



Sunday Celebration Notes from Libby Tigner

Celebrating God's Love Every Sunday at 10 am.

This Sunday is Father's Day, and we will celebrate our fathers and male mentors, caregivers, teachers and friends by presenting each man with a flower and by recognizing and giving thanks for the love of fathers in our liturgy. We'll hear musical offerings from Bellissimo (the adult hand bell choir), soloist Lisa Bode Heard and the Sanctuary Choir. There will be an Information Moment from the Board of Outreach and Social Justice about Bread for the World Offering of Letters, and after church you'll have an opportunity to write letters to your congressional representatives, urging them to enact legislation to fight world hunger.

In my sermon, I'll reflect some on my recent trip to Israel and Palestine, particularly on how I experienced the holy sites. My text will be from the fifth chapter of John – the story about a healing at the pools of Bethesda. I hope to see you there.

SERMON: *Do You Want to Be Whole?*

The Rev. Libby Tigner, preaching

READING: John 5

LITURGISTS: The Rev. Jerry Stinson and Ms. Dorothea MacNeil

Next week Jerry Stinson's sermon title will be "Being Aware of Someone Else's Pain."

In Sunday School This Week

Theme: In the Boat Together

Scripture Focus: Mark 4:35-41

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 "Good People Making a Difference – Palestinians."

Music on Sunday

This Sunday, the choir will sing "Let Their Celestial Concerts All Unite" from the oratorio *Samson* by G. F. Handel. This oratorio was written in 1743 and enjoyed early success in the theaters of England. This particular chorus is a good example of the concertato style of composition that marks the Baroque era. Composers used contrasts by the numbers of instruments, or the color of instruments, alternating forces and varying the dynamic through the use of more or less instrumentation. The piece begins with a two fanfare trumpets in parallel thirds. This is echoed by the chorus and organ. At times the chorus is alone, and then accompanied, then the trumpets are added to all – thus the contrast (concertato). This chorus is typical of Handel and his oratorio writing. See you in church!

Dr. Leland Vail, Minister of Music

Senior Minister's Blog

Jerry Stinson is in Washington, DC this week, so there will be no blog article until Tuesday or Wednesday of next week.

Letters for Bread for the World

By Jin Snelling VII

On Sunday, June 21, YOU can make a difference in the lives of the world's hungry people. After church please come over to the Board of Outreach table and sign a few letters. It only will take a few minutes to sign several form letters to your representative and senators.

The Board of Outreach will take care of mailing them. Thank you.



www.firstchurchlb.org

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Vacation Church School Has a Whole New Look, Feel, and Focus

By Wally Hoeger

Vacation Church School is coming this summer revamped and reenergized! To make our classes more accessible to adults without children, young adults and families, we've switched our time slot from the traditional Monday through Friday format to one month of Tuesdays.

Starting on August 11 and ending on September 1, every Tuesday night from 6 to 8 pm will feature classes for adults and children on religion and science. Do science and religion really work against one another? What can we learn by examining both? With activities and classes for adults to pick and choose each night and fun science experiments tied in with Bible stories for children, there's lots to do each Tuesday. Dinner will be available each night. Keep checking *The Pilgrim* for more information as we get closer!

Kindred Spirits Will Meet June 27

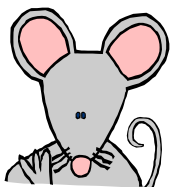
By Ron Cuttriss

Kindred Spirits will meet at 6 pm on Saturday, June 27 at the home of Shelley Sinclair, 2828 East Second Street, Long Beach. Shelley's phone number is 562-439-5641. This will be a potluck, so please bring a dish to serve six to eight people.

Questions may be directed to Ron Cuttriss (310-850-0594) or Deanna Melzian (562-433-4835).

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The Church Mouse has heard...

... Louise Lawler's grandson, Daniel L. Sparks, recently graduated with honors from UC Berkeley, and he was the valedictorian. He won the Mathematics Departmental Citation award, only the second junior college transfer student to do so. In the fall he will enter the Ph.D. program in mathematics at UC Berkeley.

... Laura Kolb, granddaughter of Maxine Cadwell and daughter of Allyson Cadwell and Roberto Kolb, recently received her BBA degree from the Les Roches School of Hotel Management in Switzerland. In addition to graduating with distinction, Laura was chosen unanimously by the professors as the recipient of the cash prize awarded to the student showing the best attitude during the year. Congratulations to Laura!

