

# The Beacon



February  
March  
2016

Sunnyhills United Methodist Church  
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Pastor and Beacon Editor: Rev. Shirley K Macemon

Dear Friends,

Very exciting conversations coming up in our community!

February is Black History Month, and the Neighborhood Association breakfast, Saturday, February 6, at 9:00 in the sanctuary will be led by the Flame Keepers, celebrating the roles and victories of our African American neighbors and Friends. The breakfast is generally amazing, so this is one you don't want to miss. Note the change in time and place from most Community Breakfasts

Sunday morning, February 7, in addition to being a Communion Sunday, will bring a congregational conversation. Starting at 11:00 in the sanctuary, and lasting for only an hour, our Staff Parish committee will seek your input for our Church Profile, one of the tools the Bishop's Cabinet uses to fill appointments at local churches. Hopes and dreams will also be shared so that these might be taken to a meeting with our District Superintendent, Staci Current.

I'll be out of the pulpit from February 14 to March 6, on leave. I've lined up some wonderful and exciting preachers to lead worship while I'm gone, so don't play hooky just because I'm not here. While I'm gone, the pastoral team at St. Paul's UMC in Fremont, Anne Lau Choy and Sun Hee Kim will provide emergency pastoral care. St Paul's UMC: 510-429-3990.

Also look in the Beacon for more information about the Lenten Study that Daislyn Pease will lead each Sunday in Lent right after worship. Joseph (of the Multicolor coat) and Forgiveness. It will be a meaningful time.

Blessings,

*Pastor Shirley*

### ***The Sunnyhills Choir***

Our small choir sings accessible, two to four part anthems. We rehearse on at 6:30 p.m. Thursday evenings twice a month, and before each Worship service. Join us! February 4 and 18, March 17 and 24, 2016.



### **Joseph - The Journey to Forgiveness**

All of us know what it's like to be hurt or betrayed. Often it's a small breach such as being spoken to rudely or overlooked in a time of need. Other times we experience lies, gossip, or harsh words that cut us to the core. Some of us have endured unspeakable pain through abuse, adultery, or abandonment. God knows the pain we cause each other and longs to help us learn to practice forgiveness.

Nowhere do we see forgiveness played out more fully in Scripture than in the biblical story of Joseph. This six-week study explores what God has to say to us about grace and forgiveness through Joseph's story of trial and triumph found in Genesis 37-50. As we study his dreams, his betrayers, his dysfunctional family, his struggle to forgive, and his journey toward reconciliation, we'll find truths that echo into our own personal situations as well as practical help for answering common questions, such as:

How do I stop dwelling on the hurt?

Is forgiving someone excusing what happened?

Is there a difference between forgiveness and reconciliation?

How can I forgive and still set boundaries?

Is it ever okay not to forgive?

Whether or not you are working through a hurtful situation right now, you can learn from Joseph how to release your past and present hurts to God and allow Him to do a supernatural work of forgiveness in your life. God wants to use the very things intended to hurt you as a source of blessing in your life and the lives of others. Daislyn Pease will lead this video-based study after worship each Sunday in Lent. Participant books are \$10.00. An e-book option is also available from Cokesbury.

#### **Incarnation**

God's revelation and incarnation are not in any way limited to Jesus Christ. God's revelation and incarnation are of the warp and woof of human history. The God who faces us and speaks to us in Jesus Christ is the same God who had already spoken and who continues to speak. God has always had many witnesses.

-Br. Curtis Almquist  
Society of Saint John the Evangelist

**Lunch Bunch!**

Sunday, February 21 at La Milpa.  
No reservation required.  
Join us!



**Trustees and Administrative Council**

Trustees will meet on February 10 and March 9, 7:00 at Karen's.  
Administrative Council meets February 17  
and March 16, 7:00 in Jones Hall.

