



Sunday Celebration Notes from Libby Tigner

Celebrating God's Love Every Sunday at 10 am.

This Sunday is the first Sunday in Lent, the forty-day period in the Christian calendar of reflection prior to Holy Week and Easter. The mood turns somber, the colors shift to the deep hues of purple, and even the music of the season invites contemplation over celebration. Our Worship and Arts Ministry Team will introduce new visual elements in the form of paraments and communion table coverings that will help to set the tone for our time together.

This Sunday's service will include the Sacrament of Communion – not because it's the first Sunday of the month (although it is) but because we've changed the communion calendar so that the sacrament falls on specific liturgical dates.

In many Christian circles, there is a tradition of giving something up for Lent – often some kind of personal indulgence. I'll look at that practice, and what this season of Lent might mean for us, in my sermon. I do hope to see you on Sunday.

SERMON: *What Will You Give Up?*

The Rev. Libby Tigner, preaching

LITURGIST: The Rev. Jerry Stinson

Next week Jerry Stinson's sermon will be titled "Sagdluk, Zeidel, the Killer Minister and the Easter Chicken."

In Sunday School This Week

Theme: God's Loving Paths

Scripture Focus: Psalm 25:1-10

In Adult Education This Week

Sundays at 8:30 am in the Klar Rooms, upstairs in Pilgrim Hall

"Exploring Lent and the Liturgical Calendar": This class will be devoted to understanding the liturgical calendar, with a specific focus on the season of Lent, its origins, how it is practiced in different faith communities, and how we might approach the season will all be discussed. Coffee is provided; you are welcome to bring your breakfast. Led by Libby Tigner.

Music on Sunday

Psalm 23 has been set by more composers over the centuries than just about any other text. Isaac Watts (1674-1740), a leading Congregational minister in London who wrote over 600 hymns, set his paraphrase of this psalm in 1719. It was eventually coupled with the American folk hymn tune Consolation in 1835. American composer/arranger Mac Wilberg published his arrangement of "My Shepherd Will Supply My Need" in 1995. Wilberg allows the tune to have prominence using two-part harmony, first in the tenor/bass line, then in the soprano/alto line. It is not until the third phrase that he allows the voices to expand to six parts, only to return to simple unison. It is this juncture that has the most meaning for those who have been disenfranchised: "O may thy house be mine abode and all my work be praise! There would I find a settled rest while others go and come, no more a stranger, nor a guest; but like a child at home." Under this he has scored the organ to play simple arpeggiated chords. Over the organ he has com-

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Lenten Exploration: "My Lenten Journey" - March 4

By Libby Tigner

The first of three opportunities to explore our spirituality in the context of Lent will be this coming Wednesday night, March 4, at 7 p.m. The first night will be focused on tracing our spiritual paths – where we've been and where we might be headed, and how our understanding of our spirituality might impact our daily living. We'll meet in the Pownall Room, upstairs in the sanctuary building. No need to RSVP – just join us!

Friday Night at First Church March 6

By Libby Tigner

Looking for a relaxing and fun end to your week? Try supper and games at FN@FC. If you have small children, take advantage of Parents' Night Out, and drop off your children and join the adults in the Pownall Room from 6 to 9 p.m. Yvonne SaMarion will be heading up the evening, so please RSVP to her if you plan to attend. She can be reached at ysamarion@firstchurchlb.org or at 562-436-2256, ext. 227.

Budget Deficit Committee Update

The Budget Deficit Committee has been meeting to thoroughly investigate measures that can be taken to close our substantial annual budget deficits (the shortfall was \$233,000 in 2008). The committee members are: Peter Wright (Moderator), Alison Mitchell (Vice Moderator), Jerry Stinson (Senior Minister), Jerry Mitchell (former Moderator), Carol Welsh (former Moderator), Mary Lou Klar (former Moderator), Bill Cole (former Moderator), Bob Kalayjian (former Moderator), Pam Chapin (Treasurer and former Moderator), Barbara Smith (former Chair of Stewardship and Finance) and Bob Halter (former Chair of Stewardship and Finance and owner of the accounting firm used by the church for many years).

