



Sunday Celebration Notes from Jerry Stinson

Celebrating God's Love Every Sunday at 10 am.

This Sunday, in addition to the choral anthem, there will be special music by Sheep's Kin and by Steve Berlanga, our baritone soloist. The lay liturgist will be Jennifer Penner.

Since we will have our Annual Meeting this Sunday, it seemed an appropriate time to reflect on why the church is important. So instead of a regular sermon, I have asked four of our most active lay people – Peter Wright, Alison Mitchell, Deb Buller and Edric Guise – to be in a conversation with me about why First Church matters so much to them.

Next week Jerry Stinson's sermon will be titled "We Are Who We Love."

In Sunday School This Week

Theme: Source of Strength

Scripture Focus: Mark 1:29-39

In Adult Education This Week

Sundays at 8:30 am in the Klar Rooms, upstairs in Pilgrim Hall

Our class on "The Historical Jesus for Beginners" continues through the end of February, led by Libby Tigner.

Music on Sunday

The anthem for this Sunday is by American composer Sam Pottle, who wrote music for "Sesame Street" until his untimely death. His lovely melody and rich harmonies are set to the final stanzas of the famous poem "The Brewing of Soma," by John Greenleaf Whittier. Our *New Century Hymnal* contains these stanzas (No. 502) set to the familiar tune "Rest." At the bottom of the page you can find these words about "The Brewing of Soma." Whittier "compares frenzied ecstasies of a sect of Hindu priests to the noisy Christian revivals he found so offensive. This hymn of quiet worship is from the final stanzas." See you in church!

Dr. Leland Vail, Minister of Music

121st Annual Meeting This Sunday, February 8, 11:15 am

Celebrate the Accomplishments of 2008

Special Entertainment

The Ralph Pillsbury Award Announced

Potluck Lunch—Please Bring

A-G: Side dish or salad

H-R: Main dish

S-Z: Dessert

The 2008 Annual Report is available on the members' area of the church website under "Organization."

Third Annual Interfaith Community Organization Celebration of Gifts

Saturday, February 7, 3-5 pm,
Patterson Hall

Featuring Gregorio Luke and
Honoring Rose Cabanban

Tickets are \$10. For more information, contact ICO at 562-984-2727 or info@greater-longbeachico.org.

Theological Study Group: Tuesday, February 10

The Theological Study Group will meet Tuesday, February 10 at 7 p.m. to discuss Karen Armstrong's *A Short History of Myth*. Armstrong is among the world's leading thinkers on human belief systems, and this concise primer on the history and manifestations of mythology will guide people from the Paleolithic period and the myths of the hunters right up to the "Great Western Transformation" of the last 500 years and the discrediting of myth by science. The history of myth is the history of humanity; our stories and beliefs, our curiosity and our attempts to understand the world link us to our ancestors and to one another. Myths help us make sense of the universe.

Friday Night at First Church on February 6

By Libby Tigner

It's time for weekend fun and relaxing with First Church friends. Join us in the Pownall Room at 6 p.m. for supper, and then we'll enjoy some fun and games. Last time, we played Cranium and Mexican Train, and we all had a great time.

Please RSVP with Libby at 562-436-2256, ext. 224 or via email at ltigner@firstchurchlb.org so that we have the right amount of food. The cost is \$5 to cover food expenses.

Progressive Christians Uniting 12th Annual Gala Benefit Dinner

Progressive Christians Uniting invites you to an unforgettable evening, which includes keynote speaker Van Jones, author, activist and President of Green for All. He is the author of *The Green Collar Economy* and his organization, Green for All, works to build an inclusive, green economy, strong enough to resolve the ecological crisis and lift millions of people out of poverty.

Monday, February 16, cocktails at 5 pm, dinner at 6 pm

The Center at Cathedral Plaza

555 West Temple Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012

Parking \$5

There are two seats left at the First Church table, \$80 each (we got the early reservation price). Please contact Ruth in the church office to make your reservations and indicate if you would like the vegetarian entree. For more event information visit www.progressivechristiansuniting.org

www.firstchurchlb.org

First Church Staff

Jerald Stinson

Senior Minister ext. 230
jstinson@firstchurchlb.org

Libby Tigner

Associate Minister ext. 224
ltigner@firstchurchlb.org

Ed Bloomfield

Minister of Visitation
bloomfield_ed@yahoo.com

Mary Ellen Kilsby

Senior Minister Emerita
revmek@aol.com

Nicholas Chaffee

Director of Sheep's Kin
nchaffee@firstchurchlb.org

Marc Dickey

Organist

mdickey@firstchurchlb.org

Tracy Halter-Balin

Assistant Director of Music
thalter@firstchurchlb.org

Wally Hoeger

Director of Children's and Youth
Ministries ext. 226

whoeger@firstchurchlb.org

Leland Vail

Minister of Music ext. 231
lvail@firstchurchlb.org

Heather Chambers or Melody
O'Keefe at Halter & Associates

Bookkeeper

ext. 225; halter.assoc@verizon.net

Yvonne SaMarion

Administrative Assistant and
Facilities Coordinator ext. 227

ysamarion@firstchurchlb.org

Ruth Warkentin

Office Manager and Newsletter
Editor ext. 221

office@firstchurchlb.org

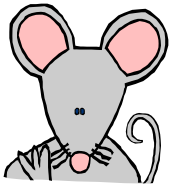
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The Church Mouse has heard...

