

Pastor's Reflections

The votes have been cast! We thank all of you who voted (and came to our many meetings)! Of the 33 votes cast, nearly half went to the Merger Option, compared to those who voted for "bringing in young people," "shared senior ministry," "any option," or "abstain." That information was forwarded by email to the District Superintendent (DS).

A new task force, working with the DS, will be comprised of those who volunteered to help with this endeavor, the Lifeguards, and myself. A chairperson will be selected to lead the group. They are scheduled to meet on October 26th, after worship.

The Committee on Lay Leadership continues to select those who will serve Lake Park (LP) next year and until 2011. This year it has been most difficult coming up with people who are willing to serve. Our struggle to find volunteers is reflective of the state of our congregation. It is also our reason for searching for alternatives that will bring growth to LP. The list will be presented at the Annual Church Conference meeting on November 9th.



The days turn into weeks, quickly flying by; and soon we will be in the season of Advent. While we pray for a slower paced world, our lives seem to be fast forwarded into the future. Since the beginning of May, we have been traveling through the Uncommon Lectionary and the Hebrew Scriptures. We saw the hand of God in the creation of the world, in the Garden from whence came the fall of Humanity. We read the stories of our forefathers and foremothers in the faith, struggling to answer the call of God; we heard the cries of the prophets calling the people to repent and follow God. We read how the Lord "sees not as man sees; man looks on the outward appearance, but God looks in the heart." And we learned how David was selected as king because he was "a man after God's own heart." Through it all, we did not hear about Jesus; and Music Director Ellen St. Thomas and I struggled at times to find a hymn or anthem without the words "Jesus" or "Christ" in it. For that's how it was when the Hebrew Scriptures were written. The prophets prophesied His coming; but for many this would not be for hundreds of years.

And yet for us, it is old news! We have grown complacent and apathetic when hearing the proclamation of the coming of our Lord's birth. "So what?" some of us say. We don't greet the King of kings on bended knee, with awe and reverence in our hearts. We don't ponder



the fact that God – **GOD** intervened in human history and was incarnated in the person of Jesus!



Advent, the time of preparation, starts on November 30th. However, start now to prepare yourself, before the rush of the season stresses us out. I would like to offer up a poem by Susan Christerson Brown, found in the November/December 2008 *Alive Now* devotional:

"A Prayer for Advent

God of life and promise,

In a season of waning days and deepening dark,
we thank you for the gift of watchful anticipation,
in which we await the return of the sun.

We have known the despair of expecting nothing,
when winter's bleak imaginings cannot envision spring,
and night blinds us to the promise of morning.
Evenings descend without the blessing of rest,
and weariness rises with the dawn.

We long for Christ's birth to renew creation,
yet scarcely trust the power of God-with-us
to transform the only life that is ours.
We believe, Lord.
Help our unbelief.

Help us to wait as Mary did,
a vessel for the gestating light of the world.
Help us to trust your holy intention
to bring forth fullness of life.

Strengthen our voice in the wilderness,
that we may reach all your children,
preparing the way in a trampled world
for the greening gift of your Spirit.

In the name of the Son for whom we wait,
Amen."

May our lives gestate the promise of abundant and full lives for us
and for Lake Park.

Blessings always,

Barbara



In and Around Lake Park

by Sachi Kajiwara



Notes from *Newscape*:

The Philadelphia Area of the UMC declared the week of Sept. 29-Oct. 8, 2008, “Nothing But Nets Week.” In conjunction with other organizations, they hosted a series of events to raise funds and awareness of the threat of malaria, a leading killer of children in Africa. Throughout the week, the United Nations Foundation, the People of UMC, the National Basketball Association and the University of Pennsylvania worked together to arouse community support in the global effort to send sleep nets to Africa and save lives.

Malaria—a disease of poverty--kills 2.7 million people a year. Since 2000, the UMC has been a partner in the Nothing But Nets Campaign which has raised more than \$20 million to buy insecticide-treated nets to protect families from the mosquitoes which carry the disease.

Notes from the *United Methodist Reporter*:

Hallmark’s new line of cards to celebrate gay marriages has drawn criticism from some conservative Christian churches, according to the Religious News Services. The four cards were released in response to increasing demands after same-sex marriages were legalized in California. Tim Wildmon, president of the American Family Association (which is boycotting Hallmark over this issue), remarked, “I’m pretty jaded with everything I’ve seen, but Hallmark has always been synonymous with all-American---wholesomeness.”

