

The Willow Word

A Publication of the Willow Glen United Methodist Church

God's Family Growing Through Caring, Sharing and Serving

Fuel Your Mission Team for the Mexico Trip – Physically and Spiritually

On July 25, more than 40 people from five United Methodist churches will climb into vans and trucks and head down to Mexico to build two houses in four days. Help fuel the team in the following ways:

- Donate Costco gift cards to purchase food for the team. Bring to church by July 19.
- Donate gas station gift cards to gas up our vehicles. Bring to church by July 19.
- Donate or loan us a propane tank for our camp stoves (refillable tanks only). Please contact Garret Seevers (gseevers@mac.com) if you have a tank to loan, and plan to bring to church by July 19.
- Send your prayers and good wishes. Write a letter to the team and bring it to the church by July 19. Letters will be read each morning and evening during our group time at camp. *See list of team members on Page 5.*
- Bake cookies, brownies or quick breads. Sign up online at <http://tinyurl.com/mexicodesserts> to make dessert for the team. Desserts will be frozen and packed in coolers to be defrosted and enjoyed by the team after our long work days.

Thanks for supporting your mission team!



Welcoming our Neighbors – Summer Barbecue for the Homeless

Saturday, August 29

12 Noon on the Woodhaven Patio

Who's in for a barbecue on the Woodhaven patio? The Building Hope team is inviting our homeless friends and neighbors for a BBQ lunch on the patio, and we would love for you to join us as well. Save the date and watch your church publications for ways that you can help with this event.

July/August 2015

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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

Tom Mounts
Director,
the Willow Glen Ringers

Dee Davis
Office & Facilities Manager

Karen Kwon
Wedding Coordinator

Welcoming Statement

The recent U.S. Supreme Court decision on same-sex marriage has prompted me to share with you a progress report from the group that has been working on a welcoming statement for Willow Glen UMC. But first, let's review a little history.

During the media coverage of General Conference in April of 2012, a group of our church members took to Facebook to talk about the UMC position on homosexuality. Many of them did not know that GLBT (gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender) Christians could not be ordained in the UMC. Nor did they know that pastors were not allowed to officiate at same-sex weddings. When that discussion group grew to over 30 people, I decided that a face-to-face conversation would be more constructive than a Facebook one, so I invited them to meet me at Woodhaven to share their stories and concerns.

From that meeting came a commitment to pursue how Willow Glen UMC might participate more actively in this denomination-wide discussion. I wanted to begin with a Bible study, which Stan Praisewater and Hank Millstein led in February 2013. When the class was over, I put together a booklet of resource materials for further study in a document that is available in our church library. From there, a small group met and a few of them went to workshops at other churches.

We initially hoped to schedule some educational events and invite speakers to come to our church. Then a lot of life (and death) happened in the congregation. As time went on, we decided that we were ready to write our own welcoming statement, one that was consistent with our beliefs and values and true to our own understanding of God's love here at Willow Glen UMC.

So in February of this year, Erica Ganz, Stan Praisewater, and Dale Hosack volunteered to be on a committee to draft a statement. In March, we sat around a table and each of them wrote beautiful statements of how they envisioned this church welcoming everyone. I blended their three statements into one and offer it to you for your prayerful reflection and response.

Welcoming Statement: DRAFT

In Jesus Christ, God reaches out to everyone to call them home, and here at Willow Glen UMC, we open our hearts and intentionally welcome you into our home, into our church family, and into a closer relationship with God.

No matter your race or cultural background, age or abilities, sexual orientation or gender identity, marital status or family situation, financial circumstances or personal challenges, the Jesus we know already loves you and that is what we are here to do.

So honor us with the opportunity to get to know you, worship with you, listen, share and grow in God's love with you. The wider we draw the circle of grace, the more we know and experience the love of God.

I encourage you to bring this draft to your small group or Bible study (or create one for this purpose) and discuss it with your friends and family. Feel free to share your heart with me or with any member of the Lay Leadership Council as we consider where the Spirit is leading us on this journey.

