

The Willow Word

A Publication of the Willow Glen United Methodist Church

God's Family Growing Through Caring, Sharing and Serving

Lent 2016: A Time for Outreach and Inreach

Lent is from an Old English word that means "spring," and the season of Lent, like spring, is a season for growth. This year, we have a wonderful opportunity to grow in all directions. By attending worship and committing ourselves to spiritual practices, we grow in our love for God. By volunteering for the winter shelter, we grow in our love for our neighbors. I call our love for God the "Inreach" and our love for neighbors the "Outreach." One love feeds the other. Neither love can last long without the other. So this Lenten season, why not do both?

I hope you'll make a real effort to ground your week in worship. The overarching theme for Lent is one of giving up the things that are getting in the way of our being real with God. If this were easy, we would have already done it. But this is hard, much harder than giving up chocolate or chewing gum for Lent. So we'll take it one step at a time. Here are the services and scriptures for the season:

February 10: Ash Wednesday

The sanctuary will be open from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. for readings on the theme of "Be Still" with guided prayer and ashes.

Because this is the first night of our shelter program, we are moving the Ash Wednesday service to the noon hour. You can come and go anytime between 11:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. There will be readings and reflections every fifteen minutes, music for meditation, and the opportunity to receive ashes and a blessing whenever you are ready. Ashes will also be available to our guests and shelter volunteers that evening.

February 14: Temptation of Jesus

Luke 4:1-13

Giving up our selfish desires and desiring God.

February 21: Jesus' lament over Jerusalem

Luke 13:31-35

Giving up our regrets and moving through our grief.

February 28: Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters

Isaiah 55:1-9

Giving up our habits of thought that do not satisfy us or serve God.

March 6: Prodigal Son

Luke 15:11-32

Giving up our pride in order to be closer to God.

March 13: St. Paul on losing all and gaining Christ

Philippians 3:4-14

Giving up our false selves and finding our true identity in God.

March 20: Palm Sunday

Luke 19:28-40

Celebrating the Journey.

March 24: Maundy Thursday

7:30 p.m., Kohlstedt Hall.

Like last year, we will have our Maundy Thursday service with choir and communion in Kohlstedt Hall. This service will conclude with an optional labyrinth walk. Choir practice will be held in the sanctuary immediately following communion.

March 25: Good Friday

7:30 p.m., Almaden Hills UMC

The Joint Youth Ministry will be leading the service at Almaden Hills UMC.

March 27: Easter Sunday

8:45 and 11 a.m., in the Sanctuary

Easter activities for children and youth in Kohlstedt Hall.

February 2016

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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

A Place of Welcome

At this time last year, we had just met former residents of the Jungle homeless encampment and begun to consider providing meals for the unhoused during Lent. We have spent this year building relationships with the houseless, growing in our awareness of this issue in our community and the needs of those directly affected, and continuing to discern how we can best help. We have advocated for changes to city policy. We have hosted educational events. We have joined with dozens of other churches to work towards emergency solutions for this El Nino season. It has been a whirlwind year!

Willow Glen UMC has always been a place of welcome. Visitors are greeted with a heartfelt smile and a listening ear, a tour of our campus and introductions to our family. We care for one another deeply and, this year, we have extended that care beyond our walls to include the women at Women's Gathering Place, our neighbors living outside, and leaders from other churches who are looking for ways to extend their outreach into a community that needs us. I know that we will offer that same beautiful "welcome home" spirit in our shelter ministry, and it warms my heart and spirit.

Now we find ourselves preparing to open our doors and hearts to 15 medically vulnerable, houseless women who have spent the past month living at Holy Spirit Catholic Parish in Almaden. On February 10, Woodhaven will become their home. Holy Spirit will bring over the cots and the guest's belongings, and we will move them into Woodhaven and settle them in for a five week stay. We will offer meals and shelter, clothing and showers, but most importantly, we offer them our friendship and care. There are many ways that you can be part of this ministry and I hope you will check out the opportunities on our webpage, and sign up there to bring a meal or do some laundry or share an evening with our guests.