Amanda Jensen, youngest daughter of Kay Gault and Jerry Stinson, successfully defended her masters thesis in evolutionary ecology from UC Santa Cruz this week. During the course of her research she identified three new species of mullet fish!

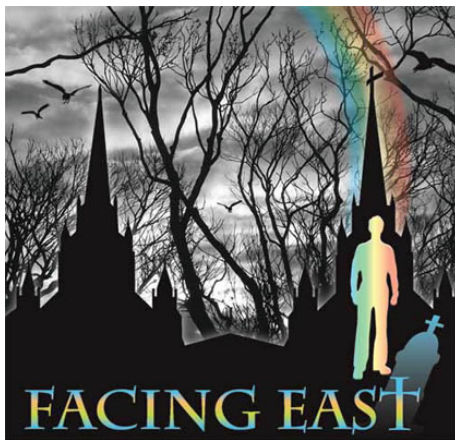


Facing East— First Church Goes to the Theatre on July 5

By Libby Tigner

Facing East is a new play making its LA debut with the International City Theatre. The play is about an upstanding Mormon couple reeling from the suicide death of their excommunicated son. Stuck between their faith and their new reality as they prepare to meet their dead son's partner for the first time, they must come to grips with their own inner demons and the love they lost.

Join First Church friends in going to see this play on Sunday, July 5 at 2 pm. We'll have lunch at the First Church Café, and some will then go to board meetings, finishing up by 1:30. Those who want can carpool to the Long Beach Performing Arts Center. Get your tickets by calling the ICT box office at 562-436-4610 or go to www.internationalcitytheatre.org. Tickets are \$25 if you use the discount code FEPC09.



Note: you are responsible for getting your own ticket.

Support First Church via eScrip and Amazon

There are two easy ways for you to support First Church without any extra expense.

One is to sign up for eScrip. You register any one or all of your existing grocery loyalty, debit and credit cards for use in the program, and participating merchants will make contributions to your chosen group, based on purchases made by you, just by using the cards you have registered. To sign up, go to the church website, www.firstchurchlb.org, and click on "Support the Church" in the left-hand menu, then choose "eScrip."

The other is to shop Amazon via the church website. To do this, you go to the church website, click on "Support the Church" and then "Shop," which will take you to the church's Amazon site. There you will find everything available on Amazon. The church receives a portion of each sale made through our site; the size of that portion is determined by total sales — the more folks shop, the greater the percentage returned to the church.

Thank You Notes from Our Caskey and Merritt Scholarship Recipients

"I'm writing to thank you for choosing to endow me with a scholarship and supporting me in my educational pursuits. I regret that I will be out of the country and thus not present at the June 7 CE Sunday so I could express my gratitude appropriately in person, but the truth is that knowing my church family has invested financially and emotionally in my future is a peerless motivator. I feel honored and privileged to be a part of First Church, and to share in its unwavering love and support."

Casey Holman

"Thank you very much for this wonderful scholarship. I am very excited about this scholarship and am very grateful for the opportunity to use it towards my college experience. I am very excited for college next year and am very happy to have this money to use towards it. Thank you very much for everything!"

Brandon Solem-Kuehl

"I'd just like to take the time to express my gratitude for the scholarship award. I am so very grateful and you must know that had it not been for this and past awards I would not have been able to complete the higher education requirements to transition into a career in counseling. I hope that one day I may be in a position to help someone else along. Again, many, many thanks for all of your support!"

Amy Peer

"I just want to express my gratitude to all of you for your continued support of my educational and vocational goals. I have been lucky enough to receive encouraging words and thoughtful advice from this church community throughout my academic career, which I have truly appreciated. I would especially like to thank the members of the Scholarship Committee for all of the time and effort they put into their positions. This scholarship will allow me to get one step closer to completing my graduate and professional education and embarking on my chosen career path. I feel very blessed to have the support of the wonderful First Church family as I begin the next stage of my education, and I thank you all once again."

Claire de Jong

"I want to express my deep gratitude to the Scholarship Committee and to the congregation as a whole. Receiving the Kenneth Caskey Scholarship means the world to my family and to me. First Church has always played an integral role in my education and maturation. For this I am eternally grateful."

Martin de Jong

"Thank you so much. This helps me ease the burden on my mother (as now I can pay all by myself). I can't wait to tell her! I'm very thankful and grateful."

