

THE STONE NEWS

STONE CHURCH OF WILLOW GLEN, PRESBYTERIAN USA NOVEMBER 2006



Church Picnic at Kelley Park is a True Celebration of Life!



Come, Ye Thankful People, Come...to Thanksgiving Dinner!

You are cordially invited to join the Roach family for dinner at Stone Church on Thanksgiving Day at 2 pm. Walter, Debbie, their daughters, new sons-in-law, and Della Smith (Debbie's sister) will create a gourmet feast with turkey and all the trimmings.

If you don't have special plans, or immediate family in the area, please join your extended church family for this wonderful holiday occasion. Bringing a favorite family holiday side dish or dessert to share would be lovely, but do not feel you have to bring anything — there will be plenty of food.

A room will be set up for the kids to play and have fun while the adults work together on the dinner. There may even be a television so those interested can watch a little football!

This will be a meal to remember and a good time to share all the things we have to be thankful for, as the year comes to a close.

Sign-up at Coffee Hour or contact Walter or Debbie to participate in this warm and loving church family celebration.

To offset the cost of the food, any and all contributions will be welcome.

Other Nov. / Early Dec. Events:

Faith Scrapbooking Class - Nov. 12 page 2

Presbytery Meeting Nov. 18 page 8

Judi Pogue - Katrina Report - Nov. 30 page 5

Muppet Movie Night Dec. 1 page 8

Parents' Day Out Dec. 2 page 8

Advent Workshop Dec. 3 page 2

MIRIAM'S COLUMN: Faith scrapbooks and Advent preparation

Several important events are coming up: a Faith Scrapbooking class, an Advent Workshop, and a wonderful Christmas pageant. Please join us for all of these enriching experiences.

Faith Scrapbooking: Taking Note of God in Our Lives

The Faith Scrapbooking class, on November 12, is a good way that we can *Take Note of God in Our Lives*. You will get creative ideas to record special moments and ways in which God is involved in your life and that of your family. Our guest, Judy Martin, a Collage and Quilt Artist and Scrapbooking Teacher, will show samples of things she has done and will provide supplies, including a wonderful variety of stickers, so you can create at least one page for a Faith Scrapbook or an existing album.

Parents can highlight Faith Stepping Stone events for their children,

including baptisms and receiving Bibles, as well as family traditions, values, and special occasions. Pictures of students receiving *The Beginner's Bible* and NRSV Bibles will be available for use with Faith Stepping Stone certificates. This is a great way for parents to communicate to their children that God cares about them and is involved in their lives.

Everyone is welcome to the class, so be sure to sign up at Coffee Hour. (There is a \$5 charge for materials.)

Are You Ready to Begin Advent, the Time of Waiting for Christ's Birth?

Stone Church wants to help you focus on the real meaning of the Advent season. Though the first Sunday of Advent is not over Thanksgiving weekend (Nov. 26), church school students will begin to make Advent Wreaths that Sunday. They will also receive an Advent Activity

Calendar called "Preparing for Jesus," with doors to open each day.

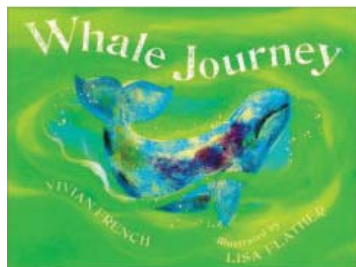
On the first Sunday of Advent, Dec. 3, at 11 am, everyone can make an Advent Wreath at the Advent Workshop. You can get a guide for using it weekly, preparing your heart and mind for celebrating Jesus' birth. Ellen Springer is also planning lots of other crafts to make, possibly including the always-popular Yule Logs.

Christmas Pageant: Archangel Gabriel's Awesome Adventure

Young people are also preparing the Christmas pageant, *Archangel Gabriel's Awesome Adventure*, which they will present at 3 pm on Sunday, December 10, in the Sanctuary. Don't miss the great songs and the angels' sometimes humorous perspective on helping God announce God's special gift to the world!

