

AVUCC KALOS

*Newsletter for the
Almaden Valley
United Church of Christ*

Pastor Kevin's Corner:

Poor in Spirit, Rich in Christmas

Frederick Buechner is a wonderful storyteller. He is also a prolific writer of books and essays that always seem to find new and unique ways to recognize the presence of God in the matters of everyday life. One biographer said that Buechner is a "writer and minister [who] has made a career of telling others about moments of holy insight." I have a practice of morning meditations and a few years ago I enjoyed reading Buechner's insights every day during my morning meditations. I read his book *Listening to Your Life* which has short meditations, one for each day, drawn from his novels, essays, and sermons. (Note: thinking ahead to the New Year, if you are interested in deepening your spiritual practice, you may want consider finding this book or many like it that offer you a daily meditation to begin or end your day.) Buechner's writings help us find ways to recognize Jesus Christ's presence within the world and in helping witness to the reign of God that is already here, but not yet fulfilled.

There was a dark time in Buechner's life when he was very sad and anxious. His daughter was very ill and his worry and anxiety over her made him sick too. During one especially bad day he received a telephone call out of the blue from an acquaintance of his who asked if he could come over for a visit. This man, who later became a close friend, was a minister from North Carolina and Buechner was living in Vermont. Buechner learned, though, that this man was actually at that moment staying at an inn just several miles from where Buechner lived. The man had heard that Buechner was in some

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December 2006

In this issue

Pastor Kevin's Corner—1-3

Council Notes—4

People in the Pews—4, 5, 6

JV Sandbox—6

Outreach and Caring—6, 7

Inspiration—7

Events—8, 9

Music—9, 10

Youth—11, 12,

Calendar—13, 14

October Lectionary—15

Pastor Kevin's Corner, cont.

troubled straits and without even calling ahead just came up to Vermont to pay a visit. Buechner says "The reason he didn't tell me in advance that he was coming must have been that he knew I would tell him for Heaven's sake not to do anything so crazy, so for Heaven's sake he did something crazier still which was to come...800 miles without telling me...." The man spent some considerable time over the next couple of days with Buechner just chatting about life and work and a lot of things while they smoked their pipes. Buechner says that as much as he can remember they never talked about Jesus Christ or even mentioned the name, Christ, but that this man's generosity, love and caring later made him realize that "Christ was as much in the air we breathed those few days as the smoke of our pipes was in the air, or the dappled light of the woods we walked through." Buechner says, "I believe that for a little time we both of us touched the hem of Christ's garment, were both of us, for a little time anyway, healed." At a time when Buechner was chained to his home and in the prison of anxiety and depression, Christ broke into his life through the visit and friendship of this acquaintance even though they didn't recognize at the moment that Jesus Christ was indeed in their presence.

John the Baptist, who we heard a little about in our early Advent lectionary readings (Luke 3:1-6, also see the readings in the back of the Kalos) spent some time in Herod's prison (See Matthew, chapter 11). The Greek word for "prison" literally means "the chain place." John was chained to this place and must have been feeling pretty depressed and abandoned. It must have been hard for him to believe there was any light in the midst of the darkness he was in. But, he hears rumors and stories about what Jesus, whom he had baptized, was doing around the countryside and in the cities. Even though he knew Jesus well and at the time he baptized Jesus he said that it should really be Jesus who was baptizing him, when he was depressed and sitting in prison he felt the need to send out his disciples to ask Jesus if he is really the "one to come,"

Pastor Kevin's Corner, cont.

the Messiah. John, from his chained place, didn't quite seem to recognize Jesus and the work he was doing. The one who had been sent by God to prepare the way for Jesus was failing to recognize that the Christ was already present.

So, Jesus, knowing John's predicament, recognizes the state that John must be in. But instead of telling John's disciples directly who he is, Jesus does not give a straight answer. He says, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind received their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them." (Matthew 11:4-5) Jesus knows that this news will reassure John, for John like Jesus, was a knowledgeable Jew who knew the Hebrew Scriptures. Jesus knew that John would recognize Jesus by the work he was doing that had been foretold by the prophet Isaiah. And Jesus goes on to say, "And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me." Jesus is saying that a person is fortunate who believes in him and is also fortunate when that belief does not make the person stumble in their faith or feel deserted. In this, perhaps Jesus is sending a somewhat cryptic message to John that John will have to figure out. Jesus is telling John to keep the faith! Jesus seems in the end to know that John is not like a reed who will be shaken in the wind and turmoil of what he is currently undergoing or what he is about to undergo. His message to John, to John's disciples who carried the message back to the prophet in prison, and to the people Jesus is teaching during this episode, is that even in times when God seems absent and sadness sets in that we followers of Jesus are to continue to prepare the way of the Lord and help witness to the reign of God by healing the sick and giving the good news to our neighbors. Most of all, we should remember that God is with us—Immanuel. We are to continue to look for those times when Christ is present in the world. God is present in the little things like visiting a friend who is sad or depressed, or sick, or whose faith is being buffeted by the strong winds of life. When we do these things,

Pastor Kevin's Corner, cont.