Daniel Charleston

"On behalf of Californians for Disability Rights Foundation (CDRF) I would like to thank your committee for your generous and thoughtful scholarship funds which have enabled CDRF to give three additional students scholarships. On behalf of these gifted students (Laura Baker, Karen Romero, Yasir Abdelhadi) we again want to thank you for helping us help them."

Stephanie Bussi

CDRF Committee Member



Thank You, First Church!

A big thank you to everyone who attended the Young People's Concert on June 7. It was another wonderful concert and the kids had a great time performing for you. We raised just over \$500 towards the Beloved Bells trip to San Diego, so thank you all for your generous support!

Tracy Halter-Balin

The Coalition on Facebook

The Southern California Nevada Chapter of the United Church of Christ Coalition for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Concerns (The Coalition) has a new Facebook page: www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=86444217654.

Reflections from the War on Torture

Dr. David Gushee, Professor of Christian Ethics at Mercer University, will speak on Sunday, June 28 at 3 pm at St. Mark Presbyterian Church (2200 San Joaquin Hills, Newport Beach), addressing the need for and benefit of bringing evangelical and mainline Christians together in justice work. Sponsored by Progressive Christians Uniting. For more info: eweller@pcu-la.org or 714-721-6554. To carpool, contact Dale Whitney (562-433-3881).

Letter to the Editor of the *Press-Telegram*

This letter was printed on June 10, 2009.

I was struck by the juxtaposition of two stories that appeared in the May 27 edition of the *Press-Telegram*, and by the appalling lack of sensitivity displayed by the editors. On the front page was a story about the demonstration by folks who were protesting the California State Supreme Court's decision which upheld Proposition 8, and which denied equal marriage rights to countless Californians. On page 3, there was a human interest story about a heterosexual couple who met as graduate students at CSULB and are now planning their wedding.

Please don't get me wrong. I'm very happy for them, and wish them all the best. But last year, when same-sex marriage was legal, I performed wedding ceremonies for over a dozen same-sex couples — some of whom have been together longer than the couple you profiled have been alive.

I am heartbroken that I can no longer say "by the power vested in me by the State of California" when I join same-sex couples in marriage. And I wonder, when will the *Press-Telegram* run a similar feature story about a homosexual couple?

*Rev. Libby Tigner, Associate Minister
First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ*

Survey of Homeless People in Long Beach Needs Volunteers

Long Beach Homeless Connections, a coalition of public and private interest groups in Long Beach, is seeking volunteers to help conduct a survey of the homeless people in central Long Beach in July. The mandatory training will be on Monday, July 20 at 3-5 pm at First Baptist Church (1000 Pine Avenue, Long Beach), and the survey will be on July 21-23 from 5 to 7:30 am, departing from First Baptist.

Long Beach Homeless Connections is co-led by PATH Partners and Mental Health of America, and other members are the City of Long Beach, various homeless service and housing agencies, the police and fire departments, CSULB, local hospitals, faith groups, business groups and residents.

If you are interested in helping with the survey, please contact Grace Yi (323-644-2213 or gracey@epath.org).



The Pilgrim
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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 Rina Hildebrand (Bob Hildebrand’s mother); Tom Nettifee upon the death of his mother; Carl Becker (Janet Rhodes’ friend); Ruth Cannon (Jerry Cannon’s sister); Heather Paine (Joanne Paine’s granddaughter); Lloyd Wright; and the family of Geomara Weitzel, who recently died (Melanie Hiller’s friends).

In the armed forces: Daniele Ware (Karen Miller’s granddaughter, stationed in Iraq).

Becoming a Church Member

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, contact Rev. Jerry Stinson.

Online Calendar

See the church calendar at www.firstchurchlb.org/calendar.html.

You’ve got a date ...

Saturday, June 20

5 pm: Guest Chef Program

Sunday, June 21

11:30 am: Bread for the World letter writing; Church tour

Tuesday, June 23

7 pm: Church Council

Thursday, June 25

7 pm: Social Justice Committee

Saturday, June 27

6 pm: Kindred Spirits Potluck

Sunday, June 28

11:30 am: Forum on torture

Summer in the City - DAYS Fundraiser a Success!



Naomi Rainey (head of the Long Beach NAACP), Michele Wilson, Ginger Heil’s mother, and Ginger Heil. Photo courtesy of Adreana Langston; see more at www.kodakgallery.com/adreanainlongbeach/adreanapics/d_a_y_s_summer_in_the_city_june_2009.