

KALOS

Congregational Church of Almaden Valley—United Church of Christ

Winter 2015

Pastor's Reflection



Dear members and friends,

I have begun reading, again, the book by Diana Butler Bass entitled *Christianity for the Rest of Us; How the Neighborhood Church is Transforming the Faith*. The focus is on how we as congregations may find new ways of being faithful in a changing world. It seems

an appropriate starting place for a celebration of the holidays ahead and the New Year coming. It seems it is a needed place to be after a grand celebration of our 50th anniversary.

Dr. Bass encourages us to imagine possibilities for deepening spirituality. She confirms that speaking up, stepping out and confidently communicating a message from our liberal progressive faith tradition is needed in our communities. We want to be/live our faith with integrity and purpose – how greatly our voices need to be heard. Our New Year calls for our re-commitment to be a gathering place for the “saints of God” and to be “a hospital for sinners”—all in need of God’s grace and one another!

We affirm with her that solid, healthy churches exhibit Christian authenticity, they express a coherent faith, and they offer members ways of living with passion and purpose. They exude a renewed sense of mission and identity and show their best selves as traditional and creative, as risk takers and grounded, as confident and humble, and as open and orthodox. It is not about being either-or but about being both-and! This describes us, doesn’t it?

My hope is our CCAV congregation may follow the light of God’s presence into the future with intentionality as we celebrate worship in our special services and regular

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Sunday services. I remain thankful for the ways you support our life together with generous financial gifts and active participation in worship, missions and church leadership. Thank you for extending yourselves to care deeply about the life we share.

May we not only see the light and celebrate the light these seasons of Advent, Christmas and Epiphany, but know the Light of the World blessing our new ways of being faithful.

Good tidings of great joy to you and yours,
Rev. Ann Michele Rogers Brigham, Pastor

Pastoral Prayer for Advent/Christmas/Epiphany

God of heavenly light: We remember that the hope of the world came to us in a child. And that event, in its quietness and simplicity, draws us to you in prayer. We rejoice in the Christ child, and we are reminded that you have called us to be your children as well.

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We thank you for the joy of this season; for the love of family and the warmth of home; for the celebration of worship and the inspiration of music; and for the peace of Christ, which surpasses all our understanding.

Keep us strong in your Spirit, O God. Let us rejoice in doing your will. We pray that the truth of your word will be felt upon our world, and that you will guide us in all the important decisions which affect our future.

We see about us the struggle for human rights and the basic necessities of life. Let us share in those struggles to relieve the world's sorrows and be joined in peacemaking for our human family.

Just as wise ones made their journey Bethlehem, we too, begin a journey of faith. We sometimes falter and fail; we are aware of our limitations, our hurts, and our anxieties; but ultimately, we will find our own place of belonging beside the manger.

The light that shined out of darkness is a light for all the world to see. Let us be born anew in this hope, as we receive Christ into our hearts. In the New Year ahead, we rejoice to give God a place in our lives, now and forever.

Amen.
Pastor Michele

Welcome Visitor!

Whether you're visiting with us because you're looking for a church, or accompanying a friend or family member, we bid you a hearty welcome!

We welcome all who would join us on our journey—for a day, a week or a lifetime—to discover who we are now and who we can become on this road of faith and inquiry. We embrace our diversity of thought and scriptural understanding. We respect and honor all who seek to be in covenant with us as we share in the joys and responsibilities of our church family.

We are a warm and friendly bunch, but we're not perfect! So, if in our excitement to greet our church family members, we forget our manners, please talk to us, introduce yourself and ask us lots of questions! And if you want to dig deeper and learn more about our church, please visit us at:
www.CongregationalChurchOfAlmadenValley.org.

Moderator's Note

It is hard to believe that we are nearing the end of the year already! When I became Moderator in January, I wasn't really sure what this anniversary year would entail, but I was pleasantly surprised at how well it all came together. It has been a year of joy for me much of the time, beginning with my wedding in February -- not related to the 50th anniversary, obviously, but definitely a significant and joyful event in my life. The anniversary activities were all well-attended, joyous events -- from the musical potluck in the spring to the 50th anniversary party, worship service, and brunch in the summer. People in our congregation came together to celebrate our rich history and share memories of our wonderful little church and our life together.



The arrival of Rev. Shelley at ECA has begun some open communication with our sister church about how we share space and how we work together, and I welcome this transparency with a listening ear and an open heart. Our joint venture relationship is the reason both churches have survived through the years, by supporting each other through difficult times, and it is a vital part of who we are. We are at a definite disadvantage with a smaller congregation and only a part time pastor, but it is refreshing to know that they care deeply about us and want to ensure that we feel we have equal access in our shared space. It has been a pleasure to work with Rev Shelley, and I look forward to our continued work together. Please be sure to let me know if you want anything brought to her attention

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related to our life together here at church. She has reiterated to me on several occasions that we need to keep the lines of communication open so that things that might be little issues don't become big issues over time.

