



News of The Kenilworth Union Church

211 Kenilworth Avenue • Kenilworth, Illinois 60043 • (847) 251-4272

www.kuc.org

February 7, 2010

Gospel Sunday

Vernon Clark and the Heirs of Joy, the KUC Youth Choir and the Chancel Choir will lead us in inspirational and uplifting worship. Do plan to attend the 9:00 am or the 10:30 am worship service.

Altar Flowers

The altar flowers this Sunday are given in loving memory of Marguerite (Heller) and Edward B. DeVry by the Robert J. Balsley family.

The lavabo arrangement is given in loving memory of Jack Wolfe by Doris and their family.

AJN Summer Program

Applications are being accepted for our Summer Program for Two and three-year-olds. Taught by our very own AJN teachers, camp meets Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9 to 11 am from June 22 to July 29. You do not need to be a member of KUC to join the fun. Invite a friend! To learn more, contact Kris Whisner at 847-853-1738 or kristenwhisner@comcast.net.

Children's Ministries

Jesus Welcomes the Children (Lambs-4th) *Let the children come to me; do not stop them for it is to such as these that the kingdom of Heaven belongs.* (Matthew 19:14) Jesus included all of us, regardless of age, race, gender, or station in life. He even went further and taught that we should actually value the child's position of trust and learn from them.

Bible Occupations(5th & 6th) Today we will study the daily lives of the men and women of Biblical times.

Bible Review Game(7th & 8th) A review of the Old and New Testament stories through a fun game.

Youth Ministries

Soup-er Bowl Sunday Chili Sale is February 7! Order gourmet homemade chili now at \$10 per quart. All proceeds benefit the KUC Quest program for youth. Order forms are now available at church, or you may download at www.kuc.org.

MSYG - Middle School Youth Group(5th-6th graders) meets at the manse on Tuesdays from 5:15 to 6:15 pm. All are welcome!

JYG - Junior High Youth Group (7th-8th graders) meets at the manse on Wednesdays from 6:30 to 8:00 pm. Dinner is provided. All are welcome!

Impact Service Night: will not be held on February 7. The next service night, open to all high-schoolers, will be on February 21 from 7 to 8 pm. Contact Sarah Garcia, sgarcia@kuc.org.

Teen Bible Study will not be held on February 14. The next Teen Bible Study session will be February 28 at 10:30 am in the manse. All are welcome.

Book discussion group

We will again be offering a discussion group about the ideas presented in the book, *One Month to Live* by Kerry and Chris Shook. There is no need to have read the book beforehand. The group will meet at KUC on Sundays, Jan. 31 to March 7 from 11:45-12:45 pm. You can join in anytime even if you haven't read the book!

Please contact Beverly Kirk (frankbevirk@comcast.net) or Jennifer Burch (jenburch@comcast.net) for more information.

Bible Study

Adult Bible study continues on Wednesdays at 9 am. We will be looking at eight core Biblical stories we all should know. These stories tell us about the powerful presence of God in the lives of God's people. While telling the stories, we will have the opportunity to connect them to our own story and to deepen our understanding and practice of faith.

New Member Classes

We invite all persons and families interested in joining Kenilworth Union Church to our Winter New Member Classes. The first class begins on February 21 at 9 am in the Centennial Room, followed by a second class on February 28. New Members will be received by the congregation on Sunday, March 7. Please fill out the "Welcome" card in the pew or call Kathy McCabe at 847-853-2636.

Outreach benefit Pre-Party

Please come to the Outreach Benefit Pre-Party at Little Ricky's in Winnetka on Thursday, February 25th from 6 to 9:00 pm. It's a great opportunity to socialize with fellow church members as well as sign up to volunteer to help with the Outreach Benefit. This benefit will be held at Michigan Shores on Friday, April 30th. In addition, part of the proceeds from the evening will go to our Outreach Programs.

