

# The Willow Word

A Publication of the Willow Glen United Methodist Church

God's Family Growing Through Caring, Sharing and Serving

## Fourth Annual WGUMC Yard Sale!

**Saturday, September 10, 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.**

Pastor Rebecca is back and in charge of the yard sale this year. So please clean out your closets, garages and storage units! Even if you don't have items to donate, we need you to get the word out to friends, neighbors and family members.

All donations should be clean, in good repair and in working order. We are looking for baby and 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.

Like last year, we will have two drop-off days on Thursday, September 8, between noon and 7:00 p.m., and Friday, September 9, between 9:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. If you need help transporting large items, please contact Brian Ganz at [specialprojects@comcast.net](mailto:specialprojects@comcast.net), or [missionpossible@WGUMC.org](mailto:missionpossible@WGUMC.org).



## Worship in July

On Sunday mornings we have been getting back to the "heart of worship," as the song goes. We've explored the "what" and the "why" of worship. We continue with that conversation in July with special guests at the end of the month.

### July 3: The Who of Worship, Luke 13:10-17

Pastor Rebecca will be celebrating her independence from chemotherapy this weekend and would also like to recognize others who have survived or are in the process of surviving cancer. If you haven't had cancer, but would like to celebrate being pain free, seizure free or drug free, join us this Sunday. We always remember to pray during the illness, but let's not forget to celebrate the recovery!

### July 10: The When and Where of Worship, John 4:5-30; 39-42

Jesus tells the woman of Samaria that the important thing is not where one worships but that one worships in spirit and in truth. Bring a bag lunch and stay after worship to discuss what it means for Willow Glen to worship "in spirit and in truth."

### July 17: The How of Worship

We will meet at 9:00 a.m. for bagels and conversation about new/old directions in worship. Then at 10:00 a.m., we will be hearing selected readings from Scripture and engage in a fun interactive activity during the sermon.

### July 24: Hymn Sing and Worship Field Trips

Pastors take vacation, but worship never does. This Sunday, worship God through the words and sounds of your favorite hymns. Or, take this chance to visit another worship service and bring back your insights. If you are willing to take a field trip, fill out a response form and report back, please send your name into the church office. We have suggestions for worship services we'd like you to visit.

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## July/August 2016

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## Sunday Worship

**10:00 a.m.**

Combined Worship

**11:00 a.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

## Ordination to a Life of Love and Service

In the past couple of months I have been to two ordination services. The first service was held at Campbell UMC but was not a Methodist ordination. It was the extra-ordinary (some would say heretical) ordination of a Catholic woman priest by a group of reformers who refuse to wait any longer for Rome to acknowledge the Catholic women who have been called by God to sacramental ministry.

The service was very moving and I was honored to be there to witness this important step forward for the entire Christian Church. The music was powerful, but perhaps the most powerful part of the service was when the candidate prostrated herself on the ground (as is customary in the Catholic ritual) in a sign of complete and utter obedience to God while the Bishop prayed. When she stood up, the Bishop (also a woman) laid hands on her and then the entire congregation, one by one, also laid hands on her in a gesture of blessing.

This past week, the scene was Annual Conference in Burlingame, and I was taking part in an ordination service for the first time since I was ordained. As her clergy mentor for the last several years, I had the privilege of standing with a young Korean pastor, Shijung Shim, as she received the laying on of hands from our Bishop. What a joy to celebrate with her this affirmation of her calling to ordained ministry. She didn't have to prostrate herself, nevertheless, I know enough about her journey to know that she has been humbled by her experiences in ministry and has proven her obedience to her calling in the face of great adversity. Though I have been her mentor, she has inspired me with her courage and with her faith. She is now serving with joy as Associate Pastor at First UMC, Palo Alto.

I tell you these stories because I think it is a shame that ordination is reserved for those who are committing to ministry fulltime. There should be a laying on of hands and celebratory prayers every time someone makes a commitment to Christ, discovers a new calling in ministry, takes on a new challenge in the church, offers a new gift or strikes out in a new direction for their lives. As Protestants, we proclaim the priesthood of ALL believers and that includes all of you. And I can think of no higher privilege than participating in your ordination to a life of love and service.

