



Sunday Celebration Notes from Jerry Stinson

Celebrating God's Love Every Sunday at 10 am.

This week there will be special music by Sheep's Kin and by our baritone soloist, Steven Berlanga. An exchange student from Afghanistan, Mahboobullah, will meet with our high school youth group this morning, and he will speak during a brief information moment in our service.

Throughout my ministry, I have spent countless hours visiting people in hospitals. But earlier this month was my first occasion to actually be hospitalized. In my sermon, I will reflect on some of what I learned from that experience.

SERMON: *Some Theological Reflections
About a Minister's First Hospitalization*
The Rev. Jerry Stinson, preaching

LITURGISTS: The Rev. Libby Tigner and
Mr. Robert Hildebrand

Next week Jerry Stinson and Libby Tigner will share the sermon time with Libby preaching a Palm Sunday mini-sermon on Jesus' entry into Jerusalem and Jerry preaching a Passion Sunday mini-sermon about the crucifixion of Jesus.

In Sunday School

Theme: Deep in Our Hearts **Scripture Focus:** Jeremiah 31:31-34

In Adult Education: The Ten Commandments, Suggestions, or Cultural Irrelevancies: A Look at the Decalogue

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

In recent years, battles have been waged in city council chambers and county courts about the legality and appropriateness of public displays of the Ten Commandments. Do the Ten Commandments have a place on our public discourse? What are they, from where did they originate, and how might they inform our covenantal life — or not?

This will be the topic of our conversation for the next few weeks at our adult class on Sunday mornings, March 29, April 5 and April 19. Coffee is served and you are welcome to bring your breakfast. No class on Easter Sunday, April 12.

Music on Sunday

The anthem for Sunday, "Sing and Ponder" by Larry Fleming, incorporates the medieval plainsong *Pange lingua*, a hymn from the 17th century, and one from the 16th century. As the chant is sung in Latin by the tenors and basses, the treble voices form a bell-like tone cluster. This process is reversed as the sopranos and altos sing the chant. All voices then form a six-part chorus, singing the chorale in English. The choir will repeat this lovely work during the Maundy Thursday service on April 9. Jerry, Libby and the choir will offer a meaningful service of scripture, music and reflection. I hope to see you in church on Sunday and for Maundy Thursday.

Dr. Leland Vail, Minister of Music

Office Closed March 31

The church office will be closed on Tuesday, March 31 in observance of the Cesar Chavez holiday. Please take note that there will be no staff at the church that day. *The Pilgrim* for Sunday, April 5 will be mailed on Wednesday, April 1.

Budget Deficit Advisory Committee Seeks Money-Saving Input

By Carol Welsh

We need your ideas for reducing our operating costs!

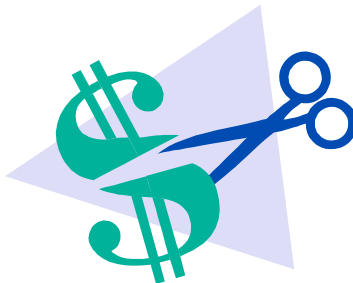
The Budget Deficit Advisory Committee has been meeting for several months to address the over \$230,000 budget deficit our church now faces. We simply cannot do “business as usual” any longer. It is the committee’s intention to develop and propose a plan that tends to the critical needs of the congregation and the community we serve, while maintaining the financial integrity of the church. We are looking at this challenge in terms of planned, rather than reactionary, reductions.

Knowing the challenges we face is not enough. We solicit your input so we can take the opportunity to know a little more about what is important to each of you. Please review our mission statement (available at www.firstchurchlb.org) and help us identify what you consider major and/or minor ways to reduce non-essential operating expenses and still maintain the viability of our church community. **Any and all ideas are welcome.**

For those who **do not wish** to remain anonymous, please email your suggestions directly to Carol Welsh (carol.welsh@gmail.com) and include “\$avings \$uggestion” in the subject line. Please do not send your suggestions to church staff.

For those who **do wish** to remain anonymous, please complete a “\$avings \$uggestion” form (available in the narthex) and drop it in the suggestion box. If you prefer to mail your suggestions, simply send them to Carol Welsh, Attn: \$avings \$uggestion at the church address.

Please make your suggestions no later than Easter Sunday, April 12, 2009.



