



The Redwoods Log

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

From The Rev. Dr. Cornel Barnett

Dear Friends,

The New Year is well on its way and we have enacted annual rituals and transformations such as celebrating the mission and ministry of the church in the annual congregational meeting and the reconfiguration of the session and deacons.

Ministry in the church is like a river. It is the same river with different flows. Sometimes a new tributary forms and the river widens. Sometimes a tributary dries up and the river narrows or reverts to its original size. All along there is the flow of God's spirit-filled water. Most members of the session and deacons continue from last year but the groups as a whole are different and newly invigorated.

The names of our officers appear at the back of our worship bulletin. Please thank them for serving and please ask them what they do. There could be a place for you on one of the committees.

The committees meet once a month or when called. Committees that would welcome participation are Worship and Christian Education (Melissa Gill); Mission Outreach (Debbie Lundberg); Membership and Fellowship (Nancy Rademacher) and Facilities (Clay Wiens).

Speak to these chairs or me anytime about the committees and other ways to get involved in the church. I like the metaphor of the church as a ship, a working ship such as the old steam ship where it takes the entire crew to keep the ship full steam ahead.

Everyone is involved in some way. Even our less active and homebound members have a role. They pray for the church and for the more active members. The more active members work and pray for them and for all of us.

The Easter Cycle is back. It begins with Lent which begins with the Ash Wednesday worship service with imposition of ashes on March 5 at 7 pm. This is a wonderful and meaningful worship service and I encourage everyone to attend if they can. It is a perfect way to begin one's Lenten reflections and commitments.

Lent continues with the Sundays of Lent and with five weekly gatherings at the church for supper and a spiritual practice session. The sessions have been offered almost every year since I came on board and have been well received. This year Stephanie will facilitate a practice called, "Creative Writing as a Spiritual Practice," based on Pat Schneider's Amherst Writers & Artists method which is popular in seminary circles.

All of us can write, therefore, all of us can benefit from this safe and supportive community to reflect, create, and connect. The Wednesdays are March 12, 19 and 26, and April 2 and 9. Supper begins at 6:30 pm and the practice at 7:15 pm for an hour.

Let us offer up our seasons and turnings to God.

Peace and blessings,
Cornel

March Church Mouse

From the Intrepid Mr. Mouse and Spouse!



To our Redwoods Church Family:
Greetings from the “grab bar stage of recovery” for Spouse! Kudos for Diane Forster and Mini Mouse Mari, super good news hounds! Thanks to Redwoods people for prayers and good thoughts (they work!), and cards, letters, food, visits, calls and Valentines. Keep the prayers coming, we need them!

Redwoods Giant fans are revved up for first game on March 31! Time to take the rally rags out to the ball-park!

The Putzi’s daughter, Simone, treated Gabriele and Robert with a trip to Bryce and Zion Canyons in Utah. How about that for a good daughter? Sure sounds like fun! Also traveling are Melissa Gill and son, Zack. They are checking out colleges in the Pacific Northwest.

Herb and Laverne Schmidt say “hello” to every one at Redwoods. Laverne is receiving therapy at home. We wish her well!

Our seminary intern and interim music director, Stephanie Ryder, shared her interesting and heart-warming faith journey at the February breakfast. We are blessed she is continuing her journey here at Redwoods. So nice to see Sibylla Putzi there too.

That Saturday Alan Edmonson became a Redwoods hero! He stopped the water leaking onto Fellowship Hall’s hardwood floor by climbing a ladder in the storm and clearing the gutters! Thanks, Alan, for saving the day!

Tani and John Girton were happy to announce son Ben’s 18th birthday on Sunday February 9 . Sal and Diana’s son Hunter turned two on February 12.

Don’t miss the sweet valentines on the back board in Fellowship Hall that were made by the children in the Redwoods after school program. They had great fun making them and also decorating the yummy and sweet heart cookies that Mollie baked. Then Stephanie gave the lucky children a piano lesson!

Speaking of sweet hearts...Jolyne & Lou Liberati recently celebrated 63 years of marriage!

Diane Forster’s grandson Lucas and family from Red Bluff visited to introduce their new daughter, Cecelia, to great-grandma Diane. She now has five great-grandchildren!