Blessings,

*Rebecca*



## Worship in July

*Continued from Front Page*

### July 31: Special Guests from the Art and Spirit Ministry

During the worship service on July 31, you'll have a chance to hear stories from the Elwood County Jail Ministry, called Art and Spirit. You will hear from people who spend time in the jail regularly tell of their experiences – moments that have changed some of the inmates, and the moments that have changed themselves. Some of the inmates' art will be on display. The art has been traveling around the county in private and public art shows. Recognizing the dignity of their humanity, and the commonalities we share, is essential for the incarcerated. The art shows that there is more to them than their crime. Their work exhibits introspection, spirituality, promise and hope.

## August Worship at Willow Glen

Our worship services in August will feature a different method of engaging the Word. According to the Book of Acts, one of the four basic elements of early Christian worship was “the teaching of the Apostles,” and the New Testament is a record of that teaching. Instead of preaching the usual expository sermon, Pastor Rebecca will be letting you in on one of her sermon preparation exercises. Since she is married to a scholar who can read the Bible in the original languages, she doesn’t need a lot of Bible commentaries or other books gathering dust on the shelf. Instead, she frequently engages her husband in what Wesley would call “spiritual conferencing” about the text that she will be preaching on that Sunday. She decided that you might like to eavesdrop and even join in on that conversation, so we’ll do that in worship in place of the sermon for the month of August. Then maybe you will be inspired to write the sermon!

## Musical Note

Do you play the saxophone or do you know someone who does? Pastor Rebecca is looking for a saxophonist to play with our worship band on occasion. As far as that goes, we welcome other instruments as well, so if you would like to share your musical gifts with us, we will give you the opportunity to share them with God.

## We Care Fund Needs Replenishing

Have you ever been in despair over all the big and seemingly unsolvable problems in this world? While we may not be able to do something big, we can all do something small and, at the same time, make a difference in someone’s life. Our We Care fund is small. We don’t have the funds to help people pay their rent or register their car, but we can get them food, a little gas or bus token or a gift card to buy some clothes. We can also use the fund to help members of our own church community get through a rough patch. Over the past year, we have been using the fund to provide some basic necessities for Russ Kintner, who is currently at Chuckawalla Valley State Prison in Blythe, CA. We donate \$50/month toward a box of supplies (clothing, toiletries, writing paper and snacks) that inmates can receive once a quarter. We need ongoing donations to the We Care Fund to continue this ministry. We have been running low lately and would welcome your continued support.

## David Forderer Gets to Conference

We held a special offering on June 12 to help David get to Annual Conference. He is one of the lay members from Willow Glen but needs extra help in getting to meetings and participating in them. Because of your generous donations, we were able to send David and two assistants to the Conference in Burlingame. We raised more than \$1,500 for travel expenses. David wants to express his gratitude to the congregation. It is an honor for him to be able to serve.

## What About the Sanctuary Lift?

The Board of Trustees has taken on the project of investigating and planning for the replacement of the sanctuary lift that is out of date and unsafe. The company that installed it decades ago will not even service it because it doesn’t meet any kind of building or safety code. We have a proposal from a company that installs lifts, but there is additional structural work that needs to be done. We will also be hiring an architect that specializes in ADA compliance to assess our property and help us prioritize our time and dollars. We don’t yet have an estimate for this work, but the cost will be substantial. The lift alone could cost about \$20,000 and other work will be needed to install it. If you or your family is looking for a good way to honor or memorialize a member of the congregation, this would be an excellent opportunity to give a gift that would help us open our doors to ALL of God’s children.

## Shelter Update

**By Mike Ferrero, Holy Spirit Parish**

The City Council approved extending the urgency order allowing churches in San Jose for another year. The action will allow churches to shelter up to 30 homeless individuals for as many as 90 days in a year for an individual church. Churches will not be required to obtain conditional use permits, pay fees, or hold public hearings. The city will probably continue to do a building inspection by the fire department and code enforcement like they did this winter. The end result is that we will be able to continue planning for shelters next winter and recruiting of more churches without significant issues with the City of San Jose. The city, in fact, considers it’s collaboration with the faith community a spectacular success in addressing the homeless situation.

## Worshipping with Children

Children are an important part of our church family, and are always included in our worship services on Sunday mornings. You never have to worry that your child will be “too restless” for worship. Our children bring an energy and liveliness to worship that we all enjoy and appreciate. We encourage children to participate in worship in the ways that they are comfortable. Many share their joys and concerns during the prayer time, and join in our responses. Others dance in the aisles, read a book, or work on an activity clipboard provided in worship each week. It is amazing how much our children learn about worship and their faith by participating with us each week.

