

The Beacon

Sunnyhills United Methodist Church
355 Dixon Road, Milpitas CA 95035

Pastor Shirley Macemon

Church Office

(408) 262-1486

Visit us on the Web!

www.gb-gm-umc.org/sunnyhills

September 2004

Sunday School Begins September 12th

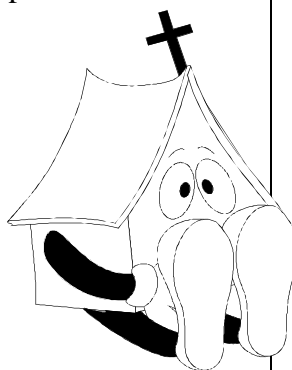
You shall love the Lord your God
with all your heart,
and with all your soul,
and with all your might.

Deuteronomy 6:5

Each student is a one-of-a-kind child of God. Learning about the Bible is one key to finding out about God's relationship with us. Our fall Sunday School classes will focus on exploring the Bible and exploring creation.

Children learn that Jesus read from the Old Testament and the New Testament is about Jesus. As God speaks to us through the Scriptures, we live our lives in response to that good news. Exploring the world of Bible people and their stories, we begin to understand that the Bible can teach us how to live.

Please plan to be in church each Sunday and to support our Sunday School teachers and students. Children learn as they are taught, but they can only learn when they are present!



CHECK IT OUT!

The Trouble I've Seen: The Big Book of Negro Spirituals by Bruno Chenu (Judson Press, 800/458-3766).

Chenu provides an extraordinary record of the origin and history of Negro spirituals and offers historical and socio-logical insights into their meaning.



Sunday Schedule

Worship Service
9:30 a.m.

Sunday School
10:15-11:15 a.m.

Adult Sunday School
(After Social & Snacks)
11:00-11:45 a.m.

Kid's Church

Children are always welcome in worship

They are also welcome in childcare at any time (Pre-School Room, next door to Office)

After the "Children's Moment," children in worship are invited to the childcare room, where the Sunday School teachers will meet them.

Sunday School classes (pre-school & kindergarten through 8th grade) are held jointly with St. Joseph the Worker Episcopal Church 10:15-11:15 a.m.

Pastor's Letter

Dear Friends,

When I head out on a mission trip, I am frequently focused on what we are going to do for the folks we will be with. In Mexico, we build houses. In Jamaica this year, we brought Vacation Bible School and the workers and resources to turn the manse—the parsonage—back into a livable dwelling. And, just as often, I am humbled by the fact that although our resources and willing hands are important, it is the relationships we build and the community we create that makes a difference in the lives that are touched. Those lives are not only the lives in the community we visit, but also those of the team in mission.



In the Frankfield Circuit of churches in Jamaica, the children and adults—Jamaican and American alike—who participated in Vacation Bible School shared their faith, their songs, and their games and had fun together. Those of us who worked on the manse worked side by side with five remarkable young adults from one of the Circuit communities, Desire. Sheldon, Raon, Damion, Janise, and Simone walked down the mountain each morning to paint, scrape, work on cement, translate their Jamaican way of life, and share their faith with us as we all transformed the house that their new pastor will make a home. These 18- and 19-year-olds have finished their basic education, are all bright and motivated enough to continue, but college is not a natural next step for kids from a mountain farming community that shares a pipe for its water supply. One may join the British armed services as a way out. One would like to explore ministry, but is unclear how he would fund further education. All feel an obligation to their families, caring for younger siblings and older family members living at home. Sheldon's grandfather, probably in his 70's, sees to his crops (yams, potatoes, breadfruit, mangos, bananas) every day. But don't think that I am painting a picture of despair, self-pity, or lack of motivation. Each of these young people radiated hope, joy and a confidence that their lives—whatever the future may hold—are blessed. These are the young people who are building their church community in Desire back to a strong center of the community. These young people are the future of the church in Jamaica. I am honored to have been able to work with them.

The Jamaica mission was one of the many mission trips sponsored each year by VIM, Volunteers in Mission. Some missions have domestic destinations. Some are headed to exotic international destinations. Some do heavy mission work, some are lighter work. If building relationships and community with Christians in other places is something that interests you, or that calls to you, talk to me. The Mexico mission trip to build houses is scheduled for April 16-23, 2005. Another trip to Jamaica is already being discussed. It is not too early to start planning for your participation.

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Shirley



September Calendar Notes

Sunday School Begins

Sunday, September 12th
10:15 a.m. (after Children's Sermon)
until 11:15 a.m.

