

THE STONE NEWS

STONE CHURCH OF WILLOW GLEN, PRESBYTERIAN USA

MAY 2013



Stone Church Welcomes Ten Amazing Confirmands!

WHAT DOES IT COST TO BE A MEMBER?

by Rev. Dr. Ken Henry

“What is the initiation fee for joining the church? What are the membership dues? Is ‘per capita’ some kind of monthly fee?”

These are just some of the questions those unfamiliar with the Presbyterian Church (USA) have been asking Irene and me. With so many new people attending Worship on Sundays, and

inquiring about becoming members at Stone, inevitably what they want to know is: *“What does it cost to be a member?”*

Recently, I received a membership satisfaction survey from the Central YMCA where I am a member and pay a monthly fee to lift weights, shoot hoops, and run on the treadmill.

Most of the survey questions were predictable: *Do you try to make healthy choices every day? Do you believe in exercising regularly? If you could change anything about the Y, what would it be?* Normal survey stuff, right? [continued on page 6]



WHY I LOVE THE INTERGENERATIONAL CHURCH

by Rev. Irene Pak

I grew up in a family that went to church every Sunday. The first ten years of my life, we traveled about an hour every week to go to the then-nearest Korean Presbyterian church in Utah. Then, for several reasons, my parents decided to start going to the local Presbyterian Church, which was not Korean.

I am thankful for this decision for different reasons, but in retrospect, the primary reason is that I grew up experiencing an *intergenerational church and worship service*. You see, the challenge with a Korean American church is the language barrier between the generation that immigrated to the U.S. and those who were born in the U.S.

[continued on page 8]

ROBIN MEYERS, NOTED PROGRESSIVE PASTOR, TO BE HENRIETTA PERDUE LECTURER

The Rev. Dr. Robin R. Meyers will be the next Henrietta Perdue lecturer, the weekend of Nov. 15 - 17.

Dr. Meyers is a nationally known progressive UCC pastor, professor, peace activist, and author of six books about Christianity and American society. He has been the senior minister of Mayflower Congregational UCC church, Oklahoma City, for 27 years, and is a tenured full professor of rhetoric in the philosophy department at Oklahoma City University.

He was a featured speaker at the Westar Convention (aka the Jesus Seminar) this April. In October, before he speaks at Stone, he will have the honor of presenting, at Yale Divinity

School, the prestigious Lyman Beecher Lectureship on Preaching – a lectureship given each year since 1871.

“His teaching and preaching offer a non-literal, non-dogmatic approach to Christianity, and his politics are neither left nor right, but rather subversive for the cause of love. He seeks to build not a collection of ‘believers,’ but a Beloved Community devoted to embodying peace and justice in a broken world. As a professor, he teaches the ancient canons of rhetoric, urging his students to think critically and fearlessly about the things they think they know. His method is Socratic, grounded in the belief that the truth is accessible but often obscured, and that love is

life’s highest achievement.” (from Dr. Meyers’ biography on amazon.com)

His latest book is *The Underground Church: Reclaiming the Subversive Way of Jesus*. His previous book, *Saving Jesus from the Church: How to Stop Worshiping Christ and Start Following Jesus*, was presented as a Sunday evening class series by Walter Hudson.

A good introduction to Dr. Meyers is provided by his website (www.robinmeyers.com); in particular, look at the video clips.

Dr. Meyers will lecture on Friday evening, Nov. 15, and Saturday morning, Nov. 16. He will also be our guest preacher on Sunday, Nov. 17.

- Pat Magee



ANONYMOUS DONOR PROVIDES \$1,000 FOR EDUARDO'S CARE

Ken Henry recently visited Eduardo Grijalva to deliver cards from our Church School and an anonymous donation of \$1,000, given on Easter Sunday (see Session article, page 6).

Eduardo defeated lymphoma at age three, only to be diagnosed with leukemia at age six. His form of leukemia is very aggressive and can be treated only with a bone marrow transplant. Stone Church sends our love, prayers, and support to Eduardo, and his family, and encourages everyone to register with the National Marrow Donor Program (www.marrow.org).