Whales, Sheep, Celts: Learn about all of these in the library!

Our church library continues to add many interesting titles. And this month brings another mini-review.



Mini-Review: *Whale Journey*, by Vivian French, illustrated by Lisa Flather (J Fre)

Do you know of a two-month-old baby that can swim 6,000 miles in 3 months? Well, Little Grey, a whale, can. He swims with his mother, Old Grey, from the warm waters of Baja, California, to the cold Arctic waters near Alaska. Here Little Grey feeds and grows fat and strong. He learns a lot on his long journey to help him survive in these deep waters. And at times there is danger.

This book is fun for young readers as well as young listeners.

- reviewed by Ruth White

If you would like to write a mini-review of a Stone Church library book, please contact Sue Evans.

Here are new books for young folks:

- ☛ *Sally Sheep's New Nibbles*, by Debbie Rivers-Moore (1st Books Riv) and
- ☛ *World's Greatest Grandma* by Kath Smith (1st Books Smi), both given by the PW Emerald Circle in memory of Margaret Brown

Here are new books for adults:

- ☛ *Why Religion Matters: The Fate of the Human Spirit in an Age of Disbelief*, by Huston Smith (200 Smi) and
- ☛ *The Celts: Life, Myth, and Art*, by Juliette Wood (936 Wo), both from Emerald Circle in memory of Margaret
- ☛ *The Case for Christ: A Journalist's Personal Investigation of the Evidence for Jesus*, by Lee Strobel (232.9 Str)

Special collections has added:

- ☛ *Charles Darwin's The Voyage of the Beagle: The Journals that Revealed Nature's Grand Plan*, by Michael Kerrigan (Ecol 508 Ker) and
- ☛ *Living the Simple Life: A Guide to Scaling Down and Enjoying More*, by Elaine St. James (Soc Issues 261.8 Stj), both from Emerald Circle in memory of Margaret

Come browse in our library or visit the book cart at Coffee Hour.

- Sue Williams, Library Coordinator

Check the Lost & Found – What Once was Lost might now be Found!

The Lost & Found box in the church office is spilling over with garments and other personal possessions. The box will be in the Social Hall until mid-Nov. for your convenience; thereafter, all items will be donated to Sacred Heart. Please check the box – maybe you'll find a favorite sweater you thought was long gone!

Sunday Adult Study

Adult Study on Sunday morning finishes the year with a book study and a scrapbooking class and looks forward to a *climate change* class in January.

Please note there is no Adult Study on December 31.

November 5 – December 24: Book Study: The Last Week

Using the Gospel of Mark as a guide, *The Last Week: A Day-by-Day Account of Jesus's Final Week in Jerusalem*, by Marcus Borg and John Dominic Crossan depicts Jesus giving up his life to protest power without justice and to condemn the rich who lack concern for the poor. At the end of the week, Jesus marches up Calvary, offering himself as a model for others to do the same when they are confronted by similar issues. Informed, challenged, and inspired, we will not only meet the historical Jesus, but a new Jesus who engages us and invites us to follow him. This eight-week study will be led by Pat Magee.

November 12: Faith Scrapbooking

Please see Miriam's Column (page 2).

Coming in January

The Challenge of the 21st Century: Climate Change with Dr. Jonathan Miller, Professor of Geology at San Jose State University.

- Pat Magee

Middle School Group is Having Fun!

The Middle School Group is off to a great start for 2006-2007. Our new format includes Communion/Music Sunday and two evening fellowships, from 5 to 7 each month with dinner.

In addition, you will see us volunteering on Sunday mornings in various areas. November 3-4 we are off to a ranch in Morgan Hill for an overnighter, complete with barn animals! We are all linked by email this year thanks to Mary Stone Bowers, and that has helped to get 12 to 14 of us out for our events. Watch for pictures and other exciting details. Oh, and if you'd like to volunteer, our advisors, Kate Wheatley, Steve Nelson, and Rosaleen Zisch, would be delighted!



