



# P l y m o u t h UNITED CHURCH O F C H R I S T

March 2010

**Pastor:** Rev. Lois Mueller **Associate Pastor:** Marjorie Wilkes **Office Mgr:** Bruce Tatcher **Newsletter Editor:** Lisse Hooker

## *In the Meantime...*

Beloved Community:

Each year, here at Plymouth Church, we choose a special theme for the season of Lent. This year's theme is RE-Lent: "Re-Lent" in the sense that we are doing Lent yet again, as we do every year; and "relent" in the sense of a word that means to "soften in feeling" or "show compassion toward someone."

In keeping with our theme, we are meditating on "RE" words – respond, restore, relate, return, reclaim, renew, refresh, etc. In the sanctuary, you will find a basket with small, folded pieces of paper, each of which bears one of these "RE" words. If you haven't already done so, stop at the basket, close your eyes, and pick a word or two. Let your word(s) guide your Lenten prayer and meditation time.

As we enter another Lenten season, it's helpful to remind ourselves of the meaning of Lent, this season when we remember Jesus' 40 days in the wilderness. Matthew 4:1-11, Mark 1:12-13, and Luke 4:1-13 describe how Jesus, just baptized and filled with the Holy Spirit, is led into the wilderness, where he fasts for 40 days and is tempted by the Evil One. But he resists those temptations, and it is only after his 40 days and 40 nights in the wilderness, after he has faced his own demons, so to speak, that Jesus returns to Galilee and begins his public ministry.

It's worth noting that the number 40 is a very significant number in the Bible. Remember how the Israelites wandered in the wilderness for 40 years before they entered the Promised Land? Remember Noah and the flood that lasted 40 days and 40 nights? Remember how Moses spent 40 days and 40 nights on Mt. Sinai communing with God?

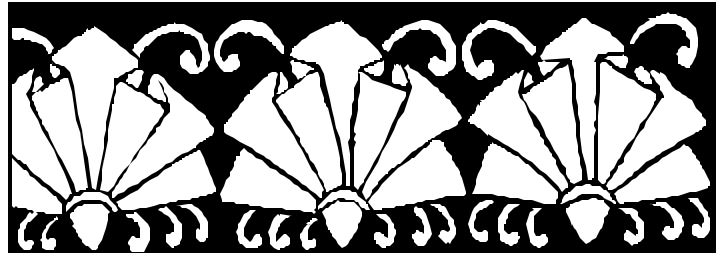
The word "Lent" comes from a German word that means "springtime" because Lent overlaps with the coming of spring, but in other languages (like Spanish) the name for Lent – Cuaresma – is derived from the Latin word for 40. In the Bible, a period of 40 days or months or years always denotes a time of testing and trial, but more than that, it denotes a time of preparation. We emerge from our time of suffering prepared to do something new, to be someone new.

And so what happens after the 40 days and 40 nights of rain? A new creation begins. What happens after Moses spends 40 days and nights on Mt. Sinai? God renews the covenant with Israel. What happens after Jesus spends 40 days and nights in the wilderness? God sends him out to begin his public ministry.

As we "RE-Lent," as we mark another Lenten season, as we pray and meditate with our "RE" words, let's turn our attention to this question of preparation. Who is God preparing you to be? What is God preparing you to do? And how will this time of preparation help you to "relent," to soften in feeling and show compassion toward someone – perhaps yourself?

Blessings of the Lenten season to us all,

***Pastor Marjorie***



Dear Plymouth Friends & Neighbors,

Our church friend, Patricia Maurice, has graciously volunteered to head up a neighborhood group that will be trained in disaster preparedness. We want the church to be available in case of a disaster with neighborhood volunteers to help staff it. If you are willing to consider being involved, there will be a morning citywide exercise on Sat., April 24th. Please contact Patricia if you would like to volunteer or to ask questions. (510) 595-1965. Or you can email her at [deedeeberd100@hotmail.com](mailto:deedeeberd100@hotmail.com)

## LENTEN PRACTICE OF 'FEEDING'

Please join us in a spiritual discipline practice for Lent, as we journey with Christ through his passion to Easter and feed God's hungry each Wednesday.

