



November Festivities

Mark your calendars for November's special occasions at Kensington Community Church. (All are at KCC except the Thanksgiving worship service.)

John And Dean's Wedding

Don't miss this joyous occasion! Saturday, Nov. 1, at 6:30 p.m.; dress tropical!

Virtual Reality Comes To Men's Breakfast

This time, it's not just food and fellowship! Read about Brock Allen's special presentation, set for 8:00 a.m. on Saturday, Nov. 1, on page.5.

Daylight Savings Time Ends

Sleep in a bit on Sunday, Nov. 2, then enjoy church at the usual hour according to your re-set clock.

All-Church Breakfast

Before or after church, depending on whether you prefer the 8:30 service or the 10:00, join your church in breakfast and fellowship on Sunday, Nov. 2.

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Stewardship Sunday

On Sunday, Nov.16, bring your pledges to church to dedicate them and to feel the warmth of connection. As Mick McClain writes, "We are all connected spiritually and the good we feel from stewardship will only be magnified by our increased sharing." And, as Bob Apgar writes, "If we realize that our true value in this world is not based on money but rather our God-given humanity, our decision about what we will share with others becomes easier." (See pages 3 and 4.)

Spud Bowl

Celebrate your pledge on Sunday, Nov. 16, after the 10:00 service with a super spud bowl – baked potatoes filled with a glorious array of tasty toppings, and shared in the company of your church community.

Thanksgiving Worship

Join the five San Diego UCC partnership churches in Thanksgiving worship on Wednesday, Nov. 26, at Pioneer Ocean View UCC, 2550 Fairfield Street, in the Mission Bay area. Refreshments are available at 6:30; the worship service will begin at 7:00 p.m.

Thanksgiving Potluck

Bring your favorite dish to share with Bruce and Katherine Larson's turkey on Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 27, at 2:00 p.m. (See page 5.)

Advent Begins!

Sunday, November 30, marks the first Sunday in Advent. If you or your family would like to participate in lighting the Advent wreath during worship, please sign up in Lander Hall. ♦

Pastor's Ponderings

We're entering lots of seasons – Thanksgiving is just around the corner, and there's that behemoth called "the Holiday Season" that's already showing up in newspaper ads and store displays. The other season, peculiar to us as church, is stewardship. In November, we're in the season of stewardship.

Why do we do this every year? Because it's an important way to be who we are. Stewardship goes all the way back to the first moment we were a glint in God's eye. "So God created humankind in God's image, in the image of God God created them; male and female God created them." (Gen. 1:27) One of the central aspects of being made in the image of God is our call to be stewards of all that God made and continues to make.

As the words of one ancient tradition puts it: "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth." (Gen. 1:28)

The command to "have dominion" does not give license to abuse and pollute the earth and its resources. Rather, it should be understood more as call to the responsible use of the earth. It's a call to sustainability. Though our society and the rest of the over-industrialized world are a long way from reaching this goal, we nevertheless are called to move toward it.

Every year, I like to remember the original setting of the word "steward." In Middle English, the word is a contraction of "sty-warden," or "one who keeps pigs." It suggests that to be stewards involves us in humble work – to be "sty-wardens" on behalf of God's interests for the creation. I like the earthiness and humility of that image. It's hard to get arrogant or greedy when one has to slog around in a muddy pig sty!

So stewardship goes far beyond the management of financial resources. In its broadest theological meaning, stewardship is related to virtually everything we do as creatures. What we eat and how we raise it, what we make and what we use to make it, who makes what and how much we pay them, whom we relate to and the relationships we make, and so on.

Nothing is left out from the realm of stewardship when it comes to living as creatures made in the image of God.

The use of our time, our abilities, our resources, our money, our relationships is all part of stewardship. God calls on us to reflect, to "image," every aspect of our lives with God's intention "that all should live in peace and unafraid." (Micah 4:4b)

So in this season when we focus on stewardship, let us reflect on our own activities as stewards. How do our lifestyles – as individuals, as households, as a church – reflect our being God's image in the world? One important way, of course, is to make a commitment to God and God's work in the world, preferably by making a pledge of a percentage of our income to the church.

As important as that is, moreover, we need to do more than pledge income to the church. We need to recycle as much of what we use as possible. We need to buy as many products as we can from sources that are friendly to the environment. We need to car pool when we can. We need to conserve water. We need to shop at stores and other businesses that employ marginalized people, practice fair employment, and give back to the community. We need to ask where our food comes from and how it is produced; the closer we can get to the sources of our food, the better stewards we will be. We need to get together with others just for the sake of getting together and enjoying one another's company. And so on.

All of this takes time and work. But the alternative of doing nothing is not an option, at least not any more. To invest in the future by changing what we do in the present is the way to be faithful stewards.

