The Stone News

Stone Church of Willow Glen, Presbyterian USA November 2015

A Season of Gratitude

by Rev. Irene Pak

"When you are aware of all that has been given to you, in your lifetime and the past few days, it is hard not to be humbled, and pleased to give back." - Anne Lamott

It's November, and we are entering a month where we are invited to be intentional about what we are thankful for in our lives. There have been seasons in my life where this was not the easiest thing to do. And then there are seasons in my life where it is so easy that all I can do is simply say "thank you" over and over. With only a few more months to go until my wedding, a family who loves and supports me, friends who are there for me whether they are near or far, a church community that is *awesome*, and a wonderful person in Marion, I am in the "it is easy" to give thanks phase of my life right now.

I am enjoying and lingering in this place of gratitude for as long as I can since that is my present reality. But I also know that seasons in my life will come again when it is not so easy. During those times, I hope that I can still turn to God and find even small reasons to be grateful.

Where are you in your life right now? As we enter a new month, how can you be more intentional about giving thanks on a daily basis? What practice might you take on this month to help you be present to the places of gratitude in your own life? And will you be ready and in a posture of giving thanks to our God even when some sudden shift happens in your life where it might be more difficult?

My prayer for you and for me is that the answer to that last question is "yes!" Whatever season, trials, or joys come my way, I want to be found in a posture of gratitude for what comes. I hope you do too.

I cannot close this piece without adding a special word of thanks to the Stone Church women for throwing me a beautiful bridal shower on Oct. 17 [*pictured above*]. It is wonderful to serve a church that demonstrates so much love to their pastors, and I can only be thankful to be one of them. I definitely felt showered with blessing! Thank you for your prayers. I am grateful to be your asso-

1st Annual Interfaith Thanksgiving Service

Join the interfaith community of San Jose in giving thanks at the *1st Annual Interfaith Thanksgiving Service*, at 7 pm, Tuesday, Nov. 24, at Stone Church.

Faith communities at this joint Thanksgiving worship service include The Center for Spiritual Enlightenment, The Islamic Networks Group, Temple Emanu-El, San Jose Buddhist Church Betsuin, St. Martin of Tours Parish, Sathya Sai Baba Center, and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, in addition to Stone Church.

You are encouraged to bring a can of food to donate to Second Harvest Food Bank. Pie and refreshments will be served following the service. Childcare is not provided, but children of all ages are welcome.

Let us gather together and unite in giving thanks for our many blessings. *- Ken Henry*

The Choir that Love Built

by Nancy Wait Kromm, Chancel Choir Director

In 2016, I will be celebrating my tenth year as the Director of the Stone Church Choir!

Have you ever wondered what it is like to direct this wonderful group?

Well let me share with you a few things – in fact, I am inspired to write a poem about the terrific people in the Stone Church Choir, thanks to Ken's inspirational series of a few weeks ago.

At Stone, I work with a group of people who love each other, support each other, and enjoy each other's company. Such a congenial group is not always found in church choirs, so I consider myself deeply blessed.

I like to call the choir, "The Choir that Love Built," because I think it is true (with apologies to Rev. Irene if it seems cheesy...).

Ever since Kate Wheatley welcomed Leroy and my family to Stone, and Walter Roach welcomed us from the choir loft, this has been our special place.

In gratitude, I present this lighthearted poem about my wonderful choir.

The Choir that Love Built

Faithful souls, tried and true,
This is the choir that love built.
Loving souls singing for you,
This is the choir that love built.

Friendly, fun, crazy, wise,
This is the choir that love built.
Experts on how to compromise,
this is the Choir that love built.

Willing to try, willing to wait,
this is the choir that love built.
Eager and glad to participate,
this is the choir that love built.

Ten years doesn't seem so long
leading the choir that love built,
I'm grateful to God for every song
sung by this choir that love built.

As the Director of the Stone Church Choir, I have the privilege of working with a group of individuals who set an example of love, community, and caring that I have always endeavored to follow. I would like to say "thank you" to my beautiful choir for 10 years of music-making. *love, Nancy*

New Member Class and Luncheon, November 8

Have you been attending Stone Church for a while and are eager to join as a member?

Are you newer to Stone Church and wondering what this place is all about?

If you answered "yes" to either of these questions, an upcoming informational luncheon is for you!

On Sunday, Nov. 8, from 11 am to 1 pm, Stone will host a New Members' Class and Luncheon in the Social Hall.