Christ is present whether we realize it or not. Every day can be a real Christmas day when you help make Christ present to your neighbors.

Paula Fredriksen, a professor and theologian, writes that the miracles that Jesus talked of in his message to John represent the “power of God breaking into the present.” Fredriksen is saying that the kingdom of God where God’s hidden work at healing the world is already taking place is here “now” but its ultimate fulfillment is “not yet.” Just like Fred Buechner and his friend, the story from Matthew about John and Jesus is a story about the presence of Christ in the here and now when, through the grace of God, friendships are made and renewed. And God is present with people who are poor in spirit or are oppressed by the events of the world that seem to be closing in on them and weighing them down. These are times when our burdens are lifted and we may not think of Jesus Christ being present but he is—he’s there working through the small moments of grace that are given to us. Jesus is the only true Christmas present that gives and keeps on giving.

Jesus tells John’s emissaries to go back and tell John, as John sits in that dark cell, that the sick are being healed, the dead are being resurrected, and that lepers are being cleansed. But for the poor, Jesus does not talk about healing or taking them out of poverty. For Jesus knows there will always be poverty, but perhaps he is also talking about the poor in spirit as he did earlier in his sermon on the mountain. People can be poor not only in money, but we can all be poor when we are oppressed by the things of this life. There will always be times when our spirits can be low, none more so than at Christmas time. During the darkness of winter and even during the rush of the holidays life can seem heavier.

Bishop Oscar Romero, the late arch bishop of El Salvador, who was assassinated in 1980, once said “No one can celebrate a genuine Christmas without

Pastor Kevin's Corner, cont.

being truly poor. The self-sufficient, the proud, those who, because they have everything, look down on others, those who have no need even of God—for them there will be no Christmas. Only the poor, the hungry, those who need someone to come on their behalf, will have that someone. That someone is God. Immanuel—God-with-us. Without poverty of spirit there can be no abundance of God.” As we prepare for and celebrate Christmas, and as we help prepare the way of the Lord, let us recognize those moments when we are poor in spirit or our neighbor is poor in spirit, and begin to look for and invite God into that place. Let us look for that light that was born at Christmas. Amen.

Pastor Kevin

Jones, Timothy K. “Frederick Buechner’s Sacred Journey” in *Christianity Today*, March 7, 2003 taken from <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2003/109/51.0.html>.

Buechner, Frederick. *Listening to Your Life*. (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1992, 310-311. Buechner, p. 311.

Fredriksen, Paula. *Jesus of Nazareth: King of the Jews*. (New York: Vintage Books, 1999), 116.

Romero, Oscar, in *Watch for the Light: Readings for Advent and Christmas*. (Farmington, PA: Plough Publishing House, 2001), pp. 141-142.



The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

J o h n 1 : 9

Church Council Notes

Moderator: Steve Coutinho
Vice-Moderator: Kelly Yamanishi
Treasurer: Jay Caturay
Recorder: Carolyn Dingman
At-Large Members: Dot Allfrey,
Sue Hamilton,
Al Nieders,
Janey Sanders, and
Bart Smith
Pastor Kevin Smith, *ex officio*

This is a summary of the Council meeting held on November 14, 2006. Official minutes will be posted on the bulletin board outside Fellowship Hall once they've been approved.

Pastor's Report

Pastor Kevin reported that Desi Brown will be leaving the office manager position on 11/24 and Dennis Elliott of AVUCC will be filling in temporarily. The JV Board will be reviewing the structure of the position before recruiting a new person. Preparations for Advent and Christmas worship are nearly complete. In May 2007, Kevin will be taking a week of study leave to attend a preaching conference in Nashville, TN.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Jay Caturay presented financial reports through 10/31/06 and projected a deficit for the year in the range of \$3-5 K which will be covered by funds on hand. The Council discussed the unused allocation for the minister's expense reimbursement and moved that some of these funds be used to purchase a laptop computer for Pastor Kevin's use. Al Nieders presented the proposed budget for 2007 which will be presented at the annual meeting on Nov. 19th. The budget includes a \$6000 line item for JV capital improvements that may be subject to change.

Church Council Notes, cont.

Other Business

Council planned the agenda for the Congregation's annual meeting. The Nominating Committee has a full slate of offices except for a vice moderator. The Long Range Planning Committee's Guidelines for Communication will be presented in the revised form.

Members of the Council also talked about current issues in the church community and agreed there remains a need for clearer communication lines among people with different points of view in AVUCC's congregation.

*Carolyn Dingman
AVUCC Recorder*



People In The Pews

Welcome back to David Dunlap. He has recovered very well from his recent heart surgery and we are glad to have David and Gloria worshipping on Sunday with all of us again. David and Gloria just celebrated their 11th wedding anniversary.

