

Campbell

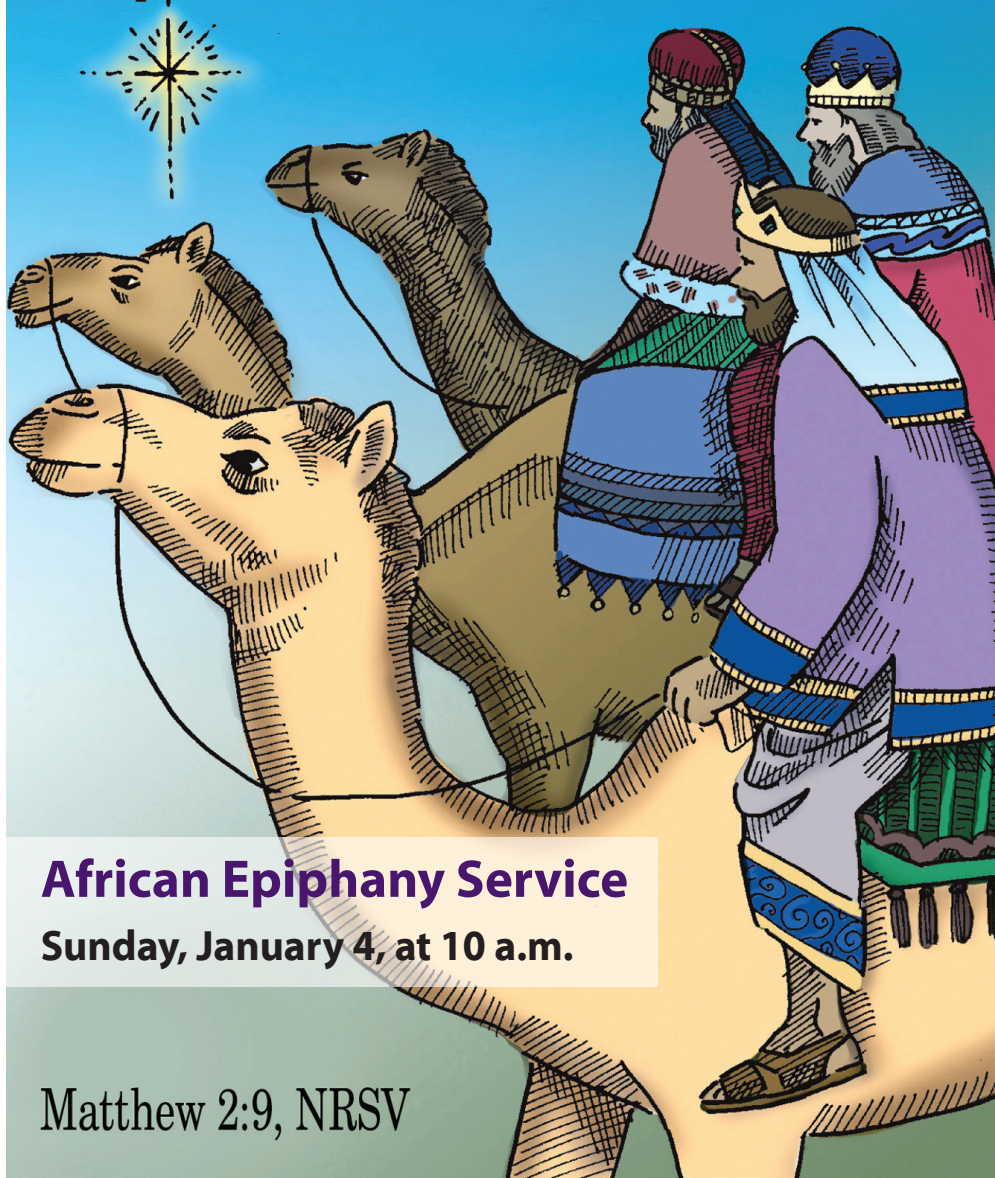


CONNECTIONS

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM CAMPBELL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

JANUARY, 2015

... and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was.



