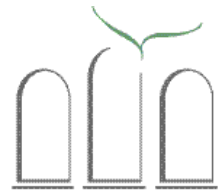


SARATOGA FEDERATED CHURCH FEDERATED FAMILY



CHURCH ADDRESS: 20390 PARK PLACE, SARATOGA CA 95070

BUSINESS ADDRESS: 14370 SARATOGA AVE., SARATOGA CA 95070

SEPTEMBER 2011

THE REAL THING: SINGLE PARENT SEMINAR FEATURING ELSA KOK COLOPY ON SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2011

Saratoga Federated Church invites you to a Single Parent Seminar featuring Elsa Kok Colopy on Saturday, October 15, 2011 from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. Tickets are \$25 and include lunch (child care provided for those who register their child in advance).

According to a report released by the U.S. Census Bureau in November 2009, there are approximately 13.7 million single parents in the United States, and those parents are responsible for raising 21.8 million children (approximately 26% of children under age 21 in the U.S.)

We have invited speaker and author Elsa Kok Colopy, a single parent for 12 years, to lead us through three key topics of learning how to navigate through the reality of a single parent life.

Living the Single Parent Life:

It's no easy job to live the single parent life – so many things pull at you from every which way. Learn how to rest in a greater love and how that love can help you through the tough stuff of saying “no” when you need to say no, managing your time, taking care of your health and finding joy along the way. The key is knowing you are not in this alone!

Companions for the Journey:

We were never meant to walk this road alone. Without a mate, how can you live and process through the every day chaos of parenting? Learn how to connect with others, build healthy relationships and lean on good friends as you raise your children, deal with household frustrations and handle the painful stuff of life.

Navigating New Relationships:

Most single parents hope to remarry, but what does it really look like to date with wisdom and clarity? Find ways to learn from your past experiences, set healthy boundaries (to protect yourself and your children) and date with integrity. Also find out how to look for red flags and what to do when you spot them!

The reservation deadline is October 1, 2011 and space is limited. Call Susan at (408) 867-1000, ext. 239 or enroll online at <http://bit.ly/SingleParentWorkshop2011>.



Elsa Kok Colopy is currently working full-time as a freelance author and speaker. She has authored six books including *A Single Mom's Guide to Keeping it All Together*. She was the former editor of “Thriving Family Magazine” and the Single-Parent edition of the “Focus on the Family Magazine,” and she also published articles for publications such as *Women's World*, *Family* and *Christian Single*. Elsa is a guest expert on the Divorce Care DVD series. She has the privilege of speaking to churches around the country offering retreats and leadership training for women, singles and single parents.



PASTORAL SEARCH TEAM UPDATE

BY LINDA CONNORS

The Search Team has been working hard through the summer evaluating sermons, reviewing, and interviewing candidates. We continue to seek a Teaching Pastor who preaches biblically-based sermons, excels in passionate instruction beyond the pulpit to equip the saints for ministry and excels in creative discipleship and evangelism. We have conducted six interviews as of the second week of August, and we are in various stages of evaluation with 15 others. All of these are high quality, high caliber candidates.

How do we spend our time? We are meeting on a weekly basis to evaluate candidates and debrief interview sessions. We are also listening to hours of audio and video taped sermons, a huge advantage to this search that was not available during past search efforts. We are mindful of allowing God to lead the process and spend time in prayer asking for wisdom and discernment.

When will we have a new Teaching Pastor in place? While this is in God's hands, there are some practical considerations that will drive placement and arrival of our new pastor. With that in mind, we anticipate the new pastor will most likely arrive after the first of the year 2012.

Please pray for the Search Team, asking God to give us discernment, wisdom and unity in our decisions. We also ask that you pray that God be preparing the next Teaching Pastor's heart so a call would be welcomed and confirmed.



October 2011 Newsletter
Deadline
Wednesday, September 14



FALL PREACHING SERIES

This Fall we will explore the rich truths and practical guidelines in the small but powerful book of Galatians. We will be led in this explorative journey by our pastoral team, by some of our elders, and by selected guest speakers who will enrich our Sunday services. Among our guests will be some of our own who currently invest their lives in cultures around the globe, including Chris Kamalski and John Langston.