Join Rev. Ken & Rev. Irene and some of the leaders of the church to learn more about what it means to be a Presbyterian, what Stone Church is about and involved in, and why you might consider joining this thriving community of faith! This is a no-pressure gathering so come and learn, eat, and discern.

Sign up at Coffee Fellowship, or contact our office manager, Jennifer (408.269.1593). Childcare is provided.

Hope to see you there!

- Rev. Irene Pak, Associate Pastor

Nursery Supervisor Candidate Awaits Session Approval, DeafNation Expo Report Received from Bill Raby-Brown

Pending completion of employment checks, Session will vote in November to approve the hiring of Kimberly Moore as Stone's nursery supervisor for a trial period.

Moore, a Willow Glen grandmother with 12 years' experience as a church school teacher, signed a contract last week to work until January, when both she and the church will assess their satisfaction with the arrangement.

Session voted at its October meeting to raise the pay for the position from $15 to $20 an hour on a motion from the Personnel and Administration Committee, chaired by Stephen Stock, who said that the combination of a low number of guaranteed hours and the pay rate had made it difficult to attract qualified applicants.

"We have the money in the budget, and it's commensurate with the going rate," he said.

Parents have staffed the nursery since October 2014 when the search began, but that has meant they could not attend morning worship.

In other Session business:

- Two committees, Budget and Finance as well as Buildings and Grounds, were authorized to draft a policy defining when committees should require bids before making purchases.
- Budget and Finance asked all committees to submit copies of their minutes in addition to vouchers when making discretionary purchases. This accounting practice will assure that there is a record of the committee authorizing purchases beyond those authorized in the church budget.
- Bill Raby-Brown made a report on staffing a table at the DeafNation Expo last month in Pleasanton as part of Stone Church's deaf ministry.

- Jody Meacham, Elder

Adult Study Features "Redwoods," Covenant Network Director, Messiah

Adult Study classes are offered on Sundays in the Fireside Room or Sanctuary, beginning at 11:15 am. Childcare is provided.

Nov. 1, 15, and Jan. 10 [2016]: Special Series: The "Redwoods" of Stone Church

Go back in time to learn the history of Stone Church and the PCUSA from those who were there.

Moderator Stephen Stock and members of Stone's congregation and youth are invited to sit down with the *Redwoods* of Stone Church – members who have become legends as they have lived their faith and creed – and changed the world in the process. Our *Redwoods* will talk about their faith and their experiences, and how we can learn from those same experiences today. [*For more information, please see page 8.*]

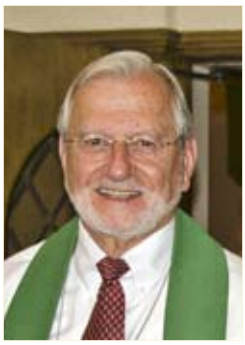
Nov. 22: Meet the Rev. Brian Ellison, Executive Director, Covenant Network of Presbyterians

The Rev. Brian Ellison is Executive Director of the Covenant Network of Presbyterians, which works for full acceptance of the LGBTQ community.

The presbyteries have voted to approve Amendment 14-F, ministers may now officiate at and Sessions may host same-gender weddings, and LGBTQ people are being ordained in congregations.

What will the Covenant Network do now?

Nov. 29: Messiah: An Advent Study [the first of a four-part series], with the Rev. David McCreath



Isaiah 9:2–7 is a familiar passage that uses four royal titles: *Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

Our study with the Rev. David McCreath will consider how Handel used each title in his famous music, whether Jesus fulfilled the title, and how Christians interpret Jesus as representative of the titles.

There is no Adult Study on Dec. 27 or Jan. 3 [2016]. For more information, contact Pat Magee, Adult Education Chair.

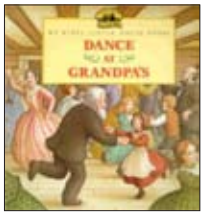
"Give Thanks" for the Thanksgiving Books in Our Church Library!

Some of our new book titles capture the meaning of Thanksgiving: celebration, blessings, traditions, conversation, courage, and hope. Enjoy!