That is especially true this year, when anxiety, even fear, tempts us to pull back because of the uncertain economic situation. But this is exactly the time when we most especially need to be faithful – to be a community of courage in the face of fear, to be a community of true stewards.

The needs will be great, and the rewards will be many. May we rise to the challenge of practicing this spiritual discipline.

Grace and peace,
Bruce ♦

True Worth

As the deadline approached for this article, Bruce provided me with numerous ideas and reference material. One that was a true revelation was an article entitled “Our Worth Comes from God, Not Money.” (<http://www.alban.org/conversation.aspx?id=6490>)

Its fundamental premise is that our worries about money are often how we cope or insulate ourselves from our fears and insecurities. We have the mistaken belief that financial security alone is the answer to many of our problems. But for many of us a money-related problem is the tip of the iceberg.

For instance, our concerns about Social Security are based in our worry about growing old. Will we be able to keep our independence and not depend upon our friends? Will we be able to keep our mental capacities? We rarely reveal to our family and friends the true nature of our concerns of our concerns about money and instead express our troubles in financial terms.

The sad part of this is that we cut ourselves off from the very conversations about our hopes and fears and insecurities that our faith communities can help us deal with. The author makes the point that as Christian brothers and sisters we must avoid the quick fix, but instead move to the next level in listening. We do this by encouraging people to say what’s in their hearts and we respond by helping them to see that their true worth comes from God rather than money.

So at this point you are probably wondering. “Is he saying we do not need to worry about taking care of ourselves?” “Just give all of our money away and God will take care of us?” “How does this relate to stewardship in the first place?”

My friends, I believe God would have us take care of our families and ourselves. However, if we realize that our true value in this world is not based on money but rather our God-given humanity, our decision about what we will share with others becomes easier – and, in turn, increases our own sense of self-worth.

Live well in Christ,
Bob Apgar (the younger) ♦

Missions Moment

Copley YMCA Christmas Party

More than 1,000 children are expected to attend this year’s Copley YMCA Christmas Party, set for Saturday, December 13, and we need you to volunteer your time and talent to make it another great success.

Volunteers are needed for any and all of these opportunities:

- gift wrapping on Saturday, December 6, starting at 9:30 a.m.;
- making holiday decorations on Thursday, December 11, starting at 9:00 a.m.;
- setting up and decorating the Copley Y space on Friday, December 12, starting at 8:30 a.m.; and
- welcoming children, distributing stockings, helping with crafts, giving gifts, serving food, and/or just lending a hand where needed on Saturday, December 13, starting at 8:30 a.m.

In addition, KCC will again supplement the gifts that the Copley Y receives from Toys for Tots, and your contributions are most welcome – gift cards as well as toys. There is a collection spot in Lander Hall – please help fill it!

Susan Christison (619-284-0162), Bruce Larson (619-284-1129), Leslie Wells (619-482-9541), and Kris Winter (619-284-8411) are leading the KCC effort. Please contact them with suggestions and questions, or sign up on one or more of the sign-up sheets in Lander Hall.

Make this a Christmas party to remember for a whole lot of children and their families – and for yourself! ♦

To Senior High Youth:

KCC has a new Sunday School teacher for you – Judy Atwater! Come back to church on Sunday mornings, and help Judy help you!

Also, you have a new youth representative on the Religious Education Board – Alicia Chaffee! If you have anything you want her to say on your behalf, let her know (aachaffee@cox.net or 619-284-8858). ♦

Visit Virtual Realities At Men's Breakfasts

Ever wondered what it's like to live, work, and play (and own real estate) in an entirely virtual world? I'll lead the Men's Breakfast (Saturday, November 1, 8:00-9:30 a.m.) on a short trip to "Second Life," an online computer-generated world with 175 square miles "inhabited" by 15 million users. We'll discuss some of the questions that virtual realities raise about the nature of reality and God.

Then, at the December 6 breakfast, we'll examine "Spore," a new video game that extends god-like powers to players who create imaginary life forms, foster civilizations, and engineer planets.

Brock Allen ♦

Religious Education

A lot is going on in Religious Education!

Update On DRE Question

At its last meeting, the Religious Education Board used the results of the community survey to hammer out a draft job description for a Director of Religious Education. Next, Pastor Bruce Larson and I will meet with the Sunday School teachers to get their input.

Youth Representative Named

Alicia Chaffee has been added to the RE Board as its youth representative. Alicia represents the young voices in the church, so here is a message to all youth: if you have something you want her to raise on your behalf, be sure to let her know.

Senior High Teacher Named

Enthusiastic thanks to Judy Atwater, who has graciously volunteered to serve as the Sunday School teacher for our senior high school students.

