



The Stone News

NOVEMBER – DECEMBER 2019

IN THIS ISSUE

✠ A Letter from Your Pastor

Dearest Congregation,

Recently I attended a gathering for pastors, and while we were checking in with one another, one of my colleagues remarked that he felt like he was rushing to plan Advent, which is ironic because Advent is a season of waiting. All the pastors around the table had a good laugh at this because jokes are funny when they are so painfully true. It is ironic that planning a season of waiting would be done hurriedly, but it's not unexpected.

As I reflect on this, I realize that so much of our lives is spent hurrying up, just so that we can wait. On the freeway, we hurry down stretches of relatively clear road, just to come upon standstill traffic, and be forced to wait. At the grocery store, we hurry through the aisles collecting everything we need just to wait in an impossibly long checkout line. When preparing for a party, we hurry to get everything done, just so we can wait for our guests to arrive. When preparing for a big decision or change, we hurry to weigh the pros and cons and work out all the details, just so that we can wait for a sign or a door to open.

This got me thinking: how might we stop this pendulum swing, hurry and

wait...hurry and wait, and find some sense of equilibrium and stability? I believe there is some semblance of an answer in the way we wait. Are we anxiously biting our nails, checking our watch, and cursing everything that gets in the way of accomplishing what we're trying to accomplish? If so, then we are likely liable to continue that pendulum path, where we experience very little joy in our movements.

I confess that I am devilishly excited for Christmas. I cannot wait to give and receive gifts, to enjoy holiday treats, to be immersed in the children's live nativity scene, to gather for a still and contemplative service late on the eve of Christmas, and to rejoice at the coming of Christ. As I prepare to enter into the Advent season, however, I am conscious of the fact that I don't want to hurry through any of it. I don't want to ride that pendulum, because I know the swinging will rob me of the joy and hope this season holds.

During this season of Advent, I am feeling an invitation to resist the urge to hurry, and instead, to seek to fully welcome the waiting. I am thinking of a number of ways to do this: take a hike and breathe in the love of the trees; seek stillness and meditation at a Taizé worship service; intentionally

(cont'd)



Chrismon at Stone Church

Pg. 1-2	Letter from Rev. Evans
Pg. 2	Season of Advent at Stone
Pg. 2	Anointing with Prayer
Pg. 2	Giving Tree Toy Drive
Pg. 2	Parents Day Out
Pg. 2	Adult Ed: Daniel Bannoura
Pg. 3	Little Dresses for Africa
Pg. 3	Seniors in Transition
Pg. 3	Sacred Heart Food Donation
Pg. 3	Thanksgiving at Stone
Pg. 3	Take a Stand Against Trafficking
Pg. 4	Building Fellowship at RTSV
Pg. 4	Wine Tasting and Auction
Pg. 5	From the Reading Nook
Pg. 5	Church School Volunteers Needed
Pg. 6-7	Session Reports
Pg. 7	Trailwalkers
Pg. 7	Homeless Student Housing
Pg. 7	Liturgical Arts Finds Fabric at FabMo
Pg. 8	Stone Church Vets Honored
Pg. 9-10	In Memoriam
Pg. 11	Women's Book Club
Pg. 11	Community Mission Table
Pg. 11	The Respite of Taizé at Advent
Pg. 12	Game Night a Prize Winning Success
Pg. 12-13	PCUSA's Revitalization Initiative
Pg. 14-15	Stone Pics

spend time with folks you love, eating slow meals and engaging in deep conversation; set aside time to read for fun, build something you've been dreaming of, or bake something that brings you joy.

If we're not careful, this season will take us for a ride and we'll find ourselves on the other side wondering why and how time moves so quickly. So, I invite you to slow down and break the hurry and wait cycle, so that we might find deep joy and stillness throughout the coming weeks.

Grace and peace,
Sammie

The Season of Advent at Stone Church

- **December 1st**-First Sunday of Advent & Communion
- **December 8th**-Second Sunday of Advent
- **December 15th**-Third Sunday of Advent
- **Blue Christmas Service** following worship on 12/15 in the Fireside Room. This service is a time to acknowledge the grief and sorrows surrounding the holiday season.
- **December 22nd**-Fourth Sunday of Advent- includes hymn sing

**Christmas Eve, Tuesday,
December 24th:**

5:30pm

Child-Friendly Service

(includes a live nativity scene & candlelight)

11:00pm

Traditional Candlelight Service

Advent Taize services will also be taking place each Tuesday night at 6:45PM (Dec. 3, 10, 17)

Anointing with Prayer

The pastors of Stone Church have renewed the practice of anointing with prayer following Sunday morning services; at present it is offered once a month, on the second Sunday following communion Sunday.

Anointing is an ancient Biblical tradition. Kings, prophets, and priests were anointed, usually by pouring fragrant oil over the head. We don't use oil; instead, we used a fragrant balm, drawing the sign of the cross on a person's forehead.



Anointing, as we use it, is an indication of God's constant grace, and God's blessings. Through anointing, persons who are distressed, or confused, or uncertain about situations in life are reminded that God's Spirit is constantly at hand to offer confidence and hope. The concerns are lifted to God in a short prayer, asking for God's Spirit to clarify the way ahead, and to bring comfort in the days ahead.

