

# The Dove



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I am writing this on February 25, 2009, Ash Wednesday.

Lent is a time in which we often give up something. During my life I have given up chicken, alcohol, bread and other items. This year I am not giving up anything for Lent. This year I have decided to set aside one hour each day for personal prayer and devotion.

Actually, that statement is rather disingenuous. I have been setting aside time nearly two months. Part of the reason for this is Pastoral Leadership Institute. PLI emphasizes two aspects of pastoral life. One part is academic. This year my assignments deal with incorporating change in the life of the congregation. I read books, write papers and develop strategies for change.

The other aspect of PLI is personal spiritual development. You remember I went to a PLI sponsored spiritual retreat at the Franciscan Renewal Center in Scottsdale, Arizona. It was led by Pastor Walt Waiser from Texas. The time involved lecture, study and private prayer / meditation /reflective time.

Pastor Waiser used several resources but his outline was around a resource entitled **Invitation To A Journey: A Road Map for Spiritual Formation** by M. Robert Mulholland Jr. Pastor Waiser followed a definition of Spiritual Formation developed by Mulholland. The definition is as follows:

“(1) a process (2) of being conformed (3) to the image of Christ (4) for the sake of others.” (page 15)

The numbers were placed in the definition to highlight the fourfold nature of the definition. Here are some further insights given by Mulholland:

**Process** – “day to day experience with ups and downs, its victories and defeats, its successes and failures.” (Page 19)  
“...life itself is a spiritual development. The only choice we have is whether that growth moves us toward wholeness in Christ or toward and increasingly dehumanized and destructive mode of being.” (page 24)

**PEACE  
LUTHERAN  
CHURCH**

**205 Tennessee  
Valley Road  
Mill Valley, CA  
94941**

peacelutheranchurch  
@email.com  
<http://peacelutheranchurch.net>

**Sunday Service  
9:30am  
Fellowship  
10:30am  
Sunday School  
11:00am  
Adult Bible  
Class  
11:10am**

**“To help all  
people know,  
believe in, and  
follow Jesus  
Christ.”**

***Being Conformed*** – “a journey into becoming persons of compassion, persons who forgive, persons who care deeply for others and the world, persons who offer themselves to God to become agents of divine grace in the lives of others and their world-in brief, persons who love and serve as Jesus did.” (Page 25). Mulholland also notes “The difference between conforming ourselves and being conformed is the vital issue of *control*.”(Page 24) “(Spiritual Formation) is a journey of learning to yield ourselves to God and discovering where God will take us.” (Page 32)

***To the Image of Christ*** – “We are created to be compassionate persons whose relationships are characterized by love and forgiveness, personas whose lives are a healing, liberating, transforming touch of God’s grace upon the world.” (Page 33)

***For the Sake of Others*** – “Everything that God has done, is doing and will ever do in our lives to conform us to the image of Christ is not so that we may someday be set in a display case in heaven as trophies of grace. All of God’s work to conform us to the image of Christ has as its sole purpose that we might become what God created us to be in relationship with God and with others.” (Page 40)

The retreat centered on these four aspects of Spiritual Formation. During these times we were also given time to go out and silently reflect on God in Jesus Christ in our lives.

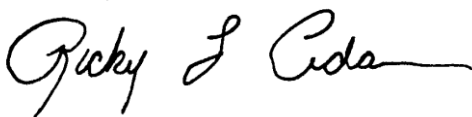
The result for me is to set aside one hour per day. This hour involves:

1. Opening by singing a meaningful hymn.
2. 5 minutes of silent reflection.
3. Reading of a weekly scripture reading (One section of scripture read each day for seven days)
4. Several minutes of reflection on the passage.
5. Reading of devotion (Reliving the Passion by Walter Wangerin, Jr.)
6. Prayers for family, church members and friends, our country.
7. 5 minutes of silent reflection
8. The remainder of the time I will read a book on the specifics of Christian Spirituality.

Sometimes in the busyness of being a pastor I forget my purpose in this life. I become consumed with a “job”. Each year, Lent comes around. It offers me the time to become ‘centered’. Centered on Christ and what does he desire me to be or become or do in this life.

What is true of me is also true of you. In the busy-ness of your lives where is your formation? Is it in Christ or somewhere else. May Lent be a time in which you are re-centered in Christ.

Christ’s Peace



Pastor Adams

## President's Message

As we start the New Year we have good reason to focus on things for which we can be thankful. Peace started the year on an upbeat note hosting the Liyana Jazz Band on Sunday January 4. This is an example of the effort underway to reach out to the surrounding community in many different ways.