Fourth Graders recently received new Bibles!

Dreamwork as a Spiritual Discipline

A wonderful opportunity for dream exploration is happening in January at Stone Church. Jeremy Taylor, D.Min, a world-renowned writer and teacher of dreams and symbols, will lead a workshop: *Dreamwork as a Spiritual Discipline*, January 26 and 27 (7 pm Friday and 9 am to 9 pm Saturday).

Dr. Taylor, an ordained Unitarian Universalist minister, has worked with dreams for over thirty years. He blends the values of spirituality with an active social conscience and a Jungian perspective. Founding member and past president of the Association for the Study of Dreams, he has written three books integrating dream symbolism, mythology, and archetypal

energy. His latest book is *The Living Labyrinth: Exploring Universal Themes in Myths, Dreams, and the Symbolism of Waking Life*. His earlier books, *Where People Fly* and *Water Runs Uphill* and *Dream Work*, have been translated into many languages.

He appears regularly on local, regional, and national radio and TV, has taught at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley for 30 years, and teaches at a wide variety of colleges and universities in the Bay Area and South Korea. We are fortunate to have Dr. Taylor help us explore the power of dreams to guide us and heal our lives.

Registration will begin in December. For questions, contact Mary Alice Collins.



Middle-schoolers recently helped Fred Groppuso transport our "First-Sunday-of-the-Month Food Donations" to Sacred Heart Community Service. Be sure to bring your donations in, to keep them smiling!



News from PW

Here are the latest events and dates for Stone's Presbyterian Women.

To join any of the groups mentioned, please contact Sheri Cunningham for more information; all groups are open to all women of the church.

Thank Offering Luncheon

Come one, come all to the *Thank Offering Luncheon* on Nov. 11, at noon, in the Social Hall. The spotlight will be on what this offering accomplishes in the US and around the world. Reservations must be made by Nov. 5, and childcare will be provided on request. A \$5 donation is suggested to cover the cost of the luncheon.

November Calendar

- ☛ Amethyst Circle meets 1 pm, Wed., Nov. 1, in the CR
 - ☛ Emerald Circle meets 9:30 am, Thurs., Nov. 2, at Janice Goertz's
 - ☛ Sapphire Circle meets 7:30 pm, Mon., Nov. 13, at Sheri Cunningham's
 - ☛ Book Group I meets 1 pm, Mon., Dec. 4, at Elizabeth Shandera's (*Mayflower* by Nathaniel Philbrick)
 - ☛ Book Group II meets 2:30 pm, Mon., Nov. 20, at Karen Scott's (*The Memory Keeper's Daughter* by Kim Edwards)
 - ☛ Prayer Shawl Ministry I & II; call Janice Goertz for dates
 - ☛ Lunch Bunch meets 11:30 am, Tues., Nov. 14, at Taiwan Restaurant; call Ida Raby to sign-up
 - ☛ Bible Study meets 9:30 am, Thurs., Nov. 16, in the CR
- Catherine Amos

Letter from Rev. Kuiken

The church recently received a letter from our former Associate Pastor, Rebecca Kuiken; the letter in its entirety was sent out by email to the congregation.

Because some of you do not have email, an excerpt from that letter is reprinted here. To get a copy of the entire letter, please contact the church office.

Dear Stone Church Friends:

I received your good-bye gift. What a generous check and wonderful reminder of our ministry together! I'm very grateful. The August good-bye party was delightful and Lyn Johnson's Huguenot cross hangs in my home study where I can see it daily, reminded of you and our Reformed heritage – and France, of course!

...

Please know that our years together remain close to my heart, and I hold you in prayer as you discern God's future for you and your new pastoral leadership.

Blessings,

Rebecca Kuiken

Session Beat

At its regular meeting in October, the Session heard Stewardship Moderator Derk Johnson give a last overview of the Consecration Sunday program. The emphasis is to have giving and pledging as a spiritual gift to God, not just a way of paying the church's bills. The Rev. Ben Daniel, pastor of Foothill Presbyterian Church, San Jose, is to preach on October 22.

