



## Sunday Celebration Notes from Jerry Stinson

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

This Sunday a large contingent of First Church members will participate in the annual Long Beach Pride Parade. Thus our morning service will be briefer than usual. We will hold it at the regular time, 10 a.m., but we are hoping to finish in about 45 minutes. There will be a choral anthem but no solos or special music. The announcements will be abbreviated and there will not be a children's time in the service – the children will go directly to their classes at 10 a.m.

In my sermon I will tell the story of 88-year-old Loraine Barr, who says it took the death of her dear life partner for her to find the courage to come out of the closet.

Feel free to wear your walking clothes to church. The service will again include the commissioning of all Pride Parade walkers as representatives of our church. Plan not only to be with us for the service, but to walk in the parade as well! I guarantee that you won't regret it. But if you cannot walk, it would be great if you could offer to drive some of our walkers down Broadway to get them close to where the parade will start.

SERMON: *This Is Who I Am*

The Rev. Jerry Stinson, preaching

READING: Matthew 7:1-5

*Next week Jerry Stinson's sermon will be titled  
"An Early Church Image of God's Farming."*

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## In Sunday School This Week

**Theme:** Friends Together    **Scripture Focus:** John 15:9-17

## In Adult Education This Week

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

Jerry Stinson will continue with "Occupied Palestine – Despair and Beyond," sharing experiences and learnings from his two recent trips to Israel and the Occupied Territories. This week the subject is "The Settlements, Housing Demolitions and Olive Trees."

## Music on Sunday

This Sunday, in celebration of Gay Pride, the Sanctuary Choir will sing "God's Paintbrush" by Paul Boyd-Batstone, and arranged by Curtis Heard. In selecting anthems for worship, I try to wait at least two years before repeating an anthem. Last Thanksgiving we performed Paul's anthem. However, it was premiered on Gay Pride Sunday 2003, so it is fitting we do it this year. I asked Paul to write a bit about this lovely piece of music and poetry. Paul writes:

"Back in the summer of 2002, I was asked by the Christian Education Board to write a song based on the children's book *God's Paintbrush* by Sandy Eisenberg Sasso (1992, Jewish Lights Publishing) for our Vacation Church School. The book explores colorful expressions of God from a non-sectarian perspective. Painting with God's paintbrush is the metaphor to illustrate diverse expressions of God's presence revealed in our everyday lives.

"I asked Curtis Heard to arrange the song for choir to be first performed in May 2003 for Gay Pride Sunday. Curtis' beautiful piano arrangement

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Gay Pride Parade – Get Ready!

The Long Beach Gay Pride Parade is this Sunday. The parade begins at 10:30; we are planning to be in the second half of the parade so that people can come join us after the worship service. I'll notify the church as soon as I know more details. If you are marching, please bring sunscreen and hats – we could be waiting a while. I'll have water and snacks at the parade site. If you are not marching, please consider giving someone a ride to the parade after church. In case you are looking for us or have a question, my cell phone number is 310-422-7114. I hope to see lots of you there. In the wake of Prop 8, I think it is especially important to have a good showing.

*Deb Moore*

## Music on Sunday *(Continued from page 1)*

opens at the chorus with women singing in unison, 'On a bright day, when I close my eyes, I see colors every shade and hue, then in my mind as I work God's paintbrush, colors of God I find in you.' The verses introduce the full choir singing in four-part harmony about God's warm and cool hues found in relationships and in nature.

"The final lines of the song turn our gaze toward our neighbor with an invitation to work God's paintbrush together with 'colors of hope.' As the choir sings, close your eyes, work God's paintbrush, and paint a picture of hope using the colors of God." See you in church!

*Dr. Leland Vail, Minister of Music*

## South Coast Interfaith Council Interfaith Cafes

Interfaith Cafes are small group discussions for laity, youth (ninth - twelfth graders) and religious leaders about how faith affects their daily lives and allows them to relate to and appreciate those from other faith traditions. Each session has the same format with different participants.

The first café will be May 24, 2-5 p.m. at Pacific Unitarian Church, 5621 Montemalaga Dr., Rancho Palos Verdes; Co-host: Islamic Center of the South Bay.

