

MARCH 2015



WANDERINGS



³⁸*You have heard that it hath been said,
An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.* ³⁹

*But I say to you not to resist evil:
but if one strike thee on thy right cheek, turn to him also the other:* ⁴⁰
And if a man will contend with thee in judgment, and take away thy coat,
let go thy cloak also unto him. ⁴¹
And whosoever will force thee one mile,
go with him other two, ⁴²
Give to him that asketh of thee
and
from him that would borrow of thee
turn not away.

Matthew 5:38-42

Voice of Protest

"He (Jesus) did not say "turn the other cheek;" he said, "If someone strikes you on the right cheek offer him the left." A strike on the right cheek could only be done as a back-handed slap, sending a clear signal that one is superior and the other inferior.

Jesus asked us to be defiant in the face of such cruelty, and not accept an inferior status, but rather demand that the oppressor strike as an equal!

Likewise, Jesus did not say "Go the extra mile" as if to mean we must give more. Rather, our Lord knew the unjust law that allowed Roman soldiers to force a Jew to carry a bag, but not for more than one mile. Jesus thus told his countrymen to go the "extra mile," so as to buy back a man's internal freedom from his oppressor, to embarrass him, and to honor the innate dignity of one

unjustly treated.

Lastly, Jesus did not say, "give the shirt off your back." Rather he said, "If someone sues for your jacket, offer him your shirt as well." Thus, instead of being a victim of another's injustice, if one turns and gives him one's shirt as well, one shows him a fearless love with the hope that it will awaken justice in his oppressor.

(Continued on last page)

New Leadership

Sunday, 25th of January, the baton was passed. Outgoing president Janet Wilson made the hand-off to incoming president Floyd Orr and the new officers and area leaders. We are so blessed with great leadership! Looks to be a good year ahead.



Search Committee



Many thanks are in order for John Walsh and all the members of the search committee. Members are: Barb Lord, Carole Wesson, Erin Beardemphl, Gretchen Andrews, Joel Maury-Holmes, John Walsh, Loring Fiske-Phillips, Sue Wallace, and Susan Haugh.

Aging

Long time ago
 When we were young
 Aging did not occur
 Just other people were old
 Very old indeed
 Time moved slowly
 Soon faster and faster
 Now I am among the Old
 Yet senior life Is very special

We are blessed
 With wisdom
 We learned to forgive
 We practice loving kindness
 Yes, we are blessed
 Day in and out
 In turn we spread
 Blessings everywhere
 All people around us
 The kind and unkind

Blessings spread
 Heals mind body and soul
 Blessings means love
 Love shows direction
 Love sustains
 Wrinkles don't matter
 The old tree's bark cracks too
 What's within
 And how we share
 That alone matters.

Helga Vroom

Lenten Suppers



February 25 through March 25 at 6:00 p.m.

"Searching for Justice in Today's World" is the theme of this year's Lenten mid-week series. We begin with a light Supper of Soup and Bread, followed by a program each night, concluding by 7:45 p.m.

Join us as we explore how a faithful Christian can address concerns such as human trafficking, racism, the environment, etc.!



From the Editor's Ipad

As Lent knocks on our doors with its invitation to a deeper relationship with God, the voice of the world seems to become louder and stronger. Distances, even places on the map have lost their meaning of separate, far, or foreign. Every town is close. Each human being is a neighbor. The dagger that ends a life, takes away a breath of our own. The tube inserted in the patient's mouth is felt

in our body. We sense the beat of the One Heart and the One Body of the world. We witness the challenges, the victories and the defeats. For all and to all, our answer is in our prayer, a communion with God when we choose to become who we are fully and freely. The world needs the healing that comes from wanting to live in the beauty of the Truth.

As we enter in reflection, meditation, acts of charity and generosity, we bring the world to the light of hope. As in the words of Dr. David R. Hawkins "We change the world not by what we say or do but as a consequence of what we have become."

