



## Sunday Celebration Notes from Jerry Stinson

*Celebrating God's Love Every Sunday at 10 am.*

On this third Sunday of Lent, Bibles will be presented to some of our children, Lloyd Wright from the Board of Outreach will talk about the One Great Hour of Sharing offering, and there will be special music by the Beloved Bells and Carlos Carlos.

In my sermon I will talk about the transformation of Rabbi Brad Hirschfield from a militant religious settler in the Palestinian West Bank city of Hebron to one who now claims truth is never found by falsifying everything else. He says doing that only makes truth small. He now sees truth as an additive process; it is bigger than any single space we inhabit. So, "you don't have to be wrong for me to be right."

SERMON: *Isaiah's Mosquechurchsynagogue*

The Rev. Jerry Stinson, preaching

READING: Isaiah 56:6-8

LITURGISTS: The Rev. Libby Tigner and Ms. Debbie Byrne

*Next week our guest preacher will be Milia Islam-Majeed, the Executive Director of the South Coast Interfaith Council.*

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## In Sunday School This Week

**Theme:** Beautiful Law

**Scripture Focus:** Psalm 19

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## In Adult Education This Week

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

We will continue our discussion of "The Bible and Ways of Reading It," looking at the Pauline epistles, the letters written by Paul and his later followers. Led by Richard Grauman.

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## 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 Rev. Jerry Stinson at 562-436-2256, ext 230 or [revjstinson@verizon.net](mailto:revjstinson@verizon.net).

## Music on Sunday

For this Sunday, the choir will sing Maurice Duruflé's (1902-1986) setting of the Latin hymn *Ubi caritas*. This is one of four motets composed in 1960. As in his *Requiem*, Duruflé uses the Gregorian chant theme as the basis for the composition, decorating it with lush modal harmony. This motet is a favorite in choral circles and is performed frequently by high school, university and church choirs throughout the world. Here is the translation: "Where there is charity and love, God is there. The love of Christ has gathered us together. Let us rejoice and be glad in it. And from a sincere heart let us love one another." See you in church!

*Dr. Leland Vail, Minister of Music*

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## Save the Date!

April 26 is Youth Sunday, with an eco-justice theme — this is one Sunday not to miss!



## One Great Hour of Sharing

Circle March 22 on your calendars. That's the Sunday we will be taking the OGHS offering.

This Lenten offering is a powerful testament to Christian love in action and demonstrates the potency of strength in numbers. The United Church of Christ, in concert with eight other denominations, raises more than twenty million dollars annually. In 2007, our denomination alone received \$2,890,358 through the OGHS. Less than 8% goes toward administrative costs.

What follows are but a few examples of OGHS funds at work. When Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast in 2005, OGHS was there providing humanitarian assistance and rebuilding desolated communities. In Guatemala, offering funds have been used in small villages to build simple greenhouses for the growing of vegetables, improving people's diets and incomes. Long-term recovery continues in Pallemala, Sri Lanka and throughout the region to help those affected by the 2004 tsunami through the building of new homes.

The church exists to serve the world. The One Great Hour of Sharing is a luminous example of doing just that.

*Lloyd Wright, Board of Outreach*

## Church History Ministry Team Seeking Recruits for Tours

The Church History Ministry Team is recruiting interested members for church tours. This provides a great way to learn about our church history. Training will be provided. Please contact Barbara Smith for information: 562-429-2890.



## Valla Lecture: Save the Date!

Hold the morning of Saturday, October 3 for this year's Valla Lecture. The lecturer will be the Rev. James Adams, former rector of St. Mark's Episcopal Church on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC and the founder of the Center for Progressive Christianity.

## www.firstchurchlb.org

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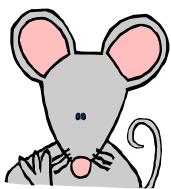
**at Long Beach, CA**

## A Virtual Lenten Journey

By Jerry Stinson

Jim Bettendorf, the leader of Sabeel's Orange County Chapter wrote this about a unique Lenten journey: "During Lent this year, Christian Aid, a British charity working in Palestine, is blogging a virtual journey through the Holy Land. You can go to their website, <http://lentpilgrimage.christianaid.org.uk/>, to register for this personal Lenten journey through the Holy Land. Each day commemorates a modern day "way of the cross." Christian Aid is getting help from people who have traveled in the region — and those who live and work there. The journey shows Holy Land sights, but you will also hear what it is like to work for peace in this troubled region. Along the way you can reflect on what Jesus' example teaches us about how we can make a difference in the world."

I am going to that website daily, and I encourage others to do so as well.



### The Church Mouse has heard...

... Laura Gonzalez received the honor of teacher of the year at Heninger Elementary (in the Santa Ana Unified School District). Laura is a second-grade teacher and grade-level chair. There was a close vote between three teachers. She and her husband Aaron Palmer will attend a dinner reception to celebrate her award.