CROP WALK: DOWNTOWN ROUTE WAS INTERESTING, SPEAKERS WERE INSPIRING

Stone Church had 20 walkers and has raised almost \$3,500 for the South Bay CROP Walk on April 21.

It's not too late to donate for this very worthy cause. 25% of the funds raised go to Second Harvest Food Bank and Sacred Heart Community Service, and 75% go to worldwide hunger programs.

Join us next year – the new downtown route was very interesting – and we enjoyed hearing from several inspiring speakers, including U.S. Representative Mike Honda and CWS Exec. V.P. Maurice Bloem.

ADULT STUDY: OLIVERS' JOURNEY, CHURCH DIVIDED, SPIRITUALITY, VAN NOSTRAN

Adult Study classes meet on Sunday after Worship, in the Fireside Room, from 11:15 am to 12:15 pm. Childcare is available in the Nursery.

May 5: Faith Journeys of Couples at Stone – Fred and Lizanne Oliver

In past years, *individual* members of Stone Church have discussed their faith journeys with the Sunday morning class. This spring, *couples* are sharing their joint journeys of faith, why they joined Stone, and why they remain faithful to Stone. On May 5, Fred and Lizanne Oliver will share their story.

May 12: The Church Divided – Understanding Why Some Churches Are Leaving the PCUSA and Why We Are Not, with Ken Henry

This class will be a time to explore the historical debate within the Presbyterian Church (USA) over the ordination standards and the theological

differences that divide evangelical and progressive churches within our denomination. Currently, several Presbyterian churches are threatening to leave or have already begun a process entitled, “Gracious Dismissal.”

Rev. Dr. Ken Henry has served on the governing committees that drafted our current San José Presbytery policy.

May 19 & 26: Being Spiritual, But Not Religious, with Ken Henry

“I have often heard people say, ‘I’m a spiritual person, but I can’t say I’m very religious.’” [from Ken Henry]

This two-week class will explore what this statement implies with regards to current social trends in spirituality and religious institutions.

While we will spend some time defining these terms, we will also learn some spiritual practices, as well as explore the historic roots of Christian spirituality.

June 9: Kristi Van Nostran, Facilitator for Joining Hands Network

Kristi Van Nostran is a Presbyterian mission worker in El Salvador and the facilitator for *Joining Hands Network*. In this position, Kristi helps build bridges of solidarity between churches in the U.S. and a network of churches, grassroots groups, and nongovernmental organizations in El Salvador. Together they work to combat the causes of poverty and suffering through education, alternative economic activities, and spiritual grounding.

Kristi will be introduced during the Worship Service on June 9 and will lead a class and discussion afterward.

There is no class on June 2 (Congregational Meeting). Also, please note that Adult Study will take a break during the summer, returning Sept. 15. Contact Pat Magee, Chair, Adult Study Subcommittee, if you have questions about any of these classes.

FIND GREAT BOOKS ON MOTHER’S DAY & PENTECOST IN THE CHURCH LIBRARY

A bunch of our newer books relate to important days in May: Mother’s Day and Pentecost. Happy browsing in both the Children’s Chapel Library and our two rooms in Lincoln House!

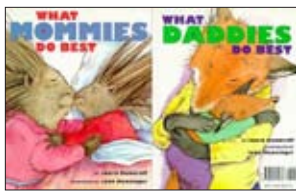
- Sue Williams, Library Coordinator

New for our younger members:



Planting a Rainbow by Lois Ehlert (Read-Aloud J Ehl)

What Mommys Do Best/ What Daddies Do Best by Laura Numeroff (Read-Aloud J Num)



Does a Kangaroo Have a Mother, Too? by Eric Carle (1st Bks J Car)

Before I Was Your Mother by Kathryn Lasky (1st Bks J Las)



My Big Book of 5-Minute Devotions Celebrating God’s World by Pamela & Douglas Kennedy (J 242 Ken)

