



# The Redwoods Log

*December 2012 - 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,

It's amazing how time flies. Here we are again at the end of the year and at one of the most beautiful seasons of the year.

It must be the child in me. I love Christmas. It is hollies and berries, trees and decorations, lights and colors, snow and ice, warm rooms and hot cider, rain and clear, and gifts and meals. Memories – many memories.

The adult in me looks deeper to concepts such as joy, peace, love and hope. It rejoices that we are back in Advent and Christmas. In Advent we reflect on folk back in biblical days who looked expectantly for a savior. They saw God revealed in Jesus the Christ.

Advent encourages us to keep building the realm of God and thus hasten the return of Christ. In biblical parlance we long for the rule of Christ where joy, peace, love and hope prevail. It's peace with justice.

These are high sounding words and as soon as they are stated they are dismissed. It's tough to live Christ's life in our world of greed, corruption, wars, occupations, religious/ ideological conflicts, refugee crises, and problems caused by water, food and other commodity shortages.

Christmas calls us to do our best in our homes, professions and causes to make this world a better and safer place for all. It's for this that Jesus came into the world.

The adult in me is serious and needs the balance of the child in me which looks at Christmas with wonder. Jesus was right when he said, "Whoever does not receive the realm of God as a little child will never enter it." It's important then to carry both the adult and child in us for a greater appreciation of life.

It will be remiss of me not to remind you of the special services we have every Sunday of Advent, beginning on December 2 with the decorating in worship of the Christmas tree with Chrismons. Each Sunday we light an Advent candle and enjoy wonderful worship.

Please don't forget the annual Spirit of Christmas Concert on Sunday, December 9 at 4 pm. It will include both choirs – voice and bells – and communal singing. This year for the first time it will be followed by the Alternative Christmas Fair in the Fellowship Hall. Please invite your family and friends – your entire neighborhood!

Finally, invite all to our very special Christmas Eve Candlelight Service with Lessons and Carols. The singing of "Silent Night, Holy Night" with hand held candles at the end is an inspiring conclusion to the service and a fitting entry into Christmas.

Merry Christmas and God bless you.

Cornel

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## December Church Mouse



### Greetings from Mr. Mouse and Spouse!

Whee! "Old time is still a-flying!" A few weeks ago we were rooting for the Giants--hoping they would be in the World Series! Then suddenly it all ended too fast and the cheering and the parades were over. So we've put the rally rag away and in April we'll start cheering again. Meanwhile Herb and LaVerne Schmidt report that Konrad is now a Texas Ranger. We wish good luck to all teams next season!

We have a "First" for Redwoods! Iris Giacotto became a great great grandmother on November 16 at 9:37 am when Savannah Nicole Trosky arrived on her father, Kyle's 25<sup>th</sup> birthday! That's really happy Thanksgiving news for the Giacotto family.

Here's a posthumous cheer to Mary Jo Ward who began the Mouse column. Mary Jo's daughter Allyson drew the Mouse that we still use. Some of you may have had Mary Jo as the math teacher for your kids and remember her interesting way of making sure that students returned any pencils they borrowed from her. She would hold a shoe for collateral and no one ever failed to return a pencil. Mary Jo's daughter, Allyson has a cake decorating business and can be located via computer under Allyson's Cakes.

Mary Jo began a Pot Luck Cookbook project in 1987 because, in her words, "Presbyterians love to eat other people's dishes, but if you eat their dishes they want to eat yours."

Diane Forster still has one of the Pot Luck cookbooks. Does anybody else out there have one? Mouse Spouse counted at least twenty or more contributors who are still alive!

It was a special pleasure to see Keenan Kelsey on Sunday November 18. Keenan has recently retired from Noe Valley Ministry in San Francisco. Keenan lives in the Redwoods neighborhood and was an intern here at one time. We're glad she has circled back this way.

It was also good to see Erik Rademacher who came home from Humboldt State to have Thanksgiving with his family. Erik seems to get taller every time we see him

Twenty-three Redwoods people went to the theater on November 11 in Richmond, and had a great party at the Barnett's home afterward.

