

# The Willow Word

A Publication of the Willow Glen United Methodist Church

God's Family Growing Through Caring, Sharing and Serving

## Stewardship Update

We are halfway through our "Stewardship Games 2012," and we are on track to set some records. Our Lay Leadership Council and Finance team worked hard to put together goals for next year and a budget to support those goals. The diligence and transparency with which they've done their work has led to our being over halfway to our goal of \$350,000 in pledges to support our ministries to children, youth and families. Well done!

So far, the stats are all good. We are seeing new pledges, increases on current pledges and a big jump in electronic or on-line pledging. The "Wall of Champions" in the Wesley Room is starting to look impressive. There is still time to join the team and turn in your pledge card. Your gift will help us serve God and go for the gold. (You can write a note on your pledge card if you'd rather not have your name on the wall.)

## Church Conference

**Sunday, November 18, 5:00 p.m. at Campbell UMC**

We are again planning our church conference with the churches of the Integrated Circuit. We will begin with a potluck at 5:00 p.m. and move into a brief time of worship led by our joint church choir. They will teach us some songs out of the new hymnal supplement, Worship and Song. We'll hear a word from our District Superintendent, Rev. Kristie Olah. Then we'll break into our respective business meetings to celebrate our ministry, approve pastors' salaries, recommend our lay speaker, and vote on church officers. If you would like to attend and need a ride, please call the church office.

## Advent Family Nights

**6:00-8:00 p.m., Woodhaven**

**Tuesdays of Advent (Nov. 27, Dec. 4, 11, 18)**

Have you ever wanted to slow down during Advent and spend quality time with family and friends without having to clean your house and do a lot of cooking? Do you long for a simpler time and simple pleasures during the holidays? We are here to help you simplify your season. Gather up your family and drop in at Woodhaven on the Tuesday evenings of Advent, anytime between 6:00 and 8:00 p.m. You'll find friendly faces, a simple soup supper, some board games, seasonal movies, Christmas crafts, and space for doing homework. Come in from the cold and crazy of the season and get warmed up at Woodhaven.

## Hurricane Sandy: How You Can Help

Dear United Methodist Volunteers, those affected by Hurricane Sandy need you! We have four ways to help:

1. Prepare to volunteer for a future team to the Northeast.
  - Consider joining a volunteer team. Visit the UMVIM site to register your interest <http://calnevumc.org/vim/detail/101>
  - Future teams will form from this list.
  - Early Response Teams will start going any day – register your interest now
  - UMVIM Recovery teams will start going next year. – register your interest now
  - Can't be a volunteer? Find someone who can and be their sponsor!

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## November 2012

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## Sunday Worship

8:45 – 9:45 a.m.

Contemporary Worship

9:45 – 10:00 a.m.

Fellowship Time

10:00 – 10:45 a.m.

Christian Education/Sunday School

11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Traditional Service

12:00 – 12:30 p.m.

Fellowship Time

## Church Staff

Rebecca Irelan

Senior Pastor

Susan Smith

Pastor of Children &  
Family Ministries

Lisa Jacobs

Director of  
Joint Youth Ministries

Lorene Sheridan

Director of  
Weekday Ark Ministries

Robert Birnstihl

Organist & Director  
of Music Ministries

Barbara Brustrom

Conductor,  
the Chancel Choir

Nichole Boaz

Director, the Praise Band

Tom Mounts

Director,  
the Willow Glen Ringers

Becky LaBree

Office & Facilities Manager

Karen Kwon

Wedding Coordinator

## Count Your Blessings!

"Count your blessings." You've heard that advice dozens of times. But what happens when the blessings are coming so fast and so furious that you can't count them all? This fall I'm thinking that the harvest is plentiful and that we laborers are being overwhelmed by the goodness of God. I have too many thanksgivings to cram them into this coming Thanksgiving. I can't describe the feeling of being your pastor and watching you be so engaged in building up this community and preparing yourself for service in the community. If you read this newsletter, you'll see what I mean: new directory, new web site, new homeless ministry, new membership class and new opportunities for families. Sometimes, my head is spinning. But my heart is grinning! For not only are there lots of things happening. You are happening, too! So, this Thanksgiving, I give thanks for you.