A special note about Mr. Mouse and Spouse: Marian Judd is doing well and keeping up with therapy at home. She is learning to use her walker with help from nurse, Dick, who she says, “keeps her putting one foot in front of the other.” Dick’s Moh’s surgery on his ear is healing well. Their daughter, Liza Salimbeni, signed them up for the Meals on Wheels program. The person in charge of scheduling the meals was Margaret Erwin’s daughter, Ramona!

So long for now!

Mr. Mouse & “Wobbly Walker”

Deacons Update From Deacon Tani Girton

Friends,
The Deacons are currently updating the Prayer Chain which is how we engage the power of prayer in our Redwoods community. We use the prayer chain to quickly spread the word through a telephone calling tree when our friends and family are in need of help and support. It’s a way we can all do something when we might otherwise feel helpless.

If you would like to be included in the prayer chain, please let any Deacon know. And whether you are on the prayer chain or not, if you ever feel like you need a wave of support from your church community, please don’t hesitate to let any Deacon know and we will all pray with and for you!

Thank You and Blessings,
Tani

Music Notes

**From Stephanie Ryder
Interim Music Director**

Hello from your Interim Music Director!

The Adult Choir and Bell Choir have not missed a beat! The Bell Choir is preparing to play for Sunday service on March 9, the first Sunday of Lent. I continue to be amazed at the talent of these musicians as they so fluently play through a wide range of hymns. It is such a blessing to be able to hear the sound of these gorgeous bells.

The Adult Choir has been learning new music, blessing us with solos, and singing more frequently during the Offertory. Please join in during this time as you hear the songs sung by choir members in the pews. The lyrics are often simple, such as "Thank you, Lord; thank you, Lord; thank you, Lord; I just want to thank you, Lord." Big "thank you" to Polly who has been bringing her guitar to practices and playing with us on Sundays

The Redwood Family Band will be gathering to perform on Friday, March 21 at 6 pm! The Putzis have so generously offered to cook corned beef and cabbage in honor of St. Patrick's Day. It will be a festive evening! Please let me know if you would like to participate.

With the love and joy of Christ
Stephanie

A Word from your Intern

**From SFTS Intern
Stephanie Ryder**

Greetings from your SFTS Intern!

I appreciated the opportunity to speak about my faith journey at the February breakfast. A big "thank you" to all who came out on such a wet and blustery day. Your presence was so warm and welcoming!

I am at the halfway point of my internship here already, and it has been such an awesome experience being with all of you. Redwoods Pres is a beautiful and caring family.

Bible Study continues to be enriching and thought-provoking as we study *Acts* on Tuesday mornings. We warmly welcome anyone interested in joining us for this time of learning and sharing together.

The Wednesday after-school group has been even more fun this year as the children learn to play the piano! We appreciate your support of this new program and please tell friends and neighbors about it!

I am looking forward to preaching on Transfiguration Sunday, March 2, and also to leading the traditional Lenten series—five Wednesday evenings from March 12 to April 9 that will begin with a soup supper at 6:30 pm and continue with a spiritual practice from 7:15-8:15 pm. This year the theme of the series will be "Creative Writing as a Spiritual Practice" based on Pat Schneider's Amherst Writers and Artists method.

The sessions will use writing to delve into our relationship with our spirit/soul and the divine. Writing ability is not a pre-requisite and neither is it the focus of the sessions. Rather it is merely one of many vehicles that can be used to facilitate our spiritual journey.

As Schneider says, "Whether we write as an act of personal discovery, as a form of prayer in the sense of the deepest cry and search of our spirits, or as a means of having a voice in the world, writing can be a fundamental act of the human spirit." All are welcome! If you would like more information about the sessions, please contact me at 992-2411 or stephy-der1@gmail.com.

Grace and Peace,
Stephanie

Happy Birthdays!

From Deacons Moderator Polly Gorder

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

3 – LaVerne Schmidt, 16 – Marilyn Sutherland
24 – Harry Richards, 25 – Ed Vorous

Add your name to our birthday list by contacting office@redwoodspres.org or at 924-4832. **Polly**

Membership/Fellowship Committee News

From Chair Nancy Rademacher

Greetings from the Membership/Fellowship Committee!

We would like to begin by highlighting two of our new members: Anna Barnett and Alan Edmondson. Anna and Alan have been involved with Redwoods Church for quite some time and have both shared their many talents with us. We are delighted they have decided to become members of this congregation.