♦“The real, true Methodist sacrament is potluck,” Shannon Vowell was told by a church member when she first joined the church. As Vowell participated in numerous Methodist covered-dish luncheons, suppers and countless cookie receptions, she realized that this statement was more than a jest. In her article, “Potluck as Metaphor,” Vowell connects our potlucks to the love-feasts of Wesley’s original followers and, further back, the communal meals taken by the first Christians. “Potlucks combine the best of what each has to share and yields something even better: food and fellowship. And while nobody at a potluck provides a whole meal, still everyone is amply fed—a beautiful metaphor for the way the Body of Christ is intended to work.” The potluck creates amazing abundance and unity, and she proposes that you can tell a whole lot about a church by its potlucks.

1) If potluck is held for only certain committees or groups in the

church without welcoming outsiders, it ceases to be truly invitational. Ditto the Church. 2) When everyone at the table is the same age, color and socioeconomic group, the church itself probably doesn’t much resemble the Kingdom of God. If potluck keeps everyone comfortably categorized by age and race, it ceases to be transformational. Ditto the Church. 3) Potluck should be part of a regular pattern of fellowship and invitation. Jesus recognized that relationship is integral to faith. People need regular feeding because people need regular relationship. If potluck only happens when you want to raise money or to celebrate a special season, Jesus’s Message gets lost in the serving line. Ditto the church.

The mandate of potluck today truly clarifies the mission of the Church: we should be creative, festive, and inventive with our dessert tables, but we must not mistake that for the meal. Potluck menus are built on the principles of nutrition: proteins, vegetables and bread must precede the pies, because people cannot thrive on empty calories. Likewise, the church that provides “extras,” like music style, visual panache and charismatic preaching, but neglects the “staples,” such as the Bible, Creeds, and spirit-grounded teaching, are sending people away hungry. The mandate of potlucks and churches is to remember what (and Who) is essential for really meeting people’s needs!

Jesus’s last act before his crucifixion was to share a meal with his disciples. We are to remember that every time we celebrate Communion. The way we do the potluck shows how we do everything else in the Church.

♦In August. around 80 disabled children, aged 3-21, attended a week-long Vacation Bible School Camp, started by Pleasant Valley UMC (which has a congregation of about 40) in Palmyra, Wisconsin. The campers had all types of physical and cognitive disabilities, including cerebral palsy, Down’s syndrome, autism, and those confined to wheelchairs. The kids had an opportunity to fish, ride horses, climb a rock wall, play with animals, make crafts, and engage in Bible study. Their siblings and parents were encouraged to come, too. The camp is staffed by volunteers from UM churches and colleges from all over the country. After the day camp concludes at 2:30 p.m. each day, these mission-team volunteers enjoy activities such as canoeing and hiking, followed by a meal and worship service.

Around Lake Park

Leo Saito hopes to go home (Vernon Street) when he is discharged from Piedmont Garden Terrace on Tuesday Oct. 21st. On September 23rd, the Lake Park Choir went to Alta Bates to serenade

him on his 93rd birthday. Besides “Happy Birthday,” we sang “May the Good Lord Bless and Keep You.” It was very touching to have Leo join in the singing. Pat Hecht (Leo’s daughter) had a hysterectomy for fibroids on Wednesday, October 15th. She is doing fine post-op. John Golden, Leo’s son-in-law, finished his 3rd course of chemotherapy without sickening side-effects. We continue to pray for Leo and his family and others in our church family who are ill.

It was Jim Meredith’s birthday on October 6th. Jim usually plays the piano whenever a birthday is announced at church. This time, he didn’t think he should play for himself, so Sara Stalder volunteered and she played with such gusto!

Speaking of birthdays, Ari Inouye’s celebrated his 94th on September 24th. In a phone call to Ari and Ida, they expressed great appreciation for all their friends at Lake Park.

The Tsujimoto-Takeuchi clan had a Family Reunion recently at a park near San Jose. There were 40 members present. It was good to see Dr. Karen Tsujimoto and her daughter, Michelle, in church on October 12th. Michelle even acted as usher that day, handing out bibles, taking up the collection and lighting the altar candles---with a little help from her fellow usher, Grandma Margaret.

On September 28th, the Rev. Sang En Han played two numbers on the saw. Yes! - an ordinary carpenter’s saw, using a bow (like a violin) and played by skillfully bending the blade to achieve the pitches. He played “Largo” by Handel, and “How Great Thou Art.” It’s positively amazing to hear such beautiful tones coming from a humble saw!

Bishop Warner Brown was appointed Bishop of the California-Nevada Conference as of September. A big Reception was held at Taylor Memorial UMC in Oakland on Sept. 21, with 4 choirs from neighboring churches participating in the 4-hour service. Bishop Leontyne Kelly (retired) was the featured speaker. She lives at the Lake Park Retirement Residence in Oakland now. Bishop Brown was minister at Taylor before being elected Bishop. A real homecoming for everybody!