Grace and peace to you from our Lord Jesus Christ,

Rebecca

Summer Worship Highlights

Pastor Rebecca will preach when she can but has scheduled special guest preachers to cover the Sundays that fall too close to her cancer treatments.

July 5: Kathy Benedict preaching; Pastor Rebecca celebrates communion

July 12: Rev. Louann Roberts, chaplain at Elmwood Prison, will preach on “Ministry in the Cracks”

August 2: Rev. Dr. Larry LaPierre preaches and celebrates communion

August 23: Tom Grubb preaches

Never Waste a Good Crisis!

The pastor’s diagnosis prompted her to get an early start on calling up new leaders for next year’s ministry. Our Nominations and Lay Leadership Committee have already met twice and we are making good progress on some new groups for getting things done. A few years ago, when Ruby Goodnight and Grace Praisewater got sick, we started the CareTeam and they are now doing a fantastic job of congregational care. This year, when Russ Kintner left us, we had to figure out how to do a lot of things differently. Because so many of you answered my call, we now have the makings of a banner hanging and garden group. And, as an answer to the pastor’s prayer, we have folks who are willing to design and lead a new stewardship program and are working on a more collaborative approach to worship planning. In addition, we are seeking those who are hearing God’s call to serve on one of our standing committees: Staff Parish Relations, Finance, and Trustees.

The pastor’s health crisis and your response remind us that the saying is true: “All things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to God’s purpose.” [Romans 8:28]

Praise God!

WGUMC Financial Snapshot

Year-to-Date Through MAY 2015

	Actual	Budget
Income		
Giving	\$178,166	\$148,967
Other Income	\$31,795	\$32,714
TOTAL	\$209,961	\$181,681
Expense		
TOTAL	\$189,923	\$183,903
Conference		
Apportionments	\$7,965	\$10,620
Special Offerings	\$2,175	