**March 10, 17, 24, 31, April 2 (Good Friday) and Easter Sunday**

### SHARE FIRST OAKLAND

in partnership with FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF OAKLAND

27th & Harrison (kitchen)

10 a.m.—2 p.m. (approx)

Materials needed: Journal, Bible, small group participation, an open heart. This series includes scripture reading and meditation, journaling, vegetarian food preparation, cooking and communion to/with the recyclers who redeem their bottles at the West Oakland Redemption Center. Assignments and handouts will be given each week, guiding the last week's service with this week's and the experiences we are having on the food line.

For 3/10: read John 1:35-39, praying with the passage. What would you say if Jesus asked you 'what are you looking for'? Ask, what does 'feeding' mean to me? What thoughts, feelings, images arise in you? Write your thoughts in your journal. Confidentiality respected.

**Contact: Theresa Freeman**

**[tfreeman7@sbcglobal.net](mailto:tfreeman7@sbcglobal.net) or 510-227-4060**

**Continued Prayers for the people of Haiti, as well as the people of Chile and other parts of the world suffering or recovering from a natural disaster.**

## One Great Hour of Sharing—March 7, 2010

*Together we make a world of Difference*

One Great Hour of Sharing is the special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that carries God's message of love and hope to people in more than eighty countries.

The UCC works with international partners to provide sources of clean water and food, education and health care, small business micro-credit, emergency relief, and advocacy and resettlement for refugees and displaced persons. OGHS also supports domestic and international ministries for disaster preparedness and response.

OGHS is our March Love Offering. This year, our OGHS Offering will be received on **March 7**.

## **Lillian Potts (November 16, 1917 - February 8, 2010)**

**Lillian Potts**, Resident of Oakland, California, passed away after 92 years of life. Lillian was born in Eudora, Arkansas. She was the second of six children. She joined the Congregational church in 1947 and remained of that faith through the year living out a promise to her late grandmother who had benefited from the early Congregationalist abolition efforts. Lastly she was a valued member of the Plymouth United Church of Christ.



While working in Arkansas, she met Weilan Potts and on June 25, 1943 they married. Weilan and Lillian then made their home together in the East Bay. Lillian retired from the State of California EEOC in 1980. Lillian became a widow on October 13, 1988 when Weilan passed away.

Throughout her life Lillian actively served her community. She supported the Civil Rights Movement and met Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in Oakland. She sponsored the NAACP youth group for five years. For seven years she served as president of the Berkeley Victory Democratic Club. She served on the board of Church Women United for more than ten years and was named Church Women United's Valiant Woman of the Year in 1998. For many years she was chair of the Piedmont Gardens Vesper Committee and sang in the choir retiring February 2006 due to health issues. Lillian was a life-member of the NAACP and a member of the National Council of Negro Women and the Democratic Party.

Lillian is interred at Sunset View Cemetery in El Cerrito, California beside her husband. Lillian is survived by her sister Mrs. Doris Terry who resides in Chicago, Illinois, her sister-in-law Mrs. DeEsco Perryman of Oakland, California, and a host of nieces, nephews, great nieces and nephews, other relatives, and friends in a number of states. She will be sorely missed by all who knew her.

## **Keeping in touch with our in-care and former Minister in Training Friends**

### **Peace and blessings from Amie Giordano**

I hope that all of you at Plymouth are doing well! I remember my time as Minister-in-Training at Plymouth with joy and gratitude. After graduating from Pacific School of Religion in May 2008, I moved back to San Francisco and completed a yearlong Clinical Pastoral Residency at UCSF Medical Center. Through some difficult discernment over the past year, I have come to realize that I will be able to live out my call to ministry more fully in the Metropolitan Community Church. Therefore, I have decided to leave the United Church of Christ. This has not been an easy decision, but I trust that the Holy Spirit is continuing to move in my life. I have been attending services at the Metropolitan Community Church of San Francisco, where I hope to become a member soon. In the meantime, I am working a temp job while looking a full time position at a nonprofit. My prayers are always with you!

### **Rhina Ramos**

Rhina is currently working as the Training Director of the Bay Area Parent Leadership Action Network. Rhina often works evening and weekends in order to reach out parents who want to improve and participate in the public school system. She is completing her Committee A requirements, and she is presently taking UCC polity at PSR. She is enjoying the process of ordination greatly. Rhina is working with a spiritual director from the Jesuit School at the GTU. The process has made her calling real and has amplified her vision of a loving God.