Anointing is offered to any person worshipping at Stone Church. It is not magic. It is an opportunity to ask God for a moment of peace, and to be reassured that God's Spirit is present in all our daily lives.

~ The Rev. Dr. David McCreath
Parish Associate

Giving Tree Toy Drive

Choose an ornament from the Giving Tree in the Social Hall, buy a toy or gift card and **return the gift to the Giving Tree next Sun, Dec 1st or Sun, Dec 8th**. We want to buy at least 70 gifts this year! SHCS distributes 18,600 toys, bikes, and books to needy children throughout Santa Clara County.



Parents' Day Out



Bring your little ones to the Social Hall on **Sat, Dec 7th (10-2pm)** when

the Deacons supervise, feed, and entertain the kids so you can Christmas shop, run errands, clean your house, or enjoy some free time! Sign-up after worship!

Adult Education Features Daniel Bannoura

Join Adult Ed after service on **December 1, 2019, at 11am** when Daniel Bannoura will discuss "Theological Reflections on the Palestine/Israel Conflict." He is a Christian instructor at Bethlehem Bible College. Born in Jerusalem, he has lived in both Palestine and the US; holds degrees in Theology from London School of Theology, and Islamic Studies from the University of Chicago; is involved in local community projects; and writes and lectures on theology, Islam, and the life of Christians in the Holy Land. He'll provide insight into Holy Land Christian Life. Stone Church is the first stop on his Bay Area tour.

Little Dresses for Africa

by Claudia Hamm



We're not just sending dresses,
we're **HOPE**
Sending

On Saturday, November 2, 2019, the fifth Sew-in Day for Little Dresses for Africa was underway in the Stone Church social hall. Sewing machines hummed and sew-ers chatted as they created colorful cotton dresses for little girls in Africa...dresses that will plant seeds of hope in their little-girl hearts.



Some came to sew, some sewed at home, but by the end of the morning 16 dresses had been completed and with 15 dresses already completed beforehand, our total to date is 31. Again at this year's sew-in, we remembered Evelyn Tower, who had encouraged us to participate in this project, and is no longer with us. She was remembered as we worked and we are thankful for her skills and gifts that she shared so willingly.



Little Dresses for Africa is a registered non-profit 501c3 Christian organization begun in 2008 by Rachel O'Neill. Its home base is in Rockwood, Michigan, where the dresses are sent. From there they are sent with mission groups; mailed directly; shipped in containers; taken personally to Africa and other locations around the world.

Little Dresses for Africa, as an organization, also promotes clean water, sanitation, good health, and family skills.

These sew-ers created this year's dresses: Barbara Clark, Sue Evans, Wendy Lord, Kiana Lord, Hilleguus Faber, Maureen Chandler, Jean Raby, Jeanette Rapp, Amber Biscardi, Deborah Crim, Carol Johnson Fritz, and Nana Oye Botchway. A big THANK YOU to all of them from the bottom of my heart!

Seniors in Transition

Seniors in Transition (S.I.T.) will meet on **Thurs., December 19, 2019** (11am - noon) in the church library. Everyone is welcome! Questions, contact the [Rev. Irene Pak Lee](#).

Sacred Heart Food Donation



In November, we collected 246.2 pounds of food which comfortably beat our monthly goal of 208 pounds. We've now completely recovered from the slight dip over the summer. To hit our 2,500 goal for the year we need just another 204 pounds in December. We are in good shape!

**Our final collection date for 2019 is:
December 1**

If you will be away on this date, simply drop off your items on any Sunday at the bins in the narthex.

Thanksgiving at Stone



The Membership & Communications Committee will be hosting the annual Thanksgiving dinner at Stone Church in the Social Hall on **Thursday, Nov. 28, at noon**. Bring your family & friends to a festive Thanksgiving dinner. The M&C Committee is providing turkey, stuffing, gravy, mashed potatoes, beverages, and table settings. You're asked to bring a side dish and/or dessert to share. Arrive at noon to socialize & we'll eat at 1pm. Sign-up after worship, or contact [Mike Raby-Brown](#).

Take a Stand Against Human Trafficking!

Join us on **November 25, 2019** and **December 23, 2019**, from 8:15 - 9:15am, and stand with us as we hold our signs along Lincoln Ave; we will meet in the library. This is a continuing project to help our community become more aware of the enormity of human trafficking (modern-day slavery). We would love to have YOU stand with us! Questions? Contact [Claudia Hamm](#).





Men's Mission and Ministry (MMM) has a full schedule of activities taking place this fall. Join us!

Building Fellowship at Rebuilding Together Silicon Valley

This fall our project was for a homeowner who was born and raised in San Jose. She grew up in Goosetown, a district in present day Willow Glen. It was once distinguished for undergoing diverse ethnic transformations – from predominantly Irish to German and later to Italian over the course of decades. Our homeowner graduated from San Jose High School and was ready to attend San Jose State but met and married her husband, deciding instead to stay home and raise a family. Her husband served in the U.S. Navy where he transported troops to Guadalcanal in the Pacific Theater. The couple raised a son and a daughter. After returning from the War, her husband worked as a City employee and concrete finisher while she worked in the canneries 12 hours a night for 30 years to support her family. She is deeply family-oriented and regards her home as a castle, evident by the large living and backyard spaces she and her husband poured their love and labor into.

