



Honoring A Tree

by David Vannier



On May 8th, 2013, I received a call from Jim Laflin asking me to bring my chain saw to his church: the United Methodist Church in Campbell, California. A branch had broken off and fallen from their coveted Silver Maple tree. The tree was roughly 65 years old and served as a centerpiece in the court yard. It was a beautiful tree, providing shade for the outdoor gatherings.

I gathered up the saw and various tools required, hopped in the car, and drove to the church. While I had seen the tree a few times, I really hadn't realized how large the fallen branch would be until I

got there. The branch was estimated to have weighed roughly 1 ton. The tree's caretaker must have had someone watching out for him, as he was just missed by the falling branch which took the rain gutter off the side of the building and broke the light pole. A few seconds earlier, it would have done serious damage, possibly killing him.

There is a club that volunteers every Wednesday, and they were already hard at work cleaning up in preparation for a funeral that was going to be held at the church on Thursday. We started cutting the branch up so that it could be hauled off, with a few of the club members working away with smaller saws cutting up firewood size pieces, while I cut the larger pieces. We ended up with two pickup loads of firewood (probably should have been three but we always push it) and two trailer loads of turning blocks.



On one of my many breaks, I decided to take a closer look at the tree. My past experience with Silver Maple was that it was generally pretty white, but spalted easily, creating some really nice turnings. This wood, however, had a dark center, with very little sap wood. There was some staining on the trunk, which I hadn't thought much about originally; but as we examined the gaping hole left by the branch in the side of the tree, I started having second thoughts. I broke off a piece of bark, and stuck it into the trunk, proceeding to push it in over 12"! There was enough rot in the tree (and especially in the fallen branch) that it would have

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Campbell Connections

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Sunday Worship: 10:00 a.m.
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Children's Sunday School: 10:15 a.m.
African Ministry: 11:30 a.m.
Quiet Communion: 6:00 p.m. Tuesday

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by David Vannier

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been in danger of dropping more branches on anyone sitting underneath. Not only was the caretaker lucky, but everyone who had been under this tree had been as well.

The church then taped off the area to keep people away and applied for an emergency permit to remove the tree. A tree company came in and took the tree down, spending two days cutting it down, forced to go slow and lower the branch pieces rather than simply dropping them. We hauled off another pickup load of firewood and three trailer loads of turning wood. During this process, there was a steady stream of church members, all saying goodbye to the tree and expressing how much they were going to miss it.

As is always true, unexpected expenses provide a hardship. The church did not have the budget for the removal or the replacement. Jim and I decided to make an offer to turn pieces of the wood which could then be sold to church members to raise money. Thanks to several members of the West Bay Woodturners club, we just completed this phase of the story, and on June 1st, 2014, the church sold off the turnings. The sale included pens, magnifying glasses, key chains, lanterns, and bowls, most of which went for more than the asking price. The sale raised just over \$5000, which will easily cover the expenses, thanks to the turners and the church members for their generosity.

Thanks to Starry Chen, Gene Frantz, Ed Howe, Glenn Krug, Dennis Lillies, Jim Laffin, and David Vannier for the donated turnings.

The church is turning 125 this year. To commemorate this, Jim turned a segmented center piece to hold flowers on the altar. It consists of nearly 125 pieces of wood, and has the Methodist logo burned into the bottom, with the red flame filled in. It will be presented to the church on June 8th at a special ceremony.

A special and unexpected pleasure was the poster which Jim Laffin's granddaughter Heather made for us, showing nice work from all the generations by taking the pictures and putting them together.

This isn't the end of the story. The turnings will live on and remind their new owners of what they once had. The money will pay for the costs, and the new tree will hopefully become a new and beloved focal point for future generations. ❖





Summer Sunday School Volunteers Needed!

During the summer, through **Sunday, August 31st, 2014**, the school year Sunday School teachers will be given a well-deserved break from their hard work and dedication throughout the majority of the year. All Sunday School classes will be combined in order to form a "one room schoolhouse" model for the summer.

