



# THE MERCURY

## UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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### In This Issue

#### Essays

- MARKings... p. 2  
From the Associate Pastor p. 2

#### In and Around the Church

- Journey to Jerusalem 2010 p. 3  
95<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Update p. 4  
Christmas Caroling p. 6

#### Insert Sheet

February 2010 Meeting & Worship Calendar

### From Ashes to Triumph

By Ginny Lum

*Lent*, the 7-week pre-Easter season the Christian Church celebrates, begins on Ash Wednesday. This year it falls on February 17.

Again, alone and/or in groups, we will meditate on Christ's Passion in a disciplined way: His journey from the Cross to His Resurrection, from death to new life—for the love of us all. One follower says he welcomes Lent- "as the time to fine-tune my humanity with the holiness of God."

Join our faith sojourners in one of the several Lenten Fellowship Groups. Schedules of dates, time, places and devotional guides are available in the sanctuary.

### Haiti Earthquake Relief

UCC Wider Church Ministries

The Global Ministries personnel from the national church conference already working in Haiti are reported safe and helping with the emergency situation.

Your prayers and monetary donations are needed so they can continue to provide immediate support and long-term relief.

Donations should be made out to UCC-Judd Street with your name and note "Haiti Earthquake Relief," so that credit to your account may be made. All donations will then be collectively sent to the Wider Church Ministries by the church treasurer.



### WEDDING VOW RENEWAL

Sunday, February  
14, 2010  
4:30 p.m.

It's fun! It's quick! It's meaningful! Please join us as couples renew their wedding vows in the sanctuary on Sunday, February 14, 2010. We will begin at 4:30 p.m. so that you can easily schedule a special Valentine's Day dinner. Families are welcome to this event sponsored by the Membership and Evangelism Committee. Please sign up in advance to assure enough "vow renewal goodies".

## MARKings...

*That's it! You got it! You go...!* These expressions communicate affirmation. Effective parents of children and youth use them; effective athletic coaches and fitness trainers use them; effective supervisors and executives in the workplace use them. Honest affirmation is motivational. Motivation feeds consistency and perseverance. This helps to create a profound sense of community among leaders and participants.

The Apostle Paul wrote a pastoral letter to a young church in an area that is now the western coast of Turkey. This letter to the Church at Ephesus begins with a strong dose of affirmation-- "*I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and your love toward all (your fellow Christians), and for this reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers.*" [Ephesians 1:15-16]. Paul goes on to express his gratefulness and deep joy for the ways that the growing congregation was an effective presence as the Body of Christ in that particular setting.

It was clear that the members' love for Christ was tangibly and practically demonstrated by the way they treated one another, as well as others around them. This is exactly what Church is all about... it is that individuals in love with Jesus express that love in their relationships with one another as well as with strangers (aka "members-yet-to-be").

Near the end of his letter, Paul prays that such a good thing might become even better! His motivational approach quite likely enabled that to happen in the years that followed!

**My own prayer theme for United Church of Christ-Judd Street is that we would all re-discover and re-commit ourselves to practicing this spirit of affirmation in all that we plan and do in this our ninety-fifth year... and beyond.**

In and through Christ we can do it!  
Pastor Phil

## From the Associate Pastor

**"Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about**

**anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."**  
Philippians 4:4-7

These verses from Paul's letter to the church at Philippi are my focus verses for this year. I encourage you all to memorize them, meditate on them, and let them sink into your life.

As the new year begins, I'm remembering to **"Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice."** Here are some of the things I hear God saying through these words:

- To **rejoice** means to be enthusiastic about what God has given us.
- Our rejoicing is **in the Lord**. It's not just a general happiness, a constant smiling face – it's always focusing on what God has done, what God is doing, and what God will be doing.
- It is rejoicing **always**, not just when we're singing great songs of praise, or experiencing a special high moment in our lives. It's living with the constant awareness that God is with us all the time.
- It is rejoicing **again, and again, and again**. When we experience loss and brokenness, remember that God is always present; he knows our pain. Keep God's words alive in your heart and mind, and you will be able to rejoice, no matter what.

