

The Chimes

FALLING INTO SOMETHING NEW

Having grown up on the east coast my memories of the Back-to-School season are tied to images of fall. Memories of the moment when the green leaves would turn into dazzling shades of bright crimson, gold, and orange only to later litter your lawn with that boring brown. I always maintained a love/hate relationship with the leaves; on the one hand, I couldn't help but be mesmerized by the colors, on the other hand the death of these leaves meant the beginning of winter—long, cold, damp winters.

Lately it seems that I've been spinning a fallen leaf in my hands, pondering both questions of death and resurrection. I should begin by saying that this has not been a morbid journey. It began a few weeks ago while I was reading the latest Seekers book *The Phoenix Affirmations*, continued as I went to see the King Tut exhibit at the DeYoung, and then subsequently thought about the lengthy relationship between human existence and the concept of resurrection.

The word "resurrection" can be defined in multiple ways; not just as a way of thinking of the rebirth of Christ as written in the New Testament but also, "to bring into practice, notice, or use." However if you were to yell "resurrection" in a crowded building I'd bet that most people would think you were a fanatic, hearing the word "salvation" instead. But the type of resurrection I've been exploring is not one that is linked to any sort of earthly or heavenly salvation; in fact, it is quite the opposite. What I've been curious about is the possibilities for earthly rebirth.

Consider this: how many times have you had a life-changing experience? Once, twice, maybe in excess of 100 times? Maybe it was when you (or someone you loved) experienced a health challenge. Maybe it was when you or your child went to school (elementary, high school, or college) for the first time. Maybe it was as simple as when someone said something to you that really resonated with you, and your life, your actions, were forever changed.

I have yet to tally the number of times that I've experienced a "resurrection" of sorts but I can give a short example: the day I realized that the first time I fell in love would not be my last. Yes, it was high school, and yes, maybe it wasn't true love, but it felt like it at the time. Seriously though, by falling in love again I allowed for the possibility of something new into my life and in doing so I was resurrected.

As we enter the fall season together I wonder how we, as a community in Christ, can be resurrected. Will it be through the development of our Spirit-in-Action program, small group ministries, or the choral program? Or will it be through a new simple practice, like a prayer filled with silence, one where we listen with God? These are the questions and answers we are free to pursue here at Eden, a place where different theologies and paths are welcome. On Sun., Sept. 20, I invite you to bring a friend to our Open House Sunday and encourage them to explore with us the ways in which we celebrate the gift of resurrection, over and over again.

~Liz



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

September 2009

Late Edition

Eden UCC has been an Open and Affirming Church since 1995. We believe that all people are children of God; that persons of all ages, races, and sexual orientations are part of our increasingly diverse culture; and we welcome all persons into the full life and ministry of this church.

Tel: 510-582-9533

Sunday Worship:

10:00 a.m.

Church Office Hours:

Monday to Friday:

9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Saturday: Closed

Visit our church website:

www.edenucc.com

Welcome to Eden!

Eden is a diverse and growing church. At Eden, people of all ages and backgrounds join together to grow spiritually, do good in the world, and develop healing and nurturing relationships.

At our church, you will not be told what to believe. We feel that the way we treat one another is more important than holding uniform beliefs. And, while the Bible is important to our faith, it is not the last word. We believe that **God is Still Speaking** through science, nature, personal experience, other faith traditions and more.

On Sunday mornings, our church services and kids' programs are open, friendly and innovative. Every week at Eden, you'll find all kinds of activities—retreats, yoga classes, service projects, music programs, labyrinth walks, study groups—to nurture mind, body, and spirit.

At Eden, we are on a journey together to understand and live God's truth for our lives. Come and join us on the journey. Check out our website. Give us a call. Come by and see us. We look forward to welcoming you!

Imagine Another World Is Possible . . . It Is with Your Neighbors in Need Offering

The Neighbors in Need offering will be received on World Communion Sunday, **Oct. 4, 2009**, and supports the UCC's ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. Two-thirds of the offering is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries to fund program initiatives and direct grants. Small but essential grants are made throughout the year to congregations and organizations engaged in community organizing, public policy advocacy, and direct service projects. Through UCCTakeAction.org, the national Justice and Witness Ministries office offers resources, news updates, and action alerts on a broad spectrum of justice issues. Working with members of the Justice and Peace Action Network (a network of thousands of UCC justice and peace advocates), Justice and Witness continues its strong policy advocacy work on issues such as the federal budget, voting rights, immigration, health care, hate crimes, civil liberties, and environmental justice.