### Correction

The correct title of Tina Datsko's upcoming book of poetry is *The Delirium of Simon Bolivar*.

### Leadership Day — This Saturday, March 14

We'll start at 8:30 a.m. in Patterson Hall with a breakfast catered by Tom "Terrific" Nettifee. At 9:15 we will move to the Koinonia Room for our morning of learning, sharing and building relationships. One thing we will be doing is taking a look at our rather lengthy (three-paragraph) mission statement, which was created in May of 1999, to see if it reflects our current affirmations. We will also learn more about our website, calendaring functions and Facebook from our Communications Committee.

The final agenda is still in the works, but the morning promises to be a great learning experience. And, oh yes, there will be a quiz.

*Peter Wright, Moderator*

### Senior Minister's Blog

Jerry Stinson's blog article this week is about homophobia and a prayer by a UCC minister.

Go to the blog and not only read the article, but add your comment as well: [jerrysjusticejournal.blogspot.com](http://jerrysjusticejournal.blogspot.com).

## By-Laws Committee Requests Input

To all church members:

Your by-laws committee has commenced meeting for the new year and is requesting that all boards look at the description of their individual boards and think about whether changes in the applicable by-laws are called for or needed. As chair of the by-laws committee, I will try to meet with each board and answer any questions you may have.

The Constitution and By-Laws can be accessed from the "members area" on the church website. If you have any trouble with this, please give me a call at 562-428-8186, and I will help as I can.

The by-laws committee wants to let everyone know that the by-laws are a fluid document and are in perpetual flux, so we welcome any concerns or questions.

Also, since the question "Do we have a quorum?" was posed on several occasions during our last business meeting (November 2008), the bylaws committee decided to investigate the interpretation of "quorum" as it pertains to our organization. Robert's Rules of Order allow that "in organizations such as many churches or some societies in which there is no required or effective annual dues and the register of members is not generally reliable as a list of the bona-fide members, the quorum at any regular or properly called meeting consists of those who attend."

Hopefully this will help clarify any questions anyone has regarding whether our congregational meetings are legal. They are, as long as we have met the required steps of notice and publication of such meetings.

Thanks,

*Kathy Young, Chair, By-Laws Committee*

## Scholarship Update

*By Terry McKiernan*

In tough economic times such as these, we appreciate now more than ever the generosity of those who have donated their money to establish scholarship funds at First Church. The Scholarship Committee recently awarded scholarships funded by the Nancy A. Merritt Bequest Fund (for UCC events) to allow our church youth to participate in the second annual Tall Ships Interfaith Youth Sail, which will be held later this month by the South Coast Interfaith Council (SCIC) in conjunction with the Maritime Institute and the Southern California Parliament of the World's Religions.

The committee is now prepared to accept applications for scholarships funded by the Kenneth Caskey and the Harriet S. and Nancy A. Merritt Memorial Scholarship funds. These scholarships will be given to assist in the education of any college, university, technical or trade institute student at any level. All qualified students are strongly encouraged to apply. Applications are available in the church office, may be downloaded from the church website members' area, or sent to applicants via email by the chair of the Scholarship Committee, Carol

*(Continued on page 5)*



## Screening of Martin Luther King, Jr. Documentary

On March 29 at 6 pm, there will be a free showing of the 2008 History Channel documentary *King* at the Art Theatre (2025 E. Fourth St., Long Beach). Sponsored by Councilmembers Suja Lowenthal and Dee Andrews, NAACP Long Beach Chapter, Antioch Missionary Baptist Church, and the Committee for a Season for Nonviolence Long Beach.

## Race to Witch Mountain

By Wally Hoeger

On March 15 after church, the jr. high youth (and any other children or youth who want to attend) are invited to go see *Return to Witch Mountain* at the Cinemark at the Pike. Please contact Wally for more information and to RSVP: [whoeger@firstchurchlb.org](mailto:whoeger@firstchurchlb.org) or 909-499-5617. See you there!

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## Every Bottle, Every Can!

By Wally Hoeger

Please continue to save your aluminum cans, glass bottles and plastic bottles for the youth recycling drive. We will be collecting recycling goods on March 29 and April 26. All proceeds will go to buy supplies to make school kits for Church World Service. For more information on Church World Service and the amazing work that they do, visit [www.churchworldservice.org](http://www.churchworldservice.org).