Session learned that First Presbyterian Church, San Jose, is loaning Stone a set of hand bells, for one year. A number of people are excited about starting up a bell choir.

As a result of discussions at its recent retreat, the Session voted to recommend to the congregation that By-laws be changed to increase the size of Session to 18 adult elders plus the youth elder. This would allow 2 Session members on each committee, providing for continuity of leadership and adequate representation on all boards and committees.

Session heard reports from Catherine Amos on the recent Presbytery meeting and its annual Mission Fair. Alice Thorn reported on a PC (USA) conference on communications. Bea Groppuso, Church & World moderator, reported on the Peacemaking Offering (see page 5 for more on this). - Alice Thorn, Clerk of Session



Fairly Traded Gift Baskets with Coffee, Chocolate Bars and More!

This year Presbyterian Women will be selling Christmas baskets featuring fairly traded coffee, tea, cocoa, and chocolate bars. You can specify exactly which items you want to include in your basket order.

PW will take orders through Sunday, Nov. 19, and start delivery as soon as possible, ending Dec. 10. Order forms are available in the church office. For questions, please contact Sally Magee.

Finding Stillness at Advent



Advent will begin on December 3 with Christmas coming fast on its heels. As the season's busy tasks begin, do you find yourself longing for stillness and a few moments of calm?

Eckhart Tolle, the author of *Stillness Speaks*, has this to say about stillness: "When you lose touch with inner stillness, you lose touch with yourself. When you lose touch with yourself, you lose yourself in the world. Your innermost sense of self, of who you are, is inseparable from stillness ..."

The weekly Taizé Service during Advent, modeled after the ecumenical community in Taizé, France, is one way to connect to your inner stillness in the midst of Christmas festivities. The

Sanctuary is dimly lit, and the sparkle of more than a hundred lighted candles reflects on the church's stone walls. Beautiful chants are led by vocalist Barbara Roberts, accompanied by pianist Karen Johnson and flutist Laraine Pitcher. There is an open invitation for church members and the community-at-large to come to sing, pray, and enjoy the silence.

We hope you will join us during Advent Season for these special contemplative services.

Advent Taizé Services are Tuesdays, December 5, 12, and 19. The Sanctuary opens for prelude music at 6:30 pm, and the service begins at 6:45 pm.

- Connie Pearson

Church & World Focuses on Katrina Relief, Eco-Faithfulness

Peacemaking Offering

Church & World extends a heartfelt *thank you* to the congregation for your generous contribution of \$3,785 to the Peacemaking Offering.

As a result of interest generated by Betsy Williams's visit to Cuba with a Yale Campus Ministry Group, C&W will send 25% of the offering to *God's Mission – Cuban Evangelism*. Cuban churches are reaching out to the society through crisis telephone projects, workshops and seminars for prospective members, transportation for pastors to visit members and visitors and family development programs. With our donation goes this prayer:

O God, may all people find their way to your path of peace, and through your guiding love may they find lasting peace in you. Amen.

Judi Pogue on Katrina Relief

"It was visual Christianity in action," said a team member describing her experience at Orange Grove Volunteer Village in Gulfport, MS. "It's awesome how God has brought us together – Presbyterians from east and west to respond to real need."

This statement came from an article in the Mission Mosaic, a publication of Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA)

On Thursday, Nov. 30, at 7:30 pm, Stone Church members will be able to hear directly from someone who has been there – Judi Pogue, a Sunnyvale Presbyterian Church member,

will tell us about her several months of Katrina relief work.

We hope to inform everyone about PDA – how it employs all sizes of volunteer groups – and to prayerfully inspire us to participate. PDA plans to continue this work for seven years, housing volunteers in six villages.

Rainbow and Family Flags Missing

A few weeks ago, it was discovered that the Rainbow and Family Flags, displayed on the Lincoln Avenue side of the church, are missing. And landscaping was damaged by the apparatus used to get to the flags.

