

The Willow Word

A Publication of the Willow Glen United Methodist Church

God's Family Growing Through Caring, Sharing and Serving

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 before we get too scattered this 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.



Recommendation to Join the Reconciling Ministries Network

We will also receive and discuss a recommendation to join the Reconciling Ministries Network, which is a coalition of churches and individuals that work for the full inclusion of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning and intersex persons into the life and ministry of the United Methodist Church.

Two years ago, we adopted a welcoming statement that invited LGBTQI persons into the love of Christ and into our "home" here at Willow Glen UMC. At that time, many of you were hoping that we would take the additional step of becoming a member of the Reconciling Ministries Network and advocating for changes in denominational policy that would make the UMC more welcoming to LGBTQI persons.

Recent events in the UMC have challenged us to think again about what our welcoming statement really means and how it is calling us to respond. Last year, the Western Jurisdiction of the UMC (the Conferences that include the states of Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, Idaho, Oregon, Washington, Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada, California, Hawaii and Alaska) elected Rev. Karen Oliveto, the senior pastor at Glide UMC in San Francisco, to be a bishop. Karen, who is a colleague of mine, is the first openly gay bishop to serve in the United Methodist Church. She is legally married to her longtime partner, Robin Ridenour, who is a deaconess in the UMC. Karen is currently serving the Mountain Sky Conference which has its offices in Denver.

Karen's election was challenged by someone in the South Central Jurisdiction and her case went to the Judicial Council of the UMC. The Council ruled that her election was proper (all the election rules were followed) but that she was in violation of church law as an openly gay clergyperson. They referred her case back to the Western Jurisdiction, the body that elected her. She has the support of all of the other UM Bishops in the Western Jurisdiction. We will wait to see what happens next.

This all brings the debate within the denomination very close to home and begs the question of where congregations in the Western Jurisdiction stand on this issue. The following churches in the South Bay are members of the Reconciling Ministries Network: Los Altos, Palo Alto First, St. Andrew's, Sunnyhills, Almaden Hills, Alum Rock, Campbell, Good Samaritan, St. Paul's, San Jose First, Wesley, Los Gatos, and Morgan Hill. The question for us is this: is God calling us to join them?

June 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 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 Birnstahl
Organist & Director
of Music Ministries

Tom Mounts
Director,
the Willow Glen Ringers

Roxanne Kholin
Office & Facilities Manager

Grace Among the Redwoods: A Trip to Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park

by William Jeske

A party of nine spent a sunny Friday in early May among the redwoods for reasons as diverse as communion with nature, to retreating from urban distractions, to reflection on Grace among God's arboreal sentinels.

Pastor Rebecca Irelan organized a day trip to Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park in Felton on May 5; a gesture of fellowship for the women participating in the Village House rotating shelter. Six shelterees, as well as parishioners Amy Yee and William Jeske, accompanied Pastor Irelan to meditate on the grandeur and stillness that comes from being surrounded by trees hundreds of years old and hundreds of feet tall, a stillness occasionally broken by birds chirping, children running and laughing, and the whistle from a steam engine locomotive from the nearby Roaring Camp & Big Trees Narrow Gauge Railroad.

En route home, the day trippers stopped at the Santa Cruz Wharf to trade narrow earthy footpaths for wide wooden platforms, the enclosure of fragrant trees for the sunny view of the shoreline, and train whistles for the bark of contented sea lions perched under the wharf's banisters.



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!



Where is Worship?

Starting on Memorial Day weekend, we will be worshipping in Kohlstedt Hall for the summer while we work on getting our lift replaced. We can really use volunteers each week to help with set up and clean up. If you can come early, we will put you to work setting up the altar, laptop and projector. If you can stay late, we'll ask you to put away chairs. If you are scheduled to usher that day, we hope that you will add this to your list of usher responsibilities for the summer! Thank you!

Woodhaven Work Day on June 10, 8 a.m. – Noon

This time we're going to work on the outside of Woodhaven instead of the inside, and we won't be moving furniture, but weeds! Come help us get the grounds ready for VBS.

