

# ADULT EDUCATION CLASSES

## Fall 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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# Fall 2017 Adult Education Classes

## Parables of Jesus in Context

Eugene Park

Many of the parables of Jesus in the synoptic gospels reflect the harsh reality of the day-to-day life of ordinary peasants in the time of Jesus. We will take a look at the social stratification of the ancient agrarian society during the Iron Age in the Mediterranean world to understand the socio-political dynamics embedded in the narrative world of the parables of Jesus. Then we will reflect on the effects the parables must have produced in the ears of the original audience. We will also ponder upon the theological meaning of the parables of Jesus for the 21<sup>st</sup> century Christians, who are far removed from the original setting but who still consider themselves as part of the target audience of the bible.



Dr. Park teaches at the San Francisco Theological Seminary and has taught at MPC before.

**Dates:** Sundays, 9/10, 9/17, 9/24

**Location:** Room 10

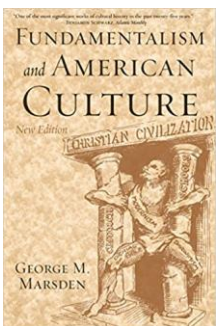
**Convener:** Minda Lucero

**Time:** 8:30 – 9:45 a.m.

**Class Size:** 10-20

**Suggested Donation:** \$15

## Fundamentalism & Evangelicalism in America: Book discussion Rick Heller



On July 15, The New York Times reported that 34% of Americans today adhere to the Fundamentalist belief in Creationism. 81% of white evangelicals voted for Trump. What, exactly, do Fundamentalists and Evangelicals believe? What is their history? Why are they growing in numbers while mainline Protestants seem to be declining? These are the topics we'll be discussing, based on the book "Fundamentalism and American Culture," by George Marsden.

Rick Heller is a member of Montclair Presbyterian Church and is currently attending seminary.

**Dates:** Sundays, 10/15, 10/22

**Location:** Room 10

**Convener:** Minda Lucero

**Time:** 8:30 – 9:45 a.m.

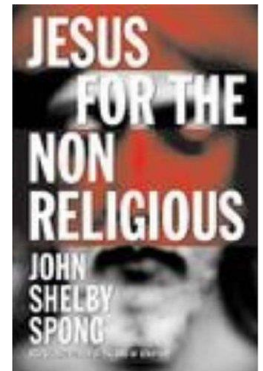
**Class Size:** 10-20

**Donations Welcome**

## Jesus for the Non-Religious: Book Discussion

Mike Griffith

In *Jesus for the Non-Religious* (2007), John Shelby Spong seeks to “pry loose” layers of miracles, myths, and creed. Spong hopes to reveal a Jesus “beyond religion” and to show the true “call of God through Jesus.” Does he succeed?



We will discuss the three major parts of Spong’s provocative book and his conclusion that a reformation is possible only after Jesus is “freed from the prison of religion.”

Mike Griffith is a member of MPC.

**Dates:** Sundays, 11/5, 11/12

**Location:** Room 10

**Convener:** Minda Lucero

**Time:** 8:30 – 9:45 a.m.

**Class Size:** 10-20

**Donations Welcome**

## Wintering Birds in Oakland

Miles and Mary Ellen McKey



Once again many thousands of ducks, geese and shorebirds will make their way south from their breeding grounds in the far north. Arrowhead Marsh, in the MLK Jr. Regional Shoreline, is a favorite wintering place for lots of species. Join Miles and Mary Ellen McKey to see what can be seen.

**Date:** Saturday, 1/13

**Location:** Arrowhead Marsh

**Convener:** Linda Benson

**Time:** 8:00 – 10:00 a.m.

**Class Size:** 10-20

**Donations Welcome**



Bishop Tutu **has** emphasized the critical role of forgiveness in building peace after apartheid. Is this emphasis on forgiveness warranted? Does forgiveness play the central role Tutu assigns it? If forgiveness doesn't play this role, what role **does** it play? Does forgiveness simply mean forgetting? Is it another word for healing?

We will explore forgiveness and the challenges of peacebuilding from three different perspectives, as follows:

- Biblical Forgiveness and Psychological Healing
- Peacebuilding: The Four Questions Approach
- The Role of Promise and Forgiveness in Reconciliation

Rev. Byron Bland is the Associate Director of the Stanford Center on International Conflict and Negotiation. He has worked for over 25 years in Northern Ireland and over 15 years in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

**Dates:** Sundays 2/11; 2/18; 2/25/2018 (this class has been postponed to February, look for it to be relisted in Spring catalog)

**Time:** 11:30 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.

**Location:** Room 10

**Size:** 20-30

**Convener:** Minda Lucero

**Suggested Donation:** \$15

# Ongoing Classes

## The Many Faces of God

We read books to expand our understanding of our own faith tradition, as well as explore other religions and important contemporary issues. We meet on the first Saturday of the month from 10 - 11:30 a.m. in the Thornhill Room. The book chosen for each month is generally published in *Contact*. Occasionally the group makes a change to the book choice or even the date, so if you have questions please contact convener Jean Gregory at [510 635-8838](tel:5106358838). For this fall the readings are scheduled to be:

September 2 - *American Nations* by Colin Woodard  
October 7 & November 4 - *Dark Money* by Jane Mayer

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

**Date:** 9/2, 10/14, 11/4, 12/2  
**Location:** Thornhill Room  
**Convener:** Jean Gregory

**Time:** 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.  
**Class Size:** 8-12  
**Fee:** None



## Sharon Noteboom

## 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

**Time:** 12:00 -1:30 p.m.  
**Class Size:** 8-12  
**Fee:** None

## Ben Daniel

# Spring 2017 MPC Adult Education Class Information

## How do I join a class?

For additional information about the offerings, please come to sign-up tables during registration at Family Hour on **Sundays, August 27, September 3 and 10**, 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](mailto:mderasary@gmail.com) or Linda Benson at [Lsbee@comcast.net](mailto:Lsbee@comcast.net) or at either number from the MPC phone directory.

Adult Education classes are open to all adults. Signing up implies a commitment to attendance, any assigned preparation, and notification to the convener when an absence will be unavoidable.

## What About Cost?

We want classes to be open to as many people as possible and we avoid required costs if we can, perhaps suggesting a donation. Outside teachers (e.g., from the seminaries) are paid for their time, and we do have a suggested donation to help with the costs. However, it is a suggestion and should never keep anyone from attending.

## 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.