This summer as we worship together in one service and consider the ways that we worship and why, our children and youth will, of course, be included in that conversation. We will continue to have a “Time for the Child” in worship each week with Pastor Susan or Pastor Rebecca. However, following “Time for the Child,” kids will be invited to remain in worship with their families or go out to the playground for some special Bible Olympic training and free play supervised by our nursery staff. In worship, we will have some new “busy bags” available for young children which contain quiet activities for them to explore while soaking in the life of worship around them. We hope that your family will find what you need to make worship a time of rest and growth for you each week this summer.



## Training for the Bible Olympics

It's an Olympic year! Athletes around the world have been preparing for their events this August, and it's time for us to kick up the training for our Bible Olympics held at about the same time as the Rio games. The Bible Olympics combine physical skills such as dribbling a basketball with Bible-related skills such as knowing the books of the Bible. Each event encourages some training in Bible skills while being offered at multiple levels so all ages can be successful.

This summer, children will have the opportunity to practice these events each week on the playground following the “Time for the Child” in worship. Our own Bible Olympics will be held on August 14. Watch the bulletin and email for details. Be sure to start your training now on Sunday mornings and get ready for the Games!

## The Promised Land, the Kingdom of God and Avalanche Ranch

Our VBS adventure this year took us through the biblical story cycle of Joshua and offered us a truly wild ride theologically. As modern people, the story of conquest is uncomfortable since our national boundaries have been defined for hundreds of years and most of us have not personally experienced a military invasion or involvement in our lifetimes. The idea that God, who we know as love, is guiding the conquest story only adds to our theological discomfort.

But we struggled with this story for a reason. First of all, it is our history and it can be dangerous to rewrite our story and gloss over the realities of war and injustice. We often think of the Promised Land as a gift from God but in reality, it may have been more of a challenge. God brought his people to a place of incredible cultural, ethnic, economic and religious diversity and instructed them to be people of love, justice, hope and peace. In the middle of this conflict, God challenges us to build the kingdom of God where acceptance and respect and humility and forgiveness rule.

Throughout the week at VBS, we tried to emphasize that God is always with us as we are knocking down all kinds of walls. We hope and pray that we can continue to meet the challenge God offers us to be beacons of love and hope in a world of diversity and conflict. As always, we love sharing this time with children from Willow Glen UMC, St. Francis Episcopal and throughout our community. We hope as families continue to walk God's challenge of faithfulness, we can walk together and build a community ever closer to the kingdom of God.

Thank you to WGUMC for hosting our Wild Ride, and for continuing to be church for children as they encounter God's word and grow in their faith.



## Thank You to Brian Ganz

On June 12, we held our worship service in Kohlstedt Hall (just like the old days before the sanctuary was built) to celebrate Disabilities Awareness Day and to consecrate the hall after the recent renovations. During the service, we presented a plaque to Brian Ganz in recognition of the incredible gifts that he has given to our congregation through his leadership of our Mission Possible renovations. Because of his passion and expertise, we have been able to make amazing capital improvements without using a lot of capital! He has donated countless hours of his own labor and has solicited countless donations of and discounts on labor and materials in order to make this happen. He is carrying on a grand tradition of service that was set by many men in previous generations, and we are grateful.



We are still renovating and still paying down debt, but we are making good progress and the Mission Possible Team needs your help to run the last leg of this race. If you can help with planning or promoting a fundraising event, you can be the one that helps us get to the finish line.

## Update from the Mission Possible Team

by Jeff Chamberlain

Planned and unplanned renovations have been completed in Kohlstedt Hall, the Wesley Room and the Sanctuary. Unplanned items have added \$75,000 to the cost of the renovation. Projects still to be finished include: Improved acoustics, upgraded sound system, refinishing of the stage floor and new curtains in Kohlstedt Hall. In the Sanctuary, paint, floor refinishing, new carpet, improved seating and energy-efficient lighting. A separate project will include improved handicap accessibility and an updated or replaced wheelchair lift.

