



Lutheran Church of the
Resurrection

www.lcrchurch.org

September 1, 2017

God's Work. Our Hands Laughter, Delight, Love

"Something special happens when we come together to impact the lives of others".



Worship together with a God's Work Our Hands liturgy, a special song, and a commissioning prayer during all three services on **September 10.**

Matthew 18:20, "For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them".

The Gathering will begin at noon on September 10 where the congregation will have opportunities to learn ways to get involved in local advocacy from Mark Carlson from the office of the Lutheran Public Policy, write letters of appreciation and bake cookies for our local fighter fighters, sew quilts, t-shirt dresses and make tie blankets, learn how to knit, repair furniture, assemble art kits for children in the hospital and assemble Halloween candy bags, write letters of encouragement and prayers for Resurrection's shut-in members. *Bring a pot-luck dish to share.*



Resurrection will be 'scattered' to eleven areas in our local community throughout the month of September. God's Work. Our Hands community teams walk alongside our neighbors sharing God's love by serving meals, collecting and distributing food, playing games with children, organizing goods for resale, assisting Resurrection members, installing smoke detectors,

repairing furniture, installing computers, and building relationships with our local community. We serve in partnership with the Salvation Army, St. John's Program for Real Change, Gathering Inn, Roseville HomeStart, Orangevale Food Bank, River City Food Bank, Red Cross Home Fire Campaign, Lutheran Social Services, and Habitat for Humanity Restore.



[Click here to sign up to serve on a God's Work Our Hands Resurrection Team](#)

God's Work Our Hands is a blessing. The light, O Jesus, is all from you. None of it is ours. It is you shining on others through us. In all its actions of caring, sustaining, and serving one another the community is bearing witness to the fact that God's work continues in the involvement and actions of a caring community that exercises its actions confidently in the name of Jesus.



Staff

Christopher D. Berry, Intentional Interim Pastor, 360-220-5466
Ralph Supper, Family Life Pastor, 791-4661
Karen Idler, Director of Shared Ministry, 791-4661
Tom O. Miller, Chaplain, 791-4661
Adriana Findlay, Director of Children's Ministry, 791-4661
Dee Dee Lutz, Director of Worship & Music, 791-4661
Patrick Neal, Director of Contemporary Worship, 791-4661
Diane McCauley, Business & Events Manager, 837-3631
Kathy Johnson, Administrative Asst./Communications, 791-4661

Contact Information Church office: 791-4661 FAX: 791-5819

prberry@lcrchurch.org

ralph@lcrchurch.org

Shared Ministry: karen@lcrchurch.org

tom@lcrchurch.org

Children's Ministry: adriana@lcrchurch.org

Music Ministry: deedee@lcrchurch.org

Contemporary Worship: pat@lcrchurch.org

Scheduling: diane@lcrchurch.org

Church: lcr@lcrchurch.org Web Site: www.lcrchurch.org

Back to School! Children's and Jr. High Ministry/Confirmation News



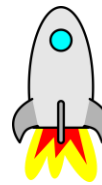
Resurrection cares deeply about helping children and youth enjoy, engage and express their experiences as they grow in faith.

Building a relationship with Jesus takes time, opportunity and the encouragement and example of pastors, teachers, mentors and indeed the whole faith community. One of the things that make Resurrection unique is the value placed on communal and multi-generational interaction in our worship and learning.

In keeping with these approaches, here are some new features of this year's programming for children and youth. Have questions? Contact [Adriana Findlay](#) for information about Children's Ministry, and [Pastor Ralph](#) for Jr. High Ministry.

- **Sunday School** for children (preschool/age 3 through 6th grade) has just begun and will now be offered *every* Sunday through May, at the 9:30 service, with the occasional exception of a few special services.
- Children of **Sunday School** age will begin their mornings *in the Faith Center* with their families, and will be invited shortly thereafter to go with their teachers to their classes. Elementary-aged children will come back to their families at the time of communion, and parents of Preschool and Kindergarteners will pick up their children after service. This new process brings the children more fully into the worshipping community, and makes it easier and clearer to visitors and newcomers to see how their children can join the others for Sunday School.
- **Confirmation** preparation for 7th and 8th graders has two parts:
 - 1) the *first Tuesday* of every month, beginning in September, students will begin at 7:00 p.m. in Youth Group with high school teens, and then break out into their own meeting.
 - 2) and as last year, the *second Sunday* of each month, beginning in October, the 7th and 8th graders AND their families will have a potluck meal in the Fellowship Hall at 12:00, and then break into separate parent and student meetings.
- Adriana Findlay, Children's Ministry Director, will be coordinating Confirmation this year, and assist Pastor Ralph, Pastor Berry and others in teaching the classes.

