

The Willow Word

A Publication of the Willow Glen United Methodist Church

God's Family Growing Through Caring, Sharing and Serving

Advent Begins on November 27

For the four weeks of Advent, we will explore four different reasons why we are Christian. The first Sunday in Advent falls on November 27th, and our texts for that day both deal with the contrast between darkness and light: Matthew 4:12-17 and I John 2:7-17. We are Christians because faith in Christ brings us out of the darkness and into the light. There is plenty of darkness in our lives and in our world this year. Thank God for the light!



Financial Statement

Estimated giving needed through September to support ministries of this church: \$299,466

Giving received January – September:

\$262,551

This is \$36,915 BELOW what is needed to maintain the ministries of this church.

To date we have been able to maintain our programs through slight increases in revenues from other sources, less than estimated expenses in others and by using our reserve funds. We started 2016 with \$21,729 in our reserve fund. We did receive a \$10,000 donation from the preschool this year, giving us \$31,729 in reserve funds. Since January we have spent \$22,000 of this. That leaves us with \$9,729 in reserve to last through at least August of next year.

We are grateful for every single thing you do and every dollar you give in support of our ministry at Willow Glen. You will soon be receiving in the mail a letter explaining a bit more about our current financial situation and lots of good reasons for us to try to change it.

Worship Plan

At our Church Conference in October, we approved the Council's plan for improving our Sunday morning offerings in 2017. You will receive a copy, along with a pastoral letter, in the mail in the coming weeks, but here are the highlights:

We gained several insights into the worship needs of church members from responses to our worship survey:

1. There was consensus that the time was right to move to one service.
2. The most important reason for feeling good about combining services was the chance to have fellowship as one united congregation.
3. Different people are seeking different things in worship, so it is important to make sure that we are consistently offering a variety of ways for people to connect with God and with each other.
4. As long as their own needs are being met at least some of the time, respondents were generally tolerant of aspects of the worship service that don't speak to them, but may be important for someone else.

In light of these observations, we recommend that we concentrate our efforts on one principle worship service at 10 a.m. with Sunday School and other faith formation opportunities for all ages at 9 a.m. But rather than just continuing to do what we are currently doing, we are proposing a number of improvements to the Sunday morning experience.

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November 2016

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Sunday Worship

9:00 a.m.
Sunday School

10:00 a.m.
Combined Worship

11:00 a.m.
Fellowship Time

Church Staff

Rebecca Ireland
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

Roxanne Kholin
Office & Facilities Manager

Why Christian?

I attended the Why Christian? Conference in Chicago a few weeks ago. At Fourth Presbyterian Church downtown, hundreds gathered to hear Christian authors and bloggers explain why they were still Christian despite living in a culture that says that Christians are hypocrites and bigots and that religion is a big waste of time. Some of them had bad experiences in churches before, but each one gave compelling reasons for not giving up on the Body of Christ. They had found something real and authentic about Jesus, and church was where his truth took flesh for them.

As I was on the plane flying home, I got to thinking that we could all benefit from hearing each other's reasons for why we are Christian. There are certainly enough forces in our lives pulling us in other directions and sometimes we need people to remind us of what brought us to Christ in the first place and what is keeping us here. So I will be asking you to write your own answer to the "Why Christian?" question and share your reasons with others this Advent season. We will publish your reflections as we have in the past, sending them out email, posting them on the church's Facebook page, and making hard copies available in worship.

Start collecting your thoughts and writing them down, because I hope to start collecting them in a few weeks. You may have never been asked this question before. If you answer it honestly, you will discover something important about your faith. And if you live with other people, this would be a great Advent exercise to do around the dinner table. By sharing with people we know why we are Christian, it gets easier to share with people we don't know. So we will use this Advent not only to get ready for Christmas, but to prepare to share our faith in Christ. As it says in I Peter: "Always be ready to make your defense to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you...." [3:15] You never know who will need it or when you'll have the opportunity to share it. I pray that that opportunity comes your way this Christmas.

