

Echoes from the Hills

Santa Teresa Hills Presbyterian Church • San Jose, California



COOP'S CORNER

I came across the following and found it so interesting that I wanted to share some of it with you, especially when we hear all the crazy rhetoric that has been coming from both sides of the aisle. It is by William Falk, editor-in-chief of one of my favorite magazines, *The Week*.

Ours is a country founded on hope. But Americans seem to be increasingly defined by what we fear.

Which frightens you more: Islamic terrorism, or anti-Islamic bigotry? Too much surveillance, or too little? Climate change, or intrusive government regulation? Angry white men with weapons, or government confiscation of all guns? Racist cops, or lawlessness? The hijacking of the democratic process by corporations and billionaires, or a creeping socialism that promises nearly everyone a lifetime of government benefits?

If you believe what you read on the internet or hear in presidential debates you're likely to conclude that THE END IS NEAR!

Now, fear can be useful: Evolution wired our brains to respond to perceived threats with a powerful "flight or fight" response – making adrenaline pour into our veins, our hearts race, our fists clench. Spend too much time in that state, however, and you become neurotic, paranoid – a little unhinged.

But it's not all bad. Let's all lighten up. A fresh new year beckons. The sky is not falling.

That isn't bad advice. Indeed, the sky isn't falling, however, that doesn't mean we can just look the other way when we see those things that go against what we believe.

I recently received an Advent letter from the California Council of Churches. It talked about Hans Christian Anderson's story, *The Little Match Girl*, who is left to watch families celebrate Christmas in warm homes but then abandons herself to freeze to death in a dark doorway.

They write that this girl symbolizes our society's often callous disregard for even our most fragile people And I would agree.

I would hope that we would never let a child freeze or suffer in that or any way. That isn't a political issue, it is a spiritual issue, as is climate change, racism, poverty, and even immigration.

The California Council of Churches went on to ask an interesting question: While we certainly wouldn't want a little girl to freeze to death out in the cold, what if we weren't talking about a little girl,

freezing in the doorway? What if she were a homeless drug addict? An immigrant? An ex-con? A prostitute? A veteran with mental health problems? A tattooed white supremacist?

Would any of those people change how you would respond to the heartbreak of the *Little Match Girl* story? Are any of these people outside the teachings that we embrace from the adult Jesus and all he taught us?

Every person we pass by in fear or indignation or disregard is a person we have left out of our human family. We don't have to take them into our homes, but can we afford to leave them out of our hearts and actions on their behalf?

I hope in this NEW YEAR that we all replace fear with love; that we replace judgment and condemnation with grace and peace; that we replace apathy with action.

May we all remember that God came in love, to show love, to be love, and invites us to do the same.

Be blessed, my friends!!!

Pastor Tom

CHURCH AND WORLD MINISTRY

Alternative Christmas

I would like to thank all of you who participated in our Alternative Christmas opportunity in December. As of December 28th, we collected \$280 for Heifer International, \$560 for the Cameroon Women's Association, and \$520 for the Women's Gathering Place in downtown San Jose. I will be sending checks to each of the organizations in January.



HOPE

I want to thank the members of HOPE as well as others in the congregation for their willingness to buy gifts for the children of the Hispanic church (Comunidad Latinoamericana). Pastor Tom was able to attend their childrens' service and delivered all of the packages. As you can see from some of the pictures, the children were pleased with their gifts. Thanks so much for spreading Joy!

Cathy Warrick, team member



The Church and World Missions Committee will be meeting in January to start planning for a Faith In Action Weekend this Spring. If you have any projects you would like the committee to consider, please contact Yvonne Miller in person or via email at napiligal@sbcglobal.net

Yvonne Miller, Elder Church and World Ministry Team

Worship and Music • Marylyn Goode, elder

Advent Setup

On Saturday, Nan Brown, James McArthur, Dave Robertson, Dottie Simerly, Bev Toulouse, and Barb Overholt were on hand to help Marylyn set up the sanctuary for Advent. Wreaths were unfurled, Christmas tree assembled and adorned with lights, Advent Candle Stand prepared, ceiling lights replaced, canopies and special paintings were hung while festive Christmas music played in the background.



