

December  
2010

The **Clarion!**  
First Congregational Church UCC



**From the Pastor**

Now we begin a time of awaiting and preparation. That's what Advent is essentially – a time of preparation. The word “Advent” itself simply means *coming*. We await the Christ event on that glorious morn – and it is so momentous an event that we need four weeks to get ready!

A tradition at this church, as it is at so many others, is the *hanging of the greens*, when the church is decorated with evergreen wreaths, boughs, or trees that help to symbolize the new and everlasting life brought through Jesus Christ. Take some time when you are in church for the next four weeks to breathe in the freshness of the greens, which can then help you to feel the freshness that Christ brings to your own life. I am especially grateful to those who worked hard to decorate the church so all of us can have this experience – Russ Smethers and Nelson Grandjean and the others who worked with them.

I am also extremely grateful to Judith Vicari who will be leading us through our Advent and Christmas season with worship services that will indeed prepare us for the coming of our Lord.

Take some time, as well, this season to do some reflecting on your own – to do your own individual preparation. Here’s an Advent litany that you might pull out from time-to-time and use it for your reflection:

**Advent calls us to prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ.**

**All around us people prepare for parties, dinners and presents.**

**These events could distract us from the real reason for our anticipation.**

**On the other hand, they also could prepare us;**

**They could be the voice crying in a wilderness of materialism:**

**“Prepare the way for the coming of what is really important.”**

**Rather than get lost in the wilderness of distractions,**

**We will let the music and the lights make us sensitive**

**To the voice that is even now calling our name.**

**We will listen for the Word in the words and even in the noise.**

**In this season of hustle and bustle**

**We are tempted to get frantic and join the panic**

**To shop our way into the holiday spirit.**

**In this moment, we resist that temptation**

**And choose instead to be at peace**

**With who we are and where we are on this path.**

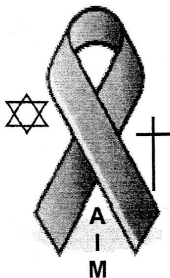
**We will let this time prepare us,**

**And we will hear God’s call**

**To be those who prepare the world.**

As I’ve said the last four years, I’m sorry that Ann and I won’t be with you to experience the Advent build-up and the Christmas commemoration, but I know that in a deep sense we are in fact going through it together. No matter how old each one of us is, preparing for the coming of the Christ and re-living the story of his birth all over again cannot help but renew in us the reality that God is in charge and that Jesus’ entrance into the world makes all the difference for a struggling humanity.

Dave



# WORLD AIDS DAY

## CANDLELIGHT VIGIL

Sponsored by AIDS Interfaith Ministries

WEDNESDAY  
DECEMBER 1ST AT 7 PM

### Congregation Ner Tamid

55 North Valle Verde Drive

Henderson, NV

*Valle Verde at the 215 Beltway, NW Corner*

#### **SPECIAL KEYNOTE SPEAKER:**

**Aids Activist Reverend Michael Piazza**

Honor and remember those who have departed & celebrate those living productive lives with the HIV virus

CHOIRS • SPEAKERS • SOLOISTS • UNLV THEATER

For more information, contact Pat Manning (702) 382-6963

## **SPIRITUAL AND PARISH LIFE**

We welcomed Judith Vicari as a new member of the Board.

The Board has proposed that we begin using name tags for ourselves and for visitors. We will launch their use on Sunday, January 9th. Tom Berly will take the lead on ushering and will set up a station across from the hymnal distribution site starting on that date to facilitate handing out name tags and making sure they are given to visitors.

Deborah Gaeding agreed to resume making lay member contacts of visitors and new people in the church. She suggested that a script be devised to aid lay people in making these calls.

The Rev. Judith Vicari will take responsibility for the Christmas Eve service. She is working hard to choose scripture and hymns that will make the service beautiful and spiritually inspiring. The service will take place at 5:00pm so that families can conduct their own traditional activities at home. The service will be sponsored by the UCC Parish. Judith will also conduct services at FCC/UCC during Advent.

Dave Pomeroy spoke about the Eastern Association meeting: Four people from our congregation attended; Jill Snodgrass read an ordination paper – she is a pastoral counselor, and the Board expressed interest in bringing her to our church to discuss the importance of pastoral counseling. A proposed Bylaws change for the Association would establish a “Section N” (replacing Section V) of the Church and Ministry Committee that would function for all of southern Nevada. This would take place at the April Association meeting.

Betty Clark would like to facilitate the ordering of live poinsettias to place on the Christmas Eve altar to honor a loved one. It is hoped that congregation members might like to take advantage of this opportunity. If you would like to donate a poinsettia, please contact Betty at [CNTRL@aol.com](mailto:CNTRL@aol.com).

Betty Clark, Secretary

### **Christmas Eve at First Congregational U.C.C.**

On December 24th at 5:00 PM our Sanctuary will be the place to be for a beautiful and inspiring service of candlelight, carols, The Christmas Story told in Scripture, and special music. Our congregation will be joined by others church from the UCC Parish for a one hour service which will begin your Christmas celebration of the birth of our Savior in just the right way. Please plan to be there.