Young Heroes in World History by Robin Berson (YA Biog BB Berson)



On the adult side:
Mere Christianity by C.S. Lewis, foreword by Kathleen Norris (230 Lew), given by Joy Moriconi)

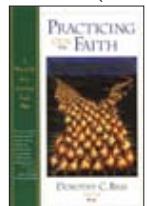
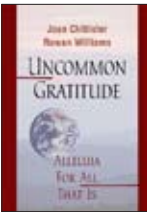
Uncommon Gratitude: Alleluia for All That Is by Joan Chittister & Rowan Williams (241.4 Chi)



Devotional Classics, ed. by Richard Foster & James B. Smith (242 Fos), given

by Alice Thorn

Practicing Our Faith, ed. by Dorothy Bass (248.4 Bas), given by Claudia Hamm

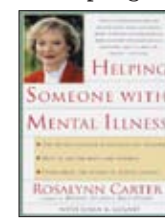


The Future of Faith by Harvey Cox (261 Cox)

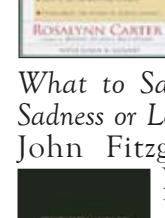
Lions, Harts, Leaping Does and Other Stories by J.F. Powers (813.54 Pow), given by Brad Bauer



In our adult special sections:



Helping Someone with Mental Illness by Rosalynn Carter (Spec. Needs 616.8 Car), given by Health Ministries Committee



Words of Comfort: What to Say at Times of Sadness or Loss by William John Fitzgerald (Spec. Needs-D 306.9 Fit), given by Rebecca Kuiken



Presbyterian Women in America: Two Centuries of a Quest for Status by Lois Boyd & R.D. Brackenridge (Women 285.1 Boy), given by Dulcie Janzen



Save Me by Lisa Scottoline (F Sco), given by Hazel James



MEN'S MINISTRY



The Men's Ministry of Stone Church includes a mission work team, a book group, a flying group, and wine- and beer-making groups.

For additional information about any of these activities, please contact Parish Associate David McCreath.

Men's Book Group to Meet May 20

The Men's Book Group will meet on May 20, beginning at 7:30 pm.

We will select books for summer and early fall reading.

Please come prepared to suggest new books.

The host for the evening is Stephen Buckley.

Men's Breakfast to be Held June 22

All men of the church are invited for good food and good fellowship to the Men's Breakfast, on June 22, from 8 to 9 am, in the Social Hall.

Save the date now - program details are forthcoming.

Donations will be accepted to offset the costs.

Thank You for Supporting the Men's Ministry!

The Men's Ministry thanks all of you who supported the recent Fund-raising Dinner and the Semi-Annual Book Sale.

Ten per cent of the funds raised will be given to the church to help retire the mortgage. The other 90 per cent will support two work projects at Westminster Woods Conference Center and four rehabilitation projects with Sacred Heart Community Service (see related article below).

Other funds will be reserved for special ministry projects.

MEN'S MINISTRY PARTNERS WITH SACRED HEART TO HELP LOCAL RESIDENTS WITH REPAIRS

Stone Men's Ministry has started a program with Sacred Heart Community Service and Matt King to help low income homeowners with health and safety repairs that they could not otherwise afford.



Over the weekend of April 13 and 14, the men embarked on their first project, for Rebecca, a five-day-a-week volunteer at Sacred Heart, who lives in the DMV/Sacred Heart area in a 90- to 100-year-old house.

The home's primary bathroom was poorly vented, mold covered much of the wall and ceiling area, and the floor and wall next to the bathtub

were rotted. The men removed and replaced a section of the floor and wall, cleaned up the mold, repainted the entire bathroom, and replaced and properly vented a new ceiling exhaust fan.

Art Holtz (pictured at left), David McCreath, Mike Roberts, Steve Lord, Wynn Barnes, and Bill Ribble made up the work team, which logged about 42 man hours. The Men's Ministry paid for all of the materials.