It was exciting to meet Rev. Diane Weible, our new NCNC Conference minister, and I look forward to her leadership. I was inspired when she spoke with us about a new program being offered in the coming year to help struggling churches look at new and innovative ways to grow and change with the times, and I am hopeful that we may be able to benefit from this new offering. It is clear to me that we need to find new ways to minister to ourselves in an effort to rejuvenate and breathe fresh life into our congregation. We are a phenomenal group of people with much caring and compassion among us, and it is exciting to think about finding new ways to share what we have here with others. This will be my focus next year, as I go into my second year as Moderator. I want us to have a renewed sense of who we are and what we have to share with ourselves and with others. We are, after all, a unique and very special congregation.

Thank you for being a part of my church family. Blessings and joy to you this holiday season and into the New Year.

Debbie Bemis

Stewardship Moment—November 2015

It is my understanding that the Stewardship moment is supposed to be a personal note about why the church, specifically this church, is important or meaningful from an individual perspective. For me, and I think for most of us, this is kind of a “no brainer.” The people sitting here in the pews and in the choir this morning are the faithful few who keep coming back. You each have your own reasons, but I suspect that they are very similar to mine, at least in part.

As you know, we had our 50th anniversary celebration this past August and it was absolutely fabulous. All of the time and preparation leading up to the event was exciting, memorable, and very meaningful for all of us. And all of the hard work was rewarded with a beautiful celebration on Saturday night, a memorable worship service on Sunday morning, and a delicious brunch afterwards. I don't think it could have gone better, and I was on a high for several weeks afterwards.

However, as with many exciting events that are built up months ahead of time with tremendous anticipation, there can often be a letdown after the event is over. For me, our anniversary celebration was no exception. I enjoyed every second of that fabulous weekend – and most of the time in the months beforehand getting ready for it. However, in the two months since, I find myself struggling with discouragement and a little bit of depression as things settle “back to normal.”

Maybe I was being naïve, but I dreamed that the anniversary celebration, full of people who were thrilled to be there, might lead some of them, and their friends and families, back to us. I fantasized that our pews would soon be filled with people; our choir with all of its new members would have the problem of not being able to fit up in the choir loft; there would be people calling me asking what committees were available, and we would be having a council discussion about making our pastor position full time.

I am, obviously, exaggerating a little bit here, but I did fantasize that the celebration might be a turning point for us, and I find myself discouraged on occasion with how some things are going here at church.. When that happens, I make a conscious effort to remind myself why I keep coming – What *is* it about this church that is such a draw for me? And with little hesitation, I always know.

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Dolores Van Loucks said it best 25 years ago when she wrote about the history of our church:

When we moved to the Prune Shed in 1966, our church consisted of a large concrete slab with a roof but no walls and an attached wood and concrete block structure that became our place of worship. A small cottage housed the church office, kitchen, and Sunday School for small children, and a garage served as Sunday School quarters for older ones. A water tower bore a white wooden cross. Flies and insects worshipped with the congregation in the summer, and the wind and rain entered in the winter. Newspapers were put on the floor to insulate worshippers' feet from the cold. Coffee hour was held on the slab. In spite of all of this, the small church kept adding new members, who stepped around the buckets during rainstorms and watched where they sat. A newcomer seeking clipped lawns and an efficiently managed building, a snug, warm worship experience, would not have been attracted. Newcomers seeking warmth of the spirit were – thus adding to and reinforcing what has always been special about our congregation.

When Diane Weible was here a month or so ago, she asked people what was special about our church. The number one, and most consistent, answer among the people there that morning was the caring and friendliness of the congregation. Rev. Weible agreed and said that she herself felt it immediately. Debra Newcomb, our newest member, mentioned feeling the warmth and caring, and knew that this was where she wanted to make her church home. In talking with former members at the anniversary celebration, quite a few of them told me how much they missed our church and that they had moved on and joined others, but not one of them had the same special feel that we have here at CCAV.

THAT'S why I keep coming back—that warmth of spirit. THAT is what is so meaningful to me.

I do get discouraged that people don't approach me to say they want to be on Council, or they want to head up this

committee or that project, or they would really like to be a part of the JV board – or even more discouraging is when they turn me down when I ask them directly, although I do understand that not everyone is able to help. I worry that we don't have enough man or womanpower to keep our church going. I have to shake the feeling of doom that sometimes comes over me when I think about the fact that we only have a part time pastor who has to have a second job just to support a small apartment outside of this community because it is all she can afford, and that our church does not have the means to help her. I get frustrated when people talk about what "was" rather than what "is," and seem to place blame rather than offer to help find solutions.