As most of know, Anna, is the daughter of our pastor and wife, Cornel and Suellen Barnett. She was born in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa and moved with her family to California (San Anselmo) when she was 2. Since then, the family has lived all over the U.S. — Jacksonville, Florida; Staten Island, New York and Calistoga, California where Anna completed high school.

Anna was a Rotary Exchange student during her junior year in high school and lived in Brazil. She graduated from U.C. Santa Cruz with a B.A. in American Studies and a Masters in Education. She also has a California Multiple Subject Teaching Credential. She has had a wide variety of jobs including camp counselor, working in restaurants, soccer coach and referee. She has taught fourth grade in three different school districts and is currently a Guest Teacher (substitute teacher) in Marin County schools.

Anna has been a Presbyterian her whole life and served as an Elder in Calistoga. She loves to hike, create art, sing, dance, garden, cook, read, write, listen to music, swim, play, and share in fellowship. Anna has joined the choir and helps on Wednesdays with the afterschool program when she can.

Alan was born in San Diego and was raised in Palo Alto where he graduated from high school. He studied at UC Berkeley and St. Mary's College. He has worked as an oil explorationist and is currently a high school history teacher. He loves the outdoors, hiking,

reading, and creating poetry. Alan has shared his poetry with us at our monthly breakfast, during last year's Lenten Supper & Spiritual Practices and during worship. Alan and Anna also participated in a breakfast program on hiking in the Bay Area for which they are experts.

We welcome Anna and Alan to the Redwoods family!

Please join us for on March 15 for our Saturday breakfast when a friend of Joyce Wells, Tory Brady, will be our speaker. Tory will show photos and describe her work with Tibetan Buddhist monks and nuns in India. Tony is one of a group of Western scientists and educators helping these monastics to become science leaders in their communities.

Started by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, this program, called "Science for Monks," is intended to bring science education into the monastic curriculum. The goal is to have a "science center" in each monastery or nunnery that will be open to the resident monks and nuns of all ages and to the neighboring communities as well. We appreciate Tory's willingness to share her unique experience in India with us. The light potluck breakfast begins at 9:30 am, with the program from 10-11 am.

You are cordially invited to the soup suppers being held before the Lenten Spiritual Practice sessions on Wednesday evenings from March 12 to April 2 at 6:30 pm. Please join us for a supper of homemade soup, salad and fellowship!

Celebrate the Irish! A corned beef and cabbage dinner is scheduled for Friday, March 21 and Gabriele and Robert Putzi will once again share their culinary expertise with us. The Redwoods Church Family Band will also entertain us—a special treat that I know we all look forward to enjoying. Please mark your calendars for this well-loved event and invite family, neighbors and friends.

Peace and blessings,
Nancy

Mission Outreach

Committee News

From Chair Debbie Lundberg

A Request Answered

Tam House is an independent, senior living cooperative nestled in the suburbs of San Anselmo. This facility is part of the Ross Valley Ecumenical Housing Association and a private home where tenants share common indoor and outdoor living spaces. Prospective tenants must be at least 63 years of age. This is a completely independent living residence and does not provide personal services or a medical or nursing staff.

Recently, Redwoods Presbyterian Church received an e-mail from the manager of the Tam House, Chris Highland, asking if we could help these seniors maintain their home. They had recently had unexpected expenses, specifically the need to fix a dishwasher and dryer. Our Mission Outreach Committee responded to the request sending \$200 to help with much needed repairs. "Thanks Be To God" we were able to do so!

Something for Nothing?

Almost...Read On!

Since 1996, the Box Tops for Education program has helped schools across America earn cash for the things they need. Support our schools today and see what a difference you can make! And it is easy to do!

How? By clipping box tops from hundreds of products! Once you start looking, you'll see these little pink coupons everywhere! Each box top coupon is worth 10¢ for your school. Each eligible school participating in the Box Tops for Education program may earn up to, but not more than \$20,000 per year from the Clip program.

The program begins March 2 of every year. For a complete list of products go to www.boxtops.4education.com or check out printed list available in Fellowship Hall. Please bring the clipped box tops to church and deposit them in marked container found in Fellowship Hall on the table directly to

your left as you enter the room. Thanks to all of you who have faithfully collected box tops. Keep up the good work!