In order to make this one-room model work, we need two adult volunteers on each Sunday - one adult serves as the lead teacher (Teacher #1 on sign-up sheet) and the other serves as an assistant (Teacher #2 on sign-up sheet). Both adult volunteers on a given Sunday may wish to share responsibilities and co-lead. **We still need volunteers for 6/29, 7/6, 7/13, 7/20, 8/10, 8/24, and 8/31. One assistant is needed for 8/3.**

Curriculum and training is available for this volunteer role (further information to follow). A sign-up sheet will be posted in the Education Building on Sundays, or one may contact Julie Lattin at 408.378.3472 or campbellumcfamilies@earthlink.net to volunteer. A link to a Google Doc sign-up sheet will be provided by contacting Julie Lattin via e-mail. ❖

The San Jose Giants Imagine A World Without Malaria

The United Methodist Community in the environs of San Jose is sponsoring an evening of baseball with proceeds going to the Imagine No Malaria campaign.

Be part of the crowd on Sunday evening, **July 20th at 5:00 p.m.**, to

cheer on the San Jose Giants against the Lake Elsinore Storm at San Jose Municipal Stadium. Tickets are \$7 per person and can be purchased during Fellowship Hour.

This is for a great cause and one of the most prominent worldwide projects for the United Methodist Church. So get a group together and plan for an entertaining evening of baseball! ❖

Musical Instruments Needed

The African Fellowship is putting together a musical ensemble and is asking for any donations of musical instruments. Any handheld musical instruments in playable condition would be welcomed. Please bring your pieces to church on Sunday and hand them to Pastor Daniel. ❖

Crafts Show and Sale!

A thank you to all the talented artists that shared their talents with us on June 1st. Especially Jim Laflin who offered his bowls, lamps, pens and key chains for donation to our new tree and landscaping fund.

Along with Jim's offerings were 3 other woodworkers' items, pottery, mosaics, handmade greeting cards, a princess dress, quilts, metal sculptures and even a handmade electric guitar!

It was a great show and raised over \$5000. Thank you to all.

Janine Peyton ❖

SCRIP Can Save You More

Did you know that if you buy gas at Safeway using our scrip cards, you get the cash discount? We sell one pound certificates for See's candies for \$17 but it is worth \$18 at the store!

Save time and gas by getting your gift cards for birthdays and weddings

when you are already at church. No need to make a trip to the store- we have Amazon.com, Target, Bed, Bath & Beyond, Best Buy, many restaurants, Starbucks, gas cards and more. ❖

Handbell Concert

The second annual all-handbell concert held on May 18, 2014, was a huge success. Here are some photos and some comments. D. B. wrote "very impressive." B.R. said "a big hit was the bluegrass piece, bravo performance." S.S. wrote "we enjoyed the variety of the programming and additional instruments added to enhance the music." C.P. wrote "how lucky we are to have handbells and handchimes which enrich our worship, provide concerts, and give many people a chance to use their musical gifts." Hallelujah, Amen!

Mary Ann Gee, Organist ❖





Time of Transition

A guest preacher, the Reverend Sun Hee Kim from St. Paul UMC in Fremont, brought the message for worship on Sunday, June 1. She chose for her text Acts 1:1-14, which describes a time of transition for the disciples of Jesus. Jesus prepares them for his leaving again, describing their new abilities through the power of the Holy Spirit, and their mission of witnessing in the world.

She said when we are in transition times, we always want to know what is next. There is an ending, then a beginning. We go from known to unknown.

What will be next for Campbell UMC?

We have done well in these interim months since February. Many have

stepped up in leadership and taken on new responsibilities. We have worked well together. We have fulfilled some dreams. We have kept our ministries active and served others well. Now we look forward to a new pastor joining us in July.

Sun Hee Kim tells of her coming to an appointment in Walnut Creek a few years ago, when the congregation prepared for her by praying. One of our small groups, the Women's Bible Study, is organizing a prayer vigil for preparation for our new pastor, Kathi McShane. It will be on June 20 - 21, and might have already happened by the time you are reading this information. We can still join this community of prayer and prepare individually, in the spirit of being a part of the Campbell UMC body of Christ. We could pray for discernment, for hope, for the future,

for steadfastness, for renewal and revival. We could pray for the Holy Spirit's outpouring on Kathi, and on the faithful members and leaders of our church, that together we will enter our new ministry with joy and expectation. We could pray for changed lives and to strengthen us as we build up the Kingdom of God. We could pray together, we could pray individually, we could pray.