The new Council has a mix of old and new members that are ready to tackle what 2009 has to bring forward. This evolution in the Council supports the Congregation as it too continues to change.

The budget for 2009 shows some growth as well as a continuing trend to focus on those things that we as a congregation think are important. This year will focus on maintaining what we have as well as planning for the future.

We want to thank Roger Steiner for his successful tenure as President of the Council. I will continue where he left off, making adjustments as time goes on to continue to lead Peace as so many others have before.

No one will doubt the need for vigilance in 2009 as we attempt to make do with what we have. A certain air of caution has come forward that will hopefully provide guidance for us to ensure that our efforts produce as much "bang for the buck" as possible.

We want to carry on as we have in the past, to achieve new dimensions this year and next. Using our skills and our abilities, we can draw upon what we know to address whatever comes our way this year.

Finally, many thanks to those who volunteered to stand for office for this year's Council. It is their hard work that gives us the guidance to go forward. Time and effort will be their contribution to our success.

### BIRTHDAYS

3/2 Nancy Adams  
3/4 Joshua Clark  
3/6 Teri Glover  
3/10 Michelle Barton  
3/17 Bob Webb  
3/22 Georgean Cooper  
3/22 Vicki McGowan

### During March

Join us for  
**SOUP SUPPER, 6PM**  
And  
**WEDNESDAY EVENING LENTEN**  
**SERVICE AT 7PM**

### CHURCH CLEAN UP DAY

Saturday  
March 28<sup>th</sup>

Everyone is invited to help clean the church. We have many jobs in all areas that need attention. These areas will soon be posted so you can decide where you would be most helpful. If you have any questions please talk to Eric Erickson, Bob Atkins or Gary Glover.

January 2009    Year To Date

#### APPROVED BUDGET

INCOME:                    \$15,820    \$ 15,820

Income                    13,850.    13,850

Less Total Expenses    -13,074.    -13,074.

NET GAIN/LOSS        \$ 776.    \$ 776.

Jim Sides, Treasure

## *Needless Pain*

I've always heard music playing in my head—some pop refrain, a snippet of some commercial jingle, Pachelbel's Canon in D, even nursery rhymes—it's always something. It seems as I've gotten older, more and more often, the music I hear are hymns—the songs of my childhood that bubble up associated with some memory or sensation. For instance, hiking on Mount Tam or a beautiful sunset, never fail to call up, “Oh Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder, consider all the world your hands have made. I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder, Your Power throughout the universe displayed....”

When I pull up next to a car with the radio booming some loud rap song, I remember in the 1950s, one Sunday our pastor raged that popular music was leading us all to hellfire and damnation. His particular example that day was that more young people knew the words to “*Ain't Nothing But A Hound Dog*,” than knew the words to “*Amazing Grace*.” That afternoon, after Sunday dinner, my mother made me sit down and memorize every word of *Amazing Grace*—all four verses. I know them to this day.

These last few months, it has seemed as if there is trouble everywhere—a national and global economy in tatters, sky-high unemployment rates, health issues for loved ones—the list goes on and on. In the midst of all this, the song I now hear in my head everyday goes like this:

**What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and grief to bear;  
What a privilege to carry everything to God in Prayer.**

*Oh what peace we often forfeit. Oh what needless pain we bear,  
All because we do not carry everything to God in prayer.*

**Have you trials and temptations? Is there trouble anywhere?  
We should never be discouraged. Take it to the Lord in prayer.  
Can we find a friend so faithful who will all our burdens share?  
Jesus knows our every weakness. Take it to the Lord in prayer.**

**Sheri Maier**

Please remember to bring  
non-perishable food items  
for the **Southern Marin Food Pantry**.

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If you would like to help serve or donate a dish  
for our homeless hot meal program **PEACE  
MEAL** please contact Lee Rosevear. Our time  
to serve is the second Thursday of each month at  
12n at West Minister Presbyterian Church in  
Tiburon.

### **OFFICE HOURS**

Our church office is open Monday thru Friday,  
from 9 a.m. – 12 noon. Mondays are Pastor  
Adams day off. He is available in his study  
Tuesday thru Fridays from 9 a.m. –12 noon and  
also by appointment. Sally is in the office  
Monday thru Thursday. If you are in need of  
ministry please stop by or call the church office  
at 388-2065.

### **HOME PHONE**

You may also reach Pastor Adams at home. His  
number is: (415) 388-7190. Please feel free to  
call him as you like.