Pastor Kevin and his wife Nancy also celebrated an anniversary this month on the 9th of November.

Alex and Josh Bemis are members of the Santa Teresa Marching Band and their band has received several awards. The boys are proud to be a part of that activity (Thanks to their Moms for providing

People In The Pews, cont.

the lessons that make this part of their high school years possible.)

Congratulations to Judy Martin and Dennis Elliott who both came in second in their age divisions in the recent Silicon Valley Marathon. Dennis walked the Half Marathon.

Betsy Dingman, who is currently studying in Ireland, was hit by a car and suffered a fractured wrist and sprained ankle. We hope she is recovering quickly and know she is anxious to see her family again soon. The Dingman family will be meeting with Betsy in early Dec. in Ireland and then on to England before their return to San Jose.

Joan Curtice is recovering from her recent hip surgery. We hope to see her back worshipping with all of us again soon.

Alice Bullard is happy with her new caregiver and always glad to have visitors.

Sue Scaff had the special joy of attending her youngest grandchild's baptism in Boston; it was held in a very historic Congregational Church.

The Shipes were delighted to announce the engagement of their youngest son Paul to a wonderful lady. Paul had a kidney transplant a year or so ago – this was made possible by the donation of a kidney from his older brother Brian. We rejoice in this good news for the whole family.

Glad to see youngsters, Rebecca and Anthony Sunseri, in church with their dad Bruce.

Bob Greene recovering from a recent surgery and we hope he will be feeling up to par soon.

Stan Yumen was traveling most of October (visits to daughters and even a cruise involved); it was good to see him back with all of us again.

People In The Pews, cont.

Athena Ballek's mom has been able to attend church a few times and always glad to see her smiling face.

Thank You Bart Smith and Desi Brown...

For the great job you did with our new pictorial directory. If you haven't gotten your copy yet, please stop by and pick it up. We all look so handsome and beautiful and now you can identify who is who.

Have you gotten your refrigerator magnet yet? The Membership Committee is asking all of us to take one for ourselves and one to give a friend, neighbor, etc. as a way for them to know about AVUCC. We have a very special church community here and we are eager to share it with others who may be searching for a church home. So pick up your magnet and then pass one on to someone else.

October Fest –

What a wonderful party! Thank you Janey Sanders and Joe Dingman and all your great crew for providing a wonderful meal and great entertainment. Bob Thomas' musical group shared great music and several jokes in between. A special treat to have some of our young folks waiting on tables and helping where needed. They did a fine job.

New Baby –

First, my apologies to the Widman family for not announcing this before. Their daughter Christine and her husband Chris had a son born in June. His name is Oein and the family lives in Campbell. We know this first grandchild is a special event in Lynn and Dennis' life and they will enjoy being grandparents. Two other daughters are also expecting. Sherry is due in November and Dana in February – both are expecting boys!

Missing Some People in the Pews

Yes we do miss you when you are absent from us. There is an empty pew. We pray you will find your way back to AVUCC and worship again with us on Sunday mornings. As the holiday season ap

People In The Pews, cont.

proaches there are so many experiences to be involved in and we need all of you to be together with us in this coming season of Thanksgiving and Advent and Christmas. Please join us.

“One of the main hindrances to living your best life now is selfishness. As long as you are focused on what you want, and what you need, you will never experience God’s best. But if you really want to thrive, you must learn to be a giver. All through the Bible, we find the principle of sowing and reaping. Just as a farmer must plant some seed if he hopes to reap the harvest, we, too, must plant some good seed in the fields of our families, careers, businesses, and personal relationships. ‘Whatsoever a man sows, that he will also reap.’”

– Joel Osteen, “Your Best Life Now”

Dot Allfrey

J.V. Sand Pile

For the safety of our children, let us keep the outdoor sand pile cover on when no one is playing in it and latch the gate.

Phyllis Chai

Outreach and Caring

Caring Committee

Thank you, Linda Farr and Carolyn Dingman for co-chairing the months of Oct. and Nov.

The new co-chairs for December and January (2007) are Phyllis Green, 268-6506 and Diane Hawes, 268-7206. Anyone in need of assistance with food, transportation or home and hospital visits, please call Phyllis or Diane.

Outreach and Caring, cont.

The committee is in need of a Chairperson for the year 2007 beginning in January. Anyone interested please call Bee Mannia, 377-2458 or the Co-chairs or Pastor Kevin.

*Bee Mannia
Caring Committee Chair*

Outreach

Neighbors in Need

Thank you for the October "Neighbors in Need" offering, amounting to \$661.00.

