



# The Beacon

Sunnyhills United Methodist Church  
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Pastor Shirley Macemon

Church Office

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Visit us on the Web!

[www.gbkm-umc.org/sunnyhills](http://www.gbkm-umc.org/sunnyhills)

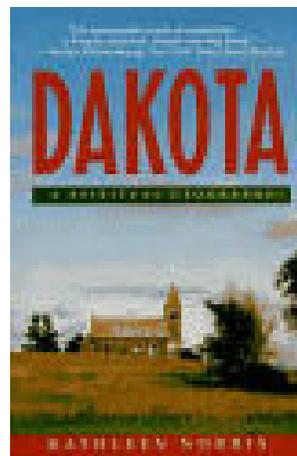
November 2003

## Kathleen Norris in Menlo Park!

Author of Amazing Grace, Dakota, The Cloister Walk

*Lecture & Workshop, November 14-15*

The Women's Ministries of Menlo Park Presbyterian Church is sponsoring a night with Kathleen Norris, the national best-selling author of *Amazing Grace*, *Dakota*, and *The Cloister Walk* at MPPC on Friday, November 14th, at 7:30 p.m. in the main sanctuary. The church address is 950 Santa Cruz Ave. in Menlo Park (west of El Camino Real). Book sales begin at 6:30 p.m. and seating at 7:00 p.m. Tickets are \$15/person and are available at Kepler's Bookstore or from the MPPC Receptionist. For more information call 650/329-7414.



For you writers, Kathleen Norris will also be leading a workshop on Saturday, November 15th, from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon at Menlo Presbyterian's 550 Glenwood Avenue facility in Menlo Park. The focus will be "Writing Your Story" and is exclusively for women. The cost is \$10 and includes breakfast. Space is limited! Sign up by e-mailing [susankammerer@yahoo.com](mailto:susankammerer@yahoo.com) or phoning 650/473-1300. Childcare is available by calling Charlotte at 650/493-6346 by Tuesday, November 11th.

Author of seven books of poetry, Kathleen Norris is well-known for her non-fiction works. Inspired by her move to Lemmon, South Dakota, Norris' first work of non-fiction was the bestseller *Dakota: A Spiritual Geography*, selected as a *New York Times* Notable Book of the Year. Norris understands how the boundary between inner and outer scenery begins to blur when one is fully present in the landscape of life. As a result, she offers the geography lesson we all longed for in school. This is a poetic, noble, and often funny (see her discussion on the foreign concept of tofu) tribute to Dakota, including its Native Americans, Benedictine monks, ministers and churchgoers, wind-weathered farmers, and all its plain folks who live such complicated and simple lives.

Her next book, *The Cloister Walk*, was also a bestseller. It follows her experience as an oblate (lay associate) of a Benedictine monastery in Lemmon. The allure of the monastic life baffles most lay people, but Norris goes far in explaining it. She compresses her years of experience into the diary of one liturgical year, offering observations on subjects ranging from celibacy to loneliness to Emily Dickinson to Christmas music. Her portrait of the world of monastics has been compared to the writings of Thomas Merton.

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## ***Pastor's Letter***

Thanksgiving is just around the corner. Even though I've lived in California for 23 years, there is still some part of me that expects all the trees to turn bright colors before Thanksgiving arrives. Last Sunday, though, I attended an event that reminded me that Thanksgiving isn't necessarily tied to a season of the year, a big meal, or a date on the calendar. Thanksgiving happens when God's people come together as a family to bring thanks and praise for the wondrous things God has done.



Our sister church, Genesis United Methodist Church, has purchased the parcel of land on Milpitas Blvd at Los Coches as the site for their new church home. This purchase was made possible by monies that were part of the proceeds of the sale of the property that was the Grace UMC in Saratoga. Last Sunday, October 19<sup>th</sup>, I joined the Genesis congregation and their pastor, Ricky Perry, for a Blessing of the Land. This short service of prayer and thanksgiving reflected the Genesis journey from its planting and early meeting in homes through growth; through times when their vision was clear, and times when their journey has been difficult. The prayers from the congregation asked blessings not only for the land and those who made its purchase possible, but the ministries that will reach out from that place. I was honored that Pastor Ricky asked me to close the service with a Benediction and warmly welcomed by the congregation.

The Genesis UMC congregation has an amazing spirit: lifting up God in spirit and in truth, and the work God is doing in their midst. Genesis and Sunnyhills hold fairly unique places in Milpitas, being among the very few open and welcoming—that is, theologically diverse—Protestant churches in the area. We compliment each other: Genesis as a praise-style worship, drawing from a regional area, Sunnyhills as a more traditional worship style, and a community and neighborhood church. I truly believe that what is good for Sunnyhills is good for Genesis, and what is good for Genesis is good for Sunnyhills. When you find yourself passing the corner of Milpitas Blvd at Los Coches, say a prayer for Genesis UMC and their permanent home. The harvest is ready, the workers are few, and there is room for us all.