Neighbors in Need also supports the UCC's Council for American Indian Ministries (CAIM) which is a voice for American Indians in the United Church of Christ.

In the Fall of 2008, 70 NCNC conference congregations raised a total of \$57,452.77 for Neighbors in Need. Approximately one-third of that offering was retained by the Conference to support neighbors within the borders of the Northern California Nevada Conference.

Chimes is a semi-monthly publication of Eden United Church of Christ. Proposed submissions should be sent to office@edenucc.com, or mailed or delivered to the church, by the first and third Sundays of each month. We reserve the right to edit all materials submitted. Publisher: the Rev. Dr. Arlene K. Nehring, Senior Minister. Chimes Staff: Liz McKay, ESLO Coordinator; Kathy Miller, Church Administrator

Examples of local community ministries able to serve as a result of our generous giving include: Puente de la Costa Sur (which was founded by Rev. Wendy Taylor), Fresno Interdenominational Refugee Ministries (FIRM), The Bridge Fellowship, and the Shalom Free Clinic. Also supported by the California Neighbors donations are the California Council of Churches and the California Church Impact. These two state-wide organizations provide education and advocacy on issues of justice and fairness in the treatment of all people.

Donations to Neighbors in Need help make another world possible for many people. Let us continue the generous spirit of giving as we support Neighbors in Need.

Families and Church School Teachers Get Ready!

All families and church teachers are encouraged to join us for a gathering from 11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m. following worship on Sun., **Sept. 13**. Join us to meet our new and returning church school teachers, learn about curriculum plans for the upcoming year, and discuss how you can bring the lessons to life at home. Childcare and a light snack will be provided. Please see Liz McKay to sign up to be a church school teacher or for more information about the gathering. As a reminder all adults interested in working with children and youth must be screened to ensure compliance with our Safe Congregation Policies and Procedures. Copies of the policy are available in the church office or online at www.edenucc.com/youth.

Bible Presentations

The Board of Church Ministries will present Eden's fifth graders and confirmands with Bibles on Sun., **Sept. 20**, during morning worship. So that we are sure to include everyone who is in these classes, please register your child for church school by Sun., Sept. 13. See Liz McKay or Pastor Arlene if you have any questions.

Come Join the Eden Choir!

For all who love to sing, 9th grade and up, you are welcome. Rehearsals are held every Thursday from 7:30–9:30 p.m. Come and be a part of lifting up the message each Sunday. YOU are welcome in the choir!

Registration for Confirmation 2009-2010

Classes begin soon for Eden's next Confirmation Class. Students in grades 8 through 12 are encouraged to participate. Families are asked to attend the Parent-Teacher Gathering on Sun., **Sept. 13**, from 11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m. To register yourself or your student for Confirmation Class and to obtain a copy of the nine-month schedule, please contact Pastor Arlene or Liz McKay. The Sept. schedule is summarized below:

Sept. 2009 Confirmation Schedule

- ◆ Sun., **Sept. 20**, 10:00–11:30 a.m., Open House Sun., Church School resumes for Middle and High School Youth
 - Confirmation Bible Presentation in Worship (Arlene & Board of Church Ministries)
 - Church School (Cowicks, Millers & Tylers)
- ◆ Fri., **Sept. 25**, 5:30–7:30 p.m., Supper (TBD & TBD)
 - Covenant Building & Planning Animal Blessing (Arlene, Pepper, Suzie, E-Team)
- ◆ Sun., **Sept. 27**, 10:20–11:30 a.m., Church School (Cowicks, Millers & Tylers)

Baptism and the Reception of New Members

At Eden Church and in our United Church of Christ tradition, we celebrate baptism with persons of every age from infants to elders. We welcome into membership youth, adults, and families who seek a deeper relationship with God in a caring community and a desire to make a difference in the lives of others. Plans are in the works to celebrate the Sacrament of Baptism and to Receive New Members next in October. Please speak with our pastor, the Rev. Dr. Arlene K. Nehring, if you or someone dear to you would like to receive the Sacrament of Christian Baptism or be received into church membership.