Refreshments will be served. A freewill donation will be accepted. To confirm your attendance or for more information please call 562-983-1665 or email [scic@charterinternet.com](mailto:scic@charterinternet.com).



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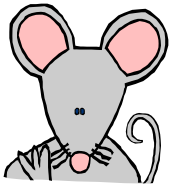
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**Editor: Ruth Warkentin**

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## The Church Mouse has heard...

... Alida Montanez-Salas was recently promoted at work; she is the new Community Library Manager of the Bell Gardens Public Library. Congratulations, Montana!

... Adreana Langston has entered a fashion photography contest using Sydney Wells as her "supermodel" subject. To see the photo, go to [www.crossroadstrading.com](http://www.crossroadstrading.com) and click on the fashion photo contest, then search the gallery with Adreana's name to view the photo. You can register if you would like to vote for Adreana's entry.

*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.*



## Senior Minister's Blog

Jerry Stinson's blog this week is about the shocking statistics of frequent churchgoers' support of torture.

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

## A Nuclear-Free World Ministry Team

By Bob Kalayjian

On April 6 President Obama gave a speech with a vision of a nuclear-free world. He opened talks with the Russian president to follow through with the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) signed in 1991 and the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Nuclear weapons are essentially unusable by civilized countries such as ours. They can't be used in retaliation to a nuclear terrorist attack. They cost us \$50 billion dollars a year to maintain. We would be in a much better position to tell smaller countries such as India, Pakistan, Iran, Korea and Israel to eliminate these weapons if the superpowers take the lead.

To keep momentum to disarm and awareness of this lingering threat from the years of the Cold War present, I am proposing forming a ministry team to achieve this end. Edric Guise and I are looking for like-minded members of the congregation to join us. If you are interested contact me at [robkal@mac.com](mailto:robkal@mac.com) or 562-754-5334. The president needs us, the planet needs us, and this is an achievable goal!

### Sunday, May 24: A Time of Honored Remembrance

During our worship on Sunday of Memorial Day Weekend, May 24, there will be a Time of Honored Remembrance. We will remember any of our members' or active participants' loved ones who have died — no matter when they died. You may wish to honor the memory of a parent, a child, a good friend, etc.

During our period of prayer that Sunday, we will read names submitted in advance to the church office by 12 noon on Wednesday, May 20 (no late submissions will be accepted). All the names will be printed on an insert in the bulletin. Partners may send in separate forms.

Send to: First Congregational Church, 241 Cedar Avenue, Long Beach, CA 90802; [office@firstchurchlb.org](mailto:office@firstchurchlb.org); 562-436-2256 ext 221.

**Please PRINT clearly.**

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

#### THOSE TO BE REMEMBERED

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Relation to You \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Relation to You \_\_\_\_\_

## Summer in the City: Saturday, June 6, 6 PM

By Nancy Valencia

Chair, Downtown Associated Youth Services Committee (DAYS)

Summer Camp is just around the corner. Started by Dorothy and Edwin Baker and hosted by First Congregational Church, the camp provides children from the downtown area with free nutrition, educational support, cultural enrichment and just plain fun.

On Saturday, June 6 at 6 p.m., we are having our annual fundraising event, Summer in the City: dinner, a silent auction and an evening of entertainment in Patterson Hall. Last year we received feedback from many of you, and as a result, this year we are providing two different ways to attend the event. The first option is to sponsor a table: invite guests to fill a table of eight and be responsible for providing food and table decorations. The alternate option is to purchase a ticket for \$35 and dinner will be provided.

Every dollar raised will fund operational costs of this year's Summer Day Camp. Without your financial assistance, this wonderful program would not be possible. For further information or to reserve space as a table host, look for us in Kilsby Courtyard this Sunday selling tickets or contact Nancy Valencia at 562-234-2851.

## Rally for Living Wages and Equal Rights May 13, 5 PM

Join gay rights activist Cleve Jones, hotel workers and community activists for a special rally for living wages and equal rights for all!

**Wednesday, May 13, 5 – 6:30pm**

**Hyatt Regency Hotel, Downtown Long Beach**

If you would like to RSVP, please contact Maya Raquel Anderson with the Long Beach Coalition for Good Jobs and the LA Alliance for a New Economy at [manderson@laane.org](mailto:manderson@laane.org) or 213-977-9400 ext. 107.