Debbie

Souperbowl of Caring

From Member Jan Salas

The vision statement of the "Souperbowl of Caring" is "Transform the time around the Super Bowl into the nation's largest celebration of giving and serving." This year, and for so many years, the generosity and caring of Redwoods has been part of that vision.

On February 2, Superbowl Sunday, the day we worshipped with the scouts, we also contributed to the SouperBowl of Caring. Members and friends of Redwoods were asked to bring one can of soup, and/or a dollar to add to the soup pot in Fellowship Hall. We received dozens of cans of soup and \$61, all of which has been sent to the Marin/San Francisco Food Bank. At the same time, 5,985 other participating churches and groups collected \$7,340,446 in cash and food items. We at Redwoods Presbyterian Church are proud to be a part of those amazing statistics.

The mission of the Marin/San Francisco Food Bank is to end hunger in San Francisco and Marin. Since the economic downturn in 2008, they have seen record numbers of people pushed to the point of hunger. The Food Bank becomes a lifeline for those people. In 2013, they distributed five million pounds of food in Marin County, enough for more than 12,000 meals per day. For more information on the incredible work they do, visit www.sfmfoodbank.org.

Jan

Earth Prayers

From Helen Morita

The prayer below by Thich Nhat Hanh is from *Earth Prayers* edited by Roberts and Amidon.

Waking up this morning, I smile.
Twenty four brand new hours are before me.
I vow to live fully in each moment
And to look at all beings with eyes of compassion.

Helen

Quiet Corner From Cornel Barnett

Contemplation

Contemplation is different from discursive meditation described last month. The emphasis in contemplation is on feeling rather than thinking, and on intuition rather than logic. Instead of a consciously directed sequence of thought, it is the effortless “prayer of quiet,” an open waiting before God. “Be still, and know...” (Psalm 46:10).

In its later stages, contemplation tends to become an experience of simple awareness, beyond words as well as thought. Along with such a heightened emotional response, contemplation can also contribute to deeper understanding. Once again, this article is indebted to Harvey Seifert’s book, *Explorations in Meditation and Contemplation*.

Aids to Contemplation

Contemplation involves quietness and openness before God. We move from compulsive frenzy to relaxed receptivity. We turn conscious attention from miscellaneous demands and activities to simple, alert awareness before God as the basic unifying reality. Along with this fundamental attitude, two general approaches have been used to prepare the way for contemplative experience.

One is to empty the mind, insofar as possible, leaving only a deep, quiet openness. If thoughts occur they are gently laid aside. A frequent suggestion is counting one’s breaths, since this is one concentration that will not trigger our usual distracting thoughts. One may count to ten and then start over, or start over whenever one loses track of the count.

In his excellent discussion of the health benefits of relaxation, Herbert Benson recommends thinking “one” for each breath. Another way to concentrate on the breath is to fix the attention just outside the tip of the nose and to be continuously aware of the movement of each breath in and out of the nostrils. Some prefer to concentrate on the movement of the diaphragm.

A second approach to contemplation also involves relaxation and receptivity. Instead of emptying the mind, it narrowly focuses the mind, restricting awareness to a single object or word. For example, a word or brief phrase (often called a mantra) is silently repeated over and over, like the rhythmic chiming of a clock or swinging of a pendulum. After a period of repetition the mantra may fade while simple awareness or feeling takes over.

A mantra can be used to open awareness to religious meaning. Such a mantra could be a single word like *God, peace, joy, power, or love*. Or the mantra could be a phrase like “God is love,” “the peace of God,” or “Use me.”

Through the centuries, especially in Eastern Orthodox churches, the so-called “Jesus Prayer” has been used as a mantra. In its long form this is, “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner.” In one of its shorter versions it becomes, “Lord, have mercy (*Kyrie Eleison*).” Francis of Assisi is said to have repeated through an entire night, “My God and my All! What am I and What art Thou!”

Additional Approaches

Somewhat similar in concentrating attention is listening contemplatively to music. While keeping the analytical mind as silent as possible, we let the music permeate our being.

In a way similar to the use of a mantra, one can concentrate on a single visual object. Without cognitive thinking, one simply gazes at a cross, a candle flame, a flower, a picture of Christ, the eraser on a pencil, the head of a match, etc.