Finally, let me share one of my reasons for rejoicing. Almost four years ago, Pastor Phil, an old friend and colleague, invited me to help out as Associate Pastor here at UCC Judd Street for six months. And I'm still here! And that is a good reason for me to rejoice, as I've had the opportunity to work with Phil and all of you, and the journey continues. Thank you, Phil, for your invitation, your friendship, and the joy of working with this family of faith. And as you anticipate retirement next month, remember, I retired ten years ago! God has many surprises in store for you.

Keep the light shining, and to God alone be the Glory!

Your brother in Christ, Pastor Don



## JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM 2010 Challenge yourself – Change the World

**FOR YOU WERE BOUGHT WITH A PRICE;  
THEREFORE GLORIFY GOD IN YOUR  
BODY. 1Cor. 6:20**

Wow! More than 80 folks in our congregation began the JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM on January 3<sup>rd</sup>. As this is written, our exercise “miles” have taken us about a third of the way across the Pacific Ocean toward the Marshall Islands...our first landfall. Keep on “swimming” as you take time to move your body and contemplate the weekly devotion.

As we move along on our journey, we want to be mindful of how each one of us affects the whole. Each one of us adds miles to the congregation journey across the map. Each one of us has the opportunity to expand our knowledge of the Bible and all of God’s creation. Each one of us can begin and end the day with grateful hearts for God’s grace and be a light to those suffering. As individuals and as a congregation, we are blessed with opportunities to share God’s light and love to a hurting world.

During our ocean travels, you might be more mindful of what goes down the drain and into our ocean. As consumers, we can “go green” - the newspapers are full of ideas for decreasing waste that might end up in the ocean. As we unburden ourselves of excess baggage and let more of God in, we can clean out nooks and crannies of our homes. **Clean, useable** non-perishables – clothes, toiletries, office supplies and of course canned goods can be donated to the box at church and will be distributed by the missions committee to agencies serving those in most need.

**All** are welcome to join this 12-week journey any time by just adding your name to the list, taking the weekly devotion and information page. It is never too late to begin challenging yourself and helping to change the world by living more like Jesus. This program is a way to “kick start” a healthier 2010. JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM is co-sponsored by the Health Ministry Section of the Membership and Evangelism Committee and the Missions Committee.

## Family Promise on January 31, 2010 to February 7, 2010

By Dwight Ovitt, Coordinator

We will again be hosting four or five families during the first week of February at UCC- Judd Street. The specifics regarding the families will not be available until a week before the date since some families may have other plans by that time.

I am looking for folks who can spend the overnight hours of 8:00 pm to 7:00 am. We need to make sure that the families have a church member available during the evenings in case an emergency develops. They can also assist in getting breakfast items ready for the next morning. Our guests get up by 6:00 am and should be ready to leave on the van at 7:00 am. Some get up earlier so they can leave for work by bus. One adult male and one adult female overnight is ideal, but at least one adult is required.

We are also looking for volunteers to help prepare a meal for about 20 each night. Oftentimes several volunteers join together to prepare a meal: someone preparing the main course, another providing the vegetable, and another providing a dessert. Signup sheets will be available after church on January 17<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>. If you wish to help with a monetary donation for a meal, that would also be fine. Staples needed: 20 lbs of rice, cold cereal, milk, juices, peanut butter, jam, and coffee.

10+ volunteers to set up on the 31<sup>st</sup> at 12 noon and another 8+ on the 7<sup>th</sup> of February to take down and transport beds on 4 trucks will be greatly appreciated. We always need 5 people to wash linen and blankets at the end.

Mahalo in advance for your willingness to be a part of Family Promise, helping our homeless families have a safe place to sleep and food to nourish their bodies.

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## Ladies! It's T.E.A. Fellowship Time!

Sunday, January 31, 11:45 a.m.  
 Out-door Café at UCC-Judd Street Courtyard  
 Theme: "Letting Go and Holding On"  
 Living abundantly in 2010  
 "My Faith Journey – So Far"- Faith Okawa  
 A hearty salad bar!!!  
 Sign-up today!

## 95<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Update

By MH Sato

The kickoff event has come and gone. We are well on our way to celebrating 95 years since 1915 when Jessie and Elijah McKenzie decided to walk the streets of Chinatown teaching the immigrants about Jesus to 2010 when we see that "The Lord Has Done Great Things" in our lives and the life of UCC-Judd Street.