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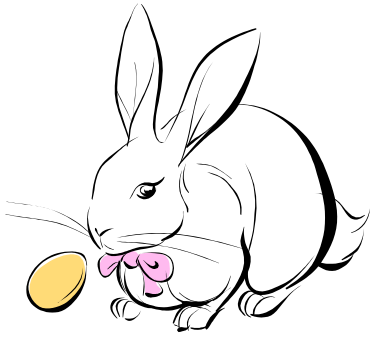
## Scholarships

Welsh ([carol.welsh@gmail.com](mailto:carol.welsh@gmail.com)). Interested applicants should obtain an application ASAP to allow adequate time for the completion of all necessary forms (including two reference forms).

## Easter Bonnet Tea Party and Workshop

By Mary Flynn

"Hippity hoppity, Easter's on its way," and back by popular demand, so is the Easter Bonnet Tea Party. This event is sponsored by the Get on the Bus team and will be held on Sunday, April 5 at 11:30 a.m. in the Koinonia Room. We have a full menu of delights planned, and you will have the opportunity to show off your Easter bonnet. The cost to attend the Easter Bonnet Tea Party is \$25 per adult. 100% of the money raised will be used for the Get on the Bus program.



Based on your feedback from last year's tea party, we will be awarding a prize to the top two most creative Easter bonnets. Ballots will be handed out during the tea party, and all attendees will have a chance to vote. After the top two bonnets are chosen, they will be auctioned off to be used as Easter centerpieces. If you would like some tools to decorate your bonnet, please join us for the Easter Bonnet Workshop on Sunday, March 29 at 11:30 a.m. We will have ribbons, plastic Easter eggs, silk flowers and lots of other goodies for you to decorate your bonnet with. All you need to do is bring your hat and we will supply the rest. We will also provide lunch. The cost to participate in this workshop is \$8.

Tickets for the Easter Bonnet Tea Party and the workshop will be on sale in the courtyard after the service this Sunday. If you are interested, hippity hoppity yourself over to the Get on the Bus table to purchase your tickets.

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## Website Expertise Needed Desperately for UCO

Teri Brewster bit off more than she could chew when she decided to redo the website for Urban Community Outreach ([www.urbancommunityoutreach.org](http://www.urbancommunityoutreach.org)). This is the non-profit parent for the Drop-In Center and DAYS. We have a committee of interested people to discuss ideas and ways to improve the website. Teri even purchased Dreamweaver, but found out that she can only do very simple steps for a web.

Is there anyone who has the expertise and the time to help our committee to turn our ideas into a website? If yes, it will save us a lot of time in trying to develop Teri's skills beyond the basics. Please contact Teri at [teriandart@earthlink.net](mailto:teriandart@earthlink.net) or 714-878-7673. Thanks so much in advance.

## Changes to Sunday Schedule are Coming!

By Libby Tigner

Do you find it challenging to get to church on a weeknight for a meeting? Did you ever say to yourself, "I'd serve on a church committee or board if I didn't have to come another meeting on another day"? Do you wish that you had more time on Sunday mornings to visit with friends, and think that if there was food available, you'd enjoy eating lunch at church?

If so, we've got good news for you! In an effort to make it easier for folks to get to meetings and to be sure that child care is available when parents need it, we're making some changes to when our working groups meet.

At the February meeting of the Church Council, it was decided that all boards, committees and ministry teams will meet on either the first or the fourth Sunday of the month, and we'll provide a choice of early morning or after church meetings, child care, and have food available on Sundays when the meetings are after church. Here's how it will work:

On the first Sunday of the month, a lunch will be provided for purchase at 11:30 a.m. for whoever would like to stay and have lunch at church. Then, from 12:15 until 1:30 p.m., boards, committees and ministry teams who have chosen to meet on the first Sunday will meet. Child care will be provided until 1:30 p.m.

On the fourth Sunday of the month, meetings will be held from 8:30 until 9:30 a.m. Child care is already provided at this time.

All working groups will be invited to pick either the first Sunday at 12:15 p.m. or the fourth Sunday at 8:30 a.m. as their regular meeting time. Of course, a group may decide that neither of these times will fit their schedule, and they'll be free to meet when they want to. However, child care and custodial support won't be available at other times, and building use time will need to be scheduled. Staff support may or may not be available, depending upon their schedules. Some groups may decide to meet offsite.

All working groups are encouraged to discuss this at their next regular meeting, and let your staff person or Ruth Warkentin know when you'd like your meetings to be. We'll make the switch just as soon as we've got all the logistics arranged, but hopefully in the next month or two.

We know this is a big change to how we've done things in the

past. We're very hopeful that more people, including folks who live a distance away, folks who don't want to drive at night, and folks with small children will find it easier to participate in the wider life of the church. And if we're able to save a little bit of money in custodial or utility costs, that's even better!

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## New Member

By Jerry Stinson

**JUDY CRAWFORD** grew up in Northridge and graduated from Cal State Northridge. She also participated in the World Campus Afloat program at Chapman University. That program, now called Semester at Sea, is no longer at Chapman. That experience of studying as she sailed around the world has had a great influence on Judy's life and love of travel.