Prayer is certainly a way to prepare oneself - and the church - for this transition. We will also be expectant. We will make ourselves ready to welcome our new pastor in openness. We look forward to learning and growing. May our ministry flourish in Campbell, and yes, even to the ends of earth. (Acts 1:8)

Ellen Droke, Care Giving Ministries ❖

HISTORY HELPERS

"snippets from our past"

OUR QUASQUICENTENNIAL HISTORY BOOK IS HISTORY

Our 48 page booklet has been printed, bound, and sold. Thank you to the 17 contributing writers, and to the photographers. Special thanks to Heather Reynolds for artistically laying out the photos and text, Barbara Wade for efficiently handling the printing, and Marv Tanner for skillfully binding the book. And thank you to all who purchased a copy.

We at Campbell United Methodist Church can celebrate our past and look forward to our future. We are indeed "125 Years and Counting."

Susan Sargent, Church Historian ❖

CARTOON CORNER



Methodist C.o.n.n.e.c.t.i.o.n

Care-A-Vaners

CARE-A-VANERS WORKED AT SELMA, FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

During the week of May 4th, sixteen Care-A-Vaners (including Gene and Elaine Hill, Dave and Susan Sargent, and Marv and Ina Tanner) painted and repaired woodwork at the Selma First UMC. Selma is about 16 miles south of Fresno on Hwy 99. The church, built in 1929, is a very large church bordered by three streets and an alley. There were many, many windows, mostly of stained glass. The wood frameworks around the large stained glass windows on the alley side were rotted and had to be replaced. Most of the other framework was badly weathered. In one room, the header above a double door had dry rot, and it had to be replaced. All the damaged areas were skillfully repaired. Dave and Gene worked on the windows in the alley.



Painting the window frames was meticulous, and it was time consuming work.

Because the painting proceeded ahead of schedule, we took on more work. The very large front doors of the church were prepped and painted. We also painted the framing of another long row of stained glass windows. One evening some church members prepared a delicious ham dinner for us with mouth-watering dessert.



When we were finished, the church looked beautiful. The day after we finished, an art show was held in the courtyard where we painted. The church members were very pleased with our work.

Marvin and Ina Tanner ❖

Circuit Writer



Experiencing the Presence of God

Rev. Larry LaPierre

When we read the Gospels how often do we notice that these stories were written about people who experienced the presence of Jesus? One such dramatic account is of the Transfiguration of Jesus. (Matthew 17:1-8) Not only did Peter, James and John see Jesus transfigured, they heard God speaking to them out of a cloud. I used to visit patients and consult with staff on a psychiatric ward in the VA hospital where I was a chaplain. I can assure you that anyone who showed up claiming they had seen or spoken to God were regarded with some suspicion by the psychiatrist on duty. What about us? Have we or anyone we know ever had an experience in which you knew that God was with you or someone you know? I have, not in a vision, but nevertheless real.

The God that many of us believe in is, for many of us, so distant that we don't really expect to experience God's presence on Earth. We have a number of reasons, some whimsical, to explain this. "God's too busy to be worried about what I'm doing!" (Really?) "God wouldn't bother with a sinner like me?" (Oh, and why DID Jesus come?) "There is no logical reason for God to visit me." (OK, how about an illogical one like God loves us or God wants us to feel God's loving presence?)

When I was in pastoral ministry I didn't meet too many people who spoke about experiencing the presence of God. Actually, it was more often the men who didn't speak about experiencing God's presence. Why is it that so many of us don't talk about experiencing God? Is it because we never had the opportunity?

Over thirty years ago my wife and I worshiped at a conservative Christian church in which we actually had such opportunities. Oh, not everyone talked about experiencing God's presence, but it wasn't for lack of opportunity. During the Sunday evening service we were invited to share specifically how God had worked in our lives during the past week and how that had

affected us. I found it challenging but also affirming of my faith.