Though the homeowner lost her husband, her daughter to pancreatic cancer, and her son to a heart attack, she is living life well with her four dogs, and gets frequent visits from her son-in-law and grandson who live nearby.

She has always loved gardening and, despite having rheumatoid arthritis, still gardens vegetables out of barrels today.

Our team was led by Michele Smith, Volunteer Coordinator, and Leland Wong and Bill Ribble, Co-House Captains.



Wine Tasting & Auction: February 8, 2020



Do you like great food, paired with awesome wines? Do enjoy a good time for a good cause? Does hanging out with your family and friends in a fun relaxed environment make for a great evening? Then mark your calendar, the Men's Group will be holding its annual Wine and Food and Auction Event on **Saturday, February 8th, 2020.**

There will be a host of great auction items, great food, wonderful wines, Stone Church fellowship and, of course, lots of fun! Proceeds go to worthy causes selected by the MMM Core Group and announced prior to January. Last year,

the MMM contributed to fire victims in the North Bay, Rebuilding Together Silicon Valley, and the Stone Church Youth Mission Trips.



A sample of auctioned items and experiences include: Dinner at Chez Mary, 3 days/2 nights at the Stark cabin at Pinecrest, an Indian Dinner for four, Giants Baseball Tickets, and much more.



Don't miss this annual "Must Attend" event!



From the Reading Nook

by Sue Williams, Library Coordinator

This holiday season brings some new books we hope you'll enjoy!

New in the Children's Chapel Library:

- * The Christmas Story by Gill Davies (1st Bks Dav)
- * The Red Woolen Blanket by Bob Graham (1st Bks Gra)
- * Angel Mae by Shirley Hughes (J Hug)
- * The Singing Shepherd by Angela Hunt (J Hun)
- * From Heaven Above: The Story of Christmas Proclaimed by the Angels by Patricia & Fredrick McKissack (J McK)
- * The Old Man Who Loved to Sing by John Winch (J Win)
- * The Story of Christmas illust. by Jane Ray (J 232 Ray)
- * Mitten String by Jennifer Rosner (J 296.3 Ros)
- * A Poem for Peter: The Story of Ezra Jack Keats & the Creation of The Snowy Day by Andrea Pinkney (J Biog KEATS), given by Sheri Cunningham

Additions in Lincoln House:

- * It's Time for Joy! How To Become the Happiest Person You Know by Brian Biro (170 Bir)
- * Rediscover Jesus by Matthew Kelly (232 Kel), given by Allen Bartu
- * Illuminated Life: Monastic Wisdom for Seekers of Light by Joan Chittister (248.8 Chi)
- * Who Needs God by Harold Kushner (296.7)
- * An Other Kingdom: Departing the Consumer Culture by Peter Block, Walter Brueggemann & John McKnight (Soc. Iss. 261.8 Blo), given by Allen Bartu
- * Beyond Charlottesville: Taking a Stand Against White Nationalism by Gov. Terry McAuliffe (Soc. Iss. 323 McA), given by Joy Moriconi

- * Miracles from Heaven by Christy Beam (Spec. Needs 231 Bea), given by Joan Helms
- * My Lovely Wife in the Psych Ward by Mark Lukach (Spec. Needs 362 Luk), given by Claudia Hamm
- * The Who the What & the When: 65 Secret Sidekicks of History by Jenny Volvoski, Julia Rothman & Matt Lamothe (BBiog Vol), given by Charlotte Dickson

Church School Volunteers (Angels) Needed

At Stone Church, during a child's baptism, the congregation vows to be part of the child's faith journey. That journey takes a lifetime, but starts here, on Sunday mornings. Mary Jo needs volunteers to lead Sunday school classes; this is your chance to be an important part of that baptism promise! Teaching on Sundays is simple, fun, and you don't need to know anything about the bible to do it; the lesson plans and activities are all ready to go! The Church School "season" runs from Sept 8, 2019, through mid-June 2020, so there are 38 (+/-) opportunities to help out, get involved!



The Importance of Church School (Children's Ministry)

- Helps children respect and appreciate their faith community.
- Gives kids a chance to ask questions. In this crazy world children need a safe and loving place to share their happy and sad feelings.
- Plants spiritual seeds; we plant them, and God does the rest.

What Will Volunteering for Children's Ministry do for You?

Your efforts will multiply. There are few opportunities that allow you to impact the future in such a direct way. When you love and teach kids, you influence future generations. These children will one day become parents and church leaders. If you want to change the world long term, serve in Children's Ministry.

Serving children will make you a more patient person. Children's Ministry is unpredictable; even the best plans can be torpedoed by a butterfly flying into view. A child's openness to the present moment can teach patience as well as opening you up to the wonder and amazement of everyday experiences. Children's Ministry will open your heart and mind!