Pastor Rebecca



Worship Plan

Continued from Front Page

These improvements include upgrades to the landscaping along Minnesota; rearranging and redecorating the narthex to improve visitors' first impressions; renovating the basement bathrooms; training ushers as greeters; reviewing our current music repertoire and broadening our musical options; purchasing the most recent hymnal supplement for use in worship; including fellowship-building activities into the worship service; occasionally worshipping God in spaces other than the sanctuary and offering alternative worship experiences at certain times of the year; promoting before-worship fellowship and enhancing our educational offerings for adults and children at 9 am.

Each of these initiatives will take everyone's effort to implement. We are counting on you! If one or more of these ideas inspire you, please share your enthusiasm with a member of the Church Council or staff. We don't have to wait until 2017 to get started!

Rethinking Church Council

At the same time that we have been rethinking our worship and Sunday School on Sunday mornings, we have been reimagining how we can engage more of our church membership in setting goals and making decisions for the church. The weeknight meetings of the Lay Leadership Council have not been well attended in the past few years, so at our Church Conference in October, we elected leaders who are willing to try something new. Leslie Chamberlain, Stephanie Liljedahl and Craig Ramsay will plan and facilitate quarterly congregational meetings that will take place over a meal following worship on Sundays. Like the Quarterly Conferences of old, the purpose of these gatherings will be to build our fellowship and enhance our ministries. Each meeting will have a different focus, such as making rotating shelter preparations or creating a welcoming ministry or promoting adult enrichment opportunities. Leslie, Stephanie and Craig will make sure that these meetings are fun and productive, too!

In between our quarterly meetings, the Church Council members will meet occasionally after church to discuss or decide any matters that require immediate action. By making the most of our time together on Sunday mornings, we hope to engage more hearts and minds in the ministry of our church.

Christmas Giving Tree for Esther's Outreach and the Family Giving Tree

Esther Jakel, a longtime member of Cambrian Park UMC, started a Christmas outreach program more than 15 years ago for needy families whose children attend Lietz or Oster School in the Cambrian Park neighborhood. This year, twenty families will be selected by the school offices and then supported by this outreach program in Esther's memory. Willow Glen UMC will be participating in Esther's Outreach through our annual Giving Tree. Gift tags will offer you the opportunity to provide gifts for family members or grocery gift cards for a holiday meal. Tags will be on the tree in the Wesley Room early in November. Come by and choose how you will share some love and hope this Christmas.

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



Christian Community: Advent Family Nights

6-8 p.m., Woodhaven

Tuesdays of Advent (Nov. 29, Dec. 6, 13 & 20)

It has become our tradition to gather as a church family to celebrate the season of Advent with activities and fellowship, food and preparation. We hope you will take a break from the “everyday” and join us each Tuesday for a simple potluck dinner and a little bit of “special” for the season. Drop in at Woodhaven anytime between 6: and 8 p.m. You’ll find friendly faces, a warm meal, Christmas crafts and activities for the whole family.

If you would like to help plan our Advent Family Nights, please contact Pastor Susan (susan@wgumc.org) to share your ideas and join the team.

Looking Ahead to Christmas Eve With Our Children

Our family worship service on Christmas Eve will be held at 5 p.m. in the sanctuary. Our children will once again participate in the early service, providing some music for worship, sharing their own version of the Christmas story and leading in other ways as well. The Praise Band will also lead us in contemporary and traditional Christmas music as we welcome God’s incarnate gift of love into our lives once again. Plan to find the meaning of Christmas at Willow Glen UMC and join us for this spirited candlelit service that does find its moments of peace even amidst the chaos and excitement of celebration.



Our Christmas kids’ choir, the Sunday School Singers, will begin rehearsing at the end of Sunday School beginning mid-November. Sunday School meets at 9 a.m. each Sunday in the preschool building.

Youth Helpers Needed!

It’s a busy season for the Joint Youth Ministry, so Kat and Lisa won’t be at WGUMC for Sunday School until later in the month. In the meantime, Susan could use some youth to help with our Christmas video project. We will be shooting our video at Emma Prusch Farm on Friday, November 11, from 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Most kids are out of school for Veteran’s Day, and the high school group doesn’t leave on their mission trip until late in the afternoon.