“Real Freedom” - A Study in the Book of Galatians

Key Verse

“It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.”
Galatians 5:1

What is the real gospel? What do we need to be free from? What does real freedom look like?

September 11

Arvin Engelson

Kick-off the theme – “Get Real”
Matthew 11:28-30

September 18

Sally Bryant

“Introduction to Galatians”
Galatians 1:1-10

September 25

Bill Allison

“Truth of the Gospel, Part 1”
Galatians 1:11 – 2:1

October 2

Tim Galleher

“Truth of the Gospel, Part 2”
Galatians 2:2-21

Sunday in the Park was a great day in the life of Saratoga Federated Church. It was a living picture of who we are, in all our diversity, coming together as one body to worship, to fellowship, and to enjoy one another's company. Let's continue that tradition on Sunday mornings as we gather to worship God and hear His Word to us.



GET REAL WITH GOD

PERSONAL INTEGRITY IN PRAYER

Preamble: The Elders selected an intriguing annual theme: Get Real! From September (2011) through June (2012), our Elders and pastors will encourage each one of us to get real about the things that matter most—in life, in faith and in relationships. In each issue of the Federated Family, a pastor will explore one aspect of reality-based faith. Since we want to reflect on life together, feel free to send your insights by email to any article's author or to all of us.

Get Real with God: When God draws near, some people hide. Adam and Eve, once naked and free, used fig leaves to conceal themselves. Why is this? The obvious and immediate answer is that people are not comfortable being known, at least, with the depth of God's perception. Here we are, made in such a way that we must be known in order to be loved; yet, we instinctively hide.

I have heard too many souls say, "If people really knew me, they would not love me." Yet, here is the rub, for if the love of another life is to be real, it must be well informed. Healthy hearts want to be loved for who they are, not for false images they carefully project.

God looks into a heart we cannot hide from him and loves what we cannot love in ourselves. His grace seeks out those things we are most inclined to conceal. The evidence that we grasp this reality is the healing of our instinct to hide. No more hide and seek; no more fig leaves. "Here I am, Father God; come find me!"

Now, let's be real. Shame, guilt and shyness make self-revelation more difficult for some of us than others. Our relational histories may limit our freedoms; but God has the patient relentless resolve to know and be known. Christian faith brings a growing confidence that God will lovingly convey to us the truth about ourselves.

At its core, prayer is being real with God. It is an honest effort to speak of those things that are working or not working in our private lives in the hope that our maker/redeemer is interested and attentive. This is why prayer so often includes confession. It is an appeal to be known and loved as required: forgiven, corrected, guided or repaired.

FROM OUR PASTORS

Young God-seekers and mature doubters have the same need. Each must imagine God with enough theological accuracy that feeds our desire to reach out in prayer. Corrie ten Boom once told me that faith grows by exercising the measure that you actually have.

She prescribed speaking aloud to the God you would like to be there. Over time, the concerns of your heart will find words.

Do not worry about the correctness of your beliefs nor the appropriateness of your language. Begin simply, with a resolve to make prayer the most honest conversations of your life. If the God of the Bible exists, your false ideas will be sorted out as your perceptions of God's true nature mature. Both your freedom to be authentic and your sense of God's presence will grow.

He is, after all, the Lord of truth and inhabits the prayers of his people.

"He is our Rock, his work is perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful God, without deceit, just and right is he" (Deuteronomy 32:4). See him this way, and desire to be like him as you pray.

Arvin Engelson
Pastor of Care Ministries



NOVEMBER 6, 2011

SAVE THE DATE

Watch for more details in the coming weeks about how you can sign up to help organize the service day, lead a team or volunteer for a specific project.