- Open to All - No Experience Necessary
- Qualifications ~ the desire to be present and to love.
- Gathering and prepping materials is

done for you.

- No need be a bible scholar or an expert in child development.
- You won't be alone; there will always be 2 people present when working with the kids. Sign-up with a friend, or work with someone you don't know and make a new friend.
- It's not a long-term commitment; 1 or 2 Sunday(s) a month, 1 or 2 Sunday(s) a quarter, whatever works for your schedule works for us! Volunteer as much as you'd like.

Search your heart and your calendar then contact [MaryJo Blazek](#) to sign up!

Session Reports

by Julia Roberts

Below is a summary of the Session meeting held on October 15, 2019:

- Approved the annual Presbyterian Women Thank Offering for November.
- Approved a SUPER SPECIAL TOP SECRET ITEM that just proves you should have accepted that Nominating Committee offer. Too late now though. Next year.
- Approved a StoneWorks request for funds to assist our Accompaniment Team family as they transition into self-sufficiency after the loss of their breadwinner.
- Approved moving forward on initial plans for the Lincoln House foundation and windows.

Committee Reports

- **Buildings & Grounds** is organizing an upcoming workday, while handling a variety of repair and maintenance needs from lighting to pest control to dishwasher leaks.
- **Membership & Communications** is busy planning upcoming events like Game Night, Thanksgiving Dinner, a new member class, and the upcoming Presbytery meeting. They are also working on a special Veterans Reflections project for Veterans Day.
- **Worship** continues working to support our beautiful sanctuary and inspiring services. They have interviewed four potential organists and are arranging auditions.

- **Personnel & Administration** is organizing staff reviews of all paid employees.
- **Men's Mission & Ministry** continues to organize workdays (Camp Daybreak, Rebuilding Together, private homes), outreach (Men's Breakfast, Book Group), and fundraising (used book sales, wine tasting & auction).
- **Presbyterian Women** is making arrangements for mission partners to engage in our social hour, one group per month, rather than one annual mission fair. PW continues to organize events like Human Trafficking stands, book clubs, and Little Dresses for Africa.
- **StoneWorks** is planning an upcoming Solidarity training, and continues to work with the accompaniment team for the family of Alfredo while refining StoneWorks policies towards future accompaniment teams. SW approved donations to help survivors of Hurricane Dorian, as well as to support Sunday Friends and the Presbytery General Mission fund.

- **Deacons** has instituted two-person teams for home visits and has made it easier to request confidentiality on the prayer chain.
- **Stewardship** is busily planning for the upcoming stewardship campaign, with Consecration Sunday on November 3.

Below is a summary of the Session meeting held on November 19, 2019:

After approving items on the consent docket, Session:

- Set the annual congregational meeting for January 2, 2020, a

Sunday, to approve terms of call and review the budget for 2020.

- Approved the serving of Communion monthly in 2020 (this is an annual vote of Session.)
- Approved a grant proposal for Rev. Sharon LeClaire's work in ministry and mental health.
- Approved an update to Rev. Sharon LeClaire's job description as Part-Time Stated Supply Pastor, which includes an increase in duties and a corresponding increase in compensation (pending Budget Review Committee negotiations).
- Approved an accounting change to the annual end-of-year office celebration, now to be hosted by P&A.
- After extensive discussion about effects to the backyard stemming from the expected elevation of Lincoln House and its impact on ADA access ramps, voted to postpone the item to next meeting.

Committee Reports

- **Budget & Finance** reports both income and expenses in a good position. They are busy prepping for the upcoming Budget Review process for 2020.
- **Buildings & Grounds** reports a very successful workday (thanks volunteers!) and is organizing lighting replacement and several cleaning projects for the winter season.
- **Deacons** reports a busy time for Stone Cares supporting members of the congregation in various transitions. They are planning for Parents' Day Out on 12/7.

▪ **Membership & Communications** celebrated the publication of the special issue of interviews with Stone Church Veterans. In addition to regular business (including StoneNews and weekend hikes), M&C is busy organizing the Thanksgiving potluck and the upcoming Presbytery meeting. They also report the receiving of eight new members at the recent new members' class.

▪ **Christian Education** heard reports from the various Sunday School levels, which are blessed with many volunteers. They are already planning for relocations due to upcoming Lincoln House construction.

▪ **StoneWorks** can't stop giving away money; this month, to Immanuel House, Rapid Response Network, Black Lives Matter, and Covenant Network. They helped win a Synod grant for a computer lab for Sunday Friends. They are addressing options for the rotating shelter given upcoming Lincoln House construction. They are also exploring a new role for the Accompaniment Team.

▪ **Stewardship** reports 106 pledges for \$390,000 to date. Expectations are that more pledges will roll in over upcoming weeks, with a forecast around \$495,000. This would be comparable to recent pledge totals (2019 budgeted for \$490,000, but traditionally this is a discount on the total pledge amount). Please get your pledge in as soon as possible, even if it's an estimate.