Help for Those Who Have Lost Their Jobs

The South Coast Interfaith Council, along with Chaplain Karyn Reddick from Memorial Hospital, organized a program on “Faith During Challenging Economic Times.” One of the hand-outs at that event was a three-page list of helpful websites. We have posted that list on the bulletin board on the Third Street landing. Most of that information came from one website: <http://mashable.com/2000/02/19/laid-off-sites>.

www.firstchurchlb.org

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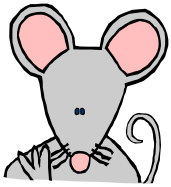
The Pilgrim (USPS 602-580) is published weekly except the last week in December and twice a month in July and August by First Congregational Church, 241 Cedar Ave., Long Beach, CA 90802. Phone: 562-436-2256. Fax: 562-436-3018. Postmaster: Send address changes to *The Pilgrim*, 241 Cedar Ave., Long Beach, CA 90802.

Editor: Ruth Warkentin

Deadline: Thursday noon

Periodicals postage paid

at Long Beach, CA



The Church Mouse has heard...

... Like to know what some church members were doing in 1978? The play *Dear Harvey*, written by Patricia Loughrey (a recent attendee at First Church) runs in San Diego at the Diversionary Theatre, April 18-25. Both Dottie Wine and Jackie Grover are portrayed in the play. For further information see www.diversionary.org/queertheatre/dearharvey.html or call 619-220-6830.

... We just discovered that Clarence Dendy's name was inadvertently left off the list of those who helped fix up the Dining Room. Clarence spent hours and hours working on all the lighting in that room. So thanks, Clarence!

... Jim Snelling, Joe Ernst and Jackie Grover will again represent First Church on April 15 at a community resource fair at California State University, Long Beach for LGBT Diversity Week.

Senior Minister's Blog

Jerry Stinson's blog article this week will be about a fascinating woman with a social justice agenda who served in Franklin Roosevelt's cabinet during the Depression of the 1930s. See jerryjusticejournal.blogspot.com.

Golf Tournament on May 9

By Libby Tigner



The eighth annual First Church Golf Tournament will be Saturday, May 9. This year we'll play at Los Verdes Golf Course, an 18-hole course in Rancho Palos Verdes. This course is known for its spectacular ocean views. We'll gather on the patio for a buffet lunch and community time at 11 a.m.; the first tee time will be at 12:30 p.m. The cost for the buffet lunch, green fees and a cart is \$75. We'll play a four-person scramble style, which ensures that everyone, even beginner golfers, will have a great time!

Remember, no matter who you are, or what kind of golfer you are, you're welcome to play at the First Church golf tournament! You can pick up a registration form at church or download it as a PDF file from the church website. Registration is due no later than April 22.

New Cost-Cutting Measures

By Jerry Stinson

Here are three cost-saving practices that we hope will help us in respond to our budget deficit.

1. As most of you know by now, we have returned to 8.5x14 inch bulletins on Sunday morning, and we are using the hymnals once again rather than printing song sheets. If you would like a large-print bulletin or large print hymn sheets (text only), you can go to the members' section of the website each Friday and make your own enlargements.

2. During the week, we are locking all the restrooms on the lower level of the sanctuary building and on the second floor of Pilgrim Hall. This means those restrooms will only need to be cleaned once a week. The restrooms in the Kilsby Courtyard and the restrooms just inside the door leading from the courtyard to the Koinonia Room will always be kept open.

3. The service policy for our copiers costs us almost \$21,000 per year. Nevertheless, we managed to do so much copying last year, especially using the color copier, that we faced an addition \$3,376 in costs. We would like to eliminate some of those additional costs. Therefore, beginning April 1 individuals making copies will need either their own personal code or the code assigned to the board or committee on which they serve. If you need an individual code, please contact Ruth Warkentin in the church office.



The Pilgrim
 241 Cedar Avenue
 Long Beach, CA 90802

**Periodicals
 postage paid at
 Long Beach, CA**

TO:

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

You've got a date ...

Sunday, March 29

Bring your recyclables for the youth recycling drive!

8:30 Ministry Team Leaders Meeting

11:30 a.m. Easter Bonnet Workshop

3 p.m. Walking Together presentation (sponsored by the South Coast Interfaith Council)

Wednesday, April 1

9 a.m. *The Pilgrim* mailing

7 p.m. My Lenten Journey

Friday, April 3

6 p.m. Parents' Night Out

Sunday, April 5

11:30 a.m. Get on the Bus Tea Party

12:15 p.m. Meetings: Christian Education Board, Stewardship & Finance Board, Communications Committee

Online Calendar

Don't miss out! Check the online church calendar at www.firstchurchlb.org/calendar.html for details about all church events. Just click on any event to see information about it.

Parish Concerns

Your thoughts and prayers are requested for Pat Radz-wicz (a former member of First Church); Heather Winn (Yvonne SaMarion's friend);

Judy Crawford on the death of her husband; Edric Guise on the death of his stepfather; and Gary Shelton and Janet Rhodes on the death of their mother.