To date we have raised \$350,000 (includes some generous specific-use gifts). We have spent \$138,000 on renovation, \$75,000 of which was not in the original plan. We have paid \$160,000 in debt, and still owe \$71,000. We have \$36,000 in the bank. We estimate we still need approximately \$65,000 to finish renovations, including \$20,000 for the sound system in Kohlstedt Hall.

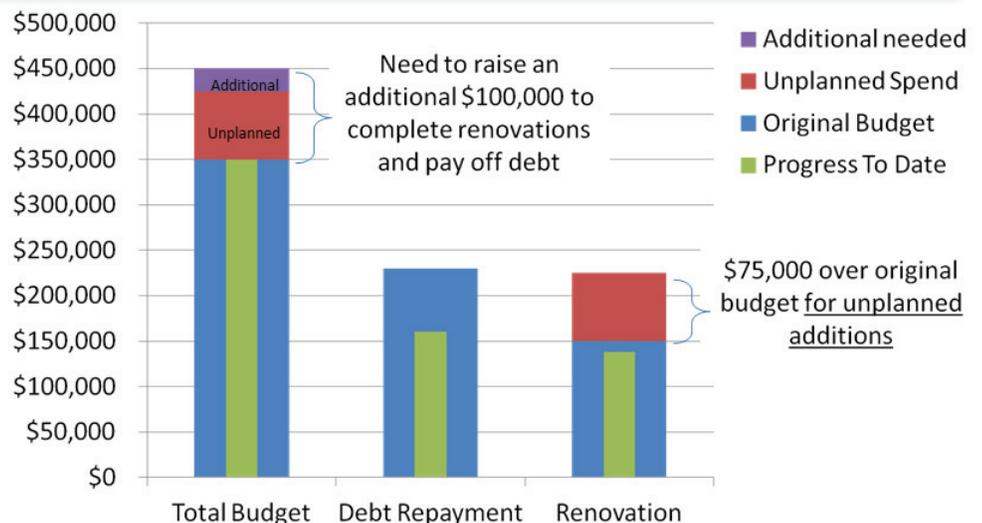
**\$65,000 in renovation + \$71,000 in debt repayment = \$136,000**

**\$136,000 - \$36,000 in the bank means we still need to raise \$100,000**

We are on track to accomplish what we started. Please keep sending in your pledges; please pledge if you haven't. Please volunteer to lead/help with fundraising events. Through your generosity we have accomplished great things – thank you!

For more details on the Mission Possible project, please visit the church website at [www.wgumc.org](http://www.wgumc.org).

## Progress to date



## Women's Groups

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

UMW's small groups and UMW Executive Board will not be meeting during July or August. Watch for details concerning September meetings.

UMW is open to all women regardless of church membership.

For more information about UMW, call Patricia Madsen.

## What's New at Women's Gathering Place? Showers!

Dignity On Wheels is now providing regular shower service to the women at Women's Gathering Place. This has been a most welcome addition to the program being offered to the women who gather three times

a week at First Presbyterian Church on 4th Street in downtown San Jose. The shower on wheels is similar to the one that provided showers for our guests at Woodhaven earlier this year.



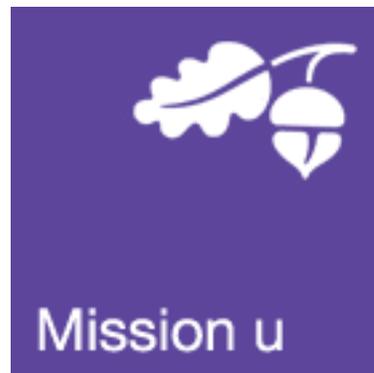
Dignity On Wheels is a Project WeHOPE initiative, in partnership with other nonprofits and local government agencies dedicated to helping the homeless, unhoused and at-risk. Some of the items needed on an ongoing basis include:

- New cotton socks
- Underwear
- Biodegradable body wash and hair soap
- Travel toothpaste, toothbrushes, mouthwash and dental floss
- Small hair combs and brushes
- Deodorants
- Shower flip flops

Donations may be left in the marked box in the Wesley Room.

UMW member and friends will continue to provide lunches on the first Monday of each month through the summer and into the fall. For more information, please contact Pat Farrow at [patricia.farrow@gmail.com](mailto:patricia.farrow@gmail.com).