The season of Lent, which also begins on February 10, is a time to give things up as well as to take on new life-giving practices – all with the intention of realigning our lives and hearts to God. We are each encouraged to find our own way of acknowledging and eliminating our distractions so we can fully rejoice in the gift of hope we find in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. As we enter this season of reflection and service together, my prayer is from Paul's letter to the Ephesians:

I ask God to strengthen you by his Spirit—not a brute strength but a glorious inner strength—that Christ will live in you as you open the door and invite him in. And I ask him that with both feet planted firmly on love, you'll be able to take in with all followers of Jesus the extravagant dimensions of Christ's love. Reach out and experience the breadth! Test its length! Plumb the depths! Rise to the heights! Live full lives, full in the fullness of God.

God can do anything, you know—far more than you could ever imagine or guess or request in your wildest dreams! He does it not by pushing us around but by working within us, his Spirit deeply and gently within us. (Ephesians 3:16-21, The Message)

Thanks be to God for working within us and through us.

Peace,
Susan



We Need Palms!

Do you have palms? We are in need of a new source for palm leaves for the sanctuary and Kohlstedt Hall on Palm Sunday. If you have palms in your yard or know someone who does and is willing to let us trim them, please let Pastor Rebecca know. She will be looking for volunteers who can cut and transport them to the church the day before Palm Sunday.

Trustees' Update

Where are the new windows in the sanctuary? The company we hired to install them made a mistake in measuring the windows and they had to be reordered. They are covering the cost of their mistake and the new windows will be here soon. When they arrive sometime in February, we will schedule the installation.

Meanwhile, we have made some progress on other projects around the church. We have a new water fountain outside of Kohlstedt Hall to replace one that had worn out. Lex Danson has been installing smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in Woodhaven to meet the requirements for a temporary shelter. We are also purchasing a larger fire extinguisher for the building and putting up drapes in the large living room window where the women will be sleeping.

There are always a million things that need attending to and we are a couple of people short on our Board of Trustees. If you have some time and skills to help us maintain our buildings for all of the ministry we are doing, we would sure appreciate a call.

A special thank you to E. Clay Buchanan for cleaning out the downspouts on the second floor of Woodhaven all by himself. If you want to see the unbelievable photos of the cleaning project and how he managed to handle a gigantic wooden ladder all by himself, you can see it all on the Woodhaven Garden blog at: <http://wgumcgardenblog.blogspot.com>. Thank you, Jesus, that he didn't hurt himself!

Give Electronically

www.wgumc.org/give

In addition to setting up automatic payments for your stewardship pledge, there are other ways to give. Contact Ingrid Quigley, eGiving coordinator, for details.

Send a Text: Simply send a text message to 408-478-9671 with the amount you would like to contribute. Include the dollar sign before the amount (example: \$20). You'll be sent a text with a link to register; enter your cardholder name and credit card information. You will receive a text verification and receipt via email.

Shop Online: When you shop at your favorite online retailers like Best Buy, 800 Flowers, Expedia and hundreds more, a percentage of every dollar you spend is contributed by those stores to WGUMC at no cost to you. Sign up at www.umcmarket.org.

Shop at Amazon: Shop through AmazonSmile and a portion of your purchase goes to WGUMC at no cost to you. You'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to WGUMC.

Donate Your Car: When it's time to get rid of your car, use DonatingIsEasy.com and donate the proceeds to WGUMC. A couple of our church members have used this already and loved it. All you have to do is register at their website and they call you to set up an appointment. If your car isn't running, they will tow it!



WGUMC Financial Snapshot

Year-to-Date Through December 2015

	Actual	Budget
Income		
Giving	\$371,805	\$353,326
Other Income	\$134,474	\$140,076
TOTAL	\$506,279	\$493,402
Expense		
TOTAL	\$445,287	\$548,152

	Actual	Budget
Conference		
Apportionments	\$28,895	\$31,860
Special Offerings	\$4,383	-



CrossWalk

Faith and Fellowship for Third, Fourth and Fifth Graders

Friday, February 5

7-8:30 p.m.