If you did not receive a special magnet listing all the events of this year, please see Edison Chong.

Photo taking for the Pictorial Directory continues each Sunday before and after worship service. You may submit a picture of your own to be scanned.

Pastor Phil's Retirement Celebration on Sunday, February 28, 2010, at the Empress Restaurant is the first event for this year. Tickets are \$25/each or \$250/table and are available each Sunday.

Donations to help defray costs are being accepted: UCC-Judd Street 95<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

If there are any questions, please contact Eric Lum, MH Sato, or Maddie Young.

## Birthday Greetings for February 2010

By Membership Committee



Your birthday is a blessed event for you are God's gift. Your fellow brothers and sisters in Christ wish that your special day be filled with joy and happiness.

<b>1 Nancy Soohoo</b>	<b>3 George B.W. Lau</b>
<b>6 Muriel Char</b>	<b>6 Kayla Wong</b>
<b>7 Jaclyn Lum</b>	<b>7 Dana Sato</b>
<b>8 Sara Tseng</b>	<b>9 Eric S. Lum</b>
<b>10 Jason Prakash</b>	<b>10 J.P. Sabbithi</b>
<b>12 Edward Pihana-Imperial</b>	
<b>12 Stephanie Taniguchi</b>	
<b>13 Bruce Asato</b>	<b>13 Barbara W. Chun</b>
<b>14 John Chun</b>	<b>17 Bertha Char</b>
<b>17 Nancy Wong Lau</b>	<b>17 Jazmin Matapua</b>
<b>18 Alison Leong</b>	<b>18 Franklin Young</b>
<b>19 Michael Chun</b>	<b>19 Carl Yoshimura</b>
<b>20 Creighton Mow</b>	<b>25 Betty P.C. Chang</b>
<b>25 Mariah Matapua</b>	<b>27 Aiden Wong</b>

## Prayers for Health and Healing

From the Membership Committee

*"...Pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective." (James 5:16)*

Please pray for our members and friends who need your intercessory support for comfort, health, and healing. Your prayers bring hope and the fellowship of Christian love to our folks in their time of need.

Mrs. Bertha Char	Mrs. Shirley Tuthill
Mr. Howard Ching	Mrs. Irene Yuen
Mrs. Eugenie Lau	Mrs. Dorothy Lum
Mrs. Adeline Zane	Mr. Dennis Yuen
Mrs. Evelyn Lau	Mr. Jonathan Spiker
Mrs. Jane Oshiro	Mrs. Ruth Pang
Mrs. Janet Bles	Ms. Jocelyn Ho
Ms. Tina Knudsen	

Please phone the office (536-8418) if you wish to add to the list or you no longer need to be listed.

## News from Members Away

### Eleanor Lee

Eleanor Lee recently left Hawaii to live with her family in California. She is adjusting well with the new climate and her granddaughter, Elena, in San Jose. She attends church there and was able to sign up for flowers on January 24<sup>th</sup>, which is grandpa Watson's birthday!

Although she misses all of us here, she feels blessed to be able to be with her children and grandchildren as well as making new friends and experiencing new adventures.

### Eugenie Lau & Family

*“My soul finds rest in God alone; my salvation comes from him. He alone is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress, I will never be shaken.” (Ps. 62:1-2)*

Dear Family & Friends,

Greetings again from Deerfield, Illinois! 2009 certainly ended up “interesting,” to say the least.

Anastasia turned 5, weighs 36 pounds and is 42-1/2" in height. She learned how to tie her own shoe laces, and her reading skills improved exponentially over the summer. Ana also started Chinese school that meets one hour every Saturday. Ana follows her mom in several ways. First, she has an outgoing personality. When our adult friends come and visit, she will interact and read books with them. Second, she has a high pain threshold. The night before her medical appointment, she confidently told Genie that she wouldn't cry when given her shots, saying, “They will only hurt a while.” I (Te-Li) was skeptical, but she surprised me and didn't cry one bit when she received 4 shots and a skin test for tuberculosis.

