

The Willow Word

A Publication of the Willow Glen United Methodist Church

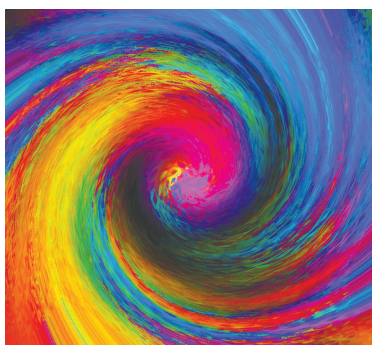
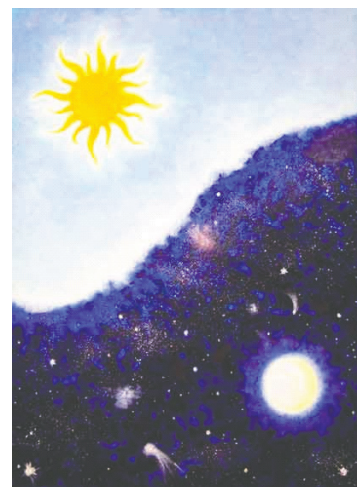
God's Family Growing Through Caring, Sharing and Serving

Where is Worship?

For the first three weeks of May, worship will be back in the sanctuary so that the choir can finish out the year. When they go on their summer break Memorial Day weekend, we will return to Kohlstedt Hall and worship there until the choir comes back in September or the lift gets fixed, whichever comes first. Just like when we had the contemporary worship service there each week, we will need volunteers to help us put away chairs at the conclusion of the worship service.

May Sermon Series: Guest Speakers on God in Creation

One of the best places to look for evidence of new life and resurrection is in God's good Creation. During the month of May we will be having a couple of guest preachers who will reflect on what different parts of the Creation can teach us about the Creator. On May 14, Hank Millstein will preach on desert spirituality, and on May 21, Dr. John Farnsworth from Santa Clara University will preach on God and the ocean.



Pentecost, June 4

Come Celebrate the Birthday of the Church and the 50th Anniversary of the Summer of Love!

Pastor Rebecca wants everyone to feel free to get out their tie-dye and bell bottoms and join the Praise Band in singing some of the music from *Godspell* in worship that day. She will preach about the Jesus she came to know through that musical and also *Jesus Christ Superstar*. Following the service, we will have a meal and congregational meeting (see below) before we scatter for the summer. If you'd like to be a part of the chorus for the day, we will be holding extra rehearsals, so be sure to let Pastor Rebecca know.

Congregational Meeting and Church Conference

After Worship, June 4

You are invited to a congregational meeting over a light lunch after church on June 4. The first part of the meeting will be an official church conference for the purpose of approving Pastor Susan's new compensation package that will go into effect on July 1, when she takes on the job of directing the Preschool. From that point on, her total compensation package will be split equally between WGUMC and the Woodhaven Preschool. Also on that day, we will discuss and possibly vote on the option of joining the Reconciling Ministries Network (see the Pastoral Letter, next page). Finally, the Board of Trustees will report on the effort to temporarily repair and permanently replace the wheelchair lift for the sanctuary.

May 2017

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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

In All Things, Charity

All last week, I was awaiting the decision of the United Methodist Church's Judicial Council on a request to review the status of Bishop Karen Oliveto, who was senior pastor at Glide Memorial UMC in San Francisco when she was elected to the episcopacy at the Western Jurisdictional Conference last summer. Bishop Oliveto is married to Robin Rid-enour, who recently became a deaconess in the Church. After the vote, the South Central Jurisdiction immediately asked the Judicial Council for a declaratory ruling on the election of the first openly gay bishop in the UMC. The hearing took place in New Jersey on April 25 and lasted three hours.

Many who read this will wonder why the United Methodist Church is still fighting about homosexuality. Over the last few decades, most other mainline Protestant denominations have resolved their disagreements and moved on. They listened to people from the LGBTQI community and acknowledged their gifts and graces for ministry. And just as we did regarding the ordination of women, these brothers and sisters in Christ learned to read the Bible differently.