▪ **Worship** is working towards Advent (including additional Taize services) and the Interfaith Thanksgiving service, and at the time of their meeting were planning the

Veterans' Day Sunday service. Liturgical Arts has created new green banners for the sanctuary and is working on the fourth Great Ends banner. Also heard reports on the organist search (ongoing).

▪ **Personnel & Administration** heard pastor reports, and has gathered employee reviews and prepared recommendations for 2020 salaries.

▪ **Presbyterian Women** reported a successful first run of the Community Mission Table during social hour. They will be collecting the traditional Thank Offering near Thanksgiving.



Trailwalkers

Our most recent hike was at Rancho San Antonio Open Space Preserve.

We took in the gentle Lower Meadow trail to Deer Hollow Farm, then the Wildcat Loop trail to the Vista point and back along the Lower Meadow

trail, for a total distance of about four miles. This was our last trek for the year – but we have a great 2020 schedule planned!



The first Trail Walkers outing of 2020 is scheduled for Saturday, January 25. Mark your calendars!

As the time gets closer, we'll choose a weather-appropriate destination. Watch the church bulletin for more information. In the meantime, Kathy Stark asks that hikers and would-be hikers take a minute to think about their hiking preferences, including hike length and challenge level, as well as trails they would like to visit in the coming year. Please corner Kathy at Coffee Hour or send your thoughts to her by [email](#).

Homeless Student Housing

Last year at Willow Glen High School, there were six homeless students in the school population. The reasons vary. Bill Ribble is gathering information on community support through potential host families. While there are still many important details to be worked out, if you might be willing to volunteer or host, please contact [Bill Ribble](#)

Liturgical Arts Finds Fabric at FabMo

Four members of Liturgical Arts journeyed to Santa Cruz in October in search of recycled fabric samples from FabMo. After having meticulously reviewed all available samples in the shop, the group headed for lunch on the wharf. The work that Liturgical Arts currently has underway is Banner #4 in the series, "The Great Ends of the Church" (meaning the great goals of the church). The theme for this banner is, "The Preservation of the Truth".



Lunch at the Wharf in Santa Cruz



Janice & Cheryl working on the banner

Stone Church Vets Honored on Veterans Day

On November 10, 2019, Stone Church honored the many vets in our congregation with scripture, sermon, and song. As is our tradition, we invited veterans to gather on the patio steps for a group photo. This year, we also celebrated the publication of a special collection of reflections from our veterans. [Reflections of Service](#) captures some of the service memories of our vets and how their time in the military has been reflected in service during other periods of their lives. Read their stories [here](#).

From the collection's Introduction:

Since our founding in 1947, Stone Church has had a storied history of service: to our church community, to our neighbors near and far, and to our country. What better reflection of our members' commitment to service than recognizing the veterans in our membership. Our veterans served in every branch: Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard, and National Guard; some served short periods, some served entire careers. Some were called to serve abroad, and others were called to serve at home.

In addition to the sacrifices made by our veterans, their families -- spouses, parents, children, relatives -- often made their own sacrifices as well. Whether in the combat zone or not, long separations created hardships on spouses, stress in children and anxiety for parents of service members who may have been in harm's way. Even in peace time and non-combat areas, training accidents often claim the lives of military personnel because the nature of their jobs and training can be dangerous, as can be observed in some of the writings.



Our veterans served in World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War and the Gulf Wars; however, many served in critical non-combat roles both in the U.S. and abroad. Of those who were deployed overseas, our veterans saw nearly twenty countries spanning five continents. Upon completing their time in service, our veterans pursued a variety of occupations, regularly drawing upon their military experience as they continued to serve in civilian life: a fireman, a teacher, a counselor, a banker, a principal, an engineer, a tech exec, a programmer, an entrepreneur, an artist, a business owner, a sales professional, a physical therapist, and ultimately, all became Stone Church Members. We gratefully acknowledge their service, and their ongoing devotion to the service mission of Stone Church.



~ Joanne Vliet
Veterans Reflections Project Manager
Membership & Communications Committee

IN MEMORIAM



Leonard Borello

Leonard passed away in September 2019 surrounded by his family. He was married

to wife Pauline for 65 years and had four children, eight grandchildren, and two great grandchildren.

Leonard was a proud veteran of the US Navy, serving during WWII and in the early 1950's he was a partner in a small grocery store. Realizing the importance of his young family, Leonard pursued a career in real estate eventually creating Heritage Investments. He enjoyed his passion for real estate development until the age of 92.

Leonard enjoyed traveling, collecting coins, writing poetry, and was a proud author of three books. His incredible compassion for others, gentle spirit, and unique sense of humor will be remembered forever. He was an inspiration to us all.

Leonard is survived by his wife Pauline; children Sue (Vinnie), Patti (Mark), Mark (Sally), and Robert; eight grandchildren and two great grandchildren.



Ed Clemenco

Long-time Stone Church member, Ed Clemenco, passed away

in September. Ed and his wife, Jeanette, were regulars at Stone Church since they joined in 1961. He served as an Elder and participated on many committees. Please keep his family in your thoughts and prayers.