I (Te-Li) continue to teach the New Testament at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. I teach 2-3 new classes a year and repeat several classes. The pace of my teaching load is not as hectic as it was last year.

I (Genie) continue to work as FT stay-at-home mom and have not looked for work elsewhere, finding plenty enough to do with Ana each day. In the fall I started teaching 2-year olds in Sunday School at North Suburban. My book recommendation would be *The Chronicles of Narnia* – great reading at 12 years of age and still so at 40+.

In light of this new adventure the Lord has brought us, *1 Thess. 5:16-17: “Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.”* has taken on new significance.

As some of you may know, Genie was diagnosed with stage 4 lung cancer in early November. Needless to say, this turn of events was a real surprise to us as she has always been relatively healthy and never smoked. She spent 2 weeks in the hospital, which included several days in the ICU and undergoing a surgery to minimize the possibility of cardiac arrest due to the cancer. Her mom and aunt came from Hawaii to help during her hospitalization and were a great blessing to us. Genie is currently going through chemotherapy and resting at home. In the meantime, I am dusting off my old apron and reading up on recipes for quick and simple meals.

Many thanks to all of you for your kind expressions of love and concern through prayer, e-mails, cards gifts, and visits. This illness has reminded us to find strength in the joy of the Lord. We are grateful for God's faithfulness and love towards us, a love which led him to give his son for us so that we would no longer need to fear death.

In this Christmas season and in 2010, may you draw closer to God and may he alone be your rock and salvation.

Blessings,

Te-Li, Eugenie, & Anastasia

## Christmas Caroling 2009

By The Membership Committee

Each year an invitation is made inviting all who are able and willing to “Share your gifts of voice and musical talents and to let your spirits soar by sharing the joy of Christmas with folks who are in assisted- living facilities, care homes, and hospice care.” The response has been overwhelming every year and for that we thank all who graciously gave of their time and talents.

We thank the Sunday School staff for providing us with the beautiful Advent wreaths that were gifted to each facility visited.

Two participants write of their caroling experiences and the impact it made on them in the spirit of Christmas.

## Some Old Fashion Christmas Songs

By Richard Young

On Sunday, December 13, 2009, the UCC–Judd Street annual tradition of Christmas caroling took place at six different Honolulu locations. After a delicious lunch and briefing by Chair Karen Mun, two groups set out to spread some Christmas cheer in three different locations.

Our large group of carolers, ranging from three-year-old Amanda Tsuha to those of us well into senior citizenry, was a true reflection of the multi-generational facet of our congregation. It was touching to see the enthusiasm that abounded in all as we headed toward the first destination.

Upon arriving at the St. Francis Hospice, we gathered in the lobby for prayer and an introduction by Pastor Don before proceeding to the main wing where we walked and sang to the individuals as they listened from open doors to their rooms. The quiet expressions of gratitude by way of smiles, waves, and words of thanks from residents, staff, and visiting family members was indeed a blessing to all of us as was the spread of cookies and punch that awaited us after we had concluded our caroling.

Nuuanu Hale presented an altogether different venue with residents awaiting us in a large hallway lobby some on chairs, others in wheelchairs. The arrangement lent itself well to some of us sharing our music with the residents and, to our delight, having them enthusiastically join us in singing the

seasonal songs which were our common bond. A special treat for us was the opportunity to visit with long-time church member, Bertha Char, in her room. As we concluded our time there with hugs and outstretched hands to our new found friends, the repeated “thank yous,” many with tear-filled smiles, was a gift that few of us will ever forget...even long after the excitement of Christmas has passed.

Our third and final stop was at the Hale Kuike where Nelson Loo, who once served on our Membership Committee, now resides. This home for seniors with Alzheimer’s is a facility new to many of us in the group. It is a setting more like a large living room where residents, seated in a large circle, allowed some of us to sit amongst them to share our music so they could join in the singing...and sing they did!



*Connor Asato, Florence Shibuya, Bob Okimoto, Loretta Chee, Avery Asato, Bruce Asato.*

Before leaving, we were treated to a tour of the facility which allowed us the opportunity to further experience the homey and highly personalized approach used in the design and operation of this special care facility.