Next RE Board Meeting

Tuesday, November 4, at 7:00 p.m. (yes, Election Night).

Sunday School Teachers' Meeting

Sunday, November 2, at 11:15 a.m. Please remember the time change!

Alexis Solomon

Religious Education Board Chair ♦

Thanksgiving Day Potluck At KCC

Wondering what to do for Thanksgiving? With no family in town, so were we. Then we thought of our church community.

On Thanksgiving Day, November 27, we'll cook a turkey at KCC; it should be ready to eat at about 2:00 p.m. If you'd like to come join us, please do! Bring a dish you'd like to share, and we'll give thanks together.

If you sign up in Lander Hall or by calling Donna at the church (619-284-1129), we'll be sure to have enough turkey for you. Or just come at the last minute – you will be welcomed!

Bruce and Katherine Larson ♦

Hanging Of The Greens

Yes, it's almost that time already! The annual Hanging of the Greens is set for Saturday, December 6, at 9:30 a.m. (Men who attend the Men's Breakfast that day will be able to go straight from "Spore" to spruce!) Please bring any old drop cloths you may have, to protect our nice new tile from the piney resin. ♦

Preschool News

KCC put on another fabulous Halloween Carnival, with too many volunteers to thank! The children always look forward to this event, and they had a great time!

The children also enjoyed singing in church on Preschool Sunday. We had a huge turnout – the most in years. [Editor's note: 50 children were counted in church that Sunday!]

October has also featured our pumpkin patch field trip to a working farm, visits from the Burn Institute, and an extra special treat: one of the parents, a firefighter, paid us a visit with a fire truck and a learning session on fire safety. The children were given play fire helmets and vests. They also had the opportunity to sit in the truck and to shoot water from the big hose. Sheer delight for a preschooler!

Connie Cleland, Preschool Director ♦

Blessing Of Animals A Big Success

Forty people and more than forty dogs and cats turned out on a gorgeous October afternoon for KCC's first annual Blessing of the Animals, and then the humans enjoyed a delightful ice cream social. Everyone who came remarked on what a great occasion it was! ♦

Dinner And Dancing

Mark your calendars for Friday, February 20, when your KCC Events Committee will bring the whole community a special treat – a fun evening of multigenerational dinner and dancing!

After a casual, barn-themed supper, a caller will lead us through the simple steps of line dancing (no partner needed, all ages can participate). Mark your calendars now! For questions or to help, call Beth Guepin (619-282-9749). ♦

What An Angel!

After the Sacred Conversation on Race, there was an enormous quantity of Jim and Penny Ward's wonderful chili left over, needing to be saved for the Halloween Carnival. But how to store it?

Jennifer Negre came to the rescue! She came to church and packaged it all up for storage in her own freezer, then washed all the pots and dirty towels for good measure. Thanks, Jennifer! ♦

Kensington Concert Series Christmas Program

This festive program, hosted by our own Kensington Community Church, will feature the Westwind Brass, joined by two superb singers, performing holiday favorites from around the world. This concert is scheduled for Sunday, December 14, at 7:30 p.m.

Tickets are available at Kensington Video, 4067 Adams Avenue (619-284-2477), for \$24, which includes a reception with the artists following the concert. Net proceeds are donated to the Friends of the Kensington-Normal Heights Library. ♦

Worship Survey Results

Thanks to all 65 people who took the time to offer opinions – it was a great and enthusiastic response rate. Generally, I see a few surprises and lots of interesting information. Here's some:

- Regarding the parts of the service that people find most meaningful, sermons came out first (not surprising, given the centrality of sermons in the congregational tradition), followed by hymns, choir, prayers, children's moment, and vocal solos respectively.

- Regarding hymn preferences, "hymns that fit in with the rest of the service" received the most responses (38), followed by "old favorites" (35) and "hymns from different cultures" (18). Lots of interesting comments here.

- Celebrating communion monthly was strongly preferred. Not surprisingly, intinction is favored by 8:30 worshippers, while trays are favored by 10:00 worshippers.

- The data on the Lord's Prayer surprised me. Since only "debts/debtors" was used before I came, I expected that it would have shown up as the clear preference among worshippers. But it didn't. "Debt/debtors" received 20 preferences while "different versions simultaneously" and "any way works for me" combined for 34 preferences, while 9 preferred to "use different ways different times to try to keep it meaningful."

- If the church decided to go to one service, preferred times to start varied from 9:00 to 9:30 to 10:00. John Tarbox says that 9:00 would be too early for the choir. From this survey, it's hard to gauge the interest in moving to one service.

- The written comments are, as expected, all over the map. Very interesting reading! Copies are available in the church office.