There were thirty letters written to our congressional representatives last month on behalf of Bread for the World. Thanks to Debbie Lundberg for organizing that project.

It's always good to see Mark Larsen bring his mom, Klara, to Sunday services and a real joy to see Joy Dryden who provides the wheels! Susan Slemple is a good wheels provider for her dad, Wayne!

Ian Vellenga, our seminary intern shared his life story with the Saturday Breakfast group on November 17. This was the first time (Mouse thinks) that we ever heard of life in the U. S. Marines from one who was in Iraq! We thank Ian for his interesting insights into duty in the Armed Forces.

Please remember the Sutherland family in your prayers. Marilyn's daughter in-law, Karen (the one who made the train trip across Canada with Marilyn and Bonnie in August) died November 9 of cancer. Karen was only 56-- much too young.

Helen Morita is currently at Smith Ranch Care Center. She welcomes visitors! Her cell phone number is 328-2495 to find out when it is the best time to visit.

Zach Paulson and Ben Girton are looking forward to going to Costa Rica over the February ski week break with several other Spanish students from Redwood High. They will stay with local families, do a community service project and try to fit in some fun.

On Sunday, December 2, Advent Season begins a new church year! Count your blessings and have a joyous Christmas Season, and a good New Year!

See you next year!

**Mr. Mouse and Spouse**

## December Choir News

**From Music Director  
Barbara Bacon-Shaw**

This will be a very special month for music at Redwoods! We are planning an eclectic mix of singers and instruments, bells and ensemble singing as our musical fare for the holidays. During the five Sundays in December, we'll hear and sing some lovely Advent music followed by all the wonderful Christmas music so beloved at this time of year.

The Bells and the Choir are hard at work preparing all the special songs for the Spirit of Christmas Concert on December 9 at 4 pm. At the end of the concert, we will sing all your favorite Christmas carols.

On Christmas Eve, Dan Phipps will again delight us with the beautiful sounds of the season on his cello and Linda Price of Marin Baroque will sing two solos. Of course, our candlelight service of lessons and carols will include many favorite hymns to sing.

We look forward to sharing the musical and spiritual joys of the season with you. On a personal note: If you turn to page 34 of the December issue of Marin Magazine, you will find out what the Bacon-Shaw's favorite holiday tradition is! **Barbara**

## A Word from your Intern

**From SFTS Intern  
Ian Vellenga**

Greetings one and all!

The holidays are coming! I remember that when I was in the Marine Corps, November and December were my favorite times of year, mainly because of all of the festivities.

November marks the birthday of the Marine Corps on November 10, Veterans' Day falls on November 11 and the battalion I was in, the 1<sup>st</sup> Tank Battalion, was created during the beginning of November.

Add to that Thanksgiving, and then a month later, Christmas, and you can see that November and December marked the time when there was *plenty* of holiday down time in the military.

Oh how times have changed! Now that I am in the civilian world and in seminary, the opposite seems true. There are exams to study for, papers to write, books about ethics and abstract theological concepts to read, as well as travel arrangements to plan, gifts to buy, food to make, and the list goes on and on.

As I go through the hustle and bustle of this time of year, I find I must constantly remind myself of the reason *why* I am doing all of these things or I might be in danger of becoming a Scrooge! The reason for all the busy-ness of our daily lives as Christians now is that we are preparing ourselves to celebrate the birth of Christ anew in our hearts and in our world. It is good to take some time to remind ourselves of that as often as we can no matter how busy we are. Peace, **Ian**

## Spiritual Growth Opportunity

**From The Rev. Dr. Cornel Barnett**

Our online prayer practice, "Exploring Contemplative Prayer," is still available to church members and friends. If you would like to explore prayer practices in your own time, space and pace, this is the program for you.

Each month, background material and guides are available online and reminders are sent out regularly. If you need the passwords again, or printed materials to be sent to you or to include a family member or friend, please contact the church office at 924-4832.

You are also invited to a monthly meeting on the last Sunday of the month after the 10 am service—our next meeting will be January 27—to share thoughts, ideas and ways the spirit is moving in your life.