In this area of riches and plenty, we all know at some level that families and individuals in our neighborhoods are hungry, have trouble making it from paycheck to paycheck, are unemployed, are homeless. These are the facts in every community. In Milpitas, one outstanding organization that reaches out to the hungry is the Milpitas Food bank. This time of year, the Food bank gears up for their Thanksgiving basket project, providing Thanksgiving meals for many who otherwise would celebrate the day with an empty stomach. Jo Roll has been in contact with the Food Bank to coordinate our participation. Our goal is to collect 150 boxes of Jello or other gelatin for the Food Bank baskets. All flavors and all sizes are welcome. If you prefer to bring money and have someone else shop on your behalf, that's ok too. Donation boxes will be in the back of the Sanctuary and in the church office from November 1 to November 23. Our Jello is a small but important part of this large project.

Grace and peace,

*Shirley*



## Calendar Notes



### **WRAP (Administrative Council)**

*Saturday, November 1st*

*5:00 p.m. Potluck*

*6:00 p.m. Meeting*

Everyone in the church community is welcome. Your comments, your ideas, your presence, and your energy will help craft the program and mission best suited to SUMC. Please bring a dish to share and enjoy table fellowship at the potluck, then help us organize our life as a Christian fellowship at the planning meeting.

### **Lunch Bunch Casa Azteca**

*Sunday, November 16th*

Everyone is welcome at the Lunch Bunch! Enjoy the adult Bible study after worship and fellowship, and then join the group at a local restaurant for good food and good conversation. In November we enjoy one of Milpitas' premier Mexican restaurants. Yum! Casa Azteca is located at 20 N. Abel Ave., one block north of Calaveras Blvd.

## **Looking Ahead**

**Mark Your Calendar and Plan to Attend!**



### **Salvation Army Bell Ringing**

*Saturday, December 13th*

SUMC members will ring the bell from morning until night to raise money for the poor and homeless in our area.

### **Carol Sing and Ornament Exchange**

*Sunday, December 14th—6:30-8:00 p.m.*

Mark the date and come sing your heart out! Carols old and new, scrumptious desserts, an exchange of ornaments, and that wonderful SUMC fellowship.

### **All-Church Conference**

*Monday, January 12, 2004*

This important business meeting of the church elects officers, sets the pastor's compensation, and reviews the year's accomplishments.

### **Mexico Mission Trip**

*April 17-24, 2004*

Registration forms will be available in the Church Office in November 2003 and are due back in January. Please see Pastor Shirley for more information.

## Hear Kathleen Norris in Menlo Park

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*Amazing Grace* sheds light on the very difficult theological concepts such as grace, repentance, dogma, and faith, yet roots them in our everyday experience. Her recent work, *The Virgin of Bennington*, traces her own life before Dakota. From a sheltered Protestant childhood to her entree into the New York art world, she describes the internal and external journey of an artistic young woman trying to find a place for herself amid the cultural tumult of the 1960s and 70s. Other works include *Journey: New and Selected Poems*, *Little Girls in Church* (a poetry collection), and *The Holy Twins*, a children's book on St. Benedict and St. Scholastica done in collaboration with noted author/illustrator Tomie de Paola.



*Be sure to wish our Birthday guys and gals  
Many Happy Returns!*

11/2	Juanita Westover	11/10	Jun Cruz	11/14	Margaret Scott
11/3	Ann Zeise	11/12	Rueben Marcos	11/20	Kristel Tanciango
11/6	Rebecca Balarbar		Valderrama	11/25	Mitch Westover

*And don't forget our old friends who will enjoy a card:*

**Birthday:** 11/4 Marley Spilman

**Anniversary:** 11/26 Sharon & Bob Fall

## Income and Expenses

<b>INCOME:</b>	<b>August 2003</b>	<b>September 2003</b>	<b>Totals</b>
Offerings	\$ 3,947	\$ 2,314	\$ 6,261
Building Use & Other	6,445	1,955	8,401
Special Giving	127	313	440
Income Totals	\$10,519	\$ 4,582	\$15,102
<b>EXPENSES:</b>			
Mission & Outreach	\$ 884	\$ 934	\$1,817
Operating Expenses	1,908	2,063	3,971
Pastor & Staff Support	2,993	3,018	6,010
Expense Totals	\$ 5,785	\$ 6,015	\$11,799
<b>Fund Balances</b>			
San Jose Family Shelter	\$ 0	\$ 0	
'363' Fund	\$ 53	\$ 103	
Cash on Hand	\$42,572	\$41,183	





