

July-August  
2010

*the Clarion!*  
First Congregational UCC  
Las Vegas, Nevada



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### From the Pastor

I bet somewhere along the line nearly every minister in America is going to be using this story as a sermon illustration...or in some forum...so why should I be any different?

By now, even if you have only a passing interest in baseball, you've probably heard the basic outline of the story. Detroit Tigers pitcher Armando Galarraga was pitching a perfect game on June 2 (it would have been only the 21<sup>st</sup> in all of baseball history... although the third in less than a month this year). The 27<sup>th</sup> batter hit a ground ball to the first baseman who tossed it to Galarraga covering first...but the umpire, Jim Joyce, called the runner "safe", thereby ruining Galarraga's perfect game and no-hitter. Replays showed that the runner was clearly out. Joyce, after seeing the replays admitted he was wrong (something umpires almost never do). Galarraga simply smiled, went back to the mound, and got the last out of the ballgame.



The next day before the game the Detroit manager asked Armando Galarraga to take out the lineup card to the home plate umpire...who was Jim Joyce. They embraced; Joyce wept; the nation saw that perfection in baseball as in life means something more than 27 up, 27 down.

What a great gathering of theological themes are here! – human error, repentance, forgiveness, community, love – and perfectionism (we'll get to that a little later).

Jim Joyce has been a major league umpire for 22 years, making this same call thousands of times. That he would admit to his historic mistake and seek for Galarraga's forgiveness speaks volumes about who he is as a man. One of the little known stories about this episode (it appears in a *Sports Illustrated* article) is that after the game Joyce went to see his elderly mother, who knows little about baseball and had to be told what a perfect game meant, in order to confess what had happened and to seek her solace – repentance begins within the context of family.

Another aspect of the story that needs to be emphasized is that Galarraga didn't rant and

rave about his misfortune; he smiled and went back about his business – which was to get the last out of the game. “Keeping on keeping on” is a significant Christian response to a failure of seeming perfection.

Columnist Mike Littwin describes the whole encounter this way: “Baseball is the game that embraces the so-called human element, meaning failure..... Baseball now has Jim Joyce admitting he didn’t just blow ‘a’ call but a ‘history’ call. He found Galarraga to apologize, and in maybe a large miracle, Galarraga not only accepted the apology but embraced it. ‘Nobody’s perfect,’ Galarraga kept saying, except that was the perfect thing to say.”

Christians know, however, that when it comes to forgiveness this really wasn’t that much of “a large miracle”. Perfection can be saved for another day; repentance and forgiveness are what Christians live with all the time.

So, here is a story with something significant for all of us. At the end of that *Sports Illustrated* article Jim Joyce reflects on the role of his father, who died a year ago, in all of this: “‘The way this turned out,’ he said, ‘I’m not so sure he didn’t have an active part in this. I’m not a metaphysical guy. But this has turned out this way for a reason..... Where does it come from? I’m just going to say my dad is still helping me.’”

That’s a sentiment that many of us can echo.

I’ve run out of room, but I still want to say something about the idea of “perfectionism” – which is a theological concept that is associated with John Wesley. Look for that in the September *Clarion*.

Dave

P.S. Have a great summer, and Ann and I will look forward to seeing you in the fall.



**Joined in Prayer**

Rev. John Kohl is at home after four difficult months of hospitalization following bypass surgery.

During Pastor Dave Pomeroy's scheduled absence in July we welcome to our pulpit good friends Jerry Blankinship, Susan Sledge, and Judith Vicari..

Pulpit: August

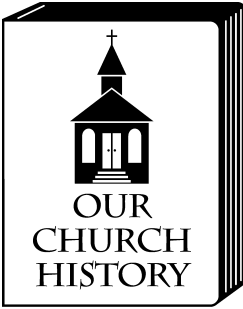
1 - Kay Obenour

8 - Cathy Grimes

15 - Thomas Perl

22 - Leonard Goodall

29 - Ailao Tofaeono.



## God's Grass

We have had visiting young people (relatives and friends) over the years but two of the most memorable are Marco and Yati, exchange teens at Rancho High School.

Ardie and Zobe (mother and nurse Ardell and father and air traffic controller Paul Zobrist and their three children Randy, Paula (Kennedy), and Carla (Orozco) had FIVE exchange students at different times.