**Cornel**

## Deacons Reminder

**From Deacons Moderator**

**Polly Gorder**

At this time of year, as we focus on holiday gatherings with family and friends that often features delicious meals, it is easy to forget that many people in Marin are not "invited to the banquet" and go hungry.

Please read Dick Judd's thoughtful article on page 4 about our food barrel and consider his suggestions for sharing your bounty this holiday season. **Polly**

## Membership/Fellowship Committee News

### From Chair Nancy Rademacher

We hope you had a wonderful Thanksgiving. We all have so much to be thankful for, including this warm and caring community at Redwoods Presbyterian Church.

### Theater Outing

Twenty-three of us attended a delightful and heartfelt performance of *Little Women, the Musical* at the Masquers Theater in Point Richmond on the afternoon of November 11.

The icing on the cake was the reception at the home of Cornel and Suellen, where we enjoyed a spectacular view, superb food and wine, and great Redwoods' fellowship. Thank you to the Barnetts for your gracious hospitality!

### Saturday Breakfast

Ian Vellenga gave a wonderful presentation at the November Saturday breakfast. Thank you, Ian, for your willingness to be our presenter. We are so fortunate that Ian is willing to share his many talents and experiences with us as our Seminary Intern.

### Annual Christmas Music Program and Alternative Christmas Fair

Please join us for two wonderful Redwoods Church traditions on Sunday December 9, when we will offer our annual Christmas music program, combined this year with the Alternative Christmas Faire

The music program will begin in the Sanctuary at 4 pm after which we will move to Fellowship Hall to shop for unique gifts that will benefit the needy in Marin county and worldwide.

The Membership/Fellowship Committee will provide festive seasonal refreshments. Please invite family, friends and neighbors to this wonderful holiday celebration. We have traditionally had a great turnout for this event, so please spread the word.

We are working on lots of ideas for 2013 and welcome your input, as well. Please feel free to join us at one of meetings or speak to a member of the committee.

Have a blessed Christmas and may peace and justice prevail in 2013!

**Nancy**

## Still at Work

### From Deacon Richard Judd

At Redwoods Church, the Deacons are still doing work behind the scenes. Perhaps you may have not noticed that in Fellowship Hall there is a food barrel that is used to collect food for the Marin Food Bank. When this barrel is full, our office staff calls the Marin Food Bank and a truck comes to pick up the barrel and drop off a new one. The food is taken to a distribution center, where the staff make sure the food gets into the hands of those who are hungry and in need.

If you have gifts of nonperishable food, you can make a donation to this barrel before or after Sunday services, or during regular working hours Monday through Thursday and on most Tuesday evenings. At these times, you can add your food to the barrel without making a statement to anyone. Your donation may be quiet, but it is meaningful.

At this time of year when we often have pantries overflowing with food that may not get used, we encourage you to consider sharing with others who would be very happy to receive something nourishing to eat. Another thought is that we often shop at stores like CostCo that offer food in large quantities. Perhaps we might consider sharing some of this food with hungry folks via the food barrel.

Another way to feed those in need would be to write a check to the Marin Food Bank to purchase food. Your tax-deductible check should be made payable to Marin Food Bank. MFB says that \$11 will provide food for 33 meals, \$22 for 66 meals and \$33 for 99 meals. Their address is 75 Digital Dr. Ste 4, Novato, CA 94949-5797. Thank you for your generosity.

**Dick**

## Mission Outreach

### Committee News

**From Chair Debbie Lundberg**

#### **Marin CROP Hunger Walk**

We recently received news from the Marin Interfaith Council that the 2012 Marin CROP Hunger Walk raised \$17,036. Funds raised support the Church World Service programs in this country and around the world. 25% of the money is shared with the Marin Food Bank, the Marin Interfaith Street Chaplaincy and St. Vincent de Paul Society of Marin.

A picture of the Redwood CROP walkers is posted next to the coffee hour sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall. A hearty thank you to them for their efforts! Mark your calendars now for the next CROP walk on Sunday, April 21, 2013.

