

# The Shepherd's Staff

Community Presbyterian Church  
Cathedral City, California



October 2013



These past few months I've been preaching more on the Old Testament, the Hebrew Bible, than I have on the New Testament. So often people look at all the doom and gloom in the stories found in the Old Testament books of the prophets and wonder where God's love is expressed. They wonder how a God who burns up the prophets of Baal could be a God of love. That's a good question!

It seems to me that the stories in the Old Testament distract us from the bigger picture the scripture presents. We seem to focus on the destruction and miss the reconstruction. We miss the times that God expresses his love and goodness to the Hebrew people and to foreigners as well.

When you look at the larger picture you can see that God always takes back the Hebrew people after they have treated God so shabbily, after they have gone off to worship false Gods. I've been preaching on Jeremiah for several Sundays. In Jeremiah we see that even though God punishes the Hebrew people for their sins, God brings them back to the Promised Land after 70 years in exile in Babylon. The people are forgiven and restored to the land that God had given them. They rebuilt the broken down walls of Jerusalem and rebuilt the Temple that had been destroyed by the enemy.

It seems that even though the Hebrew people sinned and sinned and sinned against God, God always took them back. He loved them and upheld God's part of the covenant with the people. God was their good and faithful God.

God also showed his goodness to those who were not Hebrew people, the foreigners, the gentiles. The story of Jonah is a well-known Old Testament example. God told Jonah to preach to the sinful people who lived in Nineveh, telling them to repent. If they didn't repent God was going to destroy the city because it was so evil. Jonah didn't want to go to a foreign country and preach repentance to an enemy of the Hebrew people, so he avoided God's call. But after a time in the big fish's stomach, Jonah did preach to the Ninevites and the Ninevites did repent. God's love and grace were shown to foreigners.

Time and again God's goodness and grace are in the Old Testament. We just may miss it as we read the exciting, graphic stories. We also may miss God's grace in the Old Testament because we have the New Testament. Jesus' teachings are so plain. There's little in what we read about Jesus' teaching and the way he lived that would distract us from Jesus' main message that God's love and grace is for everyone.

Grace is a free gift from God. Grace is how God shows God's love to us. The Hebrew people didn't deserve to be taken back into God's good graces time after time. Likewise, all of us fall short and need to be forgiven time and again for our sins. But God's grace is there, freely forgiving and loving us in spite of our sins.

Have you thanked God for showing us God's grace and love through the Old and New Testament stories? Have you thanked God that he loves you and cares for you as he does the Hebrew people? Have you thanked God for Jesus Christ who died and was raised again so we may have life eternal? I hope so!

Blessings,  
Pastor Lee

## OCTOBER 2013: SPECIAL DATES



Tuesday, October 1  
Sunday October 6  
Wednesday, October 9  
Wednesday, October 9  
Thursday, October, 10  
Friday, October 18  
Saturday, October 19  
Friday, October 25  
Sunday, October 27

8:00 Kids Cove Meeting  
Potluck Lunch  
Deacons  
Women's Circle  
Session  
8:00 Kids Cove Meeting  
Story Time  
5:00-7:00 Fish Dinner  
Bake Sale

### **FISH DINNER – Oct 25<sup>th</sup>**

October 25<sup>th</sup> will be our next fish dinner. Tickets are \$12 and can be purchased from Nancy Pryor. The dinner will be from 5-7pm. We will have grilled fish this time.

### Discernment: A Christian Spiritual Practice

“Discernment” is a very important Christian spiritual practice that I am recently focusing on because our decisions in everyday lives shape our identity as persons and as Christians. Discernment as spiritual practice invites us to a holy space and time by asking “Where is God in our midst?”, “How was/is God present?”, and “What and how do we know what God is calling us to do?”

A spiritual practice, discernment is very similar to “the Awareness Examen” or “Examination of Consciousness.” The Awareness Examen tries to restore the focus on God. Throughout the practice, we try to find God’s presence and action in our lives. It helps us to know ourselves in the light of God as well as to know God. It also develops one’s ability to differentiate our desire from God’s desire with our lives. Spiritual practice of discernment is “the process of intentionally becoming aware of how God is present, active, and calling us as individuals and communities so that we can respond with increasingly greater faithfulness.” (Elizabeth Liebert)

As an individual, as a family member, as a member of a group, or as a leader of a congregation, we always make a choice or have to make a decision. When we are to make a decision in our day-to-day living we are called to practice “discernment.” Through our choices that we make we can become the person who God is calling us to be, we can become the church that God is calling us to be.

*Pastor Esther Shin*

# PRAYER REQUESTS

Lord, make us mindful of your power and your glory as we pray for those in need.  
Our Service Men & Women, Our Country & Our President  
*Pray for our Church at 12:00 noon daily*

*Death of a Loved One*

Comfort and peace for the families missing loved ones

*Recovery*

Barbara Barrett – healing in eye  
Kay Sachs – recovering from a fall  
Joey – recovering from a stroke  
Leslie – Diabetic - Healing  
Norman Larson – bleeding ulcer  
Bob's son Bob – heart issues  
Vern – open heart surgery  
Mary Jane – pneumonia  
Greg – pain from fall  
John – healing  
Manny – vein problem  
Florence – heart attack  
Matt – diverticulitis  
Priscilla Martinez (LaVida's daughter) – liver and other concerns  
Ruthie – recovering from surgery  
Ray  
Trish – multiple health problems  
Marti's sisters Candice  
Marci – angioplasty  
Anita – healing and help  
Grace – recovering from surgery  
LaVida & Debbie – patience & healing

