

UUC LECTURE: LANDSCAPE OF THE CHURCH IN THE MIDDLE EAST

To raise the awareness of UUC and to recruit students to the Master's degree programs in the English School of Theology, UUC held a public event on January 28 at Trinity United Presbyterian Church in Santa Ana, where board member Bill Ditewig is on staff. The audience of about 70 people was treated to a lecture by UUC Chancellor Dr. Ray Bakke on the landscape of the church in the Middle East. The lecture combined humor and incredible insight to tell the history of the Christian church and the situation of the contemporary church in the Middle East. Having traveled there and studied that region for decades, Dr. Bakke has a wealth of knowledge of the situation in that region of the world.

Newly appointed Academic Dean of the English School of Theology, Dr. Fletcher Tink, was also there to speak about the unique mission of UUC and the opportunity to study at the Master's level in our English School of Theology beginning March 31. He gave a convincing talk about the uniqueness of our school which generated great interest.



Needless to say, the event was a great success! People learned about the church in a different region of the world. Many were excited about the work of UUC and there was also interest in our degree program. Particular thanks goes to Trinity United Presbyterian Church, which provided space and refreshments and Bill Ditewig, who made the arrangements.

Others associated with Union who were in attendance included former UUC President Dr. Cuong Huu Nguyen, Dr. Kim-Lien Ngo, Dr. Xuan Duc Nguyen, Dr. Xuan Son Nguyen, Fera Raming (Indonesian School of Theology), Dr. Lesly Joseph (French School of Theology), Shirley Akers (English School of Theology), and Paul Kim.

Message from
the President 2

Thanksgivings 4

Prayer Requests 4

UUC Day of Prayer 4

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Asking for a Second Miracle

“You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he will give it to you.”

John 15:16

“And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him.”

1 John 5:14-15

Last Friday, January 31, was the third anniversary of the day (Tet 2011) when Dr. Son Nguyen, on behalf of the UUC board, invited me to become president of our university. I said yes and then, as many of you know, was diagnosed two months later with a “fatal” brain cancer and given 18 to 24 months to live according to the statistical average of that type of cancer. When I was installed as president in May, 2011 I had just begun chemotherapy and was weak and frail. The cancer was growing quickly. Part of the installation service was a laying on of hands and prayers for my healing. In my inaugural address, I requested that we all expect the Lord to do extraordinary things for UUC since UUC was being led to do such an extraordinary thing in inaugurating me as president. At that same time, I had read again the story of King Hezekiah’s healing and of God granting Hezekiah an additional 15 years of life (**2 Kings 20**). And I asked the Lord to give me 15 years of additional time to serve him on the earth. Thousands of people around the world joined with me in that prayer, and carried me with their prayers through my most fragile time.

Today I believe that God has granted that request for 15 additional years. I am healthy. The cancer has shrunk to 10% of its size in May 2011, and is inactive. I quit taking chemotherapy a year ago. My regular MRIs showed the cancer shrinking for the first year, and small and stable for the last two years. My doctor wonders out loud if the tumor is viable anymore. I have come to believe that two of Jesus’ sayings apply to this tumor: “This illness is not unto death, but is for the glory of God” (**John 11:14**); and when Jesus cursed the fig tree, “May no fruit ever come from you again” (**Matthew 21:19**). I also noticed in my most recent reading of Matthew 21 that Jesus goes on to tell the disciples that “if you have faith and do not doubt, not only will you do what has been done to the fig tree...” I believe that together in our prayers, we have done to the cancer that invaded my brain what Jesus did to the fig tree. I don’t believe the cancer is viable anymore, or will ever bear fruit again. I have permission from Jesus to believe this is true, without the doubting that our scientific age expects of us.

So I and UUC have received a miracle. The fact that I am alive today, functioning well, and working on behalf of UUC is the opposite of what the best medical knowledge indicated would take place. I am believing that I will live to serve UUC for as long as the Lord leads me to, and after that the Lord will still give me years of life in this world to enjoy his creation, including his incredible people in the church around the world.

Now I want you to join me in asking for a second miracle.