And what a difference! Here are the "before" and "after" pictures!



With thanks to Bill Ribble for the story and pictures.

STONEWORKS WORKS!

The days are getting longer, the sun is shining and while many of us are putting in our summer gardens, we are mindful of those who struggle to put food on the table. This month, StoneWorks brought focus to hunger advocacy by participating in the annual CROP walk. It was a beautiful day, and the new route in downtown San José lent a different view and awareness of our community. Thank you to those who walked/ran and those who pledged. And a huge *thank you* to Lizanne Oliver and Emily Meacham for organizing (see related article, page 2).

In June, look for opportunities to learn more about our connections to the PCUSA *Joining Hands Network* in El Salvador. Mission worker Kristi Van Nostran will be at Stone on June 9 (see Adult Ed article, page 3). Stone has partnered with Kristi in the way of financial support, and we are excited to meet her and hear more about this ministry.

This year's *One Great Hour of Sharing* offering total was \$3,533. All of this offering is sent to General Mission and disbursed as follows: 36% Hunger Programs, 32% Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, 32% Self-Development of People. Thank you for your generosity to these missions! The *Pentecost Offering* will be received May 19, of which 40% will go to the Mission fund at Stone and 60% to General Presbyterian Mission.

Lastly, the invitation is always open to join StoneWorks. We currently meet on Sunday mornings at 11 am, with the date announced each month.

For more information, please contact Maureen Chandler.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN



Ah, the Merry Month of May! We have done May baskets, the May Pole, Mother's Day, and Memorial Day: let's just sit back and enjoy this month that is not too hot, not too cold, and flowers are blooming, and we can catch our breath.

Prayers for Rev. Eugenia Campbell

We were disappointed that the Spiritual Nurture Retreat had to be cancelled due to the illness of the Rev. Eugenia Campbell, who was to lead us in this venture. Your good thoughts and prayers for her are encouraged.

Mother's Day Cards, May 5

On May 5, everyone will have the opportunity to buy Mother's Day cards for the price of a contribution of any amount.

This year we are concentrating on families in South Sudan and their work to provide educational opportunities (see related article, below).

Aiding Schools with Coupons

Our aid to schools through coupons found on many products is going smoothly. The youngsters at *our school* are not just sitting by – they bring in coupons too! Since the cold weather is over (we hope), our emphasis shifts from hot soups and cereals to cold ones. Try Chex in one of their flavors. Don't forget about your S.H.A.R.E.S. card: ask at your grocery if they participate in this program. (For more information, contact Dorothy Stevens.)

Fair Trade Sales, May 12

The faithful folks at the Fair Trade Sales Table will have forms for special orders starting May 10, so if there is something you don't see, ask about this service.

Suzanne Woods Fisher at PWP, May 19

The Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery will hold their *Annual Gathering* at Stone Church on May 19, beginning from 2 to 4 pm.

The featured speaker will be Suzanne Woods Fisher (see related article, below).

PW Schedule for May

Amethyst Circle, 1 pm, May 1, Church Library

Emerald Circle, 9:30 am, May 2, Catherine Edwards' home

Mother's Day Cards, May 5, 10:30 am, Social Hall

PWCT, 9:30 am, May 9, Social Hall

Fair Trade Sales, 10:30 am, May 12, Social Hall

Sapphire Circle, 7:30 pm, May 13, Sue Evan's home

Lunch Bunch, 11:30 am, May 14, Taiwan Restaurant, Lincoln Ave.

Focus Group, 9:30 am, May 15, June Tablak's home

PWP Annual Meeting, 2 pm, May 19, Stone Church

Book Group II, 2:30 pm, May 20, Joyce Degan's home, discussing *Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail* by Cheryl Strayed

S.I.T. with Ken Henry, 2 pm, May 22, Church Library

Book Group I, 1 pm, May 27, Hazel James' home, discussing *Death and the Supernatural* by Ruth C. White, MD

Prayer Shawl Group: Please contact Janice Goertz for date and time.