First Sunday of Advent



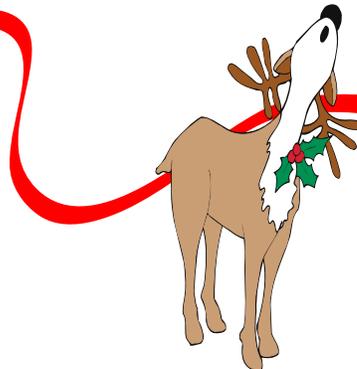
Dave Robertson • Liturgist



Beatrice and Bob Toche Lighting the Advent Candles.



Choir Director Joe Taff provided a solo for Offertory with "The Call" by Ralph Vaughan Williams.



Second Sunday of Advent



DeLynn Coop • Liturgist



Hersh and Nan Brown Lighting the Advent Candles.



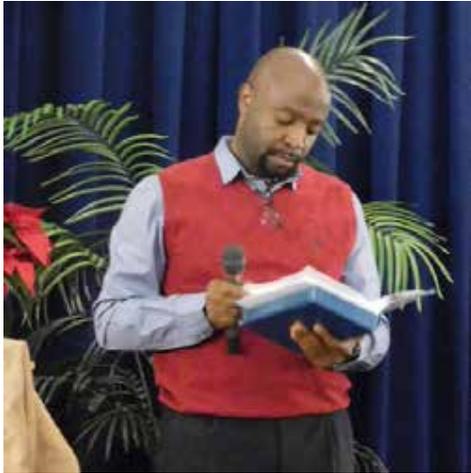
Welcome New Member Ken Leatherbarrow.



Let's Deck the Halls!



Third Sunday of Advent



Emmanuel Ngwa • Liturgist



Jay Hartley and Michael Penfield Lighting the Advent Candles.



Carols Around the Piano with Jay Hartley



Fourth Sunday of Advent



Barb Overholt • Liturgist



Chris de la Roca and Linda Buckley lighting the Advent candles.



Your church staff:

Kristie Reed (administrator), *Joe Taff* (choir director), *Shirley Etuale* (music accompanist), *Kim Do* (youth director), *Rachele Morin-Ponce* (nursery supervisor), *Libby Souter* (treasurer), and *Pastor Tom* were presented with an end-of-year bonus in recognition of their dedication for their time and talents to their church family.

Christmas Eve



The Manley family lighting the Advent candles.



The Coop and Keathley families lighting the Advent candles.

**CHILDREN'S
ED MINISTRY**

Third Sunday of Advent

“A Voice Heard in the Wilderness”

Children’s Christmas Play written by Carol Miller

I hope everyone’s holidays were filled with joy and lots of fun with families and friends. The highlight of December was the Sunday School children’s and Youth’s Christmas Play on December 13. The kids did a great job performing the play which was entitled, “A Voice from the Wilderness”, written by Carol Miller. Rogan Souter and Owen Paterson (not shown in the pics) did a great job as narrators. Thanks also to all the teachers and parents for helping out with the play.

In January, we are continuing with our curriculum, ‘We Believe’. The kids will learn about key parables and teachings of Jesus. I would like to extend a fond welcome to Mindy Gerber who is going to join our Sunday School teaching team and to Gertrud Walker for taking on the job of lead teacher. If you would like to help out with Sunday School or the Nursery please contact Cheryl Elliot.



L-R: Mason Paterson, Zoe Walker, Teke Ngwa, Miyah Ngwa, Lucius Morin-Ponce, Ethan Wu, Hannah Gerber



Brady Reynolds



Lucius Morin-Ponce and Ethan Wu (far right)



Rhona Souter, Mason Paterson

Sunday School Teachers & Helpers:

Date	SS Teacher	SS Helper	SS Helper
1/10	Lynn Hines	Sharon Simmons	
1/17	Debbie Serasio	Yolanda Wu	Marilyn Morikang
1/24	Debbie Serasio	Claris Ngwa	Libby Souter
1/31	Gertrud Walker	Mindy Gerber	Emmanuel Ngwa
2/7	DeLynn Coop	Lynn Hines	Sharon Simmons

Cheryl Elliot, Children’s Ed Ministry Elder

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08-25-2014

CAN YOU HELP SET ME UP SO I CAN FRIEND AND LIKE JESUS, TEXT HIM MY PRAYERS, AND SHARE ALL HIS TWEETS?