Youth Group News!

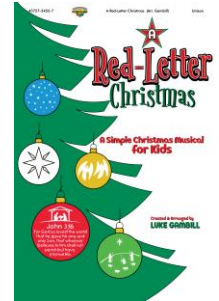


Youth Group resumes every Tuesday from 7:00-9:00 p.m. in the Teen Center starting with a **LAUNCH PARTY** on September 5. Teens in 7-12th grade should join us weekly for games, small groups, faith discussion, and fun.

Hey, LCR Kids and Parents!

I'll bet you're already thinking about Christmas, right?

Sure it may be over 100 degrees outside, but Christmas is just around the corner and so is the Kids Christmas Musical. We'll be performing on *December 10th* for both the 9:30 and 11:00 services. **Rehearsals start on Sunday, October 15th** from 10:45 till 12:00 noon (except we are off Nov. 5th) in the Faith Center. Children, ages 1st grade thru 8th grade are welcome (Kindergarteners with special permission). **Parents are encouraged to attend a short meeting on September 24th at 10:30 a.m. in the Faith Center.** Any questions call Pat Neal at 916-725-8882 and leave a name and a contact number.



God's Word, My Voice – Reading the Bible Lessons for Sunday Worship

Interactive Workshop for Children in 4th-8th Grades - Sunday, October 1st, 11:00

Resurrection Church values including children and teens in all areas of worship, and a wonderful way to do this is to have a young person read God's Word during worship. Len Merkel, Coordinator of Sunday Lectors (the churchy title for those who read the lessons) and Adriana Findlay, Director of Children's Ministry, are offering an experiential workshop in the worshipful reading of scripture. We'll go over what to keep in mind, give tips and provide practice for children in 4th through 8th grade. This is also a great opportunity to build skills in public speaking and using a microphone! Attending the workshop doesn't obligate a child to read in the Sunday service, so please encourage your child or grandchild to come! Letting [Adriana](#) know to expect your child helps with the planning.

Mt. Cross Elementary Student Camp Retreat, October 13-15



Families with 3rd through 6th graders - hold the date!

This is a fun gathering in the Santa Cruz Mountains for children from Lutheran congregations over a wide region, planned and run by the Sierra Pacific Synod Youth Team and their adult leaders, and chaperoned by adults from Resurrection Church. The camp runs Friday Evening to Sunday Noon, and is a great way for children to bond with their Sunday School

classmates, make new friends and grow their faith in a fun fall camp environment. The fee is \$110/child, after the portion covered by Resurrection Church. Contact [Adriana Findlay](mailto:Adriana.Findlay) for registration packets, which are due by Monday, September 25.

Opportunity to Share and Invite! Shared Ministry Displays

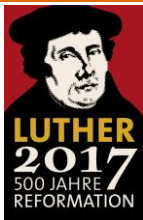
Following one combined 10:00 a.m. Worship Service on **All Saints Sunday November 5, 2017**, all Committees and Teams are invited to display information about their **Areas of Shared Ministry** on designated tables set along the corridor of the education wing.



Consider creating information sheets or brochures to handout describing the responsibilities of your Committee or Team; qualifications required of those serving in your area of ministry; position descriptions, photos of past and future plans for activities; current vacancies; and contact information for those who want to know more.

Indicate your participation and reserve a table by emailing the Director of Shared Ministry at Karen@lcrchurch.org or phone the church office at 916.791.4661

Adult Faith Formation Ministry



The World of Luther – A look at what was happening in the Northern and Italian Renaissance world leading to the advent of the Protestant Reformation. Wednesdays, 6:00 – 7:00 p.m. in Classroom 5/6 beginning September 20. Lead by Joy Rowland.

- September 20 - Luther's Early Life
- September 27 - Luther's Travels to Rome
- October 4 - Luther in Wittenberg
- October 11 - Luther Makes his Stand at Worms
- October 18 - Luther's Legacy Continues
- October 25 - A Word about "Dear Kate" (Katharina von Bora)

Old Bible Display –

We are inviting everyone to bring your old Bible(s) to church to display on **Sunday, October 15th**. This may be a Bible passed down in your family or one you received



at Sunday school or Confirmation. Other items may include catechism or confirmation resources which helped form your faith. To participate, please send the following information to the church office by October 1st or send the information to Director of

Shared Ministry, Karen Idler at Karen@lcrchurch.org

Info needed: Name, telephone number, email, name of item to be displayed with a brief descriptive comment regarding the item (i.e. "My mother received this bible from her mother in 1912.")