## Kindred Spirits May 23, 6 PM

By Deanna Melzian

The Kindred Spirits potluck will be held in the Koinonia room on May 23 at 6 p.m. It will be hosted by the family of Jim Snelling in celebration of his forthcoming 75th birthday. Birthday cake will be served so please do not bring desserts or gifts. All church members are cordially invited. Contact Deanna at 562-433-4835 or Ron at 310-850-0549 if you need more info.



## Woven Image in Concert

A compelling blend of Celtic,  
folk and jazz  
Sunday, May 24, 7 p.m.

Carole & Tom Parmeter Dyer  
Christ Lutheran Church  
6500 Stearns Street, Long  
Beach, CA 90815

Free-will offering to benefit the Woven Image Sewing Institute, Hyderabad, India. For more information, call the church at 562-433-9591.

# California Church IMPACT Ballot Recommendations

*Our denomination is a member of the California Council of Churches of which California Church Impact is a part. Prior to each election, the Impact Board of Directors takes positions on ballot initiatives. We provide that information to our members in the hope it will help you with your voting decisions – it is not meant to tell you how to vote but rather to share with you the insights of some representatives of the ecumenical community.*

*Jerry Stinson*

*Editor's note: this is a redacted version of the introduction to the propositions provided by California Church Impact; the arguments about the propositions are reprinted in full. The full text of the introduction is available at [www.calchurches.org](http://www.calchurches.org).*

The six propositions on the upcoming May 19 ballot are symptomatic of the massive dysfunction of California's budget process. These six propositions do not offer real solutions to our budget problems, and will render future budgets incapable of meeting real human needs.

Proposition 13 was portrayed as a way to protect those at risk from tax hikes. However, it also had far-reaching consequences by hobbling the state Legislature

from being able to do a thoughtful, rational job of meeting California's growing needs with adequate tax resources.

Proposition 13 allows the Legislature to cut any tax with a majority vote but prohibits the creation or restoration of any tax without a 2/3 vote. Neither party has a 2/3 majority. This causes the annual budget paralysis and habitually late budget votes. It also has strangled our state's fiscal resources. We have provided huge tax cuts for upper-income individuals, corporations, and for some middle-class rates such as the Vehicle License Fee. Once those are cut, they cannot be restored to their traditional levels because there are not enough votes. Had just the personal tax on upper income and the VLF cuts been restored, the state would have had an additional \$16-20 billion per year to meet our state's needs.

With revenues dwindling, and in frustration with this system we ourselves have put in place, voters have repeatedly sought to protect important services such as education. We approved several special Constitutional amendments guaranteeing some programs full payments but with no tax resources by which to support those demands.

With the power of the minority to hold the budget hostage with their votes, deals are made to obtain those votes. And in those deals, political biases are made manifest. This year, in exchange for one or two votes, we have cut massive services in medical care, basic income supports, and public education. These cuts fall most heavily on those who are poor who are also often people of color. This is not an accident.

The May 2009 ballot propositions do not affect this outcome. Some taxes were temporarily increased as part of the "deal" ratified by the Governor in February, but the program cuts were still made, some of them permanent. None of the ballot measures will add money to restore those programs, and the point of the propositions is to assure that demands from those in need will receive the lowest priority now and in years to come. Others will actually cost us revenue. Proposition 1C to sell off future earnings of the lottery through a bond will "rob Peter to pay Paul — with interest." This is not good fiscal sense.

The propositions extend the duration of those new taxes; they do not create them. We will have that tax revenue through 2010.

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## Ballot Propositions *(Continued from page 5)*

However, the taxes themselves are highly regressive. Rather than opting to restore the traditional upper-income tax rates, cut by 2 percent in 1998, we all will pay the additional 1 per cent sales tax. California does have a modestly progressive tax rate structure, but the lowest income people pay the greatest percentage of their income in taxes which is compounded by the sales tax that they, unlike the wealthy, cannot avoid. This is profoundly troubling. In a time of deep recession, this state is shifting the responsibility for maintaining our budget to the populations who have lost the most in both service cuts and the current recession.