Katia Hage

Literacy Changes Lives

Literacy Changes Lives Redlands Adult Literacy Program sponsored by the Friends of A.K. Smiley Library has been proving that "literacy changes lives" over the past four-plus years. Started by two dedicated volunteers, the program provides one-on-one tutoring in reading and writing to adults seeking help. Currently, there are 80 tutor/learner pairs. Most meet at the library once or twice a week; others meet at on-site programs at Lugonia Elementary School and Clement Middle School. Last fall, Redlands City Council approved a parttime aduliteracy position at the library, and a recent grant allows for some computer literacy classes and materials. Information about the learners is confidential because it takes a lot of courage for adults, many who have hidden their illiteracy for much of their lives, to admit they need help. It is heart-warming, therefore, for

some learners to speak out about realizing their dream of being able to read to their child or help a little with homework. One learner says he is no longer afraid to fill out job applications and ask questions; another says the sessions helped him to finally pass the test to become a U.S. citizen. "Every day," he said, "I thank God that I found this program." The tutors also find the program to be a wonderful learning experience. Orientation, training sessions, and roundtables are held on a regular basis for sharing information and experiences. And the need is greater--probably in most communities--than any of us would have guessed. According to the latest U.S. Census, "over 4400 adults in Redlands, 25 years and older, lack a high school diploma or GED." And the Department of Education estimates that program, go to literacy@akspl.org, call 909.798.7565, or talk to Claudia Tolar or Diana Sommer at RUCC.



Silent Retreat



Silent retreat planned
for March 31-April 2

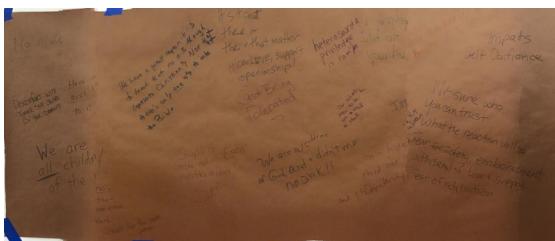
If you are interested in
exploring the 'inward'
journey, think about joining
us for a silent retreat at Loch
Leven, near Mentone.

For further information, or if you are interested, contact Heidi Malone through email by Friday, February 27.

Maloneheidi3@gmail.com

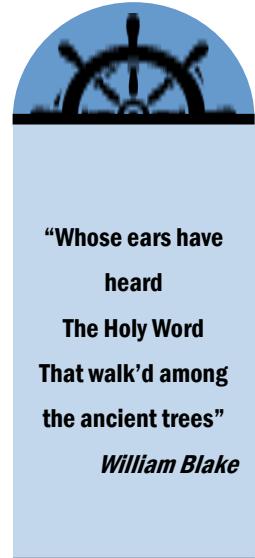
A Day's Retreat at RUCC

All-church retreat, was on Saturday, February 21 from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. It was facilitated by Barb Lord and Barbie Fiske-Phillips.



The theme of this year's all-church retreat was "Open and Affirming - Past, Present and Future".

As the day came to an end, every participant gathered on a canvas words of Hope for our community to be strengthened for the journey ahead.



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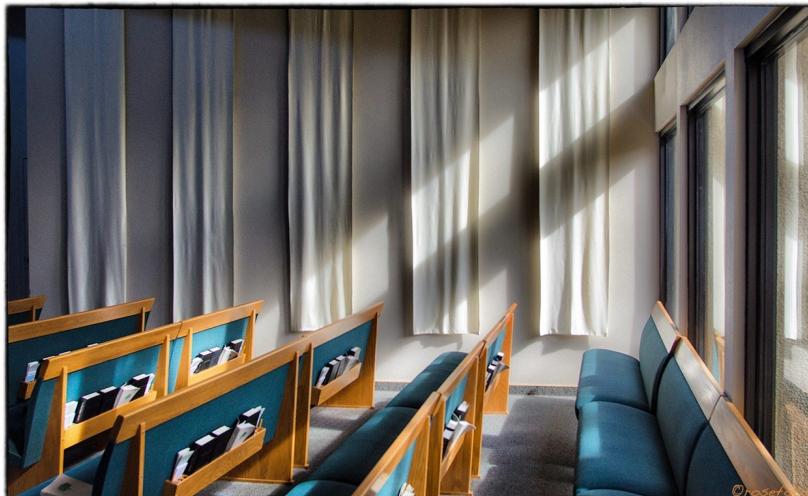


As the Redlands United Church of Christ, we are called by God to follow the life and teachings of Jesus Christ.

We are an Open and Affirming community of faith, who value all people as the family of God. We love, nurture, support, and give hope to one another on the journey of faith, seeking God's will for our lives.

Led by the Holy Spirit, we reach out to serve, and to help heal the hurts of humanity and the world with caring justice to the glory of God.

We welcome all into the full life and ministry of this church.



Voice of Protest *(continued...)*

By means of these three examples, our Lord is clear: no retaliation, no inferior status, be defiant in face of oppression, have a non-violent attitude, refuse to accept unjust treatment, and never return evil for evil. How appropriate are our Lord's imperatives today in the face of ISIS and other hateful ideologies".

*Gregory John Mansour
Bishop of the Eparchy of St Maron of Brooklyn*