

SMTribune article 6/15/18 “Won’t You Be My San Marino Neighbor?”

By Rev. Becca Bateman, Associate Pastor for Family Ministries

Like many one-year-olds, my daughter loves to dance and bop around. So we play music constantly. One day, as we listened to a children’s playlist compiled by “Alexa”, there was a delightful tune I gathered must be the theme song of some current children’s program. It sounded just like the melody from my old childhood favorite, *Mr. Rogers’ Neighborhood*. Was the tune plagiarized? I eventually learned that *Mr. Rogers’ Neighborhood* lives on as a hit show on PBS now based on his first puppet, Daniel Tiger. I’m pleased to know that a show like *Daniel Tiger’s Neighborhood* is out there for my daughter, and will hopefully be a treasured memory for her, as *Mr. Rogers’ Neighborhood* was for me.

2018 marks 50 years since Mr. Rogers became everyone’s favorite neighbor. *Mr. Rogers’ Neighborhood*, though a program limited by the bounds of a television screen and dedicated airtime, somehow reached beyond and inspired a generation of children with compassion and limitless imagination. His seemingly utopian neighborhood wasn’t without its problems but each problem, challenge, or character development was used as a platform and a teaching lesson for how it might be played out in real life. But more so than answers to life’s challenges, Mr. Rogers promoted asking questions, opening up worldviews, and seeking solutions for oneself.

San Marino Community Church invites the community to celebrate Mr. Rogers’ legacy, as we walk down memory lane this June. Mark your calendars for a “dinner and a movie” on **Friday, June 22 at 5:00**. We’ll meet at an appointed theater in Pasadena, to see the documentary “*Won’t You Be My Neighbor?*” which takes an intimate look at America’s favorite neighbor. With his zip-up cardigans and a land of make-believe, let’s dive into the heart of a creative genius, who inspired generations of children with compassion and limitless imagination. Registraton: <https://tinyurl.com/SMCCNeighbor2018>

Saturday 3:00-9:00 pm JUNE 23, we also invite the community to an All-Church Family Camp Day at Lacy Park where we expand on the “*Won’t You Be My Neighbor?*” theme. Take some time to grow deeper in your relationships within the community, your family and beyond. San Marino Community Church will have exclusive access to Lacy Park, offering a softball game, storytelling, fun family- building activities, dinner and snacks, campfire and more! Please visit our website for Registration: <https://tinyurl.com/SMCCFamilyCamp2018>

Sunday, June 24, at 11:00, after worship at San Marino Community Church, 1750 Virginia Road, come to a panel discussion about Mr. Rogers, known for interacting with his created neighborhood, preaching (he was an ordained Presbyterian minister after all) kindness, respect and family connection. His legacy continues as we address some themes from the TV show and its influences on society, children’s content, as well as the importance of the church utilizing the medium of television and movies to bridge theology and culture. Led by experts in the fields of television, theology, the development of children.

Also on Sunday morning, SMCC Children’s Programming will be showing and discussing the current hit animated show I mentioned above, *Daniel Tiger’s Neighborhood*, the spin-off of *Mr. Rogers’ Neighborhood*, based on the first puppet Mr. Rogers introduced. As a new parent, I’m thrilled that there is excellent content for my developing child, and for the future of our next generation. Join SMCC to learn more!