The “deal” to get the budget votes arbitrarily demanded that California had to receive \$10 billion in federal funding or these program cuts would have to be made and the proposed tax hike would go forward. California Budget Project ([www.cbp.org](http://www.cbp.org)) noted that we will receive some \$30 billion in direct programmatic relief, which should have stopped the cuts and lowered the tax rate, but on March 27 the Department of Finance and the state Treasurer decided not enough of the federal money “qualified” to prevent the cuts.

Why? Because some legislators wanted the higher temporary tax increase. Others wanted the service cuts. We got both, with the burden falling on those most at risk.

The cuts include Medi-Cal optional benefits (dental, vision, psychological help, and even incontinence care); cuts to monthly cash grants for rent and other non-food items for those seeking to get out of poverty; elimination of cost of living increases for the disabled; cuts to In Home Supportive Services allowing those with disabilities to remain at home; cuts to IHSS pay from \$12.10 to \$9.50 per hour thereby driving many providers to other jobs; cuts to higher education and many more.

**The Propositions will solve none of these problems, but they create far, far more difficulties now and down the road.**

If we vote NO on these six propositions, and since we have to reopen the budget due to another state revenue shortfall, the Legislature and Governor may be forced to include the \$30-plus billion in federal economic stimulus as part of our budget solution. To date, we have no suggestions from either the Legislature or the Governor as to how the federal money will be used, even though that money is directed to assist California to meet its cur-

rent budget services.

We must change the focus of our tax laws, of our governance, of our society. Passing these ballot propositions not only postpones this day of reckoning, but also creates hardship for those in the middle and working classes, and especially for the growing numbers facing unemployment, uninsurance, and homelessness. The time for all Californians to renew their commitment to a moral budget begins with refusing to be misled with false promises.

We have the resources to give us the time. Now we must have the will. California Council of Churches IMPACT would support these ballot measures if they provided real reform to make the budget process accountable and provide the Legislature and Governor with the tools to do their job. These measures do not accomplish that goal and actually worsen the “robo-budgeting” that robs this state of its necessary leadership. We therefore must recommend voting NO on all six propositions.

**Proposition 1A: State Budget. Changes California Budget Process. Limits State Spending. Increases “Rainy Day” Budget Stabilization Fund. Recommendation: OPPOSE**

As part of the 2008-09 and

*(Continued on page 7)*

## Ballot Propositions *(Continued)*

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2009-10 “deal” that was ratified February 20, 2009, certain taxes were increased and mandates for controls over future spending were authorized. Both require voter approval. Nothing in this proposition will eliminate the taxes. They will simply be extended for longer periods beyond 2010. The taxes are:

- Increase of 1% in the state sales tax through June 30, 2011. Proposition 1A extends the sales tax to June 30, 2012.

- Increases the state Vehicle License Fee from the current .65% of assessed car value to 1.15%. The increase will expire June 30, 2011 unless Proposition 1A passes in which case it will continue to June 30, 2013.

- Increases personal income tax rate by 0.125% expiring June 30, 2010 unless extended to 2012 through Proposition 1A.

The emphasis of Proposition 1A is not on providing services but on controlling the ability of the Legislature to meet growing and changing needs in our state. Proposition 1A mandates the creation of a highly-controlled “rainy day fund,” the Budget Stabilization Fund (BSF), that would take 3% of our scarce revenues annually until we had a fund

worth 12.5% of the yearly budget. While a fund is a very good idea and already in place, these revenues would be tightly regulated and not readily available for most health and human service growth in need or costs.

All budget spending would be capped, based on the average of the past 10 years, the last 8 of which have included the worst recession in contemporary history. Even when the economy improves, we could not restore cuts made in bad times. Future spending is curtailed further by the rate of consumer spending, a highly inaccurate index of costs. Health spending alone grows at four times the consumer price index. We are also facing a rapid increase in our “baby boomer” senior population who will have many services requirements. Automatic spending restrictions mean thousands of people could be denied housing, nutrition, and health care. Furthermore, when mid-year cuts might be required, the Governor alone could make these decisions without participation by the Legislature. We already voted this proposal down in 2005. Unilateral power vested in the Governor is not good for democracy.

