



Little Brown Church of Sunol

United Church of Christ – Congregational

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March 2017

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March-April Calendar

Ash Wednesday, March 1 -- 7:30 p.m., Niles Discovery Church, 36600 Niles Blvd., Fremont

Saturday, March 25 -- LBC provides SRT refreshments at Sunol Glen School

Palm Sunday, April 9 -- Worship at LBC

Maundy Thursday, April 13 -- Location TBA

Good Friday, April 14 -- 7:30 p.m., Niles Discovery Church, 36600 Niles Blvd., Fremont

Saturday, April 15 -- Conant-Spindler nuptials

Easter Sunday, April 16 -- Worship at LBC

A Wedding Invitation

Mary Conant and Robin Spindler will be married on Saturday, April 15, in Berkeley. The ceremony will be held at 5 p.m. in the Brazilian Room in Tilden Park, on Wildcat Canyon Road at Shasta Road.

All members of Little Brown Church are invited, along with their spouses, significant others, and children. An exact number will be needed as dinner will be served following the ceremony. Please RSVP by **March 15** via email to mpconant@comcast.net.

SRT refreshments

Little Brown Church will again provide the intermission refreshments at the Saturday, March 25, performance of Sunol Repertory Theater. As in previous years, we need people to bring food, beverages and supplies and to help at the event. Please email Barbara Egbert at

b.jean.editor@gmail.com and sign up to bring juice, strawberries, cookies, cupcakes or other baked goods. Also, let her know whether you can help at the event. Food and supplies should be dropped off at the Sunol Glen School cafeteria by 7 p.m. Helpers should be there by 8 p.m. to get ready. (Intermission usually occurs about 9 p.m.) We will collect donations and let members of the greater community know about our church.

New wedding coordinator

The Rev. Dr. Leslie Carole Taylor is the new wedding coordinator for The Little Brown Church. Her full-time job is assistant director of recruitment and admissions at the Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley. Before joining PSR in 2015, she was director of student services and the United Church of Christ and Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) minister-in-residence at Methodist Theological School in Ohio.

Upcoming shelter dinners

LBC has three more dates in 2017 lined up for serving dinner at Sunrise Village homeless shelter in Fremont.

Please add these dates to your calendar:

Monday, May 15

Monday, June 19

Tuesday, August 15

Menu ideas are always welcome! Let Robin know about your favorite recipes that work well for a hungry crowd of residents and a crew of amateur but enthusiastic cooks.

Lent Madness 2017

The Sainly Smackdown Returns!

Are you looking for something fun to focus on? Are you longing for inspiration and joy? For the eighth year running, people of faith are gearing up for Lent Madness, the “sainly smackdown” in which thirty-two saints do battle to win the coveted Golden Halo during the season of Lent.

With its unique blend of competition, learning, and humor, Lent Madness allows participants to be inspired by the ways in which God has worked through the lives of saintly souls across generations and cultures.

Based loosely on the NCAA basketball tournament, this online devotion pits saints against one another in a bracket as voters choose their favorites throughout the penitential season of Lent. This year’s competition begins on “Ash Thursday,” March 2.

Here’s how to participate: on the weekdays of Lent, information is posted at www.lentmadness.org about two different saints. Each pairing remains open for 24 hours as participants read about and then vote to determine which saint moves on to the next round. Sixteen saints make it to the Round of the Sainly Sixteen; eight advance to the Round of the Elate Eight; four make it to the Faithful Four; two to the Championship; and the winner is awarded the coveted Golden Halo.

The first round consists of basic biographical information about each of the 32 saints. Things get a bit more interesting in the subsequent rounds as we offer quotes and quirks, explore legends, and even move into the area of saintly kitsch.

This year Lent Madness features an intriguing slate of saints ancient and modern, Biblical and ecclesiastical. 2017 heavyweights include Joan of Arc, Martin Luther, Florence Nightingale, Stephen the Martyr, and Sarah the Matriarch. It also includes several intriguing matchups including Augustine of Hippo vs. Augustine of Canterbury (All-Augustine Anarchy); Fanny Crosby vs. G.F. Handel (Battle of the Bands); and Joseph Schereschewsky vs. Nikolaus von Zinzendorf (Clash of the Consonants).

The full bracket is online at the Lent Madness website www.lentmadness.org and, while not necessary to participate, you can order the Sainly Scorecard: The Definitive Guide to Lent Madness 2017 at www.forwardmovement.org. This companion guide includes biographies of all 32 saints, a full-color bracket, information about how to fully participate, and a series of Pocket Lent trading cards.

Lent Madness began in 2010 as the brainchild of the Rev. Tim Schenck, an Episcopal priest and rector of St. John's Church in Hingham, Massachusetts. In seeking a fun, engaging way for people to learn about the men and women who make up the church's calendar of saints, Schenck devised this devotion. Combining his love of sports with his passion for the lives of the saints, Lent Madness was born.

Starting in 2012, Schenck partnered with Forward Movement (the same folks that publish Forward Day by Day) executive director Scott Gunn, to bring Lent Madness to the masses. Schenck and Gunn form the self-appointed Supreme Executive Committee, a more-or-less benevolent dictatorship that runs the entire operation.

The formula has worked as this online devotional has been featured in media outlets all over the country including national television, the Washington Post, NPR, USAToday, and even Sports Illustrated (seriously). More importantly thousands of people have been inspired by the saintly stories of those who have come before us in the faith.

Eleven "celebrity bloggers" from across the country have been tapped to write for the project: the Rev. Amber Belldene of San Francisco, CA; the Rev. Laurie Brock of Lexington, KY; Anna Fitch Courie of Ft. Leavenworth, KS; Dr. David Creech of Moorhead, MN; the Rev. Megan Castellan of Kansas City, MO; Neva Rae Fox of Somerville, NJ; the Rev. David Hansen of Woodlands, TX; Beth Lewis of Minneapolis, MN; Hugo Olaiz of Cincinnati, OH; Dr. Derek Olsen of Baltimore, MD; and the Rev. David Sibley of Manhasset, NY. Information about each of the celebrity bloggers and the rest of the team is available on the Lent Madness website.

If you're looking for a Lenten discipline that is fun, educational, occasionally goofy, and always joyful, join the Lent Madness journey. Lent needn't be all doom and gloom. After all, what could be more joyful than a season specifically set aside to get closer to Jesus Christ?

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LITTLE BROWN CHURCH OF SUNOL

Pastor: The Rev. Mary P. Conant (phone 510-866-3167, email mpconant@comcast.net)