



ALONG THE WAY

The Newsletter of Sunnyvale Presbyterian Church • December 2009

A Season of Advent-ure

by Val Weirauch

As we enter this Advent Season — a season of preparation and anticipation of God's graciousness — our hearts are filled with excitement remembering the hope, love, peace and joy that is found in Christ's birth.

At this time I'm also entering a season of *Advent-ure* filled with anticipation, excitement and opportunity as I work as an intern toward establishing a Recreational Ministry here at Sunnyvale Presbyterian Church. As some of you may know, I have been blessed with this internship as a part of my journey through Fuller Seminary.

The internship is part time for nine months and is designed to provide me with




both a deep experience of ministry as I focus on Recreational Ministry, as well as a breadth of exposures to several other aspects of Sunnyvale Presbyterian's ministries.

I'm thankful, grateful, and all together **EXCITED** to be entering this **ADVENTure** filled season with all of you at Sunnyvale

Presbyterian. Having been a member of this community for some time now — witnessing the amazing variety of gifts demonstrated here — I know the opportunities to learn and grow from all of you are tremendous.

I look forward to discovering with you all the possibilities God has for us as we realize what it means to do Recreational Ministry by being rooted in Christ and reaching out in love. I'm sure this will be one **AMAZING ADVENTURE!**

If you are interested in helping with this **ADVENTure** please contact me at recmin@svpc.us. 

The View From Here

by Rev. Steve Harrington

One of the things common to the characters of the Bible's Christmas stories is that they are people who heard the announcement of good news and responded. Elizabeth who rejoiced and Mary who submitted and the shepherds who followed and the Magi who came — all of them heard the call and heeded. That is what's at the essence of discipleship and the life of faith: that we respond to God's invitation to both see the new thing God is doing and become new people in the process.

Before we know it, the New Year will start and with it perhaps we will make new intentions and resolutions for life. Exercise and diet and financial prudence may all be a part of that but as Christians, we especially take the New Year as an opportunity to renew our faith and rededicate ourselves to the life of discipleship. This year we are going to help with that through a great

new discipleship opportunity.

When people become members of our church they go through a class called Next Step. Starting January 24 we are offering a discipleship program called Step Beyond. For 5 weeks participants will gather on Sunday after church or Monday evening to hear our pastors

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reflect on elements of the Christian life and then meet in small groups to develop their own individual discipleship plan involving a set of personal spiritual practices and a place of service: rooted in Christ, reaching out in love. On March 14, in our worship services we will commission those who have been a part of this class to their plan of discipleship,

and provide follow-up opportunities of accountability and encouragement as their season of commitment unfolds.

I'm very excited about what this Step Beyond invitation will mean for us both as individuals and a church as we raise the bar on our Christian discipleship. It's going to be challenging and

will take a priority commitment, but the rewards are going to be a renewed and invigorated life of faith. Pray about it and I hope you will plan now to make this your priority in the New Year to come! 🌱

Grace and peace,



December Calendar

A quick look at what's happening at Sunnyvale Presbyterian Church this month...

December

- 4-6 DecemberFest Sr. High Retreat at Westminster Woods
- 6 Monthly food drive
- 6 Authors Book Signing, 11 AM in Trinity Court
- 6 Choir Concert, 7:30 PM
- 10 Presbyterian Women's Christmas Celebration, 10:30 AM
- 13 Moment with Children
- 13 Cherub Choir (3's and 4's) sings
- 13 All Church Brunch, 11 AM in Phoenix Center Gym
- 14 SVPC volunteers staff SCS Christmas Center
- 16 Youth BLEND Night
- 18 Junior High Game Night
- 20 iChoir (3's – 6th) sings
- 20 Adult Luncheon, 11:20 AM in Fellowship Hall
- 23 No FLASH or CLUE
- 24 Rainbow and Glory Choirs (K – 6th) sing
and LOGOS Handchimes play
- 24 Christmas Eve Services at 5:00, 7:30 and 11:00 PM
- 26 Sea of Cortez kayaking trip begins
- 27 All Family Worship Service — No Church School;
Childcare available for 3's, 4's and Kindergartners
- 30 No FLASH or CLUE

January

- 3 After Christmas Movie Event
- 3 Sea of Cortez kayaking trip returns
- 10 Presbyterian Women Epiphany Tea
- 18 Day of Service

Christmas Eve Candlelight Services

Thursday, December 24

5:00 PM

Contemporary Worship

- Child care for infants
and toddlers

7:30 PM

Family Worship

- Rainbow Choir “Go
Tell It on the Mountain”
- Glory Choir “Pat-a-Pan”
- Child care for infants
and toddlers

10:30 PM

Choir of Bells prelude

11:00 PM

Traditional Candlelight Service



Newsletter Deadlines

All articles need to be submitted by the second Monday of the month, which means December 14 for the January edition of the newsletter. Articles must be 120 words or less. Send your article to newsletter@svpc.us.

