



# The Redwoods Log

May 2013 - Redwoods Presbyterian Church, 110 Magnolia Ave., Larkspur, CA 415-924-4832 [www.redwoodspress.org](http://www.redwoodspress.org)

From The Rev. Dr. Cornel Barnett

Dear Friends,

Isn't it lovely to be in spring where nature mirrors the resurrection? Isn't it even better to be celebrating the resurrection in these weeks of Easter? The Rev. Dan White reminded us recently that every Easter has a Good Friday. In other words, for Christians, life always emerges out of death, whatever our experiences of death may be.

They used to call pastors "theologians in residence." Most of us don't stop thinking about theology. It permeates our entire beings. Most of you know that I can't go to a movie and leave my theological mind at the door.

I read recently two theological expressions that impressed me about who I am and who we are as progressive Presbyterians, if you don't mind my saying that.

The first is the slogan of The Christian Century magazine. Below the title on each cover is the phrase: "Thinking Critically. Living Faithfully." People trained in our seminaries, and in most of the mainline church seminaries for that matter, study the Bible, theology, ethics, pastoral counseling, etc., from a critical point of view. The mind is important. But equally important, perhaps more important, is faithful living, and for Christians that means affirming God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

Thinking critically and living faithfully says there's more to the biblical creation story. We embrace a scientific worldview of galaxies, black holes and evolution while affirming that God is and always has been in the mix. We believe it.

On a related front, I've just completed a book by world-renowned philosopher of religion, John Hick, called *Between Faith and Doubt: Dialogues on Religion and Reason*, in which he has a dialogue with an atheist. The atheist represents all the atheists who have asked him questions and spoken to him through his long and illustrious career.

In the end, Hick tells his friend David: "The conclusion of our discussions seems to be that there is no conclusion. I base my faith on religious experience, including my own, while you have never had such an experience and no basis for such faith...So it seems that in the end we have simply to agree to differ. Though I think I do now have a clearer sense of where our fundamental difference is. It's not intellectual but experiential."

Call it living faithfully or religious experience we admit that faith, our faith, is important and one of the most important aspects of our faith is experience of resurrection.

God bless you and peace,  
Cornel

P.S. Please join us at 6:30 pm, Wednesday, May 29, for a soup supper and to hear PCUSA missionary, Kristi van Nostran, share stories about her work in El Salvadore.

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# May Church Mouse

## Greetings from Mr. Mouse and Spouse!



Greetings! Hope all of you are enjoying this beautiful weather!

Baseball season has begun and the Mouse family, especially spouse, enjoy watching the Giants on TV. Herb Schmidt gave us an update on grandson, Konrad, who is now in Louisville, Kentucky on a Cincinnati Reds Triple A team as the number one catcher. We hope he does well and is called up to the majors.

All our good wishes go with Wayne Slemp, a faithful member of Redwoods for forty-seven years, who is moving to the Veterans home in Yountville. We'll miss seeing him in church on Sunday mornings.

Thanks to Mark Larsen for reporting that he and his family are all okay after the horrific bombing in Boston.

News from the past came from Wes Mayne announcing the death of his mother, Muriel. Mouse people remember the Mayne family. Wes's brother, Jeff, became Redwoods maintenance man after Dan White had his turn. Jeff's pride and joy was taking care of the floor in Fellowship Hall. Our thoughts and prayers are with the Mayne family.

Diane Forster reports that grandson, Chris Martin, (who came to church every Sunday when he was living with them years ago), made the front page of the Red Bluff Daily News on his promotion to Fire Department Reserve Engineer. Chris has been in training at the Engineer Academy since 2007. He was pinned at the ceremony by Diane's son, Tom, who is Chris' uncle and a volunteer firefighter.

Redwoods people are a traveling bunch! Nancy Radamacher just sent a note: "Kurt and I are celebrating our 30<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. We will be in Rome, hill towns of Tuscany, Florence and Venice for about three weeks. We are most excited!"

