

The Willow Word

A Publication of the Willow Glen United Methodist Church

God's Family Growing Through Caring, Sharing and Serving

Gifts from the Preschool

Woodhaven Preschool is a blessing to our church and community in so many ways, and we are grateful for the dedicated, creative and enthusiastic staff that has made this a quality, affordable, well-regarded program for years and years. In fact, this month marks Miss Lorene's 25th year working with children here, first as a teacher and then as the Director. To Lorene, we all say "Congratulations" and "Thank you" for 25 years of loving and giving.

In addition to Lorene's continued leadership, we have received another generous gift from the Preschool this year. For the last few years, the Preschool Committee has reviewed their finances at the end of the school year and given a gift to our operating budget as their way of participating in the wider mission of the church. This year, their gift amounts to \$20,000. This is a truly wonderful gift that will enable us to continue to do vital ministry in Willow Glen and around the world.

Third Annual WGUMC Yard Sale Furniture, Great Appliances, Lots and Lots of Stuff!

Saturday, September 12, 8:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.
Generous donors have already dropped off an abundance of furniture, an overdose of appliances, and a plethora of large items!

We Need You (And Your Stuff)!
Please Tell Your Friends and Family!
What will YOU bring on Thursday, September 10, after noon or all day Friday, September 11? Please bring paper and plastic bags and hangars, in addition to your donated items.



For big donations, contact Brian Ganz at specialprojects@comcast.net, or missionpossible@WGUMC.org. Come to the Yard Sale hungry – Elva's Coffee shop will be selling breakfast burritos and the Mission Possible team will be selling hot dogs. The CrossWalk kids will be selling drinks and treats.

Two Services Start September 20

We are back to two services on Sundays, starting September 20. Join us in Kohlstedt Hall at 8:45 a.m. for contemporary worship, or in the Sanctuary at 11 a.m. for a more traditional service. Sunday school and Christian education is from 10:00-10:45 a.m. There is a fellowship time following each service.

September 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

Seeing God on the Mexico Mission Trip

During our trip to Mexico this summer, I asked the team to keep their eyes open for God, and write down their “God Sightings” each day. The comments below illustrate only some of the many ways we experienced God’s strength and hope and love on this trip.

- When I looked at the family standing the doorway of their newly completed house!
- Karen and Caden stucco-ing together.
- A young boy carrying the family water (5 gallon jug) for miles along the dirt road.
- Gillian running stucco...
- I saw God in the faces of the families and neighbors and kids. They were so grateful and the joy in their faces was definitely a God sighting.
- Lesly and her brothers hammering, smiling, carrying stucco.
- The kitchen team – so creative, so caring, so patient, so much work. Thank you!
- Pat stretching chicken wire.
- I saw God in Pastor Rob looking out for whether or not everyone was cared for but being unwilling to take a break himself.
- On the morning, Steve was sick and couldn't work as much, he fixed Alex's truck and played with him and Dayana. To see him playing with these children just like he played with his son when he was little and our friends' kids etc. reminded me that we are all one big family.
- Synthia's face as she walked into the house for the first time.
- When Lesly gave me a “gatito” (kitten) picture and note to thank us and remember her by.
- When Blanca (the mother) thanked us saying that she never thought she would have such a house and gave us her blessings.
- Our bonus patio and bench project.
- On the face of Alex, the 3-year-old boy of the red team's host family.
- On Monday, when the boys from the red team showed up to help mix cement and hand gravel and sand up and down the hill on our site.
- Pat and Ben making tar squares.
- I saw God in the appreciation everyone showed for each other at the end of the week.
- Seeing the children playing with our kids and watching the family helping us out all week.
- I saw God in the beetle that landed on my hat.
- When I saw the neighborhood from the hill and felt how poor they are, and when God showed me a possibility of change with revival (when people accept Jesus Christ as their Lord).
- In the living room of Aracely, best friend of our host mother – she invited me to sit as I waited. Then she pointed to the sheetrocked walls and said this too was an Amor house.
- God was present with me around the campfire, in the faces of the children at the house we built, particularly in Synthia's smile when she first saw the house with walls and a roof! God works through our hands to do good and care for each other.
- The family's smiles!
- Wonderful teammates! A couple of examples: the ever-cheerful Gabbie, the industrious new friends, especially Garnet and Jeri, and Daislyn who always reminded me to take my pills.
- Pat Farrow shoveling, mixing and running stucco with the team. She rocked. Oh, and she made 95 percent of the tar paper nails.
- I saw God when we finished the house and in the family's reactions.
- God was present by surrounding me with love and support as I found out my godmother passed away while I was away on this trip. I felt the love surround me from God and others as I mourn the loss.
- All of the ways my team “checked in” on my health and well-being during and post-migraine.