STAY TUNED! Pastor Berry will be leading a 5-8 week study beginning mid-fall. Topics being considered are the Sermon on the Mount, a study on the Gospel of Mark, or a study on the Non-Synoptic Gospels. Classes would be held during the week and offered twice – evening and sometime during the day. More information will be coming as staff calendars are set for fall.

Did You Know?

Luther was no radical or vandal. The Castle Church was where members of the University of Wittenberg worshiped and the door was commonly used as a bulletin board for faculty and students.

Reformation Celebration!



Plans are in the works for many ways to celebrate this unique occasion during October. Save the date for an old-fashioned Lutheran potluck and ice cream social on **October 29th** after the last service. More news and details coming in October.

Note from Dee Dee

September is the beginning of our new music season at Lutheran Church of the Resurrection!

Chancel Choir, Voices of Faith, Make a Joyful Noise and Resurrection Brass all resume their regular rehearsal schedules this month.



Chancel Choir welcomes new members throughout the year. All that is required is a love of singing, with a commitment to attend scheduled rehearsals and worship services regularly. Reading music is helpful but is not a requirement. If you would like to participate in Choir for the 2017-2018 season, please contact Dee Dee Lutz (deedee@lcrchurch.org). Choir rehearsals begin Thursday, September 7th, 7:00 - 8:30 p.m. in the Music Room.

Special Music: **Jack and Janet Lane** will be our guest musicians for the 11:00 a.m. service in the Sanctuary on **Sunday, September 17th**. Janet will be at the organ and Jack will present a vocal music selection for the Offertory.

Oktober is coming early this year...



LAFF
OktoberFest
September
30th
Faith Center

You are invited to join in the fun and fellowship of LAFF's eleventh Oktoberfest on September 30th. There will be plenty of German food, beer and wine; ole Europe decorations and dress; music and dancing by Polka Power California; fun activities and new people to meet. LAFF has a surprise in honor of the 500 year celebration of the Reformation!



Tickets are \$25 per person, which includes all food and refreshments. Tickets will be sold on Sunday mornings, September 10, 17 and 24. The Oktoberfest begins at 6:00 p.m. (6:00-9:00 p.m.) in the Faith Center. Doors open at 5:45 p.m. Eight or more guests may request reserved seating. For more information or late reservations, please contact chair Kathy Wood, call/text 619-890-3087 (yes 619), kheinzewood@yahoo.com

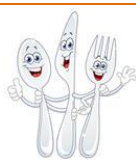
This is an adult only event. You are encouraged to invite guests that may welcome an opportunity to be acquainted with a Lutheran congregation. Childcare on campus has been arranged...one group for those under 5 years and another for those must be made by September 24th to assure appropriate staffing.

If you're looking for more social involvement at Resurrection, LAFF is always seeking more help (taking reservations, greeters, decorators, kitchen helpers, planners...) contact Kathy.

LAFF could use some help with food preparation this year: 1.) general help in the Faith Center kitchen beginning at 9:00 a.m. on Friday September 29th, or 2.) cooking Sauerbraten at your home. The easy Sauerbraten recipe will be provided and expenses will be reimbursed if requested. If either of these interest you, please call Doc Wright at 916-870-4656, Dockr1@gmail.com or Sandie 916 870-4657, sandiekwright@gmail.com, Danke Schoen!!

Fellowship Breakfast Returns!

Join us on Saturday September 9th at 8:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. After another great breakfast by chefs **Tim & Joan Moore** enjoy a presentation by one of our service partners, the **Salvation Army**.



Hear either **Lt. Steve Pavlakis** or **Lt. Stephanie Pavlakis** of the Roseville Del Oro Division discuss 2017 efforts to aid in Emergency Disaster Relief, or

hear about the three used computers and printer Resurrection donated to an after school program in the Roseville area. Learn about these and others programs and ways you may wish to help the Salvation Army. Please RSVP either by signing up on the bulletin board in the narthex, or to alshaffer@sbcglobal.net or call Al Shaffer at 663-5527. It helps with food prep, but last minute drop-ins are always welcome.

