

## ***Something Greater* Workshop Series**

Old First member and author Jeanne Choy Tate will be leading a workshop series around the topics discussed in her book: *Something Greater: Culture, Family, and Community as Living Story*. Contrasting the intergenerational childrearing of Biblical and Chinese cultures with contemporary American practices, Jeannie will explore the impact of individualism on American society and the need for living stories of culture and faith to connect people to something greater than the individual self.

Although it will be helpful to have read the chapters to participate in the discussions, it is not necessary. Bring your insights even if you haven't had a chance yet to read the book!

**September 15, 12:30-1:30pm**

**Part I: Book Signing and Reception**

**October 6, 12:30-1:30pm**

**Part II: Chinese and American Families in Contrast**

- ***How do Chinese childrearing practices present an alternative to modern American individualism?***
- ***If I pass my beliefs on to my children, won't that stifle them? Shouldn't they make their own choices?***
- ***How do families in the U.S. pass a psychology of individualism on to their children?***
- ***Where else do children learn to value individualism?***

Possibly no other culture stands in such great contrast to American culture as Chinese culture. While the independent individual is highly valued in America, Chinese culture continues, as it has for centuries, to raise its children to value parent-child relationships and to understand personal identity in relation to the family. By failing to acknowledge the importance of intergenerational relationships, American parents turn their children over to the influence of their peers, media and pop culture.

**October 13, 12:30-1:30pm**

**Part III: From the Interdependence of Biblical Families to the Independent Individual**

- ***What can our individualistic culture learn from the interdependence of Biblical families?***
- ***How did American culture become so individualistic?***
- ***How do the values of faith communities provide a balance to the individualism of mainstream culture?***

From the beginning of the Biblical story of Genesis, Yahweh enters into history through families. Hebrew households and the whole community took responsibility for the religious upbringing of children. When Jesus came, he welcomed people into an even broader understanding of family relationships at the center of faith. Yet, as Western culture has developed, family households and caregivers now have little influence in the public arena of civic life. Influenced by a psychology of individualism that promotes “freeing” children to be unique individuals, many parents choose not to pass their faith along to their children.