- Sue Williams, Library Coordinator

For our younger ones & parents

Thank You, Thanksgiving by David Milgrim (1st Bks Mil)

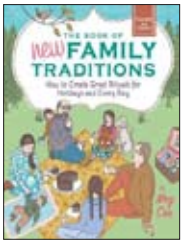


Dance at Grandpa's by Laura Ingalls Wilder (1st Bks Wil)

Celebrate Thanksgiving with Turkey, Family, and Counting Blessings by Deborah Heiligman (J 390 Hei)

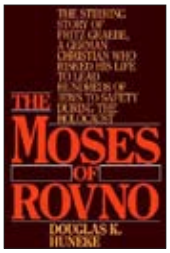
The Little Hands Big Fun Craft Book by Judy Press (J 745.5 Pre)

Heroes for My Son by Brad Meltzer (J Biog MELTZER)

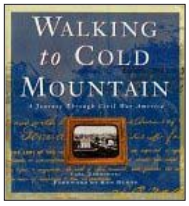


The Book of New Family Traditions: How to Create Great Rituals for Holidays and Every Day by Meg Cox (ChL-Fam 173 Cox + 2d copy at Fam 173 Cox), given by Caryl Westerberg

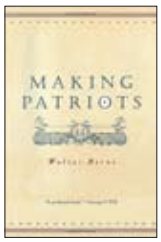
Additions in Lincoln House



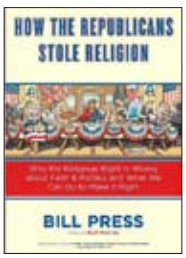
The Moses of Rovno by Douglas Huneke (940.53 Hun)



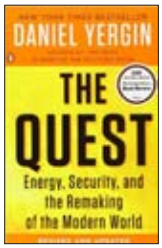
Walking to Cold Mountain: A Journey through Civil War America by Carl Zebrowski (973.7 Zeb)



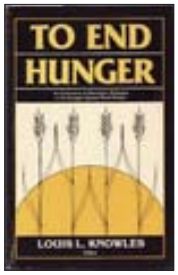
Making Patriots by Walter Berns (Soc. Iss. 320 Ber), given by the Whitesel family



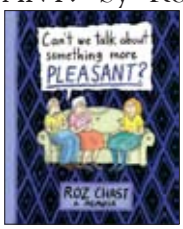
How the Republicans Stole Religion by Bill Press (Soc. Iss. 322 Pre)



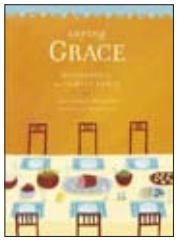
The Quest: Energy, Security & the Remaking of the Modern World by Daniel Yergin (Soc. Iss. 333 Yer), given by Pat Magee



To End Hunger by Louis Knowles (Soc. Iss.-Hunger 261.8 Kno)

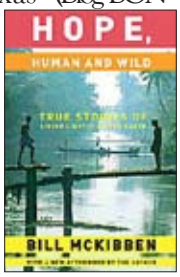


Can't We Talk about Something More PLEASANT? by Roz Chast (Spec. Needs-A 649.8 Cha)



Saying Grace: Blessings for the Family Table ed. by Sarah McElwain (Fam-R 243 McE), given by Jeanette Rapp

Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy by Eric Metaxas (Biog BONHOEFFER), given by Charlotte Dickson



Hope, Human and Wild by Bill McKibben (Ecol 333.7 McK), given by John Leih

Henrietta Perdue Lecturer Philip Clayton to Speak on "A New Church for A New World"

Dr. Philip Clayton will be Stone Church's 2015 Henrietta Perdue lecturer, speaking on, "A New Church for a New World: Rethinking Theology and Christian Community from the Ground Up."

Three lectures will be presented: one on Friday evening, Nov. 6, and two on Saturday morning, Nov. 7.

- Friday Evening Lecture (7:30 to 9 pm): Vibrant Belief: Finding Meaning in an Age of Isolation and Fragmentation.
- First Saturday Morning Lecture (9 am): Vibrant Community: Radical Hospitality and the Desire to Belong.
- Second Saturday Morning Lecture (11 am): Vibrant Witness: A Topsy-Turvy God, an Upside-Down Ethics, and an Inside-Out Church.

Tickets for the lectures are available at Coffee Fellowship, in the church office, and at the door Friday and Saturday.

Dr. Clayton's interests began with philosophy and the science-religion debate on constructive theology. *The Problem of God in Modern Thought* and a series of accompanying articles explored the fall and rise of theistic metaphysics in the modern era. He led a variety of leadership positions, including the role of Principal Investigator for Science and the Spiritual Quest Program.