Grace and peace,  
Pastor Rebecca



## Hurricane Sandy, *Continued from Page 1*

2. Pray for the victim's families and the survivors of the hurricane.

- Pray for those helping - Local Methodist churches in each of these impacted communities are heavily engaged in supporting the survivors.
- Read more about what the church is doing from UMCOR

3. Make flood bucket kits.

- UMCOR is in desperate need of more flood buckets.
- Visit the UMCOR website to learn about what goes into and how to pack a flood bucket kit.
- Participate in the Pony Express Round Ups who will pick-up relief kits.

4. Support the relief and recovery efforts monetarily by donating to:

- Online - UMCOR US Disaster Response, Advance #901670, and select Hurricanes 2012 from the drop-down menu
- On your phone text the word RESPONSE to 80888 to give an immediate \$10 donation
- Drop a check in the offering plate made out to your church with Sandy – Advance #901670 noted

## Good Gossip at Willow Glen

So much good stuff is happening this fall that it's hard to keep up. Here is a sampling:

**Advent Family Nights:** One of the ideas that came out of our Woodhaven patio meeting this summer was creating spaces for families to gather and do things together. We are making plans for family nights during Advent. For more details, see article on Page 1.

**Apportionments:** We are improving on meeting our financial obligations for the mission that is done in our name. Last year, we were able to pay 65% of our apportionments (a big increase over the previous year). This year, we set the goal of paying 72%, and we have faith that we will surpass that goal. This means, among other things, that missionaries get paid, church camps get supervision, poverty programs get funded, our seminaries get support, our pastors get continuing education, and so much more. Thank you!

**Bathrooms:** Our Kohlstedt Hall bathrooms are being upgraded, one at a time, thanks to an anonymous donor and the hard work of Brian Ganz. He is working on this during his off-hours, so please be patient. There is an additional unisex bathroom located just off the stage in Kohlstedt Hall. It is newly remodeled and available for use during the construction work.

**Children's Choir:** We've had a first meeting to explore the options for a children's choir. There is much work to do, but we are getting started and moving ahead. If you can help, contact Erica Ganz, Michelle Partsch or Pastor Susan.

**Church Directory:** The church directory is about to enter the design and layout stage. This is all done digitally on computer, and we're going to have to learn the software. Thank you to Leslie Chamberlain for volunteering to work on this project. We'll keep you posted on our progress. Thanks again to our photographers, Bob Birnstihl and Tom Grubb, and the Directory Committee (Jane Vivian, Laura Glynn, Peggy Schlosser, and Janet Ehrke).

**New Member Class:** We are hoping to hold a new member class on three Sundays before Christmas, in the late afternoon or evening. If you are interested in taking this next step on your spiritual journey, contact Pastor Rebecca.

**Website:** Tom Grubb is working with Pastor Susan and Pastor Rebecca on a wonderful new website for the church. This was one of our 2013 goals that we are getting started on early. When it's up and ready, we'll let you know.

**Women's Group:** A new women's group is meeting at Woodhaven on Tuesday nights. They are working through Joyce Rupp's book, *Open the Door*. Are you going through a challenging life change? Would you like to join us? Contact Pastor Rebecca.

## Photo Directory Project

The Directory project is far from finished, but the photo-taking portion is mostly completed. Eight photo sessions were scheduled and an attempt was made to notify each church family of the available dates. Anyone who would still like to have a photo taken should contact photographer Bob Birnstihl at [bobb@envysys.com](mailto:bobb@envysys.com) to make arrangements for a "sitting." Digital photos may be sent to Bob at the same email location, with identifying information. Members are encouraged to submit photos of themselves or their children by this means. All photos should be submitted before the end of November. There remains a lot of work to be done to complete the directory. It is not anticipated that the directory will be ready for distribution before the holidays.

