



The Connection

High Street Community Church

November 2009

A Journey of Discovering

There once was a people. They were neither significant nor exceptional nor privileged. In fact they did what most people of the time did: worked, married, raised children, celebrated, mourned and did the basic stuff of life. You would not think them unique because their dress, homes and professions were much like that of everyone else. What was different about them, however, was this strange conviction that they had been chosen by God to be a special people, a journeying people who were forced to discover, again and again, what God wanted them to be and do in the world.

This community is what the Bible calls “the people of God” and their stories are captured in Abraham’s leaving of Ur, the wilderness wandering of the Israelites, the partial occupation of the Promised Land, and the Babylonian Exile. We also have insight into their life through the stories of the early churches, partially told by Dr. Luke in the book of Acts. From these stories we see how God’s people were sojourners, like their father Abraham, who sought a home like strangers in a foreign land, looking for a city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God (Heb 11:9-10). At every stage of the Biblical story there is always a hope for a future reality toward which the people are moving. Being missional today means that we join this heritage and become wanderers who enter a journey without any road maps to discover on that journey what it means to be God’s people today.

This article by Alan Roxburgh comes at an interesting time in our journey as a congregation. New pastoral configuration, new ministry season, new opportunities to participate more fully with God in His mission in the world. We are the people of God on this journey of discovering the future reality God has prepared for us and how to partner with God in the dance of this reality. This feels like the “precious” thing that Shayne spoke about in the Abram story. Are we willing to let go of the “good” so that we may obtain what is “precious”? I appreciate Mr. Roxburgh’s reminder, through Biblical history, that it is a continual journey of “discovering”.

As we continue on in this journey of discovering, may God grant us grace for the journey so that we might more fully display His glory here in Santa Cruz and in the world.

You are loved,

Don

Seekers on High

Do you seek God's Kingdom and His Righteousness? Then we encourage you to join us, fellow Seekers, for fellowship, learning, encouragement, and growth. ***This month in class:*** We start the month with Missions Sunday. Next, Ken Hertzler concludes "Biblical Principles from the Book of Joshua" on Nov 8. Finally, Seekers welcomes Pastor Don Ferris for three weeks of teaching, discussion, and personal reflection that will challenge us to grow spiritually and as members of our church family. Take note! On Nov 22 (and possibly Nov 29) Seekers will meet from 9:45 -10:45 then join our church family for a combined service at 11:00. BOLO (be on the lookout): for Seekers socials! We try to have these every month or so; lunch together the third Sunday, and fun-filled evenings the last Friday. Look for our next evening event in December.

International Students, Inc. Santa Cruz

Does your church want to reach the nations for Christ? They're right here!

More than 50 new UCSC & Cabrillo international students have joined ISI Santa Cruz this year. Undergrads, grad students and postdoctoral scholars, including a prestigious Fulbright Scholar. Many attended our ISI Welcome Picnic last Saturday, seeking friendship with American Christians.

"We are not good singers" the Chinese student/scholars protested, but we coaxed them to sing us a gentle and lovely rendition of their national anthem, followed by students from Thailand performing a Thai song and dance, with gracefully curving hand gestures.

Thanks to all who helped put on this important friendship event.

See pictures: www.isisantacruz.smugmug.com

Our ISI program needs the support of Santa Cruz churches to offer friendship to these bright academic stars. Thanks to the 3 local churches, High Street Community, Santa Cruz Bible and Felton Presbyterian who already support ISI. How about yours?

Don't miss this great mission opportunity God has brought knocking on our front door.

"I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great and you will be a blessing to the nations...***and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.***" Genesis 12:2-3

Peggy Pollard, staff, International Students, Inc. Santa Cruz
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From Mary Jolayemi of the Nigerian Youth Camp

"Our Lord has done it again! We cannot thank God enough. Everything went smoothly. The rains ceased in the day time so we can have our group Bible Studies on the lawn. Our power supply was 80% good. We did not have to turn on the generator for long AND our water supply, ordained by God Himself, was there for us. ...

August camps: Youth camp of 850 (August 13th-16th)
 250 Rhema teenagers (17th-19th)
 60 youth (20th-23rd)
 Association of Young ministers - 400 (27th-29th)

September: 200 people from one group (September 3rd-5th)
 100 from another church (4th-6th)
 150 people from Kingdom Project (9th-12th)
 400 Baptist Student Fellowship (17th-19th)
 several smaller conferences the end of Sept

The complete letter and others from our missionaries around the world may be found in a binder in the Fireside Room.