Carolyn Clendenning

Carolyn was born and raised in Ontario, Canada, and graduated from Queen's University in

Kingston Ontario, where she achieved a Bachelor of Arts degree. After marrying her college sweetheart Don Clendenning in 1955, they came to Willow Glen California in 1961 where they lived in the same house for over 50 years, raising three children and many pets. Carolyn had a very active life covering her family and volunteer work. She was involved with her philanthropic sorority and the Stone Church of Willow Glen, where she served as Treasurer and Deacon.

Don and Carolyn moved to Oregon in 2015 to be closer to family as Don's health faded. She is survived by her three children and their spouses and children: Doug and Janet Clendenning (Kelly, Patrick); Patty and Jim Nelson (Christian, Nicholas, Peter); and Donna and Ron Kasabian (Andrew, Katie). Her life was an adventure and she lived it well. Her kindness, beauty and generous heart will be missed and remembered by her family and friends.



Sara Holtzapple

Sara and husband Rev. Robert Holtzapple, came to Stone Church in 1998. She was a Deacon, a

member of what is now called StoneWorks, but at the time was called the Church & World Board, and was a faithful member of the Library Crew that tends the church library.

Her bio in Presbyterian Women's 2010 "[Telling Stories of Faith](#)" tell us that she enjoyed mission work; she and her husband participated in Civil Rights marches in Boston, worked for fair housing, and, in general, worked to better their communities wherever they lived.

One of her lasting legacies here at Stone will be the beautiful piano she donated that now resides in the sanctuary. She will be remembered every time it is played.

Two of her favorite Bible passages on her journey were, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, your soul, and your strength, and "love your neighbor as yourself," and "Do unto others as you would want them to do unto you."

Sara's usual spot at the back of the church will miss her presence. Please keep her family in your thoughts and prayers.



June Tablak

June and her husband, Ed (aka Tab), joined Stone Church on December 25, 1956.

June was very involved in the life and history of this church, serving in numerous leadership roles over the years. She also was active in Presbyterian Women, and volunteering in the community.

At her memorial service, several highlights of June's life were shared:

- She was the first Editor of the Stone Wall News until she moved back east in 1969.
- She was the third woman elected as an Elder at Stone Church (1962).
- She led the Junior High program at Stone beginning in the fall of 1960 (90-120 kids would meet on Thursday nights.) She took that up again in the 80s when she and Tab returned to San Jose ('77). This program filled a huge need for the junior high kids.
- She wrote the Church Mouse column from 1983-2017.
- She served on the Membership Board since 1978 or so, through its name changes and other shifts until 2014.
- She started the Family Clusters Program in the 1980s which created groups of families who met together regularly. One cluster group still meets to this day.
- She attended the Women's Retreat for about 28 years, serving on the planning team several times.
- She helped to form and foster the Soul Feast groups until she was 97 years old.
- In the 1960s, June worked in the local community with the "braceros" – Mexican people who worked in the fields. Taking her girls with her, she traveled to their location and helped women learn to sew and also helped some learn English. She majored in Spanish in college.
- At age 88 she started volunteering at Sacred Heart, where she would get up almost every Tuesday and Thursday morning to be at the facility by 7am to make sandwiches and prepare food for the hungry. One Saturday each month she helped distribute food at Sacred Heart.
- Twice, June and Tab were foster parents, once for a boy and once for a girl; both children were in high school.
- June was deeply rooted and raised in a staunchly conservative, Republican family and nurtured in a fundamentalist Methodist church and emerged into a theological, social and political progressive of the highest order, exemplified in a book group she initiated 30 years ago.

June was welcoming to everyone. She enjoyed meeting new people and hearing about what they were doing. She was an excellent hostess and many people have spent an evening around her table, feeling welcome, and meeting new people.

June was a pivotal piece of Stone Church, its history, and part of its guiding light. There are so many

people of this church and our community that she has touched. She will be missed by all.

Here are a few lines from Stone Church's mission statement that represent June well:

"... the warm heart, the open mind, the adventurous spirit

That cares, heals, comforts, challenges;

That knows no division of color or class or frontier;

That inquires and looks forward as well as backward."

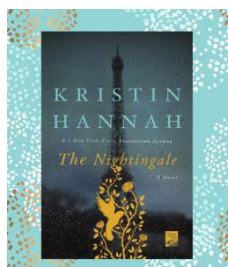


Flowers prepared by Diane VanDenBosch for June's service

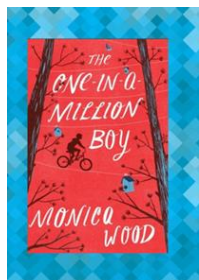
Women's Book Club, Wine, and Snacks

Join us for at an upcoming book club meeting! Great fun, great finds, great food, great friends!

<https://www.meetup.com/Womens-Book-Club-Wine-and-Snacks>



November 20, 2019 from 7:15 pm to 8:45 pm at the Stone Church Library. Book Discussion: *The Nightingale*: by Kristin Hannah



December 18, 2019 from 7:15 pm to 8:45 pm at the Stone Church Library. Book Discussion: *One in a Million Boy*: by Monica Wood

New books will be announced early November!