Dump It! Fundraiser

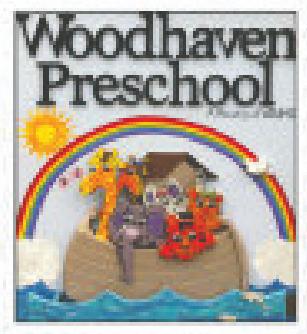
Saturday, June 10, 9 a.m. – Noon

We're getting a dumpster and we'll have some space to share. Bring that stuff you've been trying to get rid of. For a small donation, it can go "live in the dumpster." Space is limited. Suggested minimum donation is \$20.

We cannot accept tires, electronics, mattresses or construction debris. If you would like to help on June 10, please contact Susan Smith or Jim Leonard.

Now Hiring! Woodhaven Preschool at WGUMC

We are currently hiring preschool teachers and aides for the 2017-2018 school year. If you love children and would like to work in a nurturing, play-based, developmental preschool environment, we would love to meet with you about the opportunities available with 2-5 year olds in our weekday church preschool. We offer small class sizes and collaborative teaching teams, and have 2, 3 or 5 morning positions. ECE units are required. Starting salary is \$18-20+/hour based on education and experience. Please submit cover letter and resume to Pastor Susan Smith by July 1 (susan@wgumc.org).



Hero Central

Vacation Bible School 2017, June 26 – 30

We're preparing for superhero 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

Also:

- Do you have a toaster oven or free-standing punching bag we can borrow for the week?
- Do you have a "heroic" vocation that you would like to share with our children as one of our real-life heroes?
- Would you like to spend the week with some super kids?

We'd love you to join the superhero 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!

Vacation Bible School Work Days

Come help prepare our playground area on Saturday, June 17 from 9am-12noon.

Decorate our superhero spaces on Sunday, June 25 from 12:30 – 3pm.

Help us clean up the superhero city on Friday, June 30 from 1-3pm.



Many Thanks to our Faithful Children's Ministry Volunteers!

Week in and week out, these are the faithful who spend time with our kids, share the scripture stories and play together in faith. Our children have a deep love for God, their church and one another, and they care deeply about loving the world and all of God's people. It is a joy to walk alongside them as they grow, and I am so thankful for the volunteers who are committed to the journey.

I hope you will take some time to thank these special people for their dedication, and have your kids find a way to thank them, too! Their love for our children is priceless.

Lara Brock – Sunday School Supply Queen

Jed Burkey – CrossWalk

Sam Chamberlain – Children's Chapel

Gabbie Fall – CrossWalk

Tim Fisk – Nursery

Molly Freeman – Children's Chapel

Sadie Freeman – Children's Chapel

Gillian Grubb – Children's Chapel

JJ Grzymala – Children's Chapel

Noritsu Lantimo – Nursery

Michelle Partsch – Sunday School

Steve Quigley – Sunday School

Julie Rankin – Sunday School

Casey Smith – Children's Chapel



Recommendation to Join the Reconciling Ministries Network

Continued from Front Page

Below is a recommendation that has been presented to members of the Church Council and delivered to church members via email. There will be time for discussion at our Church Conference meeting after worship on June 4. We will take a vote to see if we, as a body, are more than ready to vote on the recommendation. If there is good reason to continue the conversation and delay the vote, we will do so. We have no desire to rush this decision. We will wait on the Holy Spirit to lead us through the process. I ask you to read the recommendation and pray on it and come to the meeting on the 4th to help us wrestle with it. My hope for this church, as for the United Methodist Church, is that we never lose faith that, while we are not all of one mind on anything, with God's grace, we can be of one heart.

Thank you, and God bless you.