## “Mission U” Summer Learning Opportunities



Please see the UMW board in the office hallway for information about Mission u, a Conference program of United Methodist Women to provide information about United Methodist mission and outreach throughout the world. This year's studies are in three areas: The Bible and Human Sexuality, Climate Justice and Latin America. There is a weekend event and three one-day events, all in August. Scholarships are available for first time attendees.

Mission u is open to all, UMW members or not, women or men. Ruth Granfors will answer questions at [rag-san-jose@aol.com](mailto:rag-san-jose@aol.com).

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



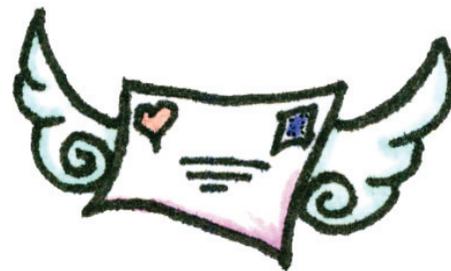
## Where Will Summer Take Us, and How Can We Stay Connected?

Summer often gives us the opportunity to travel and visit new places. While we are looking forward to seeing you all in worship each Sunday, we know you will most likely take a trip or two during the warm months. So send us a postcard!

This summer, we will post two large maps at the back of the sanctuary and we want to document our travels. Send a postcard to the church from each place you visit and we'll mark that destination on our map. It will be fun for those in worship to hear from you and look forward to hearing your stories when you return.

Finally, if you worship at another church this summer, be sure to bring Pastor Rebecca or Pastor Susan a worship bulletin from their service. Anyone who does will receive a ticket for a free ice cream cone at our end-of-summer ice cream social on September 11. Keep in touch this summer – with your church family and your faith!

Send your travel postcards to:  
Willow Glen United Methodist Church  
1420 Newport Avenue  
San Jose, CA 95125



## Ice Cream Social

**Sunday, September 11, following worship**

Visit another church this summer and bring their worship bulletin for an additional treat!



## Condolences

Our sympathy to the family of long-time member Jerry Scott, who died on June 11, 2016. Plans for a memorial service have not been announced.

## Farewell

Jim and Fran Love will be leaving San Jose for their new home in Couer d'Alene, Idaho, on July 9. Our love and best wishes go with them as they settle near their children in the Pacific Northwest.



## Congratulations to Our Newlyweds!

Julie Hall and Luke Rankin - June 19, 2016

Gina Brugioni and Doug Dionne - June 19, 2016

Alison Praisewater and Jean Nolo's Joseph - July 2, 2016

# Letter From the District Superintendent

To My Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

When the heart is full, the mouth speaks. My heart has been very heavy with so many emotions since last Sunday. As we approach the one year mark of the church shootings in South Carolina and are still reeling from the nightmare in Orlando, I wanted to let you know that you are on my heart and in my prayers. Faithfully proclaiming Christ in times such as these is no small or easy task. I humbly offer this reflection to you. May it be a blessing for the journey.

In the book "Their Eyes Were Watching God" Zora Neale Hurston writes, "There are years that ask questions and years that answer." Perhaps all years ask questions. 2016 seems to question "How will you faithfully follow Christ in the midst of a world that seems to have gone mad?" Quick platitudes and catchy hashtags are but a band aid for social and spiritual problems that require major surgery. To faithfully follow Christ we must continue to hold on to that which makes us Christ's own. We must continue to practice unconditional love, radical truth telling, and a faith in God that refuses to give up on this world.

Paul's words to the Roman church give us some sense of what to do in times like these. It is easy to feel so helpless and not know what to do. What to do when you don't know what to do: preserve in prayer, contribute to needs, weep with those who weep. To overcome evil not by evil but by doing good.

What occurred early Sunday morning in Pulse Nightclub in Orlando was unconscionable and wrong. We need to say that and make it plain. This was not God's will and as it grieves our hearts, surely it must grieve the heart of God. Perhaps our first response to this tragedy is to weep with those who weep and embrace those who are hurting. If our response to this tragedy is to love bigger and wider, then evil does not win. It is overcome with love. Isn't that how they will know who we are? By our love? So, open your church doors and the doors of your hearts wide. Really wide. And love everybody. Really, everybody. Because no matter what questions the years may ask; love is always the answer.

Staci Current  
District Superintendent

## Willow Glen United Methodist Church

1420 Newport Avenue, San Jose, CA 95125

408-294-9796

[www.wgumc.org](http://www.wgumc.org)

