



The Redwoods Log

January 2014 - Redwoods Presbyterian Church, 110 Magnolia Ave., Larkspur, CA 415-924-4832 www.redwoodspres.org

From The Rev. Dr. Cornel Barnett

Dear Friends,

With an early December LOG deadline, I am writing this letter in the middle of the month, in fact the afternoon of our annual Spirit of Christmas Concert and Alternative Christmas Fair, with gifts to buy and delicious treats to eat.

What a whopping success it all was. Praise God! We do all things to the glory of God and some of our members shine greatly at times like this. We know who they are and we thank them immensely.

Stephanie magnificently planned and executed the concert. The after-school choir was a page out of a Norman Rockwell painting. Did anyone take a photograph? The adult choral and bell choirs performed like pros. The Korean dance was exquisite. It was simply wonderful. Christmas joy continued in the Fellowship Hall with a palpable presence of the Spirit.

I designed the Christmas Eve worship service this morning and am looking forward to the service. It will have passed by the time this LOG is read and I know we will be looking back to that service as grateful as we are today.

I am so happy that Redwoods is alive and well in this center of Marin and this corner of the world. It is living up to its hundred-plus history.

Talking of history, 2013 is history. By-and-large, it was a good year for our church, although some very dear members passed from this life into the next and we remember them fondly for their beautiful lives committed to God through this church. New members affiliated with our church and other new and older members are faithful and committed attendees.

In 2013, the Session, our governing body, began their meetings with discussions of church health and growth. They will continue these discussions in the New Year. The Board of Deacons and the Session will meet together more regularly in the future for the same conversations. I became a member of a presbytery pastor's group, called a "missional cohort" that meets monthly for the same purpose.

Churches throughout the country are thinking and engaging as creatively as they can to be a vital presence in our communities and to attract people to our churches where meaning is found, real relationships are formed, where we connect with the Divine who in turn inspires us to live more meaningful, caring and compassionate lives.

My final words of year 2013 to you all are "THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU." You are a wonderful community. You make it all happen. You are God's servants for good works in church, home and work. Well done! My first words for the New Year are "THANK YOU, GOD!" and "KEEP HOPE ALIVE!"

Peace and blessings,
Cornel

January Church Mouse

Greetings from Mr. Mouse and Spouse!



To our Redwoods Church Family!

This has been some year for the Mouse people! We survived! Mouse Spouse is recovering after spine surgery and hopes to be back with you soon!

Thanks to you all for sending us your news and special thanks to Mini Mouse who has "carried on" beautifully in 2013! Thanks for all for the cards and telephone messages. Our wish is that your Christmas brought you joy, and hope and peace and you have a happy New Year too! **Mr. Mouse & Spouse**

Membership/Fellowship Committee News

From Chair Nancy Rademacher

Happy New Year! I would like to thank you all for your wonderful participation in our committee's events in 2013 and we look forward to many more fun times in 2014. Our first event of the year is the Saturday Breakfast, scheduled for January 11. The presentation will be by Zero Waste Marin and following is the information they have provided to us:

"Looking for ways to reduce waste at home and find out where items like soiled napkins or takeout containers belong? Join us on January 11th for a brief discussion to learn about the importance of using our bins and more. Local experts from Zero Waste Marin will provide easy tips to help you make smart pre-purchase decisions, save money on your grocery bill and figure out how to easily dispose of confusing household items."

The light potluck breakfast begins at 9:30 am with the presentation from 10-11 am. We always ask attendees to bring something to share.

Best wishes for a wonderful New Year! **Nancy**

Mission Outreach Committee News From Chair Debbie Lundberg

Noel, Nowell, Noelle and Thanks

How beautiful Fellowship Hall looked on the afternoon of our Christmas Fair with the lovely tree, decorations, sponsors' tables and fantastic refreshment table! The room was buzzing with good will and joy. We all felt the joy of bringing gifts of light and love, caring and security, nourishment and shelter to people around the earth. How wonderful to share in the true blessedness of Christmas giving.

The New Year will provide us with many mission outreach opportunities and challenges. We look forward to meeting them and feel blessed to be able to do so. For the wonderful support by the members and friends of Redwoods throughout 2013 – Good Jobs Well Done! Blessings, joy and peace to all. **Debbie**

Deacons' Notes

From Deacon Gabriele Putzi

I have the distinct honor of lifting up to you three of your most dedicated church officers who are finishing their terms of office as Deacons—Dick Judd, Elein Phipps and Marilyn Sutherland, all of whom have offered their many talents to our congregation for years. I also have the pleasure of asking you to join the Deacons in welcoming our newest members, Tani Girton, Bonnie Kaiser and repeat Deacon (many times over) Barbara Slusher. We look forward to working with these wonderful people during the next three years.