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African Epiphany Service

Sunday, January 4, at 10 a.m.

Matthew 2:9, NRSV



Campbell Connections

A monthly publication of
Campbell United Methodist Church
Editor - Heather Reynolds
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the 3rd Wednesday* of each month.
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hreyolds63@gmail.com.

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the newsletter will be mailed on the 4th
Wednesday & the deadline for articles will
be on the 2nd Wednesday.

If you have any questions regarding
the mailing, please call the office at
408-378-3472

❖
**CAMPBELL UMC is a RECONCILING
CONGREGATION**

CHURCH STAFF

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CHOIR DIRECTOR, Bill Coye
ORGANIST, Mary Ann Gee

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CUSTODIAN, Hector Estrada

Church Office: 408 378-3472
Web Site: www.campbellunited.org

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Sunday Worship: 10:00 a.m.
Adult Sunday School: 8:50 a.m.
Children's Sunday School: 10:15 a.m.
African Ministry: 11:30 a.m.
Quiet Communion: 6:00 p.m. Tuesday

Bright Days Preschool

Mary Smith, Director: 408-378-8422
www.brightdayspreschool.com



Kathi's Pastoral Reflections

Happy New Year, loved ones!

Even after a full Advent, it is good to turn toward the Christmas season—which, in the church just begins on Christmas. It's a time for taking in the power of what we have just experienced, and reflecting on what it all means. Epiphany—which is a bigger and more important celebration in this church than any I've ever been a part of before—is the highlight of this season. I hope you have already starred this date—Sunday, January 4—on your calendar, to worship in the tradition and under the leadership of our friends in the African Fellowship.

At the same time, we turn toward the promise of a new year. There are many things I am excited about for us in the year ahead, but I want to tell you about one of them particularly. As a pilot project in the California-Nevada Conference of the United Methodist Church, and along with a handful of other churches in our circuit, we have a rare opportunity to engage with a consultant in a thoughtful, intentional process of assessing CUMC's strengths and assets and mapping their intersections with the needs of the community around us. On five Saturdays—one each month, beginning January 17—we will gather to learn and practice tools that will help us plan for and engage in one or two significant and sustainable ministries that meet a need in our community. My hope is that these new ministries will pick up on and expand the good and generous ministry work that CUMC has already been doing.

For example—is it possible that some of the ministries we do now, on our campus, might meet a need for people who would never come to church? Could we serve them just by changing the location of some of the things we do?

Joshua Sulaiman, Bruce Hallinan and I have been trained as facilitators of this process. We will be part of the team that helps lead the rest of our congregation through this study. I'm looking for a few other folks to lead alongside of us. If you'd like to be a part of this project to widen our thinking about what it means to be the church in Campbell, I'd be glad to hear from you. You can reach me at pastorkathi@campbellunited.org, or (408)378-3472, ext. 12.

Blessings of this possibility-opening season to you—and love,

Kathi ❖



Join a Group



ARE YOU THINKING that January is a good time to start some new mental exercises?

ARE YOU WANTING to resolve to find an opportunity for some in-depth discussions of theology, church history, world religions, your faith?

OR JUST TO STRETCH YOUR MIND AND HEART?

Seekers is a group that meets at church on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month, from 8:00 to 9:30 a.m. We will start January using a new book, so this is a great time to begin with the group. YOU are most welcome!

Please contact Ellen Droke, eadroke@aol.com, or (408) 241-4055 for more information.

COME JOIN READ LISTEN SHARE & GROW ❖

Book Club

Start out January, 2015 with our new book read *The Invention of Wings* by Sue Monk Kidd

Our next get-together will be on **Monday, January 26, 2015 at 4 p.m.** in the Fireside Room.

I understand this is a very interesting book so come and join us for some lively discussion.

Lou Woodburycattott ❖

A Greeter's Smile - Priceless!



Campbell UMC is blessed to have a wonderful team of genuinely warm and welcoming greeters. Their kind smiles and handshakes help set the tone that the church is also a warm and welcoming place, open and inviting to all. Thank you, Greeters, for making sure we all feel special and that you are happy to see us when we come to church. You are appreciated!

