

JANUARY 2013



Go Tell It On The Mountain

Stephen Glauz-Todrank, Minister
Sunday Morning Service: 10:30-11:30

Church Phone: 408-353-1310
Online: www.skylandchurch.com

January Calendar

Sunday January 20

Potluck Guest Speaker

Maha Elgenaidi

Whitaker Hall 11:30am

Sunday January 27

Annual Meeting

Sanctuary 11:30am

Minister's Column

Dear Friends,

As the "old" year ends and a new one begins, I am full of gratitude for so many things and you are a very big part of that. Thank you for all your generosity during December. Together we helped six mountain families with our Giving Tree offering and many more around the world through our Blanket Sunday offering. You also responded generously to Carolyn's and my invitation to give the church a year end gift, and working together we gave over \$8000, which puts our church in great financial shape for the new year. Topping that off, thank you for your Christmas gift to me, a gift certificate to Chaminade. Carolyn and I look forward to using it soon!

There is much to be grateful for as we enter the new year. On the 20th during the potluck the Deacons are sponsoring a speaker named Maha Elgenaidi who will be address us on "Getting to Know American Muslims and Their Faith". I have met some mountain neighbors who are Muslim and they will also be attending. Please come for that special event!

On the 27th, we will hold our Annual Meeting in which we will elect new officers and board members and thank outgoing, incoming and continuing volunteers. I am so grateful to all of you for all you do to keep us alive and well.

We will certainly have some adventures in this new year. What a joy to do them together.

With deep thanks and many blessings,
Stephen

Treasurer's Note

Thanks to your generosity our Giving Tree received \$1,461 to help local families.

Our Blanket Sunday offering received \$1,511 to help those in need around the world through the Church World Service organization.

After examining current and previous years pledging I redistributed the timing of expected pledge giving. However pledge giving is still \$3,000 less than anticipated after seven months. Expenses are holding at our planned target.

We received [as of 12/27/12] unexpected gifts of \$5,000 to help our operating finances. \$7,400 was transferred from General Fund Surplus to this year's Other Income as planned in our Budget.

Here are our operating finances for December 2012:

Last Month	December 2012	
	Actual	Planned
Income	\$ 23,615	\$ 19,874
Expense	\$ 27,889	\$ 28,308
Net	(\$ 4,274)	(\$ 8,434)
Fiscal YTD	06/01/12 – 12/12	
	Actual	Planned
Income	\$ 109,609	\$ 111,077
Expense	\$ 106,074	\$ 106,184
Net	\$ 3,535	\$ 4,893

Gerald Alonzo

Altar Flowers

A sign-up calendar for 2013 has been posted in Whitaker Hall. Please choose days when you would like to donate altar flowers.

John Heyes

Salt Shakers

It's time to sign up for our annual Salt Shakers dinners. We will have our dinners for four months starting in February. Please phone Fern Thompson at 408-353-2632 or email her at fernthompson@comcast.net to add your name to the list.

Fern Thompson

Clothing Distributions

Were you wondering about all the leftover clothing donations that didn't sell during Harvest Festival? They were taken to The Happy Dragon Thrift Store in Los Gatos, the Career Closet in San Jose, and the Rebele Shelter for men, women and children in Santa Cruz. Thank you to all the donors of the clothing, shoes, etc., and the many hands it took to sort, sell, and later distribute to the above charities. Our community helps so many!

Linda Heyes

Erica Goss Named LG Poet Laureate

The Town of Los Gatos has chosen me for its next Poet Laureate. My term runs from January 1, 2013 to December 31, 2014.

The main duty of a poet laureate is to function as a focal point for the literary arts of the town he or she represents. This includes establishing poetry readings, events that feature poetry and other arts such as music, film and visual art, and conducting workshops. As Poet Laureate of Los Gatos, I plan to create events that honor people of all ages in our community, from youth to seniors, emphasizing tolerance and creative expression through the arts.

I have many ideas and plans for my term as Poet Laureate of Los Gatos. Over the next two years, I will be actively engaged in a wide variety of cultural activities that feature poetry. As a long-time resident of the Santa Cruz Mountains, I will pay special attention to our area's schools, churches, and community centers.

Look for the poetic surprises popping up all over town, and beyond!

To keep up with the latest Poet Laureate news, please visit the "Events" page of my website: www.ericagoss.com.