The United Church of Christ is, and has been since early Congregationalist days, an accepting, open and affirming faith. Many people have difficulties with the patriarchal “God” that is found in more traditional viewpoints and versions of the Bible, the King James version, for example. We hope that the following Images of God can be of some inspirational to those who are still searching for a God of their own understanding.

Gentle One	Forgiving One	Breath of Life	Keeper of Promises
Justice Seeker	One of Wonder	Mother/Father Earth	Loyal One
Giver of Hope	Giver of Gifts	Holy Light	Liberator
Compassionate One	Gracious One	Breath of the Cosmos	Peaceful One
Parent of the Poor	Comforter	Mystery of Love	Present One
Creator of Miracles	Healer	Wonder Worker	Gentle Friend
One of Inner Peace	Counselor	Spirit Within	Graced One

Hopefully one of these ideas will appeal to you if the word “God” doesn’t always work.

## **Feed your passion for ministry at Church Day!**

The next Church Day will be Saturday, March 13, 2010, at Congregational UCC of San Mateo. Registration will begin at 8:30 a.m. The program for the day will begin at 9:15 a.m. and end at 3:30. (

On March 13, interested persons may participate in an all-day Identity Seminar on UCC History. Join Church Day attendees at 9:15 for morning gathering and worship.

Authorized ministers may fulfill the continuing education requirement for Boundary Training on Church Day. On March 13, the Basic Boundary Training course meeting the 6 hour requirement will be held from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Church Day participants may choose two 1 ½ hour workshops to attend during the day. Some of the workshops to be offered on March 13 are:

- Experiencing Sing! Prayer and Praise, the new UCC praise and worship song book
- Meet your NCNC Partners-in Education, consultants for local churches;
- Choosing curriculum for your education programs;
- How to be a Church Moderator;
- Church Treasurers (101 and 102)

Go to [www.ncncc.org/page/churchday-2010-schedule](http://www.ncncc.org/page/churchday-2010-schedule) for updates of plans for the March 13 program and to register for Church Day. Youth and adults may register online for Church Day, the Identity Seminar and Boundary Training, as well as for the Children’s Program (ages 5-12) and infant and toddler care (ages 0-4 years). For additional information contact **Barbara Broadbent, Associate Conference Minister for Education Ministries, at 510-247-8996, or [bbroadbent@ncncc.org](mailto:bbroadbent@ncncc.org)**.

# MARCH 2010



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 6:30 pm Healing Service Fireside	3 Scripture Meditation, Fireside 1 pm	4	5	6
7 11:00 am Worship Communion	8	9 Church Council 7 pm	10 Scripture Meditation, Fireside 1 pm	11 Fellowship Tea Noon Fireside	12	13
14 11:00 am Worship Birthday Sunday	15	16	17 Scripture Meditation, Fireside 1 pm <b>St Patrick's Day</b>	18	19	20 Spring Begins
21 11:00 am Worship with Communion	22	23	24 Scripture Meditation, Fireside 1 pm	25	26	27 Oakland Care Center Worship 3:00 pm
28 <b>Palm Sunday</b>	29	30	31 Scripture Meditation, Fireside 1 pm			

## *March Birthdays*

**March 2** Bernard Lubin

**March 3** Bea Morris

**March 6** Melissa Gardner-McBride

**March 11** Shirley Fifield

**March 14** Kate Diepenbrock

**March 21** Alexis Gable

**March 25** Lisse Hooker

**March 27** Yofe Johnson

**March 29** Betty Foote

## Oakland Care Center Worship

**Saturday,  
March 27  
3:00-4:00 p.m.**

## Welcome to our newest members

**Diana Jenkins-Taylor** Diana is a physical education teacher. She has taught in the Oakland public schools and currently teaches in West Contra Costa at Pinole Middle School. Diana grew up in the Presbyterian Church, and her parents are very active members of Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian, where they helped found the “More Light” Ministry to fully welcome gay and lesbian people into the church. Diana has been an active member of the MCC (Metropolitan Community Churches). She is married to Opal Taylor, and they’ve been attending Plymouth for about two years.