Operation Christmas Child Collection dates Nov 16th-23rd

Operation Christmas Child is sponsored by Samaritan's Purse, an organization of Christians interested in spreading Christ's love around the world. Every year at this time, people in churches fill shoe boxes with toys, clothes, craft items, etc. They are collected and distributed around the world. In just 16 years, Operation Christmas Child has reached nearly 70 million children in over 140 countries—that's about three-quarters of all the countries in the world. In addition to the items you put into the box, Operation Christmas Child includes a Bible Storybook in the child's language. There are also follow up Bible Studies provided to the local church. Last year High Street Community Church collected over 100 boxes. It is a simple, fun way to bless a child at Christmas time. There will be empty shoe boxes provided as well as a list of the kinds of items to be included. Hope you will join us in giving this year.

Winter Sleeping Bag Collection

In partnership with Compassion Santa Cruz We are collecting items in the church office for those in need in Santa Cruz county.

sleeping bags

men's white heavy cotton athletic socks new: or

other appropriate socks for winter time

large garbage bags or rain ponchos

tooth brushes

toothpaste

flats of bottled water

Single Services This Fall

- **November 22:** Thanksgiving Sunday
- **Nov 29:** 10am Advent service (no S.S.)
- **December 20:** Children's Christmas Program
- **December 27:** New Years' Service

Other important Dates:

- **Nov 1:** Missions Sunday
- **Nov 7:** Beach Bonfire
- **Nov 15:** Membership Class
- **Nov 22:** Church Life Meeting
- **Dec 13:** Monte Vista & HSCC Choirs

The Yellow Brick Road to Vermont

Hello to my family,

I wanted to share about my decision to leave my position at the church and how the next phase of my life is shaping up. My last day at work in the office will be Thursday, November 12th. I will be moving to Vermont short-term (not sure how long) to live with and help care for my grandmother.

I have been facing chronic fatigue for some time (although it has not been diagnosed as chronic fatigue syndrome, and the cause of the fatigue is unknown). Administrative work is not my passion, and lately I have seen that it is robbing me of even more energy. In addition, my grandmother's health has taken a downturn, and I would like to allow her to continue to stay in her home. I plan to apply to graduate school for next fall (in the field of psychology and spirituality). Currently my first choice is a school in Palo Alto, so I may be back in the area next September. If I do come back to the area, you can bet I will visit often!

As I have told the deacons, I am humbled and grateful for the gifts that God has given me in High Street: how I have grown in my relationship with God, how He has taught me to love, and how He has loved me through each of you. HSCC is truly home to me because it's the first community to which I feel like I belong. Please pray for and give grace to Penny as she transitions into the position. I can't tell you how much I will miss you all. Please keep in touch. You can email me at:

dorothystowe@gmail.com, or write to 847 Rocky Ridge Road, St. Johnsbury, VT, 05819.

Love, Dorothy

Meet with our new Associate Pastor

Shayne is eager to get to know the congregation, so if you'd like to meet with him for coffee or lunch please contact him at 831-426-0207, extension 103 or shayne@hscchurch.org.

Beach Bonfire

Everyone is welcome! Let's join together to enjoy the amazing place we live in.

Twin Lakes Beach

Saturday, November 7th

6-9p.m. We will make S'mores!

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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**Lead Pastor: Don Ferris; Associate Pastor: Todd Trowbridge; Associate Pastor: Shayne Wessel
Youth Pastor: Melinda Koenig; Administrative Assistant: Dorothy Stowe
Worship Leaders: Sheryl Ayers and Brett & Lisa Fowler**

Preparing for Advent

Advent is a significant time in the life of the Church. Advent means “coming” or “arrival” and for centuries it has been a time of preparation to receive Jesus, the Christ. It is a time to look back on the Promise fulfilled in Jesus’ first coming and entering our human story. It is also a time of reflection. A time to consider how Jesus wants to come to me now in my life. How will I open my heart and life to receive Him more fully? Are there areas of my life that I keep closed to Him? Are there areas I refuse to relinquish my control over? Pondering His coming to me in this way opens the door for further sanctification. Finally, Advent is a time to renew the hope of future grace – the confident hope in His second coming and the consummation of His kingdom and our eternal life with Him forever. This year Advent officially begins on Sunday, November 29th.

My prayer is that we might take full advantage of preparing ourselves to enter this coming Advent season. May our eyes and hearts be open in anticipation of how Jesus might come to our hearts. I would strongly encourage each of us to consider ways this might happen. Here are some suggestions:

1. Ask God for the grace to open your heart to His coming to you this season.
2. Find an advent reader to help you focus.
3. Get some Christmas music and ask the Holy Spirit to renew your heart with it.
4. Ask someone to connect each week to share the experiences of your journey and for encouragement.
5. Attend a special retreat, or sacred concert, or special church services to support you in your effort.
6. We will be having a combined Advent service on Sunday, November 29th. There will be no Sunday school and an intergenerational Advent activity after the service.

As Tiny Tim declared may “God bless us everyone” in this season for His glory, for our joy and for the sake of the world.