



PresbyNews

Sharing and celebrating the people and events in the life of Faith Presbyterian Church
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What an absolute joy
to be called into this community.
God's grace and peace to you
all this season.
- Jeff

Like the Magi may the
light of Christ lead
you home. Like the
shepherds may the
angels help you worship
Christ. Merry Christmas!
- Quinn

May the
presence of
our Lord bless
you and this Christmas
and all year long.
- Kristi

May you
experience great
peace, love, and
joy each and
every day!
- Melinda

The peace of
Christ be with
you. - Patrick



Peace

MAY you
know Christ's
presence in all
seasons!
Jim



Overcoming the Disappointment of New Year's



It's funny but true. New Year's is a time of year that ought to be filled with so much promise. Instead, for many of us, it's often a time filled with disappointment. For some of us it's the fact that the calendar has turned another page and yet our lives still aren't at the place we imagined they would be by the time 2009 rolled around. For others, it's a time when we once again set resolutions to make serious changes in our lives but, often only a few weeks into the year, slip back into our old way of doing things. Happens to a lot of us, year after year after year.

Author John Ortberg sums it up for many of us when he writes, "I am disappointed with myself. I am disappointed not so much with particular things I have done as with aspects of who I have become. I have a nagging sense that all is not as it should be." He describes going to a high school reunion and fighting a deep urge to try to make himself more attractive or accomplished than he actually is. "When I show up at that reunion I want to be," Ortberg writes stealing the words of Garrison Keillor, "named Sun-God, King of America, Idol of Millions, Bringer of Fire, The Great Haji, Tun-Dar the Boy Giant."

Most New Year's we'd just settle for one of those. (Personally, I want to be Tun-Dar the Boy Giant!) Yet, for many of us, a long look at our lives leaves us with a nagging sense that all is not as it should be. We could be better husbands, better wives. Wiser parents. More loving sons and daughters. Kinder neighbors. More compassionate toward those around us in need. We love God, yes. But we still sin so much. Our faith waivers so often. If you're like me, you have a very clear vision of the person you sense you were meant, in God, to be. And yet, the reality falls so short.

One very natural reaction to this realization that our lives are a disappointment is self-pity. "Yes," we think to ourselves, "I'm not all that I could be, but if I can at least feel sorry for myself, maybe that will help." Well, it never works. Self-pity, in the end, gets us nowhere. Neither does guilt or denial, two other very natural reactions.

Let me suggest that what many of us need, instead, is a good dose of perspective. Perspective, that is, with good news. Specifically, we need to know that *God, in truth, is not finished with us*. We need to understand that *as we allow him to, God will continue to transform our lives*. He wants to, in fact, *give us a life that looks like Jesus, a life we always wanted but never thought possible*.

Sound too good to be true? Beginning January 4th, we are going to begin a new Sunday morning sermon series along these lines. For a couple months we will take an opportunity to honestly look at our disappointments, at the gap which exists between the kind of person we think we were meant to become and the kind of person we actually are. Then, we'll look together at how God really does want to help us bridge that gap.

I believe that God didn't just change people's lives in the Bible. I know, we read about these people, about Peter and Paul and David and Moses, and we see how these people were completely transformed and we wonder if that sort of thing still happens.

Well, God is, I believe, doing the same thing today. He wants to do it in my life, and in your life. Paul writes in II Corinthians 5:17, "If any person is in Christ, that person is a new creation. The old has gone. The new is come." This verse isn't meant for the elite among us. It's meant for all of us, ordinary people like you and me. We are to become, in every sense, new creations in Christ.

I hope you will make plans to join us for this series. Come, let's struggle together to figure out the sort of life God has in mind for us and then understand how that life can be, this side of heaven, a reality.

I look forward – I really do! – to worshipping with you this Sunday!

Grace & Peace, Jeff

Kelsey Ingalls to Preach at Faith December 28th

Many of you remember Kelsey, our former youth director who is now in her final year of seminary in Iowa preparing to become a Minister of the Word and Sacrament. During this period of study, Kelsey has remained under care of our congregation here at Faith, receiving regularly prayer and financial support. We are thrilled to welcome Kelsey to preach this coming Sunday. In addition, Kelsey and Donne's young son, Jordan, will be baptized in the service.