Bible Study: Bible Study is on vacation until August when we shall begin the study of *Abiding Hope*. (If you do not have a copy of the study book, talk to Sally Magee.)

- Catherine Amos

PRES. WOMEN IN PRESBYTERY TO HOLD ANNUAL GATHERING AT STONE, FEATURING SUZANNE FISHER

The Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery will hold their *Annual Gathering* at Stone Church on May 19, from 2 to 4 pm.

There will be a short business meeting, and we will hear from Susan Brooksbank and Amanda Craine who attended the 57th United Nations Commission on the Status of Women Conference in NYC earlier this year.

The featured speaker, Suzanne Woods Fisher, will do a presentation on her Amish stories, and her books will be for sale.

Suzanne is the bestselling, award-winning author of *The Stoney Ridge Seasons* series and *The Lancaster County Secrets* series, as well as nonfiction books about the Amish, including *Amish Peace*. She is fascinated by faith-based communities. Her interest in the Anabaptist culture can be directly



traced to her grandfather, who was raised in the Old Order German Baptist Brethren Church in Franklin County, Pennsylvania. She is also the host of *Amish Wisdom*, a weekly radio program and a columnist for *Christian Post*. You can download her app, *Amish Wisdom*, to receive a daily Amish proverb (www.suzannewoodsfisher.com). She lives with her family in the San Francisco Bay Area and raises puppies for *Guide Dogs for the Blind* in her spare time. - Claudia Hamm

MOTHER'S DAY CARDS HELP SOUTH SUDAN

Here are some facts you should know about the new nation of South Sudan:

- * 80% of the population cannot read or write.
- * Only 1 of 4 schoolchildren is a girl.
- * Female illiteracy is the highest in the world.
- * 44% are under the age of 14.



The Presbyterian Church of South Sudan is implementing literacy training, education, and health programs. PW Mother's Day Card funds go directly to these projects through the *Healthy Women Healthy Families* program. Come by the PW table on Sunday, May 5, to get a card, and help support this important cause. - Rosaleen Zisch

SESSION MOVES TO MAKE REV. PAK PERMANENT, RECEIVES VISION GRANT

The most important action item at the regular meeting of Session, on April 16, was to set in motion the process for making the position of Associate Pastor permanent for Irene Pak. She was hired by the Session as a Temporary Supply Associate Pastor, and the desire is to have the congregation join the Session in making this commitment to her.

Ken Henry announced that Stone Church has received a Vision Grant from the Presbytery of San José in the amount of \$5,000, to be used to provide regular American Sign Language interpreters in the Sunday morning worship services.

After Ken Henry's proposal that the church give \$2 per person at the Easter service to a mission project, an anonymous donor promised to do just that. With 349 in attendance at the regular service, plus 50 at the sunrise service, the donor has given a "rounded" amount of \$1,000. This will be used to help a child with leukemia. (See related article, page 2.)

This Easter service was the first where Stone's new flat screen was used in the Social Hall to project the service to overflow attendees. Ken Henry and the Worship committee worked to make the experience more than a television viewing opportunity

and reported to Session that overall it worked well. The committee will work on further modifications and will use it again on Pentecost Sunday.

The Personnel and Administration Committee, Brian Gustafson chair, is working on a safe church policy to accompany the safe church training carried out by Mel Goertz. With the attention paid to preventing child abuse, and with the ever-ready potential for the church to be sued in case of an incident, it is important to have such a policy and training in place.

Finally, Session authorized needed repairs to Roycott House

- Alice Thorn, Clerk of Session

WHAT DOES IT COST TO BE A MEMBER?

by Rev. Dr. Ken Henry

[continued from page 1]

But then came a question that made me consider more deeply my commitment: *How would you rate the Y on value for your money?*

I believe this last question could also be used to address *the cost of becoming a member at Stone.*

How do we value "taking part in the common life and worship of a congregation?" What is the price tag for "responding to God's activity in the world through our service to others?" And how much would we pay "to work for peace, justice, freedom, and human fulfillment?" (These quotes come directly from the membership section of the PCUSA Book of Order.)