Judith Vicari

## U.C.C. PARISH

The UCC Parish has a lot in the planning stages. We will be hosting a Christmas Eve Service here at 1st Congregational on Dec. 24th at 5pm. Next Spring the Parish will be having a Luau fundraiser (place & time to be determined) to help cover the costs with the BIG event next July. This event is a trip to Nashville, TN. to assist with flood relief efforts. As you can see, the Parish is growing.

Russ Smethers

### **Southern California, Nevada Conference Board of Directors Approves U.C.C Parish Pilot Program**

In keeping with our concept of "building the plane while flying it," our Board of Directors has unanimously approved the position of "Coordinator of Parish Activities." This is pilot program led by Russ Smethers, a member of First Congregational Church in Las Vegas. The program is under the supervision of Rev. Dave Pomeroy, pastor at First Congregational Church. The goal of this program is "bring about closer communication and cooperation between UCC congregations located in a specific geographical area in order to enhance their cooperative mission and the visibility of the UCC within that area." Russ will act as a focal point for the churches to address new ideas and help resolve problems that arise in planning events and/or communicating with fellow UCC Churches. This is a volunteer position at this time. Our goal is to test the concept in the Las Vegas area before launching it throughout our Conference. We thank Russ and Dave for their dedication and hard work!

Rev. Felix C. Villanueva Conference Minister,  
United Church of Christ, Southern California, Nevada Conference



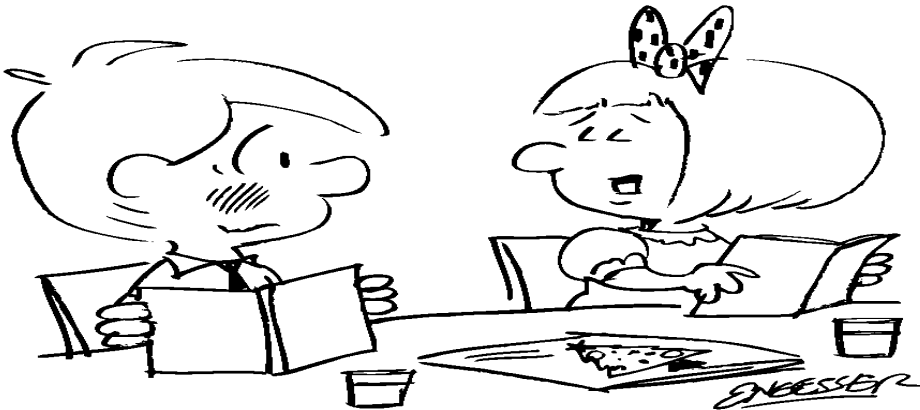
I Wish to thank Jim and Ann Beggs for all the work and effort that they have done on The Clarion. They had all the tools, clipart, resources and procedures all ready assembled so that I was able to just step right in and easily take over.

The next year there will be a few additions like a Sunday School Column and more information about what is happening in the Southern California, Nevada Conference. I would also like to receive feedback and more input from the members of the congregation so feel free to contact me with ideas, etc.

# From the Editor

Nelson Grandjean

# SUNDAY SCHOOL



“Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse’ is NOT a Bible verse!”

## December Weekly Schedule

| <b>Sunday</b>   | <b>Monday</b>   | <b>Tuesday</b>                                | <b>Wednesday</b>                                 | <b>Thursday</b>  | <b>Friday</b>  | <b>Saturday</b>  |
|---|---|---|--|--|--|--|
| 9:00AM FCC Adult Ed<br>10:30AM FCC Services<br>10:50AM FCC Youth Ed<br>11:30AM FCC Coffee Hour<br>12:30PM Samoan<br>3:00PM Iglesia<br>7:00PM Romanian | 9:00-12:00PM<br>FCC Office<br><br>6:00PM Samoan<br>(sanc)<br>6:30PM Children<br>& Youth Worship | 6:30PM Samoan<br>(Hall)<br><br>6:30PM Iglesia | 9:00-12:00PM<br>FCC Office<br><br>7:00PM Iglesia | 9:00-11:00AM<br>Thrift Shop<br>10:00AM Bread<br><br>7:00PM FCC<br>Choir<br><br>8:00PM<br>Romanian (Hall) | 9:00-12:00PM<br>FCC Office<br><br>7:00PM CCCAS<br>(Hall)<br><br>7:00PM Iglesia | 10:00AM<br>Samoan (hall)<br><br>2:00-4PM FCC<br>Cleaning |

## December Special Events

| <b>Sunday</b>   | <b>Monday</b> | <b>Tuesday</b>                   | <b>Wednesday</b> | <b>Thursday</b> | <b>Friday</b>            | <b>Saturday</b>         |
|---|---------------|----------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| Nov 28<br>1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent                      | Nov 29        | Nov 30                           | Dec 1            | Dec 2           | Dec 3<br>7:00PM Pinochle | Dec 4                   |
| Dec 5<br>Congregators<br>2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent       | Dec 6         | Dec 7                            | Dec 8            | Dec 9           | Dec 10                   | Dec 11                  |
| Dec 12<br>Leadership Sunday<br>3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent | Dec 13        | Dec 14                           | Dec 15           | Dec 16          | Dec 17<br>Food Pantry    | Dec 18                  |
| Dec 19<br>4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent                      | Dec 20        | Dec 21<br>First Day of<br>Winter | Dec 22           | Dec 23          | Dec 24<br>Christmas Eve  | Dec 25<br>Christmas Day |
| Dec 26  | Dec 27        | Dec 28                           | Dec 29           | Dec 30          | Dec 31<br>New Years Eve  | Jan 1<br>New Years Day  |