Christmas Fund Offering

The '06 "Christmas Fund Offering" (formerly Veterans of the Cross) is one of four annual Special Mission Offerings of the UCC. It is an important way of sharing our joy at God's renewing and life-giving grace, and is an expression of gratitude to, and for, those who serve the church. Gifts to the Christmas Fund help provide pension and health premium supplementation to low-income retirees, emergency assistance to the families of clergy and lay employees, and Christmas Gift checks to hundreds of annuitants. THIS SPECIAL OFFERING WILL BE RECEIVED ON SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24th at our morning service.

Alternative Christmas

The annual J.V. "Alternative Christmas" will be held on Sunday December 3rd in Fellowship Hall between services. There will be various opportunities to support our youth as well as worthy causes such as Heifer International, Silicon Valley Habitat for Humanity, African Team Ministries, the Giving Tree for InnVision homeless shelters, Beneficio More Than Fair Trade Coffee, and more. Your open hearts and check books will be welcome.

Phyllis Chai

Beneficio Coffee

(Editor's Note: I was surprised this month to find that Phyllis' Kalos contribution did not include a Beneficio Coffee note! Because I'm sure she is always happy to take your orders or answer any questions you have about this "More than Fair Trade" coffee, I want to include her contact information for you!)

Please contact Phyllis Chai with questions or your request at: 226-7150.

Phyllis Chai
408-266-7150

Inspiration

"I Will Light Candles This Christmas"

by Howard Thurman

Candles of joy, despite all sadness.
Candles of hope where despair keeps watch.
Candles of courage for fears ever present,
Candles of peace for tempest-tossed days,
Candles of grace to ease heavy burdens,
Candles of love to inspire all my living,
Candles that will burn all the year long.



Christmas Love

(A paraphrase of 1 Corinthians 13)

If I decorate my house perfectly with plaid bows, strands of twinkling lights and shiny balls, but do not show love to my family, I'm just another decorator.

If I slave away in the kitchen, baking dozens of Christmas cookies, preparing gourmet meals and arranging a beautifully adorned table at mealtime, but do not show love to my family, I'm just another cook.

If I work at the soup kitchen, carol in the nursing home and give all that I have to charity, but do not show love to my family, it profits me nothing.

If I trim the spruce with shimmering angels and crocheted snowflakes, attend a myriad of holiday parties and sing in the choir's cantata but do not focus on Christ, I have missed the point.

Love stops the cooking, to hug the child.

Love sets aside the decorating, to kiss the spouse.

Love is kind, though harried and tired.

Love doesn't envy another's home that has coordinated Christmas china and table linens.

Love doesn't yell at the kids to get out of the way.

Love doesn't give only to those who are able to give in return, but rejoices in giving to those who can't.

Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never fails. Video games will break, pearl necklaces will be lost, golf clubs will rust.

But giving the gift of LOVE will endure.

—Author Unknown

Events and Schedules

MEN'S BREAKFAST

Nov. 4—East Meets West in Turkey

Historic Turkey was briefly presented in picture and word by Dave Harris, who highlighted the ancient history of Turkey and the adaptation it is making in the 21st century.

Turkey's 99% Muslim population has strong influence on how its 78 million citizens live, yet it is a secular nation adopting western ways of life. Islamic extremists have won four national elections since 1923, all of which have been overturned by the military establishment dedicated to the democratic principles of their beloved Mustafa Ataturk.

The ancient mosques of Istanbul typically originated as Christian churches, part of the Christian heritage dating back to 330 AD. Its powerful walls

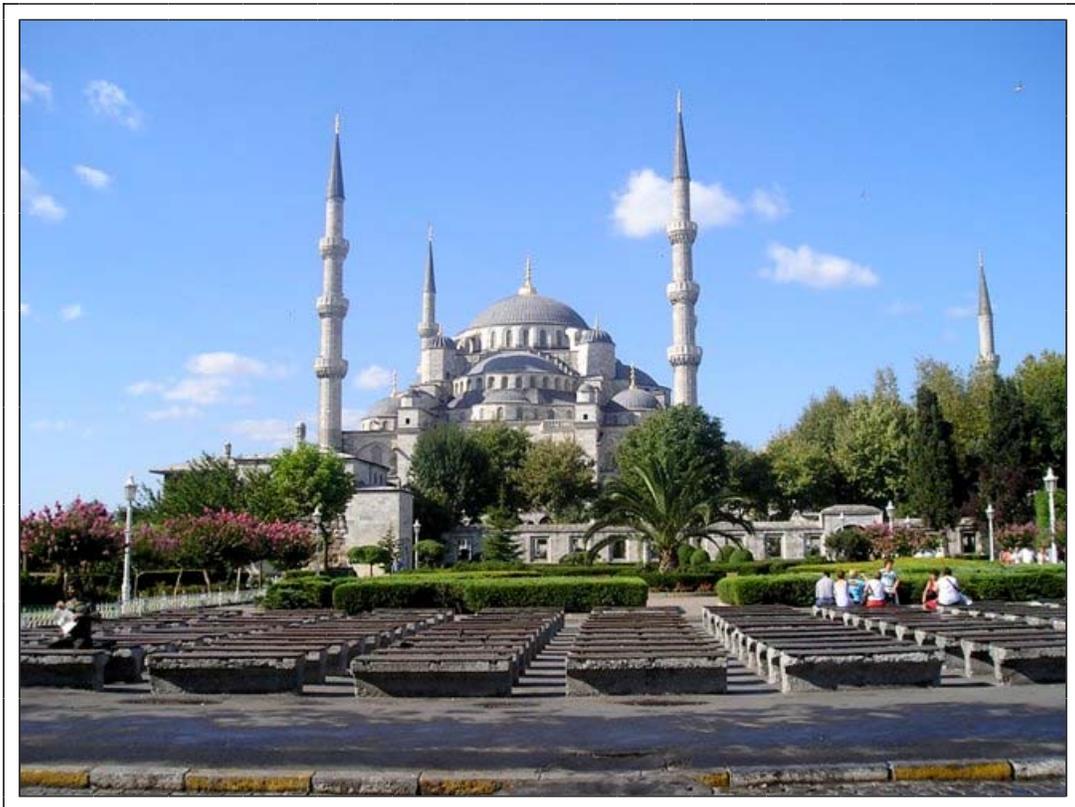
and resolute Roman leadership survived the fall of Western Rome by 1000 years.