Priceless Purls



Priceless Purls are still knitting and crocheting hats, scarfs and prayer shawls. Most of our finished hats go to Sutter Family Birthing Center, Sutter Oncology and Kaiser Oncology, all in Roseville. We also provide hats and scarfs to Gathering Inn and to our Christmas Baskets program. Prayer Shawls are provided to individuals in our congregation going through tough times and are distributed personally, often by those taking a meal or providing communion. There is a lot of donated patterns and yarn available for knitters and crocheters to use.

In September we will be meeting on Monday, the 11th in the Fellowship Hall at 10:00 a.m. Items are sorted and packaged for distribution and technical help is available. We'll also be at the Gods Work. Our Hands. gathering in the Faith Center on Sunday, **September 10** with yarn, demonstrations, patterns and time to answer questions. We generally meet on the first Monday of the month at 10:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall, unless there is a Monday holiday like September. Contact Joanne Auerbach at 624-3651 or bauerbac@sbcglobal.net for questions.

Craft Faire Extravaganza 2017

All vendor spots for the November 18 Craft Faire have been filled, but we are still in need of someone to **take over organizing the bake sale.** Please contact Ann Jolly at tennca2001@yahoo.com or call 916-784-9254, if you are interested.



Think Yoga!



Feeling more active as the Heat recedes - Think Yoga! Join our class on **Thursdays from 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. in Fellowship Hall** to learn this healthful way of connecting body, mind and spirit. Emphasizing balance and flexibility, instruction in both chair and mat exercises are provided. Our class operates on 6-week sessions for \$40 per session with a reduced rate of \$25 for travelers or busy members who can only attend three classes per session. Your first class is free to help you discover the pleasure of Yoga. You can join at any time. Call Kay Valler at (916)791-1001 for information.

September Helping Hands

September Helping Hands donations are in support of the Gathering Inn.

Some ongoing needs for our guests are as follows:

- Toothbrushes
- Hand Sanitizer
- Men's & Women's undergarments
- Socks
- Ponchos (for the rainy season)
- Combs & Brushes
- Any on-the-go nutritional bars (granola, nuts, etc.) (*We get a lot of donations of donuts and other sweets, but a limited amount of wholly nutritious options.)



Monetary contributions will support Roseville Home Start which successfully transitions homeless children and families into affordable, sustainable, permanent housing and self-sufficiency. They are a non-profit providing living accommodations, mentoring, education and case management services to families who are striving to find stable and productive lives.

Thanks to all those who donated school supplies in August. The supplies were very appreciated by students and their parents in our area.

Social Ministry Opportunities

Looking for an opportunity to be involved? Have an hour or so one Monday evening a month? Want to find a way to support those who lead Resurrection outreach projects? If you answered yes, or even maybe, to one or more of these questions, the **Social Ministry Team has the answer for you!** The team meets once a month to identify and review available resources – time, talents and financial - to support current and new outreach efforts to those in need beyond our campus and addressing social concerns. We are looking to expand our team, and would love to welcome YOU! Interested or have questions? Contact Judy Moore at jemoore@surewest.net or 521-2392.

UPDATE on the Ahmad Family, our first Refugee Family from Afghanistan.

Baby daughter Hajiara is four months old now and a very good baby! Henna is the happy 2-year-old “big sister”! Faizan (4) is in pre-school and Warda (5) is in kindergarten! She is so proud that she knows her numbers, the alphabet, months and days, recognizes her colors and shapes and loves to tell anyone all of this in English! Brishna is thrilled her children are back in school and looks forward to her oral surgery on September 7th. She thanks our church family for making this possible. Javed has gotten a new job with the Rancho Cordova School of Education as a translator. He is thrilled with this opportunity! He is hoping to attend Sacramento State University and

major in languages eventually able to work again for the United Nations as a translator. Life is good for them but they continue to ask for daily needs for others in the refugee community. For more information, please call Chris Steele 530-333-4076.

Gathering Inn – September



On **Tuesday, September 19**, we welcome The Gathering Inn. The Gathering Inn is a “nomadic” community-based shelter for homeless families and individuals. More than 20 local churches take turns each month serving a hot meal and providing a warm, safe place to sleep. In recent months, we’ve seen an increasing number of young children in the group, some of the highest counts in Gathering Inn history. Homelessness is especially hard on kids, and the hospitality we offer these families makes a big difference.

We need helpers in the following areas:

- 5 Cooks/Kitchen Helpers - arriving at 3:30 p.m.
- 8 Food Servers - arriving at 5:30 p.m.
- 4 Greeters - arriving at 6:00 p.m.
- 4 Clean-Up Helpers – arriving at 6:00 p.m.

Email Karen Murbach at murbach5@outlook.com to join the team. Thank you for being a part of this life-changing ministry.