If you would like to be a part of this remarkable group, please contact Gail Jacobs at gjacobs_2000@yahoo.com to volunteer or learn more.

The activity requires virtually no training, is a minimal commitment of two or three times a year for 30 minutes before service, and the only job requirement is the desire to greet each individual who enters the sanctuary doors.

You will be serving a very important role for the church with an extremely minimal time commitment. And you will feel great yourself when you receive everyone's greetings and smiles in return. It is truly a win-win experience! ❖

Endowment Message

As this year ends, we reflect back to the many exciting things that have happened over the last year. We have been blessed with all that takes place in and through our church family. Many of us have shared our time, talent and resources to make Campbell alive for Christ's work in our community.

"Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place."

As we reflect on the past, we may find ourselves thinking about our future ministries as a congregation. There are so many opportunities for ministry unfolding and so much generosity in the people of our church

"Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place."

This must be true because a gift amounting to almost \$42,000 has been given to the Endowment Fund of our church in 2013 and 2014. These gifts help ensure the life of Campbell UMC in the future. These and other gifts ensure that Christ's work will continue in this place.

Thank God for generous and joyful givers.

George W. Cleveland, Endowment Fund Committee ❖

Sunday Morning Umbrellas



Thanks to a generous donation, we have a supply of Campbell United Methodist Church umbrellas on campus to use Sunday mornings. They will be available to assist worshippers going between the Sanctuary and the parking lot on rainy mornings. (And let's pray for lots of rainy mornings to use them!) ❖

In the COMMUNITY

Advent at Elmwood



The Elmwood Art and Spirit Ministry is sharing Advent at Elmwood. During this season, we combined printmaking with making cards the inmates are able to send to their families, and to veterans in substance abuse programs or women in shelters. Our theme was *God As Partner/ God With us*. We focused on preparation and how God is always present.

The team made gelatin printing plates so each inmate had a printing surface and we taught them how to pull prints. Some were veritable printing machines and made print after print after print so they could pick out the ones they liked best. Some were meticulous and carefully planned each one. They helped each other, made creative suggestions and we heard words of encouragement expressed around the tables. It was a metaphor for unexpected, unpredictable things that happen, how we manage those changes and how we move forward when our expectations are not met. It was messy, wonderful, beautiful fun!

As we discussed the various Scriptures, we asked how they saw God as partner. God as partner? Whatever could we be talking about? "Where IS God?" They all pointed up. "God's up there?" They answered "Well, He certainly isn't DOWN THERE!" Hmmm. "Would you concede that God is in this room?" Okay, they were going with that. "So if God is in the space between us, could God also be in you?" Thoughtful faces looked back. "Could God always be with

you, around you, and in you?" The floodgates opened! They talked about what was true, God or science? Can God really, really forgive us for the bad things we have done? Can God still love us if we are in jail AGAIN? They argued their points with love and caring for each other. We couldn't decide which was the greater miracle, that they were willing to talk about their fears, here in this place with these other inmates, or that they were willing to listen to the idea that maybe, just maybe they were loved after all!

In the third session, we played the bells with the inmates so they could make joyful music. They also spent time writing blessings for their cards. A beautiful handmade card is their gift from the heart. Additionally, thanks to your generosity in buying Advent booklets, they have Advent meditations to help them through this time separated from their families. (If you don't have a booklet yet, some are still available and inmates will also receive one with your donation.)

My silent Christmas blessing for them, in my heart everyday and especially on the last day of our session is "Please help them believe. Please help them know they are loved no matter what. Please let them know, every day, that they have a Partner who will never let them down. Bless them with the knowledge that they are not alone!"

Ginny Johnson ❖

The Gift of Life!

On **Monday, December 29**, give the best gift of all - the gift of life!