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Boy Scouts Change Policy

If you have been following the news, the Boy Scouts of America have voted to overturn their ban on gay leaders, following an earlier decision to include gays as members. This vote was taken after former defense secretary Robert Gates warned the Scouts of continuing a policy that would inevitably result in legal battles in multiple jurisdictions at a staggering cost.

The United Methodist Church is the mainline denomination that is most involved in Scouting, with over 330,000 scouts participating in UMC-chartered groups. In their vote, the Boy Scouts allowed churches to dissent from this policy on religious grounds. However, despite a ban on gay clergy, there is nothing in the United Methodist Discipline that would require us to disapprove of gay scout leaders. In fact, we are committed “to be in ministry for and with all persons.” With that in mind, Pastor Rebecca has notified our own Troop 233 that Willow Glen UMC invites them to embrace the new policy and hopes that it helps to change hearts and minds in the UMC.

All Means All

Willow Glen UMC has written its own statement that expressly welcomes those who have assumed, rightly or wrongly, that they would not be welcome in church. Our Lay Leadership Council invites all of our small groups to read and discuss it. In the next several weeks, Pastor Rebecca will be visiting those groups to generate feedback and listen to your feelings and concerns. If the statement receives generous support, it will be offered for an official vote of approval at our Church Conference this fall. The statement would then appear on our website and in various published materials of the church. If you have any questions, please feel free to call Pastor Rebecca or our LLC Chairperson, Stan Praisewater.

Seeing God on the Mexico Mission Trip

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- Nancy making hot chocolate for everyone and Jeri serving it.
- All the teens together around the campfire.
- The sheer joy on Alex’ face as he smashed stucco onto his house, and the happiness on his mom’s face as she watched and helped.
- When we were at the border and one of the guards told us to unload the truck. At that moment I thought we were going to spend endless hours at the border. I prayed that we could cross the border without any problems. At first I thought God didn’t hear my prayer because we had to unload the truck, but all of a sudden he gave us a big break and we were allowed to cross. Then I thought to myself, God has answered.
- I saw God when I was tired.
- God was present this trip by seeing all the men pitching in and helping me with my difficult big tent. God put them there to help me deal with my lack of camping/tent skills. It was a group effort and appreciated.
- On the last day when we finished and gave the family the house, especially when we were reading the letter.
- God was present this trip by providing safe travels back and forth to work sites on very uneven and crazy roads making me appreciate our paved roads and road systems.
- Neighbors helping neighbors: near neighbor offering bano so one member of our team didn’t have to brave the hill, and the whole family and friends running out to help with stucco.
- Giggles and squeals of delight as we bounced up the big roller-coaster hills.
- Alexis, every day screaming with joy from the porch
- I saw God in the family’s faces when we gave them their key. The whole trip was worth it just to experience their joy.
- All of us acknowledging our fears and moving past our comfort zone to give to others – crazy roads, wobbly ladders, camping – brave and courageous for God’s work.
- Casey, Aidan and Connor putting real effort into building a bench for our family’s porch.
- When I saw the emotions of our family and tried to imagine their feelings of seeing total strangers come and produce an unimaginable gift of love, hope and future.
- On the last day as we left the campsite, one of the cactus’ had a large flower on it which was like a smile from God.

WGUMC Financial Snapshot Year-to-Date Through JULY 2015

	Actual	Budget
Income		
Giving	\$224,783	\$202,203
Other Income	\$40,914	\$42,858
TOTAL	\$265,697	\$245,061
Expense		
TOTAL	\$251,409	\$261,730
Conference		
Apportionments	\$13,275	\$18,585
Special Offerings	\$3,997	

We're Digging Deep in Sunday School

And Finding Wisdom to Guide Our Journey.

Wisdom: Finding Out What You Should Do and Doing it

Sometimes it's easy to know the wise choice. But what happens when the wise choice isn't as easy to spot? Wisdom isn't just about the difference between right and wrong. There is more to it as we try to see life from God's perspective and make decisions accordingly. For the first few weeks of Sunday School, we will be digging into the Bible to find God's wisdom and begin to apply it to our own choices. By opening our eyes to the wisdom of God, we will begin to notice it all around us – finding trusted friends and adults who can guide us, learning from our experiences, and following the example of Jesus as we encounter new choices each day.