C&W has ordered a new Rainbow Flag, but doesn't know where to get a Family Flag. If you have any ideas, please contact Bea Groppuso.

Global Warming Education Day

On October 8, the patio was crowded with folks viewing C&W's exhibit about human impact on the earth and ideas for minimizing that impact. Many thanks to MJ Nesbitt and David Butcher (pictured at right) for bringing their electric Sparrow car and pedal-powered generator, which charges a battery for computer use, fish tank pump and cooling fan, while helping David stay in shape!

That evening, over 100 people, including many church neighbors, viewed *An Inconvenient Truth* in the Sanctuary. The film and church setting were enthusiastically reviewed

by all present. Special thanks go to Bob Johnson who set up the sound and projection system. Lively discussions followed as many sought ways to reduce their own carbon footprint in response to religious teachings to care for God's creation. Folks took forms to order compact fluorescent light bulbs or safely recycle old electronic components. Our Stone Church CFL order, over the life of the bulbs, will save \$12,871 in energy bill savings and prevent 60,701 lbs. of CO2 from entering the atmosphere.

Eco-Faithfulness: Buy Recycled

At Coffee Hour Nov. 12, visit the C&W *Buy Recycled* table to discover holiday gifts that help, rather than harm, the environment, especially items that have had a previous life.

- Rhonda Lakatos & Bea Groppuso



David Butcher & MJ Nesbitt with their "generator"

Women's Retreat News

The leader and theme of the annual Stone Church Women's Retreat (March 23-25, 2007) have been selected.

The leader will be the Reverend Chris Williams, and the theme will be *Sacred Listening: Hearing God, Each Other and Ourselves in this Noisy and Hurried World*.

Chris is Parish Associate and Stephen Ministry Leader at Monterey First Presbyterian Church and the Director of Chaplaincy Services at Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula.

At the hospital, she supports four staff chaplains and 50 volunteers, both clergy and lay persons. Her passion is helping the hospital to be a place of healing and hope even when patients face uncertainty, loss and fear.

Chris believes in a ministry of *Sacred Listening* as a foundational practice of Christian faith. She will lead an exploration of the ways in which our own hurry and over-commitment may be "hardening our hearts" to God's presence, and will encourage us to discover ways to "witness" with our lives through our practices of seeing and hearing "with the ears of your heart," as St. Benedict phrased it.

Like a phoenix rising from the ashes, the St. Francis Retreat Center has confirmed that they will be ready for us to return to their peaceful valley, in spite of a fire that destroyed the main house where we previously shared our meals.

We hope you can join us!

- Lynn Stutz



Golfers and friends share an "après-golf" moment at the annual Stone Church golf tournament.



A Note of Thanks to Our Production Crew!

When you receive *The Stone News* in the mail each month, it is essentially because this dedicated group of volunteers (Fred Gardner, Jerry Keifer, Sylvia Snyder, Dulcie Janzen, and Jan Keifer) patiently and competently collates and folds it and then affixes the mailing labels.

MJ Nesbitt, our church office manager (not pictured) is also an integral part of the process, as she prints out all the copies, and then later takes it to the post office for mailing.

- with my heartfelt gratitude, Emily Meacham, Editor, *The Stone News*

Stone Church Golf Tournament Report

What a glorious day! It was warm and sunny by the time the 32 golfers arrived to play at The Villages Golf & Country Club, on Oct. 14, for the annual Stone Church tournament. Since our players represented all levels of golfers, we recognized teams with the lowest and highest scores, and also men and women with the longest drive and closest-to-the-pin awards.

Our Willow Glen merchants, Stone Church members, and other vendors were very generous in providing our prizes. We are grateful for this support, so, as you shop and dine, please support the following merchants who provided monetary support for our tournament.