Calling all kids! Explore the Bible and learn about our faith. Early elementary class meets in pre-school room (upper building). Older elementary and middle school class meets in front room of Jones Hall. We're looking forward to a great year. Be with us every Sunday as we grow together in God's service.

Adult Sunday School

6-Week Class Begins
Sunday, September 12th
11:00-11:45 a.m.

Everyone is invited to the new Adult Sunday School Class beginning September 12th. Cathy Deppe and Alex Walker lead discussions on "A Passion for the Possible." (See article on page 4.)

Celebrate Christian Education

Sunday, September 19th
Worship and Fellowship

Sunday School is the heartbeat of every church, a place for nurturing, encouraging, and teaching the next generation. Help us celebrate our children and teachers. Ice cream social follows worship—Yum!

Beacon Deadline

Monday, September 20th

Please send your news and information to Cliveden Chew Haas (408/262-5250 or cliveden@cliveden.com).

WRAP

(Church Council)

Saturday, September 18th
9:00 a.m. Breakfast Snacks
9:30 a.m. Meeting

PLEASE NOTE DATE AND TIME!

Everyone in the church community is encouraged to attend. Our discussions this month include the continuing question of funding repair work on our buildings. Your comments, your ideas, your presence, and your energy will help craft the program and mission best suited to SUMC.

Extension Ministries

Follow-up

Sunday, September 26th
After Worship

This half-day follow-up continues discussion on extension ministry from last spring. Eric Larsen and Rev. Emil Sazon will lead us as we explore What? Where? Why? How? we live out our faith and our calling here at Sunnyhills UMC.



A Passion For The Possible

Adult Sunday School

6-Week Class Begins Sunday, September 12th

11:00-11:45 a.m.

William Sloane Coffin has been called, after Martin Luther King Jr., the most influential liberal Protestant in America between the early 1960s and the end of the 20th century. Coffin served as the chaplain for both Williams College and Yale University, and as pastor of Riverside Church in New York City. He was an activist in many civil rights and peace causes and served as president of Peace Action.

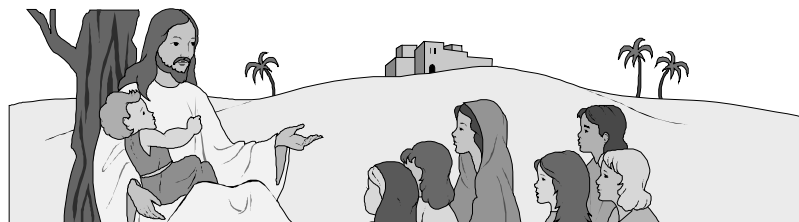
Cathy Deppe and Alex Walker will lead an Adult Study Group discussion over six weeks of Coffin's provocative book *A Passion for the Possible: A Message to U.S. Churches* beginning Sunday, September 12, 2004. The book is a slim volume of just eighty pages but is packed with the wisdom of a lifetime.

Not everyone will agree with Coffin's solutions to controversial issues of war, environment, racism, classism, sexism, homophobia, and careerism, but unlike many moderate and liberal clergymen, Coffin goes out of his way to confront these issues clearly with understanding toward both sides and with meditative reasoning based on Biblical and contemporary teachings. "Hope criticizes what is, hopelessness rationalizes it," and Coffin is a drumbeater for hope. Coffin has often said "Hope arouses, as nothing else can arouse, a passion for the possible," whence comes the title of this book.

Say "I am a believer—I am a Christian" in front of a public audience today and likely you will be associated with Pat Robertson, Jerry Falwell and so-called Christian Conservatism. Unfortunately, it is almost forgotten that in our time there was an extraordinary generation of progressive leaders of faith which in addition to King and Coffin included such notables as: John Bennett, Catholics Coleman McCarthy, Daniel and Philip Berrigan; Presbyterian Eugene Carson Blake, the Jewish theologian Abraham Joshua Heschel; Methodist Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam; and Robert McAfee Brown of Stanford University and the Pacific School of Religion (where so many of our Sunnyhills UMC pastors studied).

Throughout his long career Coffin has been eager to stake out risky positions grounded in Christian faith. In the 1960s he sent medical supplies to North Vietnam; in 1979 he celebrated Christmas with the hostages in Iran; as pastor of Riverside Church, he hired a Jewish person to run the church's disarmament program. Deeply affected by Heschel and drawn to the Old Testament prophets, Coffin preached an open ecumenical theology.

Join Cathy Deppe and Alex Walker for in what will undoubtedly be a very thought-provoking and inspiring series of discussions.