If teens can help videotape or supervise the younger kids, we would love to have their help at the farm! Please email Susan to let her know if they are available and interested. Thanks!



CrossWalk

**Faith and Fellowship for
Third, Fourth and Fifth Graders
Friday, November 11
7-8:30pm
Wesley Room & Kohlstedt Hall
Theme: What a Character!**

We are trying to walk like Jesus and that means living out our values. We’ll consider Jesus’ example and determine the kind of character we want to demonstrate, especially in this season of thankfulness. We’ll have some Thanksgiving fun, too!

CrossWalk is for all third, fourth and fifth graders. Come join the fun and faith that happens at CrossWalk! E-mail Susan to let her know you are coming, and bring a friend!

Marni's Story

by Tom & Gwyne Grubb

We have come to know some of the hard truths about what it means to be houseless in San Jose through our new friend Marni. We met Marni through her friend Shiela who came to our barbecue on Woodhaven patio a few weeks ago and told us of her friend who couldn't come because her van was broken down in a Target Store parking lot for two weeks. Sheila was deeply concerned that Marnie would be towed and tossed out in the street. Had this come to pass, Marni would have lost all of her possessions in an instant, and been on the street with nowhere to go.



We got a mechanic to look at Marni's van, who told us that the van was too far gone to repair. Luckily he was able to get it running long enough for Gwyne to drive it up to WGUMC where it sits in the back of Woodhaven serving as a temporary shelter for Marni. Now for some of the hard truths Gwyne and I have learned through helping Marni.

Marni lost her own house in the housing collapse, then was able to hang on as a worker living in her employer's homes. Then she lost her work a couple of years ago and one thing led to another until she wound up in our lives parked at Woodhaven. We've gotten to know her more and more with visits to our home for a meal, and we continue to learn her life story. She's got an awesome loving dog of eleven years, Katy to keep an eye out for her.

Marni has health issues that would be hard enough to manage from home, let alone from a houseless position. She's smart, and quick-witted -- funny. Like me, she is a news-hound and together we lament the current political landscape now and then. When most Americans are retiring or preparing to, Marni just tries to get through each day and find a path to a better day.

We want to help her get to a position where she has control back of her day to day life, and maybe -- just maybe we can lift her up enough to move forward so she has a chance for a better life. Marni's story teaches us that really bad luck can befall anyone.

We can't save the world, but we can help one person get a foothold to step up from a perilous situation to a better one that offers hope. Gwyne and I are committed to helping Marni get back on a better path. Yes, we know that swapping out Marni's broken down van won't solve all of Marni's problems. But it will enable her to take control over important aspects of her life again -- such as getting to important doctor appointments, or managing financial affairs. We ask you to join us by being the hands and feet of Christ to help Marni get a new (used) van to help bootstrap her life.

Visit our website to learn more and make a donation: <http://wgumc.org/more-info/articles/marnis-van-fund/>.

Correctional Institutions Chaplaincy's Jail Ministry Training

Correctional Institutions Chaplaincy is seeking volunteers who can help lead worship services and group Bible studies. Attending a training event is the perfect way to learn what it's like to work as a religious volunteer in Santa Clara County correctional facilities, and it is required for all Volunteer Chaplains. All are welcome!

Sunday, November 6, 1:30-5:30 p.m. (4 hour commitment)
Comunidad Cristiana de San Jose
2371 Ringwood Ave., San Jose

Thank you so much for supporting CIC Ministries!

Yours in Christ,
Collette Lynner
Administrative Assistant, Correctional Institutions Chaplaincy/CIC Ministries
collettecic@gmail.com
<http://cicministries.org>

The CIC Mission is to respond to the individual spiritual needs of incarcerated youth and adults in Santa Clara County and present the good news of God's love.

Women's Groups

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

Heart & Hand

First Thursday
7 p.m. in Woodhaven
Susan Smith

Friendship Circle

Thrid Wednesday
12:30 p.m. in Woodhaven
Sue Johnson

UMW Executive Board
Monday, November 14
9:30 a.m. in Wesley Room

UMW is open to all women regardless of church membership.