Documentary film - "make No Little Plans" - Daniel Burnham and the American city

Produced by Archimedia Workshop and KUC member, Judith McBrien, Director/Producer. This first feature-length documentary film about noted architect and urban planner Daniel Hudson Burnham will be shown on Wednesday, February 24th at 7:00 pm.

Talent Show

KUC Talent Show is on Sunday, February 28. If you would like to help with the preparations or if you have an act to perform, call Rev. Sarah Garcia at 847-853-2104 or sgarcia@kuc.org.

The Night Ministry

There are still opportunities to serve dinner at The Night Ministry on the following dates: April 12 and May 10. Adults or families are asked to provide soup and sack suppers for 150-200 individuals. sign up with a group for a meaningful evening of service. For more information or to sign up, contact Susan Bottum, sbottum@kuc.org or Sarah Garcia, sgarcia@kuc.org.

Trips With The Bowens

The Bowens are contemplating leading a trip to the Holy Land from April 20 to April 30 and a trip to Germany for the Passion Play in Oberammergau either May 15 to July 4 or August 23 to September 6. If you are interested, contact Dr. Bowen at 847-733-2304 or e-mail, gwbowen@aol.com. You may also contact Ellie Kilcran at the church, 847-251-4272 or email at ekilcran@kuc.org

Food For Thought

You could conserve 1.7 trees and 700 gallons of water over 5 years, while also preventing greenhouse gas emissions by reducing your junk mail. Imagine what we could conserve if we all reduced our junk mail.

The Care Guild Leader for February is Lyn Little. To volunteer or to let us know where help is needed, please call the Care Guild number at (847) 853-3534.

From the Pulpit: January 24, 2010

Dr. Andrew D. Chaney “Is God Calling You?”

Now there were some present at that time who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. Jesus answered, “Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered this way? I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish. Or those eighteen who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them—do you think they were more guilty than all the others living in Jerusalem? I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish.” Luke 13:1-5

When we see the images of the earthquake, we are overcome with grief. There is untold sadness behind every panoramic image of an entire village obliterated, behind every scene of refugees struggling to find shelter or waiting in long lines for water, behind every picture of a makeshift hospital tent overflowing with crying children, and behind the eyes of every desperate relief worker.

Even before the earthquake the nation of Haiti was already filled with suffering. There are many places on earth that have human suffering so staggering that it chills our bones. But now the suffering in Haiti has become exponentially worse and the suffering people are in everyone’s prayers.

We see this suffering and wonder what God is doing. How do we reconcile suffering of this magnitude with God? Why did this happen and how could God allow this to happen? I could not be a Christian if the Bible did not provide guidance about the nature of God in the face of suffering.

Psalm 107 offers guidance:

Some wandered in desert waste lands, finding no way to a city where they could settle.

They were hungry and thirsty, and their lives ebbed away.

Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress.

He led them by a straight way to a city where they could settle.

Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for men,

for he satisfies the thirst and fills the hungry with good things.

The Psalm does not give answers to why or how. Suffering is an age old mystery that remains unsolved. When is it time for someone to meet their Maker...why does suffering happen.... We do not have definitive answers. The Psalm does mention God helping those in trouble. God cares about those who suffer. Remember how Jesus reacted when he received news of the death of his friend Lazarus? It is the shortest verse in the Bible, “Jesus wept.” (John 11:35) Jesus was upset, agitated, and sad upon hearing news of the death of his friend. So we are left with no answer as to why people suffer, but we do know that God offers compassion, and we, as the children of God, are to do likewise.

Our New Testament Scripture from Luke 13 is about a moment when a crowd confronted Jesus with questions similar to the ones we face today. “There were some present at that time who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices.”

The governor Pilate desecrated the temple and the people protested. He placed Roman signs of the image of Caesar throughout the city of Jerusalem, but when the people protested he moved the signs to Caesarea. When Pilate took money from the temple treasury to finance a new aqueduct building project the people protested again but this time he had no tolerance. Roman soldiers dressed in civilian clothes mingled with the protesting crowd and flashed their swords in a terrible massacre.