Community Christmas Dinner

Saturday • December 12, 2015

Thank you to our church family for helping to make our Deacons' ninth annual Community Christmas Dinner a success! A delicious feast, gifts, craft projects, and even Santa Claus stopped by giving our neighbors an enjoyable afternoon to celebrate Christmas with family and friends.



PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

On Tuesday evening December 15 we had our annual PW Christmas party at Barb Overholt's house. We had great attendance (11 of us!) and we revealed our Secret Sisters. We also did a cookie exchange so we all went home with a plate filled with numerous types of delicious cookies.

If you would like to participate in our PW Secret Sister program for 2016, please fill out the info form. (They are on courtyard info table, or see Cheryl Elliot). The forms should be turned into Cheryl Elliot by January 10th. The program encourages us to support our Secret Sister via prayer throughout the year and occasionally give them small gifts on special occasions.

PW had a successful Nut Sales fundraiser to support projects at our church as well as some local mission projects. We sold a little over 400 pounds of nuts yielding a profit just over \$500. We will make final choice of where the funds will be allocated to at our January meeting, which is going to be SATURDAY, Jan 23rd from 10 AM - noon. At this meeting, we will continue our "Come to the Waters' bible study. We are on lesson #4 which deals with 'Dangerous Waters- God's Deliverance'. Cheryl Elliot will be in charge of snacks.

Cheryl Elliot, Moderator

Secret Sisters Revealing Party and Cookie Exchange
Tuesday • December 15



The Cookie Exchange Table filled with mouth-watering, homemade delights.

What a great time we had in fellowship, revealing ourselves to our secret sister, and exchanging cookies from our kitchens at Barb Overholt's home. Parker, the Overholt's pet, was very sociable and the women kindly left their tissue paper behind for him to romp in; thank you friends for a very fun evening!

L-R back row:

Cathy Warrick, Vivian Harley, Jane McMinn, Laura Needham

L-R center row:

Glenda Nolt, Peggy Wright, Carol Miller, Jane Parks-McKay

L-R front row:

Rebecca Elliot, Barb Overholt, Cheryl Elliot

Missing secret sisters:

Laura Davis, Karla Frye, Karin McMinn, Edith Sona

Thinking of becoming a Secret Sister?

It's a wonderful program involving the gift of love, support and encouragement to our sisters in Christ through prayer in good times and in bad with cards, flowers and possibly even a gift (we let our imaginations lead us). Become a Secret Sister in 2016 and join in the fun fellowship. Secret Sister forms are available through Cheryl Elliot.

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*Thanks to all the people who brought
 snacks and helped clean up in
 November and December. Our church
 wouldn't be the same friendly,
 welcoming place without you!*

•••••
Treat Schedule for January

- 1/10 Cathy Warrick
- 1/17 open
- 1/24 open
- 2/7 open



Sign up at the Activity Table to bring treats for your special occasion!

Helping Hands



Please help us help others who struggle to support and feed their families

In need this month: chili, peanut butter, spaghetti sauce and noodles.

Other *Requested items*: Cans of fruit and cans of vegetables, cans of soup, canned meats, jelly, pasta & pasta sauce, and boxes of macaroni & cheese. Flip-top cans are appreciated by many!

Monthly summary: Between October 15, 2015 and January 5, 2016 66 people were assisted; 57 people received food and 2 people received bus tokens. Kristie was able to honor requests for 2 gift cards and 2 backpacks. One person received cash.

Food donations totaled 760 lbs.! Thank you for donations from STHPC: 276 lbs., St. Julie's: 39 lbs., A friend of the church: 410 lbs., and Other: 35 lbs.

The Deacons and the Church & World Committee

VISIBILITY/ SESSION NOTES

Visibility - Did you see the new banner that our own Pastor Tom designed? Would you like to have a go at designing our next "new" banner? Look for details in our February newsletter!

December Session Meeting recaps:

- January Session is cancelled as Pastor Tom will be on vacation.
- Pastor Tom has been elected as a commissioner from the Presbytery to General assembly 2016 in Portland, OR.
- The Audit Committee (Cheryl E., leader; Paul E.; and Debbie S.) reported on their review of bills paid in 2014 and reminded everyone on the process. The Payroll Audit was also completed by Cheryl E.
- Session committees turned in their 2016 Budgets

Session meetings are open meetings where anyone can attend with the exception of infrequent personnel matters. Meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month starting at 7:00pm. Please note, there will be no meeting in January 2016.