Proposition 1A creates more “ballot box budgeting” and more “robo-budgets” that have no realistic link to our state’s population, growth, or needs for services. There is no urgency that requires we pass this measure. We will have the taxes we need for the current crisis. It is imperative that we do not harm our democratic decision-making processes and our legislators’ ability to speak in our interests, now and in the future.

### **Proposition 1B: Education Funding. Payment Plan. Recommendation: OPPOSE**

Proposition 1B is dependent on the passage of Proposition 1A. As a highly-technical ballot measure, simply stated, it locks in future education funding via formulae different from the existing Proposition 98 guarantees voters passed in 1998. Part of the plan will be how to restore what was cut from Proposition 98 over the past few years, but the state already has the ability to make these repayments without Proposition 1B or 1A.

We support the repayment. Some teachers’ groups are in support of 1B precisely for this reason. The status of California schools is already dire without cuts in funding. However, this ballot measure makes it less likely we will spend wisely and generously on our state’s pupils in the future. This second version of automatic budgeting is not intended to improve our state’s educational system but to take away flexibility in meeting upsurges

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## Ballot Propositions *(Continued from page 7)*

in enrollment, increased operating costs, or expanding and restoring programs that were already cut. We therefore cannot support this proposition.

### **Proposition 1C: Lottery Modernization Act. Recommendation: OPPOSE**

In 1984 voters passed an initiative that established the state lottery. Half the money raised by the lottery goes to winner payouts, 13% for operating costs, and the rest, that must total a minimum of 34%, to education from kindergarten through university. Proposition 1C 2009 would do several things.

- It would allow the state to borrow against future revenue by issuing bonds upon which the state must pay interest as well as principal from the General Revenue. Immediately it would introduce \$5 billion into the General Fund, but it would have to be repaid to bond holders. California is currently at the bottom of all 50 states in credit standing, meaning that the interest rates would be extremely high. We could easily be required to pay more than double the face value of the \$5 billion bond. This is “robbing Peter to pay Paul with interest.” It’s poor fiscal sense.

- No money would ever again be directed to education from the state lottery. While that is a small portion of K-14 spending, this nevertheless increases the amount due to education through Proposition 98 from the General Fund.

- It would expand the lottery outlets throughout the state to try to increase revenues from gambling. Lottery outlets would be far more numerous than they currently are. Especially in a recession, encouraging gambling to shore up a budget is utterly immoral.

Failure to pass 1C does create a current budget shortfall of \$5 billion. However, once again, no legislative or executive calculations are looking at the federal stimulus to close some or all of that “hole” in the current 2009-10 budget, which should be our first priority ahead of encouraging gambling.

### **Proposition 1D: Protects Children’s Services Funding. Helps Balance State Budget. Recommendation: OPPOSE**

This proposition “temporarily” redirects \$5 billion from “First 5” program budgets to fund child health and social services over the next five years. It does anything but “protect” children’s ser-

vices funding.

“First 5” was created by Proposition 10 in 1998 to use tobacco tax money to fund a wide variety of programs benefiting pre-school children, from birth to 5 years old. Each county has a First 5 Commission with wide latitude to create programs ranging from preschool to health coverage to prenatal and dental care along with good anti-smoking programs. Much of county First 5 money is saved and encumbered by future contracts and plans for capacity building to add more and wider services. In some counties, the First 5 Commissions have been able to provide universal health coverage to all the county’s children. Because tobacco use is declining, the Commissions have had to exercise good stewardship over what funds they have been given to keep safe the programs they started.

However, the state legislature has decided those encumbered but unspent funds are ‘surplus’ and therefore ripe for the picking. Proposition 1D will take a proposed 50% of those funds from each county, leaving First 5 with no way to build new capacity and even to cover existing contracts. In one county, plans for universal dental care will have to be scrapped. Because tobacco taxes are down, the decision to

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## Ballot Propositions *(Continued from page 8)*

take \$340 million the first year and \$268 million in each of the four succeeding years, it is possible that after three years a given county could have their reserve funds totally gone and that the percentage would actually be 60-70% of First 5 revenues.

Taking money from First 5 to cover state budget issues on other children's programs is hard to justify. Proposition 1D violates the will of voters who twice approved these funds for local health, education, and antismoking programs. Prop. 1D also replaces voter-mandated local control with Sacramento decision-making.

