

Shepherd of the Sierra Presbyterian Church

"Time for Change"

5400 Barton Road
Loomis, CA 95650
Ph. 916-652-4851
www.shepherdpres.org

September 2010

- 9/2 - The Gathering Inn
- 9/3 - Breakfast Work Group
- 9/3 - The Gathering Inn
- 9/5 - Annual Cong. Meeting
- 9/6 - Office Closed
- 9/8 - Wednesday Bible Study
- 9/9 - Women's Fellowship
- 9/12 - Ministry Team Faire
- 9/12 - Youth Group Pool Party
- 9/12 - New Members Class
- 9/19 - Confirmation Orientation
- 9/19 - New Members Class
- 9/24 - Children's Night Out
- 9/24 - Men's Retreat
- 10/1 - Women's Retreat

**Celebrate the return of
Pastor Dave!
Sunday, September 5**

Children in Worship

By Pastor Dave Ratcliff



As I return from my summer sabbatical I look forward to two new opportunities. One opportunity will be the introduction of weekend spiritual retreats that will begin in January of next year. This is a discussion for a future newsletter. The other opportunity focuses on the many positive changes that will begin on November 7.

Beginning that day will be the overall expansion of our Sunday ministry at Shepherd. I would like to take the time to talk about what those changes are and why I am excited about them.

On November 7, we will return to our previous schedule of two worship services. I am excited about this return for a couple of reasons:

1. Challenge to grow - for the past seven years Shepherd has experienced a time of little growth in the number of individuals who are attending worship. I believe that by moving to two services we will have the challenge of increasing our attendance by inviting friends and neighbors and by expanding our outreach into the community. Shepherd has never been about growth in numbers per se, but we firmly believe that we are called to welcome individuals into the church. We need to renew that commitment and I believe two services will help enhance our ability to reach out to many others.

2. Creative use of worship space - one of the topics that Cathy Lovejoy and I have been having over the past couple of years concerns overall involvement of the congregation in worship. Last Advent we offered the chance for individuals to come and light small candles. The response was very positive, but our limited space made the action a bit dangerous. With two services, we will have more space to offer these kind of experiential events during the whole liturgical year.

On November 7, we will also offer the chance for young people to remain in worship. Cathy will be explaining in her article some of the specific changes that will be put in place to do this; I wish to speak to the importance of having children in worship.

As I have stated at times in the past, I have never been much of a fan of the idea of having children and young people leave worship for church school. We have provided that format here at Shepherd because it seemed to meet the needs of most parents. I accepted this decision as a necessary compromise to address a certain need. I believe that by doing this we have taken away from our young people the power and influence of worship. I once had children this age and I know that young people are less than likely to sit quietly during the whole time of worship. But I also believe that it is not right for a young person to never be able to participate in communion or to see a baptism because they are in church school.

continued on next page

Staff

David Ratcliff

Pastor

Cathy Lovejoy

Director of Child and
Family Ministries

Randy Henry

Director of Youth Ministries

Steve Corey

Associate for Ministry
of Music

Barbara Besson

Administrative Assistant

Carol Nielsen

Administrative Assistant

David Carroll

Parish Associate

Kristi Heckelman

Finance Clerk

Cristin Machado

Nursery Caregiver

Kay Potter

Choir Accompanist

I also believe that by sending young people away from worship we announce a subtle message that worship is for adults and kids are not allowed. This is not the message I want our children to hear.

Our new format will offer parents and children options during worship to make the time a positive experience. I believe that our older children will quickly adjust and will begin to know that the worship of God is for them as well as their parents. Our children might not experience this change in perspective immediately; but in the years that follow, I believe we will have shaped and formed young disciples that understand that God desires all of us to worship Him.



I will be addressing many of these issues in more detail at our Annual Congregational

Meeting on September 5 at 5 pm. I would urge you to be in attendance as we discuss these matters and begin the process of moving toward the positive challenges before us.

This Month in Church School

Welcome Home, Onesimus (Philemon 1-21) - Paul encourages Philemon to welcome Onesimus back as a friend, and not as his slave. Christ calls us to live in respectful and just relationships.

Growing in Christ (I Timothy 1) - When Paul became a believer in Christ, his whole life changed and he became a role model for others.

Pray, and Pray Some More (I Timothy 2) - This letter to Timothy teaches us to say prayers of thanks, prayers for others, prayers for yourself, prayers for the leaders of the world who work for peace, and prayers of thanks for Jesus.

Dare to Trust in God's Plans (Jeremiah 32, Psalm 91, I Timothy 6) - Even in times of great despair, God reminds us of his love for us.



New Directions

by Cathy Lovejoy

Director of Child & Family Ministries

Perhaps you've seen this illustration before. I know I have shared it in the past, but it is particularly appropriate as Shepherd moves in a new direction this fall. First, find a spool of string and measure off fourteen feet. Then, take a piece of masking tape and cover one inch of the string. In these fourteen feet of string there are 168 inches - one inch for each hour of every week. The inch represents the amount of time you and your family spend at church Sunday mornings in worship or church school. It doesn't look like much, does it? In fact, it represents only one half of one percent of your time.

Now while I know that many people spend time in personal devotion or prayer, or helping with various ministries here and in the community, or attending Youth Group or Bible Study, the vast majority of us rely on our Sunday morning experiences to keep us spiritually grounded, connected, accountable and inspired. While time alone is not the measure of our devotion or spiritual health, the way we spend it certainly plays a role in our experience of God's kingdom.

