

ADULT EDUCATION CLASSES

Spring 2017



We are a *multigenerational, social justice oriented* community of joyful, imperfect people who *welcome absolutely everybody* with hospitality, openness and acceptance.

Montclair Presbyterian Church
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Spring 2017 Adult Education Classes

Birding at Arrowhead Marsh

Miles & Mary Ellen McKey



Take a break from the political situation and join Mary Ellen and Miles McKey in a birding escape at nearby Arrowhead Marsh. The marsh is the winter home for many hundreds of waterfowl—ducks, grebes, waders, shore birds—which breed in the Arctic and fly south as the weather chill sets in. They are

easy to see as they sit on the water—no flitting around in tall trees! We always have fun and learn a lot. Heavy rain will postpone the class.

Dates: Saturday 1/14

Location: Room 10

Conveners: Miles & Mary Ellen McKey

Time: 8:00 – 10:00 a.m.

Class Size: 10-20

Donations Welcome

The History of the Son of God

Dr. Christopher Ocker

This series will examine how Christians in cities around the Mediterranean developed the idea that Jesus of Nazareth is God in antiquity, how the idea of the divinity of Jesus led to the doctrine of the Trinity in a Christianizing Roman Empire, and how biblical scholars and Protestant theologians in eighteenth and nineteenth-century Europe challenged and reinterpreted the traditional Christian dogma of Jesus as God.



Dr. Ocker is a Professor of Church History at San Francisco Theological Seminary and has taught at MPC before.

Dates: Sundays, 2/5, 2/12, 2/19, 2/26

Location: Room 10

Convener: Minda Lucero

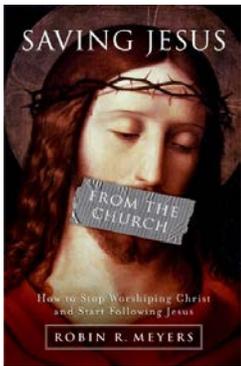
Time: 8:30 – 9:45 a.m.

Class Size: 10-20

Suggested Donation: \$20

Book Discussion: Saving Jesus from the Church

Rick Heller



Robyn R. Myers – a member of the Jesus Seminar, a group of leading Biblical scholars who are searching for the “historical Jesus” -- has written a provocative book entitled: “Saving Jesus from the Church.” He discusses how many themes that dominate today’s Christian denominations – a personal relationship with Jesus; a focus on belief in the trinity; literal meanings of the Bible – would be alien to the historical Jesus. Using his extensive Biblical scholarship, he exhorts the Church to “go back to basics” and focus on what the historical Jesus stood for – bringing the Kingdom of God to earth today. Here

are some questions raised by Mr. Myers for discussion:

- When, how and why (and if) did the Church shift its focus from the teachings of the historical Jesus to “Christianity?” What should our focus be at MPC?
- Why asking “do you believe in Jesus” as a litmus test for Christianity might be the wrong question to ask.
- What does faith – as described by people like Paul and Luke – actually mean? What does it mean to MPC?
- How would Jesus view the tension between science and religion over the last 500 years?
- What is the Kingdom of God? How do we/can we help Jesus bring it to earth?

Dates: Sundays, 3/5, 3/12

Location: Room 10

Convener: Minda Lucero

Time: 8:30 - 9:45 a.m.

Size: 20-30

Donations welcome

John Calvin: An Introduction for Pilgrims

Ben Daniel

This introduction to John Calvin’s life, theology, spirituality, and political thought is open to anyone on a spiritual journey. Those whose spiritual journey will also include an actual trip to Geneva in the fall are especially encouraged to attend.



Dates: Sundays, 3/26, 4/2

Location: Room 10

Convener: Linda Benson

Time: 11:30 a.m.– 1:00 p.m.

Class Size: 10-20

Donations welcome



This class will look at the Parables of Jesus using the fresh insights and interesting perspectives found in the book *Parables as Subversive Speech* by William Herzog.