E-vent #1: Have a Ball at Open House Sunday

Sun., **Sept. 20**, marks Eden's first E-vent, called Open House Sunday. This day is especially designed to help introduce newcomers to the life and ministry of Eden Church. Please begin planning and inviting friends, neighbors, and extended family to Eden for this very fun Sunday. The E-Team will present all of our visitors and those who bring them with "God is Still Speaking" (GISS) beach balls. Our full-fledged church school program will resume, classrooms will be open for tours, and teachers will be on hand to meet and greet children, youth, and families. The Fellowship Committee will provide a free yummy lunch. And information will be available about Eden Church programs offered in the coming year.



Having a Ball at Last Year's Open House



Feeling the Beat at Eden

E-vent #2: Blessing of the Animals

Have you prayed for your pet lately? How about the wild turkeys or the raccoon family that live on Birch Street, or the deer and birds that live on your street? We will pray for these and more at Eden's first "Blessing of the Animals" celebration, Sat., **Oct. 3**, from 11:00-12:30 p.m. Our contemporary celebration is grounded in the ancient Feast of Saint Francis, and is an occasion to express God's love for all creatures. Bring your pet(s) and your friends and their pets, or pictures of pets, to be blessed by our pastor and deacons. All pets participating in this event must be kept on leashes or in cages for safety reasons. Special features of our celebration include a performance by Gayle Marie's dancing dog, Ginger, and an opportunity to greet Ginger and her service animal friends. The E-Team welcomes assistance in procuring healthy pet treats, reliable pet health and grooming tips, and information about less expensive pet services and clinics. See Stephanie Spencer from the E-Team to get involved (ssspencer63@comcast.net or 510-861-0930).

E-vent #3: Building an Inclusive Church Training

Eden Church will host an ecumenical *Building an Inclusive Church Training* Workshop from **Oct. 23-25**. This workshop is for people interested in learning more about how to increase the number of faith-based communities which openly welcome people of all sexual orientations and gender identities. As host, Eden will be working with other local open and affirming churches to provide meals, transportation, organizational support, and possibly housing for the workshop participants. If you would like to join a team of Eden individuals who will shop, cook, host guests, and perform other important support roles for the training, please contact Pepper Swanson at pepper@edenucc.com.




Spirit-In-Action

Save the Bay

... and the ocean too! Join the next Spirit-in-Action event on Sat., **Sept. 12**, to help Save the Bay. Eden members and their friends will be picking up trash and cleaning the Bay shoreline at Eden Landing. Last year, we learned how much plastic is collecting on our shores and beaches and how this is carried by the tides into the ocean, creating the Great Pacific Garbage Patch. Bring a friend and help do your part to help prevent this ecological disaster. Contact Jacque Blake for more information.

Date: Sat., Sept. 12, 2009
Meet: Eden Church at 8:00 a.m. and carpool to site
Work: 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Location: Eden Landing Ecological Reserve
Potluck: Oliver Hall, 12:30 p.m.



Shopping List

Help Eden's Operating Budget by donating these much-needed supplies.

September Needs:

- Washable tempera paint
- Elmer's glue (large bottle for refills)
- Fruit snacks (for the nursery)
- Apple Juice
- Thermal coffee cups (8 oz.) (Costco San Ramon has them)
- Birthday and anniversary cards with their envelopes
- Gift cards to Costco, Safeway, or Trader Joe's for Coffee Hour creamer and Stewardship Committee

Please no Styrofoam anything (cups, plates, etc). See anyone who helped Save the Bay for an explanation.

**Coming Attractions—
Mark Your Calendars!**

September 13, Baptism & Reception of New Members
Parent-Teacher Gathering

September 20, Open House

Sunday; Church School Begins

September 25, Confirmation Supper & Class

October 3, Blessing of the Animals

October 4, World Communion Sunday;

Neighbors in Need

October 10, NCNC Jr. High Fall Family Festival,

SF Zoo

October 11, Inquirer's Gathering

October 17, "Eden Family" Outing to the

Redwood Forest

October 23, Confirmation Class

October 23–25, UCC Building an Inclusive

Church Training

October 25, Reception of New Members, New

Member Photos

October 25, Potluck Sunday

November 1, All Saints Sunday

November 1, Congregational Meeting

November 7, PSR Lay Theological Day

November 8, Holiday Bazaar

November 13–14, Confirmation Class Sleepover

November 15, Baptism

November 22, Souper Sunday

December 6, Inquirer's Gathering

December 6, Choral Christmas Concert

December 9, FESCO Luncheon

December 13, Baptism, Reception of New

Members, Christmas Pageant & Happy

Birthday Jesus

December 20, Lessons & Carols

December 24, Christmas Eve Service

December 27, Moravian "Love Feast"



Joys

The **Summer Fellowship Dinners** which were offered as part of the Eden Church Auction last spring have been a huge success! Many thanks to our hosts and attendees for supporting these fun-raising events.

