



The Connection

2010

High Street Community Church

The Abrahamic journey is not a solo event, it's a call to community

Abraham's story challenges and encourages my faith. God calls us to live more fully awake and alive to God and God's purposes for our life – for His glory and for the sake of the world. God calls each of us from those places in our hearts lured, in the words of C.S. Lewis, by “the evil enchantments of worldliness”. This worldliness even permeates our spiritual and religious life. The Lekh Lekha (go forth) call is a daily, moment by moment, invitation to leave our self-determined, self-dependent way of living and to “walk/live before God” or as the Apostle Paul describes it in Galatians 5:16,25 “walk/live by the Spirit”.

I am deeply encouraged because, like Abraham, I have a tendency to default to my old “self” patterns of self-reliance and self-preservation. Can you relate? Like Abraham and the 18th century Methodist pastor and hymn writer, Robert Robinson, I am “prone to wander...prone to leave the God I love”. O do I hate admitting that. I am encouraged in my faith because God is faithful to His promise to redeem us completely, and to conform me to the image of His Son, Jesus. God will not abandon me as He did not abandon Abraham. The poet Francis Thompson discovered, that the “Hound of Heaven” is relentless in His passionate pursuit of our hearts. That gives me great courage and strengthens my faith. God has given each of His children a new name, a new identity and a new home address. The old way of living is no longer our true home no matter how many times we try to return to that familiar place. We have been called out to “live a new life”(Rom 6:4).

I am also encouraged in my faith journey, because it is not a solo event. God promised to never leave us or forsake us and to be with us wherever we go (Joshua 1:9). If that were not enough, God also gives us one another to “spur/encourage each other on in love and in good deeds”(Heb 10:24). We need each other, companions in faith –this IS God's plan. Two years ago, God impressed upon us, as we listened together as a congregation, that God calls us to strengthen and deepen our relationships as an intergenerational family of faith. We were encouraged to not see events primarily as a means to accomplish a task –ie, work days – taking care of the facilities, Texas trip – serving those recovering from the devastation of Hurricane Katrina, worship team – leading worship, fellowship meal team – providing meals, but as a means to deepen our relationships.

Sharing meals together have a wonderful way of facilitating relationships. Some groups are catching on to this. For example, on Sunday once a month the Seekers class fellowships at Fresh Choice. Every other Sunday the Parents of Young Children share a potluck meal on the church campus. The College class has modeled this for years. Lenten meals are an important part of each service. Having a time of fellowship around a meal or dessert before a church life meeting is important. Also, some individuals and couples are stepping out and asking others to go to lunch after Sunday service. We are responding to what we've heard and walking in step with the Spirit. That's pretty exciting! Eh? (as our Canadian friends would say)

TWO NEW OPPORTUNITIES to deepen relationships:

1. Shayne and Jacque are putting together another opportunity to deepen our relationships. They are forming a dinner event to take place after Easter. It will be a wonderful opportunity to get to know other people in our congregation. I strongly encourage your participation – for your own blessing and for the blessing of this body.
2. To enhance fellowship a strong Fellowship Meal Team is necessary. A team of people willing to facilitate the sharing of meals at all church events. If you love food –making it, serving it, or just making sure it gets here – would you prayerfully consider being a part of the Fellowship Meal Team? Call Renee Takesue or Margaret Trowbridge if you are.

We are called to community. Let's continue to walk together in step with the Holy Spirit as we follow God as a congregation, willing to go wherever He leads – for His glory, for our joy and for the sake of the world.

You are loved,

Don

Reflections on Lent from Shayne Wessel-Associate Pastor

In the ninth chapter of Luke's Gospel, Jesus tells his disciples: "If anyone wants to come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me." Lent is the yearly season in which Christians prepare for Easter by reflecting on this call of Christ and examining our lives to consider how we might be more fully yielded to him. The roots of this season in the Christian faith extend back in continuity with our Hebrew faith-ancestors' celebration of the Exodus from Egyptian slavery celebrated at the same time of the year. Christ-followers have historically taken an extended period of about seven weeks to reflect deeply on our own Exodus from slavery to sin and death through our Lord's passion, as well as to examine our hearts and lives to recognize the ways we might continue to inhibit our ability to display God's glory as image-bearers of our Creator and Savior.