Rooted in Christ...

Sunnyvale Presbyterian offers everyone an opportunity to connect with the church community.

All-Church Brunch

You're invited to attend a brunch hosted by the Sunnyvale Presbyterian Church Youth Ministry on Sunday, December 13 immediately following the 10 AM service in the Phoenix Center. The SVPC Youth offer this brunch as their way of saying "Thank You" to the church community for all you provide us. Thank you so much for the time, financial resources, love, support, and prayer that you give, which allow us to grow with God, grow with each other, and have fun all in the name of Jesus Christ.

Day of Service — January 18, 2010

Where is your heart for service? Is it feeding the hungry, supporting those who make a home for foster children, improving the environment or sprucing up a home for an elderly person? A myriad of opportunities to serve "the least of these" are available in this county.

Way of Service and the Peacemaking and Social Justice Committee, both part of our Mission and Service Ministry, are joining hands to organize and carry out a Day of Service on January 18, 2010. Mark your calendar and watch for details in the Sunday bulletin, on the website and in the Ministry Focus.

Your ideas for service projects are welcome. Contact either **Paul Wilcox** at pwilcox_99@yahoo.com or **Judi Pogue** at judipogue@comcast.net to have your project included.

PW Cookbooks

Consider giving a *Homemade with Love* cookbook gift, a collection of recipes by Sunnyvale Presbyterian Church friends and members. The books are a bargain at \$10 and are available at the book cart in Trinity Court.



Chancel Choir Advent Concert

The 2009 Chancel Choir Advent Concert is coming Sunday, December 6 at 7:30 PM. Come hear something old and something new. Selections include portions of the Bach Christmas Oratorio and a brand new lively rendition of Gloria by Mark Hayes, followed by traditional Christmas carols. Child care for ages 6 months to 6 years is available in Room 901. Invite friends and family alike!

Presbyterian Women Christmas Celebration

All women of the church are invited to Presbyterian Women's Christmas celebration in Fellowship Hall, Thursday, December 10 from 10:30 AM to 12:15 PM. Jill Denny's Madrigal choir from Mountain View High School will entertain us. Lunch will be served. The cost is \$5.00. Please bring unwrapped gifts, especially those suitable for a teenager. These gifts will be given to Sunnyvale Community Services. Please RSVP by December 3 to **Betty Sauer** (408) 736-2452 or bettrysauer@comcast.net.



In our thoughts and prayers...

The families of **Virginia (Ginia) Rockie** who died on November 19 and **Bob Erickson**, former member, who died in Manteca on November 12. **Laura Babcock** and **Beth Robb**, whose stepmothers died and **Gene Ritchey** and **Pam Leitterman**, whose mothers died. **Elsbeth TeBrake**, whose father died and **Charlie Brown**, whose brother died. **Ray Wallace**, **Howard Gaines**, and **Bill Frees**, who were hospitalized. **Mercedes Snyder**, **Barbara Lefler**, **Peter Calverley**, and **Jim Harris**, who recently had surgery. Prayers of healing, comfort, and recovery for **Al Clinton** and **Dave Wetle**.

Charlie Jensen Lectureship

The Mission and Service Ministry established a Lectureship in memory of that great supporter of justice, **Charlie Jensen**, who was active in many peace and justice programs and was a great leader for our congregation. The first program honoring Charlie will feature **Una Stevenson**, who will address the issue of human trafficking.

Una has been actively working with Presbyterian Woman and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA) since 1991 to educate and lead actions against of the exploitation and abuse of women and children around the world.

Her presentation will be offered during the 11:30 AM Adult Learning time on March 7 and again at 7:30 PM on Monday, March 8. Please watch the Sunday bulletin for location.



Advent Study for Adult Learning

Spend some time this Advent season in reflection and rejoicing as we study three cherished Advent hymns during the 8:50 AM class on December 6, 13 and 20. The class meets in room 303. There will be no 11:30 classes in December. Adult learning classes will resume on January 10, 2010.