The Gorders visited Jim's sister, Janet, and her husband, Mark, in Olympia, Washington. Mark is a Lutheran minister who married Jim and Polly and all

of their three children. While there, they visited the church where Mark and Janet's daughter is Youth Minister and her husband is Senior Pastor. Then they went to Kirkland to visit son, Joe, and family.

Joyce Wells went to Modesto to see her brother, Al, receive a Distinguished Service Award at the Stanislaus Farm Bureau Annual Meeting.

Iris Giacotto's family of at least 30 will gather at their fruit farm in Williams, east of Sacramento, to meet the newest member of the family—5-month-old great-great-granddaughter, Savannah Nicole.

Jane Purkey is going to Santa Cruz to see the new apartment of her granddaughter—a Big Basin ranger!

Finally, Debbie Lundberg is back from L..A. and the Putzi's will soon be in Berlin to see Gabriele's brother.

Our former SFTS Intern, Faith McClellan, will graduate this month on May 25. Our current intern, Ian Vellenga, says he is still working to get his degree.

Margaret Erwin is happy to report that her husband Richard is finally home after weeks convalescing.

At the Saturday Breakfast, Dan White shared details of his life as a Sheriff's Chaplain, a very interesting occupation. Dan grew up in the church and has had a long career as a minister in many churches.

It was good to see Helen Morita at the wonderful Redwoods Family band event with the delicious Putzi corned beef and cabbage dinner. Anne Benezra writes from Oregon, "I wish I could be there."

Mr. Mouse appreciates all the birthday cards he received, and thanks to Mari Mouse for being a great news collector this month. We couldn't do it without her help! (Mari-Mouse: Mouse Spouse had thyroid medication issues that prompted the following ditty.)

We'll end with some advice from Mouse Spouse.  
Don't let some louse mess with your thyroid!

That's all for now! See you next month

**Mr. Mouse and Spouse**

## May Choir News

**From Music Director**

**Barbara Bacon-Shaw**

Could it be May already? On the heels of bad news from Boston and all around the world, I will skip the standard 'spring flowers' sentiment in deference to people suffering everywhere.

April was a whirlwind. Thank you to all the choir members and bell choir members who gave so generously of their time and talents to install the new bell tables that you see in the choir loft. They create a nice line of "sight" for those people sitting in the congregation.

As variety is the spice of life, we shall endeavor to keep everything "spiced up" on the music front this month, commencing with a guest singer on Cinco De Mayo, a bell serenade for Mother's Day, something very special for Pentecost Sunday and a salute to veterans on Memorial Day Sunday.

As always, if you would like to join either (or both!) the choral or handbell choirs, please see me. The choral choir practices at 7:30 pm on Thursdays and the bell choir meets at 9 am on Tuesdays.

Thanks and be well. **Barb**

## A Word from your Interns

**From SFTS Intern**

**Ian Vellenga**

Greetings to all! Graduation is about a month away at San Francisco Theological Seminary, however, I will not be graduating this year. I have at least another semester in the fall to complete all my academic requirements, but I will be at commencement to bid farewell to my class and wish them luck. Also, I will be staying at Redwoods until the new intern comes in August. Right now, I just have to get through exams.

All of us at seminary, whether graduating or not, are dealing with conflicting emotions: some are happy to be leaving SFTS, but at the same time sad. Those that are still at school for at least another year are already starting to miss the ones that will be walking during commencement.

And with the changes that are taking place at SFTS, every one of us is apprehensive about the future. No one likes change: it can be a scary thing, particularly when we have grown accustomed to our environment, made good friends, and learned to live in a place that we have called home for so many years.

But unfortunately (or perhaps, fortunately), change is the only constant in the universe. As seniors go out into the world, I ask for prayers that we all find our way. And also, I pray for the remaining students as we continue on with our studies. Please pray for all of us as we deal with the changes in our lives, that we will be able to adjust to the new normal.

Peace, **Ian**

**From Former SFTS Intern**

**Faith McClellan**

Dear Redwoods Family:

As I approach the last few weeks of my seminary education, I can't help but reminisce on the many blessings God has given me as a student at San Francisco Theological Seminary. One of those blessings was serving as your intern last year.