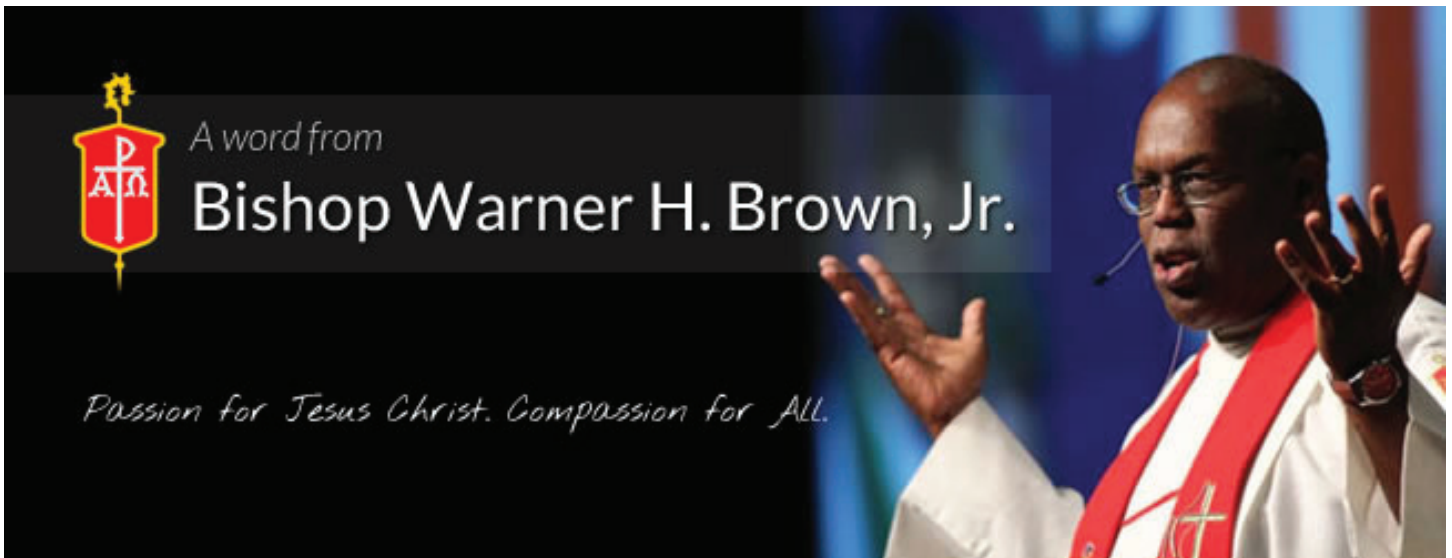
Summer Pledges

Even if you are gone, bills need to be paid, so be sure that you plan to keep current with your pledges this summer. Now is a good time to arrange to have your pledge paid automatically. Go to the church’s website at www.wgumc.org, look at the left sidebar on the homepage and click on “Give” to get instructions about online payments. If you have any questions, contact the church office.



Don’t miss your opportunity for an amazing day of inspiration, information, innovation, integration and implementation, as we gather around the topic of innovating collaborative leadership between Clergy and Laity. Amazing innovators, Charles Lee, Rev. Jerry Hershops, and Micheal Pope (among others) will be offering us insight into what innovation looks like in the context of the church, discipleship, leadership development, and community impact.

The conference will take place on the beautiful University of the Pacific Campus in Stockton. Register soon... the early bird discount price of \$88 will be available only until June 30th! For info and registration: www.discipleshiftconference.com. If you are interested in attending, contact the WGUMC office by July 15.



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Mark 12:31 says, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these.”

Throughout the history of the United States, the Supreme Court has been called on to ensure equality, liberty, and justice for all people. This can be seen in the abolition of slavery, the women’s movement, the civil rights movement of the 60s, and now in the fight for marriage equality.

Today, in a 5 to 4 decision, the United States Supreme Court ruled in favor of marriage equality for all people.

For decades, the United Methodist Church has debated this issue. Next year when General Conference gathers in Portland, Oregon, the decision to change, or reaffirm the church’s historic position will be considered. Pastors and congregations within our annual conference hold opinions across the spectrum of this decision. But, throughout the years, the California-Nevada Conference has consistently stood for full inclusion, and equal rights, for all people in our denomination, and secular society.

In our Social Principles, United Methodists have stated our common belief around this value: We affirm that all persons are individuals of sacred worth, created in the image of God. All persons need the ministry of the Church in their struggles for human fulfillment, as well as the spiritual and emotional care of a fellowship that enables reconciling relationships with God, with others, and with self.

This Supreme Court decision calls attention to the difference between the laws of the United States, and the policy of our church. The law does not require anyone to violate their conscience of what God has called them to do, or their theological understanding. But, if we seek to be an inclusive church that serves all of our parishioners, and all of our neighbors, we will have to consider how we treat all people equally. The heart of our call to ministry is to be pastor to the people of the congregation, and the community, we serve. May we continue to be a people of prayer, and hope, as we work towards a day of equality and inclusion for all people created in the image of God.

Alice Stokes Paul, women’s rights activist and leader in getting women the right to vote says, “I never doubted that equal rights was the right direction. Most reforms, most problems are complicated. But to me there is nothing complicated about ordinary equality.”

Grace and Peace,

Bishop Warner H. Brown, Jr.
Resident Bishop



From the Joint Youth Ministry

We loved Joplin! We have so many stories. So much to share back. I want to let you know that we've scheduled a "Share our Testimony" dinner and sharing night on a Sunday in August for students from the mission trip, junior high camp and Mexico mission trip to talk about their time. We will have a video slide show, testimony time and potluck dinner. It will be at WGUMC on Sunday, August 16, from 5-7 p.m. Check the JYM website for more summer events at jointyouthgroup.com.

Here is our Junior High Summer Camp list. Please drop off mail for these students and leaders in the next two weeks at the church office. We will bring it with us before we leave on July 12.