Book Group Members Support Village House Shelter, September 2019



Community Mission Table

For the past four years, Presbyterian Women have held a

Mission event where we've invited a number of community organizations to provide information about their particular missions. Now, we are going to do it in a "new way." On the second Sunday of each month, the Community Mission Table will feature a local community organization. We've already begun!

On Sunday, November 10, **Recovery**



Café was our first featured community organization. Recovery Café is a healing community for those traumatized by addiction,

homelessness, and mental health challenges. We hope many of you stopped at the table to talk with Judi Kaiser and Julie Cookson about this important community program. On Sunday, December 8, **Rose Academies** will be at the Community Mission Table. Since 2014, Rose Academies has been empowering the world's most oppressed individuals with lifesaving knowledge. They work in rural communities in Eastern Africa, educating girls of all ages and the disabled about reproductive health, menstruation, water & sanitation and disease prevention. Find out more on December 8, 2019.

We hope the Community Mission Table will not only provide information about important community organizations but also an opportunity for you to volunteer to be a part of their programs and outreach.

~ by Claudia Hamm

The Respite of Taize During Advent



Candles in preparation for Taize

Brother Roger, the founder of the Taize community in France wrote: "Christ Jesus, you were always within me and I did not realise it. You were there and I was not looking for you. Having once found you, I longed for you to be whole of my life. A fire was burning in me. But so often I forgot you again...while you kept loving me."

Contrary to the spirit and meaning of Christmas, we frequently get distracted and caught up in the busyness of the holidays - the decorating, the shopping, the baking, the parties...But deep inside that longing for connecting with God and the true purpose of all this 'doing'. The Taize service provides that sacred space of silence where we can again meet Christ. **Throughout the year, on the first Tuesday evening of the month, Stone Church opens its sanctuary at 6:30pm for music and meditation in the soft glow of candlelight. In this most peaceful beautiful sacred space, the service begins at 6:45pm and concludes about 7:30pm. During Advent and Lent, this is held weekly. The Tuesday evening services this Advent are December 3, 10 and 17. All are welcome. Please join us.**

~ by Donna Bell

Game Night is a Prize-Winning Success!



The M&C Committee organized Game Night on October 18, 2019, filling the Social Hall with game stations and tables where cards and board games were enjoyed by kids and adults alike. Multiple tables were set up; one each for Sorry, Clue, Scattergories, Tabble, Catch Phrase, Monopoly Deal, Backgammon, Checkers, Boggle, Scribbage, and more! Other tables were set aside for prizes, such as stickers, plastic spider rings, light-up wands, journals & pencils, small pumpkins and Halloween headbands. Popcorn, hot dogs, cookies, lemonade, candy corn and three barrels of apples from Derk Johnson's family orchard were available for needed sustenance when the games



went into the later innings. The evening wrapped up around 8:30pm, with laughs and smiles all around and suggestions of

pulling together another game night soon! A special thanks to Lizanne and Fred Oliver for arranging the games, the food, and the fun!

~ Joanne Vliet
Membership & Communications Committee

Church leaders give PC(USA)'s revitalization process solid reviews

by Paul Seebeck | Presbyterian News Service

(Editor's Note: Stone Church of Willow Glen participated in the Vital Congregations initiative.)

LOUISVILLE — As 14 Presbyteries prepare to launch the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A)'s Vital Congregations initiative in January, three presbyteries — Trinity, Newark and **San Jose** — are finishing up a pilot program of the two-year revitalization process.

The Presbyterian Mission Agency initiative led by Vital Congregations (VC) coordinator the Rev. Dr. Kathryn

Threadgill prayerfully walks with pastors and congregations through intentional efforts of revitalization by focusing on these 7 Marks of Congregational Vitality: lifelong discipleship formation; intentional, authentic evangelism; outward incarnational focus; empower servant leadership; spirit-inspired worship; caring relationships; and ecclesial health.

In the **Presbytery of San Jose**, the 10 congregations in the VC pilot have about six months left in the revitalization process. For the presbytery's VC coordinator, the Rev. Dr. Margaret Boles, it's been a delight seeing 15 pastors representing 13 churches meeting in monthly cohort groups.

"It feels like gold, because relationships are being strengthened and ideas are being shared," she said. "It has created such good energy in both the presbytery and its churches."

At Trinity Presbytery in South Carolina, 10 of the presbytery's 61 churches went through the pilot VC initiative. The first launch was so

successful that they held an orientation in October for another 10 churches interested in going through the second wave of the revitalization process. At that gathering, pastors of the churches who had gone through the initiative became table facilitators, sharing both their successes and struggles in going through the intentional revitalization efforts.

According to Trinity VC coordinator Dr. Phyllis Sanders, the pastors who have already been through the pilot program will continue to meet quarterly in their cohort groups to discuss ways that they're continuing to live out the seven marks of congregational vitality.

"Otherwise it becomes a one-shot deal, like a project, rather than a continuing process of transformation," said Trinity's general presbyter, the Rev. Danny C. Murphy.