... Adreana Langston's photos of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Unity Parade may be seen online: www.kodakgallery.com/adreanainlongbeach/adreanapics/mlk_parade_long_beach_2009.

Please send your news to the Church Mouse in care of Ruth in the office, or put one of the news slips from the pews in the offering plate on Sunday.



Women's Spirituality Retreat March 6-8

By Libby Tigner

The Women's Spirituality retreat is coming up soon – March 6-8. Be sure to pick up a brochure or download one from the church website. The cost is \$110, and scholarships are available. If you want more information, please contact Libby.

Senior Minister's Blog

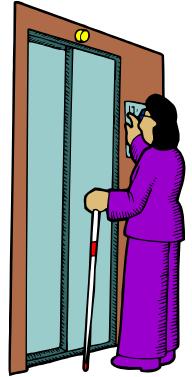
The title of Jerry Stinson's blog article this week is "The Increasing Emptiness of the Word 'Democracy.'"

Go to the blog and not only read the article, but add your comment as well: jerrysjusticejournal.blogspot.com.

The Scott Elevator Out of Order

By Yvonne SaMarion, Facilities Coordinator

Some of you may have noticed that the Scott elevator is no longer answering to its call button. This wonderful little elevator, that was painted pink and decorated with angels by the children of the church, has been a hard worker for the last 65 years. In truth, I've made fewer repair calls on this elevator than I have on the much newer Pilgrim Hall elevator. I regret to inform you that "Scotty" has slipped a cable (this can happen to any of us as we age!) and will be permanently out of order until we can prudently afford to pay out the \$9500 it will take get her up and running again. She will be missed.



Mardi Gras Potluck with Wii and Board Games February 21

By Libby Tigner

Want to have some good-natured fun with friends? Itching to show everyone that you are a rock star on Guitar Hero? Interested in participating in a virtual bowling game? Looking for a relaxed game of cards? The Mardi Gras potluck and game night is for you!

Saturday, February 21 (the last Saturday before Lent) is the night that we'll celebrate Mardi Gras. We'll start with a potluck supper (bring a dish for six to eight), and then everyone can play their favorite games. We'll have two TVs set up with Wii games and several tables for board and card games. It'll be great fun for all ages, and everyone is encouraged to wear their Mardi Gras spangles, beads and boas! This is a great opportunity to invite a friend or neighbor to a church event.

When: Saturday, February 21 at 6 p.m.

Where: Patterson Hall

What to bring: a potluck dish, your favorite game

Optional: wear your Mardi Gras outfit, and bring your own table settings to save on paper use and clean-up.



The Pilgrim
 241 Cedar Avenue
 Long Beach, CA 90802

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TO:

“Never place a period
 where God has placed a comma”
 [Gracie Allen]

Parish Concerns

Your thoughts and prayers are requested for Denny & MarJo Sebolt (relatives of John Baney); Kenia Casarreal; Georgette deBruyn upon the death of her mother; David Franco, Sr. (father of David Franco); Ben Rockwell's daughter-in-law.

In Memoriam

This last Sunday afternoon, a beloved member of our First Church family, Bud Kilsby, died very peacefully at Memorial Hospital. Bud was the husband of Mary Ellen Kilsby, our Senior Minister Emerita. A memorial service will be held at the church on Sunday, February 15 at 3 p.m.

You've got a date ...

Friday, February 6

6 p.m. Parents' Night Out;
 Friday Night at First Church

Saturday, February 7

3 p.m. Interfaith
 Communication Organization
 Celebration of Gifts

Sunday, February 8

8:30 a.m. History Ministry
 Team
 11:15 a.m. Annual
 Congregational Meeting

Wednesday, February 11

7 p.m. Sacred Practices

Thursday, February 12

6 p.m. Board of Cultural Arts

Friday, February 13 -

Monday, February 16

Feb Camp at Pilgrim Pines

Sunday, February 15

11:30 a.m. Church tour

Monday, February 16

President's Day - office closed

6:30 p.m. Air Quality Ministry

Team

7 p.m. Urban Community

Outreach Board

Coming Up ... Mark Your Calendar!

Ash Wednesday Service: Wednesday, February 25, 7 p.m.

Air Quality Forum: Saturday, February 28, 2 p.m.

Children's Bible Class: Wednesday, March 11, 7 p.m.

Leadership Day: Saturday, March 14

Spring Fling: Saturday, March 21

Online Calendar

Don't miss out! Check the online church calendar at www.firstchurchlb.org/calendar.html for details about all church events.

Becoming a Member of First Church

Whether you have been attending for a few weeks, a few months or several years, we would like you to consider becoming a member of First Church. When you are ready to take that step, please call or email the Rev. Jerry Stinson at 562-436-2256, ext 230 or revjstinson@verizon.net.