On May 25, I will be graduating from SFTS and that moment will be filled with mixed emotions. I'm not sure yet what I will be doing after graduation since I am still in the ordination process. One possibility is serving as a resident for one year in a Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) residency. This journey may keep me here in the Bay Area, or it may take me far away. I do plan on remaining at the seminary throughout the summer preparing for ordination exams as I wait on the Holy Spirit's leading.

On May 25, graduation day, I would love to walk across Buick Field and see all of your faces! It is then that I will realize that it was all worth it!

Have a blessed day! **Faith**

The link to "Exploring Contemplative Prayer":

**[www.scriptureecho.com//](http://www.scriptureecho.com//exploringCPyrCong.htm)**

**[exploringCPyrCong.htm](http://www.scriptureecho.com//exploringCPyrCong.htm)**

(not case sensitive)

User Name: praywithhope (case sensitive)

Password: insilence (case sensitive)

## Membership/Fellowship Committee News

**From Chair Nancy Rademacher**

Greetings from the Membership/Fellowship Committee!

We hope everyone is enjoying our glorious spring weather and abundant flowers. Aren't the purple azaleas in front of the church spectacular?

It was a bittersweet Sunday on April 14 when we bid farewell to 47-year member Wayne Slemp who is moving to the Veterans home in Yountville. There were many kind words said to honor Wayne but he stole the show with his inspirational speech on how to grow the church. We thank him for his many years of faithful service to Redwoods Church and wish him much happiness in his new home. A plaque expressing our thanks has arrived and will reach Wayne shortly.

The corned beef and cabbage dinner was great fun and the entertainment by the Redwoods Family Band terrific. Thanks to all who came and enjoyed this wonderful event. And a special thanks to the Putzi's (chefs extraordinaire) for the delicious corned beef and cabbage, the Gmahlings (musicians extraordinaire) for organizing and leading the band and for Barbara Bacon-Shaw for accompanying on piano.

The next Saturday breakfast will be held on May 18 with longtime member James Holmes giving a program on historic Larkspur. He is quite an expert on the subject and some of you may have had the opportunity to join him on one of his walking tours. The light potluck breakfast begins at 9:30 am with the program from 10-11 am. Please mark your calendars and join us to learn more about our charming town.

A very special event is happening at the church on

Wednesday evening, May 29. Kristi Van Nostran, a Presbyterian missionary working with Joining Hands Against Hunger in El Salvador will be giving a program on her work and experiences in that country. We will be having a soup supper at 6:30 pm followed by the program. This is an event not to be missed and we welcome visitors to join us.

Please invite a friend or neighbor to join you at church or one of our many activities. It is a simple but effective way to reach out to the community.

Happy spring to all!

**Nancy**

## Spiritual Growth Opportunity From The Rev. Dr. Cornel Barnett

This month our online prayer practice, "Exploring Contemplative Prayer," is focusing on "silent prayer." We are also focusing on "reflection and evaluation" as well, because this is the last month that our nine-month prayer program will be accessible to us online.

If you would like to start the practices now, you must download the monthly guides from September through May this month. Alternatively, you may obtain printed monthly guides from the church office. This is also the last month you will see the passwords for the program in the box on page three.

You are also invited to our last monthly meeting on May 26, after the 10 am service. We will meet to share thoughts, ideas and ways the spirit has moved us in our lives over the past nine months and what practices we will continue in the future.

This program has been a very important means of helping us expand and deepen our prayer practices. If you have not taken advantage of the program yet, I hope you will before June. Peace, **Cornel**

## Mission Outreach

### Committee News

#### From Chair Debbie Lundberg

“By all the means you can,  
In all the ways you can,  
In all the places you can,  
At all the times you can,  
To all the people you can,  
As long as ever you can.”

John Wesley

The above quote seems to describe the actions of members and friends of Redwoods. “We are small, but we are mighty” also seems an apt description of the mission work of our church.