I welcome any and all comments you have about these survey results (or anything else, for that matter). Drop in, or call me (619-284-1129), or email me (bruce@kcc.sdcoxmail.com).

Bruce ♦

Prayer List

Please remember these people in your prayers:

David Adams
Kathleen Andrews
Utahna Atwell
Nancy Brest
Carolyn Devine
Karen Gibson
Bob Guerra
Alden Malachowski
Darlene Mann
Irene Naismith
Penny Novak
Joyce Sciascia
Jim Toomey
George and Pat Varnum



The family and friends of Alice Crittenden, Ben Gutierrez, Jane Owing, Cecilia Panganiban, and Brad Paulson

Those who are unemployed or experiencing financial hardship

To get a name added to this list, please contact the church office (info@kcc.sdcoxmail.com or 619-284-1129) or the *Chimes* (klarson26@cox.net or 619-501-1187). ♦

If You Are Hospitalized...

Privacy laws prohibit hospitals from letting KCC know, even if you list KCC as your church on the admission form. So if you want us to know, or if you'd like a visit, please contact us! Bruce and Donna can both be reached at 619-284-1129; their emails are bruce@kcc.sdcoxmail.com and info@kcc.sdcoxmail.com. ♦

Concentrate On This Sentence

To get something you never had, you have to do something you never did. When God takes something from your grasp, God is opening your hands to receive something better. Concentrate on this sentence: "The will of God will never take you where the Grace of God will not protect you."

Beverly Patch ♦

Senior Luncheon

All senior members and friends of KCC are invited to the next Senior Luncheon, scheduled for noon on Thursday, December 4. You can count on this being an especially festive holiday treat! ♦

KCC Prayer Group

What We Do

The Prayer Group has been exploring what prayer means to us as individuals and the value of different forms of prayer. We are also currently reading *A Praying Congregation* by Jane E. Vennard.

My time spent in prayer has become more focused and meaningful and less rote. As I have applied thoughts from the book and our discussions to my everyday interactions and experiences, I find my spirituality deepening.

You Are Welcome

The Prayer Group meets from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. every Thursday. Please join us whenever you can.

Asking For Prayers

All prayer requests are welcome. You can give them to Bruce or Donna at the church (619-284-1129 or bruce@kcc.sdcoxmail.com or info@kcc.sdcoxmail.com) or to me (jenniferhn@gmail.com or 619-269-9568). If you leave a message, please be sure to include your name along with the request.

Also, within the next few weeks, confidential Prayer Request Cards will be found in the pews and can be dropped in the offering plate or left in the office. These requests will only be shared with the Prayer Group. We want to pray for your needs.

Jennifer Negre ♦

November Birthdays

- 1 Marg Stark
- 3 Virginia Phares
- 5 Pete Rapp
- 7 Nina Deering, Mick McClain
- 9 Charles Gorder, Sr.
- 10 Steve Winn
- 13 Harold Culver
- 15 Joan Reilly
- 16 Betty Lou Uhazie
- 22 Monica Beran
- 28 Grant Choy
- 29 Kay Vavra
- 30 Brittany Tarbox



If your name, or the name of someone you love, should be added to this list, please let Donna know at 619-284-1129 or info@kcc.sdcoxmail.com. ♦

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UPCOMING EVENTS

LEARN: LECTIONARY BIBLE STUDY
PLACE: KCC CONFERENCE ROOM
WHEN: TUESDAYS, NOON TO 1:00 P.M.

PRAYER: PRAYER GROUP
PLACE: KCC SANCTUARY
WHEN: THURSDAYS, 2:30 TO 3:30 P.M.

BOOK STUDY: FOLLOWING JESUS IN A CULTURE OF FEAR
PLACE: KCC CONFERENCE ROOM
WHEN: THURSDAYS, 6:30 TO 7:30 P.M.

WEDDING: DEAN HANSEN AND JOHN TARBOX
PLACE: KCC
WHEN: SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 6:30 TO 9:00 P.M.

MEN: MEN'S BREAKFAST – VIRTUAL REALITY
PLACE: KCC
WHEN: SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 8:00 A.M.

WORSHIP: STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY
PLACE: KCC
WHEN: SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 8:30 AND 10:00 A.M.

FELLOWSHIP: SPUD BOWL
PLACE: LANDER HALL
WHEN: SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 11:15 A.M.

WORSHIP: THANKSGIVING EVE
PLACE: PIONEER OCEAN VIEW UCC, 2550 FAIRFIELD STREET
WHEN: WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 6:30 P.M.

THANKSGIVING: POTLUCK WITH THE LARSONS
PLACE: KCC
WHEN: THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 2:00 P.M.

**SEE THE FULL CHURCH CALENDAR
AT WWW.KENSINGTONUCC.COM**