Equal Exchange Coffee Help Small Farmers



When you pour your next cup of coffee, give a thought to supporting our new **Equal Exchange Coffee Project**. Coffee is big business—it's one of the most heavily traded commodities in the world. But for the majority of small coffee farmers, living in rural communities in some of the world's poorest countries, the benefits are small. Processors, creditors, exporters, brokers, and a cast of middlemen—known to Latin American farmers as “coyotes”—come between the purchaser and the farmers. The middlemen make the money. The producers of a rich crop are often trapped in poverty.



Guy Haas and Cathy Deppe came back from Annual Conference with a proposal to buy coffee from **Equal Exchange** in support of The United Methodist Committee on Relief, the not-for-profit international humanitarian aid organization of The United Methodist Church. (Learn more about the Equal Exchange Coffee Project online at <http://gbgm-umc.org/umcor/hunger/coffee.cfm> or call 1-800-554-8583.)

Fair trade shares the bounty of the coffee trade with those who grow the crop, helping them build a better future for themselves and their communities. Equal Exchange, UMCOR's partner in the Coffee Project, works with cooperatives that are owned and governed by the farmers themselves and buys directly from the farmers so the benefits of trade go to the farmers and their communities. Fair trade enables small farm families to invest in education, health care, and agricultural improvements.

The UMC General Conference adopted a resolution in May 2004 with the goal of helping small farmers earn a fair price: “...Therefore be it resolved that in seeking an authentic Christian response to the plight of developing world small individual coffee farmers... the General Conference of the United Methodist Church urges all agencies of the church... that use coffee to purchase coffee for corporate and personal use through the fair trade partner, **Equal Exchange**, or through another fair trade organization.”



Equal Exchange was founded in 1986 to create a new approach to trade. As a worker-owned co-op, it offers consumers fairly traded gourmet coffee direct from co-ops in Latin America, Africa, and Asia.

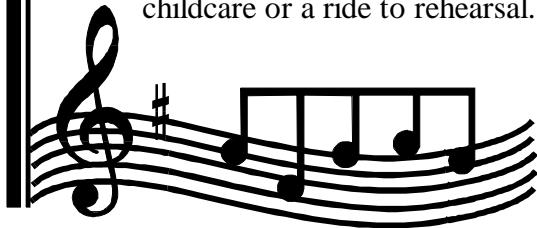


We are offering **Equal Exchange** coffee at fellowship hour and also packages for individual purchase in 12 oz. packages of both whole bean and drip grind. Each regular bag is \$6.00. Each decaf bag is \$6.50. Part of the purchase price—less than \$1.00 per bag—helps fund our fellowship coffee. Check it out. We've tried it. It's really great gourmet coffee!

Alleluia!

Lift Up Your Voice and Sing
Choir Begins Thursday September 9th
7:00-9:00 p.m.

Adult choir rehearses Thursday evenings from 7:00 until 9:00. This is a perfect time to join and enjoy new discoveries and old favorites. Fall is here and we'll soon be preparing music for the holidays. Everyone who enjoys singing and making a "joyful noise" is greatly welcome. Please phone Pastor Shirley (408/262-1486) if you need childcare or a ride to rehearsal.



Special Offerings

Love Your Neighbor as Yourself

September 19th † Heifer Project Intl.
October 3rd † World Communion Sunday



Your gift makes a world of difference!

- † HPI works to stop hunger permanently through gifts of animals and training.
- † World Communion Sunday gifts fund scholarships for U.S. and international ethnic-minority students in church-related ministries.

Learn to Work With Puppets

Saturday † September 25th † 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Wright Hall at Cambrian Park UMC, 1919 Gunston Way, San Jose CA 95124
Call to register by 9/20: 408/377-8155 or FAX 408/377-8523

Leaders: Rev. Michael & Carrie Murphy
Experienced leaders with ONE WAY STREET Puppet Ministry

A fun day for youth and adults!

Workshops: Basic Puppetry, Live Puppetry for the Classroom,
and Props/Scenery/Stages

SUMC will gladly pay registration fee—please talk with Pastor Shirley



**A Very
Happy Birthday!
To**

9/5 Eric Cruz
9/15 Erin Cruz
9/15 Rolf Haas
9/22 Warren Scott
9/26 Irene Jefferson

**Best Wishes for
a Wonderful
Anniversary!**

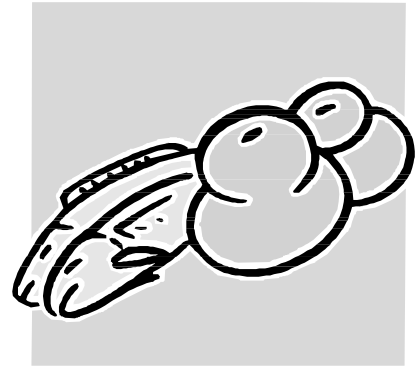
9/12 Thelma & Robert
Wilber
9/21 Aida & Jun Cruz

