

Go Tell It on the Mountain

Skyland Church Newsletter – December 2018

Skyland Community Church
10:30 Sunday Service

Minister: Rev. Kevin Omi
Church phone: 408-353-1310

December Church Calendar

December 1	9:00-11:00 a.m. Skyland Church Mini-Retreat. 7:00 p.m. Christmas Concert and Sing-A-Long at Church of Latter Day Saints, 23185 Summit Road; bring cookies.
December 2	10:30 a.m. First Sunday of Advent with Communion Worship Service. Christmas Crafts & Fellowship after service in Whitaker Hall.
December 9	10:30 a.m. Second Sunday of Advent Worship Service. Trustees Meeting after Service. Deacons Meeting after Service.
December 16	10:30 a.m. Third Sunday of Advent Worship Service; Potluck after Service
December 23	10:30 a.m. Fourth Sunday of Advent Worship Service. Church Council Meeting after Service.
December 30	10:30 a.m. Worship Service.

Regularly Scheduled Events in Whitaker Hall

Mondays:	Alcoholics Anonymous 8:00 p.m.
Tuesdays and Thursdays:	QiGong 8:30-9:45 a.m.
Thursdays:	Yoga 7:00 p.m.

Message From Reverend Kevin Omi

Dear friends:

We are about to embark on a time of new beginnings.

Advent marks the beginning of a new liturgical year. It is a time of anticipation; not only for the coming of Jesus as an infant born into poverty in Bethlehem, but also the future--the coming of Christ in glory to fulfill God's loving purposes for humanity. We tend to focus on "Baby Jesus" but the prophets, including Jesus himself, also pointed to a time when "the kingdom of God will be near."

How can we best prepare for new beginnings? Above all, with prayer. Why? Because in our prayers, we are most honest with God and ourselves. When we pray, we bring all that we are and our hopes for those we love and the world. We bring all our challenges and all our blessings to the Holy One, knowing that God listens, God cares, and that God is always working for the best. If we so choose, Advent can be a "mini-Lent", a time of reflecting on the importance of Jesus in our lives. During Advent we wait, breathlessly, for the coming of Emmanuel, "God with Us", to be born yet again. We do so with prayer: prayers of anticipation, wonder, and hope.



The reVision process is an integral part of Interim Time, a time of rediscovery of our identity, calling, and the role we play in the community. We'll also explore our heritage, leadership, missions, connections, planning for the future, and other topics.

During December we will be inviting you to sign-up for the reVision small group gatherings that will begin on Epiphany Sunday, January 6, 2019. Guess what the most important aspect of reVision is? Yes, prayer, combined with the movement of God. The second most important aspect is wide and deep participation, ideally, by all members of the congregation.

We hope two documents will help make people feel more comfortable in participating: a Small Group Covenant and Safe Space Guidelines. The schedule we are proposing is as follows: Tuesday 3:00 - 4:30 pm, Thursday 9:00 - 10:30 am, Saturday 9:30 - 11:00 am, and Sunday 12:00 - 1:30 pm.

This is a time of new beginnings, for our church, community and the world. May Jesus be born in our hearts yet again, bringing hope, peace, joy, and love. Amen.

Love and blessings, Rev. Kevin Omi

Skyland Community Church Website

To learn more about the Interim period, the progress in the search for the Interim Minister and other transitions at Skyland please visit the Transitions page: <http://skylandchurch.com/transitions/>

Church Council News

On November 25, the Church Council met at noon downstairs in Whitaker Hall.

Rev. Omi provided an updated timeline for the Interim period and discussed the next steps in the reVision program. Sign-ups for the small groups will begin soon, and the first small group meetings are being planned for the week of January 6. He also led a discussion of the behavioral covenants to be used in the small groups to ensure respectful and inclusive discussions.

A Nominating Committee to recruit members for the various boards and committees was formed with volunteers Gerry Alonzo, Anne Evans, Jackie Seymour, and Larry Lopp. The Council moved to keep the sizes of the boards and committees similar to last year, except that the Deacons requested one additional seat be filled.

A communication strategy drafted by Larry Lopp and Rev. Omi was presented and ratified by the Council. The multipart strategy includes use of our current website, Facebook, NextDoor, and the Patch for our outward-facing publicity efforts; Constant Contact as our communication platform and contact database; use of GoogleDocs for collaborative document development; use of Google Calendar as our official church calendar; and purchase of a Dropbox subscription to serve as the repository of all documentation. The Dropbox subscription is only about \$100 per year, and will provide secure off-site storage for electronic files for all church documents, except for certain highly confidential financial documents.

If you have any questions about the meeting, please ask Rev. Omi or me and we would be happy to give you more details.

Blessings! Deana Arnold, Moderator

The Giving Tree

The Skyland Church Women's Group will again sponsor local families at CT English and Loma Prieta Schools for the holiday season. Children will receive Target gift cards. Each family will receive grocery store gift cards.

The felt Giving Tree in Whitaker Hall is our way of showing the generosity of our church community and our neighbors. Add a felt ball to symbolize your gift. We will collect money during and after church during Advent.