Donate blood during our annual holiday Blood Drive on Monday, December 29, between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. The week between Christmas and New Year is the time when blood is in greatest demand and the lowest supply. Twenty minutes of your time can mean the difference between life and death for someone

injured in an accident or natural disaster. Give blood - give life! ❖



United Methodist Women



BOOK REVIEW

Love in a Headscarf

by Shelina Zahra Janmohamed

This book offers an intriguing insight into what it means to be a woman living in a Muslim culture and devoted to her faith. Living in England, she narrates her travels from her late teen years through her mid-twenties. She wrestles with the universal questions. "What does it mean to be a woman?" "Do I choose to continue to grow in the faith that I was raised in even though I can now see certain hypocrisies in the way my community lives out its faith?" "Do I want to get married?" "What qualities must my husband-to-be have?" "Most essential of all, will he respect and appreciate my desire to express my faith by wearing the headscarf and treat me as an equal partner in the marriage."

I recommend the book for its insight.

Jane LaPierre, Campbell UMW ❖

CUMC SNAPSHOTS

An Historical Skip Around Campus



CUMC has a long tradition of adorning our Sanctuary. A photo taken at a wedding in December of 1960 shows the Fellowship Hall decorated with two green Christmas trees, and two evergreen wreaths, arranged on each side of the large white cross which hung over the altar table. (*The Sanctuary had not yet been built.*)

Over the years, many of our members and staff persons have used their creativity, talents, and skills to create visuals to enhance our worship experience. They have illustrated symbols of our faith, the church seasons, special days, and sermon series' themes. Besides paraments for the pulpit, lectern, and table, we have enjoyed colorful banners and a variety of objects. Remember the traffic signs or the painted shoes?

The photo seen here was taken during the Season of Advent of 2012. Thanks to all who have participated over many years in our worship design teams.

Susan Sargent, Church Historian ✦

People are only at risk of exposing others after they begin to show signs of the disease. You can only get ebola by touching blood or bodily fluids of a person who is sick or has died of the disease, or by touching contaminated objects like needles.

Many West Africans are concerned about their jobs here in the United States. When people hear their accent the West Africans are afraid of losing their jobs because of who they are, even if they have not been in Africa for several years. It is illegal to fire or evict someone because of their ethnic background. Joe Kappia mentioned issues at school and has heard suggestions that his students stay home until ebola is eradicated. This is illegal, and county health is able to provide assistance in educating the misinformed public. Dr. Cody said that one of her jobs is to honor people's rights while relieving anxiety.

Where did ebola come from? Ebola is a virus. Many viruses live in animals without hurting the host animal. It is when the virus is transmitted from animal to human that the problem occurs. There are currently five strains of ebola that we know of. Outbreaks usually occur in very rural areas so that the disease is contained. This ebola outbreak became a problem because it broke out near major transportation areas and spread before anyone knew they were ill. The virus traveled many miles, rather than being contained to a small village.

For more information contact the Santa Clara County Health Department www.sccphd.org or California Department of Public Health www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/cder/Pages/Ebola.aspx, or Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC), www.cdc.gov/ebola ✦

CELEBRATION AND INFORMATION

Sunday, November 16, was a huge day of celebration. It began during the worship service with the baptism of Flokel Williams. After worship, in the Fellowship Hall, her family and friends served a banquet of West African foods. There was music and gifts, since Flokel was also celebrating her 10th birthday.

After the luncheon was over, Julie Lattin provided games and activities for the children on the patio. Meanwhile, Tamba Tugbawa gave us some background information and introduced Dr. Sarah Cody from the Santa Clara County Health Department.

Tamba reminded us that many of our church members from West Africa have been helping to support family members back home. When the ebola virus epidemic began, U.S. and European companies shut down their offices and left the West African countries. This put many people out

of work. Those people in the United States who were already concerned for their family and friends health now also had concern about their ability to afford food and housing.

Dr. Cody talked about what the county health department is currently doing and what we as individuals can do. She also mentioned the legal issues concerning discrimination. When travelers return from West Africa, the county health department is notified so that they can do a welfare check on those individuals. She said several times that the county health department does not publish the names of persons who have just returned. This is an invasion of their privacy. The individuals are given a written list of things to look for, a number to call if they have questions, and instructions for what to do if they think they are infected. Tamba had earlier suggested that people self-quarantine for 21 days after returning to the U.S.

