

Echoes from the Hills

Santa Teresa Hills Presbyterian Church • San Jose, California



COOP'S CORNER

The Reason for the Season

As we begin this month of December, we also begin a new year in the Christian calendar. Advent, the season that starts the Christian year, begins (or began, depending on when you read this) on December 3rd this year.

That is the latest it can ever start, because it puts the fourth Sunday of Advent squarely on Christmas Eve. *More on that later.*

Most of us know that Advent is the period starting with the four Sundays that precede (and help us prepare us for) Christmas. But, to be honest, Advent suffers from neglect.

Many of us tend to skip Advent entirely and start celebrating Christmas before Thanksgiving. We get so caught up in the frenzy of secular preparations -- parties, shopping and decorating -- that we forget the true meaning of Advent.

There is a story of a little boy who was helping his father set up the Christmas decorations. As an inquisitive four-year old he barraged his father with questions. The father was so busy that he failed to pay attention to his son.

Finally, the little boy asked, "Daddy, what does *ignore* mean?" The father was taken aback and explained, "Ignore means not to pay attention when people talk to you."

The little boy then asked, "Why do we ignore Jesus?"

Puzzled, the father answered, "I don't think we do. Why do you say that we ignore him?"

The little boy answered, "Because that's what the Christmas carol says, *O come let us ignore him.*"

Do we "ignore" Christ in our preparations for Christmas? Are we so wrapped up in the busyness of the holidays that we only remember Christ on those Advent Sundays, if then?

It is so easy to do. Our culture demands from us attention on everything but Christ during these days. Our children expect us to focus on the shopping and the buying and the decorating. And we don't disappoint.

So, my invitation this Advent season is that we don't "ignore" Jesus and what he means to us.

Now I don't expect you to spend the same time on Jesus as you do on the rest of your "preparations." But, if you will just take some time each day to focus on "the reason for the season" I think you will be surprised how much more meaningful this season can be.

To assist you, we will be doing some pretty special things this Advent.

On the First Sunday of Advent, since I will be visiting my son Austin in Chicago, you will be in the hands of one of my favorite preachers and an all-around good guy, Rev. George Minerva. It is this Sunday where the Christmas tree, lit by 100's of sparkling white lights, makes its first appearance.

Then I will begin my Advent sermon series the following Sunday on the 10th of December: "Christmas Through the Eyes of Angels." We will look through the eyes of the angel who appears to Zechariah (who was to become John the Baptist's dad). In addition, we will have the children's Christmas pageant that morning. You don't want to miss that!

On the 17th we will look through the eyes of the angel who appears to first to Mary and then to Joseph. Plus, it will not only be our choir Christmas concert, but you, too, will get to sing Christmas carols, sip cider, and eat Christmas cookies after the service.

And then on the evening of the 24th – you guessed it- we will join with the heavenly chorus of angels as they proclaim our Savior's birth

Christmas Eve we will have THREE services.

The first service, at our regular time of 10:00 a.m., will be in a "Lessons and Carols" format, where we will be singing familiar carols and reading the Christmas story.

The second, at 7:30 p.m. on Christmas Eve, will be a candlelight and communion service, featuring our choir.

And the final service at 11:00 p.m., will also be a candlelight and communion service, but instead of the choir, we will have very special music from some of our choir members. It is also the service which flows past midnight into the early hour of December 25th, *Christmas* – which makes it my personal favorite. Join us, if you can stay up that late!

I will be at all three services (naturally) and I hope you will join us for at least one, hopefully two, and maybe for all three!

And ... may each of you feel the presence of the one whose birth we celebrate and may it make a difference in your lives.

May you all experience the joy, peace, hope, and love that Christ offers each of us this Advent season and always.

In His Love,

Pastor Tom

CHURCH AND WORLD MINISTRY

The "Season of giving" is upon us! Children are crafting long, detailed 'Wish Lists' to give to Santa. Ask a child what they want for Christmas, and they will rattle off a dozen items, most of which you have never heard of, at a speed that could cause whiplash. Ask an adult that same question, and you will likely hear "I really don't need anything". Well, the Church & World Ministry has some excellent gift ideas for those friends and family members, for whom shopping for a Christmas present, is a challenge. Welcome to "Alternative Christmas Giving". Instead of a sweater, small appliance, or a gift card, give them a gift that truly comes from the heart - the gift of helping those in need. What could be more Christ-like at

Christmas? This year, we have 3 wonderful programs in need of your support.