Happy New Year!, **Gabriele**

Earth Prayer

From Helen Morita

The finest workers in stone are not copper or steel tools
But the gentle touch of air and
Water working at their leisure
With a liberal allowance of time.

Henry David Thoreau

Helen

Music Notes

**From Stephanie Ryder
Interim Music Director**

Joy to the World! The Lord Has Come!

What a joyful and fulfilling season of music we have had at Redwoods. Our concert at the Tam was ethereal. The acoustics in the beautiful concert hall were astounding, and the bells rang out with the most joyful and heavenly sounds! Thank you all who helped to make this such a successful event, and thank you to our dedicated Bell Choir. I see bright things for our future!

Likewise, the Spirit of Christmas concert was an uplifting event with special guests John Girton (violin) and Jong Lee (Korean dance), and soloist Marilyn Sutherland. The choir has been diligently rehearsing these songs, and it was beautiful how everything came together. We were blessed to have Dan Phipps play the cello at our worship service on December 8, and my dear friend, violinist Liz Matthews, play at the Christmas Eve service.

In the new year, we will be expanding our repertoire and hopefully hearing more soloists! It is a talented group. Recently, I read the choir parts from "Singing as a Spiritual Practice." This article documented not only the physical health benefits associated with singing (reduction of stress, lowered blood pressure, increase in "feel-good" hormones), but the spiritual benefits as well. There is something profound that happens when we come together in song, giving praise and glory to our Creator God. Hallelujah!

May God's peace be with you, **Stephanie**

A Word from your Intern

**From SFTS Intern
Stephanie Ryder**

Greetings from your SFTS Intern! It has been a wonderful four months at Redwoods! I have so enjoyed getting to know all of you, and look forward to our year ahead together!

Our Bible study of Acts continues to provide much

thought-provoking discussion and questioning, as we learn about and reflect on how the original followers of Christ gathered as and in community. Are the issues really that much different than those we experience today? I value the depth of sharing and reflecting that the members bring to this group. We are so blessed.

I am grateful that some of our dear children from the after-school program (and two talented extras!) were able to sing at the concert and stay for the fair. I look forward to more fun and music with them in January.

I continued to be nourished and inspired by this special community at Redwoods. Your care for one another is palpable, and I consider it an invaluable gift to be a part of it.

Stephanie

After School Program

From Coordinator Melissa Gill

Our successful "After School: Study, Fun and Music at Redwoods," for children in grades 1-4 starts its second session on January 22. The 12-week program—study with Suellen Barnett and Molly Rademacher, snacks by Diane Forster and singing with Stephanie Ryder—takes place in Fellowship Hall on Wednesdays from 2-4 pm. Cost is \$72 (or \$6/session).

We had seven lively and fun children last session and hope for more. Thanks for telling your friends and neighbors about our program!

Melissa

Happy Birthdays!

From Deacons Moderator Polly Gorder

Join the Deacons in wishing the following members and friends a happy birthday this month:

- 8 – Zach Paulson ('96)
- 11 – Rory Little
- 11 – Wayne Slemp
- 19 – Clay Wiens
- 23 – Elein Phipps
- 25 – Molly Rademacher ('85)

Add your name to our birthday list by contacting

3 office@redwoodspres.org or at 924-4832. **Polly**

Quiet Corner From Cornel Barnett

Enlarging Devotional Experiencing

Many of us have heard of Lectio Divina. It helps us go deeper with scripture or any written text. I will cover that in the future. This month's practice enlarges this kind of practice. It is called, "devotional experiencing," a term coined by Harvey Seifert, author of *Explorations in Meditation and Contemplation*. This article draws on his insights.

Among traditional forms of private worship, devotional reading is particularly suited for greater exposure to the advantages of our environment. When we read devotionally, we ask "What is God trying to say to me through this material?" or "What insights can I get into truth more fundamental and ultimate than is provided through other forms of reading?"

Devotional reading is done with both a Godward and a personal reference. The reader is intent upon finding the deepest and most important illumination about the most fundamental issues of life, and relating these meanings specifically to his or her own life. Uppermost in the reader's mind is not a scholarly problem to be solved, or an imaginary tale to unfold, but a deeply authentic personal message to hear, an action to take.

Six suggestions may make our devotional approach more helpful.