**Opal Taylor** We welcome Opal in absentia. As many of us know, Opal is in Haiti, helping with the relief effort there. Opal was born in Sierra Leone in West Africa. When she was young, her family moved to Senegal, and then to the U.S., to the state of Maryland. Opal’s family members have been long-time Protestants, and she has been actively involved in church since childhood. Opal is an emergency room physician, and she has traveled to Haiti with a group of former colleagues from Highland Hospital. We look forward to welcoming her back from Haiti in early March, and our prayers are with her and her team during this time.

**Paul Bolduc** Paul is from Canada, and grew up in the French Catholic tradition. Paul is a Program Manager. In September, Paul’s dear friend – and our dear friend – Ron Buford, invited him to come to Plymouth. Paul took Ron up on that invitation, and then proceeded to just jump in and become one of us. He joined one of our Faith Formation Groups last fall, and he’s been coming regularly to Plymouth Church ever since.

**Tim Bockmiller** Well, by now, we all know that David Sturdevant is one of the best evangelists in this congregation. Tim is yet another wonderful person was introduced to Plymouth Church through David. Tim grew up in Newport Beach, CA, where he was raised in the Roman Catholic tradition. He moved to the Bay Area about 15 years ago, and has spent much of his career working in book stores, at Cody’s and Walden Pond and some other local favorites. Tim is a singer and musician, and I’ve recently learned, has a talent for gardening and can tell you almost anything you want to know about plants!

**Jeremy Armstrong** Many of us know Jeremy as the chef who catered this year’s Thanksgiving feast, where we were recipients of his great talent with food. Jeremy lives out his passion for food preparation by working at Brown Sugar Kitchen and attending the California Culinary Academy. He was born and raised in Minnesota and grew up in the Evangelical Free Church. He and his partner, Darren, have been together for 4 ½ years and moved here from New York last summer.

**Darren Falls** Darren returned to the Bay Area with his partner, Jeremy, after 11 years in New York. He is a buyer for Gump’s Department Store and will be traveling the world to find furniture worthy of Gumps. Darren’s dad, Duncan, is also a member of Plymouth Church. Darren grew up in the UCC and feels blessed to have had such an affirming church life. He has been a member of Skyline UCC, New Fellowship UCC and most recently, Riverside Church in Manhattan.

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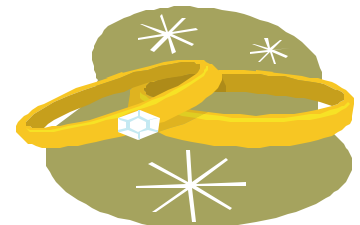
## **New Members Con't:**

**Kelley Gibler** . . . Kelley is a Creative writer who has earned her Masters Degree from Mills College. She has been a teacher in the past, and currently supports herself by working at the Trader Joes in Alameda, while working on her novel. She was raised Catholic and grew up in Idaho. She came to the church as a friend of Raymond Holkkos and Lisse Hooker. Raymond is her housemate currently. Kelley isn't always able to be with us on Sundays due to her work schedule, but is here as often as possible!

**Mary Lou Watson** Mary Lou was baptized and confirmed in Plymouth Church some years ago and found her way back after her mother's death. Mary Lou is a lifelong activist, including as an organizer for the Farmer Workers during Cesar Chavez' time. She's an active volunteer in a first grade Spanish Immersion class at Rosa Parks Elementary School in Berkeley. Mary Lou is married with two sons and is a dear and devoted friend to Jean Lindborg.



**March 7, 2010**  
**Join us for the blessing of  
the marriage of**



**Rev. Marjorie Wilkes and Rev. Robert Matthews**

Come celebrate with them and enjoy refreshments after church,  
including wedding cake!

## **National Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS**

**Sunday, March 7—Saturday, March 13, 2010**

This national week of prayer is the coming together of all people of faith to unite with purpose, compassion and hope. God's heart is big enough for everybody!

[www.NationalWeekofPrayerfortheHealingofAIDS.org](http://www.NationalWeekofPrayerfortheHealingofAIDS.org)

# Movie Night Fridays @ 7:00 pm Fireside Room

Re-el Lent: Sacred Cinema

Join us for some of the best films of 2008. If you can, bring a snack to share.

March 5: **Doubt**



March 19:  
**Gran Torino**



March 26:  
**Slumdog Millionaire**



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