October 8, 2009

Dear Friends in Christ,

I had a wonderful time at my intense, eight hour-a-day class on Pastoral Crisis Intervention last week in Braintree, Massachusetts, and was also able to get in on most of the business meeting for Pueblo Presbytery in Colorado Springs on Saturday. Thanks to Norvilla's suggestion, I also got to Sunday's final performance of *Children of a Lesser God* at Adams State. What a powerful play! As for the photo, no, this isn't the road I took; it comes from **Rusty and Sara**, on their way to the Festival de Espiritualidad in the remote Rio Apurimac Valley, 16 hours by bus, van and car from Lima, over the Andes Mountains and into the jungle. About this photo, Sara writes: The road over the Andes Mountains gets up over 16,000 feet. After Ayacucho, the road turns to gravel for the last seven hours. Sara was one of the keynote speakers at this event Sept.24-26. For more photos (including wonderful shots of children and a wedding), go to: http://www.facebook.com/album.php?aid=26526&id=1605742650&l=2592c23f44 . Sara says, "If you are on Facebook, look me up!"

In the midst of our own lives, we are always called to **pray** for others. This week, please pray especially for David Tucker, not expected to live much longer, and the Ritchie family of Raton on the death of their aunt, Madonna MacGowan, whose funeral I did on Tuesday. Phoebe asks prayers for her daughter, who has broken a leg, and John and Ellen report that Kate Daniels is still in need of prayer, although they rejoice that she is making progress toward recovery.

The news is on as I write this, and it reminds me of our need to pray also for the families of the thousands of people dead in Sumatra and the people of Samoa and American Samoa; the people of Japan after the typhoon; and the people of Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan living with suicide bombings, war and internal disarray. On this eighth anniversary of the American war in Afghanistan you, like me, have probably heard and read a wide variety of opinions and analysis about the best way to bring peace and stability there. Please pray for President Obama, that he may be led to a wise decision about future American policy in that troubled country.

Last night I attended a talk by Dr. John Fisher about the organization "Soldiers Heart" and ways in which communities can help returning **veterans**, who often suffer from what he calls "loss of soul," remaining isolated and in distress. There were a number of veterans and health care providers at the talk, and a good discussion afterwards. I would be glad to talk about what he said with anyone who is interested. You can also visit their website: www.soldiersheart.net. If you are interested in learning more about **Afghanistan**, you are invited to attend the screening of the DVD "Rethink Afghanistan" with the **Unitarian Universalist Fellowship**, this coming Tuesday, October 13, at 6:30 pm in Fellowship Hall. The website (rethinkafghanistan.com) for this full-length documentary by Robert Greenwald comments, "After eight years of US military engagement in Afghanistan, violence and instability still prevail. With over 90 percent of US funding in Afghanistan directed toward military purposes, nonmilitary strategic options are not being pursued. The problems facing Afghan society are economic, social and political in nature and require economic, social and political solutions. The US can play a more constructive role in Afghanistan by engaging civil society than by waging war."

There isn't room to catch you up on all of the church's mail for the week. Most urgent: We have a last-minute La Puente work group from Estes Park staying here this weekend. And: there will be a **fundraiser this Sunday**, October 11, for Valley Horizons, a local home for pregnant and parenting young women. You are encouraged to dine at All Gon Pizza in Fort Garland between noon and 8:00 pm Sunday. All Gon will donate 10% of your total bill to Valley Horizons. More information is on the narthex bulletin board.

Scriptures for Sunday:	Job 23:1-9, 16-17	Hebrews 4:12-16
	Psalm 22:1-15	Mark 10:17-31

Attached is a brochure for the **Bereavement Workshop,** "translated" (imperfectly) into Word 2003. Copies will also be in the bulletin again this week. Please use the form to register and mail it or put it in the offering plate. Your cost is $15 for the morning session and catered lunch; there is no charge for the congregational All Saints art project in the afternoon (which is not described in the brochure). If the cost is a problem, please let me know. I'm hoping that all of you can be here for this very special event on Saturday, October 24.

In Christ, Katherine **PS REMEMBER OUR MONTHLY BREAKFAST THIS SUNDAY!!!!**