



The Link

Volume 41, Number 10

January 28, 2010

Sunday Worship:

1/31/10 at 9:20 AM

Tim Diebel preaching
"Growing Up Into Love"
I Corinthians 13:1-13

2/7/10 at 9:20 AM

Tim Diebel preaching

2/14/10 at 9:20 AM

Tim Diebel preaching

Prayer Themes:

January 31: **Community Council:** Please pray for the new and returning members of our congregation's leadership in this new year.

February 7: **Haiti:** Please keep in your prayers the people of Haiti, and the people/organizations ministering to them

February 14: **Blanket Fund:** Please pray for the Disciples Women's special offering for the Blanket program of Church World Service.



Carrie Newcomer In Concert

"To my mind – a writer's mind – Carrie Newcomer is much more than a musician. She's a poet, storyteller, snake-charmer, good neighbor, friend and lover, minister of the wide-eyed gospel of hope and grace. All this, and she comes with a voice that declares, "Sit down here a minute and listen." Who could ask for more?"

Barbara Kingsolver, Author of The Poisonwood Bible

Thursday, February 18 - 7 pm
First Christian Church

Tickets \$20 (\$15 in advance for church members)
or online at www.iowatix.com

SONG CENTRAL

Dear Friends,

Community happens face to face. The following is an article by my friend and colleague Donald Schell, Creative Director for All Saints Company, San Francisco, which has encouraged the "paperless" songs we have done together as a congregation. It is a wonderful explanation of the "why" behind this liturgical practice. I hope you enjoy it.

Ben

Face-to-Face by Donald Schell

What St. Paul hinted at it in I Corinthians -'Now we see in a glass darkly, then face to face: now I know in part; then I shall know even as I am known' -he left to the writer of I John to speak plainly, 'Beloved, we are already God's children, but what we will be hasn't appeared yet; what we know is this: when He comes we shall be like Him, for we'll see Him as He is.' More than 'believing,' seeing is becoming. Mirroring makes us who we will be.

We feel the energy of that becoming when we learn by mirroring. My own role exploring "What God's doing in this music" has me reading and re-reading primatologist Frans de Waal and Neurologist Marco Iacoboni, scientists whose research could challenge the church to ask how liturgy and music-making in liturgy trains us in compassion and shapes us for community in mission. If our humanity emerges from empathic communication, and if singing together is older and more essential to our communities than language, as Steven Mithen argues in *Singing Neanderthals*, how can we do it better?

For millennia before we had printed texts our ancestors learned music from face-to-face mirroring. Many of us learned songs this ancient way at summer camp and maybe from learning some spirituals and work songs, or savoring world music that brings us living choral folk traditions from Africa and elsewhere. There are musical treasures that would be very, very difficult to learn without words and notes on paper. But singing by mirroring, learning without paper touches something profound in our God-given humanity and taps a primal root of human community.

[I'm reminded] of my wife's University of California doctoral research, a qualitative study of the daily meal interaction between nursing home caregivers and residents. One day Ellen was discussing her research with Leonard Schatzman, the groundbreaking sociologist on her dissertation committee. Ellen said, somewhat apologetically, "I'm really just interested in what happens locally, at the bedside and in the hallway outside the patient's room face-to-face. I don't know what to make of the big institutional stuff higher up." Dr. Schatzman's responded simply, "Ellen, face-to-face is all there is. It's face-to-face all the way up."

Singing together doesn't change us all at once. Friendship and the discovery of grace come with repetition. Face-to-face singing and learning music to pray together in liturgy changes us, ripples out to generous leadership and creativity that emerge among us as we count on one another to hold tune and words. We used to know this culturally. Civil Rights movement songs like 'We Shall Overcome,' changed the people who sang together and echoed in hearts and minds facing fire hoses and police dogs. It's courage, 'heart' that we find when we offer even tentative voice to sing what we're just learning and eventually to stand in front of the group and take a turn as leader.

"Face-to-Face" continues on facing page



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LOGOS

Wednesdays Evenings
Grades K-5: 4:25 to 7:00 p.m.
Grades 6-12: 5:00 to 8:00 p.m.



Upcoming Themes:

January 27: Beach Party
February 3: LOGOS Rocks!
February 10: Winter Olympics: Vancouver 2010

Sunday Morning Worship Skills Participation:

January 31:

Grade 3-5: Skit
Middle School: Singing
High School: Bells

February 7

Grade K-2: Worship contribution
Grade 3-5: Tone chimes

Please arrive by 8:55 a.m. for rehearsal/duty.

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Face-to-face we recognize authenticity. Baby's brains are primed to discern faces. Even an abstraction, a highly stylized pair of eyes, nose and mouth holds a baby's attention. All of us began to discover who we and how we care by seeing ourselves in the faces, voices, and gestures of others like us. And in glimpsing their tenderness mirroring us, we longed to become what we saw. Our adult's consciousness still involuntarily tips our eyes sideways to discern a face nested in print ;~)

Seeing isn't believing, it's becoming, and, as Irenaeus and Gregory of Nyssa insisted, we become both human and holy by seeing and by learning. 'Gnosis,' esoteric, fully defined knowledge for the few can't build community. Learning together face-to-face does build community.