- Let the material speak, instead of interpreting it to mean what we want it to say.
- Read thoughtfully. Devotional reading is not done in a hurry. Insightful reading has its greatest value when it stimulates thoughtful meditation. Those who seriously practice devotional reading should usually read less and meditate more.
- We read until a luminous phrase lets important light shine through for us. Then we close the book and meditate. It is not quantity of words but quality of meaning that we are after.
- Mark and re-read fertile material.

- Broaden the range of insights by reaching out for well-chosen new material. Contemporary data is necessary for fully understanding our situation and choosing specific next steps.

The concept of devotional reading can be expanded to other kinds of sensory and extrasensory stimuli. God is trying to say a great deal to us through forms of devotional seeing other than the printed page, as in sunsets, chapel windows, or children's faces. There can be devotional listening to music or laughter or sermons. We can have eyes and ears in our hands as we touch a baby's hand or the bark of a tree. We might even think of devotional smelling of incense or flowers.

Beyond physical sense experience, all our sensibilities can be involved, including our emotional, intellectual, and spiritual capacities. In experiences of love, intuition, creative thinking, or aesthetic response, the whole person can be devotionally alert to the guidance of God.

We are still asking, "What is God trying to announce to me about more ultimate meaning?"

For developing a devotional approach to selected experiences, we need to cultivate a deeper involvement, to be intensely aware of what is happening. Also, we need to select experiences more carefully. If we try to experience everything deeply, we experience nothing fully. The cluttered life leads to confusion and mediocrity.

Use experiences as pointers to deeper meanings. Ask a series of questions behind the questions, moving from "What is this?" to more ultimate reflections like "What is the plan of God?" We see nothing completely for what it really is until we see it in its total context, which is to say until we relate it to God.

Begin reading the Sermon on the Mount at Matthew 5:1 and continue reading until a "luminous phrase" appears which speaks directly to you. Stop reading and begin meditating on the meaning of the phrase for your life.

Cornel

January 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
5 Epiphany Holy Communion 9:15 Choir 10:00 Worship 10:15 Children's Education 11:00 Fellowship 11:15 Deacons 11:15 Mission Outreach Cmte	<i>6</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>9</i> 7:30 Choir	<i>10</i>	<i>11</i> 9:00 Saturday Breakfast
12 9:15 Choir 10:00 Worship 10:15 Children's Education 11:00 Fellowship 11:15 M/F Cmte 12:00 Mill Street	<i>13</i>	<i>14</i> 9:00 Bell Choir 10:30 Bible Study	<i>15</i>	<i>16</i> 7:30 Choir	<i>17</i>	<i>18</i>
19 Birthday Sunday 9:15 Choir 10:00 Worship 10:15 Children's Education 11:00 Fellowship 11:15 Worship/CE Cmte	<i>20</i>	<i>21</i> 7:00 Session	<i>22</i> LOG Deadline 2:00 Wednesday Afterschool Program	<i>23</i> LOG Mailing 7:30 Choir	<i>24</i>	<i>25</i>
26 9:15 Choir 10:00 Worship 10:15 Children's Education 11:00 Fellowship	<i>27</i>	<i>28</i>	<i>29</i> 2:00 Wednesday Afterschool Program	<i>30</i>	<i>31</i>	

Redwoods Presbyterian Church
110 Magnolia Avenue
Larkspur, California 94939

Helping Hands in December – Thank you so much!



Mill Street Shelter Meals

Maisie Campbell, Debbie Lundberg, Margie Egger, Margaret Erwin, Diane Forster, Melissa Gill, Tani & John Girton, Polly & Jim Gorder, James Holmes, Gabriele & Robert Putzi, Nancy Rademacher, Ed Vorous, Joyce Wells

Liturgists, Greeters & Ushers

- Dec 1** Rademacher Family (L), June Bellen (G)
Debbie Lundberg (U), Margie Egger (U)
- Dec 8** Joyce Wells (L), Melissa Gill (G)
Iris Giacotto (U), Suellen Barnett (U)
- Dec 15** Melissa Gill (L), Barbara Slusher (G)
Nancy Rademacher (U), Ani Lelea (U)
- Dec 22** Clay Wiens (L), Suellen Barnett (G),
Margie Egger (U), Melissa Gill (U)
- Dec 24** Multiple Readers (L), Margaret Erwin (G),
Maisie Campbell (U), Jim Campbell (U)

Visit and Share our Website!

A great way to keep up with what is happening at Redwoods
and to introduce the church to your family and friends is via

www.redwoodspres.org