Erica Goss

Spaghetti Dinner



SAVE THIS DATE! Friday, February 1st will be our annual COMMUNITY SPAGHETTI DINNER, 6:00 p.m. in Whitaker Hall. Please consider inviting your friends, neighbors and relatives. The price is right: you can feed your entire family for \$15.00, or individually for \$7.50 per person, \$5.00 for children age 12 and under, and children age 5 and under are free! We will be serving handmade pasta with both vegetarian and meat sauces, a wonderful organic salad, crunchy french bread, and a delicious dessert. We will also have water, milk, and coffee; however, you are welcome to bring your own wine or Martinelli's. Just think! NO cooking or kitchen clean-up after a long week! We will also have some entertainment and music to delight you throughout the evening. Do join us for a fun social event to start off the second month of 2013!

Linda Heyes

Women's Group Annual Retreat

When: April 6th

Time: 10-3

Tour the Monterey Bay Aquarium with a spiritual docent. Located on historic Cannery Row, it is one of the largest and most respected aquariums in the world.

Cost: \$20 -\$30, depending on the number of people.

We will try and get passes from members and Deborah for the Aquarium.

Deborah Streeter will lead the retreat. It will be held at her church and then at the Aquarium. The focus is on some spiritual / stewardship issues.

Deborah describes the day:

Come first to our church, which is 0.8 miles from the Aquarium. Easy free street parking, as opposed to Aquarium garages. We gather, coffee, and some orientation. The church is a 115 year old redwood gem, lovely social hall and sanctuary. (It will remind you of yours!) Then walk along the shore to the Aquarium. (Sometimes we do this in silence with the kids, or in pairs help a spiritual conversation happen.) (There could be a car for folks who don't want to walk.) Spend time there, I give you a tour, focus on some spiritual / stewardship issues. Picnic outside or at church if weather is bad. Walk back, debrief, worship, done. I did this with some UCC adults from San Jose a few months ago and it went well.

This will be a great opportunity for the women of our Church.

Please let Nancy Jo Lopp know if you will be able to attend:

nancyjo@lopp.com

408-353-4257

Blue Theology focuses on how human beings sense the divine through relationship with the Ocean.

Nancy Jo Lopp

Positive Thinking

Positive Thinking Improves Life and leads to:

- Decreased negative stress
- Greater resistance to catching the common cold
- A sense of well-being and improved health
- Reduced risk of coronary artery disease
- Easier breathing if you have certain lung diseases
- Better coping skills in difficult situations
- Read more:
 - <http://advancedlifeskills.com/blog/can-positive-thinking-really-improve-your-life/>

Ellie Lavender

Thoughts on a Torah Reading

This month as we proceed from the celebration of Jesus' birth, we recall that as a Jewish son, he learned the Torah (first five books of what we call the Old Testament). I offer the following thoughts on a Torah reading for January from the Bay Area Jewish Healing Center. I met the author, Rabbi Zucker, at an educational seminar for chaplains and spiritual leaders in San Francisco this past fall. May these words provide inspiration to you as they have for me:

Multiple Verbs Highlight Different Possibilities: Torah Reflections on Parashat Va-era

Exodus 6:2 - 9:35

January 12, 2013 Rosh Hodesh Shevat, 5773

The Torah portion Va-era contains some familiar verses that are preserved and expanded in the Passover Haggadah.

In verses Exodus 6:6-7 God tells Moses that redemption is at hand for the enslaved Israelites, and in that explanation, God uses four verbs: v'hotzeiti . . . v'hitzalti . . . v'ga-alti . . . v'lakahti . . . I will free you . . . deliver you . . . redeem you . . . take you Then, in verse 8 we read an additional verb, v'heiveiti – I will bring you Generally, these verbs are understood to mean that God acted, and continues to act, in multiple and cumulative ways to help us.

There is another way to interpret these verbs: they represent different possible approaches to an issue or a problem.

God is saying to us, just as I am offering various ways of describing – if you wish, reframing –what I am doing, so it is important to realize that there is more than just one way to achieve a goal. There are multiple valid paths to see a course of action.

Whether at home or in another setting, we often face difficult decisions about care, or about how to adjust to a new, and often unwanted, life situation.

At times we are sure that we are on the right path, but then we run up against a roadblock. At these moments, it is hard to believe that there are alternative avenues. Further, others may have ideas or compelling reasons to propose a different solution.

The multiple verbs in Exodus 6:6-8 teach us that though we may not initially understand or appreciate it, often there are many possibilities before us. There are various viable options; the challenge for us is to recognize and consider them, and then to choose from among them. May the Source of many possible blessings in our lives grant us the patience and wisdom to discern the viable options before us and guide us to make wise choices. Amen.

© Bay Area Jewish Healing Center, Rabbi David J. Zucker

This Torah Reflection was written by Rabbi David J. Zucker, PhD, BCC, author of **The Torah: An Introduction for Christians and Jews** (Paulist Press, 2005; www.davidjzucker.org)

Patricia Wood