Wesley Room and Kitchen

Theme: Cooking for Others

We'll be heading into the kitchen to prepare a meal (or two) for the homeless shelter. This is a great chance to have some fun in the kitchen and share the results with others.

Also, we are planning to serve dinner at the shelter on Friday, February 12. If your family would like to participate, please let Pastor Susan know soon.

Save the Dates!

Vacation Bible School 2016

June 13-17

VBS is a week earlier this year, and you won't want to miss it! More information is coming soon.

Toyon Kids Camp 2016

July 10-15

Monte Toyon, Aptos, CA

Our conference offers summer camps for children and youth beginning in third grade. CrossWalk kids are planning to attend Toyon Kids Camp at Monte Toyon in Aptos, July 10-15. Pastor Susan will not be on the camp staff this summer, but many of our favorite camp leaders from previous years will be there, and they want your kids to be there too. Check it out at <http://www.cnumc.org/youngpeoples-ministries>. Registration will begin in February. If you have questions, contact Pastor Susan (susan@wgumc.org).

Confirmation Class Begins February 23

Confirmation Class is that time in a teenager's life when they look closely at what it means to be a Christian in general, to be a United Methodist in particular, and to be a member of this church precisely. It is a great time to explore their faith, to grapple with some of the tough questions facing them individually and as a generation (and facing all people of faith), to get to know themselves and their church a bit better.

All seventh and eighth-graders are invited to join our Joint Youth Confirmation class which will regularly meet on Tuesdays from 7-8:30pm (February through April). Confirmation Sunday will be celebrated on May 1.

As part of the confirmation experience, Lisa, Kat and I ask that each youth find a mentor. This should be a member of the church (preferably not a family member) who is willing to spend some time sharing with a teen about his or her faith and church experience. Mentors will be expected to join us for two or three classes, stand up with their teens when they are confirmed, and spend several hours with the teens outside of class talking about various faith-related issues. If you would be interested in serving as a Confirmation mentor, please contact Pastor Susan (susan@wgumc.org).

The Power of Cooperation

Cooperation is working together to do more than you could do alone. When you think about it, cooperation is huge. When you cooperate, you can build more. You learn more. You can do more.

As kids are growing they become more aware of the people around them. They have friends on the playground or in their neighborhood. They have to work in teams to finish projects in school. If they don't learn God's plan for cooperation, they'll have a difficult time getting along with people. That's why it's important that we take some time to discover what the Bible says about cooperation.



Cooperation is actually a spiritual concept that originates with God. God designed us as human beings not only to need each other, but also to need Him. Now, it's not like God was up in heaven desperate for some help. No, God is all-sufficient. But God created us so we could have a relationship with Him, and so that we could participate in His work together. In other words, God put all of us together on this planet to do more together than we could ever do alone, and in some cases—with His help—to do things that might even seem "un-doable."

The Bible is full of stories of people who came together in faith to do something they never could have done alone. This month, we're asking the question: "What can we do together?" What can we do together as a church to demonstrate to our children the way God designed us—not only to need each other, but also to need Him? How can we cooperate with God on His plan to change the world?

Sunday School meets each Sunday at 10 a.m. See you there!

Woodhaven Shelter Opens February 10

We will welcome our guests on Wednesday, February 10, and our shelter will be open 6 p.m. to 7a.m. through March 16. Dormitory space will be set up on the first floor of Woodhaven and the Wesley Room will be used for meals. We encourage everyone to find some way to help care for our guests. The list below shows many of the volunteer opportunities available. You can sign up by following the link on our website to our VolunteerSpot page (<http://vols.pt/2djVbL>) or go to wgumc.org and click on "Help Our Homeless Friends." Or look for Jan Leonard or another member of the Shelter Team on Sunday mornings. We also are collecting donations of supplies as listed below, and financial contributions will be used for the expenses of the shelter program.

We are still looking for someone to help coordinate the Morning Meal volunteers. If you are interested in helping with this or have other gifts to share with our shelter guests, please be in touch with Pastor Susan.

Volunteer Opportunities

Intake Volunteers (1 each night, 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.)