- 1) Contributions to our Annual Cameroon Project will supply the Bethel Orphanage in Bamenda, Cameroon, with needed supplies for the children that live there full time and those who come for a short time. This is to be in a safe, caring environment. Never underestimate the power of clean sheets, clothing, school supplies and a good meal.
- 2) The refugees/residents of Immanuel House come to the U.S. with just the clothes on their backs. They are fleeing from political, religious, or other forms of persecution, and/or

the ravages of war. They can never go home, and they hope for a better life in America, which many see as the "land of opportunity". The house accommodates up to 14 refugees and as you can imagine, 14 people working toward independence and becoming productive citizens need a lot of support and supplies. Your contribution will go to a variety of household supplies, and even toward supporting residents as the transition from Immanuel House and into a home of their own.

- 3) "You give a poor man a fish and you feed him for a day. You teach him to fish and you give him an occupation that will feed him for a lifetime." (Chinese proverb.). Our Youth Group project takes this a step further, and knows not everyone likes fish. Their goal is to raise

\$1,300 to purchase a "Farm Bundle". It provides a deserving family chickens, goats, and other livestock, as well as vegetable and fruit seeds, plus the training to manage it all properly. This is done through the Presbyterian Church (USA) Giving Catalog. It's the gift of independence and self-sufficiency.

Thank you in advance for supporting one or more of these great gift ideas. Visit our table in the courtyard after church, to purchase your special gift for a loved one who has almost everything, to benefit someone who has almost nothing.

Merry Christmas,

Mike Manley, Church & World Ministry Elder

YOUTH MINISTRY

I am proud to share all of the Youth activities during October, November and December this year. Our youth are continuing to discuss prayer and how we communicate our beliefs about Jesus Christ. We are building an inspired team environment where we empower and motivate each other's thinking about our personal faith journeys.

We have decided on our Youth Alternative Christmas gift. We are promoting giving to purchase a Farm Bundle through the PCUSA Giving catalogue. (This is similar to Heifer, but through the Presbyterian Church.) You may ask what is a farm bundle?

Farm bundle

Cost

\$1,300

A Farm Bundle will provide people in need with a sustainable source of income and nourishment. The Farm Bundle includes chickens, goats, and other livestock, as well as seeds, tools, and training to help support successful farming. Please support our youth's efforts to help a family start a business that will change and nourish an entire community for many years to come.



We are also working on some smaller community service projects. The Youth have decided to help the San Jose Animal Shelter again this year. We are making and donating toys for the dogs and cats in the shelter to play with this year. We will also be volunteering for the annual Deacons dinner and are currently working to design the kid ornaments for the craft table.

We invite each of you to support the Youth activities and participate in the fun. Material or old T-shirts are welcome to build up our material supplies for the pet toy projects.

I am so proud to be part of this amazing team of youth.

Kate Manley, Youth Ministry Elder

Worship and Music Barb Overholt • Elder



The second Sunday of every month, we are blessed to have the Cameroon Choir sing. In November, they provided the **Introit** "O Day of Rest and Gladness;" the **Offertory** "Ba Ni Ngeti Ba Yaweh;" and the **Anthem** "We Plough the Fields and Scatter the Good Seed on the Land."

Welcome New Members!

On November 12, we welcomed **Jim and Sally McClure**, and **Comfort Arrey** as members into our congregation! Please give them a warm welcome into their new church family.



*Welcome New Members! (L-R)
Sally and Jim McClure, Comfort Arrey.*



Worship Calendar of Events

First Sunday of Advent • December 3

Guest Minister: Rev. George Minerva

Second Sunday of Advent • December 10

Cameroon Choir
Church Family Decorates Tree
Children's Christmas Pageant

Third Sunday of Advent • December 17

Carols Around the Piano

Fourth Sunday of Advent • December 24

Christmas Eve Services
10:00 a.m. • 7:30 • 11:00 p.m.

December 31

Guest Minister: Rev. Jennifer Bales



Thank You Ushers

For November: Laurie Boggs, Chris De La Roca, Barb Overholt, Jay Hartley, Bill and Sharon Simmons, Dave Robertson, Emily and Kate Manley

Thank You Worship Leaders

For November: Dave Robertson, Emmanuel Ngwa, DeLynn Coop, Marylyn Goode.



Heavenly Warblers

Interested in joining the choir? It's a great way to get to know one another! We are friendly and welcoming, and invite you to join us **Thursday evenings at 7:30 p.m.** All current choir members and first-timers, please arrive about 15 minutes early to pick up your music.

Worship and Music (Cont.)