## Support WGUMC Through Amazon.com

It's the time of year for shopping, in the mall and online. Did you know that Amazon will give our church a donation for each order that we make? Just enter Amazon through the link on our church website ([wgumc.org](http://wgumc.org)), and Willow Glen UMC will receive a donation in the amount of 5-8% of your order. So... before you do your holiday shopping at Amazon.com, be sure to visit [www.wgumc.org](http://www.wgumc.org), click on the "Books" button and shop away, knowing that a percentage of what you spend will come back to support the church. Tell your friends and family, too!



## Bring the Whole Family to Sunday School November 11

Family Focus is an opportunity to learn and grow together, strengthening the relationships within our individual families and our church family as a whole. On November 11, we'll be learning in Sunday School together. There will be crafts and games, discussion and Scripture for the whole family! We will focus on giving thanks to God for the bounty in our lives. Take this opportunity to spend time together as a family, preparing your hearts for Thanksgiving and learning to live with gratitude throughout the year. Join us in Sunday School at 10:00am on November 11 for family fun. *Bring a canned food item that we can donate to Second Harvest Food Bank.*

## “God Is With Us” in Sunday School

Beginning November 18, our Sunday School children will be hearing the story of Jesus' birth and consider what it means that God is born among us. Children will learn that Jesus was born as God's presence or “incarnation” here on earth. Understanding that Jesus is Emmanuel – God with us – will help children continue to expand their understanding of and relationship with God. In these weeks before Christmas, children will enter into the story themselves, exploring what the birth might have been like for those who were there at the time, and considering what it means for us today. In addition to preparing music for the Christmas Eve service, children will create photo illustrations for our Christmas Eve story. As we celebrate this story of birth, we come to know God and God's love for us in new ways. Sunday School meets at 10:00 a.m. each week for all ages. Come, prepare for the birth of Christ with us!

## Looking Ahead to Christmas Eve with Our Children

Our family worship service on Christmas Eve will be held at 5:00 pm in the sanctuary this year. Our children will once again participate in the early service, serving as the choir for worship and sharing in some of the leadership of the service by helping to tell the Christmas story in an upbeat and lively way. The Praise Band will also lead us in contemporary and traditional Christmas music as we celebrate the birth of a baby King. Please join us for this spirited candlelit service that does find its moments of peace even amidst the chaos and excitement of celebration.

Our Christmas kids' choir, the Sunday School Singers, will begin rehearsing at the end of Sunday School beginning mid-November. Are your elementary-age children interested in participating in a Christmas Eve handbell choir and/or dance team? Please contact Pastor Susan by November 11 ([susan@wgumc.org](mailto:susan@wgumc.org)) so we can make our plans according to interest. All of our Sunday School students will be invited to be part of the telling of the Christmas story as well.

## Instrumental Ensemble for Young People this Christmas

Has a young person in your family been learning to play a musical instrument?

Let's get together and play for Christmas!

A few of our children and youth would like to learn a song together to play on Christmas Eve. If you are interested, we will be getting ourselves organized on Sunday, November 4 at 12:15 p.m. Bring your instrument, if you'd like, but more importantly, bring your enthusiasm. We'll look over some music, choose something to play together and head home to start practicing! We will also decide some ensemble rehearsal times and try to come up with a catchy name for our group. Contact Pastor Susan ([susan@wgumc.org](mailto:susan@wgumc.org)) to let her know you are interested or if you have any questions.

**CrossWalk**  
Faith and Fellowship  
for Third, Fourth  
and Fifth Graders



Friday, November 2  
7:00-8:30 p.m., Kohlstedt Hall  
Theme: Who's the Greatest? (Success and Competition)  
Scripture: Mark 10:35-45; 1Corinthians 9:24-27

There is competition everywhere. We always want to know who won. Does it matter? What is Jesus' idea of greatness? Can we all be winners? Let's play and find out! Come join the fun and faith that happens at CrossWalk. E-mail Susan to let her know you are coming!