Rebecca

DRAFT: May 26, 2017

Because we believe that all persons are of sacred worth [[¶161 F, The Book of Discipline](#)];

Because we believe that all persons — including those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning and intersex — are made in the image of God [Genesis 1:26-7; 9:6];

Because we believe that God has given us the ministry of reconciliation [2 Corinthians 5:18];

We therefore join our sisters and brothers in the Reconciling Ministries Network in their efforts to extend the love of Christ to all and to work toward the full inclusion of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, questioning and intersex persons in the life and ministry of the United Methodist Church.

As a member of the Reconciling Ministries Network, we will:

- Listen to the stories of LGBTQI persons and seek to grow in wisdom and understanding of the grace of God;
- Welcome LGBTQI persons as full members and, as they seek to use their gifts and graces for ministry, as leaders and teachers in the church;
- Welcome the children of LGBTQI persons without reserve and include their families in all the ministries of the church;
- Provide for the pastoral care of LGBTQI persons, including weddings for couples that have indicated their desire for a Christian wedding and have completed the required premarital counseling;
- Proudly display our welcome on our church signs and publications and intentionally extend our welcome to the LGBTQI community;
- Renew our commitment by celebrating a Reconciling Ministries Day once a year;
- Pray for a change of heart while advocating for a change in the policies of the United Methodist Church, because we do not believe that the Christ-centered love of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, questioning and intersex persons is incompatible with Christian teaching.

We acknowledge that we cannot live out this commitment without personally diving into a deeper relationship with God through Jesus Christ, and so we pray for the grace to receive the new birth that we are called to share.

Willow Glen UMC's Welcoming Statement, Adopted March 2015

In Jesus Christ, God reaches out to everyone to call them home, and here at Willow Glen UMC, we open our hearts and intentionally welcome you into our home, into our church family, and into a closer relationship with God.

No matter your race or cultural background, age or abilities, sexual orientation or gender identity, marital or legal status, family situation, financial circumstances or personal challenges, the Jesus we know already loves you and that is what we are here to do.

So honor us with the opportunity to get to know you, worship with you, listen, share and grow in God's love with you. The wider we draw the circle of grace, the more we know and experience the love of God.

Women's Groups

Our circles don't meet regularly during the summer months.

The UMW Executive Board will meet Sunday, September 10, at 11:30 a.m. in Woodhaven.

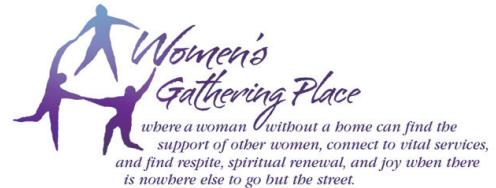
UMW is open to all women regardless of church membership.

For more information about UMW, call Ruth Granfors.

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

Women's Gathering Place

The Willow Glen United Methodist Women (UMW) will serve lunch to approximately 40 women at the Women's Gathering Place on Wednesday, June 7. We appreciate the donations and support of all the volunteers who help prepare and serve these lunches each month. We still need desserts that each serve 12. We will gather at church at 11 a.m. and carpool to WGP. To sign up or for more information, please contact Gwyne Grubb at gwyneo@comcast.net.



It's Picnic Time! UMW Picnic is June 14

Yes, it's June, it's almost summer, and it's time for a delightful picnic of refreshing salads and a joyous "Mission Springs Retreat" reenactment by four of our own members. Everyone is invited to our UMW Picnic – a delicious potluck salad buffet featuring the best salad selections from Willow Glen gardens and kitchens. To ensure everyone's protection from too much direct sunlight, ants and assorted critters, we will enjoy the cool shade of the Wesley Room. We hope to see you there Wednesday morning, June 14, at 11:30.

Upcoming UMW Events

The CAL/NEV Conference United Methodist Women's Breakfast will be Saturday, June 24, at 7 a.m. in San Carlos at the Fale Hufanga Tongan UMC. A flyer describing this program "Legacy – Blooming in the Holy Spirit" is available on the UMW bulletin board in the church office hallway.