Two years ago, to distance ourselves from the exclusion written into the policy of our denomination, this congregation wrote a welcoming statement that specifically invited all people, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, to participate in the life and ministries of this church.

At the time, we did not take the additional step of joining with other United Methodist congregations to advocate for full inclusion of LGBTQI Christians and to work to change the denomination's official policy of condemnation and exclusion. [For more details about the UMC position and the history of the church's debates over homosexuality, please see the resource booklet I put together. You can request one by email or check out the copy in the church library.]

The Judicial Council has now ruled that the election of Rev. Oliveto violated church law, and she will have to undergo a review here in the Western Jurisdiction. Considering that our jurisdiction is the one that elected her, it is unclear what action, if any, they will take. But regardless of the outcome, I believe that it is time for us to vote on whether or not WGUMC joins the Reconciling Ministries Network. That network includes Almaden Hills UMC, Los Gatos UMC, Good Samaritan UMC, Campbell UMC, St. Paul's UMC and First UMC. With the network logo on our website, visible in some way on our property, and in our publications, we can stand with our sister churches in the South Bay and send an important message to newcomers that "open hearts, open minds and open doors" is not just empty talk but the way we do the Jesus walk. **I hope that you will come to our congregational meeting after worship on June 4, when we will determine if we are ready to take that vote.**

Some way, somehow, I have faith that the Methodist movement, started 276 years ago by John Wesley, will survive this cultural conflict. Methodism is a movement that is not defined by our politics regarding people but by a firm commitment to Jesus Christ. Committed to Christ, let us live into the wisdom of Mr. Wesley, who used to say that when it comes to differences of opinion among Christians, this is all we have to remember: "In essentials, unity; in nonessentials, liberty; in all things, charity."

Pastor Rebecca

Getting Ready for Summer?

As you make vacation plans, do you stop the mail and the newspaper? Please don't stop your pledge! Every summer, the church experiences a short but fierce financial drought as church members leave town. You can help keep things green and growing by switching to online or electronic giving or paying your pledge a few months ahead to help us get through the travel season. Thank you!

Hero Central: Vacation Bible School 2017

June 26-30

We're preparing for super-hero fun! We need some special supplies and your help.

We are collecting the following items to use in projects at VBS. Please bring items to the church office or the preschool building for Pastor Susan. Contact Pastor Susan (susan@wgumc.org) with any questions.

Please bring us:

- Empty cereal boxes
- Toilet paper tubes
- Adult-size colored t-shirts

We'd also love you to join the super-hero fun and help our young heroes discover their special abilities through their connection to God. We are looking for adult and teen volunteers to spend a day or two or three or the whole week at VBS. Email Susan (susan@wgumc.org) if you'd like to be part of our hero team! Thank you!

Registration is still open for Hero Central. Go to vbs.wgumc.org to sign up now!



Help needed!

We still need some shelter volunteers. Spend the evening with our guests or sign up to bring breakfast. It takes a village...

We are hosting 15 medically-fragile women thru May 17. There is a role for everyone in making our guests welcome. The opportunities are for all ages and levels of assistance to help both during the day, and in the evening – with Hospitality and Supervision, Meal Prep & Service or Laundry/Cleaning.

Find out more and sign up online at shelter.wgumc.org or with Amy Yee (amyrandallyee@gmail.com).

Welcome, New Members!

Doug Allbee, his wife, Susan, and their daughter, Isabella, relocated to San Jose from New Hampshire last summer for a job offer that Doug received from Apple.

Doug spent his childhood in Vermont, Maryland, and Massachusetts. Susan grew up in northern Vermont.

Doug has a Master's Degree in Business Administration and a Graduate Certificate in Organizational Management Development. Susan has a Bachelor's Degree in Human Services/Counseling. Isabella is eleven and attends Buchser Middle School in Santa Clara.

The entire family enjoys music and spending time with their dog, Paddington. Isabella loves to sing and is learning to play the guitar. Doug enjoys movies, cooking, and games (especially cribbage). Susan enjoys reading, writing, and baking.



Focusing on Who God Created Us To Be – Our Individuality!