**Happy Birthday Wishes to:**

- 02/01 Jeremy Westover
- 02/02 Jess Tanciangco
- 02/21 Robert Roll
- 03/06 Daislyn Pease
- 03/06 Tyler Tanciangco
- 03/09 David Haas
- 03/14 Ealasaid Haas
- 03/26 Huynh Phan



**Happy Anniversary!!**

- 2/14 Jo and Bob Roll
- 2/16 Pastor Shirley and Jon Marcus
- 03/05 Gwen and Jack Freeman



**INCOME AND EXPENSE SUMMARY**

Income	December 2015	Full Year	Expenses	December 2015	Full Year
Offerings	\$2,579.00	\$33,498.28	Mission & Outreach	\$1,182.12	\$15,841.23
Building Use & Others	\$8,192.32	\$102,499.04	Operating expenses	\$6,878.06	\$42,667.48
Special giving	\$535.31	\$3,857.70	Pastor & Staff	\$2,847.15	\$62,194.38
Total	\$11,306.63	\$139,855.02	Total	\$10,907.33	\$120,703.09
Cash on hand		\$41,299.55			
Designated funds		\$8,707.00			
Second 50 balance		\$37,153.65			

## Guidelines for the Road

I was recently reading a set of comments on one of my favorite interfaith/multifaith websites, Patheos.com. As you might imagine, when a hot topic is discussed, the comments range from supportive to, frankly, vile. I came across a note preceding comments on one page, “The Way of Openness is practiced here” I was intrigued, so following the link, found the following explanation. Even though I think I follow these guidelines, they have been a good review, and reminder that I’m not as good about some as others.

### What is the Way of Openness?

The Way of Openness is a set of skills and attitudes that will significantly improve the quality of your conversations, your perception of yourself and others, and the power of your influence for good in the world.

**Be Honest:** Honesty begins when you look in the mirror. It affects how you relate to yourself, how you talk to yourself, and what you think of yourself. When you get to a point in life that you can be perfectly honest with yourself, being honest with others happens naturally. And perfect honesty with others is easily understood and accepted by those who matter to you. The rest are not worth worrying about.

**Be Kind:** Kindness will go further towards building trust than any other virtue listed here. Kindness is never outdated. It is not weak, or naive, or small. Kindness is easily recognized and understood by everyone, so your ability to affect change and influence the world for good is greatly enhanced by sincere kindness. But, be wise about this. Nothing is more offensive or destructive than kindness that is forced, phony, or insincere.

**Listen Well:** Make no mistake, listening well is hard to do. It is not *just being quiet*. Even pausing one more second takes real effort and often much practice. To listen well means to listen with a desire to truly understand rather than with a need to respond. It is the epitome of love and empathy in action. But it is also a sign of self-respect. We all need a good listening ear from time to time. But sadly, so few have them. So be one of the few who do.

**Share the Floor:** If you want to be taken seriously you must take others seriously. Sharing the floor means allowing others to speak even when we “know” we are right. It is acknowledging the dignity of your opponent even when you feel obligated to silence them. Hogging the floor undermines your ability to persuade others because it manifests your fears more than your convictions. But most of all, hogging the floor is just rude – and you don’t want that.

**Presume Good Will:** Too often we assume the “other” party involved doesn’t have our best interests in mind. Sometimes those concerns are valid. But more often than not, even with good intentions, we subconsciously sabotage our conversations because we presume that the other party has “bad” will, or, even worse, is incapable of “good” will. Presuming good will is not the same as accepting the other persons beliefs or positions. It means accepting the other persons intentions as being good.

**Acknowledge the Differences:** Acknowledging the differences frees us to know where we stand without having to guess. When we discuss differences openly, it validates both parties and sets the tone so *a real conversation can finally happen*. If done with a posture of humility it can indicate a sign of maturity that better preserves and ensures the dignity of everyone involved. If you are tempted to only discuss the similarities and hide the differences, something is out of balance in the relationship. Similarities are a great place to start, but a shallow and boring place to end.

**Answer the Tough Questions:** With genuine differences come tough questions – especially when both sides desire a trusting relationship. Asking and answering tough questions in a strait-forward and honest way builds more trust than avoiding them. This does not mean one party should subject themselves to endless interrogation or share private details carelessly. It simply means diving a little deeper to better understand the motives and biases that might be driving us. The mere act of vocalizing our answers to tough questions has a powerful effect on everyone involved.

**Give Credit Where Credit is Due:** A good compliment goes a long way. But an honest compliment from an unexpected source can go *all the way*. Acknowledging the good in the “other” party shows you are interested in discussing the position(s) based on merits and not because you are focused on winning. Chances are very rare that nothing good can be said of someone who disagrees with you. However, fake compliments intended to manipulate or deceive others will only backfire.