### **Proposition 1E: Mental Health Services Funding. Temporary Reallocation. Helps Balance State Budget. Recommendation: OPPOSE**

This Proposition will redirect funds from the 2004 voter-approved Proposition 63 that set up a statewide system of county and local mental health programs. These programs were supported by a 1% additional tax on upper-income earners and was restricted to be used for only these local mental health programs.

Proposition 1D directs \$230 million per year for two years (2009-10 and 2010-11) to fund a federally mandated mental

health screening program for children and youths under 21 (Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment Program – EPSDT). It is a draw on the state General Fund to meet this federal requirement. Legislators are now looking to the Prop. 63 money as a source of revenue by which California can meet this federal mandate.

Taking this money from the counties means each jurisdiction could incur major costs in homelessness, social service programs, jails and prison operations, and other outflows from their mentally ill populations once again going untreated. Many of the federally-directed pediatric and youth screenings are already done at the county level although the state does share the greater cost than the counties.

California Council of Churches IMPACT originally opposed Proposition 63 due to the concern that the money from the new 2004 tax increase should go to the General Fund. However, we did support the principle of increased and improved local mental health programs. Proposition 1D is now being set up as a 'cash cow' to cover the General Fund mental health mandates.

Destroying much of the Prop. 63 county mental health system, now that it is finally in place, is a highly risky process. Even for two years, capacity can be permanently lost, and people who need services permanently harmed. \$230 million is a fairly small amount that on the local level does significant good, but at the state level may not be as effective, even in meeting the federal requirement.

### **Proposition 1F: Elected Officials' Salaries. Prevents Pay Increases During Budget Deficit Years. Recommendation: OPPOSE**

California voters created a Commission that sets salaries for the Legislature and all other Constitutional officials including the Governor, Treasurer, etc. The Commission has no control over per diem payments for lodging, meals, and other expenses when Legislators are in Sacramento where they do not permanently live. These expenses are tax-free.

Currently, the Constitution does not list the financial condition of the state as a factor the commission must consider when setting the pay and benefits of these officials. In addition, Proposition 6 — approved by voters in November 1972 — prohibits the reduction of elected state officials' salaries during their terms of

*(Continued on the back page)*



*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]

## Parish Concerns

Your thoughts and prayers are requested for Carol Armstrong (Perry Ellwood’s friend); Deanna Karafiath (Tina Datsko’s sister); Waid Johnson (Bill & Betty Cole’s nephew); Brian Lands (Jim Deaton’s friend); Mary Martin; Michelle Repucci (Perry Ellwood’s friend); Ray Riecke (Melanie Hiller’s father); Daniele Ware (Karen Miller’s granddaughter, stationed in Iraq); Gwen Wiggins-Long and family (Yvonne SaMarion’s cousin).

*To put someone on this list, put a note on the Parish Concerns board on the Third Street landing or contact Ruth in the office (562-436-2256 x221 or office@firstchurchlb.org).*

## 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. Just click on any event to see information about it.

## You’ve got a date ...

### Sunday, May 17

10 a.m. Pride Parade marchers commissioned during the service of celebration

### Monday, May 18

6:30 p.m. Air Quality Ministry Team  
 7 p.m. Drop-In Center Committee

### Tuesday, May 19

7 p.m. Personnel Committee (offsite)

### Saturday, May 23

6 p.m. Kindred Spirits Potluck

### Tuesday, May 26

7 p.m. Church Council

### Wednesday, May 27

7 p.m. Sacred Practices

## Ballot Propositions *(Continued from page 9)*

office.

Obviously pay raises in a recession are not good sense. Proposition 1F, however, has a small fiscal savings, if any, since the Commission does not grant raises every year. But since this measure has no effect on per diem amounts, it is not clear there would be a real benefit if the tax-free portion of support is unregulated as well.

In 2004 California Council of Churches IMPACT did support Proposition 56, which called, in part, to restrict pay from Legislators when the budget was late, but raises were not an issue. This measure is punitive and unnecessary and serves no real good. Voting should be for something other than venting one’s frustrations, especially when it has no socially meaningful purpose.

## 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).