Choose my teaching instead of silver. Choose knowledge rather than fine gold. Wisdom is worth more than rubies. Nothing you want can compare to her. Proverbs 8:10-11 (NirV)

Back to School!

Sunday School and Children's Chapel Begin Again September 20

Our regular Sunday morning schedule resumes Sunday, September 20. Our children and youth are in a constant state of discovery and our Sunday School classes are a place where they can begin to experience for themselves who God is, how much God loves them, and all that God wants for their lives. Together, we explore God's big story and discover the active part we play in it. If you have not been a regular participant in our Sunday School program before, now is the time to join. We find that the kids who engage their faith during Sunday School are confident in making faithful decisions throughout the week.

From creation to God's promises to the life of Jesus and the ministry of the disciples, we will dig in to discover what the Bible has to offer us and how we can use it to walk with Jesus on our faith journey. We will practice our Bible skills and become more familiar with the way that Scripture shapes our faith. Each class will have fun exploring the stories and developing their values through music, games, crafts and more. Sunday School classes will meet at 10:00am each Sunday.

In addition to Sunday School, Children's Chapel will continue to be offered during worship. This program gives younger children a chance to interact with the Bible and worship in their own way. Following the Children's Time in worship, our preschool through first graders will participate in Godly Play, hearing Gospel stories about the life of Jesus in a quiet and thoughtful way that allows them to enter into the story themselves and learn it from the inside out. If you have wondered what we do after we leave the service, come on over and find out! There's always something great happening in the ARK!

Classes and Locations

8:45 a.m. Worship Service
Nursery Care: ARK 109
Children's Chapel: ARK Circle Room

10:00 a.m. Sunday School
Nursery Care: ARK 109
Preschool & Kindergarten: Old ARK Art Room
First & Second Grades: ARK 102
Third, Fourth & Fifth Grades: ARK 106
Junior & Senior High: Youth Room (Basement)

11:00 a.m. Worship Service
Nursery Care: ARK 109
Children's Chapel: ARK Circle Room

Protecting Our Children and Youth

God has given us a sacred opportunity and a great responsibility to nurture and protect children and youth. For this reason, Willow Glen UMC has established procedures intended to provide a safe and supportive place for children, youth, and the persons who work with them, and to protect children and youth from abuse on our campus and in our programs.

This set of procedures outlines the respectful ways in which we treat children at WGUMC and the screening procedures for volunteers and staff who work with children and youth. We ask all parents and volunteers to complete a simple disclosure form which will be kept on file with the Children's Pastor. A fingerprint screening must also be completed. If you have any questions about the policies or need volunteer forms, please call Susan (x.30). Thank you for supporting our efforts to make WGUMC programs wonderful and safe for our children and youth.



Faith Exploration for Youth on Sunday Mornings

Should we call it Sunday School? Probably. Our youth are ready to dig deeper into their faith and consider what the Bible says about the tough issues and how they should live their lives. On September 20, we will meet as a class to determine which issues we would like to explore this year, and how we would like to engage that conversation together. Heaven and Hell. Social justice issues. Social behaviors and boundaries. Dealing with difficult people. You choose the topics and we'll dig in together, studying the Bible and ourselves for our own answers to some of life's greatest questions and supporting one another as we continue to grow into the people God wants us to be. Please join us in the youth room on September 20 to share your preferences for our studies, and plan to be there each Sunday at 10:00 a.m. to be part of some deep discussion and real relationships.

Our Kids Need Your Support!

There Are Lots of Ways for You to Help in Our Children's Ministry Programs

When we think of volunteering in children's ministry, we often assume that our programs just need teachers and folks who will work directly with our children. Of course, we are always looking for nurturing leaders for our Sunday School classes and fellowship groups, but there is a lot more that happens to support our children, families and teachers. Below I have listed just a few of the ways you can get involved in our children's programs. We'd love to have your help in any of these areas, so give me a call if something sounds good to you at susan@wgumc.org (ext.30).

Prayer and Care for Children and Families: Send birthday cards to children. Meet together to pray for our kids and their families. Send notes to encourage them and celebrate with them.

Coordinate or prepare supplies: Cutting out pieces for craft projects. Gathering the supplies Sunday School classes will need each week.

Organize Supplies: Have you seen Susan's office (a.k.a. the Sunday School supply room)? Keeping it all organized is an ongoing job. If you like everything in its place, have we got the task for you! Help Susan keep it all together, making sure everything has a place and gets back in it after its use.