“By all the means you can” at Redwoods Church translates into the following: multiple thank you notes from the groups we supported at the Alternative Christmas Fair, ongoing participation in the Two Cents a Meal Program, participation in the Bread for the World Offering of Letters, contributions to the Special Offerings (i.e., One Great Hour of Sharing and the Pentecost Offering this month), continued sponsorship of Mill Street Meals, participation in the Marin CROP Hunger Walk, contributions to the food barrel, collection of Box Tops for Education, sponsorship of Boy Scouts Troop 43, and making space for many twelve step groups—whew! That’s a long list of ways we do “All the good we can.”

Thanks and appreciation for shining the light so brightly in the darkness. Amen!

#### MIC Program—May 15

This month, the MIC is continuing its Intra-faith series about Christianity 7-9 pm, Monday, May 15. The series will conclude with a look at all the denominations within Christianity to highlight the diversity and complexity within the denomination. For more info, go to [www.marinifc.org](http://www.marinifc.org) or check out flyer posted on the Mission Outreach bulletin board in Fellowship Hall.

Debbie

## Earth Prayers and Thanks

### From Helen Morita

The following prayer poem was taken from the wonderful book, *Earth Prayers from Around the World: 365 Prayers, Poems and Invocations for Honoring the Earth*, edited by Elizabeth Roberts and Elias Amidon.

When the animals come to us,  
asking for our help,  
will we know what they are saying?

When the plants speak to us  
in their delicate, beautiful language,  
will we be able to answer them?

When the planet herself  
sings to us in our dreams,  
will we be able to wake ourselves, and act?  
Gary Lawless

### Thanks, Thanks, Thanks

Recently, I've read a book called "Help, Thanks, Wow" by our beloved author Anne Lamott. In it, she describes the three parts of prayer, as "help," "thanks," and "wow."

I want to concentrate on the "thanks" part. I want to thank all the members of this church for remembering me during my prolonged illness. I have received cards, notes, flowers, small gifts, visits, and phone calls of which I am most appreciative.

I hope I will be back with you in the near future.

Helen

#### 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 our church website:

[www.redwoodspres.org](http://www.redwoodspres.org)

## **Counseling Corner** **From Suellen Barnett, MA, LMFT**

### **Celebrating Mothers and Fathers and All Parent Figures**

Mother's Day is coming up soon and Father's Day is not far behind.

This is the time we appreciate and celebrate all parent figures; including mothers, fathers, grandparents, aunts and uncles, guardians, foster and adoptive parents, who have given of themselves in caring for and providing good role models for the children and young people in their lives.

Parenting takes an amazing amount of wisdom, patience, sensitivity, kindness, and lots of energy. Cornel talks about the fruits of the spirit from time to time – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22) – and every one of these qualities is needed for parenting!

As parents, we can all think of times when we didn't use the above qualities and when unfortunate things happened. Probably our children can think of even more specific times when we spoke too intensely without thinking through the full issues at hand. Yet also I'm sure we can think of times when we did show tenderness and forbearance and love.

Think of a time when you received acts of care and kindness from your parents or grandparents.

When I was about seven, my older brother and sister and grandfather and I were walking through the woods on the farm and across a log over the creek on the property. Only I didn't make it across – I slipped, and fell into the creek!

My grandfather immediately jumped in and picked me up out of the water, and ran across to his car carrying

me, and wrapped me in a blanket to keep me warm. (He also asked my brother to stop laughing.) We went home immediately, but he did stop at a little store along the way to buy us all ice cream cones.

These special memories of care stand out in our minds, don't they?

Thinking of caring parental figures, I have asked the students I work with – mostly Latino boys – who they feel the closest to in their families, who they can talk with about most things; and almost without exception they say their mothers. Part of this is because their fathers are often away working. Who did you relate to the most during your high school days, and now?

Being a helpful, caring mother or father or parent-figure is not always easy. What we do matters. Children notice. Counselors suggest ideas about parenting, which we have heard before - establishing rules and also explaining them. Kids appreciate both the rules and the explanations.