Debbie Serasio, Visibility Ministry Elder

Nursery Attendants

- 1/10 Courtney Mays
- 1/17 Ashley Fitzgerald
- 1/24 Alfred Morikang
- 1/31 Nan Brown
- 2/7 Courtney Mays



Nursery care is provided for three year olds and younger, supervised by Rachele our nursery attendant and assisted by one of our rotating volunteers.

The nursery children are learning the same story each week as the Children's Sunday School class as Rachele provides story time.

As a reminder, parents please sign your children in and out of the nursery and use the name tags.

Cheryl Elliot, Children's Ed Elder



Income and Expenses

	Nov 2015 Month to Date	Through 11/15 Year to Date
Income	\$19,921	\$269,620
Expense	\$22,332	\$245,166
Net Income	-\$2,411	\$24,454



Reasons to Celebrate!

Birthdays

January 1	Monica Haney, Mona Johnson
January 4	Epie Sona
January 5	Mary Jane Judge, Lesley Toche
January 6	DeLynn Coop
January 10	Tonge Sona
January 17	Emily Manley
January 19	Laura Davis
January 21	Jeanie Shelton, Jerry Miller
January 22	Charles Alvarez
January 26	Edward Koborssy
January 27	Iris Fox
January 31	Jerry McMinn

Anniversaries

January 15	Keziah Ndifon
January 19	Ruth and Howard LeBas
January 22	Monica and David Haney
January 26	Carol and Jerry Miller

Go Green!

Want to help the church save paper, ink, trees, and money? Sign-up to receive your copy of Echoes from the Hills by email! Please email Lynn Hines at not57@sbcglobal.net to begin receiving your newsletter by email. Your church and your planet thank you!

Newsletter Staff

Editor: Lynn Hines
 Proofreader/Publisher:
 Kristie Reed
 Elder: Debbie Serasio



ACTIVITIES FOR EVERYONE

Activities are open to all members and visitors - come check out what is happening!

EVERY SUNDAY:	TWO-CAN SUNDAY: BRING YOUR FOOD DONATIONS FOR THE DEACON'S PANTRY TO WORSHIP
Second Sunday:	Church and World Ministry Team after Worship
All Other Sundays:	Church Library Open after Worship
Every Thursday:	Choir Practice At STHPC at 7:30 pm.
First Tuesday:	Fellowship Ministry Team at STHPC at 7:15 PM
Second Tuesday:	Session meeting at STHPC at 6:59 PM
Second Saturday:	Men's Fellowship meets at 8:30 AM in the Multipurpose room.
Third Tuesday:	Presbyterian Women at STHPC at 7:00 PM. - every other month
Third Saturday:	Presbyterian Women at STHPC at 10:00 AM - every other month
Third Sunday:	Deacon's meeting at STHPC, following worship.
Last Sunday:	Breakfast at Aqui Restaurant (Blossom Hill & Snell) following worship (around 11:30ish)

Upcoming Events

Pastor Tom is on vacation through January 21. Please call your Deacon or the Church Office for assistance.

Sun. Feb. 7
2:30 PM - ??

Super Bowl Party in the Fellowship Hall. Please bring an appetizer to share - and your comfy chair! Come for all or part just come! Beverages provided.

Wed. Feb. 10 Ash Wednesday



*Santa Teresa Hills Presbyterian Church,
The Reverend Tom Coop, Pastor*
www.sthpc.org

Adult Sunday School: 9:00 AM (child care available)

Worship: 10:00 AM

Sunday School PreK - 8th grade 10:00 AM

**Regular Office Hours: Tuesday thru Friday
9:30 AM - 3:00 PM**

**For Pastoral care: The Office (408)629-5906 or
Pastor Tom's cell (408)234-8553**

Church Bulletin deadline: Thursday 9:00 AM

Church Historian: Barb Overholt

**Church Newsletter deadline: January 20
for February Newsletter**

email your information to Lynn Hines at not57@sbcglobal.net

Santa Teresa Hills Presbyterian Church
5370 Snell Ave.
San Jose, CA 95123

Phone: 408-629-5906