Turkey's location controlled many of the ancient trade routes including the famous Silk Road, thus was attractive to settlements by Hittites, Assyrians, Greeks, Lycians, Romans, and Turkemen in turn. Some Christians believe that St. John brought Mary, Mother of Jesus, to Ephesus after Jesus' death.

The ancient structures and beautiful scenery make it a photographer's paradise. The ruins of Lycian sarcophagi and Roman aqueducts nestle next to Crusader castles built in the 13th century.

Hiking the adjacent hills were a high point of this nineteen day tour taken by the Harris and Crowleys. Outdoor Adventures was the tour company employed.

(photo: The Blue Mosque of Istanbul, Turkey)



Men's Breakfast, December 2, 2006

Fellowship Hall

Speaker: Jim Livingstone CPA

Subject: Important tax advice for the year 2006.

Jim has worked with the IRS for many years before entering private practice, so he has excellent experience and good information to assist you with your current tax year.

Ladies are welcome at 8:30 am, so please sign up at your earliest convenience.

It will be an excellent, informative meeting with great breakfast!

Dick Okumura

Earl Lectures

The 106th annual Earl Lectures at Pacific School of Religion will be on January 23-25/07.

The theme of the lectures and conference will be: "All the Rivers of Paradise: Christian Responsibility in an Interfaith World". Please see more information on the downstairs hallway bulletin board.

Phyllis Chai

Men's Monthly Discussion Group Report

An exciting new discussion group has formed among the men of the AVUCC. At our 1st meeting we created a list of future topics that would challenge and stimulate us. This past month, at our 2nd meeting, the Topic was "Who or What is God?". Some of the responses are included below. Not to rest on tackling the hard issues – our topic in December will be "Good and Evil". If you would be interested in joining a discussion group like this – please contact Ed Grossmith (email - ergoapp@aol.com).

Men's Monthly Discussion Group, cont.

Who or What is God: "Today, God is seldom created in man's image, is more nebulous, and generally considered to be the universal life Force of the cosmos although some still envision a father figure seated on a cloud carving his creations as He did Adam and Eve. Whatever the form and whichever of the varied names man might ascribe, God is all of those and so much more." or "For me God is all, God exists and is the creation of all. He is present in all of us, all of the universe and gives us our existence by his very support of all natural laws. I believe that we are hard wired for God and the search for God and purpose of life" or "God is the Being who created this universe and everything that dwells in it. From the personal level, God is the Being who loves everyone unconditionally like the sun that sends its gentle rays to all the people in the world."

*Respectfully submitted,
Tom Rose*



Music Notes

CHRISTMAS EVE SINGERS

The Shalom Choir has begun rehearsals for the AVUCC 7:30pm Christmas Eve Service of Lessons and Carols. We would love to have more singers for this special festival worship, so if you are interested in joining us, please talk to John Leslie or one of the choir members. Rehearsal CDs may be made available for you to take and practice at home if desired.

CHRISTMAS CAROLING

John Hawes has once again scheduled this year's AVUCC caroling to shut-ins. Anyone interested in singing or playing carols will meet at the church on Sunday, Dec. 17 at 6:30pm.

JV CHILDREN'S CHOIR AND BELLS

The JV Children's choir has resumed rehearsals on

Music Notes, cont.

Saturday mornings at 10:00. They have also had fun trying out the handchimes. We are rehearsing special music for the Sunday School “instant pageant,” as well as for the 5:00pm Christmas Eve JV family service.