Dear ARCOfaithfuls,

On **Sunday, December 28th** (a 6 pm start [volunteers need to arrive at ARCO by 4 pm]), the Kings host the NBA Champion Boston Celtics in their only visit to Sacramento this season. **We could use 9 or 10 more volunteers** to finish staffing this event. So, if you would like to come out and help, I will be at Church tomorrow taking sign-ups, or you can just take a parking pass from the outside wall just outside the entrance to Link Hall and let me know you will be there. It will be a lot of fun and we'll see some college youths home for the Holidays, and new 18 year olds, who will be helping out. Let me know if you can help out and we'll see you there. THANKS, and Merry Christmas!!!!

Paul Keller



Dear Fellow Christian:

We are inviting you and your congregation to a Walk thru the Bible — New Testament Seminar on Saturday, January 10, 2009. This is an exciting interactive way to learn a basic overview of the New Testament for the whole church family (from 5th grade on up.)



NEW TESTAMENT
BIBLE STUDY

The one-day seminar will be held at Fair Oaks Presbyterian in the Worship Center from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. The cost which includes a workbook is \$20 for Adults and \$15 for youth under 18. A box lunch is available for \$5.00 if you order at registration. Lunch includes a turkey or roast beef sandwich, pickle, salad cup, chips, and drink.

Childcare is available for \$15.00 for the day. You must reserve child care when you register. You may bring your child's lunch and snacks or pay \$5.00 at registration for MacDonald's hamburger and snacks. (No peanut butter please.)

If you want to learn more about Walk thru the Bible please check out www.walkthru.org. You may register online at www.fopc.org or at the FOPC plaza on Sundays. If you have any questions please contact Diane Christensen at 916-852-1001.

Thank you for your time and help getting people in the Word of God and the Word of God into people!

Yours for Christ,
Connie Neal
Junior High Director
Fair Oaks Presbyterian Church

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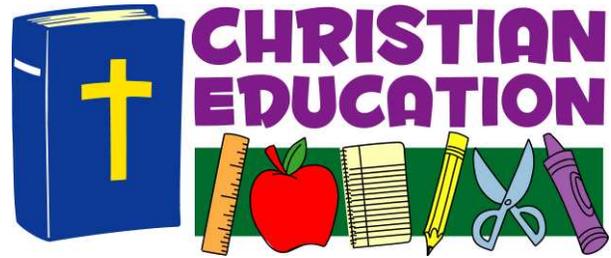
Adult Sunday School in January:

January 4, 11, 18, 25, Feb 1:

When the Game is Over It All Goes Back in the Box

A promotion. A new house. The rewards of winning at life's game can be thrilling. But eventually everything goes back into the box, and what ultimately matters is whether we've played according to

God's rules. Pastor John Ortberg (of Menlo Park Presbyterian Church) uses popular games and his trademark gift of storytelling to help us live our lives for the things that really count. Come and be part of this DVD and discussion series and consider the things that really "count" in your life. Jim Zazzera will be the leader throughout this series.



An Opportunity for Learning and Growth

Consider deepening your faith and knowledge with this new class: *Understanding the Religions of Our World*, Wednesday Evenings, January 7, 14, 21, 28, Feb 4. Walter Newport, Instructor

Too often, Christians do not know what to say to people of other religious traditions, and have little idea about how to give the reasons for the hope we have when confronted by them. Often this is the result of not knowing what others believe, so even if we know what we believe, we don't know what the world views of others are. During the two five-week segments in which the world religions class will be held, we will be focusing on questions such as the evidence for the existence of God and some of the forms that atheism, agnosticism, and animism have taken. The basic beliefs of such established world religions as Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and the common roots and differences of the three main monotheistic religions, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam will also be topics for discussion. Also investigated will be offshoots of these established religions, such as the New Age movement and the Ba'Hai faith, in addition to popular notions associated with modernism, post-modernism, humanism, naturalism, pluralism, and relativism.

Walter Newport has been a member of Faith Church for about a year now. He has a doctorate in Higher Education, and is a retired professor of international cultures and languages, having taught the Spanish and Japanese languages, as well as English as a Second Language during the last forty years. In that time, he has lived in Cuba, Spain, Japan, and several states in the U.S. He was the first non-native professor ever hired by Ishikawa Prefecture in Japan, where world religions were an integral part of his International Cultures classes.