## Milpitas Community Breakfast

*Sunday—November 2nd—7:00 a.m.  
Jones Hall*

Join civic and neighborhood leaders, enjoy a hearty and delicious breakfast, and discuss issues of concern in our area. The November guest host is GoMilpitas.com, organized by Ann Zeise. The topic is home schooling. Sponsored by the Sunnyhills Neighborhood Association. For more information, contact Neil MacKenzie at 408/946-5260 or sunnyhills@ix.netcom.com

## Thanksgiving

### 150 Boxes of Jell-O Pledged To Milpitas Food Pantry

Sunnyhills UMC has promised a minimum of 150 boxes of Jell-O to the Milpitas Food Pantry for Thanksgiving Dinner baskets. Holiday dinner supplies will be distributed to 300+ families in our local community. Bring donations of Jell-O (any size, any flavor) to the church during November. Look for the marked box in the back of the sanctuary. Contributions large and small are welcome. If you don't have time to shop, cash donations are also appreciated and will be used to purchase additional food.

Help feed the hungry in our area!



## Actions of General Conference

# Be Ye Doers

Every June, our Lay Member to Annual Conference (Guy Haas) and our Pastor go to Sacramento for a few days of fellowship and business. Sometimes we may wonder what goes on in this mysterious process that is the business of our Northern California Nevada Conference of the United Methodist Church. Every year, recommendations are intended to affect the life of the Church. Some recommendations are forwarded to General Conference to be considered as additions to the Discipline, our Social Concerns, or our Resolutions. Some are recommendations that affect our lives in the local church. Our Conference Secretary, Virginia Pearson, has summarized the six recommendations adopted that fall into that last category—affecting our life in the local church. You can find the full text of the recommendation at the conference website ([www.cnumc.org](http://www.cnumc.org)), or ask Guy Haas or Pastor Shirley and they will get a copy for you.

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## General Conference

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- **Concern for Climate Change (Item 5)**  
Members of local United Methodist Churches are urged to show leadership as stewards of God's creation and take concrete actions to:

1. educate our congregants on energy production and usage in relation to global warming,
2. conduct an energy audit of our homes, church facilities, and camp structures to identify sources of energy waste and the potential financial savings of energy related improvements,
3. make energy efficiency improvements to our homes, church facilities, and camp structures,
4. replace light bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs,
5. expand our use of public transportation, carpooling, and teleconferencing to reduce fossil fuel consumption,
6. choose a cleaner vehicle that is the least polluting and most efficient,
7. keep our vehicle's engine tuned and tires properly inflated,
8. study the consequences of our consumer choices and take action to lessen our impact on the environment, and
9. use our votes by telling our elected officials that we need laws that support the most important solutions to climate change: cleaner cars and cleaner power plants.

- **Children and Poverty (Item 6)**  
Each congregation in the conference is asked to undertake a study of the issues of children and poverty using the United Methodist study material in *Community with Children and the Poor: A Guide for Congregational Study* (available from Cokesbury).



- **Fair Trade Coffee (Item 7)**  
Local congregations and their affiliated organizations, which use coffee, are urged to purchase coffee for corporate and personal use through the fair trade partner, Equal Exchange or through another similar fair trade organization.

- **Jubilee Debt Relief (Item 8)**  
Each congregation in the California-Nevada Conference is encouraged to become a Jubilee Congregation supporting the advocacy work of the Jubilee USA Network ([www.jubileeusa.org](http://www.jubileeusa.org)) toward further debt cancellation, freeing funds in poor countries for health services, education, and environmental protection. The Jubilee USA Network asks that each Jubilee Congregation pledge four things: to pray for a Jubilee for the world's poorest countries, to appoint a Jubilee contact person, to contribute one dollar per member to the Jubilee USA Network (or whatever they can afford), and to send one letter per member to a member of Congress or a member of the administration calling on them to "Drop the Debt."

- **Boycott Coca-Cola (Item 25)**  
Calls upon individual members, congregations, boards and agencies to not buy Coca-Cola [brand beverages] for any event for one year, beginning July 22, 2003.

- **Call Sunday (Item 27)**  
Local churches are urged to participate in a Conference-wide "Call Sunday" on one Sunday of May (or another appropriate Sunday) to focus on God's call to ministry as "call-stories" of church ministers are proclaimed and worship resources from the Conference Enlistment Committee are offered.