Circuit Writer



Letting Go of Distractions

Rev. Larry LaPierre

Advent is supposed to be a time to remember the coming of God into the world in the utterly unique person of Jesus the Christ. Frankly, I have to work harder to focus on Jesus during this time of year. Why? It's because I am continually distracted as the forces of capitalism try to convince me that gift giving is really the focus of Christmas. I suspect that the Churches are vastly outspent in our attempts to bring the message about Jesus to the world by those whose agenda is about having more things.

In response I've been praying for God's grace to help me resist wanting more than I need. My prayer is simply this: "God, help me to live a simpler life." I ask God for help because the ads are like static in the background of a radio or TV signal. Instead of turning to God I pause at the HSN station whenever they have a computer on sale. Do I really need another computer? No, I certainly do not, but I am still distracted.

As I write this article, other people are distracted by notices to leave "The Jungle"—a place in San Jose where people with nowhere else to go often live. I have never been homeless. So, perhaps I'm not the one to talk about homelessness as a distraction from celebrating Christmas. On the other hand, if there was one thing that Jesus' parents knew something about, it was being homeless when Jesus was born. If that makes us uncomfortable in the midst of our Christmas celebrations, perhaps that's good. It may actually be good for us to be distracted, at least from the ads, by our neighbors' needs.

How can we help to restore balance to the tension between those of us who have more than enough and those who live and die on the streets? There is no simple answer, but most of us can do something to help. Those

who are able can give money to organizations that help people in need (the Salvation Army, Second Harvest Food Bank, UMCOR, etc.). We might be able to offer our time by visiting someone who lives alone or someone who lives in a place where they don't want to live (think prison, psychiatric ward or even some nursing homes). Or perhaps we can offer to stay with someone's sick family member so that a caregiver can have some time for themselves. Our choices at Christmas enable others to cut through the distractions to see God at work.

For people of faith Advent is a time to invite Christ to work more deeply within our hearts and to invite others to do the same. That means turning away from anything that distracts us from God's love in Christ.

My prayer will continue to be, "God, help me to live a simpler life." However, God can't help me to do that unless I let go of whatever distracts me from recognizing how God spoke through Jesus to the poor, the suffering and the lonely in his day. The needs of the poor, suffering and lonely of today become voices that God uses to call us to serve God's people now. Will you join me in my prayer for a simpler life so that we can focus on being Christ's servants to each other?

Rev. Larry LaPierre ✦



Care Giving Ministries

In the Hebrew Scriptures, God often spoke in the Whirlwind, Fire, Thunder, Lightning or the Storm. When God was communicating it was in a big noise.

When the idea of God speaking in a still, small voice was expressed, that was new. Then people tried seeking God in the quiet, they had to listen diligently to hear God, to experience God. Waiting on God and listening. These are the avenues in which we can move toward God.

Our church care givers often help their special ones in quiet ways. In patience, in empathy, in waiting with them to find God; in special moments, in thoughtful responses, in deep conversations. God is in the loving connection in the purposeful relationship. May you feel blessed as you reach out in loving concern for those you have been called to serve.

Ellen Droke,
Care Giving Ministries ✦

CARTOON CORNER



SAVE THE DATE

Our **Third Annual Crab Fest** is scheduled for **February 21, 2015.**

Come one, come all, for the fun, food and silent auction. Watch for more information about volunteering and ticket sales.

A Thriving Community at Campbell United Methodist Church

Special celebrations these past few months





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Jan. 7, 2015

Return Service Requested

People reaching out, with open minds, souls and hearts -

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Engaging creativity

Building social justice

Providing loving, welcoming community

- for Christ and the world.



**FOR LAST YEAR'S WORDS BELONG TO LAST YEAR'S LANGUAGE
AND NEXT YEAR'S WORDS AWAIT ANOTHER VOICE.
AND TO MAKE AN END IS TO MAKE A BEGINNING.**

- T.S. Eliot

