



January



Happy New Year!

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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF ANAHEIM

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Embracing New Tomorrows

Pastor Jim asked us if we would be home for Christmas this year when we began the Advent season. Isy Martin sang "I'll be home for Christmas," and we started thinking about what our Christmas would look like. As Pastor Jim continued his message, the picture we had connected to the song changed. By "home," he meant time with God. Would we take time to enjoy being home with God throughout the season?

For New Year's, Pastor Jim turned our attention to change through the passage in Luke 5:27-39. Jesus calls Levi, a tax collector, to be his disciple, and Levi holds a banquet for Jesus at his home. A large group of tax collectors and others join in to see what Levi is celebrating. The religious leaders watch from a distance and complain. Jesus is not being religious enough. How could he eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners? Everyone knows that tax collectors cheat people out of their money. Jesus' closest followers aren't religious enough, either. Why don't they fast and pray like other good Jewish disciples?

Jesus identifies the deeper issue they are having. Change. They are stuck in what they know, in how they have known God, and they miss the incredibly good new thing God is doing right under their noses.

Pastor Jim in his message shared that all change involves loss. Even change that we easily consider to be good change. A new job, an exciting move, a new relationship, getting married, having kids, taking on a new hobby, finding a new community of people to enjoy—devoting ourselves to any of these things involves gain and loss. Jesus sees that behind the criticism of the religious leaders is a deep fear of change. They *know* how to do religion. They don't know what is happening in the presence of Christ. *(Continued on Page 7)*

January

Sunday Morning Worship
10:30am in the Sanctuary

NorthEast of the Well
Mondays, 6-8pm
McKenzie Hall/Sanctuary

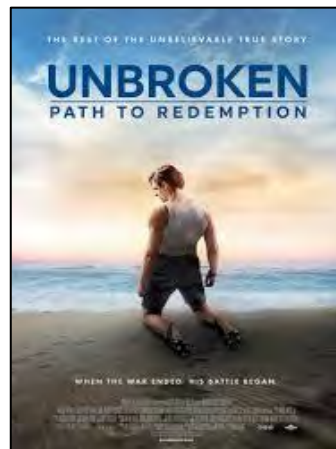
FCCA Choir Rehearsals
Thursdays at 7:00pm
*Contact the office at
fccaooffice@gmail.com if
you would like to receive
choir emails. Rehearsal
updates are also included in
the weekly email news.

Men's J.O.G. Meeting
Join JOG for lunch, comedy, music and a testimony!
Monday, January 14th
Featuring Guest Speakers,
Luke and Lisa Zamperini
12-1:30pm, McKenzie Hall
RSVP: Mike 714-425-2649
Cost: \$12

Richard Sham Memorial Service
Friday, January 18th
12:00pm in the Sanctuary
followed by a reception

Montessori Choir Program Starting!
Raffia Thomas will begin
choir lessons in the older
Montessori School classes
this month! A couple of
times a year, the students
will perform during Sunday
morning worship.

JOG's New Year's Luncheon
Featuring Guest Speakers, Luke and Lisa Zamperini



Join us as we dip into the past and Luke relives the story of Louie Zamperini and how his dad encouraged him to become a Christian. Lisa will share what it was like travelling the world over assisting her famous father-in-law. Together they will share their passion for Christ and their personal testimonies.

When: Monday, January 14, 2019
12:00 pm - 1:30pm

Where: First Congregational Church of Anaheim
515 North State College Blvd Anaheim, Ca 92806
(Located one block south of La Palma on the west side of State
College in the city of Anaheim)

Cost: \$12

Plan on enjoying another delicious meal prepared especially,
By Adam Curry and his helpful staff.

Please RSVP via email at chuck@penningtons-inc.com or
Call Chuck at 714-350-8983 or Mike Austin at 714-425-2649

JOG



Of Orange County
Just Ordinary Guys
Meeting the 2nd Monday of Every Month

Christmas Joy



Above: Carson Davis handmade wooden toys for the kids who were at the last NorthEast of the Well service here in Anaheim before Christmas. Thank you, Carson! Janice and Haylie asked the kids questions about the Christmas story as they chose their favorite toy.

Below: The Montessori school put on a wonderful Christmas Program to end the year. The program brought a lot of smiles and produced many family photos!



Missions' Corner



CHRISTMAS LOVE:

Our deepest thanks to all of you who gave so generously to our CHRISTMAS LOVE project. With those funds we were able to purchase clothes and toys for a struggling family and bless several other individuals and families with valuable gift cards from grocery stores, Target and Walmart. It is truly a blessing to witness our church being the Hands and Feet of Jesus at this beautiful time of year.

Again, thank you for your CHRISTMAS LOVE and know that it was given away to others in the "Name above all names" and providing them with a very Merry Christmas.

Janice Bowers
Missions



January Birthdays

3-Jan Rachel Rolnicki

5-Jan Noah Torres

11-Jan Greg Ramsay

13-Jan Francisco Morales

21-Jan Dennis Johnson

24-Jan Jeffrey Williams

25-Jan Andrew Ramsay

27-Jan Kim Collier

If you would like to have your birthday included in the CALL, please contact the church office at 714-776-0960 or fccaooffice@gmail.com.

(Embracing New Tomorrows Continued...)

Notice where Jesus is standing and who He is talking to when he says that he has not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance. That phrase may set our guards up as we picture someone with a sign at a train station yelling at us and telling us how awful we are. Jesus isn't saying this to the sinners he is accused of enjoying company with at a banquet—Jesus is saying this to the ones who think they are righteous. He is telling the religious leaders that they are the outsiders. The “righteous” who are afraid of showing their raw humanity are actually the outsiders who are missing a fabulous party with the bridegroom. Another upside down Jesus moment.

Growing in our faith and following the movement of God requires that we let go of clinging to what we know and who we have known ourselves to be. It takes knowing that we are people under construction in ever changing environments.

Jesus then tells the religious leaders short parables about embracing the “new” that God has for us. People don't patch old clothing by cutting from new clothing. They'll ruin the new and it won't match the old anyway. New wine is poured into new wineskins because it would burst the old, stretched out skins. Jesus reminds us that people are creatures of habit. We tend to think what we have known is better than something new and unknown. Sometimes we miss out on looking forward and experiencing the new that God has for us. If you weren't in worship on December 30th, ask Pastor Jim about his dead rabbit illustration. It is a great one!

Thankfully, our home in Christ is a home that always carries us forward and newly creates in our changing circumstances. May 2019 be filled with new discoveries, lessons, and blessings as we follow Christ, Pastor Emily

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF ANAHEIM

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Your donation of \$50 can help offset the cost.
Please contact the Church Office for details at 714.776.0960