For all of us, seniors...young adults...teens...pre-teens...and even Amanda, the heartwarming messages we received at each of these special places was the reminder of how blessed we are to be able to share the joy of Christmas with these folks. What we received was above and beyond worldly treasures. It was also a reminder of the significance of our time, our caring, and the healing that comes to the human heart with just a few old fashioned Christmas songs delivered with a genuine dose of aloha.

## A Time for Caroling

By Roy K.S. Chang

Christmas caroling this year was on December 13, 2009. For those who keep count, that's only 12 shopping days before Christmas. Whenever I mention this countdown to Anna, she gets even more stressed out. (I do it on purpose.) It's like watching a pot of water come to a boil. First a few bubbles, and before you know it, "rapid boil." No time to waste!

Why is it that women get so stressed out the closer we get to Christmas? Whereas for us guys...no stress. Could it be because I only have one gift to buy, and I usually wait until Christmas Eve? Of course, I've learned not to use a charge card as it leaves a paper trail with the date of purchase.

So you could imagine Anna's response when I suggested that this year we go Christmas caroling. Over the years, I usually got these responses: "But I can't sing;" "You can go (alone) since you like to sing so much;" "Oh, but I have so much more shopping to do." But this year, it was different. She finally agreed to just "ride along." It would be our first time Christmas caroling with the Church.

For those who have never been caroling with UCC-Judd Street, it was an experience to behold. With military precision, Karen Mun had everything organized. "Roy, you look to this chart to find out if you're in (platoon) Group 1 or 2, then you find your name and the number next to it (#24). It tells you who your driver is. Let's see...#24 is Pastor Phil...you're riding with Pastor Phil. Take this map, and you can be his navigator." (I always thought that God was his co-pilot?)

Following a quick (and I do mean quick) lunch of noodles and Chinese chicken salad, Group 2's platoon leader, General Asman, roused the troops from our meal and led us to the parking lot to mount our horses. Karen had scheduled the first care home for an e.t.a. (estimated time of arrival) of 12:30 hours, and two other homes every 45 minutes thereafter. No time to waste!

For Group 1, our first destination was a short drive down Liliha Street to the Korean Care Home. As we arrived, the aroma of a Korean lunch got my gastric juices flowing again. Unfortunately, we weren't there to eat. We were directed to a covered

patio where all the residents were assembled, awaiting our arrival.

Initially, it was difficult getting them to sing along as many didn't understand English. But when we got to the universal carols like "Silent Night" and "Oh Come All Ye Faithful," we knew we had them. After 20 minutes of carols, we were off to destination #2, Manoa Cottages.

When we got to Manoa, we almost didn't recognize the area because it was a bright, beautiful, sunny day. Nestled behind a giant tree were a series of cottages that opened out to a beautiful courtyard, complete with a water fountain, fishpond and two pet chickens. Waiting for us in their large activities room were the residents, including a very special resident, Ruth Pang, a member of our church.

Following rousing choruses of "Jingle Bells," "Mele Kalikimaka," and other favorites of the season, the staff served us cookies, cake and iced tea. After this welcomed repast for our parched vocal chords, we were off to Hale Ola Kino at One Kalakaua. No time to waste!

At Hale Ola Kino, our audience was just a handful of residents as most could not make it out of their rooms. Did this stop the UCC-Judd Street carolers? Of course not! If they couldn't come to the music, we took the music to them by caroling down the hallways. At the end, the staff was equally as hospitable with cookies, candies and juice.

Tired, exhausted and all sung out, our caravan of carolers returned to the church. On my way home, I reflected on the day's experiences. Freshly imprinted in my memory were the faces of the many people we had met and the camaraderie of Group #1.

Time, how often we tend to waste it because we think we have lots of it. For the people we met today, time was precious, none to waste.

As we go about our hectic lives, especially at this time of year, we sometimes devote time to pursuits that don't always bring lasting benefits to others or to ourselves. Those minutes, hours or days can never be recovered. Our time on earth cannot be extended by even a single minute.