Sunday School, May 2017

God is the only God. God is one of a kind with no beginning and no end. And everything God has created is unique and one of a kind. Each animal is not only different from the other species, but also different from other like animals. No Zebra has the exact same patterns of stripes. Each monkey has its own temperament. Each sparrow sings a slightly different tune.

The same is true for people. God made each person one of a kind—even identical twins have unique fingerprints! Every person that ever was or ever will be is an original, including our kids! God created each one of our kids with an individual box of potential and this month, we'll help them figure out how to open it and use it.



Some adults treat kids like they need to wait before they can start discovering what's in their box—before they can do something that matters. But at Willow Glen UMC, we know kids can use their gifts right now. Sometimes they just need some help figuring out what's in their box.

So this month in Sunday School, we'll help them discover how to tap into their God-given potential and start doing something significant right now. If they find their purpose NOW, they'll grow up knowing the even greater potential God has for them in the future. This was actually what Paul did for Timothy. Remember him? We don't talk about him a lot, but he is a perfect example of a young individual who had incredible potential. One day, a handful of insightful adults in his life recognized what was in his box and helped him open it. And because of that, Timothy had tremendous impact on the growth of the early church. His story is an incredible example of individuality.

Individuality is discovering who you are meant to be so you can make a difference.

Most of us remember Timothy because of what Paul wrote to him while he was a young leader in the church at Ephesus. But if you do a little digging in the book of Acts, and you look at what we know about the journeys of Paul, you can piece together a pretty remarkable story about a young man who discovered his unique God-given potential and did some amazing things.

Our Memory verse is 1 Timothy 4:12a: "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young. Set an example for the believers in what you say and in how you live." (NIRV) As kids learn this verse, we hope they are encouraged to use their gifts to serve others now.

Toyon Kids Camp 2017

July 9 - 14, Monte Toyon, Aptos, CA

Each year, some of our CrossWalk friends (entering 3rd-6th grades) go to summer camp together at Monte Toyon in Aptos. Sponsored by the California-Nevada conference of the United Methodist Church, this is a great way to meet other kids of faith and enjoy the great outdoors together as we learn about our God and ourselves. Susan will not be on staff at Toyon Kids Camp this year but she may stop by for a visit! You can find more information and register online now at the Conference Camping website: www.calnevypm.org

WGUMC has financial assistance available for your kids to go to camp. If you need it, please talk to Pastor Susan.

CrossWalk

Faith and Fellowship for
Third, Fourth and Fifth Graders

Friday, May 12

7:00 – 8:30pm

Wesley Room and Kohlstedt Hall



CrossWalk will meet on Friday, May 12 to welcome our newest members – next year's third graders. We will introduce ourselves and get ready for another year of growing together in faith, all while having some crazy CrossWalk fun!

CrossWalk is for all third, fourth and fifth graders. Bring a friend!

Building Houses, Not Walls: Mexico Mission Trip 2017

For most of the past decade, members of the United Methodist Churches of Almaden Hills, Cambrian Park and Willow Glen have led trips to Mexico to build homes for families in need. Partnering with the nonprofit Amor Ministries, our teams will spend four days building two homes for working families in and around Tijuana. It is a transformative experience for both our team and the families we serve.

We are fortunate to be able to participate in a truly intergenerational trip. Our 45 volunteers, of all ages – we have children as young as 10 traveling with their own families – are eager to work on the homes and meet our Mexican families.

In addition to paying for our own travel, our group also pays for all of the materials needed to build the houses for two families. This year, we are facing rising expenses which are making the trip more challenging. Our costs have increased, and we want to ensure that we CAN build two homes! To do this, we are asking for your help.

To make a donation directly towards the costs of the trip and the homes for two hard working families, please visit our fundraising site at missiontrip.wgumc.org.



We would also gladly accept your sponsorship of an individual or family going on the Mexico mission trip:

- ☐ Full Sponsorship (\$725 adult or \$425 child)
- ☐ Half Sponsorship (\$360 adult or \$215 child)
- ☐ Quarter Sponsorship (\$185 adult or \$100 child)

Or your support of the mission team with a financial donation that will help with gas, food, building materials, camp supplies and tools.