## Do You Want To Do Something Different About Poverty?

Did you know that nationally, the U.S. Poverty Rate has remained virtually unchanged for over forty years? With over 46 million people in the US living in poverty, the time has come for a new model!

- Do you find joy in making donations and volunteering but you are longing to make an impact that will radically transform a family's life?
- Do you want to give of your "connections" and relationships instead of just your pocketbook?
- Are you sick of quick fixes to poverty that mask a situation that is much deeper?

Almaden Hills, Cambrian Park and Willow Glen United Methodist Churches have decided to collaborate and embrace a model of change that hundreds of faith communities across the country have begun with incredible success! We want you to join us.

"The Open Table" is a growing movement of faith communities seeking to re-focus from poverty maintenance to poverty transformation. Each table is composed of a group of volunteers that make a year commitment to act as a team of life specialists, encouragers, and advocates for impoverished Brothers, Sisters and families. The Table members, together with the individual or family being helped establish goals, accountability, develop an overall plan and implement it. Table members network in their congregations and the community for resources to support the plan." ([www.theopentable.org](http://www.theopentable.org))

You give your time and your specific gifts for one year to a family ready to move out of poverty. You use your connections in the community, listening skills, organizational skills and advocacy experience to help change a person's financial, physical, emotional, spiritual and relational situation for the rest of their lives.

Would you consider learning more about this model of helping those in poverty and prayerfully consider sitting on a "table"? If so, here are the next steps

- Email our group to ask questions, share that you are interested or register for the training- [Open-table-san-jose@google-groups.com](mailto:Open-table-san-jose@google-groups.com)
- Check out the national website at <http://theopentable.org/>
- Come to the half day training if you are interested in starting soon- November 3rd- 9:00am-3:30pm at Almaden Hills UMC – 1200 Blossom Hill Rd San Jose CA 95118 and/or
- Come to a 1.5 hour info meeting on November 4th if you want more ideas about the success and implementation of this model at the Presbyterian Church of San Jose, 49 N. Fourth St. between St. John and Santa Clara Streets.

You are capable. You are gifted. You are connected. You are able. What are you waiting for?

"This is the kind of fast day I'm after: to break the chains of injustice, get rid of exploitation in the workplace, free the oppressed, cancel debts. What I'm interested in seeing you do is: sharing your food with the hungry, inviting the homeless poor into your homes, putting clothes on the shivering ill-clad, being available to your own families. Do this and the lights will turn on, and your lives will turn around at once. Your righteousness will pave your way. The GOD of glory will secure your passage. Then when you pray, GOD will answer. You'll call out for help and I'll say, 'Here I am' Isaiah 58:6-9



*Inviting Broken People  
to Break Bread Together*



## Women's Groups

### Heart and Hand

Third Thursday  
7:00 p.m., Woodhaven  
Meg Kau  
Childcare available -  
please arrange with  
Susan Smith

### Friendship Circle

Wednesday, Nov. 7  
Noon at Woodhaven.  
Sue Johnson

### Wesley Women

Fourth Tuesday  
1:00 p.m., Woodhaven  
Jane Vivian

The UMW Executive Board will meet Monday, November 19, at 9:30 a.m. in the Wesley Room.

UMW is open to all women regardless of church membership.

For more information about UMW, call Ruth Granfors

The deadline for the December/January *Willow Word* is November 25. Please send your story ideas and submissions to Leslie Chamberlain

## Sisterhood of Grace

### Recapping the Annual District Celebration

Eighty-four United Methodist Women from twenty-seven United Methodist Churches met at Campbell UMC on October 27 for the Annual District Celebration. With spirited singing, a special dance ensemble from Genesis UMC, accomplishments noted, departed "saints" recognized, new officers installed and the 2013 budget approved, UMW took care of business and celebrated the mission that has been accomplished since our last gathering. President Nina Klepac led an opening worship with the theme "Pondering Poverty/Supporting Sisters." Pastor Jane Schlager of Almaden Hills UMC gave the keynote address and with Pastor Jim Mishler of Campbell UMC served communion. Lunch was served by the members of Campbell UMC. This is the celebration of a year in the new El Camino Real District – a much larger area covered and many more churches. We are beginning to get acquainted in a new sisterhood that includes friends from Livermore, Millbrae, Pittsburg and Walnut Creek among other United Methodist Churches.