There is a saying: "Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away." There were many moments

*Continued on next page*

**Time for Caroling** (cont'd.)

that took my breath away this past Sunday: seeing the entire Matapua family singing, playing the ukulele and dancing the hula to "Christmas Luau;" Dwight Ovitt at the Korean Care Home trying to get the residents to sing along to that Korean favorite, "Feliz Navidad," and Dwight trying to convince everyone that he's really from cold, snowy Vermont where he lived on a farm and used to go riding in a "one horse open sleigh." Of course, he did have the sleigh bells with him to prove it.

There was Jane Bacon ringing a bell she was wearing around her neck to provide realistic sound effects to "Silver Bells" and "Jingle Bells." Of course, who could forget Pastor Phil thumping the beat to "Feliz Navidad" on his brand new fiberglass guitar or Ruth Pang singing along with Dwight. And that one priceless moment, when Karen playfully scolded Larry because he got so excited and started dancing, making it impossible for Karen to see the ukulele chords on the song sheet he was holding. Yes, and even Anna, the one who "doesn't sing," was moved to song.

These were memorable moments. But God also provided us with memories of the people we met, from those at the Korean Home who didn't understand much English, to the residents at Manoa and One Kalakaua who joined us in song.

With each song, you could see eyes brighten, lips moving, hands keeping time to the melody. For those who could not sing along, you could hear the singing in their hearts. They smiled as if recalling a special time in their lives, perhaps when they were young or when their children were young, when these songs brought joy and happiness.

There were many other things that all of us carolers could have done this past Sunday, but we wouldn't have had these precious moments. I have come to learn in my life that the best things are rarely about "me" and nearly always about "we."

Our last song at each home was "We Wish You a Merry Christmas." There is something magical about Christmas and Christmas caroling. We all shared that magic with our friends at the care homes and with each other. We thank God for Christmas, for caroling and for this special and memorable time we shared together.

**River of Life Mission: January 13, 2010**

By Dwight Ovitt

Two more men are now "experts" in cooking with the Chinese wok in our kitchen. They are Edwardo Imperial and Javier Figueroa. One is Filipino and the other is Puerto Rican. Javier was a former guest at River of Life and is now here to help cook the food.

We prepared curry chicken stew with the assistance of our regulars: Jane Bacon, Faith Okawa, Kathy and Kenji Sumida, Loretta Yee, Dennis Lee, Frank Alip, David Char, Michael and Sylvia Young, Loretta Chee, Cynthia Lai, and me. Cynthia Lai again purchased the ingredients and helped to add spices to make the food delicious. Westley Mow also came by later in the evening to help clean up.

At River of Life, the worship team of Richard Young, Bruce and Connor Asato, Jon Yoshishige, and Pastor Don and Judy Asman lead the worship service as well as assisted in serving meals to 184 guests. Also helping to serve the meals were Dennis and Charlotte Yuen with children Stanneth and Dennielle who were on break from college in California. Joseph Petaia, Jeff and Susanne Naval, Trudie China, Gwen, and Kenneth Nishimura and son Liam, Gertrude Hara, Geena Wan, Brett Kurashige, Benson Young, and Wendy Mow-Taira also helped serve, wash pans, clean floors, and offered their assistance to individual guests that evening.

This was our first dinner for 2010, the 21<sup>st</sup> year of serving the homeless and poor participants of this very special ministry at River of Life. Mahalo to all who came to help provide a meal and a message of hope during this difficult time.

**UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
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## **WORSHIP CALENDAR**

### **January 24, 2010**

10:30 a.m. Worship—Pastor Phil Mark, preaching  
Sermon: “The Unity that Only Christ can Give”  
Scriptures: Ephesians 2: 11–22; I Corinthians 3: 1–15

### **January 31, 2010**

10:30 a.m. Worship—Pastor Phil Mark, preaching  
Sermon: “When Outsiders Become Insiders”  
Scriptures: Ephesians 3: 1–7; Luke 24: 13–35

### **February 7, 2010**

10:30 a.m. Worship and Service of Holy Communion—Pastor Phil Mark, preaching  
Sermon: “When the Eyes of our Hearts are Opened”  
Scripture: Luke 24: 13-35

### **February 14, 2010**

10:30 a.m. Worship—Pastor Phil Mark, preaching  
Sermon: “Living as Gifted People”  
Scripture: Ephesians 4: 1-16; Luke 9: 10–17