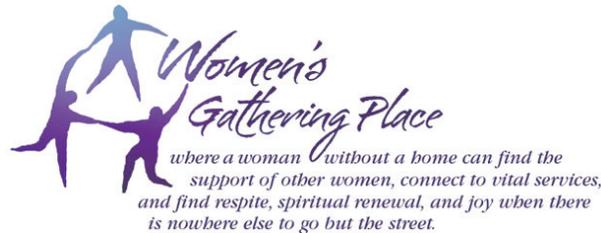
For more information about UMW, call Patricia Madsen.

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

Lunch and Learn on November 13

Becky Morgan wants to share what she knows about UMW's World Thank Offering on November 13, following the worship service. Everyone is invited. Bring a bag lunch. Tables will be set up in Kohlstedt Hall where we'll have an opportunity to learn what the World Thank Offering is, what it does, and how we can participate. There is even a craft project for those interested!

It will only take about an hour, but it's a good time to visit with friends and meet some new ones as we lunch and learn together.



Women's Gathering Place – November 7

Members and friends of UMW will take lunch and gifts to the women at WGP on Monday, November 7, leaving the church at 11:15 a.m. We would enjoy having some newcomers join us. Pat Farrow can provide additional information at patricia.farrow@gmail.com.

The ladies are needing warmer clothing now. Please leave donations in the marked box in the Wesley Room.

Take a Look at “Response” Magazine

There is usually a copy on the table in the library, or not far away. “Response,” the magazine of women in mission, is published monthly by United Methodist Women, with the goals of educating for mission, interpreting the Purpose of United Methodist Women, and strengthening the organization. Each issue contains a Bible Study and stories of how UMW carries out its work in the world. An outstanding feature of the magazine is the photography that accompanies the articles. Many are attributed to the Reverend Paul Jeffery.

The members of Willow Glen UMW who attended the El Camino Real District Celebration at First United Methodist Church of Palo Alto on October 22 had the privilege of hearing Reverend Jeffrey as he shared some of his experiences as a missionary and photojournalist for the General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church. In this capacity, he documents the work of the church around the world as senior correspondent for “Response” as well a media specialist for Action by Churches Together (the ACT Alliance), a Geneva-based global alliance of churches and church agencies responding to emergencies.

His stories and the photos he showed brought the mission projects alive for those in attendance. Pick up a copy of “Response” and enjoy the photos and the stories.



Election 2016: Prepare with Prayer

Doctors and counselors are reporting an increase in stress and anxiety this election season as many are worried about where our nation is headed and/or are deeply concerned about the candidates who want to take us there. If you are feeling anxious about what will happen on Election Day and the day after, come to Woodhaven during the Sunday School hour on November 6. Ingrid Quigley will lead us in a time of prayer to help us clear our minds, calm our spirits, and give us the courage to face the future unafraid.



Our prayers are with the family of longtime member Margery Epperson.

Help Needed: AHUMC/Dignity on Wheels

Free shower and laundry services are provided by Dignity on Wheels (DOW) in Santa Clara County. Almaden Hills UMC is looking for volunteers to be present at our location at 1200 Blossom Hill Road on Wednesday and Saturday mornings. Sign up online at: <https://signup.com/go/2SKfWS>. The shifts are as follows:

Every Wednesday: 7:30-10 a.m.
10 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Every Saturday: 8:30-11 a.m.
11 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

Thank you!
Mary Blakeslee, Chair of AHUMC DOW Effort

DIGNITY ON WHEELS

Take a shower, wash up, and get ready for the day. It's easy, it's free!

For Location Info:
650-779-5063 650-779-5065*
**San Jose area only*

FREE SHOWERS AND LAUNDRY SCHEDULE

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Friday	Saturday
<p>San Jose 12-5P* First Presbyterian Church 47 4th St, San Jose</p> <p>Redwood City 2-6P Fair Oaks Comm. Center 2600 Middlefield Rd</p>	<p>San Jose 9A-1P Social Services Agency 1929 Center Rd, San Jose</p> <p>Sunnyvale 8A-12P Trinity Church of Sunnyvale 477 N. Machado Ave</p>	<p>Redwood City 2-6P Fair Oaks Comm. Center 2600 Middlefield Rd</p> <p>San Jose 8A-12P Almaden Hills UMC 1200 Blossom Hill Rd.</p> <p>San Jose 1:30-5:30P Manha's Kitchen 311 Willow St</p>	<p>San Jose 12-5P* First Presbyterian Church 47 N. 4th St, San Jose</p>	<p>Palo Alto 8A-12P Opportunity Center 3855 Univ Ave</p> <p>San Jose 9A-1P Almaden Hills UMC 1200 Blossom Hill Rd.</p>

* Women only from 12-3P at this site only. Open to all from 3-5P.