I accepted the presidency of UUC with the understanding that God would act in behalf of the school in extraordinary ways. Much has happened in the past three years. God has expanded our community and our ministry. God has added new people to our staff and faculty to join the work of those who have been faithfully serv-

(continued on page 3)

Message from the President (continued)

ing for years. God has given us unexpected financial help from a faithful and generous donor. God has opened door after door, given opportunity upon opportunity to increase UUC's ministry. We are on the verge of teaching in five languages instead of two. We have networks of people throughout the United States and around the world who are learning about UUC and drawing near to support us. We are seeing more and more clearly how great is the hunger for learning among pastors and church leaders all over the world who have not had access to education. We have realized how unique we are in our commitment to church leaders and communities living in poverty and oppression. The Holy Spirit has opened our eyes to a larger calling. We have been judged faithful in our ongoing service to the Vietnamese Church. And because we have been faithful, the Lord is giving us responsibility over much more.

One thing is lacking. We need greater financial strength. We need a network of benefactors who understand our calling to UUC's ministry; and who understand their own calling to support us with the resources the Lord has given them. We can do so much more teaching with much smaller resources because of how we use technology and how we avoid the costs onsite schools must bear. But we need a breakthrough, a great leap forward in our financial strength. We need God to appoint the people whom he has chosen among his disciples to provide the financing of our school. We need the equivalent of a \$20 million endowment. We need the kind of support that traditional onsite schools have received from wealthy donors. The lack of major financial supporters is the factor that most holds us back from fulfilling our ministry.

Please join me to pray for the Lord to raise up in 2014 the benefactors we need to enable our ministry. We are asking "according to his will" (**1 John 5:14**) because we are asking for what we need in order to do his will as he has revealed it to us. We are asking "in order to go and bear fruit that will abide," the very thing we have been chosen for (**John 15:16**). So I hope you will not hesitate to join me in persistent prayer that the Lord will give us the benefactors that we need to support our school. **This is the second miracle I am asking for.**

And I want us to *ask together*, as disciples who are of one mind. Jesus once said that if his followers would agree on earth about anything we ask, it will be done for us by his Father in heaven (**Matthew 18:19**). I believe I received my first UUC miracle, my life and health and ongoing presidency, not because I prayed but because so many people prayed so persistently and are still praying. I would not have had the strength to accomplish that prayer of faith on my own. I believe that is how we will receive our second miracle too, as we pray consistently throughout this year that the Lord will raise up for us people to whom he has given great wealth, who learn of us and love us, and join in our work, providing the financial strength we need.

I can hardly wait to meet these people, to welcome them into our community, and to witness their joy at what we accomplish together. I believe they will come as we pray together for the Lord to bring them to us. Their appearing, to give our school its financial strength, will be the second miracle of my tenure as president. Thank you for joining me in this prayer.

Rev. Dr. Dale Sewall
President

UNION UNIVERSITY
OF CALIFORNIA

14200 GOLDENWEST STREET
WESTMINSTER, CA 92683

714.903.2762

info@uuc.edu

UUC
DAY OF PRAYER

UUC's
Board of Directors
invites UUC students,
faculty and friends
to join them
in prayer for UUC on
the **first Monday**
of the month.



www.uuc.edu

THANKSGIVINGS

- We are thankful for Dr. Fletcher Tink, the new UUC Dean of English School of Theology.
- We are thankful that UUC's application for accreditation from DETC has been submitted.

PRAYER REQUESTS

- Pray for Dr. Tink's new role at UUC and his recovery from injuries caused by a recent motorcycle accident in Nepal.
- Pray for the continued work on the accreditation process by UUC staff members.

SUPPORT UUC

Union University of California is able to provide scholarships to our underserved students primarily through the love and generosity of individuals like you. We welcome all levels of support, whether it is a one-time gift, a monthly donation, or a full scholarship for one of our students in need.

You can contribute by sending a check or money order to:

UNION UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

14200 GOLDENWEST STREET
WESTMINSTER, CA 92683

For more information on how to designate your gift toward specific programs, please contact info@uuc.edu.

Double your efforts!

Ask your workplace if they have a Matching Gifts Program.