A series of events precipitated a change, leading to the Ford Foundation grant, "Rekindling Theological Imagination." Dr. Clayton lectured around the country; organized "Theology after Google;" and launched "Big Tent Christianity" with Brian McLaren and others.

His important book, *Transforming Christian Theology: For Church and Society,* argues that seminaries should help prepare Christian leaders for an unheralded transformation in the church, which has already begun in our culture. *- Pat Magee*

Fair Trade Christmas Baskets

Christmas Baskets filled with fair trade coffee, tea, cocoa and chocolate can be ordered through Nov. 15. Because each basket is custom-made, you can chose the exact items you want.

We will deliver baskets as soon as they are complete after Dec. 6.

You can pick up an order form in the church office or contact Sally Magee (408.927.0862).

"Be Open to the Spirit" at Advent Taizé

As we move into the holiday season, with the increased pressures and tasks that seem to fill our days, Stone Church offers a gift to each of us: a time to breathe; to rest in stillness and beauty; a time to center ourselves and be open to the Spirit that is waiting there to touch our hearts.

This gift comes in the form of our Taizé Prayer Service which, during the Advent Season, will be offered every Tuesday evening: Dec. 1, 8, 15, and 22. The candlelit sanctuary is open at 6:30 pm for silent meditation, and the service begins at 6:45, ending by 7:30.

This is also a wonderful opportunity to invite friends or neighbors to experience the inclusiveness and love of our Stone Church Community, and to be touched by this sacred time of music, chanting, silence and prayer.

Mark your calendars now. Reserve this time for a space of peace and renewal in the midst of a very busy season. *- Mary Alice Collins*

Join Us For Thanksgiving Dinner

Stone Church will again host a Thanksgiving Dinner, led by Christine Lee, chef extraordinaire! Turkey will be provided, and you are asked to bring a side dish to share.

Sign up at Coffee Fellowship, starting in November.

- Carrie Giorgianni,
Chair, M&C Committee

Parents' Day Out, The Deacons' Gift to You

The Stone Church Deacons are happy to announce the 18th Annual Parents' Day Out, on Saturday, Dec. 12, from 10 am to 2 pm.

Sign up at Coffee Fellowship, starting in November.

For more information, please contact Diane VanDenBosch or Lawrence Summers.

Stone Works Explores Ways That We Can All Help WGHS Students

Stone Works recently held our October meeting at Willow Glen High School, where we met with staff and student representatives of the Willow Glen Cares program.

During this meeting, we met three wonderful young women (all seniors at WGHS) who are not only overcoming the struggles that life has thrown at them (such as loss of a home, loss of a parent, or an abusive home life), but are also helping other students experiencing struggles.

After meeting them, we discussed our next steps in our partnership with WGHS. We are starting with a focus on three areas, each of which you will be able to get involved with!

- Sponsoring a student: Starting with seniors, you will be able to help a student in need experience all those wonderful high school experiences that cost extra (such as senior portraits, yearbooks, and prom), as well as things they will need to continue their education, such as paying for college applications.
- Tutoring a student: WGHS has a strong need for after-school tutors, especially those who are well-versed in math and science.
- Donating gift cards and essentials: These will help students who need things such as money for food or clothes, or who just need a stick of deodorant or tube of toothpaste.

While we're still working with WGHS on the details of how these programs will work, we're incredibly excited to be working closely with them to help improve the lives of the 43% of their students that live well below the poverty line.

We (and the students and staff of WGHS) look forward to your help!

- Nicholas Hurley, Chair, Stone Works

BEING THANKFUL

A Mission Gathering for the Stone Church Community

"For it is God who is at work in you ... " Philippians 2:13

Saturday, November 14, 2015
stop by anytime from 2:30 to 4:30 pm

"Meet and Greet"
representatives from our partners:

Immanuel House
The Women's Gathering Place
Emmaus House
Men's Ministry Work Team
Recovery Cafe
Stone Works - mission workers & other projects
Sacred Heart Community Service
Human Trafficking Coalition
Next Door Solutions
Thank Offering and Least Coin Mission of Presbyterian Women
Front Door Ministry

Serving J Lohr wines, appetizers, and cider
Hosts: PW and Men's Ministry Group

Little Dresses for Africa

Stone Church women recently made 48 dresses for the *Little Dresses for Africa* program. They were blessed in Worship and sent, with love, to their destinations in Africa, along with a contribution of $150 to cover shipping costs.