Imitatio, the imitation of Christ, is our becoming, our becoming like him who is, by the grace of God, our being. Repetition, mirroring, our simplest, most primordial building block of human learning puts us face-to-face, where compassion is born, where conversion and formation really happen.

Face-to-face takes us to the specific incarnational particulars of humanity. Who would we be without the sometimes joyful, sometimes disquieting experience of knowing people well when they tell us the next piece of their story and experience? Face-to-face changes us all.




5th Sunday Offering January 31

We will be collecting for Shalom Zone school backpacks. Each summer, Shalom Zone has a "Back to School Fair" and passes out materials for school. In 2009, they distributed over 1000 backpacks. On January 31, 2010, we will be collecting the following items to help fill backpacks:

Crayons—24 packs
Marker sets
Pencils, Stick Pens
Colored pencil sets
Blunt End Scissors
Erasers
Spiral Notebooks (wide or narrow)
Glue Sticks
4-Pocket Folders
Notebook paper
Rulers

- Witnessing Ministry

EARTHQUAKE



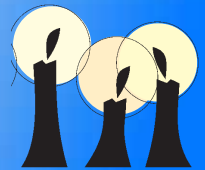
Haiti Fundraiser

Plans are underway for the sale of refreshments and baked goods during intermission for the Carrie Newcomer concert. Funds raised will go to support relief for the victims of the Haiti earthquake.

RELIEF



The Contemplative Corner



for your Spiritual Journey

The Gift of Letting Go

The trails, normally clogged with hikers now stood eerily vacant, forking in every direction. My fingertips stung from the cold and a misting snow fell from the sky, brushing against my cheek. Steve busied himself snapping pictures of the partially frozen mountain stream that ribboned beside stands of aspen. Ice lined the stream in delicate lace patterns resembling the doilies my grandmother used to have. You could hear the rush of the water beneath the ice as it gurgled downstream.

It was late October and Steve and I found ourselves at our favorite vacation spot, Rocky Mountain National Park. We had disappointingly arrived too late for any showy color. In fact, snow would fall heavily the next day, covering the world in a foot of snow, but today – this day – it had not yet come and we were taking advantage of this season of quiet when the summer tourists had finally gone home and the park was bathed in extravagant silence.

What caught my eye were the aspens, undressed, and starkly bare. Their ivory skin exposed for all the world to see, their leafy garments dropped to the ground, leaf by leaf by golden leaf, layering the forest floor like glittering golden coins. I studied the carnage – the beautiful carnage – and thought of how these elegant trees lose themselves like this every year, letting go of their covering, and allowing themselves to stand tall without protection year after year after year. They were prepared for what was to come: the ice, the snow, the bitter cold and now waited, having done their duty.

I thought of how hard it is to let go of things that have served their time and are now outdated: ideas, relationships, traditions. It is so much easier to hang onto them – even when deep within we know better. Parker J. Palmer in his book, *Let your Life Speak* writes, “If I try to “make” a life that defies the diminishment of autumn, the life I end up with will be artificial, at best, and utterly colorless as well. But when I yield to the endless interplay of living and dying, dying and living, the life I am given will be real and colorful, fruitful and whole.”

As winter continues to bear down upon us, may you be gifted with the clarity of letting go.

Blessings on your journey,

Mary Jo Franklin



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Sunday Morning Schedule:

9:20 am -- Morning Worship

10:45 am ---- Friendship Time

11:00 am ----- Learning Hour

OFFICE HOURS

Mon-Thurs — 8:30-4:30

Friday — 8:30-1:00

The Link ...

... is published twice per month. Submissions are due Wednesday of the previous week and may be edited for length, clarity, or for consistency with other articles.

NEXT DEADLINE:

February 3 (Feb 11 issue)

WE ARE DISCIPLES OF CHRIST, an Open & Welcoming community of faith, called to witness to God's creative power in the midst of a richly diverse neighborhood. We are challenged to share in a vibrant Spirit-led common life. As we mature in the Spirit and respond to God's calling, we are empowered and compelled to reach out to neighbors near and far in a reconciling ministry partnership.



Week of Compassion Responds as Needs Happen

Our usual "Week of Compassion" annual special offering will occur the final two weeks of February. This year's theme is "*Do You Love Me? *Feed My Sheep.*" Materials will be distributed in February.

In the mean time, Week of Compassion (our denominational outreach for global relief and development) is working directly in Haiti and in cooperation with other organizations, such as Church World Service. You may donate to the Haiti relief program through First Christian, by writing your check to "First Christian", with a memo line of "WoC/Haiti."

You may also donate directly online to Week of Compassion via a secure site:
<<https://secure.groundspring.org/dn/index.php?aid=6566>>.

