

Church in the Forest

at Erdman Chapel, Stevenson School • 3152 Forest Lake Road,
Pebble Beach • P. O. Box 1027, Pebble Beach, CA 93953
831.624.1374 • email: citf@mbay.net • www.churchintheforest.org

Monday morning, June 26, 2017

Dear Friends,

In our new *BIG/Small group*, we're continually asking, "How can we know we're saying anything true about God?"

This question nearly drove me to agnosticism early in seminary (not a good place to be). Sitting in a classroom filled with Jesuits, Jews, Evangelicals, Unitarians, Hindus and more, the swirl of claims about God could make you dizzy.

How do we sort out questions about God—who is not visible for independent inspection, and is always "boxed in" by human language and limits?

This Sunday we'll face that question, as we read about a god who demands human sacrifice—the story of Abraham and Isaac in Genesis 22.

Although an ancient story, it helps us think about a pressing contemporary problem: how should we respond to conflicting claims about God? And, can we counter claims about God that seem downright wrong or dangerous?

In Genesis 22, not only is Abraham's faith tested. God is also tested—what kind of god would make this demand to kill one's child? Let's find out who passes the test.

See you Sunday!



The Rev. Joanne Swenson, Th.D.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: We need you! Might you be able to offer some lay help to CitF... serving as lector, usher, cookie purveyor? Sign-up sheets are on the bulletin board or you can contact Sherry directly. Please see if you might lend us a hand this summer.

Small Groups are gatherings where CitF members and new friends can explore questions of faith and deepen fellowship. These groups are open to visitors who wish to find out more and experience a meeting.

You are invited to the *Small Group Bible Study* that meets every **Sunday at 8:30 AM** in the Multi-purpose Room where the topic is the day's sermon scripture lesson.

The next *Thursday Small Group* meeting will be **June 29, 10–11:30 AM** at **Michele Axley's** home, **60 Spanish Bay Circle, in Pebble Beach**. Every two weeks this group answers the question, "How goes your soul?" and encourages each other in the Christian practices of service and faith development. RSVP to **Michele**. Her cell is 214-384-1123 and her email address is: micheleaxley@icloud.com

The next *BIG/Small Group* meeting will be **Tuesday, July 11, 5–6:30 PM**, at the home of **Vicky Nelson**, 1143 Mestres Drive, Pebble Beach (655-9502). We share our BIG questions about religion, combining learning with personal experiences, empathy, tears and laughter.

Calendar

Sunday	July 2, 2017 — Fourth Sunday after Pentecost
8:30 AM	Bible Study in the Multipurpose Room led by the Rev. Ken Feske Topic: Genesis 22: 1–14
9:15 AM	Chapel Concertino
9:30 AM	Holy Communion
Passages	1 John 4: 1, 7–12; Psalm 73: 21–26; Genesis 22: 1–14
	Lector Lloyd Nattkemper
	Crucifer Skip Lord
	Flowers Bruce & Phyllis Rosnes
	Cookies Kathryn Lawrence and Joe Stine
	Ushers Marilyn Gorman and Bruce Rosnes
	Altar Care Martha Jordan and Sandy Rice
	Prayers of the People Mia Jarick
	Oblation Bearer Liz Lord
Sermon	The Rev. Joanne M. Swenson, Th.D.
Title	"Fresh Starts from Old Stories ~ A Sermon Series on Genesis" This Sunday: "Old God, New God, True God?"
Saturday, July 22, 10 AM	Memorial Service for David Mackie at CitF

Music Box

JUNE 25, 2017

Jos Milton, tenor
Melinda Coffey Armstead, piano & organ

CHAPEL CONCERTINO

- Shenandoah.....American Folk Song, arr. Luigi Zaninelli
- The Water Is Wide..... American Folk Song, arr. Mark Hayes
- To the SkySouthern Folk Song, arr. Carl Strommen
- How Lovely Are Thy Dwellings (Psalm 84) Samuel Liddle
- In the Garden.....C. Austin Miles/Price Walden
- Were You There?.....Traditional Spiritual, arr. Moses Hogan
- Yankee Doodle with Variations..... Anonymous, ca. 1790

This column doesn't often spend itself on nostalgia, but the Fourth of July triggers overriding childhood memories of barefoot summertime: sticky watermelon juice down sunburned arms and legs, seeds spit like machine gun fire, decimating brothers, sisters, cousins, and friends. I remember the frantic scramble for a nickel or dime to answer the siren song of the ice-cream truck in the late afternoon, the frozen delight on a stick that, only half eaten, melts and falls onto the ground. I know what it is to run through the sprinkler, to pull the wagon filled with water or friends or both, to hop from shadow to shadow, feet bottoms hissing in the hot sun, because I was there. I know how to catch fireflies in a jar at dusk and how to blow on them so they flare up in green-white heat in answer to the promise of romance. I remember the lure of fireworks with exhilarating names, failing to deliver their promises, but giving 45 minutes filled with the prospect of danger and "the punk's out again," deriving most of their noise from grownups yelling at the kids to be careful. I remember, unable to wait until dark, lighting those sulfurous snakes that left their signature on the sidewalk for months afterwards. I know how to write my name in the dark with a sparkler and where to throw it later to maximize adult anxiety. I know the summer-evening sound of locusts, the intoxication of honeysuckle, and the sweet hope of a later bedtime. I know the boring drone of adults talking their summer away, wasting the heat, wasting the chance to run and yell, wasting happiness itself. I know the feeling of wet grass, of air palpable with sulfur and smoke and brass bands and patriotic songs, and of Dad's warm hand holding mine.

Melinda Coffey Armstead



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