Unfortunately, for many of us the season has become layered with a sense of morbid introspection and a focus on feeling guilty, which has obscured its profound value. The sad result is that many western Christians now miss out on the opportunity to be meaningfully formed by this practice.

In his poem, "The Ballad of Reading Gaol", Oscar Wilde wrote: "Ah! Happy those whose hearts can break / And peace of pardon win! / How else may man make straight his plan / And cleanse his soul from Sin? / How else but through a broken heart / May Lord Christ enter in?" These verses capture the heart of Lenten hope that we seek in this season of the Christian year. By intentionally setting aside time and space to consider our own attachments to sin, we hope to make room for the kind of "Godly sorrow" that the apostle Paul said "brings repentance leading to salvation that leaves no regret" (2 Corinthians 7.10). In so doing, we posture our hearts to welcome the life and light that Christ has for us as well as for a broken world that desperately needs the hope that Christ has to offer through our presence and witness.

During this season of Lent, would you consider joining with us and with the Body of Christ across the earth to embrace the Way of the Cross so that his life may be revealed more fully in you? If so, and your schedule permits, see if you can join us for our weekly gatherings (Wednesday evenings from 6 to 8pm through March 24th and on Maundy Thursday April 1st and Good Friday April 2nd) to focus on the steps of Christ's path toward the Cross and to yield our lives more and more to his love for us and his service to increasingly become a blessing to the world.

Mt Hermon Spring Reflective Retreat—March 19-21, 2010 at the Conference Center

This year's focus "A Heart of Gratitude" is comprised of six short sessions of worship and input that frame a weekend of directed solitude and rest with materials prepared by Jayne Price.

International Students, Inc. Santa Cruz

Please pray for our new friends "Thanks for what you have done for me and my family!... and I enjoyed a lot from your lesson. That's great!" writes a visiting Professor's wife, from China, *helped by ISI with airport pickup, furniture, friendship activities visiting High Street Community church, Bible study and enjoying our ISI snowplay weekend staying at host family homes.*

Snowplay Weekend Feb 26-29—"Now I cannot tell the difference between heaven and earth" said one student from India after our sledding Saturday. He, and about 10 of the 65 attending had never been in snow before. After a wet start, it poured rain, then snowed most of our sledding trip. Much spiritual work happens during the annual weekend, especially lots of sharing with the host families, and visiting church service Sunday morning. (see story www.isiwebnet.net/sites/PeggyPollard/snowstory)

Bible Study, Waltz lesson: 16 have attended so far. **Weekly Ladies Tea meets Tuesdays**

Thanks for God providing my weekly prayer partner, uplifting with me all aspects of ISI Santa Cruz ministry to the throne of Grace.

New Volunteer Orientation meeting March 7, 1-2:15 @Santa Cruz Bible Church

"the body of Christ... grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work" Ephesians 4:16

Peggy Pollard, staff, International Students, Inc. Santa Cruz www.isiwebnet.net/sites/PeggyPollard

Community Dinners starting in April!

Thanks to the many of you who responded to our call for hosts in anticipation of our Community Dinners. These gatherings will take place sometime during the week of April 11th through 17th at a time chosen by the hosts. There will be opportunities for you to sign up for a dinner at the location of your choice during the Sunday services beginning March 28th through April 11th.

Men's and Women's Knitting & Crafting Group

Men's and Women's Knitting & Crafting Group will be meeting weekly now on Saturday afternoons from 1 to 3pm in the Fireside Room. All ages are welcome. No experience necessary.

Important Dates for Lenten and Easter Services

Our observance of Lent will continue with a shared meal at 6pm and a service from 6:45 to 8pm on March 10, 17 and 24.

April 1-**Maundy Thursday** Service
Shared meal at 6:00pm, service at 6:45pm to 8:00pm

April 2-**Good Friday** Service
No meal, service begins at 6:45pm.

April 3 –Young Families Seder Meal

April 4—**Easter**—NO Sunday School
Two services—8:45am and 11am
Refreshments served at 10am between services

Combined Services

March 21—Sunday School at 10am,
Combined Service at 11am

March 28—Sunday School at 10am
Combined Service at 11am—Texas Commissioning

April 25—NO Sunday School,
Combined Service at 10am
Texas Report—church picnic to follow

May 23—Sunday School at 10:00am
Graduation Sunday-Combined Service at 11am

June 13—VBA Sunday, kids move up,
First Sunday on Summer Service Schedule
Combined Service at 9:30am
Classes and special activities to follow.