Additional sites may be added. Check www.dignityonwheels.org.

How it works:

- Showers and laundry available on a first-come basis. Check in at the Dignity on Wheels table, receive a number and wait your turn
- Take a 7-minute timed shower in a private shower room
- Wash up to 2-sets of clothing only (no shoes, sleeping bags, heavy items)
- For adults, 18-years and older at this time

Project WeHOPE™
Helping people help others by giving their time and talents.

Made possible through the support of:

Dignity on Wheels is a mobile hygiene assistance outreach program sponsored by Project WeHOPE, a 501(c)(3) organization. 800-4-3-CARE

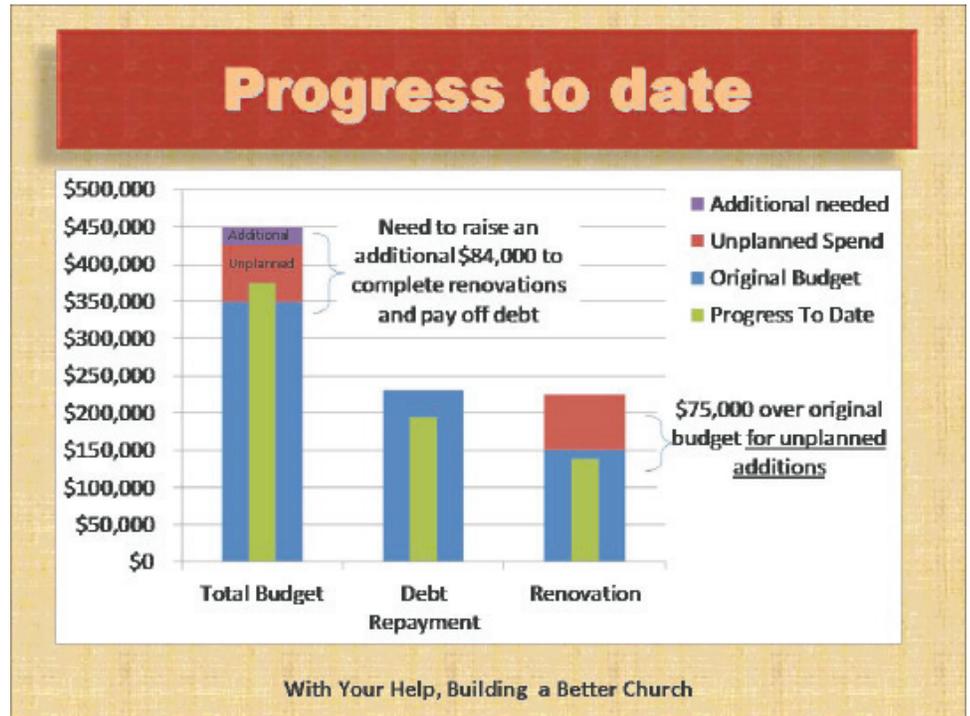
Update: Mission Possible

To date we have raised \$375,000, which 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 \$194,000 in debt, and still owe \$37,000. We have \$18,000 in the bank.

We estimate we still need approximately \$65,000 to finish renovations: \$20,000 for the sound system in Kohlstedt Hall, \$20,000 for the downstairs bathroom and the rest for the Kohlstedt stage and sanctuary improvements.

\$65,000 in renovation + \$37,000 in debt repayment = \$102,000
\$102,000 - \$18,000 in the bank means we still need to raise \$84,000

We are on track to accomplish what we started. However, we need more resources to continue. 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!



Willow Glen United Methodist Church

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www.wgumc.org