ADULT MINISTRY NEWS

ADULT EDUCATION AND DISCIPLESHIP

- A new class on the book of Galatians taught by Tom Priest begins September 11 at 9:00 am in the library.
- Telling Your Story: Learn how God has been at work in your life and how to share your story with others. Class meets Tuesdays from 7:30-9:00 pm, October 4-25.
- Bible Study Fellowship (BSF) begins Wednesday mornings on September 14, studying the Acts of the Apostles.
- Community Bible Study (CBS) begins Monday nights on September 12, studying the book of John.
- Church-wide hour of prayer meets the first Thursday of the month from 6:30-7:30 pm and the third Sunday of the month from 4:00-5:00 pm. All are welcome. We meet in the library.

WOMEN'S MINISTRY

- Contemplative Prayer Retreat at Mercy Center on October 6-7. Join us as we spend time with our Creator and Redeemer enjoying the company of one another and the beauty of the retreat center. Cost is \$150, including 3 meals. Register online at <http://bit.ly/WomensPrayerRetreat2011>. For more information, please contact Olivia DCosta at olivia@saratogafederated.org.
- Craft Night meets the second Friday evening of the month in room 105, 7:00 -10:00 pm. This is a great evening of crafts and conversation. For more information, contact Kim Rolston at kim.rolston@netapp.com.
- Monday Moms meets every Monday from 9:30-11:30 am. Childcare is provided. They will be studying *Crazy Love: Overwhelmed by a Relentless God* by Francis Chan beginning on September 12. For more information, contact Dorothy Araldi at dorothy_araldi@yahoo.com.

SMALL GROUP MINISTRY

- Small Group leader training: The Importance of a Group Covenant. All are welcome as we explore the ways in which a covenant helps your small group. Join us on October 20 at 7:00 pm in the Library.

FALL INQUIRER'S CLASS

Twice a year Saratoga Federated Church offers an opportunity to learn more about this church and to meet other people who are also pursuing their faith in Christ. Those who attend this class have the choice to become a member of this fellowship at the completion of the class. The next Inquirer's Class will be held Friday, October 21 from 7:00 to 9:00 pm and Saturday, October 22 from 8:30 am to 3:00 pm. Please watch for further announcements as the class time draws near. Questions? Contact Sharon Liljenstolpe, Coordinator at (408) 374-0843.



Small Group Leaders: please save October 20 for leader training at 7:00 pm in the Library. This will be a good opportunity to reconnect with fellow small group leaders at SFC. It is also a good time for anyone in your group who might consider becoming a small group leader or stepping out from your group for a short time to facilitate/start a new group. Watch for more details in coming weeks.

"Sticky Faith" - Remember when Tim spoke from the pulpit about how many youth disconnect from their faith after leaving for college? Small Groups can help! This Fall, we would like the small groups to take on an easy project which will help assure that SFC's recent high school graduates feel connected to their church even when away at college. Consider supporting one, two, or three students with cards, letters, "good luck during finals" notes, informational notes on what is happening at their "home" church, etc. Maybe this will help reverse that trend. We don't know...but it is a start. Talk it over with your groups. More information will be available soon.

Interested in joining a small group? Want to start a small group? Contact Camille and Rol Chapman at camillechapman@sbcglobal.net for more information.

FINANCIAL REPORT

We are in the process of finalizing the financial reports for our last fiscal year, and the Elders are reviewing the proposed budget for the current year.

Our previous fiscal year ran from July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011. In many ways it was an exceptional year. With an eye on the continued weak national economy, the Elders approved a reduced operating budget for last year of \$2,100,000. At the same time, they presented a stretch budget of \$2,500,000 indicating what additional goals could be accomplished if we were able to hit that target. Consistent giving from the congregation as well as some very generous gifts in December set us on the path to aim for that stretch target and many of the goals were accomplished.

Regular ministries receipts for last year ended at \$2,411,066. We were able to provide a small bonus to the church staff, reinstate a portion of their suspended pension contributions, replace the old wooden chairs and restore a substantial portion of our operating reserves which had been depleted in the previous year. Thanks are in order to everyone who prayed and contributed to this outcome.

Near the end of the fiscal year, some encouraging and inspiring gifts were received earmarked specifically for missions. At this time, our local and global outreach teams are meeting and praying to determine how these gifts can best be applied to effectively meet our outreach objectives in the months and years ahead.