Seekers on High

Seeking spiritual growth, **Equipping** and **Encouraging** one another, **Knowing God**, **Enjoying** fellowship, **Reflecting Christ**, **Supporting** the church body.

This month in class: Through prayer God encourages and comforts us, prompts and admonishes us, and allows us to cry out to Him from our hearts. Seekers invites you to join us as we continue to learn about and discuss different attributes and outcomes of prayer, how we can integrate these into our lives, and become more closely attuned to the Holy Spirit and God's will for us.

Seekers Class meets at 10AM, lower level ACE building. All welcome!

THANKS for our contribution to the *HAITI PROJECT* came from Don Skow of Hollister Christian Fellowship. He reported that 100% of our donation will go directly towards helping a grass roots movement to rescue at-risk children who are encountering extreme poverty in Haiti.

Missionary Update

Bryan and Joan Harmelink have been missionaries with Wycliffe since 1982. Bryan and Joan (nee Johnson) were married in our church in 1980. The Harmelinks lived in Chile for 14 years and worked on the New Testament translation into the Mapuche language, which was published in 1997.

The Harmelinks now live in Philadelphia where Bryan works as a translation consultant, traveling all over the world, helping those who are translating. Recently Bryan has participated in Scriptural Use and Translation with East Africans, and meetings and conferences in Dallas and New Orleans, Thailand, Italy, and England. At several of these meetings, he has been the only American, "truly a glimpse of what God is doing in his global church."

Next year he will be teaching at Gordon-Conwell Seminary in the Doctor of Ministry for Bible Translation program.

Bryan and Julie request prayer for them we seek to glorify the Lord in our lives and as they try to give counsel to their children: for Julie as she juggles her responsibilities as a mom and working, for Jill and Billy as they return to teaching in South Carolina, and for Ty as he continues to consider options for work and where to find his place in life.

March 2010

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High Street Community Church 850 High Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

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

From Todd Trowbridge, Associate Pastor

Church Picnic on April 25th!

Yes you read that right. We are having a Church Picnic on April 25th! We are very excited about the opportunity we will have to gather together for food and fellowship.

April 25th will be a Combined Service for the Texas Team Report, and then we will all head out To DeLaveaga Park. Be sure to mark this event on your calendar! More details will come out as it gets closer.

Children's Play Structure update.

We have decided that it is more cost effective to have Roy Colby build our new slide and platform. The cost will be around \$780, which is a considerable savings for us. We are very grateful to Roy for his willingness to head up this project.

Would you consider a one time gift to help us reach the goal of \$780 to cover the cost of the materials? You can make the check out to HSCC, and in the memo area put "SLIDE". Thank you in advance for your consideration of helping us with this cost!

Texas Team 2010 (April 2nd – April 9th)

I would like to introduce you to our 2010 Texas Hurricane Relief Team. I would also like to personally invite you to attend our Texas Fundraising dinner on March 21st. We work very hard to put on a quality event, and would like to have the chance to serve you that evening.

2010 Team

Zach Souza	Sandra Ramirez	Dawn Hattrup
Cole Collins	Makenzie Sisk	Whitney Hattrup
Matt Armstrong	Analisa Lopez	Courtney Hattrup
Conor Armor	Kelsey Rollo	Melinda Koenig
John Wylie	Cassidy Burr	Margaret Trowbridge
Stephen Burchell	Bianca Grossi	Debbie Bergen
Mike Hattrup	Ali Ayers	Abbi Bergen
Todd Trowbridge	Kayla Exley	
Pherf Koenig	Julie Young	
Ty Garvey (worship Leader)	Lorna Gilmore	
Wolf Samuelson (speaker)	Heather Brown	

We have 29 total on our team this year, including our speaker and worship leader. Will you commit to pray with us for our trip? Will you pray that the funds needed will come in through our fundraising letters, and the dinner? Would you be willing to help us reach our goal of \$25,000 with a one time gift?