

HIGHLIGHTS

REV. FARRIS BOOK STUDY & POTLUCK

Sunday, September 23 @ 12 noon
Join Rev. Patricia Farris for an enlightening study and discussion about Relating to People of Other Religions: What Every Christian Needs to Know. The book, on sale now in the church library, focuses on very pertinent questions faced by Christians as we relate to people of other faiths, such as: Who are our neighbors? How do we balance witnessing to our faith with respect for the faith of others? What are some practical guidelines for interfaith interaction? The author Dr. Thomas Thangaraj, Professor of World Christianity at the Candler School of Theology at Emory University, will be with us to lead the discussion. Everyone is welcome to attend! We encourage you to read the book first. If you are able, bring something to share for the potluck lunch.

PROMOTING TRUTH AND JUSTICE

Sunday, September 30 @ 2 pm
We will be hosting an important event sponsored by the Christian-Muslim Consultative Group entitled "Obsession Salon" on Sunday, September 30, at 2 pm in the Fireside Room. The film Obsession: Radical Islam's War Against the West will be screened followed by a Discussion and Q&A with panel guests: Rev. Dr. Gwynne Guibord, Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles; Edina Lekovic, Muslim Public Affairs Council; Dr. Maher Hathout, Author of "Jihad vs. Terrorism" & "In Pursuit of Justice," and will be moderated by Jihad Turk, Islamic Center of Southern California. All are welcome!

BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

Saturday, October 6 @ 10 am
Get your pets ready for our first annual Blessing of the Animals Service and Festival to be held on Saturday, October 6 at 10 am in the courtyard of the church. All pets and their owners are welcome. We hope to make this an annual October tradition! For more information or to get involved, please contact Nancy Perov in the church office.

SUMMER ADVENTURES! DRAMA CAMP 2007

by Nate Risdon



As in years past, the children who participated in the Summer Adventures! camp finished their summer by putting on a play. This year they produced the play *Aesop's (Oh So Slightly Updated) Fables* by Mary Esop Wylie. Based loosely on Aesop's Fables and designed with children in mind, the play consists of a series of small, interconnected vignettes strung together with its reoccurring characters. Each vignette is anchored with the traditional morals found in the original Aesop's Fables, but in this play the audience discovers the morals in silly and humorous ways.

Under the direction of Michelle Markwart-Deveaux, the children worked hard every morning for three weeks on developing their characters and memorizing their lines. Not only did the children perform as the actors in this play, they also designed the sets along with the Summer Adventures! staff, acted as their own stage managers, and designed the costumes and many of props they used in the play. In short, the children were deeply involved in all aspects of the production.

The actual performance was a wonderful event full of laughter and surprise and gave each of the children an opportunity to shine. At the end of the production, the children stayed on stage and talked about their experiences producing the play and what they learned through the whole process. What struck me as unique about this production compared to numerous other productions I have seen was how the children were able to relate this to God. As one young man put it, "I learned that we can be talking about God, even when we don't know it." In other words, they came to an understanding that God is in all aspects of their lives – the play, the trips to the beach, the games, the development of lasting friendships – God is in and throughout all of these things.



You know of my love of languages. So I was delighted to learn a new side of John Wesley at the Oxford Institute that draws me into even closer kinship with him. One of the plenary speakers from South America observed in a rather off-hand way that Wesley had learned Spanish in order to read the writings of the Spanish mystics. Not knowing if this was a fact or a native Spanish-speaker humorously making the point I've been told many times that "Spanish is the language of heaven!" I

began to check this out with several of the renowned Wesleyan scholars participating in the Institute.

I thought the answers might prove not only personally affirming but instructive for our work in Southern California as well. This became a quest and led to several fascinating meal-time conversations. Did Wesley learn Spanish? And if so, why? I received many speculative answers. Yes. No. Never heard that he did. He did so to convert the Jews he met when he came to Georgia.

Much to my delight, Dr. Rex Matthews of the Candler School of Theology at Emory University followed up in a long email a week or so after we returned home. He had pursued my quest, his curiosity having gotten hold of him. Well, as it turns out, Spanish tells only a small part of the story. Wesley had a deep love of German and translated some 33 hymns from German into English. He also studied French, though (to my regret) didn't think much of it, commenting on a poem of Voltaire saying: "I was more than ever convinced that the French is the poorest, meanest language in Europe; that it is no more comparable to the German or Spanish than a bagpipe is to an organ." He also studied Italian.