Turning our attention to the budget for our current year, we continue to see challenges. Our operating expenses continue to face pressure from increases in rent, utilities, medical insurance and the like. Also, our prior year budget benefited from the salary savings of not having a senior pastor, whereas the current year budget needs to take that into account. While the exact budget has not been determined, it is likely that it will represent an increase over last year's operating budget. Please be in prayer for the Elders and other church leaders as they determine the best course for our church in the coming months.



VICTORIOUS LIVING CHRISTIAN WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

Winning in every area of life presented by Rohi Christian Church on September 16 & 17, 2011

The Victorious Living Women's Conference presented by Rohi Christian Church is a 2-day conference focusing on encouraging and inspiring women of God to live victoriously in their daily lives for Jesus Christ. The conference is September 16 & 17. Tickets are \$49 before Saturday, September 9 and can be purchased at www.victoriousliving2011.com. The price increases to \$59 after September 9. If you would be willing to volunteer at the conference, please contact Terri Goehner at (408) 406-0259 for details.

MEN'S MINISTRIES

FATHER & SON BREAKFAST - SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 24

We are excited to kickoff our new season's Breakfast Speaker Series with George Neau, Chancellor and Founder of the School of Urban Missions (SUM) in Oakland. He is bringing with him 30+ young men, both students and their friends, who have a passion for reaching disadvantaged youth for Christ.

Men, this is a unique opportunity to share with your sons, grandsons and other men how Christ has impacted the lives of George Neau and these young men. Breakfast will begin Saturday, September 24 at 7:30 am. We expect to finish by 9:00 am. Please purchase your tickets in the courtyard on Sundays in September. The advance price is \$8 and space is limited. If there are tickets available on the morning of the event, they will be \$10.

An outstanding lineup of Breakfast Series speakers is planned for the months ahead. Our children, youth, friends and "Valentines" will be invited to attend. Stay tuned.

BOOK CLUB

Book Club is back after a summer break. Our next meeting is on Thursday, September 15 at 12:15 pm in room 111/112. Our book this month will be *The Paris Wife* by Paula McLain. Please bring a bag lunch and be prepared to have fun socializing and discussing the interesting life of Earnest Hemingway and his first wife! Come one and all! Questions? Please contact Jean Hilt at jeanhilt@comcast.net or (408) 984-2266.



TAKE NOTE OF MUSIC

“Think of singing as a language that allows us to embody our love for our Creator. Song is a means he has given us to communicate our deepest affections, to have our thoughts exquisitely shaped, and to have our spirits braced for the boldest of obediences. Through music, our God draws us deeper into a love affair with himself.”

Taken from *With One Voice*, by Reggie M. Kidd

Music is within each one of us. Listening to it can be great, singing in the shower or in the car is a free release of emotion and just a lot of fun, but making music with others is the ultimate scenario. As we gather together to worship on Sundays, sing! It’s something that every person – young, old, rich, poor, married, single – can do. It blesses you, it blesses others and it blesses God.

This is an open invitation to anyone who wants to be part of taking it to another level:

Celebration Choir & Orchestra rehearsals begin again on Wednesday, September 7. At 7:00 pm, the choir meets in the Sanctuary with Bill and Diane Allison while the Orchestra meets in the Music Room with Becky Dugan and Mary Norton. At 7:45 pm, both groups come together to complete the evening in a joint rehearsal.

Music for Sundays, for the Thanksgiving and Christmas season, including music for the fourth annual “Christmas in Saratoga” production with four performances to be presented on December 9, 10 and 11, 2011, will be our focus in the next several months.

Kids Choir kicks off on Wednesday, September 21, 5:30-6:30 pm, in Douglass Hall, under the direction of Stacey Lewis who uses music to teach stories, values and concepts from the Bible on a child’s level. Kids Choir has an exciting season ahead, singing in church once a month, as well as participating in the “Christmas in Saratoga” production. Kids from kindergarten through 5th grade are invited. It’s the place to be on Wednesdays!

Worship Teams at the 9:00 am service lead in music that reflects the passion of contemporary worship. A rotating team schedule allows for commitment with flexibility.