Of course, every congregation has costs for keeping a church active and alive. We pay for our exceptional staff, including our choir director, organist, treasurer, custodian, office manager, children's ministry coordinator, nursery attendants, and pastors. We pay for building maintenance, office supplies, and copy machines.

Such costs are concrete, and everyone who completes a pledge card during our annual pledge drive in October, or gives on a monthly basis,

or subscribes to automatic withdrawal, understands this.

But we also understand that when we give to Stone, we are supporting the value we place on belonging to, and sustaining, an inclusive and progressive community of faith. Like the value I place on keeping myself fit by going to the Y, I also place great value on my spiritual journey with the people at Stone.

So, while there are no initiation fees or membership dues, and *per capita* is an annual amount that supports the general mission of the PCUSA, the cost for becoming a member is a matter of value; it is a matter of hearing and acting on God's call to participate in the life of the church by offering our time, talent, and money; and it is a matter of believing Jesus' words: "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." (Matthew 6:21)

🚌 Price of a gallon of gas?

\$3.67 to \$4.05 (at press time!)

🍴 Dinner for two at a Willow Glen restaurant? \$30 to \$80

🌿 Membership at the Y?

\$40 to \$60 a month

♥ Discovering the Love of God at Stone Church? Priceless!

For more information regarding pledging or making a financial contribution to Stone, please contact the Church Office.



GIVING AS LEGACY

Maya Angelou writes these words that guide her thinking about legacy.

"The New Testament informs ... that it is more blessed to give than to receive. I have found that among its other benefits, giving liberates the soul of the giver. The size and the substance of the gift should be important to the recipient, but not to the donor save that the best thing one can give is that which is appreciated. The giver is as enriched as is the recipient, and more important, that intangible but very real psychic force of good in the world is increased.

"When we cast our bread upon the waters, we can presume that someone downstream whose face we will never know will benefit from our action, as we who are downstream from another will profit from that grantor's gift.

"Since time is the one immaterial object which we cannot influence - neither speed up nor slow down, add to nor diminish - it is an imponderable valuable gift. Each of us has a few minutes a day or a few hours a week which we could donate ...

"While our gifts and the recipients should be considered, our bounty, once decided upon, should be without concern, overflowing one minute and forgotten the next."

- *Wouldn't Take Nothing for My Journey Now*, 1993, Random House, New York.



Above: Photographs from the recent Deacons' Spring Tea

TRAIL WALKERS TO STEVENS CREEK PARK

The Stone Church Trail Walkers will take on the Tony Look Trail in Stevens Creek County Park on Saturday, May 18, at 9 am.

This beautiful 1,077 acre park offers widely diverse recreational amenities, including the 92-acre reservoir. Sturdy shoes are a must for this month's walk, as this is an unpaved trail with mild elevation changes.

Stevens Creek Park is located along Stevens Canyon

Road and Mt. Eden Road in the foothills between Saratoga and Cupertino. To access the park, take Interstate Highway 280 to Foothill Expressway. Follow Foothill Blvd. west three miles to the northern park entrance. (Foothill Blvd. changes into Stevens Canyon Road as it crosses McClellan Road.)

For questions, or to sign up, please contact Katherine Webb Calhoon.

SERVICE TO WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

A *Service of Welcoming New Members* will be held May 19, during the *Worship Service* for those who have attended a *Get Acquainted Lunch* to

learn about what it means to be a Presbyterian.

RSVP to Virginia Holtz or to one of the pastors at the Church Office.

CAN YOU HELP YOUR FELLOW MEMBERS?

Stone Cares is *people helping people* in the Stone Church congregation. Organized by the Deacons, it is made up of people like you who volunteer your time and talents to help those in the congregation who have a special need.