Campers

Abigail Kufeldt – WG
 Addison Gonzales – WG
 Aidan Choy-Marshall – WG
 Aidan Morgan – WG
 Alex Kunde – WG
 Alexis Tejada – JYM
 Andrew Barker – CP
 Anika Manuel – AH
 Ashley Horzewski – WG
 Blake Yorkey – JYM
 Carolyn Schwartz – WG
 Catalina Contreras – JYM
 Chandra Pham – WG
 Connor Morgan – WG
 Daphne Warren – AH
 David Pyzel – CP
 Dawnia Congirlu – JYM
 Devon Nuti – JYM
 Elizabeth Gonzales – WG
 Emily Keller – JYM

Evan Pham – WG
 Gillian Grubb – WG
 Isabella Tejada – JYM
 Joshua Grzymala – WG
 Katie Schwartz – WG
 Kylee Prins – JYM
 Lauren Roeschlein – WG
 Maggie Davis – JYM
 Matthew Garbarino – JYM
 Natalie Garbarino – JYM
 Natasha Kleva – JYM
 Nick Wieczorek – CP
 Rebecca Johnson – JYM
 Zoe Martin – AH

Counselors

Amy Lingard – AHUMC
 Madeleine Dile – AHUMC
 Gabbie Fall – WGUMC
 Alexa Wieczorek – CPUMC
 Daniel Ahrens – WGUMC



2015 Mexico Mission Team

From Front Page

Sue Bowling - AH
 Jeri Connolly - AH
 Karen Ehrke - WG
 Patricia Farrow - WG
 Sandi and Gracie Friend - AH
 Jennifer Frost - WG
 Gillian, Gwyne and Tom Grubb - WG
 Rob Kirk - CP
 Guivin Lee - New Creation
 Bethany Barriga Lopez - New Creation
 Shirley Macemon - Sunnyhills

Garnet Martinez - AH
 Aidan, Ben, Connor and Becky Morgan - WG
 Daislyn Pease - Sunnyhills
 David, Nancy and Bill Pyzel - CP
 Ingrid and Steve Quigley - WG
 Valentina and Craig Ramsay - WG
 Faith and Justin Ryu - New Creation
 Carolyn, Katie, Maryann and Randy Schwartz - WG
 Caden and Garret SeEVERS - WG
 Casey, Susan and Stephen Smith - WG
 Timmy Song - New Creation
 Stephen and Jennifer Young - New Creation

Women's Groups

Open to all, newcomers are welcome. Please call the contact listed below for information.

Heart and Hand

First Thursday
7:00 p.m., Woodhaven
Susan Smith

Friendship Circle

Third Wednesday at
Woodhaven
See bulletin for time
Sue Johnson

UMW Executive Board will meet Monday, August 3, at 10:30 a.m. in the Wesley Room. UMW is open to all women regardless of church membership.

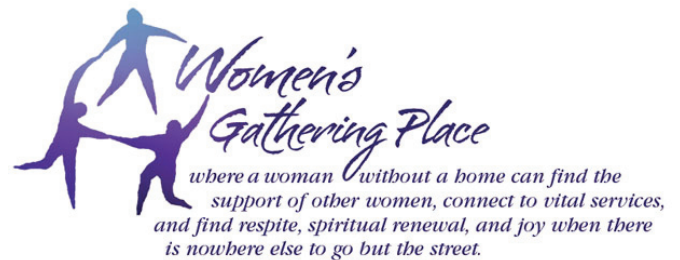
For more information about UMW, call Patricia Madsen.

The deadline for the September *Willow Word* is August 25. Please send your story ideas and submissions to Leslie Chamberlain

Women's Gathering Place

Six Willow Glen UMC women spent an enjoyable afternoon with about 15 homeless women at the Women's Gathering Place (WGP) at First Presbyterian Church on North 4th Street in downtown San Jose. We took a simple lunch, which was greatly enjoyed by the guests at WGP. We got acquainted around the tables at lunch, then spent the next two or three hours in light conversation as we played card games, did crafts, colored in coloring books or just visited. Some of the women were eager to share details of their lives; others were not. But all seemed to enjoy having an afternoon in conversation with other women in a safe place.

Our next visit to WGP is scheduled for Monday, July 20. We will meet at church at 11:30 a.m. to carpool, take lunch for the group and some activities to share. Our plan for July is to take supplies needed to provide limited manicures and pedicures for those who want them. We'll continue with the crafts and games, as well.