Crossing Guard: Serve as a small group leader for our third, fourth and fifth grade fellowship group which meets the second Friday of each month in the evening. Play games, engage in faith-filled discussion and support our upper-elementary kids as they continue to discover who they are as people of faith.

Sunday School Teachers: Spend one or two Sundays a month leading a lesson with a class of children or youth. Curriculum is provided, and supplies are prepared for you. Come and be with our kids as they learn and grow in faith.

Music Leaders: Help our kids' choir learn songs for Christmas eve worship. Coordinate some of our young instrumentalists to play together in worship. Choreograph and teach a dance. Or help the children learn a song on the handbells.

Family Activities: Do you have an activity you'd like to see us do as a church family? Attend a baseball game? Go bowling or ice skating? Coordinate events for families to have fun together with other church families.



CrossWalk Starts September 11

All third, fourth and fifth graders are invited to CrossWalk. We meet once a month to learn about ourselves and our faith, and have a lot of fun! This year we will be exploring the wisdom found in Proverbs and how it can help us live faithfully. We'll get to know ourselves and our friends better as we laugh and play and explore God's word together. CrossWalk is never the same twice – there's always something goofy happening as we grow! As always, feel free to bring a friend!

Friday, September 11
7:00-8:30pm, Woodhaven
Theme: Digging In...

E-mail Pastor Susan (susan@wgumc.org) to ask any questions, let her know you are coming, or just say "hi!"

Women's Groups

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

Friendship Circle

Third Wednesday at noon
Contact Sue Johnson

Heart and Hand

Second Thursday, 7 p.m.
Contact Susan Smith

UMW Executive Board will meet Monday, September 14, 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 October *Willow Word* is September 25. Please send your story ideas and submissions to Leslie Chamberlain

Evening in Mexico

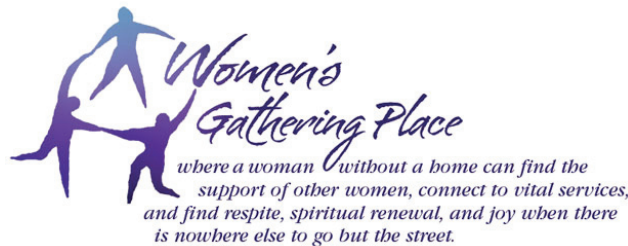
You are invited to join the members of United Methodist Women at an Evening in Mexico on Saturday, September 19, at 5:30 p.m. in Kohlstedt Hall. Appetizers and "Methodist" Margaritas will start off the evening, followed by a program of Mexican dances presented by a local children's dance group. A full Mexican dinner will be served by UMW members.

Tickets will be available following worship services on September 6 and 13 or by contacting Pat Farrow at patricia.farrow@gmail.com, \$10 for adults, \$7.50 under 12, \$35 maximum for a family. This evening of food and fellowship will be the kickoff for a study of Latin America to be carried out by the local unit of United Methodist Women during the year to come.



Women's Gathering Place

Our next visit to WGP is scheduled for Monday, September 28. We will meet at church at 11:30 to carpool, take lunch for the group and take activities to share. We want to take along personal items to stock their give-away chest: health and beauty items of all kinds, new underwear and sanitary supplies. Clean used clothing in good condition is well received, including shirts, jackets, pants and shoes in all sizes. Donations will be much appreciated by the women at WGP.



There is always a need for more women to take part in these visits. For more information how you can participate in our September 28 visit, please contact Pat Farrow at patricia.farrow@gmail.com.

August 22: A Day with No Limits – Limitless!

One hundred and thirty girls and women, driving from as far away as Walnut Creek, Hercules, and Fremont, flooded into First United Methodist Church in Campbell that Saturday morning, staying on their feet to sing along with the high-flying music of Jo Neish and her praise band.

Guest speakers kept their presentations short, but packed a punch –

Meghan Waddle, Chair of the Young Women's Advisory Board of the UMW National Office, reaching out to women ages 14 to 45.

Sharon Martin, Licensed Clinical Social Worker, quoted poet Audre Lorde who said, "Caring for myself is not self-indulgence. It is self-preservation."

Lisa Jacobs, Director of the Joint Youth Ministry in San Jose, said that we are reluctant to share our open wounds, but our past hurts which bear tougher scars can be shared.

Stephanie Liljedahl, certified yoga instructor, childbirth doula, and health food store owner, was "creative" but not "athletic" when growing up. But now she loves to move!

These were our hands-on activities for the day, and their facilitators:

Kiersten Manuel – Making shoe kits for Africans to assemble.