The Presenter is Michael Moreland, who happens to be Ben's dad.

Date: Sundays, 4/30, 5/7, 5/14, 5/21

Time: 8:30 – 9:45 a.m.

Location: Room 10

Class Size: No limit

Convener: Minda Lucero

Suggested Donation: \$20

Astrotheology: Theological Speculation on Extraterrestrial Life

Dr. Ted Peters

Outer space vibrates with spiritual meaning within the human soul. Astrobiology and related space sciences thrill us with expectations and even hopes. Ted Peters sets an agenda for the field of Astrotheology, asking: (1) Will confirmation of Extra Terrestrial Intelligence (ETI) cause terrestrial religion to collapse? (2) Can the scope of God's creation include the entire cosmos? (3) What can we expect when we encounter ETI? (4) How can religious leaders prepare theologically and ethically to greet our new space neighbors? Our thesis is that contact with extraterrestrial intelligence will expand the existing Christian vision that all of creation—including the 13.8 billion year history of the universe replete with all of God's creatures—is the gift of a loving and gracious God.



Ted Peters is an ordained pastor in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. He is now Distinguished Research Professor Emeritus of Systematic Theology and Ethics at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary and the Graduate Theological Union.

Date: Sunday, April 23

Time: 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Location: Thornhill Room

Class Size: No limit

Convener: David Siegenthaler

Donations welcome

Lenten Bible Study: The Gospel According to Matthew

Ben Daniel



The Lenten Bible Study will look at Matthew's Gospel, using the New Testament's first book as a tool to introduce methods for reading the whole Bible.

Talitha Aho will facilitate a Bible Study for the youth group on many of the same dates (except 3/15).

Dates: Wednesdays, 3/8, 3/15, 3/22, 3/29, 4/5

Time: 7:00 p.m. with optional simple supper at 6:15

Location: Thornhill Room

Class Size: No limit

Convener: Linda Benson

Donations welcome

Ongoing Classes

The Many Faces of God

We read books to expand our understanding of our own faith tradition and to explore other religions. Discussions are always lively and spirited. If the book for each month is not published in Contact, you can contact the convener, Jean Gregory, or Sharon Noteboom for questions.

Sharon Noteboom is a teacher, student and longtime member of our church.

Date: First Saturday of each month

Location: Thornhill Room

Convener: Jean Gregory

Sharon Noteboom



Time: 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.

Class Size: 8-12

Fee: none

Pastor's Bible Study



If ever you have wanted to learn more about the Bible – not just as a document used to excuse bad behavior, but as an ancient, many-layered, sometimes beautiful, sometimes-awful text made holy by centuries of the faithful who have found comfort, hope and inspiration in its pages – then the Pastor's Bible Study is for you. Everyone is welcome!

Date: Wednesdays

Location: Thornhill Room

Convener: N/A

Ben Daniel

Time: 12:00 -1:30 p.m.

Class Size: 8-12

Fee: None

Spring 2017 MPC Adult Education Class Information

How do I join a class?

Adult Education classes are open to all adults. The fees/suggested donations are used to pay outside teachers, but should never keep anyone from attending -- they can be waived. Signing up implies a commitment to attendance, any assigned preparation, and notification to the convener when an absence will be unavoidable.

For additional information about the offerings, please come to sign-up tables during registration at Family Hour on **Sundays, January 8, 15 and 22**, or contact the convener. The church will provide childcare if requested. Contact one of the Adult Education co-chairs, Margaretha Derasary at mderasary@gmail.com or Linda Benson at Lsbee@comcast.net or at either number from the MPC phone directory.

How else can I be involved with Adult Education?

You can contact one of the Adult Education co-chairs, Margaretha Derasary or Linda Benson at the contact information above, for the following:

- If you would like to become a convener.
- If you'd like to join the Adult Education committee.
- If you would like to lead a class, or have an idea for a class you'd like to see.