

Congregational Church of the Valley

your community Congregational Church



*"And above all these put on love,
which binds everything together*

NEWSLETTER

August, 2003

in perfect harmony."

Colossians 3:14

Our Covenant

We covenant with the Lord and one with another and do acknowledge our faith in Christ Jesus as Lord and Savior and take for our rule of life His own words: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind and with all thy strength; and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."



From the Pastor's Desk

THE TIME HAS COME!

Children are back in school -- or will be soon! It's a "new beginning" for many of them ... in many ways, it is so for all of us ... here, at the Congregational Church of the Valley we have talked several times of "new beginnings" ... and this time it's for Real!

In this Newsletter you have found an "I WISH" note ... it's your church ... this is "our" chance to make it what "you" want it to be and a witness to the Love, Power and Presence of God! PLEASE take them seriously for as you return them at the door, through the mail or in the offering plate ... we will - take them seriously.

Remember the words of Will Rogers when he said, "Even if you are on the right track, you will get run over if you just sit there." We realize that a "mega" church has just been built in our neighborhood and another will soon break ground ... and they will do well (and we praise God for it). But, some folk prefer a smaller church in which we share a closer fellowship. Do you know, that, if everyone who calls this their church were present on a given Sunday, it would take two services to hold them? That is, for each to have a place to sit?

Now then, let's be careful so that we not suffer from "analysis paralysis" ... you know, we can go on and on thinking and talking ... so much so that we never act. And without realizing it we can become one of God's "frozen chosen." It is easier to act your way into a new way of thinking than to think your way into a new way of acting.

In rock climbing there is a technical term called a "commitment move." Often it's the crux move of the climb. It isn't as simple as I make it sound here -- but it is simple in fact! And, on a commitment move, you've either got to go for it or come off the climb!

JESUS talked in those terms over and over again. "He that is not with me is against me." (Matt. 12:30) And remember what Joshua said? "Choose you this day whom you will serve ... but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

We're sort of on a Summit Expedition here at the Congregational Church of the Valley. In that, we realize, of course, that risk is at the very core of the Christian life. But we aren't called to be safe from all of life's troubles -- but, simply secure in the knowledge that you're "roped to" the living Christ! His rope is trustworthy and time-tested! The only thing about life that is permanent is change. If we stay on the ledge, forever expecting the next handhold to be easy and guaranteed, we'll never go anywhere. Sometimes what is waiting is difficult; sometimes it's surprising;

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often it's unpredictable.

I believe that if God speaks to us anywhere, He speaks to us in our daily lives, in ordinary settings. We can't wait for lightning to strike or for the wind to die down before we step out ...as individuals and as a church... to make ourselves all that we can be. The necessary move is called a step, or leap, of faith for a very good reason.

As we step out, God reveals Himself more with every step along the way ... because ... it is much easier to steer a moving vehicle than one that is "parked".

A fellow loaned another fellow a book. When the book was returned, the man noticed that on many of the pages there appeared three letters, "YBH," written in pencil in the margin. He asked the meaning of the letters.

"Oh, I thought the book was terrific." said the friend, "in fact, it could have been life-changing." The YBH in the margin stood for "Yes, But How?"

Our TEXT BOOK can also be life-changing! Throughout this Newsletter you may detect ways in which we intend to do just that!! They are practical ... the fall season is the right time to set them in motion. We must start NOW --- literally. A wise man once said, "If you don't get started in the next day or two ... you ain't gonna get started at all."

STOP WORRYING AND START BELIEVING

YOU CAN'T WORRY AND PRAISE GOD AT THE SAME TIME!

Here are a coupla' practical words from a Book I've been reading lately. And, by the way, it has a dynamite ending!!!

- "And my God will supply every need of yours according to His riches..."
Philippians 4:19

- "Seek first, the Kingdom of God and ... all things needful will be added unto you." (Matthew 6:33)

- "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he" (Proverbs 23:7)

- "If God be for us, who can be against us...?" (Romans 8:32) Want to know the power of God? Read that whole chapter!

- "Whatever you ask in prayer, BELIEVE that you receive it, and you will."
(Mark 11:24)

WHAT A BOOK!

-LJS