Kevin Casey, Allen Gardiner, and Win Lockerby were well enough and had companions who were able to help them return to worship on Sept. 6!

Lucille Hood, Cliff Sherwood's cousin, who is now back at home and doing well!

We have **newcomers** in worship every Sun.

Jan Richards recently received some great health news.

Russ Miller will be throwing out the first pitch at the Giants-Rockies game Tuesday night at 7:15 p.m.

Prayer Requests

For **Ryan Bhalla**, John Jobst's three-year-old nephew, who broke two bones in his elbow last month.

For **Todd Bove**, who is in the midst of a job search.

For **Kevin Casey**, who is in rehab recovering from cardiac bypass surgery and a major stroke, and who is having another surgery this week, and coming home soon.

For **Rindie Chase**, who has a return of cancer and is undergoing chemotherapy. Rindie is a friend of the Payne family.

For **the Collier family**, who are searching for a different home to rent in the Hayward area.

For **Kelly and Bryan Doyle and son Robert**, born on August 25, who recently underwent surgery to fix a brain swelling problem. The Doyles are Liz McKay's friends.

For **Curtis Fuller**, who is being treated for a recurrence of cancer.

For **Phillip Grove**, a colleague of Steve Ryken's, who is in the hospital recovering from an aneurism and brain surgery to alleviate the affects of the aneurism.

For **Diane Hurd**, a close friend of the Smith-Bove family, who is living with a recurrence of ovarian cancer.

For the family and friends of **Jose Perez**, a friend of Rob Parrish, who died two weeks ago.

For the family and friends of **Ed Saenz**, who are experiencing several challenges.

For **Lucy Norman Spencer**, Stephanie's mother, who is having surgery this week. Stephanie is home helping parents for a week or so.

For **Dave Wallace**, who is looking for full-time employment and developing a math tutoring business.

For **Lori Woolman**, Mary Haro's sister, who is being treated for Lyme disease.

Continued prayers for **Anita, Nick, Bryan, Richard**, and all in the armed services; and for peace and justice in the world.

And for **Carlton Alexander, Mary Babikoff, Mary Bernstein, Jim Burgess, Juanita Chavez, Ann Dodd, Regina Fischer, Susan Fivelstad, Allan Gardiner, Clyde Howell, Angie Payne and Helen Van Stone.**

Birthday & Anniversaries

**Mid-September—
Mid-October Birthdays:**

9/16 Curtis Fuller and Terry Kinoshita; 9/19 Lorene Kiger and Erik Nelson; 9/21 Shawn Stoddard-Nunez; 9/24 Esther Jorgensen, Velva Jones, and Jenna-Marie Moniz; 9/25 Stephanie Cartwright; 9/26 Rogelio Stoddard-Nunez; 9/30 Athena Guy-Malloy and Dennis Mills; 10/4 Mary Roth; 10/6 Susan DuPree; 10/7 Jacque Blake; 10/9 Karri Michell; 10/13 Bill Jarvis, Mary Joan Stone, and Ryan Miller; 10/14 Daniel Livesay; 10/15 Manuel Inverno.

Mid-September—Mid-October Anniversaries:

9/19 Barbara & Ted Wallis; 9/30 Lia & Bill Jarvis; 10/4 Ruth & Frank Jenkins; 10/8 Athena and Chris Malloy; 10/10 Holly & Brent Guier; 10/11 Arlene Nehring & Stephanie Spencer; 10/12 Laura & Mike King.

Call your congress member on Sept. 15

Over 300,000 people of faith joined on a nationwide phone call with President Obama in August to support health care reform. The next couple of months are crucial for us to act with unity to make health care accessible for all families.

Call your Representative's & Senators' offices at **866-279-5474**. You will automatically be connected to your senator's office by entering your zip code. Tell them: "My name is (your name) and I am calling as a person of faith from (Your church), United Church of Christ in (your city). I strongly encourage Rep./Sen. to pass health reform this fall. I'd like to communicate two points. First, we need to pass health insurance reform. Second, we want to see a strong Affordability Standard that would put a cap on total health care costs (both premiums and other costs) at 13% of a family's income. We need health reform. There's too much at stake for our families to let this opportunity slip by. Thank you."