For Boles, pastor of Covenant Presbyterian Church in Palo Alto, California, the richness of the VC process is what makes it so meaningful to participating churches. After the first year, the initiative encourages churches to celebrate their history — which Covenant did, taking files from 70 years of life together and laying them out in a missional timeline.

"It was so much fun and so positive for the congregation," she said. "We left it up for a month."

For other churches in the presbytery Boles heard from, both celebrating their history and also being encouraged to do a prayer walk in their neighborhood helped create a new sense of purpose and meaning.

One of the final steps during the second year of the initiative is taking the U.S. Congregational Life Survey to help each congregation assess how

they're doing in each of the seven marks.

Trinity's Sanders has seen how helpful this is in helping churches continue to explore their strengths while working on areas that need attention. For example, McGregor Presbyterian Church in Columbia, South Carolina has been working on "intentional, authentic evangelism," which was its lowest-scoring mark.

"And now they're beginning to restructure what they do around all the marks," Sanders said.

Wanting to more fully live into the mark of "outward incarnational focus" by getting out of the walls of their church and into the neighborhood, Shiloh First Presbyterian Church in Winnsboro, South Carolina, held a Jazz on the Green event. When it was moved indoors to a local community center because of inclement weather, the church's pastor, the Rev. Dr. Robert Scotland, had artificial turf placed in the area where the band played.

"It was a great neighborhood and ecumenical gathering, with children from both the church and community participating," Scotland said.

At Newark Presbytery the Rev. Dr. Barbara Smith, transitional director of presbytery ministries, says going through the VC pilot initiative was "a win for them." When the churches started the revitalization process, she admits that the presbytery wasn't in a good place. But because of the pastor cohort group they are doing much better.

"Which in our context is just as valuable as what has happened in the other pilot presbyteries," she said.

Some 24 pastors and church leaders in Newark Presbytery participated in the cohort groups. Of the 19 responding to a survey at the end of the process, 14 said they would probably (6) or definitely (8) participate in future cohorts. Of the 10 participating congregations, three-quarters of those responding said they would be somewhat comfortable talking with others about the seven marks.

Now when churches apply for grants, Smith says the presbytery asks them — whether they participated in the VC pilot or not — how their project fits in with the seven marks as a way of helping the churches in the presbytery start talking about the marks.

Boles said the one thing the Vital Congregations revitalization process does is raise awareness of what God is already doing — and for congregations to enter into that.

"It's raised all of our awareness," she said. "Members of our presbytery who aren't in the pastor cohort groups are learning about the things we're talking about — and you begin to see the ripple effects."

Presbyterian Mission Agency's Threadgill is grateful for the faithful work done by the three pilot presbyteries on behalf of the PC(USA) and the initiative.

"I want to acknowledge the significance of their pioneer work for the denomination," she said. "By boldly doing their work, through the Spirit's power, they are bringing about transformation and revitalization within their congregations today. This is a great celebration to us all."

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<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/story/three-presbyteries-finishing-up-vital-congregations-initiative-pilot-program/>



Bob cleaning a stained sanctuary wall



Leland repairs grout during Workday



Pastor Evans lends a hand during Workday



Closing ceremony for Village House



Closing ceremony for Village House



Clockwise from upper left: Julia, Jim, Michele, Leland and John hard at work for Rebuilding Together Silicon Valley



Gabriel at work



Gabriel, Julia and Leonard in a forest of ladders



Welcome baby Rasura!



Carol, cutting a pattern



Kathleen and Janice laying out patterns



Claudia at work in Liturgical Arts



World Communion Sunday



World Communion Sunday



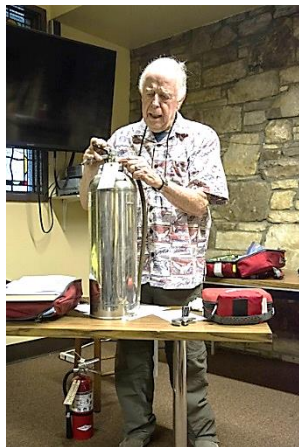
World Communion Sunday



World Communion Sunday



Flower arranging class



Lawrence leads a fire safety class



Fire safety class



Bill & Claire on Veterans Sunday



Honoring Veterans Sunday



The Stone News

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 Sunday Services: 9:30am

The Rev. Samantha Lynn Evans, Pastor
The Rev. Irene Pak Lee – Associate Pastor
The Rev. Sharon LeClaire – Stated Supply Pastor
The Rev. Dr. David McCreath – Parish Associate
The Rev. Marge Palmer – Pastor Emerita
Nancy Kromm - Choir Director
Peggy Spool – Children's Choir Director
Jean Raby – Hand Bell Choir Director
Mary Jo Blazek – Church School Administrator
Jennifer Scott-Brand – Office & Facility Manager
Ruthanne Martinez – Treasurer
Liliana Borda - Nursery Supervisor
Victor & Sonia Perez – Custodians
Hilleguus Faber – Memorial Coordinator
Lizanne Oliver – Wedding Coordinator
Mary Johnson – Parish Nurse
Sheri Cunningham - Presbyterian Women
Bill Ribble - Men's Mission & Ministry
Joanne Vliet – StoneNews Editor

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