

MIRACLE DAY

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2005

Garfield Park Christian Church in Santa Cruz has a Miracle Day project set for Saturday, November 5, 2005. Nancy Orosco has volunteered to coordinate the members of our congregation so we may help Garfield Park with their Miracle Day project. We will be providing lunch and/or dessert for the project workers.



CHURCH HISTORIAN WANTED SHARING THE GOOD NEWS

We have some beautiful wooden, hand-made history books that are in dire need of being updated and kept up. We need an historian to record and share our rich church life not only for our future but to celebrate these experiences with our area and regional churches. We have many people willing to donate photos, newspaper articles, etc. Now if we only had someone to put it all together. Please see Pastor Reuben if you are interested in this important ministry.



PASTOR'S VACATION

Pastor Reuben and his family will be on vacation from August 2nd through August 17th. In his absence, we are fortunate enough to have **Claire Vilhauer** as our Guest Minister on Sunday, August 7th and the **Youth** on Sunday, August 14th.

First Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)
15 Madison Street, Watsonville, CA 95076
(831) 724-4517 • FAX (831) 724-5285



BELL TOWER

August 2005

MISSION STATEMENT

We, at First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Watsonville, as part of the Church Universal, are committed to Spreading God's abounding Love, Proclaiming Jesus Christ's Message through the Truth of the Gospel by Word and Deed, and Spiritually Growing and Sharing the Gift of the Holy Spirit through Involvement and Interaction with the Diverse Community in which we live. In Faith, Unity; In Opinions, Liberty; In all Things, Love.



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PASTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

BY DR. REUBEN NEGRON

I woke up a couple of weeks ago to the awful and unsettling news that four separate bomb attacks took the lives of dozens and injured hundreds of commuters in London. What a horrible and senseless act of pure violence. It was only yesterday Londoners were elated, celebrating their chance to host the Olympic games for 2012. Today the mood in Great Britain and the world changed drastically. These events reminded me of the lives lost and injured in the Madrid bombing back in March 11, 2004, and our own tragedy in my hometown, New York City, on September 11 with the loss and maimed of over three thousand men and women. Of course, I also recall the countless victims in other countries who suffered the same ominous fate.

These demonstrations of evil acts continue to remind us that we are at war and during these times of relentless strive, where all considerations and boundaries do not exist, under such circumstances we are called to be vigilant and prepare for the unexpected. Yes, we are at war and what is different about this turmoil is that this is not a simple conflict where political, economic, and religious interests are at stake. As a matter of fact, terrorism has nothing to do with the lack of social justice in the Middle East or around the globe. These are excuses which only serve to rationalize their hatred and spiritual frustrations. Those responsible for these

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OUTREACH

VETERAN'S HOSPITAL IN PALO ALTO SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2005

Our Mexican Fiesta was such a hit in April, we have been invited back to prepare a delicious lunch at noon for the 40+ Veterans (mostly from Iraq) currently being treated in the Palo Alto Veteran Hospital's trauma center, blind unit, and spinal cord injury section.

This will be a festive party atmosphere in the Veterans' dining hall. In addition to a sumptuous lunch, the Veterans really look forward to talking and socializing with people.

These Veterans have difficult therapy during the week and Saturday is usually their "free" day. They are living at the trauma center for surgery, therapy and counseling. Many of them do not have family or friends nearby but have been at the hospital for many months. Their disabilities include: post traumatic stress, blindness, amnesia, spinal injury, and amputation, among others.

If you are unable to physically participate on September 10th, a monetary donation will be appreciated to help purchase supplies and decorations. Please mark your donations for the "Veterans' Lunch".

LORRAINE MATHIESEN, CHAIR



MISSION SPRINGS

Women's Ministries 2005 Fall Retreat will be held at Mission Springs Conference Center in Scotts Valley on September 15-16 and 17-18. The theme for the occasion is, "Open to the Journey... Hearing God's Call". Women interested in attending will find more information on the website at: www.ccn-cn-womensministries.org.



RUMMAGE SALE

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2005

This is an all church fundraiser. The profits will go to the youth fund, which includes summer camp. For more information, please contact **Nancy Orosco**.

atrocities have no agenda other than to inflict pain and introduce fear. It is a way of venting their inner void and brokenness. This is a complex struggle where good and evil is measuring it out. We are dealing here with a spiritual warfare that goes back since the beginning of human awareness and reasoning. And what is more disturbing is the irrefutable fact that as time moves on the resolve of evil intensifies and spreads mercilessly with the sole purpose of defacing God's creation and dismantling every divine gift that stands for hope and deliverance.

We cannot argue that the death of so many innocent people at the hands of an "invisible foe" disrupts the peace of mind which we so desperately need. Truly, these inhumane acts of terror pretend to bring fear into the hearts and confuse God-given gifts of reasoning. For all purposes, its main goal is to strip us of our human dignity and paralyze the creative drive to become the dynamic human beings that God intended for us to be. However, despite the horror that comes with these perverse actions and twisted end to destroy, God has granted us weapons, spiritual weapons that can truly hold evil at bay.

We cannot fool ourselves and blindly ignore the fact that the world is living in a climate of palpable terror and fear. Terrorism has many faces and it expresses itself as a global problem. It extends its tentacles in every community. Gang activity, corporate crime, religious indifference, political corruption, social injustice, and the many actions that denigrate the human soul are expressions of terrorism. It is for this reason that we must begin to get acquainted with the spiritual weapons granted to us if we are to defeat the effects with which terrorism has burdened us. The letter to the Ephesians addresses this issue. "Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Eph. 6:10-12" I agree terrorists must be sought out and brought in to face justice. But we must understand terrorism is not simply a political, economic or religious problem; it is a spiritual dilemma. Those who perpetrate these actions are spiritually broken and obviously emotionally devoid of human sensibilities. Their spiritual plight goes beyond any human remedy, only God can truly rehabilitate the mind and the heart. As for us who seek peace with all people, we are called to stand firm against evil, and we do this honorably by praying and working for true peace which seeks understanding and cares for the other. It is our call to stand by the truth and share it with compassion; it is only then when evil be disarmed and defeated.

In shared ministry,
Reuben