Marco Fernandez arrived in the summer of 1971 from Guatemala. A few days later, Zobe told Marco it was time to mow the church yard. Marco said that he was Catholic. Zobe said that God didn't care what your religion was, His grass needed mowing!

Marco was active in the youth group, luau, attic sale, bazaar, and other church activities. He spoke at the Priscilla meetings. Our church sent leftover Attic Sale clothing to Guatemala after a devastating earthquake. Because of our church's friendship with Marco, his family sent us the beautiful red and black Guatemalan wallhanging that has been in the Narthex.

Marco visited a few years later during luau time and helped out. He and his family immigrated to Canada. His father died a few years later but Marco's mother and family live in Montreal and Marco lives in Ottawa.

Yati Buyong came in late Summer of 1974 from Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, a tourist city like Las Vegas. Yati was active in the youth group, luau, and other church activities even though she was Muslim. She especially enjoyed celebrating Christmas. Ardie said that she remembers Yati crying a lot when she prayed to the East. When the dog would lick Yati, Yati would run outside and wash her hands in the dirt. Ardie got some "dirt" for inside the house that Yati could use. Yati married and had two children. She died at 34 of breast cancer.

Ardie and Zobe got to visit both Yati in Malaysia and Marco in Canada. They visited Marco in 2000 before Zobe died.

Next time: Mission and Action and the 50-Plus Club.

Grace Schmiedel, Historian

As we head into summer months there is always a concern that when people are away their pledges are not kept up as steadily as when they are here. Right now we are in a good cash flow situation.....but that often slips during July and August and September. The Church Council would like to lovingly remind you to keep your pledges current, even if you are away for a period of time. Thank you for helping us to remain solvent.



Campership News: Please keep in touch with our campers by sending them notes, postcards, and letters. They appreciate correspondence while away from home. Donny Grandjean, Amanda and Samantha Patterson, and Madelaine (Maddy) Farago will be there from July 11th - 16th (week # 2). Harry Frink, Jr., Carrie, Casey, and Caitlin Orozco will be there from Aug. 1st - 6th (week # 5).

Address: Pilgrim Pines Camp  
(Name of camper and week #)  
39570 Glen Road  
Yucaipa, CA. 92399

A campership luncheon is scheduled for Sunday, Sept. 12th, chaired by Carolyn Patterson to start funds for next summer. Please join us and support this worthwhile cause.

Jeanette Matsuura, Chair

### **U.C.C. Parish**

The U.C.C. Parish is having a Movie Night on July 17th, at 7:00 pm. It will be held at our Church in Gudmundsson Hall. The movie of choice will be "RV" starring Robin Williams. There is NO COST to attend and the U.C.C. Parish will be providing beverages and popcorn.

A forum was held after Coffee Hour on June 6 to discuss significant items for our delegates to the Annual Gathering in Santa Ana, CA. While the conference posted two issues for formal consideration, the more significant issue of immigration was missing. We devoted about an hour to this issue.

Questions :

- Is Immigration worthwhile?
- Have we a historical bias about immigration that limits our nations future?
- Are our current laws and quotas adequate for our community?
- Where do our drug smuggling problems fit in?
- How well do we act according to our beliefs?
- Do we lead the world towards love or hate?
- What can we, at 1200 N Eastern, do to help our community and/or nation?

The first question began with a very heated dissertation condemning all the illegal activities of immigrants. The dissertation also attacked the question as being improperly framed. When the question itself was answered, all present agreed that immigration was indeed a fundamental beneficial part of our nation's history.

We had no trouble enumerating many

historical biases against immigrants. Indeed, many of our individual ancestors faced such biases.

When talking about laws and quotas, we again began with many criticisms of current immigrants. However, we ended with calm and unanimous agreement that our current laws and quotas do not work. Not only do they fail to keep illegal immigrants out, they do not do an adequate job of processing the legal immigrants. An analogy was drawn to the enforcement of traffic laws in LA. While the speed limit is clearly stated at 65 mph, highway officers will direct drivers going 65 in the diamond lane to speed up.

Drug trafficking was regarded as the major cause of violence on our borders. Our first critic wanted to rework all our current drug laws. A general timidity of this approach was expressed by many others.