But then I remember what it is we DO have here at church, and I remind myself that THAT is what I want. I don't want to worry about what we don't have, or what other people think we should have, or what I sometimes wish we did have. I don't want that kind of pressure to overtake me. That's not what I want in my church, and it is certainly not why I keep coming back.

I go back to what I said last year – and the year before in my Stewardship moments. Let's celebrate who we are and what we have here that is so special... The beautiful sanctuary, the inspiring music from Maria, the dedicated leadership, the hard working choirs, our nurturing pastor, our outreach activities, our fellowship, our unique and ongoing joint venture relationship with our sister church, and on and on -- but most importantly, US – the people in our pews – who love and care about each other. THAT is what we have. THAT is what we should celebrate. THAT is what makes us special. The warmth of spirit.

I know you all feel it too. I believe that is why the majority of you keep coming. I don't want you to lose faith or get discouraged. I want you to think about FOR YOU what makes this church so special. Then I want you to prayerfully consider ALL you can do to help keep that spirit alive. Are you financially able to give a bit more?

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Can you help on some Sunday mornings as a liturgist or coffee host? Would you be willing to commit time to serve on a committee next year, or better yet, on Council or JV? Can you help with the building and grounds around the church? Will you be a part of the caring committee that reaches out to people in our congregation who need some extra TLC? There is so much to do – and so few people to do it all. Please think about what more you can do to help. What will feed your spiritual soul and fill you with joy? THAT is what we need more of here at CCAV. THAT is what will continue to keep us all coming. That warmth of spirit is what this church was built on, and it is what will continue to keep this very special church alive.

In Memoriam: Jack Takayanagi (1922-2015)

*Obituary from Crown Memorial Centers,
Portland, Ore.*

Rev Jack, was born 28 June 1922 in Cupertino, California. He was the youngest son of four boys born to Jusuke and Isa Takayanagi. Many of you may not know that the “M” in Jack’s name represents his given Japanese name, Mitsuwo. Likewise his three brothers had traditional Japanese first names. One day after school, his oldest brother lined the boys up and said, “Because our teachers are having a difficult time pronouncing our Japanese names, from now on you are George, you are John, you are Jack, and I am Harrie.” And that is how they got their “school” names.

In his teenage years, Jack hitchhiked to Southern California to visit his oldest brother Harrie, who was by then living in Riverside. Upon his return home to Cupertino, Jack convinced his folks that Southern California was the place to be and they moved to west Los Angeles. It was here while attending University High School that he met his future wife Mary Takemura. He graduated from high school in 1940.

With the outbreak of World War II, Jack and his parental family were interned along with 120,000 Japanese and Japanese Americans. He and his family were interned at Manzanar Relocation Center in Lone Pine, California and Poston Relocation Center in Yuma County, Arizona. Upon receiving an educational deferment from camp, Jack enrolled in Drake University, Des Moines, Iowa. In 1943, during his undergraduate years, he and Mary were married.

After receiving his BA from Drake in 1946, Jack went on to receive his Master of Divinity at Colgate Rochester Divinity School. During his first year at Colgate, Jack was assigned as student minister to Reed Corners Federated Church, a Baptist/Congregational affiliation. He continued to serve there for five years. By this time children Michael and Gail were born. After his ordination in 1951, Jack received a call to two interconnected parishes in New York State, at Messiah Congregational church in Washington Mills and Paris Hill Congregational church, Paris, New York. He served here for five years and children Marsha and Paul arrived.

His ministry continued in the following churches:

- Mayflower Congregational, Minneapolis, Minnesota, as youth pastor
- Parma-Greece Congregational, Hilton, New York
- South Church, Utica, New York
- First Congregational Church, Santa Cruz, California, associate pastor in charge of youth ministry
- College Avenue Congregational, Modesto, California
- Almaden UCC, San Jose, California
- Community UCC, Fresno, California
- Hillsdale UCC, Portland, Oregon

Rev Jack retired from active ministry in 1991 and then served as interim pastor in the following parishes:

- Beaver Creek UCC, Beaver Creek, Oregon
- Vancouver UCC, Vancouver, Washington

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- Gresham UCC, Gresham, Oregon
- Smyrna UCC, Smyrna, Oregon
- Parkrose UCC, Portland, Oregon
- Ainsworth UCC, Portland Oregon

During actual worship services Rev. Jack was known for his “brown bag” children’s stories and sermons in which he would transform himself into a Biblical character or a contemporary personality by dressing up and playing the part. He led many summer youth work projects that included building churches, paving roads in Puerto Rico and working the California orchards.

Rev Jack also served on the National Board of the United Church of Christ.