There will be a Special Service of Dedication of Lights and the new sidewalk handrail at Lake Park on Sunday, October 26th.

Don’t forget to turn your clocks back 1 hour on November 1st before you go to sleep, as we return to Standard Time starting November 2nd.



Care Corner

Prayers of healing go out to Pat Saito Hecht, who just had a hysterectomy. Please continue to offer prayers of healing and comfort for:

Art and Kristina Black	John and Janet Golden
Art and Ida Inouye	Ruby Ouye and family
Dr. Leo Saito	Pat Saito-Hecht
Terry and Mary Takaki	Ellen St. Thomas
Daniel Thompson	Karie Yamashita & family
Lake Park’s future	



Uncommon Lectionary – “Faithful Servants”

- Nov. 2: Isaiah 6:1-8 and Isaiah 9:1-7
“Jesus’ Coming Prophesized”
- Nov. 9: Isaiah 30:1-18 and Isaiah 41:1-13
“Message of Hope from the Past”
- Nov. 16: Isaiah 55:1-13 and Isaiah 61:1-11
“The Nearness of the Word”
- Nov. 23: Rev. Barbara’s 5th Sunday off

Returning to the Revised Common Lectionary

- Nov. 30: First Sunday of Advent
Isaiah 6 4:1-9, Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19;
1 Corinthians 1:3-9, Mark 13:24-37
“The Son of Man Coming in Clouds”



United Methodist Student Day – Nov 30, 2008

The funds collected in this Special Sunday Offering will be used for loans and scholarships to attend Methodist and other accredited colleges and universities. A portion of your offering is returned to our Annual Conference which awards merit scholarships to students in our area. With tuition costs rising every year, more and more students are applying for aid – furthering the need for more and funds to assist them. Please help these people who want to go to college and can’t afford it without your help.

Highlights of the Administrative Council Meeting, October 1, 2008

Correspondence received:

Colma Cemetery is requesting money for grounds maintenance. Also selling raffle tickets with a trip to Japan as the first prize. See Rev. Barbara for tickets.

Reports:

- Christian Education: no report
- Finance/Treasurer: Ron - September report was distributed, although some additional information needs to be incorporated.
- Mission and Outreach: Marlene - no report
- Staff/SPRC: Ron - Pastor evaluation meeting was held and the Church Conference questionnaire filled out.
- Trustees: Steve - Handrails installed from sidewalk up to walk way. Invitations to Oct 26 Dedication of the Lights service going out to donors. Church cleanup scheduled for Saturday Oct 25 at 9:00am. Still waiting for the Eritrean congregation to repair damaged paneling and floor.
- Worship: Sara - Dedication of the Lights Service will be Oct 26. Oct 19 is Laity Sunday – Leo had volunteered to speak, but is still in the hospital; therefore, looking into technological ways to have his message delivered. Also looking into a backup plan.
- Music: Ron -- Dorinda Chase of Prometheus Orchestra (a semi-professional organization) holds a concerto competition for young people and have requested use of the sanctuary for auditions, probably on a weekday in January. Ellen St. Thomas is producing an Opera-in-the-Park event with Olivia Stapp in the near future, possibly at Berkeley's Live Oak Park.
- JASEB: Ron - JASEB is raffling off a beautiful quilt made by their quilters group. You can see a picture of it at www.Flicker.com on the internet; search for "JASEB quilt." Tickets for \$1 each are available through Ron. JASEB is still searching for candidates for Executive Director position, and also considering remodeling the old office spaces. Cypress House facilities situation (whether to be licensed, etc.) still in the works.
- Pastor's Report: Rev. Barbara - Congregational meeting with the DS on Our Options was held Sept 24th. Also a Lifeguard meeting was held on Sept 30th, along with Sachi Kajiwara, Hugh Lee, and Irene Lee. Voting will be held on Sunday (Oct 5) on the one option each member of congregation wants to work on – Rev.

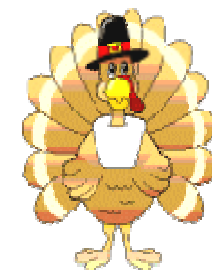
Barbara will be the only one to know how people voted. Church Conference meeting will be on Sunday, Nov 9 at 4pm, with an SPRC meeting at 3:30pm. Administrative Council will continue with revolving convener/recorder schedule. The Vital Signs survey will be passed out to those who will fill it out at a meeting on Oct 19th (Lifeguards + Tsugi, Sachi, and Sara). Lay Leadership meeting on Oct 12th. ♦ Eritreans approached Rev. Barbara, offering to pay per month to use the main sanctuary for their Sunday evening worship and to use the Horikoshi Chapel for Bible Study on Saturdays. Matter was referred to Trustees. ♦ Copy of the Montessori lease finalized by trustees was distributed and approved. Dedication of Lights invitations being written and sent out by Trustees. ♦ Joanna, from the Montessori school, called to ask what earthquake retrofitting had been done to the building. Although an examination was made years back, no substantial work has been done. ♦ Scott Sebastian, Director of Programs at Grand Lake Gardens, called and wanted to contact Montessori to have the children visit the seniors there. He also inquired about programs for seniors. ♦ Agenda for upcoming Church Conference was distributed.