The next two questions were briefly considered, but a significant time was spent discussing our role at 1200 North Eastern. We concluded that providing language training for immigrants was very worthwhile. Many immigrants come here with very poor education and little trust of government. Our church has been instrumental in gaining the trust of many. We can use that trust to help immigrants learn to understand English. Money may be available from the Bread Run to buy computer software. The trustees will need to support the use of our facilities in such training.

Jim Beggs, Chair

## **Food Pantry**

The good news is that starting in August 2004 the Food Pantry has been open one day a month and over 2700 families have received emergency food supplies.

The not so good news is that hard times have set in. Large food donors are no longer able to help to the same extent that they have in the past. The price of food at the Three Square Food Bank has risen on selected items from nine cents a pound to as much as fifty to seventy cents a pound. The cost of food now is a bare bones \$125.00 and \$150.00 a month. The fall drop off in the number of people coming to get food has helped us keep costs down. Our highest month was November 2008 when we had 162 people pick up food. The lowest month was April 2010 when 24 people picked up food. As of July first there is enough money to support the Pantry for the months of July, August and September.

According to Three Square, an Agency Partner (that's us) cannot accept money for the food that is distributed. If you do, its Adios Amigo, you can no longer buy from Three Square.

Times are tough now and the light at the end of the tunnel is very dim. But with your help and prayers as the old saying goes "with the good Lord willing and the creek don't rise" we'll get thru these hard times.

In the meantime cash or cans or other non perishable food, jars of peanut butter or boxes of cereal, etc would be welcome.

## July-August Weekly Schedule

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
9:00 AM FCC Adult Education, 10:30 AM FCC Services 10:50 AM FCC Youth Education 11:30 AM FCC Coffee Hour 12:30 PM Samoan 3:00 PM Iglesia 7:00 PM Romanian	9:00 AM - 12:00 PM FCC Office 6:00 PM Samoan (sanc) 6:30 PM Children & Youth Worship	9:00 AM – 11:00 AM Thrift Shop 9:30 AM Bread 6:30 PM Amer. Samoan (Hall) 6:30 PM Iglesia	9:00 AM - 12:00 PM FCC Office 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM Iglesia	9:00 AM – 11:00 AM Thrift Shop 9:30 AM Bread 7:00 PM FCC Choir 8:00 PM Romanian (Hall)	9:00 AM - 12:00 PM FCC Office 7:00 PM- 9:00 PM Iglesia	10:00 AM Amer. Samoan (hall) 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM CEN (hall) 2:00 PM FCC Cleaning

## July-August Special Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Jun 27	Jun 28	Jun 29	Jun 30	Jul 1	Jul 2	Jul 3
Jul 4	Jul 5	Jul 6	Jul 7	Jul 8	Jul 9	Jul 10
<b>11:30 AM Congregators</b>					<b>7:00 PM Pinochle</b>	
Jul 11	Jul 12	Jul 13	Jul 14	Jul 15	Jul 16	Jul 17
					10:00 AM Food Pantry	<b>7:00 PM Movie Night</b>
Jul 18	Jul 19	Jul 20	Jul 21	Jul 22	Jul 23	Jul 24
Jul 25	Jul 26	Jul 27	Jul 28	Jul 29	Jul 30	Jul 31
Aug 1	Aug 2	Aug 3	Aug 4	Aug 5	Aug 6	Aug 7
<b>11:30 AM Congregators</b>					<b>7:00 PM Pinochle</b>	
Aug 8	Aug 9	Aug 10	Aug 11	Aug 12	Aug 13	Aug 14
Aug 15	Aug 16	Aug 17	Aug 18	Aug 19	Aug 20	Aug 21
					10:00 AM Food Pantry	
Aug 22	Aug 23	Aug 24	Aug 25	Aug 26	Aug 27	Aug 28
Aug 29	Aug 30	Aug 31	Sep 1	Sep 2	Sep 3	Sep 4
	<b>Clark Co School</b>				<b>7:00 PM Pinochle</b>	
Sep 5	Sep 6	Sep 7	Sep 8	Sep 9	Sep 10	Sep 11
Sep 12	Sep 13	Sep 14	Sep 15	Sep 16	Sep 17	Sep 18
<b>11:30 AM Congregators</b>					10:00 AM Food Pantry	