In August of 1963, Jack traveled to Washington DC and joined thousands for the March on Washington, the largest demonstration seen at the Capitol at that time. He was inspired by Martin Luther King's “I have a dream” speech for the rest of his life. In 1965 Jack joined Cesar Chavez in Delano, California to participate in the protest of working conditions for farm workers against grape growers. The boycott lasted five years and was one of the few times historically that a boycott was actually successful. He was a man of his convictions.

Rev Jack also served on the founding board of Habitat for Humanity and worked alongside Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter to build some of the first homes for that organization. He was the director of Head Start Santa Cruz County. He supported the Heifer International Program and participated in transporting and delivering a plane load of heifers to Korea thus empowering people to become self-sufficient.

In Jack’s spare time he enjoyed traveling back to his home state of California to visit family and friends. His and Mary's travels included Lake Tahoe, California, the US, Alaska, Japan, Korea, France and their favorites,

Scotland, Amsterdam and Switzerland. He recorded his travels by sketching and painting watercolors. He was an avid reader and a lifelong New York Yankees fan.

He is survived by his wife Mary, son Michael (Janet - spouse), daughter Gail (Paul), daughter Marsha (Dick), son Paul (Deak), three grandsons, Aaron (Lyn), Kyle (Riel), and Shigeru and four great-grandchildren, Esther, Kayli, Aidan and Zane.

A Celebration of Life service will be held at the Ainsworth United Church of Christ in Portland starting at 1:00 p.m. on Sunday, 6, December 2015, and it follows the regular church service that starts at 10:00 a.m.

In lieu of flowers, the family has asked that contributions be made in the name of M. Jack Takayanagi to either:

- Heifer International: <http://www.heifer.org/what-you-can-do/give/index.html>
- Habitat for Humanity: <http://www.habitat.org/support/giftfromtheheart.aspx>

Letter from Gail Takayanagi Nichols

Dear Friends,

Rev Jack, died peacefully of natural causes at Hopewell House Hospice on 4 November 2015.

A short informational obituary will appear in the Oregonian Sunday, 15 November. You may wish to view an extended obituary at www.ANewTradition.com, also available on Sunday. If you wish, there is a place within that website to leave a remembrance and/or message to the family.

We invite you to join us in Portland, Oregon for a celebration of life service in memory of M. Jack Takayanagi; husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, brother-in-law, uncle, cousin, friend and pastor.

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The service will be held at the Ainsworth United Church of Christ in Portland starting at 1:00 pm on Sunday, 6 December 2015 and it follows the regular church service which starts at 10:00 am. The 1:00 pm remembrance service will include Jack's favorite Bible readings, hymns and devotional quotes that inspired him throughout his life both personally and in his professional ministry. The 45 minute (approximate) service will be followed with a "coffee hour" with light refreshment. Rev Jack's body was cremated so there will be no graveside services.

In lieu of flowers, the family has asked that contributions be made in the name of M. Jack Takayanagi to either:

- Heifer International: <http://www.heifer.org/what-you-can-do/give/index.html> or
- Habitat for Humanity: <http://www.habitat.org/support/giftfromtheheart.aspx>

Whether or not you are able to attend the celebration of life service, we want you to know how much you meant to Jack and Mary. You gave as much to our parents as Rev Jack gave to you! Truly, he would say that it was he that was blessed to have you in his life!

Shalom,
The Jack Takayanagi Family

Remembrance from Dot Allfrey: My memories of Rev Jack are still a part of my life - I was blessed to have been a secretary during those wonderful times with Rev. Jack. When he and Father John got together it was really, really special - the two of them were magic for me. Bill and I were on the search committee when we were looking for a new minister. We visited a church service at Seacliff on a Sunday and when we met with Rev. Jack and Mary after the service (they didn't know we were looking for a pastor) but we found our new pastor that morning. For ten years all of us who were part of UCC knew how blessed we really were to have Jack and Mary come into our lives. Their presence among us was a gift for those wonderful

years. Rev Jack and Mary are still a big part of so many of us who were fortunate to be a part of their life among us. Rev. Jack and Mary were a gift from the Lord to all of us.

Remembrance from Phyllis Chai: In 1980 when our family moved to San Jose, unbeknownst to me, my mother in Canton, OH had written Rev. Jack, telling him about our move. When we showed up at church our first Sunday in town, of course everyone knew that we were visitors, and Rev. Jack announced that my mom had sent him a letter about us. Leave it to her! Not long after that Sunday, Rev. Jack and Mary paid us a visit to the apartment (on Cottle Rd., by IBM where Hi Dong was working, on sabbatical, and little did we know, not far from Kathy and Phil Kisa-beth) where we were staying that first summer, and "the rest is history," "so-to-speak," as Rev. Jack was known to say.

