Community Church
12540 Skyline Blvd.*

11 a.m. – Easter Worship

*Plymouth Sanctuary
Followed by Easter Egg Hunt & Brunch*

Annual Meeting

The March 25th annual meeting has been postponed. A new date will be set by the church council on 3/13.

Peace Vigils—Weekend of March 16-18

The call for peace will be heard across the US the weekend of March 16-18, 2007. As we grow in concern for our service personnel in Iraq and Afghanistan we urge our government to really care for them by bringing them home to our loving arms. We cry out at the number of lives that have been lost, the billions of dollars that have been wasted—dollars that are needed both here at home and by the poor across the globe. Violence is never a solution; we must speak out.

The Justice & Witness Ministries of Plymouth UCC and St. Leo the Great invite our neighbors to join us on Friday, March 16th, 2007, at 7:00 p.m. on the corners of Piedmont Ave., Ridgeway and Linda Ave. and we hold a one hour candle light vigil for peace. Folks will be attending these vigils across the country with many from our local faith community traveling to Washington, D.C. for a vigil at the White House. Bring a sign and a candle—or just bring yourself and friends or neighbors and join us. For more information on the vigil or other weekend peace events, call Joan MacIntyre (510) 451-2712.

"I am about to do a new thing . . ."

Lenten Healing Service

Tuesday, March 20th

7:30 p.m.

Lent is a time when we can reflect on how we might be in need of healing, whether that be in our bodies, minds, or spirits. This service will be a time for us to lift up the reality of our brokenness, and our hope for wholeness.

This meditative service will include music and prayer as well as a time for individual anointing and laying on of hands.

If you are interested in helping with worship leadership, please speak with Amie.

Cody's Presents Michael Eric Dyson At First Congregational UCC, Berkeley Tuesday, March 6, 2007 7:30 p.m.

Bestselling author Michael Eric Dyson collects his previously unpublished intellectual encounters, cordial and combative, with some of today's most influential thinkers and politicians.

Whether chronicling the class conflict in the African American community or exposing the failings of the government response in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, Michael Eric Dyson has never shied away from controversy.

Debating Race gives readers a front row seat as he spars with politicians, pundits, and public intellectuals. From John Kerry and John McCain to Ann Coulter and the hosts of television's "The View", Dyson shows the mental agility and rhetorical tenacity that have made him one of America's most astute intellectuals. His topics include Civil Rights, the legacy of the O.J. Simpson trial, and the authenticity of Colin Powell.

\$10/\$5 students suggested donation

Lent: A Time to Fast & Feast

FAST from judging others; FEAST on the Christ within them.

FAST from emphasis on differences; FEAST on the unity of life.

FAST from apparent darkness; FEAST on the reality of light.

FAST from thoughts of illness; FEAST on the healing power of God.

FAST from words that pollute; FEAST on phrases that purify.

FAST from discontent; FEAST on gratitude.

FAST from anger; FEAST on patience.

FAST from pessimism; FEAST on optimism.

FAST from worry; FEAST on divine-order. Trust in God.

FAST from complaining; FEAST on appreciation.

FAST from negatives; FEAST on affirmatives.

FAST from unrelenting pressures; FEAST on unceasing prayer.

FAST from hostility; FEAST on nonresistance.

FAST from bitterness; FEAST on forgiveness.

FAST from self-concern; FEAST on compassion for others.

FAST from personal anxiety; FEAST on eternal Truth.

FAST from discouragement; FEAST on hope.

FAST from facts that depress; FEAST on verities that uplift.

FAST from lethargy; FEAST on enthusiasm.

FAST from suspicion; FEAST on truth.

FAST from thoughts that weaken; FEAST on promises that inspire.

FAST from shadows of sorrow; FEAST on the sunlight of serenity.

FAST from idle gossip; FEAST on purposeful silence.

FAST from problems that overwhelm; FEAST on prayer.



Spring Forward!

**Don't forget
Daylight
Savings Time**

**Set your clocks ahead on March 10,
Saturday night before bed, so you'll
be on time to church Sunday, March 11!**

Lenten Worship Schedule

March 4th – 2nd Sunday of Lent

Delayed by Disorganization

Luke 15:8-9

Communion

March 11th – 3rd Sunday of Lent

Sidelined by Excuses

Luke 14:15-24

Birthday Sunday

Spring Forward!

March 18th – 4th Sunday of Lent

Diverted by Waste

Luke 15:1-3,11b-32

Communion

March 25th – 5th Sunday of Lent

Ill-prepared & Left Behind

Matthew 25:1-13

April 1st – Palm Sunday

Distracted by a Parade

Communion

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