Aqui Cal-Mex Grill, Lincoln Ave.
Bill's Café, Willow St.
Coyote Creek Golf Club
Geared for Golf, Bascom Ave.
Gene's Classic Golf Collection
Jamba Juice, Lincoln Ave.
John's XLNT Foods, Lincoln Ave.
Joseph George Wines, Meridian
Le Boulanger, Lincoln Ave.
Monsieur Beans, Lincoln Ave.
Pizza My Heart, Lincoln Ave.
Ribble Family Winery
Round Table Pizza, Lincoln Ave
Siena, a Mediterranean Bistro
Starbucks Coffee, Lincoln Ave.
Taiwan Restaurant, Lincoln Ave.
Willow Glen Books, Lincoln Ave.
Willow Street Wood-Fired Pizza
Wyllie Family



Many families participated in the golf tournament, like the Ribble Family. Bill said, "It was a really special family get together ... made possible by the Stone Golf Tournament. We are going to try to make it an annual family event." Bill also donated some of his award-winning wine.



Working on a prayer quilt in the Social Hall



Fred Oliver Named Best Community Volunteer of 2006 by WG Resident

This article is from "The Best of Willow Glen 2006, Willow Glen Resident," October 25, 2006.

Fred Oliver continues to impress and amaze with his commitment to Willow Glen. This year he was volunteer chairman of the 11th annual *Dancing on the Avenue*.

Thanks to his efforts, more than 25,000 people squeezed onto Lincoln Avenue on June 17 to hear live music, socialize and eat. He has already signed up to coordinate next year's event.

Oliver's community involvement extends beyond the association. He is an active member of **Stone Church** on Lincoln Avenue, where he sits on committees and sings in the choir. He also raised money to renovate the church with earthquake safety reinforcements. In addition, he works full-time as a Realtor.

"Fred has a big, big heart," said longtime friend John Lococo. "He cares about people, and he cares about this community."

Parents Day Out

Parents, set aside some time for yourself on Saturday, December 2, from 10 am to 2 pm. Children, ages 12 and under, can be left in the capable hands of the Deacons; and you can go shopping, go out to lunch, take in a movie, or just have some quiet time. Contact Mike Wyllie or sign-up at Coffee Hour on Nov. 19 or 29.

Presbytery at Stone

The San Jose Presbytery will meet at Stone Church on Saturday, November 18, from 9 am to 1 pm.

Stone will provide breakfast and lunch, and the Chancel Choir will sing at the Worship service, which begins at 9 am.

This is the last meeting that our former Associate Pastor, Rev. Rebecca Kuiken, will moderate, and it is traditional that her home church be the host.

If you would like to help, please contact Emily Meacham.



Join us for Muppet Movie Night!

Please come to Stone Church's Annual Christmas Movie Night, featuring *The Muppet Christmas Carol*, on Friday, December 1, at 7 pm in the Social Hall.

Kids big and small can wear their jammies and bring their favorite blanket or beanbag pillow to sit on (we will, of course, also have chairs!). Snacks and drinks will be provided.

The Muppet Christmas Carol is a heartwarming family holiday movie with lots of fun, singable music that will put everyone in a festive, Christmas-y mood, even the most un-festive and "Scrooge-like" of us!

This is a wonderful adaptation of the traditional story of Ebenezer Scrooge — who despises Christmas above all else. Scrooge closes his shop Christmas Eve and goes home *humbugging* everyone who wishes him a "Merry Christmas." That night, his former co-workers, Jacob and Robert Marley, appear to tell him he will be visited by three ghosts: the ghost of Christmas Past, the ghost of Christmas Present, and the ghost of Christmas Yet-to-Come.

When his potentially bleak future is presented to him, Scrooge is finally "enlightened" and vows to change his evil, wicked ways and to rejoice in Christmas. And so he does, bringing joy to everyone around him.

Michael Caine is marvelous as Scrooge, and of course the Muppets — Kermit the Frog, Miss Piggy and The Great Gonzo as Charles Dickens — are always lovable and wise.

Please join us for this joyous welcome to the holiday season! And God Bless Us, Every One!

- Maureen Searing & Fred Oliver