Who of the participants could ever forget the "Days Apart" that Rev. Jack organized and drove us to, perhaps monthly, to The Novitiate in Los Gatos? We would meet as a group, but then also spend time alone or with another, perhaps walking on the lovely wooded grounds, or reading. I remember Rev. Jack trying unsuccessfully to get the ladies to eat lunch in silence. It was a good idea, but didn't "catch on" with the group as a whole.

Remembrance from Diane and John Hawes: Rev. Jack was a wonderful man. All three of our children were confirmed by him. He was part of the marriage ceremony for Keith and Lisa at a Catholic Church here in San Jose. He performed the marriage ceremony for Rob and Kristy in Maui and for Heather and Jason also here in San Jose. He was very special. On our children's birthdays for more than 30 years, he has sent them each a dollar for ice cream. This he has done for all the children he confirmed. We were very fortunate to have known him for all these years.

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Last Picture of Jack and Mary

Calendar

All our Sunday Worship services begin at 9 a.m. and Holy Communion is served on the 1st Sunday of the month. Birthdays/Anniversaries are celebrated on the 4th Sunday of each month in worship.

- Nov. 22 Thanksgiving Sunday and Special Food Collection We will sing traditional Thanksgiving hymns and bring in special food gifts for Second Harvest Food Bank. Worship Committee meets after Coffee Hour.
- Nov. 29 Rev. Debra Newcomb will lead worship on First Sunday of Advent while Rev. Michele spends her last few vacation days in Mississippi with extended family for Thanksgiving.
- Dec. 6 Annual Meeting after Worship/Coffee Hour. (Note: Book Study Discussion on 1st Sundays will resume in 2016)

Ongoing

- **AA Meeting:** Tuesdays 8:15 - 9:15 p.m. at our church.
- **JV Handbell Choir,** Wednesdays 4:30-6:00pm.
- **Shalom Choir:** Wednesdays, 7-8:30 p.m.

- **CCAV Sunday School/Nursery Care:** is available each Sunday during the Worship Hour if requested.
- **Lectionary Bible Study:** Led by the Rev. Shelley began Thursday, November 12, from 10:00-11:30 in The Center. This will be an ongoing Bible study open to everyone and we will be studying the Gospel for the upcoming Sunday each week. All are welcome—bring a friend!
- **Quest Group:** The Quest ladies group continues to meet in the choir room on Wednesdays from 9:30 a.m.–11:00 a.m. The current book which is read and discussed in the group is CREDO by William Sloane Coffin. Please know that you are welcome to join and do not need a book to participate. For questions please contact Phyllis Chai (408-226-7150).

Events

Santa Clara Association Fall Gathering and Ecclesiastical Council: The Fall Gathering of the Santa Clara Association was held at Foothills Congregational Church on Sunday November 1. One of the orders of business that was favorably voted on was to bring the Silicon Valley Progressive Faith Community into Care in the Association. The Ecclesiastical Council also voted affirmatively to approve John Any for Ordination into the United Church of Christ.

John's Ordination service is scheduled to take place on Sunday November 29 at Foothills Congregational Church. All are invited to attend. The Association meetings are always a wonderful time of renewing friendships with those who are members of other local UCC congregations, gathering together in worship, and participating in business matters.

NCNC (Northern California Nevada Conference) Church Day: The Fall Conference Church Day was held on Saturday, October 24 at the Congregational Church of San Mateo, UCC. Bessie Hutchins and Phyllis Chai were grateful to have participated in Worship and Workshops

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(“Racial Sobriety,” “Twelve Steps to a WISE church for People with Mental Health Challenges,” “Taking Actions toward a Just Peace in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict”) with the many folks who attended from numerous UCC churches in our Conference.

It is always a good feeling to connect with friends we’ve met at previous Conference gatherings. And always, there is welcome food for the body as well as the soul.

The next Church Day is scheduled to take place on Saturday, March 5. The theme will be on “Domestic Abuse,” led by a pastor that Rev. Diane Weible has known in Hawaii. We will look for more details to come.

Church Service Start and End Times

Have you ever wondered about service start and end times? It has come up quite a few times this year for a variety of reasons, and a leadership team from both churches came together to discuss and come to agreement on the issue at hand. Our team consisted of Pastor Michele, Debbie Bemis, and Connie Moore. Sharing space is never easy, but it was apparent at that meeting that our sister church is committed to working together with us to keep our partnership strong, and our relationship positive and loving.

Following are the start and approximate end times of the worship services that take place in our building on Sundays beginning November 29:

7:30–8:30	ECA Sunday early morning worship—no music
9:00–10:15	CCAV Sunday morning worship
10:45–12:00	ECA regular Sunday service—with music
12:30–2:00	Korean Methodist Church service

This gives each church some leeway between services if they “spill over,” and gives about 20 minutes of time for the choirs to practice up in the sanctuary as well as time for the next church to set up the sanctuary for their service.