## Celebrating a



December 1 Gerri Bergston  
 December 10 LaRue Knauss  
 December 10 Amanda Paterson  
 December 14 Grace Moenoa  
 December 15 Kay Stevens  
 December 17 Priscilla Arola  
 December 17 Grace Schmiedel  
 December 19 Pamela Sage  
 December 21 Maddy Farago  
 December 22 Samantha Paterson  
 December 23 Betsy Spiller-Caldare  
 December 29 Ken Hammond

## December Liturgists

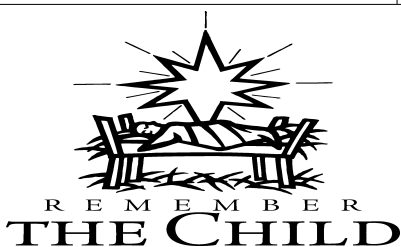
Dec 5<sup>th</sup> Ray Sitkiewicz  
 Dec 12<sup>th</sup> Jean Sitkiewicz  
 Dec 19<sup>th</sup> Al Horkay  
 Dec 26<sup>th</sup> Don Schmiedel

## Tuesday 9:00am Breakfasts

Nov 30<sup>th</sup> Arizona Charlies  
 Decatur  
 Dec 7<sup>th</sup> Cannery  
 Dec 14<sup>th</sup> Skyline – Boulder  
 Hwy  
 Dec 21<sup>rd</sup> Denny's - Charleston  
 West  
 Dec 28<sup>th</sup> Arizona Charlies  
 Boulder Hwy

### Finances

|                       | <u>October</u>    | <u>2010</u>        |
|-----------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Contributions:        | \$5,247.89        | \$46,271.30        |
| Building Usage:       | \$2,447.50        | \$32,070.00        |
| <b>Total Income:</b>  | <b>\$7,695.39</b> | <b>\$78,859.86</b> |
| Ministry:             | \$32.99           | \$2,981.98         |
| Ops & Admin:          | \$333.08          | \$6,542.39         |
| Utilities             | \$1,010.99        | \$10,870.91        |
| Building & Grounds    | \$775.00          | \$10,550.93        |
| Salaries:             | \$2,225.33        | \$54,845.04        |
| <b>Total Expense:</b> | <b>\$4,377.39</b> | <b>\$85,791.24</b> |
| <b>Net:</b>           | <b>\$3,318.00</b> | <b>-\$6,931.38</b> |



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

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

|                         |                             |                                    |                 |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| <i>Dave Pomeroy</i>     | <i>Pastor</i>               | <i>davepomeroy@ucclasvegas.org</i> | <i>360-5355</i> |
| <i>Don Schmiedel</i>    | <i>Moderator</i>            | <i>moderator@ucclasvegas.org</i>   | <i>734-1887</i> |
| <i>Christina Grant</i>  | <i>Office Administrator</i> | <i>church@ucclasvegas.org</i>      | <i>642-2220</i> |
| <i>Nelson Grandjean</i> | <i>Clarion Editor</i>       | <i>clarion@ucclasvegas.org</i>     | <i>624-4603</i> |

Please submit all Clarion articles for the **January** issue by

**December 21<sup>st</sup> to [clarion@ucclasvegas.org](mailto:clarion@ucclasvegas.org) or  
[nd\\_grandjean@yahoo.com](mailto:nd_grandjean@yahoo.com)**



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**December Issue 2010**  
**Return Service Requested**

**We are especially Thankful for:**

**NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
LAS VEGAS, NV  
PERMIT #63**

## **Sunday Schedule**

|                     |          |
|---------------------|----------|
| Adult Education     | 9:00 AM  |
| Sunday Service      | 10:30 AM |
| Youth & Nursery     | 10:50 AM |
| Coffee & Fellowship | 11:30 AM |

## **Other Happenings**

Men's & Woman's Breakfast

9:00 AM every Tuesday

|                   |                           |
|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Pinochle          | December 3 <sup>rd</sup>  |
| Congregators      | November 5 <sup>th</sup>  |
| Leadership Sunday | December 12 <sup>th</sup> |
| Food Pantry       | December 17 <sup>th</sup> |



## **Special Dates**

|                         |                           |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| Second Sunday of Advent | December 5 <sup>th</sup>  |
| Third Sunday of Advent  | December 12 <sup>th</sup> |
| Fourth Sunday of Advent | December 19 <sup>th</sup> |
| First Day of Winter     | December 21 <sup>st</sup> |
| Christmas Eve           | December 24 <sup>th</sup> |
| Christmas Day           | December 25 <sup>th</sup> |
| New Years Eve           | December 31 <sup>st</sup> |