For more details and more open doors for using your creative gifts of music, drama & art, connect with us:

Bill and Diane Allison (Choir, Orchestra, Worship Teams, Kids Choir) – bill@saratogafederated.org;

Mary Norton (Orchestra, Handbells) – daveandmarynorton@yahoo.com;

Stacey Lewis (Kids Choir) – smuckers@me.com.



MONDAY MOMS

We are starting a new book study, *Crazy Love: Overwhelmed by a Relentless God* by Francis Chan. Join us on Monday mornings from 9:30 to 11:30 am in Room 111. Come for coffee and conversation with other moms. Childcare is provided

We also do monthly Moms Night Outs and other activities. Contact Dorothy Araldi at dorothy_araldi@yahoo.com to be notified about upcoming events.

VILLAGE PRESCHOOL

Village Preschool extends a welcome to all new and returning families with Open House/Orientation Days on September 6 and 7. We are looking forward to a fun and productive school year ahead. We hope everyone enjoyed a restful and rejuvenating summer. We look forward to getting to know our new families and to “catching up” with our returning families!



OVERCOMING ADVERSITY

ONE MAN'S STORY

BY DR. JIM BLEVINS

They say that when we are experiencing one of the exigencies of life, such as marriage, major job change, major move geographically, the death of a family member and other changes in life, we will likely experience some degree of major or minor depression. In September 1997, I left my job in Atlanta, moved to the San Jose area of California and got married to a most wonderful woman. Was I depressed? Not at all! I was, if anything, quite happy in my new life.

I was mulling over my triumph over depression, when, while filling out a prescription, I became aware of a cramping in the muscles in my hand. There was a similar feeling in my hand when brushing my teeth that evening. This was one day in January 1998 and within a few more weeks, I was given the diagnosis of Parkinson's Disease (PD). In medical school, I remembered the halting gait, the hand tremor and the lack of facial expression that PD patients had. The diagnosis was confirmed by a successful trial of the medication carbidopa/levodopa (Sinemet). My symptoms were sufficiently subdued, allowing me to function as usual.

I was in denial. It seemed that my disease was progressing slowly. Therefore, I didn't do a lot of things that were recommended, such as the Parkinson Support Groups. I thought it would be a downer seeing all those people in advanced stages of the disease. Instead I began some weight lifting exercises and did well over the next two years. My wife and I decided that we were going to fight this disease. She attended support groups specially for caregivers. I began learning from my neurologist and others that "there are no two PD patients alike." PD is a depletion of dopamine in the brain and Sinemet replaces the dopamine in the brain. PD is chronic and progressive and terminal. Terminal means that if something else doesn't get you, PD will.

Meanwhile, "back at the ranch," memory lapses started showing up. Once a week since 1998 I gave a lecture to the patients in our program on the disease of Chemical Dependence. I could give that lecture without notes or any such aid. In the spring of 2004 I began to block on words and lose my train of thought. The disease was progressing. I took a year of medical leave and then retired.

I was finding more speech difficulties, blocking on words needed to converse appropriately and feared giving erroneous information. I began to use a cane for fear of losing my balance and falling. To date I have fallen about 10 times without a fracture. Today my taste buds are totally inactive, swallowing is difficult and I accumulate small amounts of food in my mouth. My voice is reduced to a whisper at times. Dyskinesia, a gross, writhing tremor, occurs when one takes too much medication or not enough. When resting, a fine tremor of the hand can occur. Dental problems, severe back pain, and macular degeneration complicate matters. We are told that there is no treatment and it is terminal, i.e. deadly.

Louise and I have decided to continue fighting this disease. So, what to do? The first thing to be done is a don't. Don't blame God. He is not to blame for giving me this disease. I got this disease because I am a human being. To many, that may seem to make God worthless but let me explain.

My wife and I are both Christians and members of a 12-step group, a group in which the first step toward recovery is an admission of powerlessness. We have absolutely no power to deal with the relentless progress of the disease. It will run its course rapidly or slowly and cease only upon my death. I am powerless, but God is not and never will be. He remains who he is with all the power and love that he has for me. With him I live a rich and valuable life. Without him I shrivel up and die.