JV EPIPHANY TALENT NIGHT

Our annual Epiphany Talent Night (“night of gifts”) will take place this year on the actual date of Epiphany - Saturday, January 6, at 7:00pm. If you have a talent or gift you would like to share with the wonderful Joint Venture Community, please contact John Leslie. Remember, being an audience member is a gift, too! If you have art or photographs to display, those would be welcome, as well as home-baked goods to share and beverages.

ADVENTURES IN THE ARTS

A subscription to the remaining concert series would be a great holiday gift! Please call John Leslie if interested. Our upcoming concerts in 2007 includes

two organ recitals: James Warren (Jan. 13) and from Saratoga Federated Church Ruthanne Adams (Jan. 27) playing harp, organ, piano, and handbells; a Celtic Heart performance near St. Patrick’s Day; a Cole Porter revue performed by JV choirs and Summer Musicals casts; an evening of brass big band music; and the Peninsula Banjo group.

*Come surely, Lord Jesus, as dawn follows night,
Our hearts long to greet you, as roses, the light.
Salvation, draw near us, our vision engage.
One candle is lit for the hope of the age .*

- Mary Anne Parrott

Kum-ba-ya, my Lord, come by here.
Happy Advent!

John Leslie

You can always reach John, or leave him a message, by calling the church office (408) 268-0243 or by E-mailing him at:

music@jointventurechurches.org.





I joined two members of our Junior High Youth Group to the Diocesan retreat '24 hours' in Carmel this last weekend. Danielle Petruzzelli, Patricia Kabeja and I arrived at All Saints Episcopal Church a little before 1 PM on Saturday to find the entire church open (except the room we were to stay in) and no one there! Danielle and Patricia did some exploring to say the least. It is a darling church with a beautiful terraced garden and several buildings. The rest of the participants arrived at about 1:15PM and all together we were 10 youth and 4 adults.

Our program included a scavenger hunt down town Carmel run by Carter Potts, our leader, and I heard the kids spent a lot of time in Sharper Image. They were also enamored with the number of dogs (pets) down town. You'll have to ask the kids for clarification on that. I was on a different hunt. Since we couldn't get in to the classroom with the VHS system (we had VHS tapes) and the room we ended up in had a DVD player, I needed to rent movies in the new format. It was tricky but I managed to find a regular old shopping center in Carmel and got the movies.

Carter led the discussion about what the youth had found on their window shopping trip. After dinner and while the kids worked on their prayers for the people for services the next day, the technically challenged leaders tried to figure out why no sound would come from the huge TV/DVD player set up. Just as Carter and I became exasperated and stepped out of the room to discuss plan B, we heard

an organist practicing. After scaring him half to death we managed to gain an all door key from him. Alleluia! We gained entrance to the VHS room, returned the key and played the movie.

After a very chilly night, we had breakfast, made ourselves presentable and attended the 9:15 casual service. This service was held in the fellowship hall with a bunch of toys behind the folding chairs. Little ones were free to roam! Our youth read the prayers they had written the night before and did a good job. We packed up our things then headed for the kitchen once more to make brown bag lunches for our trek to the beach. The weather was perfect and we ended our '24 hours' with a prayer on the white sand with the music of the surf in the background.

*Katie McCormick
Youth Director*

P.S. I ran upstairs before leaving for the beach to say hello to John Baenz who is their interim Priest!

Junior High Youth Group

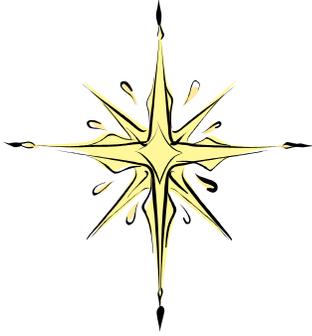
December/January JHYGs Calendar

December

- Sat. 2nd 4-5:30pm Bring baked goods to church to package for bake sale
- Sun. 3rd 10am Alternative Christmas bake sale
- Sun. 3rd 6-8pm Meet at church to go shopping for adopted family
- Sun. 17th 5-8pm Meeting **pie baking**
- Mon. 18th through Fri. 29th SJUSD Christmas break

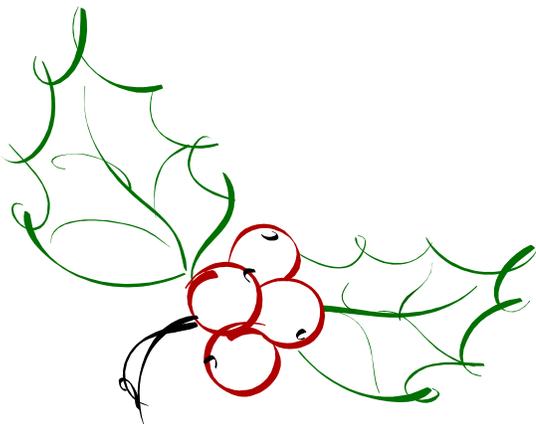
January

- Sun. 7th 6-8pm Meeting
- Fri. 18th to Sun. 21st Ski trip – **Joint SHYG and JHYG**



Let us remember that the Christmas heart is a giving heart, a wide open heart that thinks of others first. The birth of the baby Jesus stands as the most significant event in all history, because it has meant the pouring into a sick world of the healing medicine of love which has transformed all manner of hearts for almost two thousand years... Underneath all the bulging bundles is this beating Christmas heart.