#### **Canal Alliance**

Please take a minute and read the thank you letter from the Canal Alliance acknowledging our donation of \$125, which represents 40% of the Pentecost Offering. The letter is posted on the Mission Outreach Bulletin Board in Fellowship Hall.

#### **Peacemaking Offering**

At our November meeting the Mission Outreach Committee voted to donate 25% of the Peacemaking Offering to the Center For Domestic Peace. The total amount raised is currently \$665. Thank you all.

#### **Alternative Christmas Fair**

Our Alternative Christmas Fair will be held in Fellowship Hall on Sunday, December 9 at a new time—following the Christmas Music program at which both choirs, the Sanctuary Choir and the Bell Choir, will participate!

The following sponsors will have tables: Bread for The World, Heifer International, Habitat for Humanity, Church World Service, Faith In Practice and Fair Trade Items. New this year will be the Twin Cities Police Officers Association-sponsored table raising money for gifts for Marin foster kids/teens. Mission

statements, gift cards and ornaments for the tree will also be available.

Be sure to invite family and friends to enjoy this lovely music program, wonderful reception with delicious Christmas treats and an opportunity to shop for joy.

#### **Christmas Joy Offering**

This year the Christmas Joy Offering will be received during Worship on Sunday, December 23. This year's theme is Good News of Great Joy! That is what funds collected will bring by supporting racial, ethnic education at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges, helping families of active and retired church workers meet unexpected needs through the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions.

As the Christmas Joy brochure says with such eloquence: "As we celebrate this good news of great joy – that a Savior has been born to us – may our gifts bear joyful witness to God's uncontainable love."

AMEN!

## December Happy Birthdays

### **From Deacons Moderator Polly Gorder**

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

December 10—Helen Morita

December 21—Maisie Campbell

December 24—Robert Putzi

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

Please consider including "Redwoods Presbyterian Church, 110 Magnolia Ave., Larkspur, CA 94939, Tax ID No. 94-1347047" among the beneficiaries of your estate plan.

## Counseling Corner

**From Suellen Barnett, MA, LMFT**

Holiday time. What's happening in your lives? Sometimes it can be an exciting, fun time of year – and for others, it can be varied – exciting and also sad, remembering those who have gone before us or because we're not near those we love.

A fun, joyful time was experienced by both Anna and Molly of our church when they both wound up teaching at the same school, Hidden Valley, where everyone was having a totally festive time – all, even teachers, came to school in their pajamas and fuzzy slippers and with their favorite stuffed animals, as an introduction to the Thanksgiving holidays.

Students of another age and place – over at the court school where I work – were also saying this is their favorite time of year – fun with family and friends, delicious food and great music and enjoyable times just talking and hanging out.

But the holidays are more than the all of the above and the shopping days and gift cards (which the Shopping Center Council says will top over \$40 million this year). The holidays are more than organizing holiday dinners and visits to relatives near or far.

Think about what we love about this time of year. We take time for ourselves to relax and meditate on what it's all about - God's love for each of us, our love of God and our love of family and friends, even our love of those who have gone before us and their love for us.

As we partake of the holiday cheer, we take a moment to stop and notice the person on the street who may not have a place to sleep or presents to open Christmas morning.

We thank God that we are part of a spiritual family that supports and appreciates each one of us –

and that celebrates this special time when God came into the world and was revealed in Jesus.

Blessings for a wonderful and meaningful holiday for all of us!  
**Suellen**

## Earth Prayers

**From Helen Morita**

The following prayer is 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.

i thank You God for most this amazing  
day for the leaping greenly spirits of trees  
and a blue true dream of sky; and for everything  
which is natural which is infinite which is yes

(i who have died am alive again today,  
and this is the sun's birthday, this is the birth  
day of life and of love and wings: and of the gay  
great happening illimitably earth)

how should tasting touching hearing seeing  
breathing any—lifted from the no  
of all nothing—human merely being  
doubt unimaginable You?

(now the ears of my ears awake and  
now the eyes of my eyes are opened)  
e. e. cummings

**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)

We appreciate your help getting the word out!