**Speak Only for Yourself:** None of us like to be *told* what we believe by someone who doesn’t represent us – particularly if that person opposes our positions. It is an obnoxious trait that should be avoided by anyone seriously desiring to influence the world for good. If you have not been asked to speak on behalf of someone then don’t. If you are an authority or leader of a particular group, then disclose such responsibilities and speak accordingly, otherwise, speak only for yourself and let others have the same opportunity.

**Keep Private Things Private”** Everyone needs some privacy. It is a core ingredient to our personal dignity. The virtue of being honest does not mean disclosing all things to all people. Neither is there a need to answer *all* the tough questions (see above). Keeping private things private means being respectful of the other party’s desire to speak “privately” about a particular matter. But it also means not sharing certain things at certain times and in certain situations. Before trust and honesty, there was privacy.

# Worship in February and March

Pastor Shirley is on Leave from February 11 to March 12. During her time away, we've got several wonderful preachers to fill the pulpit:

## February 14

Raymond Lockley          Raymond has been with us on a regular basis, and always has great message.

## February 21

Mike Baggett          Mike is a young friend of Karen's. He has just begun Seminary at the American Baptist School of the West this semester. He preaches at his own American Baptist church, Grace, in San Jose, and is very excited to join us.

## February 28 and March 6

John Lynch          John has been a Lay pastor at Boulder Creek UMC for several years, and is attending the course of Study at Claremont. Pastor Shirley has been his mentor for several years.

**March 13** Pastor Shirley back in the pulpit

**March 20** Palm Sunday

**March 27** Easter.          Our Sunrise service is at 6:30 a.m. on the patio, weather permitting. A pot-luck breakfast is served between services.  
Easter Celebration at 9:30 a.m.



**Kairos Krafters: February 4, 3:00 p.m.—5:00 p.m.**

Sometimes it is just nice to be able to sit with a group of friends and chat while working on handcrafts of all kinds. Kairos Krafters meet somewhat irregularly, but generally on the first Thursday of many months, 3:00—5:00 in the Sanctuary. Kairos Krafters is a drop in group, so don't worry about coming after 3 or leaving before 5.



In February we will have something to craft in response to our InnVision visits in January—perhaps a tied blanket. And as always, bring your own craft and work on that if you wish. We'd like to see you!

## *Calendar*

Every Sunday: 9:30 a.m. Worship  
Every Monday: 1:00 a.m. Centering Prayer

### *February*

Thu, Feb 4, 3:00 p.m. Kairos Krafters, Sanctuary  
Thu, Feb 4, 6:30 p.m. Sunnyhills Choir  
Sat, Feb.6 9:00 a.m. Community Breakfast – Flamekeepers  
Sun, Feb.7 11:00 -12 Congregational Discussion: Future of Sunnyhills  
expressed as Church Profile and preparation for  
Discussion with our District Superintendent  
wed, Feb 10 5:00 – 6:00 p.m.  
Ash Wednesday Come as you are Communion  
Wed, Feb.10 7:00 p.m. Trustees @ Karen's  
Wed, Feb.17 7:00 p.m. Ad Council  
Thu, Feb 18, 6:30 p.m. Sunnyhills Choir  
Sun. Feb 21 Special Offering: Black College Fund  
Lunch bunch, La Milpa

### *March*

Sun, Mar 6 Special Offering One Great Hour of Sharing  
Wed, Mar 9 7:00 p.m. Trustees @ Karen's  
Wed, Mar16 7:00 p.m. Ad Council  
Sun, Mar20 9:30 a.m. Palm Sunday  
Sun, March 27 6:30 a.m. Easter Sunrise service , potluck breakfast  
9:30 a.m. Easter U.M. worship  
Special Offering. Milpitas Food Bank

### **Scrip it for Sunnyhills**

Scrip is always a good deal for the church, and can make your Easter Basket stuffing even easier: a gift card for Starbucks, a dinner on the town, even groceries. You pay the full price but the church gets a percentage. See Daislyn Pease if you have questions,

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**First Class Mail**

### **Ash Wednesday Come-as-you are Communion**

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the season of Lent. Lent is a time when many Christians prepare for Easter by observing a period of fasting, repentance, moderation and spiritual discipline. The use of ashes as a sign of mortality and repentance has a long history in both Jewish and Christian worship. Ashes signify our humanness, as well as purification and sorrow for sins.

On Wednesday, February 10, drop into the Sanctuary between 5:00 pm and 6:00 pm. Pastor Shirley will serve Communion and “impose” ashes. Materials will be available for personal reading and meditation.