☐ \$25 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$150 Other:

Checks can be made payable to Willow Glen UMC, memo: Mexico Mission Trip. Thank you for being part of the 2017 Building Hope Mission Trip to Mexico!



Warming Center Comes to Willow Glen

For three days in May, we can provide comfort and love to our Village House guests in the Warming Center here in our church. We need volunteers May 4 – 6. These are easy shifts, when you can sit and have a cup of tea, visit, knit, read your favorite book, watch a DVD etc. If you would enjoy helping, please contact Carmen McBride and indicate the day and time you can be at church to help staff our Warming Center:

Thursday, May 4: 7:30 a.m. - 12 or 12 - 6 p.m.
 Friday, May 5: 7:30 a.m. - 12 or 12 - 6 p.m.
 Saturday, May 6: 7:30 a.m. - 12 or 12 - 6 p.m.

If you can loan card or board games, magazines or DVDs for these three days, please contact Carmen.

Women's Groups

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

Heart and Hands

Thursday, May 4
Serving Dinner for the Shelter
6 p.m. in Kohlstedt
Susan Smith

Friendship Circle

Thrid Wednesday
12:30 p.m.
Sue Johnson

The UMW Executive Board will meet Sunday, May 7, at 11:30 a.m. in Kohlstedt Hall.

UMW is open to all women regardless of church membership.

For more information about UMW, call Ruth Granfors.

The deadline for the June *Willow Word* is **May 20**. Please send your story ideas and submissions to Leslie Chamberlain.

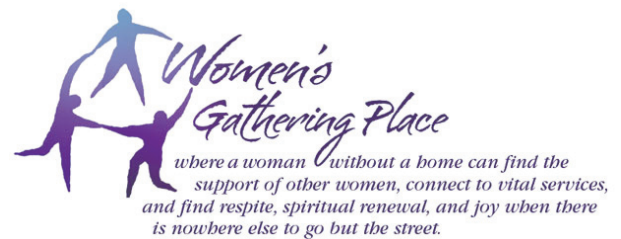
Easter Candy Sale a Huge Success!

Many thanks to all you beautiful, generous supporters of the UMW Easter Candy fundraiser. Our See's Candy sale this year was such a great success that we were able to make donations to The Village House guests here at our church as well as to The Family Supportive Housing and Next Door Solutions shelters. All of this was possible because of Becky Morgan's trips to See's Candy to accommodate all requests (including sugar-free options), time organizing all the orders, and staffing the Sunday morning ordering operation. Thank you, Becky!

Circle Updates

Heart and Hands Circle has been busy providing dinner for our guests in the Village House in April and they plan to provide one more dinner in May.

Unfortunately Friendship Circle, which has been plagued with members suffering illnesses and other maladies, has not been able to meet in the past month. God willing, they hope to be able to be more active soon.



Women's Gathering Place

Our ongoing support for Women's Gathering Place continues each month when we serve lunch to approximately 40 women. We've recently changed our schedule from Mondays to Wednesdays – so on May 3, we will leave our church campus at 11:15 a.m. to take lunch and assorted donations to WGP. We're still looking for donations of pasta salad for lunch that day.

For more information or to join in this effort, please contact Pat Farrow or Carmen McBride. Thank you for being our Lord's "hands and feet" in this capacity.



Gratitude for Village House Volunteers

Because we didn't budget for paid staff to oversee shelter operations and partially fill the overnight shifts, our volunteers have really been priceless this year. We thank God for the dozens of people who did tasks small and large, who volunteered once or several times a week, who asked their friends to participate and who provided funds for us to buy food and purchase other supplies. You gave your heart and soul to providing a loving, welcoming space for our women guests for five weeks and they have expressed their appreciation freely and frequently.