# December 2012

| Sun   | Mon  | Tue   | Wed                                   | Thu                                    | Fri                               | Sat                               |
|---|--|---|---------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>2</b><br><i>Communion</i><br>9:15 Choir<br>10:00 Worship<br>10:15 Children's Ed<br>11:00 Fellowship<br>11:15 Mission Outreach Committee                    | <b>3</b>   | <b>4</b><br>9:00 Bell Choir<br>10:30 Bible Study                          | <b>5</b>                              | <b>6</b><br>7:30 Choir                 | <b>7</b>                          | <b>1/8</b>                        |
| <b>9</b><br>9:15 Choir<br>10:00 Worship<br>10:15 Children's Education<br>11:00 Fellowship<br>12:00 Mill Street<br>4:00 Christmas Concert & Alternative Fair   | <b>10</b><br>7:00 Spirit and Work Support Group  | <b>11</b><br>9:00 Bell Choir<br>10:30 Bible Study<br>7:00 Deacons         | <b>12</b><br>NOTE: Early LOG Deadline | <b>13</b><br>7:30 Choir                | <b>14</b>                         | <b>15</b>                         |
| <b>16</b><br><i>Birthday Sunday</i><br>9:15 Choir<br>10:00 Worship<br>10:15 Children's Education<br>11:00 Fellowship<br>11:15 Membership/Fellowship Committee | <b>17</b>  | <b>18</b><br>9:00 Bell Choir<br>10:30 Bible Study<br>7:00 Session         | <b>19</b>                             | <b>20</b><br>LOG Mailing<br>7:30 Choir | <b>21</b>                         | <b>22</b>                         |
| <b>23</b> <i>Christmas Joy Offering</i><br>9:15 Choir<br>10:00 Worship<br>10:15 Children's Education<br>11:00 Fellowship                                      | <b>24</b> <i>Christmas Eve</i><br>Church Office Closed<br>7:00 Christmas Eve Candlelight Service of Lessons & Carols | <b>25</b> <i>Christmas</i><br>Church Office Closed                        | <b>26</b><br>Church Office Closed     | <b>27</b><br>Church Office Closed      | <b>28</b><br>Church Office Closed | <b>29</b><br>Church Office Closed |
| <b>30</b><br>9:15 Choir<br>10:00 Worship<br>10:15 Children's Education<br>11:00 Fellowship  | <b>31</b> <i>New Year's Eve</i><br>Church Office Closed  | <b>Jan 1</b> <i>2013</i><br><i>New Year's Day</i><br>Church Office Closed |                                       |  |                                   |                                   |

Redwoods Presbyterian Church  
110 Magnolia Avenue  
Larkspur, California 94939

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



### Mill Street Shelter Meals

Marjorie & Jim Egger, Margaret Erwin, Diane Forster, Iris Giacotto, Melissa Gill,  
Polly & Jim Gorder, James Holmes, Marian & Dick Judd, Debbie Lundberg,  
Gabriele & Robert Putzi, Nancy Rademacher, Joyce Wells

### Liturgists

Marilyn Sutherland, Ian Vellenga, Joyce Wells

### Greeters

Melissa Gill, Marian Judd,  
Ani Lelea, Deb Lundberg

### Ushers

Suellen Barnett, June Bellen, Melissa Gill,  
Marian Judd, Ani Lelea, Nancy Rademacher

### Coffee Hour

June Bellen, Marjorie & Jim Egger, Kitty Prosser  
Gabriele & Robert Putzi

### December Helping Hands

**December 2** Tani Girton (L), Kitty Prosser (G),  
Marian Judd (U)

**December 9** Ian Vellenga (L), Melissa Gill (G)  
Nancy Rademacher (U)

**December 16** Phipps Family (L), Ani Lelea (G)  
Melissa Gill (U), Suellen Barnett (U)

**December 23** Rademacher Family (L),  
Gabriele Putzi (G)  
Debbie Lundberg (U)

**December 24** Melissa Gill (L), Lori Wood (G)  
June Bellen

**December 30** June Bellen (G)