We hope to take along personal items to stock their give-away chest: health and beauty items of all kinds, new underwear and stationery supplies. Clean used clothing in good condition is a popular item at the center, including shirts, jackets, pants and shoes in all sizes.

For more information on how you can participate in our July 20 visit, please contact Pat Farrow at patricia.farrow@gmail.com.

Opportunities for Summer Learning

There is still time to register for Mission U, the learning events sponsored by the CA/NV Conference of United Methodist Women. The events scheduled are:

- An overnight, July 31-August 1 at Sparks UMC in Sparks, NV
- A weekend at University of California, Davis, August 7-9
- A one-day training on August 29 at Salinas UMC in Salinas

Registration forms are available on the UMW bulletin board in the office hallway, or contact Ruth Granfors for additional information.





3rd Annual WGUMC Yard Sale

Mark Your Calendars:

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12th

8:00 am – 2:00 pm

We were a great success the last two years so let's do it again!

Please clean out your closets, garages, and storage!

We want Big Things and Little Things!

All donations should be clean, in good repair and in working order. We are looking for baby & children's clothes, electronics, furniture, sporting goods, books, garden & patio items, toys, costumes, tools, holiday decorations, collectables, clothes, jewelry, kitchen items, linens, office equipment – and everything else. No need to price your items in advance.

Bring your donations to church on Friday, September 11th between 9 a.m. and 7 p.m. Kohlstedt Hall will be set up so you can sort your items into appropriate price categories. Guidelines and volunteers will be available to help you, but please plan on spending a few minutes sorting your items.

If you have large items that you need help transporting, please contact Brian Ganz at (408) 595-5675, specialprojects@comcast.net, or missionpossible@WGUMC.org.

We need your help! In addition to your rummage, we are asking each family to donate paper or plastic grocery bags and clothes hangers. We also need to borrow clothes racks and pop-up canopies for the sale weekend. These may also be dropped off on Friday, September 11th.

Finally, we need volunteers for shifts on Friday and Saturday, September 11-12. We will have a volunteer sign-up sheet after church. Please look for us and volunteer – it takes a whole congregation to make this event the success it is!

Let's Be a Good News Church

We've heard enough bad news in the past several months that we are making a concerted effort to gather and share the good news. If you have some good news about what God is doing in your life or what you are celebrating in your family, please send it to the pastor or to the church office and we will celebrate with you. Don't worry. You're not boasting. You're just helping to build up the Body of Christ!

In Memoriam

Our sympathy to Jim Kwon on the recent death of his brother, Edward.

Moving On

Fond farewells to Margot Sidener as she and her husband relocate to Kansas, and to Kate Salazar, moving to Lakewood (Long Beach), California.

Pastor Rebecca has a CaringBridge Site!

Hi – Dale Hosack here. Many of you may remember back in 2011 when my wife Lynne had a Cerebellar Stroke. At the time I was getting lots of calls from friends who were, of course, concerned about how Lynne and I were doing and what they could do to help us. One of those calls came from a cousin in Washington State who told me about CaringBridge. CaringBridge is a web site that allows a person who is having a health issue, and/or their family, to post information into one site that everyone else can see. This allows their friends and loved ones to stay up to date without having to call for an update. From a personal perspective it was a very cathartic process for me. As Lynne progressed, I was able to post updates and all of our family and circle of friends were able to post their supporting statements of love, prayer and support for us.

To view Pastor Rebecca's site, simply go to www.caringbridge.org, type in Rebecca Ireland in the search box at the upper right hand corner and press return. You can then click on her name in the search result. If this is your first visit to CaringBridge you will need to create an account and create a password that will allow you to read and post to her site. On your next visit you can just log in with your user ID and Password to visit the site.

This is an opportunity to share your love and support for Rebecca, Hank, and Kristen as they make this journey together, and I hope it is as helpful for them as it was for us.

Peace, Dale

Willow Glen United Methodist Church

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