They also say it's important to foster our children's independence, to be consistent, to avoid harsh actions and treat the children with respect. And ultimately, we can never be too loving.

One of the commandments in Exodus 20 is "Honor your father and your mother so that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you."

Let's honor our mothers and fathers, maternal and paternal bonds and the positive influence of mothers and fathers and parent figures in our society.

*Happy Mother's Day for May 12;*  
*Happy Father's Day for June 16;*  
*and Happy Parents' Day for all parents*  
*every day of the year!*

**Suellen**

# May 2013

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			<i>1</i>	<i>2</i> <i>National Day of Prayer</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>5</i> <i>Holy Communion</i>  9:15 Choir 10:00 Worship 10:15 Children's Ed 11:00 Fellowship 11:15 Mission Outreach	<i>6</i>	<i>7</i> 9:00 Bell Choir 10:30 Bible Study	<i>8</i>	<i>9</i> <i>Ascension of the Lord</i>  7:30 Choir	<i>10</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>12</i> <i>Mother's Day</i> 9:15 Choir 10:00 Worship 10:15 Children's Education 11:00 Fellowship 11:15 Worship/CE 12:00 Mill Street	<i>13</i>  7:00 Spirit and Work Support Group	<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>  9:30 Saturday Breakfast
<i>19</i> <i>Birthday Sunday</i> <i>Pentecost</i> 9:15 Choir 10:00 Worship 10:15 Children's Education 11:00 Fellowship 11:15 Membership/Fellowship	<i>20</i>	<i>21</i> 9:00 Bell Choir 10:30 Bible Study  7:00 Joint Session and Deacons Meeting	<i>22</i>  LOG Deadline	<i>23</i>  7:30 Choir	<i>24</i>	<i>25</i>
<i>26</i> <i>Trinity Sunday</i>  9:15 Choir 10:00 Worship 10:15 Children's Education 11:00 Fellowship 11:15 Prayer Group	<i>27</i> <i>Memorial Day Observed</i>  <i>Office Closed</i>	<i>28</i> 9:00 Bell Choir 10:30 Bible Study	<i>29</i>  6:30 Soup Supper & Mission Speaker	<i>30</i>  LOG Mailing  7:30 Choir	<i>31</i>	

Redwoods Presbyterian Church  
110 Magnolia Avenue  
Larkspur, California 94939

## Helping Hands in April – Thank you so much!



### Mill Street Shelter Meals

Suellen Barnett, June Bellen, Board of Deacons, Margie & Jim Egger, Margaret Erwin, Diane Forster, Melissa Gill, Tani & John Girton, Polly & Jim Gorder, Georgene & George Gmahling, Debbie Lundberg, Kitty Prosser, Gabriele & Robert Putzi, Nancy Rademacher, Joyce Wells

### Liturgists, Greeters & Ushers

- |                 |   |               |   |
|-----------------|---|---------------|---|
| <b>April 7</b>  | Melissa Gill (L), Nancy Rademacher (G), Margie Egger (U), Debbie Lundberg (U) | <b>May 5</b>  | Nancy Rademacher (L), Ani Lelea (G), June Bellen (U), Debbie Lundberg (U)   |
| <b>April 14</b> | Clay Wiens (L), Melissa Gill (G), Iris Giacotto (U), Ani Lelea                | <b>May 12</b> | Ani Lelea (L), Barbara Slusher (G), Iris Giacotto (U), Melissa Gill (U)     |
| <b>April 21</b> | Tani Girton (L), June Bellen (G), Suellen Barnett (U), Melissa Gill (U)       | <b>May 19</b> | Debbie Lundberg (L), Tani Girton (G), Suellen Barnett (U), Margie Egger (U) |
| <b>April 28</b> | John Girton (L), Debbie Lundberg (G), Nancy Rademacher (U), Clay Wiens (U)    | <b>May 26</b> | Melissa Gill (L), Marian Judd (G), Clay Wiens (U), Ani Lelea (U)            |

### Coffee Hour

June Bellen, Membership/Fellowship Committee, Barbara Slusher