~ George Mathew Adams



December Birthdays

| | |
|-------------------|---------|
| Ruth Breseke | Dec. 04 |
| Ed Rasala | Dec. 04 |
| Leanna Dando | Dec. 05 |
| Annie Laurie Hall | Dec. 06 |
| Susan Hamilton | Dec. 06 |
| Eric Gaydon | Dec. 08 |
| Gloria Dunlap | Dec. 13 |
| Penny Rasala | Dec. 13 |
| Rachel Hall | Dec. 15 |
| Claire Henderson | Dec. 15 |
| Kevin Smith | Dec. 15 |
| David Sanders | Dec. 16 |
| Kathy Graham | Dec. 17 |
| Danielle Hall | Dec. 25 |

December Anniversaries

| | |
|------------------------|---------|
| Lynn and Dennis Widman | Dec. 09 |
| Rae and Dave Harris | Dec. 10 |
| Betsy and Terry Shoup | Dec. 18 |
| Athena and Jim Ballek | Dec. 23 |
| Ed and Gwen Anderson | Dec. 27 |
| Aris and Bob Thomas | Dec. 31 |

Worship Schedule

| | |
|---------|--|
| Dec. 3 | First Sunday of Advent (“Hope”) Lighting of Candles begins |
| Dec. 10 | Second Sunday of Advent (“Peace”) |
| Dec. 17 | 9:45 AM—JV Bell Choir Concert 10 AM—JV Instant Christmas Pageant Third Sunday of Advent (“Love”) 6:30 PM—Christmas Caroling |
| Dec. 21 | Blue Christmas/From Darkness to Light Advent Service of Healing (Joint ECA-AVUCC) |

Worship Schedule, cont.

| | |
|---------|---|
| Dec. 24 | Fourth Sunday of Advent (“Joy”) 9 AM Service to feature Special Sermon Skit 5 PM JV Family Christmas Eve Service in Sanctuary 7:30 PM AVUCC Service of Lessons And Carols 10:30 PM ECA Service |
| Dec. 25 | No AVUCC Service Enjoy your Family!! |
| Dec. 31 | 9 AM Regular Worship |

Lay Readers:

| | |
|---------|-----------------|
| Dec. 3 | Bob Farnquist |
| Dec. 10 | Londa Daley |
| Dec. 17 | Instant Pageant |
| Dec. 24 | Judy Martin |
| Dec. 31 | Betsy Shoup |

Ushers:

| | |
|---------|---|
| Dec. 3 | Diane Hawes |
| Dec. 10 | Josh Bemis Alex Bemis Kristie Bemis |
| Dec. 17 | Betty Benson Robert Thomas |

JV Book Club

There will be no meeting of the Book Club in December.

This group is open to women of both churches, and meets monthly. Hope to see you there.

Robyn Dorsey

DECEMBER 2006

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|--|--|---|--|---|---|
| 26 8:00 AM AVUCC Children Bread Making 9:15 AM AVUCC Children Bread Making 10:00 AM Advent Wreath Making | 27 7:00 PM Emergency Preparedness Planning Meeting | 28 | 29 7:30 PM AVUCC Shalom Choir Rehearsal | 30 | 1 | 2 10:00 AM JV Children's Choir |
| 3 First Sunday of Advent "Hope" Alternative Christmas | 4 | 5 7:30 PM Christian Ed Committee Meeting | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 10:00 AM JV Children's Choir 5:30 PM UCC Annual Christmas Progressive Dinner |
| 10 Second Sunday of Advent "Peace" | 11 | 12 7:00 PM UCC Council | 13 | 14 | 15 Kalos Deadline | 16 10:00 AM JV Children's Choir |
| 17 Third Sunday of Advent "Love" 10:00 AM JV Christmas Pageant 6:30 PM Evening Christmas Caroling | 18 | 19 4:15 PM Avucc Shelter Food Service | 20 7:30 PM AVUCC Shalom Choir Rehearsal | 21 6:30 PM JV Blue Christmas Service | 22 | 23 10:00 AM JV Children's Choir |
| 24 Fourth Sunday of Advent "Joy" 5:00 PM JV Family Service 7:30 PM AVUCC Lessons & Carols 10:30 PM ECA Service | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| 31 | 1 | 2 7:30 PM Christian Ed Committee Meeting | 3 7:30 PM AVUCC Shalom Choir Rehearsal | 4 | 5 | 6 7:00 AM AVUCC Men's Breakfast |

For Current Updates, Please visit the online calendar at www.avucc.org

-Daily Lectionary- December, 2006

These lectionary readings are from A Daily Lectionary-Scripture readings for Every Day based on the New Common Lectionary. Please share this resource with members of your church.