And the purpose of all of his language study was not conversion at all. It was, as he put it, to read the holy writings in German, Spanish and Italian, to converse with his Spanish and Italian speaking parishioners in Georgia and to lead worship for them. He wrote in his diary: "I began learning Spanish in order to converse with my Jewish parishioners, some of whom seem nearer the mind that was in Christ than many of those who call him Lord." His Jewish friend, Dr. Samuel Núñez, became his chief mentor and religious colleague during his time there.

Now I'm curious to read more about these Spanish-speaking Jews who were in Georgia at that time (pre-Revolutionary War) and who made such an impression on Wesley. And I am inspired at this role model of one willing to study and learn in order to converse and be in ministry with those whom God put in his path. What a marvelous inspiration for us all in this wonderful multi-cultural, multi-lingual community in which we live!

Patricia Jarvis

OUR CHURCH COMMUNITY

Birthdays

We're excited to celebrate the 90th birthdays of Ferne Thompson (September 19), Grace Miller (September 20) and Ruth Heppner (October 7). Congratulations, ladies!

Thanks to Mervyn's

We extend our deepest appreciation to Mervyn's and Store Manager Melody Wang who graciously discounted prices on clothing at the Westchester store for the purpose of our clothing drive for Esperanza School. There may be other opportunities for shoppers to take advantage of these discounts for the express purpose of the Clothing Drive. Contact the church office for more information. Huge thanks to Melody and Mervyn's!

Condolences

We extend our deepest sympathy to the family and friends of these dear friends in Christ:

-Lee Latham who died on September 6. Services have been arranged to be held in Santa Ana.

-Mildred Dale who died on August 6 at the age 89 in Sun City, CA.

-Ruth Shadbolt who died on December 5, 2006.

Congratulations

We congratulate our 4th graders who received brand new Bibles of their very own during worship on Sunday, September 16. We wish Christian Dodd, Frances Erlandson, Jake Guyette, Sam Guyette, Colin Heffner, Alejandro Quintana, Lauryn Wilson and Haylie Wollitz a life-long relationship with the Word of God.

Who Are We?

Want to learn more about what it means to be United Methodist? Visit the "About Us" page on the church website and click on the "UM101" link which will take you to a free online course about United Methodism. Soon, you'll be the authority and a glowing example of our deep rooted principles.



September 23

9 am Partnership with God, Rm 101
 9 am Worship
 10 am Children's Ministry Council, Rm 303
 10 am Coffee Hour, SH
 10:30 am Worship
 11:30 am Coffee Hour, SH
 12 noon Rev. Farris Book Study & Potluck, FR, *Relating to People of Other Religions: What Every Christian Needs to Know* by Thomas Thangaraj

September 25

7 pm Church Council, FR

September 26

6 pm UBH Board, UBH Comm Rm
 7 pm Gulf Coast Work Project, CR
 7 pm Rev. Farris' Oxford Report, FR

September 30

9 am Partnership with God, Rm 101
 9 am Worship
 10 am Coffee Hour, SH
 10:30 am Worship
 11:30 am Coffee Hour, SH
 2 pm Obsession Salon, FR

October 2

6 pm UCLA 50+ Lecture/Seminar, FR

October 4

12 noon UMW Unit Lunch & Program, FR. All are invited to this potluck lunch with special guest speaker & celebration of Fall birthdays. The UMW will be taking nominations for officer positions (elections to take place at November meeting).
 7 pm Hope Circle, MH

October 5

7 pm Shareringers, off-site

October 6

10 am Blessing of the Animals, CY
 1:30 pm Annual Game Day Fundraiser, FR. All are welcome!

BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

Gather Fido and Fluffy and all of your beloved pets for our first annual Blessing of the Animals service on Saturday, October 6, at 10am in the courtyard. We will celebrate and honor the special bond between pets and people. There will be fun for everyone and all animals are welcome. If your pet prefers to stay home, just bring his or her picture! All animals must be suitably restrained (on leash or caged). Please also bring pet food, pet treats, or pet toys for us to share with a local animal shelter.



CARING FOR CREATION

This Is My Father's World – Malthie D. Babcock

This is my Father's world, And to my listening ears All Nature sings, and round me rings The music of the spheres. This is my Father's world, I rest me in the thought Of rocks and trees, of skies and seas, His hand the wonders wrought. This is my Father's world, The birds their carols raise. The morning light, the lily white, Declare their makers praise. This is my Father's world, He shines in all that's fair, In the rustling grass, I hear Him pass, He speaks to me everywhere.

We cannot be all that God wants us to be without caring about the earth. We at First United Methodist Church of Santa Monica believe that to be true!