December Adult Luncheon

Our December Adult luncheon will feature a performance by our Bell Choir. Be ready to ring and ready to enjoy the holiday sounds. We will gather in Fellowship Hall on December 20 from 11:20 AM to 1:00 PM Cost is only \$5. Hope to see you there!

Financial Report through October '09

After coming back up in September, October income has fallen well below budget again. Year-to-date income is now 11% under budget. If we are to catch up we will need strong contributions in November and December.

Expenses, which have also been running well below budget, were right on budget this month yet remain below budget for the year to date. Personnel expenses continue to be low and should continue in that vein for a few months more.

Putting the income and expense picture together, we are still running a cash flow surplus, but it has been reduced considerably. If income makes up some ground and expenses continue to run low, we could still end the year in the black.

Our pledge commitments for 2010 are coming in now. We are about two-thirds of the way there. We still need to hear from many more individuals and families if we are to match or, as we hope, exceed the pledge commitments made for 2009. Follow-up emails have gone out and calling will begin shortly. All members and friends of our church are strongly encouraged to express their stewardship by making a pledge commitment for 2010. 🍀

Jim Peterson, Church Administrator
November 2009

After Christmas Movie Event

During the morning and evening church services on January 3, we will not be holding regular Church School. Instead, all children are invited to attend the special "After Christmas Movie Event." Morning BLAST classes will meet in Fellowship Hall and morning Stars classes will meet in Soule Hall (501) at 10 AM. All Intersections Church School classes will meet in Soule Hall (501) after dismissal from church.

Reaching Out In Love.

Christ commands us to love one another as He loves us. Here's how.

Alternative Gift Faire & Special Worship Service

"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink...I was naked and you gave me clothing... Whatever you did for one of the least brothers of mine, you did for me." Matthew 25: 35-36, 40



With this Scripture in mind, the Alternative Gift Market was introduced to Sunnyvale Presbyterian Church in 1987, and has been patronized by enthusiastic shoppers each year since. It's a tradition at SVPC now: the opportunity to get an early start on Christmas shopping and simultaneously support life-giving projects around the world and in the U.S. that are described in the AG "Shopping List for the World." Shopping days are November 22, 29 and December 6.

Your family will want to attend the unique service on November 29, which has been featured in the Alternative Gift International fall/winter newsletter as a model for other churches and organizations to emulate. Kudos go to **GINNA TRAINA**, creator of this multi-generational musical service, working in team with **CAROL HEATH**, Director of Children's Ministry, and **TONI WOODRUFF**, Children's Choir Coordinator. Following the service, the congregation is invited to enjoy live Native American music in Fellowship Hall, satisfy hunger pangs, and peruse exhibits representing various native arts.

Knit for Kids

Donations of 4-ply acrylic yarn to make sweaters for needy children would be appreciated. Contact **JAN MORTENSEN** at (408) 733-1220 for more details. Knitters will not meet in December, but they can keep those knitting needles clicking at home! Please give finished sweaters to Jan. They will be mailed to "Guideposts" in April. 🌿

SCS Christmas Center

Once again this year, SVPC will be supporting the Community Christmas Center through Sunnyvale Community Services (SCS). The Center affords families the dignity of selecting a two-week supply of food, new gifts for infants through teens, and a gift for every household. On Thursday, December 3, the Sunnyvale Chamber of Commerce will host an auction to benefit the center. Then join us on December 14 as SVPC volunteers staff the center. We will help move food and supplies, sort food and toys, stock shelves, escort clients, accept and pick up donations, and staff the reception area. To volunteer or for more information contact **PAUL WILCOX** at pwilcox_99@yahoo.com or (408) 733-9828.



Book Signing

An Authors Book Signing will take place on Sunday, December 6 after the 10 AM service. You may purchase books (or bring earlier purchases) to be signed by our authors. Children's books include *The Ocean is My Sky* by **Andrew Charlton**, *The Rainbow Kangaroo* by **Lisa Maletis-Massey**, *Playful Bunny* by **Kim Zarins**, and two by **Jack Hasling**, plus his newest *I've Thought Every Thought I Can Think*, a book of verses for grown ups. **Ray Pole** will offer his first book and a chance to be notified when his soon-to-be released book on living in New Zealand is available.

Christmas and other books will be available on our booksale display as well. Choose gifts that enrich and inspire! 🌿



728 West Fremont Ave., Sunnyvale, CA 94087

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