Stone Works Supports Teens from InnVision Shelter Network

Early Saturday morning, Oct. 10, nineteen teens gathered with anticipation and excitement at Kohl's of Santa Clara before the store opened.

These teens are in families that have fallen on hard times and have experienced homelessness. They are the unseen families who struggle among us. They may initially live with extended families or in their cars, but eventually end up in InnVision Shelter Network programs.

The teens go through this unsettled time, parent job loss, or domestic violence – their situations often unknown to their peers. They don't fit our stereotype of the homeless on the street, but their needs are real.

That is where our fun, enthusiastic, and caring Stone volunteers came in. With a gift card in hand, they each partnered with a teen and helped fill their carts with shoes, sweaters, and fabulous finds. Then, they joined together for a breakfast snack before parting ways. InnVision staff are so thankful for our 21 volunteers and the generosity of the whole congregation in supporting this special morning.

- Alice McNelis

Women's Activities at Stone Church

"Open to me the gates of justice; I will enter them and give thanks to the Lord."
- Psalm 118:19

The holidays are upon us. Thanksgiving is food, family, friends, and gratitude.

Mission Gathering: "Being Thankful"

Being Thankful is the topic for the Mission Gathering, on Nov. 14, where you can meet and greet local mission partners of Stone Church [*For more information, please see page 5.*]

Thank Offering

The PW organization has helped to build some of the best hospitals, schools, orphanages, domestic violence shelters, and countless other church-related projects and organizations, both in the USA and throughout the world. We give thanks to God that, since 1888, our organization has generously and joyfully shared our gifts through the Thank Offering so that others may know God's abundant grace. We trust that God will continue to work through us and through our gifts.

Would You Help with the Women's Retreat 2016?

Help is needed for organizing the Women's Retreat: April 1-3, 2016. It is a wonderful fellowship among the lovely grounds of the St. Frances Retreat center.

If you could help to plan a great weekend, please contact Deborah Crim or Maureen Searing.

Women's Gathering Place in "Horizons" Magazine

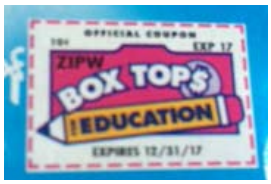
The Sept/Oct. issue of *Horizons* magazine has a great article on our local Women's Gathering Place. Located at First Presbyterian Church in San José, it is a daytime shelter for homeless women. If you do not have access to the issue at home, there is one in our Church Library.

To volunteer with us for a day fixing a hot lunch, please contact Claudia Hamm.

BOX TOPs for Education

Be sure to place only "Labels for education" in the BOX TOPS coupon box – do not put in Bar Codes.

Some of the accepted brands are Pillsbury, General Mills, Campbell's, Scott Paper, Kleenex, Land O'Lakes, Betty Crocker, Ziploc, Old El Paso, Green Giant, and Progresso. Kirkland is not on the list. Each BOX TOP coupon equates to 10 cents and is used at K. R. Smith school for non-funded student enrichment programs, maps, both reference and fun-to-read books, and special assemblies.



For more information, please contact Sue Evans.

PW Calendar for November

Amethyst Bible Circle, Nov. 4, 1 pm, Church Library. Contact Jan Keifer.

Emerald Bible Circle, Nov. 5, 9:30 am, Joyce Degan's home.

Fair Trade Coffee & Chocolate Sales, Coffee Fellowship, Nov. 8

Sapphire Bible Circle, Nov. 9, 7:30 pm, Ida Raby's home.

Lunch Bunch, 11:30 am, Nov. 10, Taiwan Restaurant, 1306 Lincoln Ave. Contact Ida Raby.

Coordinating Team, Nov. 12, 9:30 am, Social Hall

Mission Gathering, Nov. 14, 2:30-4:30 pm, Social Hall

Book Group II, 2:30 pm, Nov. 16, Rosaleen Zisch's home, discussing *A Spool of Blue Thread*, by Anne Tyler

Focus for Justice & Peace, Nov. 18, 9:30 am, June Tablak's home

Book Group III, 7:15 pm, Nov. 18, Church Library, discussing *Station Eleven*, by Emily St. John Mandel

Book Group I, 1 pm, Nov. 23, Linda Hagan's home.

Prayer Shawl Ministry, Nov. 28, 1-3 pm, Linda Hagan's home.

- Joyce Summers

Men's Mission & Ministry at Stone Church

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

For more information about any of these activities, please contact the Rev. Dr. David McCreath, Parish Associate.