As we come to the end of our rotation for this year, we would like to name several truly exceptional servants without whom we could not have participated in the shelter program this year. Liz Pense, Jan and Jim Leonard, and Becky Morgan went over the top in their ministry of presence day after day and logged a tremendous number of hours. They are going to need a rest! Pastor Susan somehow managed to keep the shelter staffed, making sure that almost 600 volunteer shifts got filled! Other members of the Shelter Team also played key support roles: Amy Yee, Kristen Brown, Michelle Partsch, Pat Farrow, Craig Ramsay and Joyce Osborn. These folks were joined by a bunch of consistent and committed volunteers that we could count on week by week: Jeff and Leslie Chamberlain, Linda Yepiz, Vicki Lynn, Mikaela Manuel, Becky LaBree, Rosa Soler, Michelle Unger, Neil Fissel, Traci Menicucci, Gerri Hodson, Carmen McBride, Jane Vivian, Gabbie Fall and Addie and Lizzie Gonzales. We also got much needed help from several folks who came from other communities of faith: Bob Fields, Eileen Hunter, Kathy Romero, Marsha James, and James Moore.

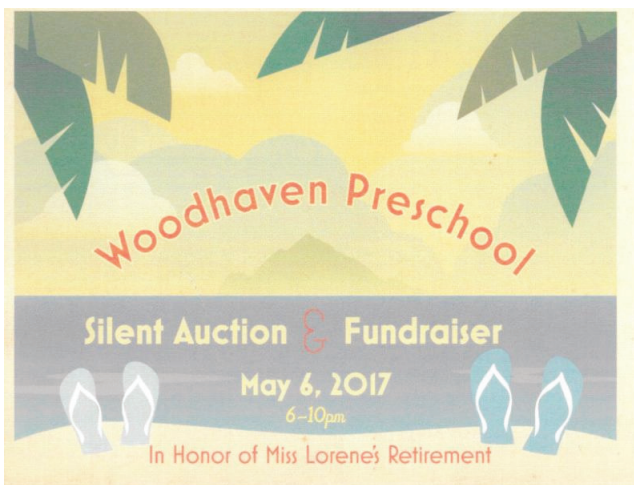
The Village House shelter program has a good name, because it really does take a village!



Rotating Shelter Moves to St. Paul's UMC on May 10

We will need your help again to return the furniture to Woodhaven because we have some May events scheduled there.

Also, if you didn't get enough volunteer opportunities while the shelter was here, you can follow the women to St. Paul's. We didn't have a church lined up for May and St. Paul's graciously offered their building but could not offer enough people to staff the program, so all the churches in the network are pitching in to help out. For more information, go to www.village-housesccca.com.



A Day at the Beach:

WGUMC Preschool Fundraiser

Celebrate Lorene Sheridan's retirement at the 2017 WGUMC Preschool Fundraiser!

The "beach" themed party will be held at 6 p.m. on Saturday, May 6, at St. Francis Episcopal Church, located at 1205 Pine Ave. Tickets are \$40 in advance and \$45 at the door.

Visit www.woodhavenpreschool.org to make a donation or to buy tickets for the event.

Financial Outlook through March 31

Our giving receipts through March 2017 are \$66,228, which is \$13,048 less than we received by this time last year. As a church, we have managed to keep our expenses below last year's level, but not enough to eliminate our cash flow problem. We have not yet had to use funds from the reserve cushion, but may have to before the end of the month to pay our bills. The estimated giving needed through March to support the ministries of this church: \$94,163.

The good news is that it's easy to set up online giving by going to giving.wgumc.org. Also available is the Joyfully2UMC App which can easily be used on mobile devices for one-time donations anytime, even during worship (offering time)! The app is available through iTunes or GooglePlay.

You also can give to WGMC while you shop. Instead of going to amazon.com, go to smile.amazon.com. You will be prompted to choose your charity from the drop-down list which includes WGUMC. That's it! Prices, passwords and any lists are just like Amazon, but a percentage of your purchase price goes to the church. Just be sure to include Amazon Smile in your favorites on your browser for easier access. Your gifts mean more than you know.



The other good news is that our fund dedicated to replacing the lift to the sanctuary is slowly growing. We still have far to go until we can all worship together again in the sanctuary. Be sure to designate that your donations to the lift go to that fund. Also, please remember to turn off the lights and turn down the heat if you are the last one in your group to leave.

As we continue moving through 2017, we invite you to update your online giving profile on our website or send an email to Ingrid Quigley at stewardship@wgumc.org so we may better plan for this year's finances.



Willow Glen United Methodist Church

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