

Community Church of the Monterey Peninsula
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A member of the Community
Church of the Monterey Peninsula

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Wherever you are
on your
faith journey, you
are welcome here!



**Upcoming Dates
For Your Calendar**

Sunday, Dec. 4
Advent Tea
after worship

Saturday, Dec. 24
Christmas
Eve Candlelight
Service
7 p.m.

December 2016



Community Church of the Monterey Peninsula

Independent and United Church of Christ

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Wherever you are on your faith journey, you are welcome at the Community Church of the Monterey Peninsula. We are both independent and United Church of Christ, as governed by the members. Openness, independent thinking and inclusivity are critical for our journey together. We encourage individual spiritual exploration and do not require adherence to a creed or a single view of what it means to be a Christian or to follow Christ. We journey by heart and our goal is to love God and all that God loves.

In our worship and activities beyond Sunday, we invite you to experience the transforming power of God and walk daily with Jesus as you live out your spiritual journey. Welcome to the journey!

Our Mission

The Mission of The Community Church of the Monterey Peninsula is to welcome independent-minded people of all ages, build a diverse Christian community, and nurture one another to love God, neighbor and self.

Our mission is grounded on ten core values:

- God loves all people.
- We welcome all people, wherever they are on their life journey.
- Worship is the life breath of our community.
- We are the heart and hands of Christ serving others.
- We grow spiritually in Christ.
- We provide creative, open, lifelong Christian education.
- We are stewards sustaining all of God's creation.
- We promote understanding and cooperation among people of all faiths.
- We are a vital democracy and value independent thinking and dialogue..
- We joyfully support our mission with time, talent and treasure.

Next Newsletter Deadline:
Sunday, December 18!

From Our Minister

December 2016

Dear Friends,

As we are all well aware, one of the great strengths of our church is the independent-mindedness and often strong opinions of our members. But this strength does have a shadow side, and this shadow side was expressed to me a number of times after this week's national election.

I received calls from some asking me to bless our new president, and calls from others asking me to denounce him.

I also received several calls from members expressing their concern that partisan politics would be expressed, and that they were actually afraid to come to church because of this.

Community Church needs to be an absolutely safe place for ALL of its members, friends, and visitors. During this time of intensely partisan politics in our country, I think it absolutely crucial that we keep partisan politics out of church.

This means that I personally will not be blessing or denouncing anyone from the pulpit or, for that matter, making any kind of public statements that purport to represent our church as a whole.

The truth is that our church is a microcosm of our country, with people on both sides of the political divide, and some libertarians to boot.

I strongly believe in one of the founding principles of our nation, the separation of church and state. And I also believe that the teachings of Jesus, while often political in the broad sense of how we treat our neighbors, are definitely not political in the sense of Jesus being more Republican or Democrat or Libertarian or Green. Jesus is the best of all of these and then infinitely more!

So I would ask that we leave our partisan politics at home when it comes to worship on Sunday mornings or during any other activities at church during the week. I very much want to reinstitute our church's long-time practice of inviting the congregation to offer up prayers, which I had to suspend during the election season because some of the prayers were becoming too politically partisan and offending others in the congregation. So I would ask that we leave partisan politics out during our time of intercessory prayer.

Here's an example of how NOT to pray during public worship:
"Loving God, please see to it that Obamacare is repealed as soon as possible."

Here's an example of how TO pray during public worship:
"Loving God, we pray that more and more people in our country come to have access to affordable health care."

Another example of how NOT to pray during public worship:
"Loving God, please see to it that the new administration honors the Paris Climate Agreement."

Another example of how TO pray during public worship:
"Loving God, we pray that human beings become better stewards of your good creation, and that we take concrete steps in that direction."

I think all of us would heartily agree that we want Community Church to be a safe place for everyone, a place where we are all focused on the relentless compassion, yearning for justice, absolute nonviolence, and unconditional love of God as lived out for us by Jesus.

Blessings & Peace,



Chuck Scardina

Poetry Corner

That's Christmas!

Oh, how the reds, the silvers
And the golden colors of Christmas
Depict this incredible man who came among us.
Dazzling us with His goodness.