STEWARDSHIP

It's that time of year again – the kids are back in school, the nights are getting a little cooler – summer's over. We've come home from our vacations – and realize that we're behind on our pledge to the church! Not to worry! September is the month to catch up on those forgotten or misplaced payments. While we're at it, September is the ideal time to begin prayerfully thinking about how much you want to increase your pledge for next year!



SIMKINS HALL

Progress continues in Simkins Hall. All equipment, fixtures, flooring, and carpeting have been ordered. There are many changes happening every week. Over the next few weeks we expect to continue painting, transforming the alcove, and hopefully restoring light to the main hall!

UBH MONTHLY GARAGE SALE FUNDRAISER

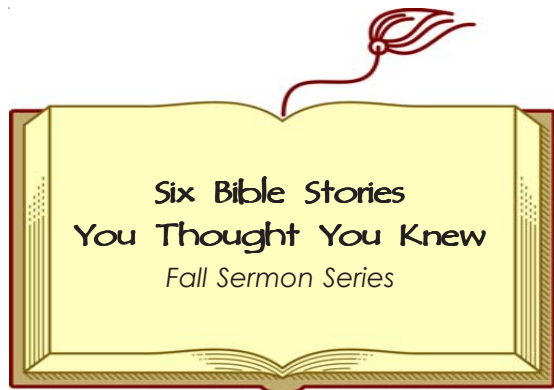
Opening Sale - Saturday, September 29, 8 am - 12 pm, Family Place garage

UBH has launched a new project in connection with in-kind donations: A garage sale, actually in the Family Place garage! This promises to be an excellent garage sale. We have many, many generous contributions and volunteers who are already hard at work sorting, cleaning and organizing. Still we need more garage sale items and ESPECIALLY volunteer help, particularly on the day of the sale. This is a great, fun, volunteer opportunity for all (ages 10 and up) or just come shopping and, simultaneously, support Family Place! Please contact Elka Gilmore at 310-458-7779 ext 204, or egilmore@upwardboundhouse.org if you have time or items to donate.

SOJOURN 30TH ANNIVERSARY: ON THE RED CARPET

Since 1977 Sojourn (a program of Ocean Park Community Center or OPCC) has been a sanctuary for battered women and their children, where they can regroup, rebuild, and reestablish their self-esteem and their lives. In celebration of 30 years of service this event will take place on Saturday, October 13, at Loews Santa Monica Beach Hotel from 6:30 - 8 pm with a champagne reception, silent auction, live auction, the awards presentation, dinner, dancing and the program. Tickets are \$300 each with sponsoring packages available starting at \$3,500. For additional information about the event or Sojourn, contact our own Linda Diane Anderson who is co-chair of the event at (310) 839-6489 or landerson@schulerbrown.com.

SUNDAY WORSHIP - 9:00 am & 10:30 am



September 23 - Worship Renewal Weekend

Seventeenth Sunday After Pentecost

Babel "The city of Babel - God's Gift of Diversity"

Genesis 11:1-9

Rev. Patricia Farris

September 30

Eighteenth Sunday After Pentecost

Abraham and Sarah (and Hagar)

Genesis 15-17

Rev. Patricia Farris

ALTERNATIVE CHRISTMAS IS ON ITS WAY

Alternative Christmas is a program sponsored by FUMC's Missions Council in which you may support mission programs in our community and abroad. In the next few issues of the Sentinel you will learn about this year's offerings leading up to the start of Alternative Christmas on Sunday, December 2. Read the articles in each issue and decide which project(s) you would like to support this year! More information about Alternative Christmas can be found on our website.

The Hewitts in Central Asia: Richard and Cornelia live in Kyrgyzstan, Central Asia. They have done a variety of projects over the years that have helped the local people to live more productive lives. Their agricultural and medical projects in high mountain villages as well as writing books that present biblical narratives in culturally relevant ways has expanded the spiritual and nutritional diets of the mountain people.

David and Mari lived in Kyrgyzstan for eight years. They helped start two Kyrgyz language Christian training schools. These schools are now run by the local Christians. Recently Dave and Mari have moved over the border into western China. They are currently studying the local Uighur language and serving the 10 million Central Asian peoples of China.

Harvest Home: Harvest Home is a nonprofit, non-denominational, fully programmed residential home that is Christ centered and dedicated to meeting the needs of women in crisis pregnancies, regardless of race, religion or nationality. The purpose of Harvest Home is to provide love and care to each woman, offering a stable environment where her physical, emotional and spiritual needs can be met. The ultimate goal is that each woman will leave Harvest Home spiritually strong, with a newfound sense of self-worth and better prepared to support and care for herself and her child.



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