Moment for Reflection

On Sunday, October 15 Elder Linda Buckley shared her faith journey with her church family. Through scripture, Matthew 7:24-27, Linda shared her faith journey with all its ups and downs, personal opportunities and conflicts, illness and death, and how a sturdy foundation was formed for her through her relationship with the faithful at Santa Teresa Hills Presbyterian Church. Linda and husband Stephen will be moving to Vancouver, Washington this autumn and we, the faithful, will miss her. Prayers extend to you, LindaB, and your family as you continue in your Faith Journey.

CHILDREN'S ED MINISTRY

The Sunday School kids have been busy learning lessons from the Bible. Listed below are their October lessons.

1. The Runaway: Parable of the prodigal son - Luke 15:11-32
2. The Dead Man who Lived Again; Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead - John 11:1-54
3. Where Are the Other Nine?; Jesus heals the ten lepers - Luke 17:11-19
4. Two Kinds of Prayer; Parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector - Luke 18:9-14



Sunday school Teachers and Helpers

| Date | Lead Teacher | SS Helper |
|-------|------------------|------------------|
| 12/3 | Marilyn Morikang | Yolanda Wu |
| 12/10 | DeLynn Coop | Cheryl Elliot |
| 12/17 | Gertrud Walker | Emmanuel Ngwa |
| 12/24 | Claris Ngwa | Lynn Hines |
| 12/31 | Cheryl Elliot | Marilyn Morikang |

Marilyn Morikang, Children's Ed Ministry Elder

ADULT ED MINISTRY

Read Luke 2:9-11

Who are "them"? _____

What was the good news of great joy? _____

What does that mean to you today? _____

Where was the city of David? _____

"Then an angel of the Lord stood before **them**, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, Do not be afraid; for see – I am bringing you **good news of great joy** for all the people: to you is born this day in the **city of David** a Savior, who is Messiah, the Lord."

Luke 2:9-11

Unscramble these words.

Sart cloars greamn hiassem gelagns skign myra

What role did angels have in the Nativity? *Check Matthew and Luke*

Remember to work on the **Bulletin insert** every week. Check out the **Upper Room** also.

Give from the heart: Treat someone. Thank someone. Support a good cause. Surprise someone. Send an affirming note. Help someone. **Reach out. End 2017 with by spreading God's love.**

Carol Miller, Adult Ed Ministry Elder

VISIBILITY MINISTRY

1). The latest newsletters and copies of sermons are always available on the website as well as a video of the most recent sermon: www.Sthpc.org. Please check these out.

2). Check out the STHPC listing in the "Places to Worship" section of the South Valley Review (local community newspaper). 12,000 copies printed and available at newstands in our area.

3). STHPC was represented by 1 Teaching Elder, 1 Ruling Elder, and 1 elected commissioner at the November 18 Presbytery meeting held in Monterey.

Bill Simmons, Visibility Ministry Elder



Good-bye Jim Wright, we'll miss you!

Pictured on the right is Jim Wright, long time friend of STHPC. Jim moved to Nebraska at the end of November. The cake, provided by Hersh Brown, celebrates Jim's move and his service on the USS Leutze. On the left is elder Bill Simmons.

You can write to Jim at

Jim Wright
404 Woodland Drive # 205
Grand Island NE 68801



Come Celebrate Pastor Tom's 16th Anniversary at STHPC



Saturday, January 13, 2018 from 7 - 9 PM
in the Fellowship Hall

Karaoke and games for the entire family!

Please bring an appetizer to share.
Ice cream sundae bar and drinks provided.

Please sign up at the Activity Table.



Turkey Tango Lunch

Sunday • November 12, 2017

Turkey Roll-up Sandwiches and Pastor Tom's Famous
(11th Annual) Turkey Quiz!



BUILDINGS & GROUNDS

What Got Fixed This Month?

- Plumbing: Broken drinking fountain was removed and pipes capped. Plumber will be coming to replace the building water shutoff valve and repair a broken floor attachment for Ladies Room toilet.
- Courtyard: Getting a quote to re-level the brick pavers. They have sunken below the concrete edges and present a tripping hazard.

Handymen and Handywomen Needed: Can you clean? Plant? Change light bulbs? Fix plumbing, electrical, do minor wood/building repairs? Buildings and Grounds needs extra hands to help with fixin' stuff at the church. Please let Dave Robertson know if you can help out in any way. He has a list of projects you can choose from.

Dave Robertson, Administration Ministry Elder, Buildings and Grounds

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

We have finished three of our PW bible study "Cloud of Witnesses" sessions looking at the book of Hebrews. We have discussed our support community with 1) Jesus Christ - the basis of all of our faith and action, 2) The Living God - God lives both in us and among us, and 3) the Living Word - God's word is both living and active and challenges, supports, and encourages us to look inward and live the most faithful lives we can. If you are still interested in participating in the bible study either with us at our PW meetings, or on your own, Cheryl Elliot still has a few of the bible study guides available.