## World Thank Offering

United Methodist Women are invited to give with thanksgiving for the many good things God gives us. These offerings can be set aside throughout the year, or a special gift can be made at the World Thank Offering observance. World Thank Offering at Willow Glen is observed in circle meetings with a program written for the occasion and published in the annual Program Book. The World Thank Offering is and has been for many decades an opportunity for personal Thanksgiving and learning of mission outreach. Through the years, mission has been the main focus of the members of United Methodist Women and its predecessor organizations. Being in mission is sharing our lives and gifts with others that all may be whole persons through Jesus Christ. Mission is creating new persons and a new society as we do away with those things that create barriers or cause separation. It is working to eliminate racism, and sexism, and loneliness. Mission is Christ's challenge to us to bring the possibility for food, shelter and fulfillment to all of humanity. Through Thank Offering contributions mission projects are supported in all 50 states and in almost 100 countries. These projects vary from support to schools, hospitals and clinics, day care centers and homes for senior citizens to educational training courses to prevent soil erosion, leadership development, sewing and nutritional courses, and medical training. The number of persons reached by this type of caring and sharing is almost incalculable.

## Coming Events

December calendars fill up fast, so mark yours now and save the date of Wednesday, December 12, for UMW's annual Christmas Program and Luncheon. A program designed to help prepare your heart and mind for the holidays is planned for 11:00 a.m. with a festive holiday luncheon to follow. All are invited; membership in UMW is not required. Child care will be available. So, make a note on your December calendar and plan to attend!

## The ToKalon Project – Paying It Forward

Ten years ago, more or less, a committed group of Willow Glen women took on a project to raise money for child care for UMW meetings and events. Their rationale for taking on this project was to show their appreciation to UMW for child care which had been provided for their own children in the past. The project was serving dessert to an outside group called ToKalon, who schedule their meetings at WGUMC about six times a year. The money raised was to provide child care so that young mothers could participate in the meetings and projects of United Methodist Women. These funds have been drawn on regularly throughout these years, providing child care for Heart and Hand meetings and for UMW general meetings and special events. The women who originally took on this project have turned it over to the UMW Executive Board to staff ToKalon events at this church. Ruth Granfors currently heads up this project, which has been a financial success to the local unit of UMW.

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## Esther's Outreach and the Family Giving Tree

Esther Jakel, a longtime member of Cambrian Park UMC, started a Christmas outreach program over 14 years ago for needy families whose children attend Lietz or Oster School in the Cambrian Park neighborhood. This year, twenty families will be selected by the school offices and then supported by this outreach program in Esther's memory. Willow Glen UMC will be participating in Esther's Outreach through our annual Giving Tree. Gift tags will offer you the opportunity to provide gifts for family members or grocery gift cards for a holiday meal. Tags will be on the tree beginning November 4. Come by and choose how you will share some love and hope this Christmas.

We will also be supporting The Family Giving Tree. These tags will be on our tree later in November. All gifts and donations need to be returned to the church early in December. Please read your chosen gift tag carefully for specific instructions and deadlines. Thank you for sharing with others during this holiday season. What a wonderful time to surround others with joy and love!

## Ruby Says "Thank You!"

Thanks to all who made my 98th birthday so special, especially to Ruth Granfors who planned and served lunch for my family after church. *And we say "thanks" to Ruby for the example she has set for all of us for "walking the walk" with Jesus.*

## Coffee Hour

The coffee hour following the first service is thriving, due to the enthusiastic participation of many church families. However, the same can't be said for the coffee hour following the second service, where the only sign-ups since early summer were for special birthday celebrations. It appears that the 11:00 worshipers aren't hungry after church, or maybe they're intent on getting home or to a local restaurant to have a "real lunch." In any event, the food service for the second coffee hour is hereby suspended until further notice. Coffee and hot tea will be available, and apple juice may be served if someone remembers to put it on the cart. Anyone who would like to host a coffee hour may do so. You may contact Jane Vivian at [janevivian@sbcglobal.net](mailto:janevivian@sbcglobal.net) for additional information. Thanks to those who have provided treats for special occasions.