St. Paul came to realize that in his weakness, God's power was made available to him. In his second letter to the Corinthians he says, "*I will boast...gladly of my weaknesses so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.*" I pray not for God to remove my disease but to give me the power and strength to deal with the pain and weakness that is such a part of Parkinson's disease.

I attain this power by asking God for it, asking him to exercise his power in my behalf. He has given me things to do. I have just completed a 12 part task at his direction. I believe I will live for exactly the amount of time God can bless others through me or me through others. I believe God is continuing to mature my spiritual walk with him, and I believe with all my heart, mind, soul and spirit that God is in control...in charge... and he is also good, very good indeed!

Celebrations!

THANK YOU

Jeff Davis for teaching the class on Hebrews and Romans.

Everyone who helped make Sunday in the Park such a success!!

CELEBRATING AN Anniversary

- 63 years - Russ & Nita Bryant, September 5
- 55 years - Bob & Lou Matison, September 8
- 51 years - Bob & Donna Huebner, September 3
- 48 years - Dave & Nancy Sheets, September 28
- 47 years - Bob & Lois Tomlin, September 12
- 41 years - Dale & Bonnie Workman, September 12
- 37 years - Rick & Cathy Ridder, September 15
- 33 years - Horst & Janet Brenner, September 9
- 32 years - Dave & Christie White, September 15
- 31 years - Jerry & Mary Jane Bruce, September 6
- 31 years - Corky & Al Davis, September 6
- 30 years - Ron & Cathy Oleson, September 12
- 28 years - Tim & Susan Hall, September 17
- 28 years - Brian & Diane Hartsell, September 17
- 26 years - Steve & Dorothy Vidlock, September 7
- 17 years - David & Annie Ticzon, September 24
- 14 years - Jim & Louise Blevins, September 20
- 12 years - Jeff & Rebecca Bond, September 11
- 9 years - Robert & Flora Pinschmidt, September 28
- 7 years - Lance & Amy Archer, September 25
- 1 year - Jake & Jen Welhouse, September 4



Please let us know if you move or have changes to your contact information. Be assured this information will be used only for SFC business. Send your changes to Kathy Hensley at kathy@saratogafederated.org or (408) 867-1000, or go to the COMMUNITY tab on our website to update your personal profile. Thank you.

Celebrations shares events and milestones of our church family. If you have a wedding, birth, baptism, new job, graduation, anniversary, etc. to share, please send the information to Nicki at the church office, (408) 867-1000 or nicki@saratogafederated.org.

BRIDGE BUILDERS RESPITE DAY



The next respite event will be on Saturday, September 10, 9:00 am to 1:00 pm. (Volunteers from 8:15 am to 1:30 pm.) This respite day is designed for families with special needs children and their siblings.

Families must pre-register for this event. Volunteers are encouraged to sign up as early as possible. Contact Debbie Lillo at bridgebuilders@saratogafederated.org or (408) 252-4160.



JAPAN - MISSIONARY UPDATE

SFC has been a partner for many years with the Cole family in Tokyo as they work with Japanese families through Family Forum Japan.

After the devastating Tohoku earthquake and tsunami in March 2011, the Coles have been involved in relief efforts through the ministry of CRASH Japan (<http://www.crashjapan.com>). Tim worked for weeks in the most stricken areas. In April Katie wrote, "Tim kept saying that things were 'unreal, completely unreal.' There are areas where the tsunami completely obliterated areas up to a certain point and then 5-10 meters beyond people are able to live as normal (except for loss of utilities right now). Many of the survivors are wary of all the people who are coming up to bring supplies and offer help. This is actually a very Japanese response - wondering about what is expected of them in return for these favors. The welcome Tim received was very cool until he said he was born in Ishinomaki. That made him more of an 'insider' who could be trusted."

The Coles have a tremendous outreach in Japan. Many at SFC have made donations for relief efforts and you can still do so at the "Japan Earthquake Relief" link on the church website.

"Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet My unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor My covenant of peace be removed," says the Lord, who has compassion on you.

Isaiah 54:10