It may be a ride or perhaps a meal for someone who is recuperating. It could also be a fix-it project or yard work for someone who is unable to get around. We all have a

talent that we can use to help others, whether it be giving a ride, cooking a dinner, fixing a broken lamp, pulling some weeds, or simply reading or listening.

We are expanding our list of volunteers, along with their talents.

Please contact Phil Curtis to add your name, contact information, and talent(s).

Thank you!

FAMILY PICTURES FOR NEW DIRECTORY

Planning has begun for a new Stone Church Pictorial Directory, to be issued shortly after Christmas 2013.

Family photos will be taken on Aug. 8 - 10 and 23 - 24. Please mark these dates on your calendars. Sign-ups for the photo shoots will begin in mid-July. We anticipate that family photos will be available in time to be used as Christmas presents.

If you are interested in serving on the ad hoc Pictorial Directory committee, contact Pat Magee or Virginia Holtz.

For the past ten years, we have worked with Olin Mills. Mr. Mills retired and sold the directory business to Lifetouch. Therefore, our business contact will now be Lifetouch. [For general information about Lifetouch, see www.lifetouch.com.]



WHY I LOVE THE INTERGENERATIONAL CHURCH

by Rev. Irene Pak

[continued from page 1]

Because of that language barrier, it is necessary to have separate worship services, in Korean and in English. And the Korean service is composed primarily of the older generation and parents, while the English service is mostly youth or college students.

Many would argue that having separate services around age and life experience is easier. As a pastor, I would agree. It is easier to focus a sermon around a particular group or age. It's much more difficult to prepare a sermon that will be meaningful for a congregation composed of very different ages and experiences of life.

However, it is my personal belief that this challenge of being intergenerational is a necessity for the future of the church.

On Sunday, April 14, some of you may have been in worship to celebrate ten Stone Church youth confirming their faith and five being baptized (see photo above). It was my privilege to officiate this portion of the service because it says a lot about this community when that many young people say "yes" to the faith journey when it is really not a "cool" thing to do anymore.

The challenge now for all of us is to not "tokenize" these young people, but to find ways to engage them in the life of the church – and to invite them to share their voices and gifts with us.

In a recent online article, based on the book *Sticky Faith: Practical Ideas to Nurture Long Term Faith in Teenagers*

(www.stickyfaith.org/articles/the-church-sticking-together), four intergenerational insights were shared that might help us think about how to engage the young people in our midst:

- ✘ **Intergenerational Insight #1:** Involvement in all-church worship during high school is more consistently linked with mature faith in both high school and college than any other form of church participation.
- ✘ **Intergenerational Insight #2:** The more students serve and build relationships with younger children, the more likely it is that their faith will stick.
- ✘ **Intergenerational Insight #3:** High school seniors do not feel supported by adults in their congregations.
- ✘ **Intergenerational Insight #4:** By far, the number one way that churches made the teens in our survey feel welcomed and valued was when the adults in the congregation showed interest in them.

Apparently, more than any single program or event, youth are far more likely to feel like a significant part of their church when adults make an effort to get to know them.

This is our challenge and our joy. I hope that everyone reading this would agree that we need to incorporate our young people into the life of the church – but let's also be mindful that perhaps we are expecting them to do so in "our" model of church, instead of trying to find out what they might have to offer us.

Our former PCUSA moderator Bruce Reyes-Chow recently wrote, "For those of us who work with young

people – or any population for that matter – it's vital that we understand trends and tendencies, but we must be careful not to romanticize or condemn their reality as a whole."

It's our fundamental understanding that in our baptisms, we make covenants with one another. It's the covenant to teach and share the love and mercy of God and to help each other along the journey.

Confirmation is the fulfillment of that baptismal covenant when we hear the youth say YES to continue the faith journey. The challenge and call for us today is to continue to honor the covenant we have made – to hold each other up in respect and love – and to be open to the ways in which God is speaking to all of us.

Those ten youth, and I know there are more in our midst, are saying YES to continue the faith journey.

Let's say YES to engaging them and empowering them as we serve God together.

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