UMW Offers Three Mission u Events This Summer

The CAL/NEV Conference UMW Mission u is a "Learning Together for the Transformation of the World" study program. This year's three Mission u Events (July 28 – 30 in Gardnerville, August 11 – 12 in Livermore and August 26 in Palo Alto) offer the following study choices:

- A. Spiritual Growth – A Covenantal Community
- B. Geographical – The Missionary Conferences of the UMC
- C. Social Issue – Climate Justice: Call to Hope and Action
- D. In Mission Together – Missionary Conferences (Youth)
- E. Spiritual Growth – The Bible and Human Sexuality

More information and registration forms are available on the UMW bulletin board in the church office hallway.



Congregational Meeting on June 4: Q&A

Join us after worship on Sunday, June 4, for Peace, Love and Reconciliation, our quarterly congregational meeting. Wear your tie dye tees and your bell bottoms (or come as you are) and boogie into Kohlstedt Hall for That '70s Show!

You're kidding, right? Am I really supposed to wear tie dye and bell bottoms?

We are channeling the 70's – and singing *Godspell* in worship – so do what makes you happy, or come as you are!

If I come at 10 for worship and stay until 1, that's a long day. I don't know if I can spend that much time at church.

It is a long day – but it will also be fun! 1 hour of worship, singing *Godspell*. 1 hour of food, fellowship and games, and one hour of meeting about important church business – and it's only once/quarter. Think of it this way: You'll enjoy worship so much, it will seem like no time at all, you would probably stay for an hour talking to friends during Body Builders anyway, and the meeting will be so efficient it will be over before you know it! Really, those three hours will seem like one hour! And you won't have to make lunch when you get home!

I don't know if I can talk my kids/spouse/friend into coming.

We hope you can! But if not, come on your own – you'll meet some new people and have a good time. Children can eat lunch and play games with us, then there will be daycare for them while we meet. Older teens may be interested in the discussion.

I hate Jello!

Just put some on your plate and play with it. You don't have to eat it. But it will be fun and tasty to sample some of the creative jello recipes that day, as well as the rest of the yummy '70s-style lunch that's being served.

Remind me what we're talking about?

1. Administrative Council updates, including a report from the Trustees on the new lift for the Sanctuary.
2. Church Conference to approve Pastor Susan's salary increase to reflect her new role and Linda Yepiz's appointment as alternate to Annual Conference.
3. Discuss the proposal for WGUMC to join the Reconciling Ministries Network. Take a look at the article on the front page and bring your questions to the meeting. After discussion, we'll vote on whether we're ready to vote – if we are, great! If not, we'll spend more time talking about it in the coming months.

Is there anything I can do to help?

Thanks for asking! We need to borrow a bunch of crockpots. Also, we could use one or two more people to help with cooking and set-up on Saturday, June 3, 9-11. And a bunch more people to help clean the kitchen (including dishes) and Kohlstedt Hall after the meeting.

Need more information? Contact Leslie Chamberlain at leslie_chamberlain@hotmail.com.



Building Hope in Mexico

Support our Mission Trip, July 29 – August 5

This summer, a mission team from Willow Glen and Almaden Hills UMCs will be traveling to Mexico to build houses for working-class families near Tijuana. While the practical mission of the trip is to build a house, perhaps the more important mission is to build community with one another and with our neighbors in Mexico. Throughout the week, we will hammer and saw, mix cement, stucco walls, and lay tarpaper. We will frame walls, lay a foundation, and install doors and windows. Amongst it all, we will be sharing stories and activity with a family of new friends and their neighbors. We will be playing soccer in the streets, jumping rope and making crafts with the children. We will come home with new friends and a new understanding of how connected we are as people of God.

As we turn the keys over to the homeowners and dedicate their new home, we would also like to give them some gifts to warm their new home. During the month of June, we will have gift ideas displayed in the Wesley Room. Please sign up to bring a housewarming gift for our Mexican neighbors, donate supplies for our children's activities on the trip, or help with gas expenses on our trip. All gifts and donations should be brought by July 1. Thank you for sending love and hope to Mexico with your mission team.



Willow Glen United Methodist Church

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