If you have any questions about how this was decided or concerns about the decision, please talk with Debbie Bemis. The relationship with our sister church is vitally important, and the goal is to keep talking together about issues in order to resolve them before they become problems.

Debbie Bemis

Preparing for Christmas

These are some of the things we have planned to help us celebrate the joyous season of Christmas with our CCAV family. Please mark your calendar and plan to join us for as many of these as you want to.

CCAV Christmas Dinner—Saturday, December 5, 6:00 at the church . Plan to join us for this very special annual event. Cost is \$25 per person. Please reserve your spot with Connie Moore no later than December 1. You will need to choose your entrée of either Salmon or Roast Pork Loin when you make your reservation. Please contact Connie Moore SOON to let her know you will be coming!

Christmas Pageant—Saturday, December 19, 5:00 at the church . Susie Ferguson, our Christian Ed Director, is planning an instant Christmas Pageant on a Saturday evening this year, and it will include a free dinner and Christmas cookies for dessert! It is open to everyone, and it promises to be lots of fun. Please sign up in the fellowship hall if you plan to attend so they are able to plan for food.

Christmas Caroling—Sunday, December 20, 6:00 meet at the church . This is an annual event that starts at the church. We caravan together and make various stops to carol for those in our congregation who aren’t often able to come to church. We end the evening at someone’s home where we share hot cider and Christmas cookies. There is lots of laughter and good cheer, and we would love to have you join us!

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Christmas Eve Service—Thursday, December 24, 7:30 in the sanctuary. Plan to join us for this beautiful service. There will be beautiful music featuring David Chernyavsky on violin and our own Maria Brodski. David plays violin for the San Francisco Symphony, and he and Maria played some beautiful music for us last year on Christmas Eve. Come see what they have prepared for us this year! It promises to be a beautiful evening of music, lessons, carols, and candlelight. Please plan to join us.

Outreach

Special Offerings

Neighbors in Need: Thank you to all who contributed to our annual “Neighbors in Need” Fall offering which amounted to \$780.00.

Christmas Fund Offering: The dedication of our annual Christmas Fund Offering (formerly called “The Veterans of the Cross”) will take place on Sunday, December 20. The funds provide direct financial assistance to individual UCC clergy and lay church employees. Watch for upcoming bulletin inserts which share personal stories.

Interfaith Community Blood Drive: On Saturday November 14 an interfaith blood drive was held at the nearby Latter Day Saints church. Charley Coy, coordinator of the drive, reported that there were 50 “good” (not everyone who wished to donate was eligible) blood donations, “a lot for a blood drive like this.” A number of enthusiastic Leland students helped with registration and the canteen. Charley is thankful to all the people of CCAV, UCC and ECA who participated in any way.

Mission Programs

Second Harvest Food Bank: On October 20 the J.V. overflowing donation bin for Second Harvest Food Bank was swapped for an empty one. Thank you to all who continue to bring non-perishable items (in non-breakable containers); flip-tops are especially appreciated. For ques-

tions concerning donations please contact Phyllis Chai (408-226-7150).

Next Outreach Missions Meeting: The next Outreach-Missions meeting is scheduled to meet on Sunday January 24, 2016 at 10:30 a.m. in the Choir Room.

Shelter Feeding: The Shelter Feeding volunteers welcome Dennis Elliott and Jeannie Martin’s participation as servers as they are able. Jeannie has helped to bake cookies for the last two months, and the shelter guests have been very appreciative of her special treat. To help drive or serve at either of the two downtown shelters on the third Tuesday of the month please contact Phyllis Chai (408-226-7150). On the previous Sunday each month banana jell-o is prepared after our service; the shelter guests look forward to that dessert also and are grateful for our members who prepare it. We were thankful for Hannah Yamanishi’s participation recently in shopping for groceries which were used for the dinner.

Beneficio Coffee: Both our Joint Venture congregations continue to serve Beneficio (More Than Fair Trade) Coffee. A 12-oz. bag of beans (ground or not, as preferred) sells for \$10.50. To learn more about the Beneficio mission or to purchase the coffee please contact Phyllis Chai (408-226-7150), and know that you will be helping the small scale farmers in Costa Rica and their families.

Outreach Events

A Report from the Day Room

Our Life Skills class meets in the Day Room at Julian Street InnVision Shelter. The class continues to be meaningful both to us and to the clients. This last quarter suffered by Ted taking time off for his daughter's wedding, but at the same time we were joined by Saleem Qadir. Saleem is an ex -Air Force Officer, and Director of Emerging Operations at GS1. He was also a manager at E-Bay and Facebook and the leader of a 400 person outreach group at his Ahmadiyya Mosque. He led one of the

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early recovery teams into Hurricane Katrina. Just as Ted enhanced our classes by researching better ways of finding a job, Saleem, with his extensive and current experience in the local job markets is able to bring that up to date knowledge to our students. Growing up as he did in East San Jose, a single parent child, he connects well with the class. We have made changes to our classes about interviewing as a result. Connie connects very well with the class and is teaching many of the classes, especially those relating to interpersonal skills. We are trying harder to promote discussion among the clients, and that is working out very well. It is extraordinarily rewarding. I always feel like God is there.