Register guests as they arrive under the direction of the Evening Supervisor (staff), help them feel welcomed, and to understand the expectations as guests. Schedule them for a timeslot to use the shower/laundry facilities (if they desire) on the days when Dignity of Wheels is there with the Shower/Laundry truck.

Hospitality Ambassadors (1 or 2 each night, 5:30 to 9:30 p.m.)

Welcome guests and help them get settled, ready for shower and dinner. Share a meal with our guests and spend time with them after dinner.

Overnight Host (1 volunteer per night, 9:30 p.m. to 7 a.m.)

Help guests move from dinner to sleeping area, stay with them through the night and help them back to Wesley Room for breakfast

Evening Meal Provider (6:30 to 9 p.m.)

A great group activity! Recruit 3 – 4 of your friends and lead the team to plan, prepare and serve a complete dinner for 25 people. Your team will prep and serve the meal, dine with guests, and lead the clean up afterwards.

Evening Meal Servers (select nights, 6:30 to 9 p.m.)

Set up and serve previously prepared meal, and share meal with our guests. Work with guests to clear dishes and clean up kitchen for the night.

Hot Breakfast Provider (TThSatSun, 5:30 a.m. to 7:30 a.m.)

A great group activity! Recruit 3 – 4 of your friends and lead the team to plan and serve a complete breakfast for 20 shelter guests and volunteer staff between 6:15 – 6:45am on this morning in the Wesley Room.

Morning Host (cold breakfast, MWF, 5:45 to 7 a.m.)

This volunteer will set up continental breakfast for our guests, welcome and assist them with the morning meal and help with clean up afterwards.

Laundry Service

Pick up bag(s) of bed linens and towels in the morning, launder and return them by 6pm.

Clothes Closet Host (M&Th, 2 volunteers, 7 to 9 p.m.)

Keep donated women's clothing organized. Bring guests to clothes "closet" racks and assist them in finding clothes they like. Offer new socks and underwear.

Shower & Laundry Host (T&F, 5:30 to 9:30 p.m.)

Work with Dignity on Wheels staff person to assist guests with access to the potable showers (as scheduled during check-in by the Intake Volunteer), and laundry facilities. Provide clean towels as needed, help guests keep to their assigned schedule for shower and washer/dryer usage.

Shelter Donations

- Toiletries
- Women's clothing
- New underwear, bras & socks
- Hairdryers
- Flashlights (small)
- Umbrellas
- Large boxes of cereal (less than 10g sugar per serving)
- Granola bars
- Toilet paper
- Feminine hygiene products
- \$\$\$ for pantry staples such as milk and juice
- \$\$\$ for staffing and other costs
- \$\$\$ for bus passes

Women's Groups

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

Friendship Circle

Third Wednesday
1:00 p.m.
Woodhaven
Contact Sue Johnson

Heart and Hand

Thursday, March 3
6:30 p.m.
Woodhaven
*Help us serve Friendship
Soup to our friends at the
shelter*
Contact Susan Smith

UMW Executive Board will meet Monday, February 8, at 9:00 a.m. in Woodhaven. UMW is open to all women regardless of church membership.

For more information

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

UMW Officers – Getting started in 2016

The new officers of United Methodist Women were recognized and installed by the Pastors in the 11 a.m. worship service on January 24, in an inspiring ceremony of commission and blessing. With plans formulated at the first meeting and planning session in January, the women of UMW are embarking on a schedule of activities which includes:

- Four general meetings (March, June, October and December).
- Executive Board meetings in January, February, May, September and November.
- Circle Meetings of Heart and Hand and Friendship Circle.
- Fundraising plans, which include the sale of See's Easter Candy, and providing dessert service to the ladies of To Kalon who meet in our church approximately eight times each year.
- Attending Leadership Development events (January 30 and February 6) to better prepare officers for the year ahead.
- Participating in the annual Pledge Service, Call to Prayer and Self Denial and World Thank Offering.
- Taking part in a One-Day Spiritual Retreat on Saturday, March 5, at WGUMC, being planned by the officers of El Camino District, UMW.
- Legislative Event in Sacramento in April.
- Monthly participation in Women's Gathering Place at First Presbyterian Church of San Jose.
- And more! Watch for future announcements.