Women's Retreat Scheduled for 2009

Faith's Women's Retreat will be held February 27–March 1, 2009 at Mercy Center in Auburn. The theme is "Choices, Choices, Choices." Our leaders this year are Pastors Quinn Vaughn and Joan Stock. Cost is \$150 (\$80 deposit required at registration). Rooms are single occupancy; no need for a roommate. Registration

will be taken Sunday, January 4 in the narthex. For more info contact Ilah Turner at 428-8716.



Children in Sunday school classes made beautiful Christmas baskets that were given to folks in the community as they were visited and serenaded by Faith Christmas carolers.



Thanks to the Holiday Decorators

Faith folk should thank the following people for their help in the decoration of our sanctuary: Kathy Ramos, Randy Ramos, Monique Ramos, David Leader (coordinator for the Hanging of the Greens ceremonies) Ken Pisor, Esther Chapman, Isabel Chapman, Bereket Chapman, Terri Westerdahl, Cynthia Crow, Rick Crow, Kathy Pehrson, Ken Finch, Matt Sell, and Wally Smith.

All In The Family

This Advent season provided the opportunity for members of our church to share the hope, peace, joy and love of Christ with homeless families in the Family Promise program. During the week of Dec. 14th our church provided food, fellowship and shelter to 4 families: 1) Charles, Lisa, Justin & Lauryn; 2) Jacqueline & Lamont; 3) Roger & Dakota and 4) Francisco, Angelina & Joseph.

Many of our own families volunteered together: The Reynolds (Brien, Maegan, Trevin & Collin); The Bakers (Em & Bill); The Browns (Bert & Barbara); The Powells (Bob & Barbara); The Smiths (Jennifer & Catherine); The Ainsworths (Erin & Sarah); The Morris Family (Dan, Christa & Justin); The Pisors (Ken & Claire); The Bagbys (Roy & Molly); The Crows (Rick & Cynthia); The Hankeys (Rhonda & Connor); The Thommens (Larry & Jo); The Reins (Emily & Wendi); and 2 sisters (Michelle Sweeting & Marianne Jenkins).

We also had 3 life groups provide meals this week: 1) Melodi Anderson, Audrey Sherfy; 2) Ellie Boyce, Kathy Pehrson, Joan Parks & Brenda Norris. 3) Ruth Collier, Mary Nabers, Brenda Norris, Jackie Rule, Jackie Klas, Lois Chan, Winona Miles, and Marthe Sweet.

These individuals served in various capacities: Chuck Bell, Donna Touros, Ilah Turner, Tanya Anderson, Jim Tracy, Terri Williamson, Janet Leader, Debbie Barton, Kent Kim, Mary Masterson, Gary Cash, Jeff Brown, Joann Helmich, Vicky Chastain, Ann Johnson, Erwina Bush, & Patti Bill. A special thanks goes to our staff who made accommodations to their schedules to allow the guests to use our facilities and to the Fellowship Committee who provided our Wednesday night meal.

If you, your family or life group would like to participate in this mission project you will find the sign up board outside the office. Our next rotation is the week of March 22, 2009.

Cynthia Crow and Sue Hooper



Take a Walk on the Frequent Side

Wish you could remember yesterday like it was only yesterday? Then take a 20-minute walk today. And every day. Yep, in a recent study, that's all the extra activity it took to help counter faltering memories in a group of people over age 50.

Long Lasting Benefits

After six months of doing an extra 20 minutes of exercise daily (on top of the physical activity done normally), a group of adults experienced losses in memory and verbal fluency saw improvements. More good news: the exercise didn't have to be terribly taxing. Not only did walking work but so did swimming and ballroom dancing. Even better, the improvements persisted for 12 months after the study ended and so benefits lasted up to 18 months. The research suggests that exercise may help delay Alzheimer's in at-risk adults -- people who have mild cognitive decline.

Move for Your Mind

Although it's yet not fully understood how staying active improves the mind, it may be that the boost in blood flow nourishes brain tissue and by extension stimulates the generation of new neurons, synapses, and blood vessels.