She obtained her teaching certificate and spent 25 years teaching primary school children from kindergarten through third grade in the Bay Area, Sacramento and Cypress. Judy's husband of 39 years, Jim, is retired from working for the postal service. He is a Jeopardy champion (three days), has been a race track announcer at both Cal Expo in Sacramento and Los Alamitos, and he also produced and hosted a program

*(Continued on back page)*

## Drop-In Center Attendance and Expenses Report

From Teri Brewster

We want to thank First Church for all of the care and concern that you all have shown with our endeavor to serve the homeless people in our area. Because of your help, we raised over \$5,700 at our wine tasting in January 2009.

To give you a clearer picture of our endeavors, we are posting our numbers of what we did in 2008.

### Guest Count and Food Cost report for 2008 Drop-In-Center

Approximate count of attendees for months January through June: 26 weeks

6 weeks @ 225 = 1350  
 12 weeks @ 250 = 3000  
8 weeks @ 300 = 2400  
 Total 6750

Cost per plate of food, 1/08 – 6/08: \$2.50 at an average of \$650.00 each week

*Closed and reorganized during the month of July.*

Attendance August through December

8/3 - 225	9/7- 203	10/5 - 225	11/2 – 270	12/7 Closed
8/10 – 100	9/14 - 289	10/12 - 328	11/9 - 311	12/14 - 510
8/17 – 225	9/21 – 321	10/19 – 350	11/16 – 421	12/21 - 500
8/24 – 250	9/28 – 387	10/26 – 367	11/23 – 374	12/28 - 460
8/31- 300			11/30 – 369	
Total -1100	1200	1260	1745	1470
			Thanksgiving 279	Christmas 297

Cost per plate of food, 8/08 – 12/08: \$1.51 at an average of \$450.00 each week

January – June 26 weeks 6750  
 August – December 21 weeks 5675  
+ Holidays 2 576  
**Total 13,001 guests served**

**Approximate expense for food in 2008: \$26,350.00**

**Approximate expense per plate: \$2.03 per person per plate of food**

Thanks so much for all of your help, First Church.



*The Pilgrim*  
 241 Cedar Avenue  
 Long Beach, CA 90802

Periodicals  
 postage paid at  
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TO:

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

## You've got a date ...

### **Saturday, March 14**

8:30 a.m. Leadership Day

### **Sunday, March 15**

11:30 a.m. ONA bake sale;

Church tour; Christian  
 Education Board

### **Monday, March 16**

6:30 p.m. Air Quality Ministry  
 Team

7 p.m. Urban Community  
 Outreach Board

### **Tuesday, March 17**

7 p.m. Boards: Diaconate,  
 Membership Development,  
 Outreach, Stewardship/  
 Finance

### **Wednesday, March 18**

7 p.m. Lenten Experience

### **Saturday, March 21**

5 p.m. Guest Chef

8 p.m. Spring Fling

### **Sunday, March 22**

11:30 a.m. Forum on the South  
 Coast Interfaith Council; Our  
 Whole Lives

## Online Calendar

Don't miss out! Check the  
 online church calendar at  
[www.firstchurchlb.org/calendar.html](http://www.firstchurchlb.org/calendar.html)  
 for details about all  
 church events.

## Parish Concerns

Your thoughts and prayers  
 are requested for Helen Lat-

timer's friend's granddaughter  
 and Lori, Ron and Justin Smith  
 (friends of Amy Peer).

*(Continued from page 6)*

## New Member

on KDOC on harness racing.

Judy lives in a 1915 Long Beach house near the ocean. She has a passionate love for ships. She is a member of and was a docent for the Steamship Historical Society and has spent a lot of time on the Queen Mary. She and Jim have traveled a lot, especially by sea.

Although Judy's grandmother was an organist at St. Luke's Episcopal Church here in Long Beach, Judy herself was raised and married in the Presbyterian Church. In the late 1980's she felt that denomination was changing. Its churches were more conservative, their services more casual, and in her words "the music simplistically and gratefully contemporary." Jim stopped attending church and Judy said she left the services feeling empty and irritated.

In the late 1990's, she began attending here. Jim attended with her but soon faced serious health problems and could no longer attend. Jim is suffering from a debilitating form of palsy, and as a result Judy retired from teaching to care for him. This is a difficult time for her. Jim is now at the Broadway by the Sea care facility and will soon be moved to a hospice facility.

She says it is hard leaving the denomination that was previously so important in her life, but in this difficult time for her, attending services at First Church has been a "calming and comforting part of an otherwise stressful existence." So she says, "It is time for me to finally join the church." We are glad she is doing so.