We do not know if the people asking Jesus about this massacre were family members, relatives, or friends of those killed. Jesus makes it clear that

those people that were killed did not deserve it. God was not punishing them. Another headline of that time was the Tower of Siloam that fell and killed 18 innocent bystanders. Jesus answered, "Do you think they were more guilty than all the others living in Jerusalem..." Jesus makes it clear that these people did not die because they were more evil than anyone else. There are many in the world, sadly, who are so self righteous that they would need to hear this point more than any other.

When the blind English poet John Milton was visited one day by Charles II, whose father the Puritans beheaded, Charles II said, "Your blindness is a judgment from God for the part you took against my father." Milton answered the king with a brilliant reply, "If I have lost my sight through God's judgment, what can you say of your father who lost his head?"

So what do we make of what Jesus says: "I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you too will all perish." Jesus seems to be saying, ask not why it was their time, but consider why it was not your time- this could have happened to any of you! So the question really is, are you ready, if your life were to end today in an earthquake, are you ready to meet God? Jesus wants the people to reflect as deeply upon their lives as they are upon the people who died in the tragedy.

God calls us to respond to the earthquake in Haiti as well. God is calling us to assess where we are going. Maybe we are heading toward a goal and we are going the wrong way. We have a tendency to identify a goal that we see as the end of our life's fulfillment. It could be subconscious and we do not even realize it. It could be a job, a family situation, a certain brand of car, a conquest of some sort that we are moving towards with grave determination because that goal will finally bring fulfillment to our lives. When we reach the goal, maybe we recharge and identify another goal and blindly continue, or maybe we realize the utter despair that comes with the discovery that the goal is not worthy to be the end of life's journey.

Let us realize that the end of our journey is not a job, a car, a house, a title, but God. God is the end of our journey in life. We are heading toward God - God is our life's journey!

So along the way in life we face tragedy with first turning toward God.

Psalm 18 is a beautiful prayer: "I love you, O Lord, my strength. The Lord is my rock, my fortress, my deliverer; my God is my rock in whom I take refuge."

Jesus called out to God from the cross, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?" Sometimes we feel forsaken by God, but eventually God brings us from darkness into the light. In 2 Samuel David calls out to God, "In my distress I call to the Lord!" David was being pursued by assassins and barely escaped. Sometimes in life we feel as if something is chasing us and we cannot escape. God offers freedom from this wild chase. God offers rest and peace.

When we turn to God we gain an eternal perspective. Our temporal situation is placed within an eternal framework. Eventually, even the most desperate cries to God may turn into prayers of thanksgiving for deliverance. This is found in so many Psalms- the move from bitter to better. Even the worst circumstances will end. Suffering will not last forever. There will be an end because God is our end, and with God we find peace. As Revelation 21 states, "He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

Once we have called out to God, found comfort from God's eternal promise of peace, then we are strengthened to react properly. An example of this is found in 2nd Corinthians chapter 1. The Corinthians had asked Paul how they were supposed to deal with the fact that Roman soldiers were taking their friends and family and throwing them to the lions. Paul responds beautifully that we should praise God, the Father of Jesus, "the Father of compassion and the God of comfort, who comforts all of us in our trouble..." Paul states that comfort from God generates a type of energy within that pours out. God comforts us in all our troubles "so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God."

When God comforts us we are able to comfort another. God knows what it is like to feel the pain of this life, and God cares about the pain of his children. When we choose to turn to God, remembering that suffering does not have the final say, and become empowered with compassion to help another, we can reach out to others with the

power of God. We become instruments of God's peace- the arms of God, the body of Christ. No matter how many questions perplex us, we must see the final goal in life- God. With God as our final destination, let us hear him calling, "Keep the faith, stay the course, keep praying, keep hoping, keep helping..." Amen.

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