In his early journal Thomas Merton, a Catholic monk and mystic, wrote about one such experience that happened to him on April 29, 1940, when he was worshipping at St. Francis' Church in Cuba. It happened as the children began to pray "I believe . . ." He was clear that he saw nothing except what was already materially present in the church. Yet, he wrote, "I knew with the most absolute and unquestionable certainty that . . . between me and the altar, somewhere in the center of the church . . . was at the same time God . . . in all (God's) glory, . . . and God surrounded by the radiant faces of the uncountable thousands upon thousands of saints contemplating (God's) glory and praising (God's) Holy Name."¹

It's not that all Christians must have this sort of experience; but when we do, isn't it worth sharing? Is there something about being a contemporary Christian, especially a so-called "liberal Christian," that limits our experience of the presence of God? Or are we simply afraid that we won't "fit in" if we share such accounts? What do you think?

Rev. Larry LaPierre ❖

¹ The Secular Journal of Thomas Merton. New York: Farrar, Straus & Cudahy, 1959, p. 76.



ART & SPIRIT MINISTRY AT ELMWOOD

The Creator Within: Seeing Through God's Eyes



During the latest session of the Art & Spirit Ministry from Campbell UMC, team members led an art class on mask making. The inmates each reflected upon and then designed the inside of a mask (Creator Within), followed by creating artwork for the outside of their mask (Creator Expressed). The emphasis of this session was for the inmates to recognize their individual God-given gifts and to reflect upon how these positive assets can be expressed and shared with others.

Here are some of the masks made by the women in the minimum security unit.





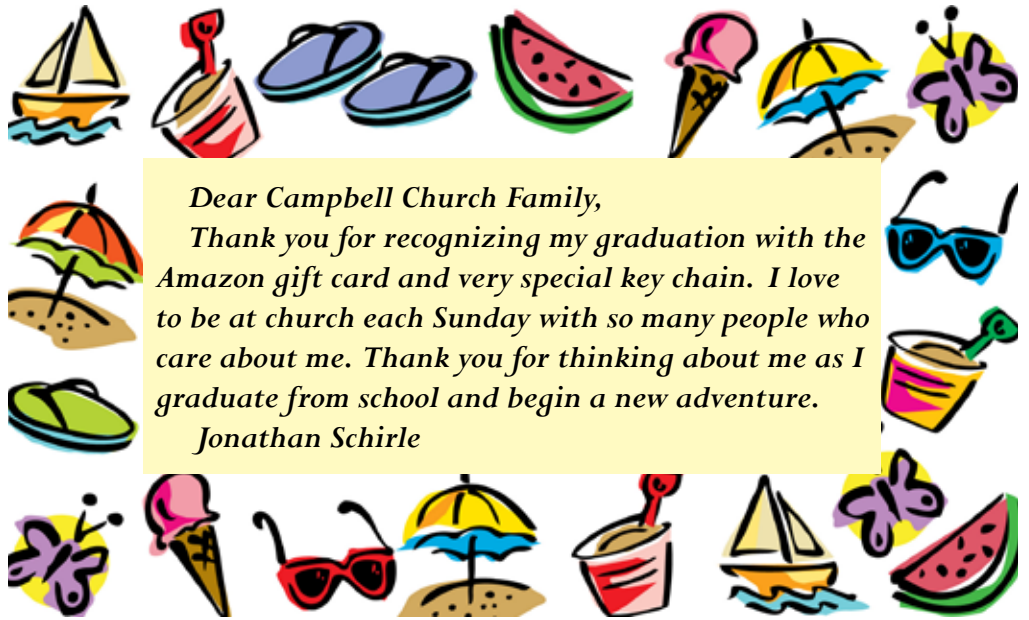
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People reaching out, with open minds, souls and hearts -

- Nourishing spirituality
 - Engaging creativity
 - Building social justice
 - Providing loving, welcoming community
- for Christ and the world.



Dear Church Family,
Thank you so much for the lovely azalea. We appreciate being remembered and receiving calls from Claudia; copies of the Upper Room; and, of course, Ellen and Pastor Karen's participation in the Caregiver program.
Blessings to you all,
Stu and Jean Sigafos

Dear Campbell Church Family,
Thank you for recognizing my graduation with the Amazon gift card and very special key chain. I love to be at church each Sunday with so many people who care about me. Thank you for thinking about me as I graduate from school and begin a new adventure.
Jonathan Schirle

To the Congregation of CUMC,
Thank you for all the expressions of sympathy on the passing of my mother. She's in a happier place now. With agape love,
Janice McClanahan