The Board of Laity of the California-Nevada Conference presents:

Partnership in Ministry
Fulfilling Our Vision of Passion for Jesus Christ
and Compassion for All

Saturday † October 2nd † 8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

United Methodist Center, 1276 Halyard Dr., West Sacramento
and Best Western Inn (two doors from the UM Center)
Registration includes continental breakfast, lunch
and resource materials



Featuring addresses by: Bishop Beverly Shamana,
Rev. Jeffrey Kuan, Professor of Old Testament at Pacific School of Religion,
and a panel discussion by clergy and laity who are partners in ministry

Workshops: Cross-Cultural Ministries, led by Kathy Thomas Sano, General
Commission on Religion and Race
Connectional Giving, led by Rev. Betsy Schwartztraub, UM Foundation
Q&A with Jeffrey Kuan
Hospitality: Beyond 30 Seconds, led by Jeneane Jones

SUMC will gladly pay registration fee—please talk with Pastor Shirley



Stewardship Adventures

Increasing the Harvest 15% to 30%

Monday † September 20th † 3:00-9:00 p.m.

Creekside Center at Los Altos United Methodist Church
655 Magdalena Ave., Los Altos (650/948-1083)

This one-day seminar led by Eugene Grimm (author of *Generous People: How to Encourage Vital Stewardship*) equips laity and clergy with practical “how to” insights, ideas, and methods that have proven effective with thousands of congregations. The format is a mixture of presentation, question-and-response sessions, idea sharing, handouts and resource recommendations that have practical applications for local church leaders.

Clergy and laity can immediately put into practice the dozens of practical ideas that Dr. Eugene Grimm will give on the following aspects of stewardship:

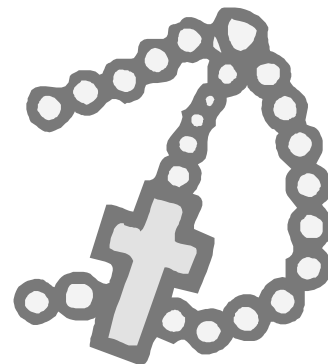
- ✘ Ten principles for effective stewardship
- ✘ Eight reasons why people give
- ✘ Nine stewardship myths
- ✘ Increasing mission and ministry through ten effective campaign models

“We’re not raising money—we’re raising Christians.”

Please speak with Pastor Shirley if you are interested in joining the SUMC group!

Beyond Acceptance Conference

First United Methodist Church in Palo Alto is sponsoring a special conference on “Beyond Acceptance” September 24-26, 2004, supporting church organizations and individuals working toward a more inclusive society. The Rev. Mel White, renowned speaker and founder of Soulforce, will be the keynote speaker leading us to imagine a future “beyond the acceptance” of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender individuals toward full inclusion.



The conference will include small group sessions on:

- Art and Spirituality: A Personal Journey led by Bruce Hiliam
- Winning the Biblical Debate and Creating Rainbow Spirituality led by Joel F. Roberts
- Reading the Bible Ethically in the 21st Century: The Homosexuality Debate led by Mary A. Tolbert
- Contemplative Dialogue led by Jean Holsten
- Queer Eye for the Trees led by Rev. Roger Wharton
- Old Testament Issues led by Rev. Jeffrey Kuan
- Hate Crimes and Violence led by Tina D’Elia
- Gays in the Military
- Couples Support led by Rogert Brigham

Panel discussions: Gay Families, Gay Marriage, Denominational Panel, Transgender Issues

Conference Schedule

Friday, September 24, 2004

7:30 p.m. Keynote Address Rev. Mel White with the MCCSF Choir

Saturday, September 25, 2004

9:00 a.m. Workshop w/Rev. Mel White

11:00 a.m. Lunch

1:30 p.m. Small Group Sessions

3:45 p.m. Small Group Sessions

8:00 p.m. Music

Sunday, September 26, 2004

10:30 a.m. Mel White Preaching

Registration

Conference Cost: \$20

To request a registration form by mail, please call 650/323-6167

To register online for the conference, please go to www.firstpaloalto.com. The registration form is available in PDF format. Please print the form and mail it with a check or money order to:

First UMC Palo Alto
625 Hamilton Ave., Palo Alto CA 94301

For additional conference information and details, visit www.firstpaloalto.com