What's cooking at St Vincent?



Thank you for all the food and funds that you donated in August. On August 27th, we served 46 very brave people that came out during a very hot afternoon. For many clients, this is the only meal for the day.

Since Sloppy Joes have been a big hit, we will be serving them again on September 24th and need the following items:

- Sloppy Joe mix (canned)
- Coleslaw dressing
- Coleslaw
- Applesauce
- Shredded cheese
- Milk
- Cash donation to the St Vincent fund

Please put all items in the Fellowship Hall kitchen by September 24th by 9:30 a.m. **We always welcome extra helpers!** If you have any questions or wish to help, contact Sandy Russell, 916-781-959 or Jane Stevens 916-632-9884. Please fill out the colorful insert in the bulletin on the second Sunday of the month so we can plan the meal, or give us a call. Thank you for your past, present and future support. This is our monthly “God work, Our hands” mission.

Legacy Committee News

Easy Ways to Share Your Legacy

This month we would like to share with you some easy – and beneficial – ways you can maximize your tax benefits while also providing funds to charities of your choice at any time – including the Legacy Fund at Lutheran Church of the Resurrection. These ideas are targeted at ways to give now. A later article will

explore several ways to leave money to charity as part of your will, trust, or estate.

Donor-Advised Fund Accounts

A donor-advised fund allows you to invest a sum of money into a charitable giving account, receive immediate tax benefits, and then provide grants (monetary gifts) to your favorite charity. For example, Charles Schwab has a plan called Schwab Charitable, which you can create with as little as \$5,000.

Benefits of a donor-advised fund:

- You can invest either cash or non-cash assets such as real estate or stocks.
- Because it is an investment fund, your charitable giving amount can grow over time.
- You can grant consistently to any IRS-designated 501(c)(3) charity.
- When you donate to the donor-advised fund, you receive a current-year tax deduction and minimize capital gains taxes.
- Donations to your charities from the donor-advised fund can be made in later years – allowing you to get a tax-deduction now but spread out the donations over several years. (This could be a huge benefit if the charitable tax deduction is limited in future years with tax law changes.)
- Funds are easy to set up and inexpensive to maintain. Compared to a foundation, for example, a donor-advised fund is extremely low cost. Funds require very little paperwork or ongoing maintenance.
- The list of charities is long, but if your preferred charity is not on the list, you can easily request that it be added.

[Schwab Charitable](#) is just one of many donor-advised funds. Others include [Fidelity Charitable](#) and [Vanguard Charitable](#). No matter which fund you choose, remember that once you make a contribution to a donor advised fund, the organization has legal control over it; however, you retain advisory privileges with respect to the distributions and investments in the account.

[Read more!](#)



For All the Saints

Perpetual Motion - 'Movement' keeps 96-year-old Lorraine Spain young at heart

By John Frith

Resurrection member Lorraine Spain will be 97 in a few weeks, but that isn't slowing her down!

Spain recently was housebound for a few weeks after injuring her ankle and badly tearing her skin when she tripped on the curb outside her Roseville apartment. But she's healed and on the go again, which means she's golfing at Loomis Creek most Thursdays with a group of golfing buddies, weather permitting, and throwing herself into exercise classes two or three days a week at Maidu Park.

Oh, and she just bought a new car, a gently used Hyundai Accent.



But that's not unexpected for a spry and active woman who went parasailing in Hawaii on her 90th birthday and helped the U.S. win World War II.

And to what does she attribute her long life and good health? Movement, and the man upstairs.

"The good Lord gave me the want to move," said Spain, who from childhood preferred to walk than ride and to play sports at a time when relatively few women did so. "I still miss it if I can't exercise."

Born Lorraine Broecker on October 19, 1920, she was raised in the small town of Mayville, Wisconsin, about 35 miles northwest of Milwaukee. She knew from an early age that she wanted to be a kindergarten or P.E. teacher, but when she graduated in 1938, her parents frowned on the idea of her going off to college. That was something for her brother to think about. [Read more!](#)

FOR ALL THE SAINTS features stories of the lives of Resurrection members some of whom, for a variety of reasons, are no longer able to worship with us. We hold these saints in our thoughts and corporate prayers and reading about them is one way our entire community can get to know them also! Thanks to our interviewers, **John Frith and Karen Murbach**, who contact and set up interviews and write the newsletter articles.

Contact Karen Idler, Director of Shared Ministry, if you have a person you would like to have interviewed **FOR ALL THE SAINTS** at karen@lcrchurch.org or phone the church office at 916.791.4661 ext. 225.