If you want to give and can't make it to church on Sunday, please email Shannon Edwards at: shannonedwards14@gmail.com or Deana Arnold at: darnold@mac.com and we'll include your contribution.

Food Pantry Update

Thank you so much for your recent donations! Our pantry has begun to see a bit of use, which may well continue as weather gets colder. We could use a few each of the following items:

Vegetarian soup Peanut butter Crackers Cereals (both hot and cold)

We are "swimming" in tuna (with surplus in the shed) even after donating to the Davenport Resource Center, and do not need more at this time. We also have plenty of pasta and sauce. Thank you again for your generous gifts of food to those in need.

Blessings, Julie Victorine

Missions Board

Africa Library Project	The container of 19 boxes of books for the Africa Library Project will be arriving in Freetown, Sierra Leone around Dec 1st and then sent to MCA School Heremakono that will serve the whole community. Skyland Church has been named a 2018 Global Literacy Champion (See below). Thanks to all who helped. africanlibraryproject.org	Contact: Cindy Siwajek
------------------------	---	---------------------------

From the African Library Project

Thank you for completing your African Library Project book drive!

The container is on its way to Sierra Leone and with it your hard work in the form of a future library. The container is estimated to arrive in Freetown around Dec 1st and then our partners will start distributing to the individual libraries. We've attached an electronic thank you from us to you celebrating your accomplishment and naming you a 2018 Global Literacy Champion.

We hope that you will post this on your website, social media pages, or print it and hang it where all those who contributed might share in the pride of this accomplishment. Congratulations and THANK YOU!

We are currently looking for book drive organizers to help us complete libraries in Ghana & Botswana with ship dates of January 15th and February 15th. Would you like to do another drive? If so, let me know and I will get you signed up! Please share this with any of your friends and family who might be interested in making a huge difference in global literacy!

Thank you for your dedication. I look forward to working with you on future libraries!

Sincerely, Alice Valentine Container Manager and Botswana Country Liaison

Note From Your Treasurer

Pledge income is continuing behind what we expected by \$4,365. However due to income from Harvest Festival and other exceeding our plan, total income is only \$2,335 less than anticipated.

Individual account expenses are all less than anticipated amounts. I changed the \$900 fallen tree expense from the Trustee account to Facility Maintenance Fund. The end result is a fiscal year to date operating net of \$19,716 that is \$5,236 more than anticipated. Mission's local Giving Tree outreach has received donations of \$1,170. More is required to support the anticipated need.

Thanks to PGE renting my property for temporary use during their local tree removal fire prevention work, I am donating the rent to Skyland Church to be sent to NCNC-UCC Fire Relief efforts. Thanks to PGE and other members' donations we have given \$10,745 to NCNC Fire Relief support.

We are able to accept credit card payments for pledge, general and special offerings if that is more convenient than check or cash. See either Jan or me after service for these transactions.

Here are our operating finances as of November 26 for our 2018-19 fiscal year.

November 2018			Jun 1, 2018 to November 26, 2018		
	Actual	Planned		Actual	Planned
Income	\$ 9,378	\$ 11,052	Income	\$ 87,857	\$ 90,192
Expenses	\$ 7,919	\$ 10,571	Expenses	\$ 68,141	\$ 75,712
Net	\$ 1,459	\$ 481	Net	\$ 19,716	\$ 14,480

Note: Operating finances do not include non-budgeted special and local mission gifts and outreach.

Respectfully Submitted, Gerald J. Alonzo, Treasurer

Altar Flowers

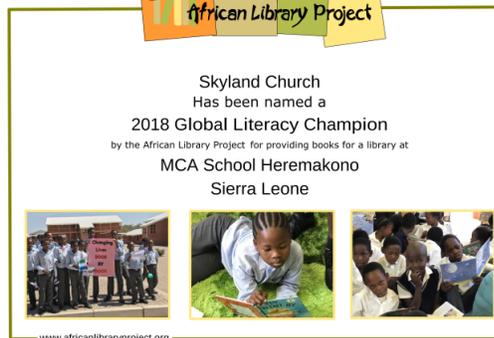
Several Sundays during December are open for floral gifts. Please sign up on the calendar in Whitaker Hall.

MEDITATION MOMENT

Holy, wholeness-creating Jesus,
I find you deep in the core of my awe-filled being
I know you as a slowly unfurling deep red rose
Called to bloom into fullness and service
Advent Christ, be born within me yet again, I pray.
Bloom in the face of everyone I encounter
Fill the world with your pure light this day.
Amen.

LITANY THROUGHOUT THE INTERIM PERIOD

*For God's holy presence amidst change, we pray.
For comfort because loss is part of change, we pray.
For Christ-like steadfastness during the challenges of transition and seasons of faith, we pray.
For reassurance through frailty and failings, we pray.
For the abundant creativity the Spirit provides, we pray.
For our loved ones in this community of faith, we pray.
For God's children beyond this community, we pray.*



www.africanlibraryproject.org