**The readings listed for Sundays are from the UCC Desk Calendar and are not part of the daily lectionary cycle.*

| Day | Date | Old Testament | New Testament | Epistle |
|--------------|----------------|--|--|---------------------------------|
| Fri. | Dec. 1 | Jeremiah 4:1-4 | Luke 19:28-40 | 1 Thess. 2:13-20 |
| Sat. | Dec. 2 | Jeremiah 23:1-9 | Luke 19:41-48 | 1 Thess. 3:1-9 |
| *Sun. | Dec. 3 | Jeremiah 33:14-16 | Luke 21:25-36 | 1 Thess. 3:9-13 |
| Mon. | Dec. 4 | Jeremiah 33:19-26 | Luke 21:10-24 | 1 Thess. 4:1-8 |
| Tue. | Dec. 5 | Isaiah 42:5-9 | Mark 13:14-23 | 1 Thess. 4:9-18 |
| Wed. | Dec. 6 | Malachi 1:1-5 | Mark 13:24-37 | 1 Thess. 5:1-11 |
| Thu. | Dec. 7 | Malachi 1:6-14 | Mark 1:1-8 | 1 Thess. 5:12-28 |
| Fri. | Dec. 8 | Malachi 2:1-9 | Luke 1:57-66 | Rev. 1:4-8 |
| Sat. | Dec. 9 | Malachi 2:10-17 | Luke 1:67-80 | 1 John 1:1-4 |
| *Sun. | Dec. 10 | Malachi 3:1-4 | Luke 1:68-79 and Luke 3:1-6 | Philippians 1:3-11 |
| Mon. | Dec. 11 | Malachi 3:6-12 | John 3:22-36 | 1 Cor. 1:10-17 |
| Tue. | Dec. 12 | Malachi 3:13-18 | Matthew 3:1-6 | 2 Thess. 2:1-12 |
| Wed. | Dec. 13 | Malachi 4:1-6 | Matthew 3:7-12 | 2 Thess. 2:13-3:5 |
| Thu. | Dec. 14 | Amos 2:1-8 | John 1:6-13 | James 5:7-12 |
| Fri. | Dec. 15 | Amos 2:9-16 | John 1:19-28 | 1 Tim. 1:3-11 |
| Sat. | Dec. 16 | Amos 3:1-11 | Matthew 23:23-28 | 1 Tim. 1:12-17 |
| *Sun. | Dec. 17 | Zephaniah 3:14-20 and Isaiah 12:2-6 | Luke 3:7-18 | Philippians 1:3-11 |
| Mon. | Dec. 18 | Amos 3:12-4:5 | Matthew 23:29-39 | Romans 12:1-8 |
| Tue. | Dec. 19 | Amos 4:6-13 | Matthew 12:30-37 | Romans 2:3-11 |
| Wed. | Dec. 20 | Amos 5:1-17 | Matthew 12:39-45 | Hebrews 9:11-22 |
| Thu. | Dec. 21 | Amos 5:18-27 | Matthew 14:1-12 | Romans 8:1-6 |
| Fri. | Dec. 22 | Amos 6:1-14 | Luke 1:5-25 | Titus 1:11-15 |
| Sat. | Dec. 23 | Amos 7:1-9 | Luke 1:26-38 | Rev. 7:9-17 |
| *Sun. | Dec. 24 | Micah 5:2-5a | Luke 1:46b-55 and Luke 1:39-45, (46-55) | Hebrews 10:5-10 |
| Mon. | Dec. 25 | Isaiah 62:6-12 | Luke 2:(1-7) 8-20 | Titus 3:4-7 |
| Tue. | Dec. 26 | 2 Chron. 24:17-22 | | Acts 7:55-8:8 and Acts 6:1-7 |
| Wed. | Dec. 27 | Prov. 8:22-30 | John 13:2-20 | 1 John 5:1-12 |
| Thu. | Dec. 28 | Isaiah 49:13-23 | Matthew 18:1-14 | 1 John 4:7-16 |
| Fri. | Dec. 29 | 2 Samuel 23:13-17b | John 2:1-11 | 2 John 1-3 |
| Sat. | Dec. 30 | 1 Kings 17:17-24 | John 4:46-54 | 3 John 1-15 |
| Sun. | Dec. 31 | 1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26 | Luke 2:41-52 | Colossians 3:12-17 |

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KALOS—December 2006

KALOS Deadline for the November Issue

The deadline for the January 2007 issue of the Kalos is Sunday, **December 15th**. Items may be left in the mail slot labeled Kalos, or preferably may be submitted via email to:
kalos@avucc.org

For questions contact one of the editors: Sue Scaff (448-3038) and Kelly Yamanishi (997-3373)