FYI – Around Campus...



There's a flourishing tree at the end of the parking lot enriching our campus dedicated in memory of **Jim Hawkins**. Jim loved nature and worked for nurseries and landscaping companies his entire career and loved and served God well. Thanks to Elsie Hawkins and family for remembering Jim in this way.

Outdoor Worship Schedule

Grove Services continue on the first & third & fifth (if applicable) Sundays thru Sept. 17. The 8:00 a.m. service will be held in our one-of-a-kind "Outdoor Chapel." Please park in the north parking lot and join nature and your Resurrection friends in this beautiful outdoor setting.



Resurrection Readers



On the 3rd Thursday each month our book club meets in the library at 2:00 p.m. Contact Beryl Bakken at 916-791-1582. **Please join us!**

What we'll be reading:

Sept. 21 – *The Nightingale*, Kristin Hannah

Community Activities at Resurrection

Lutheran Church of the Resurrection has long been the center of community activities in Granite Bay.

Here's what's happening in September:

- AA meets each Tuesday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday each week in the Fellowship Hall. Times vary.
- Al Anon District 10 meets Sunday, September 17 at 2:00pm in the Fellowship Hall.
- Boy Scout Venture Crew will meet September 9, 9:00am to 3:00pm in various locations.
- Boy Scout Patrol Leader (PLC) and Assistant Scout Master (ASM) meet September 12 at 6:45pm in various classrooms.
- Boy Scout Board of Review (BOR) and Troop 121 meet September 14 in the Fellowship Hall and various classrooms.
- Boy Scouts Pioneer Build Day meets Saturday, September 30 on the soccer field at 8:00am.

- American Association of University Women meets Wednesday, September 6 at 3:00pm and on Thursday, September 19 at 10:30am in the Carlson Library.
- Daughters of Norway meet Saturday, September 9 at 2:00pm in the Fellowship Hall.
- Sierra Kronan meets Monday September 11 at 6:30pm in the Fellowship Hall.
- Mankind Project meets each Wednesday at 6:30pm in Classroom 10.
- National Charity League, Granite Bay Chapter, meets September 18 at 7:00pm in the Fellowship Hall: fostering mother-daughter relationships in a philanthropic organization committed to community service, leadership development and cultural experiences.
- Older Adult Collaborative meets Wednesday, September 18 at 8:30am in the Fellowship Hall.
- Northern California Accordion Society meets September 6 at 7:00pm in the Fellowship Hall. All are welcome. \$3 donation at the door. Food and entertainment provided. Donations support musical scholarships for teens.
- Boys Team Charity meets Sunday, September 24 at 5:30pm in the Faith Center.
- Los Lagos HOA will meet Tuesday, September 26 at 5:00 p.m. in classrooms 5 & 6.

Shared Ministry Matters



From the Director of Shared Ministry, Karen Idler

Resurrection church groups are encouraged to begin our meetings and other gatherings with a brief devotion. Groups may choose a devotion for themselves or use the devotion provided in the monthly newsletters. This month's group devotion is written by Richard L. Floyd, Pastor Emeritus of First Church of Christ (UCC) in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. A writer and author, he blogs at richardlloyd.com

God's Great Laboratory of Love

"I beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." - Ephesians 4:1-3

A pastor friend of mine is known to have told his congregation, "If there isn't somebody here who rubs you the wrong way you need to come around more often."

In my long ministry I tried to love everybody in the church, but I never entirely succeeded. I knew God loved them even if I couldn't. But one thing I learned

over time was that if I kept trying sometimes, just sometimes, I did learn to love the seemingly unlovable. If, just as Paul admonished, I had patience and could bear with another member for a while, then something in our relationship changed.

I am convinced that this change in the relationship was by grace. Perhaps that is what Paul meant when he wrote about "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." That somehow if we hang in there with another member of the body of Christ, even someone we seem to have no natural affinity for, God's Spirit brings a change of heart in both parties.

And this dynamic is something that I firmly believe is an important part of what the church is, a kind of laboratory of love. Too often we betray this aspect when we look for our congregations to be homogeneous enclaves of the like-minded.

Try a little experiment. Next time you are in coffee hour don't migrate to a person you love and delight in. Pick out someone who rubs you the wrong way and start a conversation. It might be "the beginning of a beautiful friendship."

Prayer: *We pray, O God, for your unifying Spirit, that we may all flourish in your great laboratory of love, the church. Amen.*

August Average Attendance 312