November kicked off our annual Nuts fundraiser. Many thanks to Paul & Monica Elliot, Bev Toulouse, Faith Sandman and Marylyn Goode for packing up over 235 pounds of nuts! We are selling the nuts after worship each Sunday until our supplies run out. They make great gifts so we hope you take advantage and purchase lots of nuts.

Our December PW meeting will be our annual Christmas Party held at Barb Overholt's house. We are going to gather from 12:30 PM - 2 PM on Sunday, December 10. Lunch will be provided (Soup & Sandwiches). We normally bring a small gift to exchange, drawing numbers to see who gets to choose first. We also encourage everyone to bring a plate of your favorite cookies (and the recipe if you can to do a cookie exchange. If you bring some you go home with a plate full of assorted cookies!

Sunday, January 7th from 2 - 4 PM at Stone Church of Willow Glen, will be the Presbyterian Women's Epiphany Tea with the theme of 'Nurturing the Caring Community'. After enjoying tea and dessert, we bring in the New Year with a Taize worship experience of music, chanting, and readings in Stone Church's beautiful candle-lit sanctuary. Carpools will be available leaving from STHPC (let Cheryl Elliot know if you need a ride).

Cheryl Elliot, Moderator



Helping Hands



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

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

Monthly summary: Between October 17 and November 21 - 16 people were assisted; 12 people received food and 8 people received bus tokens. One person received cash.

Food donations totaled 30 lbs. – from STHPC. The Deacons donated 5 complete turkey dinners. A friend of the church gave 1 complete turkey dinner and 2 additional frozen turkeys.

Thank you so much for your support!
The Deacons and the Church and World Committee

*The Deacons
and the Church & World Committee*

Nursery Attendants

12/3 TBD
12/10 Ashley Fitzgerald
12/17 Rebecca Elliot
12/24 Nan Brown
12/31 Ashley Fitzgerald



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.

Marilyn Morikang, Children's Ed Elder



Income and Expenses

| | October 2017 Month to Date | Through 10/17 Year to Date |
|------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Income | \$34,282 | \$257,579 |
| Expense | \$26,182 | \$256,008 |
| Net Income | \$8,100 | \$1,571 |

Thanks to the Fellowship Team, the Elliot family, and Hersh and Nan Brown (for a cake honoring long time friend Jim Wright before his move to Nebraska) for treats in October. The "open" dates below are opportunities to help provide fellowship after our worship services.

Treat Schedule/Clean-up help needed also

Dec. 3 open
Dec. 10 open
Dec. 17 Rhona Souter

All other dates are open!!!

Amount for a "normal" Sunday is approximately ONE of the following: 8 dozen cookies, OR - 4 dozen donuts, cut in half, OR - 3 - 9X13 pans of brownies, cut small, OR - a sheet cake from Costco, OR - \$15.00 and we will purchase for you! Sign-up at the Activity Table or the Treat Table.





Reasons to Celebrate!

Birthdays

| | |
|---------|--------------------------------|
| Dec. 7 | Marylyn Goode, Emmanuel Ngwa |
| Dec. 8 | Megan DeJarnett |
| Dec. 9 | Pearl Njinda |
| Dec. 17 | Tim Davis |
| Dec. 19 | Barb Overholt, Chad Cunningham |
| Dec. 23 | Merry Leatherbarrow |
| | Nancy Alvarez |
| Dec. 25 | Jesus |
| Dec. 28 | Sharon Simmons |
| Dec. 30 | Gretchen Webb |
| Dec. 31 | Zoe Webb |

Anniversaries

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: Bill Simmons



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



Every Sunday

Two-Can Sunday

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Sat, Dec 9 | Deacon's Community Christmas Meal 12-2 PM |
| Sun, Dec 10 | 10 AM Worship and Children's Christmas Program |
| Sun, Dec 17 | Caroling around the Piano - after worship |
| Sun, Dec. 24 | 10 AM Worship Service Lessons & carols |
| Sun, Dec 24 7:30 & 11:00 PM | Christmas Eve Candlelight Service |
| Dec 25 - Jan 1 | Church Office closed |

*Santa Teresa Hills Presbyterian Church,
The Reverend Tom Coop, Pastor*

www.sthpc.org

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: December 28
for January 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

**Christmas Eve
Candlelight Services
Sunday, December 24
7:30 and 11:00 PM**