We have now awarded 15 Diplomas and have seen several clients gain permanent housing and some get jobs. That is especially rewarding for all of us involved.

Thanks to Phyllis Chai and the outreach Committee, and with a generous contribution from Linda Farr, our church is now keeping the Julian St shelter supplied with disposable razors for men and women. This is very important when they prepare for an interview for a job. Clients are not allowed to keep a razor in their room, so the razors are used once and tossed out. We have also supplied “Pocket Guides” (small notebooks used for keeping track of information). Bill Fritz of Fritz Construction Company has supplied over three hundred. We supplied several dozen recently.

The Julian Street Support Committee meets monthly and determines ways we can help with needs of the staff. Staff, many of whom hold down two jobs are often overwhelmed by daily crises, lack of funding for needed supplies (such as razors or peanut butter and jelly for lunches). Our Support Committee usually fills those gaps, which are frequently urgent and need fast response.

The Deputy Director in a recent discussion indicated that staff morale was very low. I commented that their jobs were the most noble work I know of. Colleen said they

needed to hear that—and from that grew the idea of having a staff recognition meeting in December at a regular staff meeting on Friday morning. So we are doing this! It will be a Support Committee sponsored event. We are providing 28 nice little framed 3x4 inch inspirational quotations which several of us selected. They have been printed and framed—all different. One staff member is bringing two small cakes which say “JSI STAFF ROCKS!” We will have Starbucks coffee and will say incredibly wonderful and encouraging things to staff while we show our appreciation and admiration for them J. We will have photos next report.

Mike Moore

A Report from the Jail Ministry

Randall Newcomb leads a Bible Study every Thursday evening at a local jail, and he writes a blog each week about the session. He says, “I try to update it weekly after each study. Some of the early blog entries give the background on how I got involved in this.” You can access the blog at <https://godinthemax.wordpress.com/>.

Randall Newcomb

Christian Education

What’s coming up in the next few months in Children’s Programming? First, in December, a highlight will be our Christmas Pageant. This year it will be on Saturday, December 19, with a very special presentation at 5 PM followed by dinner for cast and families and all who come to see. Dinner will be a gift to everyone using proceeds we have accumulated through our special children’s camps during 2015, of which there have been three.

As we have done in the past two years we are inviting families to join us at 3:00 in the afternoon. At that time children, teens, and sometimes adults choose parts in our pageant, practice them, do Christmas crafts and decorate Christmas cookies which will be our dessert. Yes, in less

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than two hours we create our own miracle. Our Bell Choir will be providing our music and St. Francis will be our special narrator for this presentation. Did you know that St. Francis actually created the very first crèche? Hopefully many of you will be joining us for this special evening.

In February we will be providing another camp for children kindergarten through fifth grade during the SJUSD school break. This camp “Chariots of Fire” will feature some very significant Christians who have had an impact on others, including Eric Liddell. We will learn how they witnessed the love of Jesus to communities and find ways we can do the same. In 2016 we hope to offer four special camps for children, winter, spring, and fall school breaks plus one during the summer.

Besides our special camps we do offer Sunday School each Sunday throughout the school year especially for the CCAVUCC service. Encourage friends and neighbors to join you for worship and bring their children. We are always ready at 9 AM to welcome their kids.

In your faithful service
Susie Ferguson

Church Facilities

Operating the Lift

Many years ago, I attended a training put on by Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART). This full day of training consisted of a lot of things, and it was so long ago. They made us endure a slide presentation since Power Point had not been developed. The BART trains run on three rails. The two outside rails support the train cars, and the middle rail, which was referred to as THE THIRD RAIL was full of lots of electricity. There is enough electricity running through that rail so that if you touched it you were a goner. Every other slide had a picture of The Third Rail, accompanied by the warning, DON'T TOUCH THE THIRD RAIL. To this day, I don't remember much about the training session, but I do remember the admonishment regarding that Third Rail.

Which bring me to my point. When our current lift was installed, it was intended for people. The manufacturer told us that there was a load limit, about two people, and we shouldn't push the envelope. The other thing was this: DON'T TOUCH THE DOOR. The doors (upstairs and downstairs) operate automatically, need no assistance, so please DON'T TOUCH THE DOORS. The control panels near the entrance to the lift have the word "DOOR" in tape. If you push the button closest to that word, and release the button, the door will open. DO NOT TOUCH THE DOOR. You have fifteen seconds to enter the lift. The door will close automatically, then you can push either the Up or Down buttons, depending on which direction you are headed. Hold the button in until you reach your destination. If you release the button prematurely, the lift will stop. Don't panic, and please, DO NOT TOUCH THE DOOR. When the lift stops, release the button and the door will open - all by itself. DO NOT TOUCH THE DOOR. You have 15 seconds to escape, and all will be fine.