Men's Book Faire, Nov. 1

The Men's Book Faire will be held Sunday, Nov. 1, in the Social Hall, following morning worship.

Men's Mission Trip to Westminster Woods, Nov. 6-8

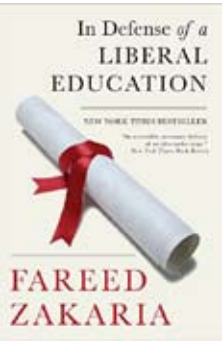
The Fall Men's Mission Trip to Westminster Woods will take place Nov. 6-8.

For more information about transportation, work tasks, etc., please contact Leland Wong.

Men's Autumn Breakfast, Nov. 14

The Men's Autumn Breakfast will take place Saturday, Nov. 14, from 8:30 to 9:30 am, in the Social Hall.

Craig Bowers will present a program on the ICON A5, a new, uniquely designed amphibious sport plane.



Men's Book Group, Nov. 16

The Men's Book Group will meet Nov. 16, beginning at 7 pm.

Jim Hagan is the host.

The book for review is *In Defense of a Liberal Education*, by Fareed Zakaria.

The Stone Church Trail Walkers recently hiked at Almaden Quicksilver Park.

The Stone Church Youth Group recently made their annual outing to the Uesugi Farms Pumpkin Park and Corn Maze ... they missed Irene, but continued her tradition!

A Shower for Irene

photos courtesy of

Lynn Stock, Kim Mattan, and Jason Leibowitz

The "Redwoods" of Stone Church: A Special Three-Part Intergenerational Learning Event

When: Nov. 1, 2015; Nov. 15, 2015, and Jan. 10, 2016

What time: 11:15 am

Where: Sanctuary of Stone Church

What: Go back in time to get the *inside skinny* on the history of both the Stone Church of Willow Glen and the Presbyterian Church USA – from Stone's *Redwoods*, that is, those who "have walked before us."

Moderator Stephen Stock and members of Stone's congregation and youth are invited to sit down with the *Redwoods* of Stone Church – members who have become legends as they have lived their faith and creed – and changed the world in the process. Our *Redwoods* will talk about their faith and their experiences, and how we can learn from those same experiences today. Hear firsthand accounts of what it was like to build the modern PCUSA and make Stone Church what it is today.

Also hear from those who experienced what it was like to live in the United States in the era of what Tom Brokaw calls "Our Greatest Generation."

Here's the "Lineup":

- **Nov. 1: WWII, Cesar Chavez, Presbyterian Re-unification**
  How was WWII won? What was it like to work with Cesar Chavez? [with Bob & Hazel James]

  Why did it take 100 years for the Presbyterian Church to reunite? [with Edward & June Tablak]

- **Nov. 15: Stone Church & the Greater Church through the Ages**
  What has changed and how will we continue to change in the coming century?
  What is it like to be someone different even now?
  [with Marge Palmer, David McCreath, & Irene Pak]

- **Jan. 10 [2016]: Women of History**
  How were women treated by society and the PCUSA in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s?
  How did we get to where we are today?
  [with Diana Lim & Alice Thorn]

- Stephen Stock, Chair, P&A

Rebuilding Day Brings Crew of 19 from Stone To Help "Veteran Cliff"

Stone Church Men's Mission & Ministry sponsored a Rebuilding Day on Saturday, Oct. 25, at the mobile home of a disabled veteran off Capitol Expressway.

"Veteran Cliff" was very grateful for the over 100 man hours that went into rebuilding his deck railings, shoring up his deck, rebuilding the south-facing front fascia, and painting the entire mobile home.

A crew of 19 came from Stone Church: Wynn "the painter" Barnes, Julia Roberts, John, Chris, and Beth Lococo, Barbara Clark, Michele Smith, Jim Hagan, Jeanette Rapp, Mary-Stone and Craig Bowers, Craig Murphy, Mary Jo Blazek, Rhonda Lakatos, Jeff Mattan, and Pat McDaid. Last but certainly not least were Maureen Chandler, our Volunteer Coordinator, and David McCreath, assistant House Captain.

It was a hard day of work, but very rewarding for at least two reasons; first was the community service aspect, and second was the fellowship of the Stone Church community of faith.

Some serious carpentry skills were exhibited – you should see Julia Roberts handle a skill saw or Michele Smith power-drive screws! *- Bill Ribble*

[photos courtesy RTSV & Rhonda Lakatos]

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