## About the Kitchen...

Those who show up to prepare meals in the church kitchen are frequently frustrated to find that needed equipment is missing. Articles that disappear from time to time include the rolling carts, mixing bowls, cutting boards, small appliances and the large plastic tubs that are used to bus dirty dishes. If you borrow something to use elsewhere in the church, please return kitchen ware to the kitchen, preferably clean and in good condition. There is a sign-out sheet for items which are removed from the church premises, but it is better to check with the facilities manager before borrowing church equipment, as it may be needed by another group before you can return it.

The kitchen is intended for preparing and serving food. It should be kept clean and sanitary for that purpose. Please clean the tables, counters, carts and stove after use, wipe up spills, don't leave clutter or leftovers in the refrigerator or on the counters, and take dish towels home and launder them after each use. Thank you!

## The ToKalon Project, *Continued from Page 6*

The only problem with the project, says Ruth, is that more help is needed to staff the events. It takes four women to be on duty in the church kitchen from noon to four o'clock, although not all are needed for the full four hours. Ruth would appreciate hearing from anyone who might be able to help once or twice a year, even if just for an hour or two. Her appeal is especially to those women who have benefitted from this project, whose children have been cared for with the funds earned from the ToKalon meetings. In a way, it's "paying it forward." The funds earned today may help the young mothers of tomorrow to take an active part in United Methodist Women, an organization that supports the mission programs of the United Methodist Church at home and around the world, with special emphasis on services to women and children.

To learn more about the purpose and program of United Methodist Women, or to volunteer to help with ToKalon, please contact Ruth Granfors at 408-251-0458 or [ragсанjose@aol.com](mailto:ragсанjose@aol.com).

# November Library News

By Alice Singh

It's good to be back, but I am way behind and am trying to catch up. The library is going to discard children's videos as most people can no longer play them. This will make room for the expansion of children's books. We still appreciate donations of DVDs!

Check the library for holiday books on display. We have added some new ones to our collection. This month, we have some interesting fiction and non-fiction donations. I hope that you will take a look at them.

*At Home: A Short History of Private Life*, by Bill Bryson

Whatever happens in the world eventually ends up in your house. The history of household life isn't just a history of beds and sofas and kitchen stoves, but scurvy, guano, the Eiffel Tower, bedbugs and body-snatching and everything else that has ever happened.

*Corduroy Mansions*, by Alexander McCall Smith

Located in Pimlico, London, the Corduroy Mansions is home to a delightfully eccentric cast of residents. This is the start of a new series by the author of the No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency.

*Grief: Climb Toward Understanding*, by Phyllis Davies

The author, who lost her own 13-year-old son, shares the process to make it through an experience most of us face in life.

*The Litigators*, by John Grisham

David, a burned-out attorney, finds himself literally at the doorstep of a seedy boutique law firm.

*The Professional*, by Robert B. Parker

An attorney wants to find the blackmailer of her wealthy wives friends, who start turning up dead.

*Shadows at Dawn: An Apache Massacre and the Violence of History*, by Karl Jacoby

A reconstruction of one of the worst Indian massacres in American history. It illuminates the clash of cultures in the southwestern frontier.

*The Way of Pilgrim and the Pilgrim Continues His Way*

Translated from the Russian, this the story of the anonymous narrator carrying a Bible, some dried bread and a Prayer rope as he walked across nineteenth-century Russia.

*The Worst Hard Time: The Untold Story of Those Who Survived the Great American Dust Bowl*, by Timothy Egan

This is the story of those who stayed and survived—those who, now in their eighties and nineties, will soon carry their memories of this environmental disaster to the grave.

## Willow Glen United Methodist Church

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