*Continuing Health Concerns*

Bertha's brother in law Ray, recurring cancer  
Patty's friend Shemko  
Bill's mother in coma, final days  
Rena Rodman  
Francis and Paula – terminal cancer  
Patty Valdez, Matt & Ann Matheson, Charlton, Alexis, Mary, Julee  
- Friends and Family suffering with cancer:  
Phyllis, Father Isaac, Aaron, Tom, Ben, Ray, Jon, Lynn, Stacy, Reggie, Barnie, Kathy, Dale, Sammy, Neal, Cathy, Paula, Scott, Ruthie, Arvid, Kathy, Pat, Scott, Kathy, Anna Marie, Darrell, Jim

*Community and World Concerns*

Cathedral City police and fire departments

**Prayer concerns in addition to those expressed during Sunday's worship service may be submitted on the prayer request cards in the pews or by contacting the church office. Confidentiality will be maintained at all times.**

*Please Pray for the Mission Activities of the church as well*

Neonatal unit blankets and baby items  
Twenty-nine 29 Palms Marine Base Wounded Warrior  
Well in the Desert  
Scholarship for graduates of Cathedral City HS  
VA & Stroke Centers  
Clothes That Work  
One Great Hour of Sharing  
Alternative Christmas  
School supplies for Sky Ridge Mobile Home Park Kids

Desert Summer Kids Feeding Program  
Life Line subsidies  
Coachella Valley Rescue Mission  
Migrant Farm Workers – bedrolls and food  
Shelter from the Storm  
Ronald McDonald House  
Veterans hospital Loma Linda  
Baby kits for Haiti  
2 Cents-a-Meal

# OCTOBER 2013 Prayer Calendar

Please pray for each individual on the date listed

1) Psalms 99  
Proclaim God's greatness  
**Nancy Joy Pryor**

2) Jude 17-25  
Prepare for the Lord's coming  
**Bertha Rawlings**

3) Exodus 33:1-6  
The people in mourning  
**Rawlings Family**

4) John 6:25-35  
God will feed the believer  
**Sandy Rayner**

5) Exodus 33:12-23  
God's glory revealed to Moses  
**Rena Rodman**

6) **Matthew 22:1-14**  
20<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost  
**Bill & Kay Sachs**

7) 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10  
Thanksgiving for the church at Thessalonica  
**Esther Shin**

8) Psalms 90:1-6, 13-17  
Show your servants your works  
**Larry & Cecile Shoot**

9) Rev 18:1-10, 19-20  
Standing firm in the gospel  
**Marge Stahl**

10) Rev 18:21-24  
Babylon will be found no more  
**Dorothy Susdorf**

11) Matthew 17:22-27  
Jesus pays the temple tax  
**Ervin Syfert**

12) Deuteronomy 34:1-12  
Death of Moses  
**Patty Valdez**

13) **Matthew 22:15-22**  
21<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Pentecost  
**Ray & Greta Venter**

14) 1 Thessalonians 2:1-8  
The apostle's concern  
**LaVida Warren**

15) Psalms 107:1-7, 33-37  
Thanks for a beautiful land  
**Noel White**

16) Numbers 33:38-39  
Death of Aaron  
**Evelyn Woods**

17) Joshua 2:14-26  
Faith without works is dead  
**Beth Alfred**

18) Deut 26:16-27:7  
The covenant ratified  
**Martha Anderson**

19) Joshua 3:7-17  
Crossing into the promised land  
**Jean Angus**

20) **Matthew 22:34-46**  
22<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Pentecost  
**Peggy Bakke**

21) 1 Thessalonians 2:9-13  
The apostle's teaching  
**Bob & Barbara Barrett**

22) **Matthew 23:1-12**  
**Proper 26 (31)**  
**Alma Boney**

23) Joshua 4:1-24  
Another story of the crossing  
**Doug Bridges**

24) *Matthew 5:1-12*  
*All Saints' Day*  
**Brown Family**

25) Psalm 128  
It shall be well with you  
**Julee Collins**

26) Joshua 24:1-3a, 14-25  
Joshua calls Israel to serve God  
**David & Opal Eason**

27) **Matthew 25:1-13**  
23<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after Pentecost  
**Carol Frances**

28) 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18  
The promise of the resurrection  
**Rebeca Franz**

29) Psalm 78:1-7  
The power of God  
**Leslie Franz**

30) Joshua 24:25-33  
Joshua's generation passes on  
**Dick Gampert**

## How's your path?

Some Christian converts in an African village were diligent about daily prayer. In fact, they each had a special place in the thicket outside town where they prayed in solitude. Over time, they wore pathways through the brush to their private prayer areas. If someone neglected his or her prayer life, it was evident because fresh grass started growing on that particular footpath. Out of concern, fellow Christians offered this loving reminder: "Friend, there's grass growing on your path."

How worn is your own path to prayer? Are you persistent when answers don't seem to come? Do you trust that God will answer your prayers, according to His good and gracious will? Don't abandon your pathway to prayer. When you grow weary, remember Galatians 6:9 (NIV), which promises that "at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up."

*~ Taken from The Newsletter Newsletter*



## GARDEN NEWS

Special thanks to Peggy for helping the children learn about gardening. We are all eager to start planting in the new garden beds that were recently built for the Community Garden and look forward to seeing what new things the children and community can grow together.



**COMMUNITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
**38088 Chuperosa Lane**  
**Cathedral City CA, 92234**

We're on the Web:  
[www.churchinthecove.org](http://www.churchinthecove.org)

## **Who We Are**



We are a church family who care for each other and all of God's people. We celebrate worship each Sunday, thanking and praising God for the wonderful gifts generously given to us. We then go out into the world to share God's love with all we meet. We are strengthened for service and outreach through small group outreach activities and weekly Bible study. All are welcome to join us as we seek to glorify and serve our risen Lord.