Still another way to open ourselves to a free flow of awareness is by imagining moving images. We can either sit quietly to receive whatever images float to the surface of conscious awareness, or we can direct the imagery to the extent of choosing the general picture, and then allowing the scene spontaneously to unfold.

God bless your contemplative experiences this month.

March 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2 <i>Holy Communion</i> 9:15 Choir 10:00 Worship 10:15 Children's Education 11:00 Fellowship 11:15 Deacons 11:15 Mission Outreach Committee	3	4 9:00 Bell Choir 10:30 Bible Study Support Group	5 2:00 Wednesday Afterschool Program 7:00 Ash Wednesday Service	6 7:30 Choir	7	1/8
9 <i>1st Sunday of Lent</i> 9:15 Choir 10:00 Worship 10:15 Children's Education 11:00 Fellowship 12:00 Mill Street	10 7:00 Spirit and Work Support Group	11 9:00 Bell Choir 10:30 Bible Study Support Group 7:00 Membership Fellowship Committee	12 2:00 Wednesday Afterschool Program 6:30 Lenten Supper & Spiritual Practice	13 7:30 Choir	14	15
16 <i>Birthday Sunday</i> <i>2nd Sunday of Lent</i> 9:15 Choir 10:00 Worship 10:15 Children's Education 11:00 Fellowship 11:15 Worship/CE Cmte	17	18 9:00 Bell Choir 10:30 Bible Study Support Group 7:00 Session	19 <i>LOG Deadline</i> 2:00 Wednesday Afterschool Program 6:30 Lenten Supper & Spiritual Practice	20 7:30 Choir	21 6:00 Fellowship Dinner	22 9:00 Saturday Breakfast
23 <i>3rd Sunday of Lent</i> 9:15 Choir 10:00 Worship 10:15 Children's Education 11:00 Fellowship	24	25 9:00 Bell Choir 10:30 Bible Study Support Group	26 2:00 Wednesday Afterschool Program 6:30 Lenten Supper & Spiritual Practice	27 <i>LOG Mailing</i> 7:30 Choir	28	29
30 <i>4th Sunday of Lent</i> 9:15 Choir 10:00 Worship 10:15 Children's Education 11:00 Fellowship 11:15 Prayer Support Group	April 1	2 9:00 Bell Choir 10:30 Bible Study Support Group	3 2:00 Wednesday Afterschool Program 6:30 Lenten Supper & Spiritual Practice	4 7:30 Choir	5	6

Redwoods Presbyterian Church
110 Magnolia Avenue
Larkspur, California 94939

Helping Hands in February – Thank you so much!



Mill Street Shelter Meals

Anna Barnett, Suellen Barnett, Karen Carmody, Alan Edmonson,
Margaret Erwin, Diane Forster, Polly & Jim Gorder, Jolyne Liberati,
Debbie Lundberg, Nancy Rademacher, Ed Vorous, Joyce Wells

Liturgists, Greeters & Ushers

Feb 2 Ed Vorous (L), Ani Lelea (G)
Ani Lelea (U), Melissa Gill (U)
Feb 9 Nancy Rademacher (L), Debbie Lundberg (G)
Suellen Barnett (U), Iris Giacotto (U)
Feb 16 Ani Lelea (L), Melissa Gill (G)
Nancy Rademacher (U), June Bellen (U)
Feb 23 Suellen Barnett (L), Elein Phipps (G),
Debbie Lundberg (U), Margie Egger (U)

Mar 2 Debbie Lundberg (L), Dan Phipps (G)
Ani Lelea (U), Suellen Barnett (U)
Mar 9 Polly Gorder (L), Iris Giacotto (G)
Clay Wiens (U), June Bellen (U)
Mar 16 John Girton (L), June Bellen (G)
June Bellen (U), Melissa Gill (U)
Mar 23 Jim Gorder (L), Jan Salas (G),
Debbie Lundberg (U), Nancy Rademacher (U)
Mar 30 Melissa Gill (L), Tani Girton (G),
Clay Weins (U), Margie Egger (U)

Coffee Hour

June Bellen, Membership/Fellowship, Barbara Slusher

Thank you in advance to all March Helping Hands!