Old Business: - Damage by Eritreans not yet repaired. Rev. Barbara will talk with them. Letter of Agreement for Sonos was distributed as well as the new Montessori lease.

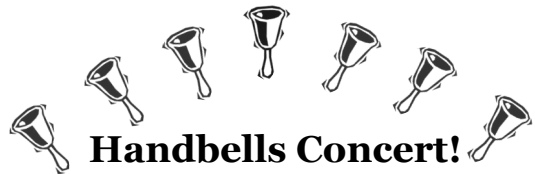
New Business: - Pledge Drive – Before Thanksgiving (per Tsugi).

Calendar:

Oct 12 – Lay Leadership meeting
Oct 12 – Plowshare items due
Oct 19 – Laity Sunday
Oct 25 – Church Clean-up – 9:00 am
Oct 25 – Conference UMW annual meeting in Napa
Oct 26 – Dedication of Lights and Railing Worship
Nov 5 – Admin Council meeting
Nov 9 – Annual Church Conference, 4pm
Nov 16 –Thanks Luncheon
Dec 3 -- Admin Council meeting
Dec 7 – Luncheon and tree trimming
Dec 14 – Plowshare items due
Dec 24 – Christmas Eve service, 7pm



Next Ad Council meeting will be Nov 5, 2008 at 7:30pm
Sachi Kajiwara, Convener; Marlene Yamashita, Recorder



Handbells Concert!

On **Saturday, November 8, 2008, at 5 pm**, handbells choirs from seven Northern California United Methodist Churches will perform music with bells and voices at :

Lake Merritt United Methodist Church

1330 Lakeshore Avenue, Oakland
(Parking at 1255 First Avenue)

Dorothy Straks is Mass Ring Conductor and the lead singers will be the 25 voices from the Mormon Temple Hill choir of Oakland.

Admission is Free! --but a free-will offering will be taken.



CONGRATULATIONS, SUZANNE

We recently learned that Suzanne Yamamoto received an honorable mention in the international Portia Steele Awards for Excellence in Poetry and Prose contest. In retirement, Suzanne has joined writing workshops and is now writing her autobiography.



Her winning poem, "Less is More," expresses her advice to someone mourning a death: "Resistance to moving forward is love's agony." The way to honor your loved one's soul best, is to let it guide you to acceptance, creative energy and salvation: "Reckon the past, the present and the future" -- grieve less, and discover that "Less is More."



Reminder: Annual Church Conference

November 9th, at 4:00pm
DS meeting with the SPRC at 3:30pm
All are invited!!!



THANKS LUNCHEON NOVEMBER 16th

Plowshare Acknowledgements September 14 through October 5, 2008

SPECIAL GIFTS:

Alexander, M/M George - Blessings

Takaki, M/M Teruo - Glory to God

Shigematsu, Diane, and
Doug, Kendra, David, Alex, Scott, Alan,
Jill, Kayli, Darius, Eric Jameson,

In memory of mother, grandmother, and
great grandmother Kazu Yumae

St. Vincent de Paul Food Kitchen

Oshika, Tsugiye
Saito, Dr. Leo
Takeuchi, M/M Frank

Anonymous - 1



THANKS

CONFERENCE OFFERING:

World Communion Sunday



Derreberry, M/M Steve	Narasaki, Theresa
Eto, M/M Frank	Oshika, Tsugiye
Futagaki, Chiyo	Teshima, Carolyn
Harding, Howard	Yamashita, Karie
Horikoshi, Hisako	Yoshida, M/M George
Horikoshi-Firebaugh, Rev Barbara	
Kajiwarra, Sachi	

Floral Acknowledgements September 21 to October 12, 2008

Sept. 21:	Ruby Ouye, for husband, Fred
Sept. 28:	Diane Shigematsu, in memory of mother, Kazu
Oct. 5:	"Thank You," Choir for hard work and dedication!
Oct. 12:	Rev. Barbara, for our 32 nd Anniversary!



Tea Fellowship for November

Tsugiye Oshika and Rev. Barbara