When you practice just one of His acts,
Notice how the moment has changed?
You might just melted someone's heart,
And he, yours.

Knowing that He was all that mattered,
The apostles recorded His life,
Making the pursuit of His goodness,
The gift of Christmas.
Yes, that's Christmas!

Dodie Scardina, 2016



Givingtree Benefit Shop

Hours: Wednesday-Saturday 12-4
Donations welcomed during shop hours.
Open Sundays after church for an hour.
Volunteers welcome!

From Lyn Rosen



*"Beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing,
but underneath are ravenous wolves."
Matthew 7:15*

Me: It has been awhile since I have prayed to You. I resist You, and I don't know why. I do not believe I ever had faith that You are the son of God. I just did not get it. Then when I was in college, it was a time of great change and many old ideas were questioned... The role of women, the oppression of minorities, what our country was doing, and belief in You as well. I changed my thinking about many things and I dismissed You. So for me, it became easier to just keep up the status quo as far as You were concerned. That way I could carry on without having to struggle with any questioning of my belief that You were, and forgive me for this: irrelevant. However, eventually I could no longer do this; I sensed something was missing.

To be truthful, since many of the people I associate with are not religious, I worry about what they think of me if I start speaking of You. Therefore I am silent and this feels cowardly. So I disassociate and stop communicating with You.

Jesus: You need to lay down the burden of worrying what others think. Remember it is not what others think of you, it is what God thinks of you that matters.

Me: Some other people I know believe in You and they like to tell the rest of us who and how You are, and believe they are absolutely right and everyone else is wrong even to the point of framing it into good (them) and evil (everyone else). I find this type of thinking offensive and somewhat scary. I have used this as a reason to refuse to get to know You; to believe.

Jesus: Remember, some fanatics and others are human and trying to explain and / or use something that is Divine. Do not let this concern you. Do not let this stand in the way of your relationship with Me. Remember what I said and what I did while on earth, and keep praying.

Me: I will... I love the person You are in the Bible. I do not like what is sometimes done in Your name... You know, war and things. You have even been used as an excuse for cruelty.

Jesus: I know and my heart breaks over it. Try to look for the positive and follow your own heart and what you are beginning to realize is true about Me. There are many wonderful people who sacrifice, pray, and help others for Me. Look towards them. Look for kindness in others. Look for a belief in Me that is passionate, and is also manifest in good works and actions. You will come to Me in time and pray often with or without words. I will listen.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

Our Prayer Shawl Ministry meets Tuesdays 9:30-11:30 a.m. All knitters are welcome! We meet in the Broaddus Room just off Woodhull Hall. Call Pam with questions at 624-8759.



Birthdays In December

5th Lane Hayes
7th Lawrence Samuels
12th Max Tadlock
20th William Daniel



24th James Akin
31st Elizabeth Wrightman

I- Help Dinners

The I-Help Dinner for Homeless Men will be held on December 14. (They occur on the second Wednesday of each month.) You can help by signing up to bring something for the meal. The men arrive about 5 p.m. and we eat about 5:30. The sign up sheet is in Woodhull Hall. The Women's I-Help Dinner will be on December 20 (the third Tuesday of the month). Thanks to those who constantly support this fine outreach!

Church Women United



Church Women United will meet on Friday, December 2, at 9:30 a.m. for their "Holiday Gathering." Host church will be Disciples of Christ Christian Church, 442 Central Avenue, Pacific Grove. We will collect new children's shoes for "Farm Worker Families Ministry." Bring items for auction and sale and baked goods. We will collect for the Leprosy Fund and the Fellowship of the Least Coin as we do at each gathering. See or call Kathy Warthan, our CWU representative if you have questions.

Property Steward

Peter Sewald

Three items only this month:

1. We can always use help on Wednesdays and Saturdays.
2. At last, the banner, that was on county property, was moved by Bill Daniel, Richard Howell, and Larry Kuck. Prop Steward's timing was perfect as he arrived at completion of move.
3. Speaking of whom: Said Property Steward would dearly love to see someone else in position as Property Steward; someone who knows how to do the job.