We will be meeting again in March and hope to soon be able to present a solid financial plan to take us into the future. The committee will make recommendations for action that will then proceed through our regular approval structure, i.e. Personnel Committee, Board of Stewardship and Finance, and Church Council.

Peter Wright, Moderator

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For Bud and His Love

By Kit Wilke

How?
 How (...though you've said it
 Ten thousand times this year alone...) How?
 How could you ever
 Find the strength
 To say goodbye?
 Where is the strength for "goodbye"
 When he was your strength
 And your strength is gone?

Your mountain fortress.
 The towering crag
 From whose summit you took flight;
 He, the aerie, from whose heights
 You took wing to soar.
 He was the mountain that made the skies
 – and even the heavens –
 Seem close enough to touch –
 For your wings, an easy flight.
 His were the encircling arms
 Where your racing heart
 Could find peace.
 His, the voice – certain low and calm
 – that gave melody and song to yours.
 He – his flesh – was the home
 That welcomed your return
 No matter how bold or wild the journey.

He was the love
 That filled you completely:
 The joyful flesh of your flesh,
 The bone of your bone
 Whose flesh and bones
 Made your heart dance
 And your body sing,
 His, the envelope of love
 That gave earthly things
 Heavenly rapture.

He your laughter,
 Your giggles
 Your broadest
 – and your shiest – smiles.
 How do you say goodbye
 To the heart of your own heart?

Your tears – a river.
 The roses of memory – still all thorns;
 But they will bloom
 And someday,
 Not too long from now
 Cover your hillside with rainbows.

And the torrents
 – your salty rivers of pain –
 Will still
 To a quiet stream
 And their murmuring flow
 In timely seasons –
 Bring peace to your dreams.

And somewhere
 (Behind the dim unknown)
 Where we dare to dream
 That love does not die:
 Yes, your love lives.

And holding his hand
 Forever in your memory
 His large loving body
 Surrounding you at night in dreams
 And by day in the gift
 Of the children you share,
 And, yes, the soft twinkle of his eyes
 Forever locked
 In the rhythm of your heart,
 Your breath begins to whisper:
 "Goodbye, good friend, goodbye."

Kit Wilke was an associate minister of First Church when Mary Ellen Kilsby was the senior minister. He read this poem at the inurnment of Bud Kilsby's ashes in our columbarium.



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TO:

“Never place a period
 where God has placed a comma”
 [Gracie Allen]

Parish Concerns

Your thoughts and prayers are requested for Ivy Bottini; John Buchlottz (Mary Granger and Richard Berryman’s friend); Kenia Casarreal; Gary Shelton and Janet Rhodes’ mother.

To put someone on this list, put a note on the Parish Concerns board on the Third Street landing or contact Ruth in the office (562-436-2256 x221 or office@firstchurchlb.org).

Save the Date!
Leadership Day
Saturday, March 14
8:30 am - 12 noon

Online Calendar

Don’t miss out! Check the online church calendar at www.firstchurchlb.org/calendar.html for details about all church events. Just click on any event to see information about it.

You’ve got a date ...

Sunday, March 1

11:30 a.m. Communications Committee

Tuesday, March 3

7 p.m. Caregivers Support Group; Drop-In Center Committee

Wednesday, March 4

7 p.m. My Lenten Journey

Friday, March 6

6 p.m. Parents’ Night Out; Friday Night at First Church

Sunday, March 8

11:30 a.m. Parish Life Board

Tuesday, March 10

7 p.m. Theological Study Group

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Music on Sunday

posed obbligato material for the oboe and flute. It is an exquisite piece of music, and one of our favorite anthems. Joe and Laura Stone will play the flute and oboe respectively. See you in church.

Dr. Leland Vail, Minister of Music

Proposition 8 and Open and Affirming Summit

The Rev. Mike Schuenemeyer, national UCC Minister for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Concerns and HIV/AIDS Ministries, and the Rev. Jane Fisler Hoffman, Interim Conference Minister, invite you to a day of reflection on what’s happened, what’s happening now and planning for the future, with a focus on Proposition 8, but also taking some time to evaluate and think forward about where we are in the Conference around Open and Affirming.

March 3, 10:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

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A light lunch will be available at a reasonable cost for those who make reservations through the church office (949-733-0220) or by emailing michael@iucc.org.