If you are at the opposite end of where the lift is and want to recall it to your location, press the button that corresponds to the direction you want the lift to go (up button to go up or down button to come down), hold the button in until the lift reaches your destination. But remember, when the lift arrives, release the button and DON'T TOUCH THE DOOR. You may question as to why the door has a handle on it. That's in case someone messes up and has to be rescued. We try to keep the lift in good working order since a service call to undo whatever problem caused the unit not to operate properly is expensive and we'd like to use our resources wisely. Thanks for your indulgence and patience, and don't forget: When using the lift, DON'T TOUCH THE DOOR.

Thanks,
David Byers

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Fellowship Hall

Thank you for all the donations, organizing, sorting, selling, etc. All the help was needed and appreciated! Fellowship Hall was full of “stuff.” Those that donated – Thank you! We had more than we could sell.

Thanks to Kelly Yamanishi for the banner, Mary Moran for the expressway signs, and Betty Consorte, Susie Ferguson, and Mel Stonehocker for helping. And, Earl Griffith for putting up all the signs and the banner.

Thank you to those who spent the day on Friday helping to sort and organize: Betty Benson, Betty Consorte, Susie Ferguson, Carol MacDonald, Pat McGarvin, Susanne Moore, Dennis and Mary Moran, Debra Newcomb, Marianne Schmidt, Mel Stonehocker, and Joan Wagner.

Thank you to those who spent the day on Saturday, getting to church at 6:00 a.m. to put out the items and then to stay and sell all day: Betty Benson, Betty Consorte, Susie Ferguson, Carol MacDonald, Pat McGarvin, Susanne Moore, Dennis and Mary Moran, Marianne Schmidt, Mel Stonehocker, and Joan Wagner.

Thanks to all who helped when they could on Friday and Saturday: Dot Allfrey, Debbie Bemis, Jan Blake, Phyllis Chai, Debbie Estill, Jerry Ferguson, Earl Griffith, Alain Guichard, John and Diane Hawes, Wendy Martin, Jim and Bonnie McPherson, Arnold Moore, Connie Moore, George and Nancy Romer, John Schaefer, and Anne Tysanner.

Thanks to all those who donated money.

Thanks to all those whose names may have been inadvertently omitted.

Note on the Fellowship Hall/Kitchen Flooring Fund:

In July we started with a talk/lunch on decluttering our “stuff.” Many people listened well and cleaned out their “stuff.” The sales and donations totaled around \$5,600. With the donation from the de-cluttering lunch, the amount donated for the Fellowship Hall / Kitchen flooring fund comes to \$5,900.

Amy Griffith

Thank you to all who helped refurbish Fellowship Hall.

For the awesome painters who painted Fellowship Hall including: Debbie Bemis, Bryan Bond, Inge Bond, Jerry Ferguson, Laura Hall, Bill LaVallee, Todd Lukanc, Kathryn McAbee, Kathy Mastre, Bonnie McPherson, Jim McPherson, John McPherson, Aida Messersmith, Jon Mills, Mike Schmidt, Marty Tysanner, Joyce Wing, Steve Wing, and Maggie Yao.

For the many people who made donations for the new flooring in Fellowship Hall and our kitchen. Thanks to you the Fellowship Hall is done in time for our holiday parties, and the kitchen work will be done early in the New Year.

For the people who have helped keep our church yard looking nice with mowing, trimming, weeding, planting, and sweeping throughout the year including: Dave Beyers, Debbie Estill, Jerry Ferguson, Susie Ferguson, Mary McPherson, John McPherson, Mike Schmidt, and Dennis Widman.

John McPherson

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Kalos Publication

Please remember you may take a copy of our *Kalos* Newsletter home each month if you are not reading on line. It is located along with other UCC info on the wall to the left of the sanctuary entrance.

Kalos appears on the CCAVUCC website and in a few printed copies for those who request a mailing. If you would like *Kalos* to be sent to your home, please contact Sue Scaff (sscaff@sbcglobal.net or 960-4452).

We encourage you to share stories and inspirations in our newsletter! Tell us about your experiences, your reflections, your hopes for the church, anything of interest to the community that you would like to share. Send us images, poems, links for our Inspiration section. We want to hear from you!

To submit an article, send it by the 15th of the month to kalos@ccavucc.org. *Kalos* editors are Sue Scaff, Kathryn McAbee and Risa Feely.

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