**Happy Birthday!**

July 12 Kelsie Matsuura  
 July 13 Kazuo Matsuura  
 August 1 Carla Ann Orozco  
 August 1 Ray Sitkiewicz  
 August 8 Harry Frink  
 August 17 Sam Donovan  
 August 18 Jason Stubrich  
 August 18 Alice Berly  
 August 21 Al Horkay  
 August 24 Ferina Moenoa  
 August 29 Judy Howarth

**July-August Liturgists**

Jul 4 Ray Sitkiewicz  
 Jul 11 Jean Sitkiewicz  
 Jul 18 Kay Obenour  
 Jul 25 Gina Eaton  
 Aug 1 Madelaine Farrago  
 Aug 8 Jason Stubrich  
 Aug 15 Jeff Rice  
 Aug 22 Marjorie Branch  
 Aug 29 Suzanne Rayno

**Tuesday 9:00am Breakfasts**

Jul 6 Denny's on Charleston at CSN  
 Jul 13 Skyline on Boulder at Sunset  
 Jul 20 Arizona Charlie's Decatur  
 Jul 27 Arizona Charlie's Boulder Hghwy  
 Aug 3 Denny's on Charleston at CSN  
 Aug 10 Skyline on Boulder at Sunset  
 Aug 17 Arizona Charlie's Decatur  
 Aug 24 Arizona Charlie's Boulder Hghwy  
 Aug 31 Village Pub on Regatta



**Finances**

**May**

**2010**

Contributions:	\$5,225.11	\$24,712.66
Building Usage:	\$2,300.00	\$15,647.50
Other:	\$457.53	\$518.52
<b>Total Income:</b>	<b>\$7,982.64</b>	<b>\$40,878.68</b>
Ministry:	\$24.28	\$2,163.66
Ops & Admin:	\$374.65	\$2,018.38
Utilities	\$686.54	\$4,681.26
Building & Grounds	\$62.13	\$2,990.62
Salaries:	\$5,660.65	\$28,703.44
<b>Total Expense:</b>	<b>\$68,078.25</b>	<b>\$40,557.36</b>
<b>Net:</b>	<b>\$1,174.39</b>	<b>\$321.32</b>



July 27 Ray & Jean Sitkiewicz  
 August 4 Marvin & Suzanne Rayno  
 August 10 Kevin & Jayne Warner  
 August 20 Kazuo & Jeanette Matsuura  
 August 21 Don & Grace Schmiedel

**Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Friday from 9am to Noon**

**Also --- Contact us by email or phone**

Dave Pomeroy	Pastor	davepomeroy@ucclasvegas.org	360-5355
Don Schmiedel	Moderator	moderator@ucclasvegas.org	734-1887
Christina Grant	Office Administrator	church@ucclasvegas.org	642-2220
Nelson Grandjean	Tech editor	clarion@ucclasvegas.org	624-4603



Campbell

"What do you want? Quaker or interdenominational?"

**Feedback:** Names, Birthdays, and Comments are welcome. Please clip and send.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  New

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Birthday, Anniversary: \_\_\_\_\_

*First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ*  
1200 North Eastern Avenue Las Vegas, Nevada 89101

Rev Dave Pomeroy, Minister  
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E-mail: church@ucclasvegas.org Web: www.uccclasvegas.org

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**July-August 2010 Issue**  
**Return Service Requested.**

**NON-PROFIT ORG.  
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*Adult Education ~ ~ ~ ~ 9:00 AM  
Sunday Service ~ ~ ~ ~ 10:30 AM  
Youth, Nursery ~ ~ ~ ~ 10:50 AM  
Coffee & Fellowship ~ 11:30 AM*

Men's & Women's Breakfast  
9:00 am every Tuesday



*August*

**Congregators ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ July 4**  
**Pinochle ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ July 9**  
**Food Pantry ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ July 16**  
**Congregators ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ August 1**  
**Pinochle ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ August 6**  
**Food Pantry ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ August 20**  
**School Begins ~ ~ ~ ~ August 30**  
**Pinochle ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ September 3**  
**Congregators ~ ~ ~ September 12**  
**Food Pantry ~ ~ ~ September 17**

Special dates

• Independence Day

July 4