Beginning November 7, we will be expanding our Sunday schedule to include a dedicated time for spiritual formation for the entire congregation. This new schedule will allow us to explore new interests, deepen our understanding of faith, scripture and service, and bring the Shepherd community closer together. Although the specific details of class offerings and scheduling will come at a later date, there are some essential elements of this model that we can share right now.

• **Opportunities for All** - Classes and experiences will be offered for all ages. In the recent past, we have offered education on Sunday mornings only for our children and youth. Our new model includes experiences and classes for all ages, including age-specific and multi-generational opportunities.

continued on next page

Clerk of Session

Kent Milton

Elders

Sue Bordelon

Dave Brown

Melissa Cowles

Daniel Graham

Melanie Graham

Kati Henry

Carl Hentschke

Doug Hunter

Dave MacMillan

Lois Ortmann

Deacons

Trish Cargile

Carita Connelly

Linda Hunter

Joan Nordine

Marc Parce

Debbie Pearsall

Pam Reynolds

Jim Sipes

Kitty Toms

Meaghan Thoke

Stephen Leaders

Andrea Chin-Mitchel

Bill Connelly

Nick Ladas

Diana Pellegrin

Rita Peterson

Stephen Ministers

Charlotte Greenhalge

Nick Ladas

Matt Milton

Diana Pellegrin

John Pellegrin

Rita Peterson

Harry Prah

Suzanne Sheetz

• **Formation, Not Education** - Although most people will probably say "Education Hour" when describing our new offerings, I will always say "Formation Hour." Education is certainly important, but there are many opportunities to deepen our spirituality and tend to our discipleship that are more experiential, rather than educational. Many of you will agree that some of the most profoundly formative experiences are found outside traditional classroom settings.

• **Unity in Community** - One of the hallmarks of our new formation hour will be the opportunity for every person in the congregation to study the same scripture and themes each week through a lectionary-based curriculum. While this is just one option among many that will be offered, we believe that it will provide a great link between church and home as family members reflect on the lessons and themes introduced each week. Additionally, when Pastor Dave is not working through a particular series, he will preach from the lectionary. This added connection between worship, the formation hour and home will further enrich our experience together.

• **Head, Heart & Hands** - "What if I hate sitting in class?" We are working hard to provide opportunities for formation that move beyond the traditional classroom setting. Do you experience God best when you are discussing scripture? Making music? Praying? Do you feel God's presence as you serve others? Or do you long for a small group of people to challenge you and support you in a personal way? The options are nearly endless for deepening your discipleship.

• **Fellowship & Community** - Every few weeks we will celebrate the end of a series by gathering together for a continental breakfast during the formation hour. With this expanded opportunity for fellowship, we will be able to deepen our friendships and

celebrate the ways we are living out our discipleship. It is during this time that our mission efforts, music-making, book lists, artistic endeavors, and more, can be celebrated and shared with the entire community.

Finally, as you might imagine, our new formation hour will require the involvement of many people. The Lifelong Learning Ministry Team is working hard to design and implement a ministry that will strengthen our community and deepen our connection to God. If you have specific ideas for classes or experiences, or if you wish to help implement this new ministry, please contact me this month or visit the Lifelong Learning Ministry table during the Ministry Faire on September 12. You can email at children@shepherdpres.org.

Looking Forward

By Randy Henry

Director of Youth Ministries

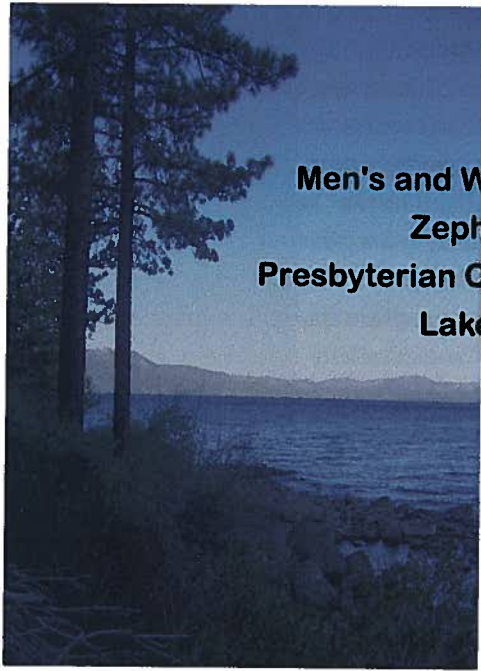


For me, this has always been the most exciting time of the year. Our kids are going back to school. Programs are starting back at church. Some of us are starting new jobs. There is anticipation in the air. You can feel God's presence in these changes. The summer was very successful for our youth; we had the most participation this year than we have ever had in our summer events. As I look forward, I am excited for the prospects for this change of seasons and beginnings. Our youth program is still expanding and this year we will really need help. We are blessed with one of the best group of youth I have

experienced in my many years of youth ministry. Help me make another great year. I need help coordinating meals for youth group. I need more help with the actual youth group nights and I will need help with youth Sunday school.

Please assist me with this wonderful task. Call me if you are interested. God Bless.





**Men's and Women's Retreat
Zephyr Point
Presbyterian Conference Center
Lake Tahoe**

**Men's Retreat
Sept. 24- 26**



**Women's Retreat
Oct 1- 3**