

the **Visitor...**

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. . . bringing into your home the news and ministries of  
First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Vallejo

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*I've Been Thinking . . . . . about faith  
from the pastor's keyboard*

As many of you know, we are in the midst of some serious dialog about our outreach giving. Those of you who attended the Congregational Meeting on Sunday, May 22nd know that the discussion was deep and thoughtful. I heard the witness of several members of this congregation, members whose commitment to outreach giving is deep and powerful. This church has a proud history of outreach giving. For many years, First Christian Church in Vallejo has been among the very highest churches in the region in per capita giving, and several critical community outreach programs still serving people locally began right here in this congregation. Over the years volunteers from this congregation served hot meals to the elderly, helped start Meals on Wheels to continue that vital ministry, helped found the Christian Help Center for residential help for the homeless, supported our missionary family the Stoufers in their ministry in Nepal, made and gave away comfort bags full of soap and towels and the little comforts we take for granted, provided back packs and school supplies and teddy bears for children, purchased blankets for the homeless, hosted the Global Faire supporting a number of local and national programs and sent thousands and thousands of dollars to help support the regional and national church and send aid to people in dire emergency situations. Additionally, the church continues to provide very low rent space to a variety of 12-step programs and collects food for the Salvation Army to help feed the hungry. This is a proud history indeed.

Now we are faced with difficult economic realities and are struggling to find the right solution. I know many of you now give to the absolute limit of your ability, and the church and all those who benefit from your gracious and sacrificial giving have reason to bless your names. As I listened to the various ideas at the meeting, one of our members asked a penetrating and difficult question. Viona asked if any of us had ever heard of a church that gave its outreach first, off the top, and then found ways to support the other necessities of keeping a church open. A few of us nodded, but we were mostly very silent. "It is," she said, "a matter of faith."

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ, I have been pondering and praying over those

words, and I have come to the conclusion that she is exactly right. It *is* a matter of faith, and I think we should all take her words with the deepest and most heartfelt seriousness. Outreach is not something we do, it is who we are. I do not believe we are called to build up a church building to shelter us, or to build up church programs to nurture us, or to devise creative worship to entertain and uplift us. Those are the blessings that come to us as a result of doing what we *are* called to do: *Feed my sheep. Feed my lambs.* I know the Administrative Council will work hard to pilot our course during the next months in a way that will be responsible and based in Christian love. I enlist each and every one of you to pray, to ponder, to search your hearts for the best possible answers to our dilemma of too much outgo and too little income. I prayerfully, and fearfully, and I hope, faithfully, suggest that we must continue to support our outreach program to the very limit possible, or we shall not be a church with a proud history. We shall be a church that *is* history.

With deepest Shalom,

*Judith*

## *Youth Sunday is June 5th*

We hope everyone is planning to attend worship on Sunday, June 5th, to see what our youth have cooked up for Youth Sunday! Make sure you come to support our kids - they deserve a really big turnout.

## *Sunday School for kids ending for summer*

Following Youth Sunday on June 5th, the youth Sunday School program will be on hiatus for the summer. But look for school to start up again in the fall!

## *don't forget to shop at Nairobi fundraiser*

The Nairobi Street Children Project is the beneficiary of the lawn sale on Saturday, June 25th, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the church. Some of you have already sampled the coffee and the nuts available for purchase, and the rest of you don't know what you're missing! Come and shop, and tell your friends about the great fashions!

## *save these dates!*

Saturday, August 13th will be another FCC day at the ballpark as we once again go see the Oakland A's. Full details will be forthcoming. Also in August, program council has scheduled a church picnic for Sunday the 28th. Later, save October 1st for a "Cocoa Brunch" followed by a scrapbooking workshop. You can attend either one - or both - of the events that day which you will hear much more about later. And finally, on October 8th the church will be sponsoring a "Peace Faire" which we hope will be a big hit with the community.

## *what's with the word "progressive"?*

The evangelism team has chosen to highlight the "progressive" stance of our church as we try to reach new people in our community. And although the term may not be familiar to you, the positions that it stands for are things which are well-known to this congregation. When we refer to our church as "progressive," we mean that we are not fundamentalists. We mean that we are pro-justice and pro-peace; that we are pro-child and pro-family; that we are pro-compassion and pro-tolerance. We use the term to show our desire to fight the devastating effects of homelessness and poverty. We also signify our commitment to touch God's earth lightly. So get used to hearing us use the term "progressive" on items such as brochures and magnets and in places such as our web site.

As part of our desire to see FCC use this term more often, the evangelism committee will be sponsoring a series of discussion groups which will take on the topic of how we define "Progressive Christianity." Look for more information soon, and think about joining one of these discussion sessions - they will be a place for you to explore your faith and discern why we would want to call ourselves "progressive."

Although we won't be participating in this year's Fourth of July Parade, we will have a great opportunity for evangelism at the Vallejo Inter-Tribal Council's powwow July 30th and 31st down at the waterfront. Please sign up for a time that you could sit at our booth and help spread the word about our church - we need you!

## *within the church family*

### *lavender tea report*

Lavender was in the air, on the tables, and in the tea cups. Eighteen people enjoyed sandwiches, brownies, cream puffs, lavender macadamia cookies, and mmmore!

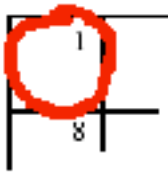
At the piano, Barbara Hamm delighted the group with a variety of musical styles. She provided shopping music as folks made silent bids and made donations for items on the bouTEAque table. Door prizes included lavender plants, teapots, taillights, and gift certificates from A Little Bit of Love, Liled's, Zoey June, Best Wishes, and Camelia Tea Room of Benicia. Please remember these businesses when you shop.

Thanks to Dave Whittington in the kitchen, and the great help of Judith Jones for sandwiches and the loan of her beautiful teapots and teacups. Special thanks for additional help goes to Jean King, Mary Atchison, Doug Northrip, Jan Iversen and Heather Iversen and her friend Alicia Farnsworth. My job as organizer and coordinator was made easier with all the willing hands.

Net proceeds totaled \$550, which was divided between the camp scholarship fund and the general fund.

## *a moo-ving presentation*

It was such a pleasure to visit with Suzanne and Roy Awalt on Pentecost and hear Suzanne's presentation about Heifer International's Central and Eastern European efforts. Amazingly, although our congregation has supported Heifer for many years, there was still a lot for us to learn and we hope to continue to learn all the nuances of this outstanding program. Thanks to everyone who brought food for the potluck lunch, and to those who contributed to the freewill offering taken for Heifer; we sent \$176 with Suzanne to add to the cause!



*mark your calendars*

### June

- 4 - Rehearsal for Youth Sunday. 1 p.m.
- 5 - Youth Sunday.
- 6 - Peace Prayer Service. 7 p.m.
- 25 - Nairobi Street Children Project sale. 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on the church lawn.
- 26 - Camp Commissioning, Part I.

### July

- 4 - Happy Independence Day!
- 30-31 - Vallejo Inter-Tribal Powwow at the waterfront.
- 31 - Camp Commissioning, Part II.



*Finished with the **Visitor**? Don't forget to recycle!*