Betty Dickey – Assembling UMCOR Health Kits.

Susan Smith – Hand-tying blankets and quilts to give away.

Kiersten & Mikaela Manuel – Making Protestant Prayer Beads with beautiful supplies.

Lisa Jacobs – Scripture painting on small canvases.

Katrina Kraynick – Scripture theater, later performed during the closing worship.

Personal Note from Pastor Rebecca

I have completed four of six chemotherapy treatments and am anxious to finish the course! Some have asked me if I have received any word as to how effective the treatments have been so far. Since they removed the tumor and it had not spread to the lymph nodes, there is nothing to test right now. As far as I'm concerned, the cancer is gone. The chemotherapy and radiation and subsequent targeted therapy are to assure that it doesn't come back. What you all need to know is that I will be back! My last chemotherapy treatment is at the end of September. Sometime in October I will begin six weeks of radiation. During that time, I will be getting help preaching from the Walk to Emmaus graduates. The very best way you can support me is to support this church and its ministries during my treatment. Thank you all so much for what you are doing to share the Good News in Willow Glen. If you want to read about my personal reflections on what I've been going through, friend me on Facebook or call the church office and Dee will send you copies of my "Tree Therapy" journal.



In Memoriam

Our hearts are saddened by the death of Walter Mounts on July 25, 2015. A faithful servant of the church, Walt will be greatly missed by his family and friends. A memorial service was held in our Sanctuary on August 22.

Want to Make a Joyful Noise?

Calling all musicians! Would you like to help us celebrate Christmas musically? If you play an instrument and would be interested in playing together with others at Christmas, please contact Pastor Susan (susan@wgumc.org). With enough interest and commitment, we will create an ensemble for the season.

Planning Advent Family Nights

For the past few years, we have gathered weekly for a family meal and activity in Woodhaven during Advent. We would love to continue this tradition with your help. Please contact Pastor Susan (susan@wgumc.org) if you would like to make this family ministry possible this Advent season. We will all meet together in late September or early October to plan our Advent activities and then work together to publicize, prepare and lead them for our church family.

Joint Youth Group Walk-A-Thon Is Coming!

When: Sunday, October 18, 2015. Walking starts at 1:00 p.m. and ends at 5:00 p.m.

Where: Cambrian Park United Methodist Church, 1919 Gunston Way, San Jose

Why: To raise money to support our youth by giving them opportunities to attend "life changing" camps, mission trips, and weekly Joint Youth Group programs!

What you can do to help:

Encourage your Jr. High and/or High School youth to participate

Pledge our youth, in person or online at jointyouthgroup.com

Sign up to volunteer on October 18th!

If you have any questions, contact Kiersten Manuel at kiersten@mccormickzone.com. Thank you!

Directory Updates

Do you have changes to your contact information? Would you like to submit a new photo for the church directory? Please send your changes to Dee in the church office by Tuesday, September 15. Thank you!

DISCIPLE

FAST TRACK

BIBLE STUDY FOR BUSY LIVES

Disciple Fast Track Is Now Available!

Many members of Willow Glen have taken Disciple Bible Study in the past. It is an intensive and extremely rewarding course that leaves one with a more complete view of the Bible than ever before. It's been several years since we have offered it. Many newer members haven't ever taken it. Some others have, but wish for a "refresher". And since we've offered it, our lives are busier than ever with still-increasing demands.

What is Disciple Fast Track?

Since 1987, Disciple Bible Study has reached nearly 3 million people worldwide, introducing the grand sweep of Scripture in a 34-week format. Disciple Fast Track maintains the integrity and principles of the original study, but its modifications can better meet the needs of a hectic world. Participants still receive a thorough introduction to the Bible, but in a third less time.

How Does It Work?

The course uses the same Disciple Study Manual, but the class time and course length have all been adjusted for busy lifestyles. Additional print and video materials, which are extremely easy to use, give participants the tools to absorb and retain what they learn in this shortened format.

Main Features of Disciple Fast Track:

- Classes meet for a total of 24 weeks – There are 12 sessions in the Old Testament and 12 in the New Testament. Groups typically start the Old Testament in early fall and finish before Thanksgiving; they then start the New Testament in January and finish around Easter.
- Each group session lasts 75 minutes – This is half the time of traditional Disciple classes. Churches are able to fit classes in on Sunday mornings, lunch hours, during evening children's programming and even early in the morning before the work day begins.

Are You Interested?

Email the church office at wgumc@wgumc.org or Stan Praisewater at spraisewater@gmail.com.

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