UMW officers for 2016 are:

President
Secretary
Treasurer
Program Resources
Spiritual Growth
Social Action
Membership, Nurture & Outreach
Historian
Sunshine
Special Rep.

Ruth Granfors
Jane Vivian
Becky Morgan
Alice Singh
Carmen McBride
Pat Farrow
Jane Vivian
Joyce Osborn
Linda Russo
Gwyne Grubb



For information about UMW, please contact any of the above – they will be happy to share details about the mission and program of United Methodist Women.

Annual See's Easter Candy Sale

Easter is coming early this year (March 27) and so is the annual sale of See's Easter Candy being promoted by UMW. Orders will be taken on February 28 and March 6, with orders filled on March 13 and March 20. For additional information, please contact Becky Morgan or Beth Minton.

An important reminder: You can order Easter Candy for the children in 3 local shelters, and provide Easter treats for children who might not have any otherwise, at the same time avoiding all those calories going home with you. Or, you can take the Easter Candy home for you and your family to enjoy!



About Meditation

By Ingrid Quigley

Christian meditation, known as contemplative prayer, is the prayer of silence. The teaching of this ancient tradition of prayer is rooted in the Gospels and early Christian monastic tradition of the Desert.

Meditation is universal tradition found in all of the great religions. It helps people of all ages and cultures to find simple, practical and meaningful ways to awaken and deepen their spiritual life.

One of Fr. John Main's remarkable insights is the community which evolves by those persons coming together regularly for meditation. This gives us great hope for ecumenical unity.

Meditation does not replace other forms of prayer, but rather enhances and deepens all prayer in the Holy Spirit.

"The important aim in Christian meditation is to allow God's mysterious and silent presence within us to become more and more not only a reality but the reality which gives meaning, shape and purpose to everything we do, everything we are."

-- Fr. John Main

Willow Glen United Methodist Church has a Christian meditation group that has been meeting weekly since 2010. If you want to know more or would like help beginning a meditation practice, contact Ingrid Quigley at ingridquigley@sbcglobal.net. Or, begin by checking out the web for World Community for Christian Meditation at wccm.org.

How To Meditate

Meditation is as natural to the spirit as breathing is to the body. While meditation is common to many religious traditions around the world, the method of practice may differ. The discipline as taught by John Main, based on the teachings of the Desert Fathers and Mothers, is approached for twenty to thirty minutes twice daily in the following way:

- Choose a quiet place.
- Sit down comfortably, with your back straight.
- Close your eyes lightly.
- Sit as still as possible.
- Breathe deeply, staying both relaxed and alert.
- Slowly and interiorly, begin to say your mantra or prayer word. Listen to the word as you say it.
- Continue repeating it gently and faithfully for the whole time of the meditation.
- Return to it as soon as you realize you have stopped saying it.
- Stay with the same word during the meditation and from day to day.

Do not evaluate your meditation. Do not be discouraged by distractions. Rather, let them come and go, always keeping your attention on the mantra. In time, the fruits of your meditation will appear in your self, your life, and in all your relationships.

In Memoriam

In the past month, we have experienced the loss
of two of our long-time members.
Our condolences to the families of:

Fred Collen

Charles Fissell





Mission Possible Pancake Breakfast a Huge Success!

Our second annual pancake breakfast raised \$6,600 for renovation and debt repayment. Nearly 200 attendees enjoyed a delicious breakfast of pancakes, bacon, sausage, fruit salad, juice and coffee.

The ping pong tournament was a fun addition this year. Congratulations to Sam Chamberlain (first place), Jeff Chamberlain (second place) and Daniel Pense (third place). The silent auction was also a big hit, with stays at vacation homes, sports tickets and more!

Thanks to the many donors and volunteers who helped make this event a success, and in particular to Michele Unger for chairing this event for the second year!

Willow Glen United Methodist Church

1420 Newport Avenue, San Jose, CA 95125

408-294-9796

www.wgumc.org