Easter Lilies

To contribute toward the lilies that will adorn the sanctuary on Easter Day, please fill out the form below and return it to the office with your check made out to First Congregational Church, or put the form and your check together into a pew envelope and place in the offering plate during the church service.

DEADLINE: Noon on Wednesday, April 8

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY!

Name _____

Phone number _____

Number of lilies _____ x \$10 per plant = \$ _____ enclosed

In honor/memory/celebration of ...

I will take _____ plant(s) home.

Please take _____ plant(s) to shut-ins.

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.

April Birthdays

1	April Bradley	18	Philip B. Wilson
2	Jonathan Chambers, Stephen Chambers, Larry Forester	20	Debra Buller, Jeff Ford, Patti Nakamura
4	Estelle Cordova, Bob Klar, Jose Lopez	21	April Porteneuve
5	Louise Fiori, Linda Ramsay	22	Dorianne Campbell-Graham, Tim Harris, Doug Jones, Wendy Kuran
6	Thomas Nicolai, Alison Ramsay	23	Melody O'Keefe, Lane Shepherd
9	Savi Nguli, Barbara Smith	24	Jeff McFarland
10	Nicole Cook	25	Janet Waggoner
11	David Fitzgerald, Larelle Hendon	27	Jim Long
14	Jacob Esqueda-Macias, Howard Williams	28	Beau Chandler
16	Ellen Kameya	29	Margaret O. Brown
17	Roger Reid, Aldra Robinson	30	Donny Lara-Gagne

April Anniversaries

	<u>Years</u>	
7	Bill and Joan Mueller	53
20	Susan Dampf and Alida Montanez-Salas	8
21	Jennifer and Brian Mota	2
22	Edward and Veronica L. Bloomfield	42
23	Brad and Kathryn Stevens	33
24	Michael and James Llewellyn-Woodruff	9

April at First Congregational Church

Sundays	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
8:30 Una Voce Rehearsal, Adult Education* 9 All Seasons Choir 9:30 All Seasons Cont'd, Charming Chimes, Prayer in Sacred Space* 11:15 Sheep's Kin 12:30 Drop-in Center	*Childcare is provided. To request childcare for a church event, contact Wally Hoeger.	The submission deadline for <i>The Pilgrim</i> is every Thursday at noon for the following week's edition.	1 9 <i>Pilgrim</i> mailing 7 Lenten Experience	2 5:45 Beloved Bells 6:45 Bellissimo, ZONE 7:30 Choir Rehearsal	3 6 Parents' Night Out	4
5 10 Service of Celebration*: Stinson & Tigner preaching 11:30 Get on the Bus Tea Party 12:15 Meetings*: Christian Education, Diaconate, Stewardship/Finance, Communications	6	7 9 <i>Pilgrim</i> mailing 7 Caregivers Support Group; Drop-In Center Committee	8 6:45 Bellissimo 7 Sacred Practices, PFLAG 7:30 Choir Rehearsal	9 5:45 Beloved Bells 6 Footwashing Service 7 Maundy Thursday Service	10	11
12 8:30 History Ministry Team 9 Continental Breakfast 10 Service of Celebration*: Stinson preaching 11:30 Easter Brunch	13 Office closed	14 9 <i>Pilgrim</i> mailing 7 Theological Study Group	15	16 5:45 Beloved Bells 6 Board of Cultural Arts 6:45 Bellissimo, ZONE 7:30 Choir Rehearsal	17 5:30 Farmers Market Board	18 9 Youth Uniting in Mission (offsite) 5 Guest Chef 8 Organ Concert with Sean O'Neal
19 10 Service of Celebration*: Stinson preaching 11:30 Forum: End of Life & Five Wishes 6:45 Our Whole Lives	20 6:30 Air Quality Ministry Team 7 Urban Community Outreach Board	21 9 <i>Pilgrim</i> mailing 7 Board of Outreach	22 7 Sacred Practices	23 5:45 Beloved Bells 6:45 Bellissimo, ZONE 7 Social Justice Committee 7:30 Choir Rehearsal	24	25 5 Spirited Parenting Dinner 6 Kindred Spirits
26 10 Service of Celebration*: Youth and Eco-Justice Sunday 11:30 Forum on Homelessness; Pride Bake Sale	27	28 9 <i>Pilgrim</i> mailing 7 Church Council	29	30 5:45 Beloved Bells 6:45 Bellissimo, ZONE; Our Whole Lives 7:30 Choir Rehearsal		