

# The Neighbor

Newsletter of

## The Orinda Community Church

*An Open and Affirming Congregation of the  
United Church of Christ*  
July 2015

Dear Friends,

Where I'm from out East, when we think about July, we think of long, hot days, slower movements, a break from our ambitions, maybe a week of recreation or vacation. When we think about summertime reading, we think about a nice, relaxing book we can pick up and put down. Maybe a mystery or romance with just enough intrigue to keep you flipping the pages, but not too much tension to disrupt your mood.

When you imagine the ideal form of summer relaxation, the Book of Job might not immediately come to mind! But this Scripture story has survived for so many centuries because of the way it explores (and not necessarily answers) life's biggest mysteries and meanings. In the aftermath of the murders in Charleston, in the continued endangerment our society poses to black bodies, and in the basic ups and downs of living, we have ample reason to return to these big questions. Why do bad things happen? Where is God in suffering? How do human beings respond?

Inspired by our church's visit to "Head of Passes" at Berkeley Rep, we will spend some time in the month of July throwing ourselves into the deep end with God, Job, and his friends. Our summer sermon series at OCC will explore the Book of Job, using five Sundays to tackle five big questions. Each Sunday, following coffee hour, Lee, Jim, or I will lead a second-hour conversation on the Scripture topic and sermon. If you'd like to, read over the relevant chapter of Job in the week ahead. But you don't have to prepare at all -- our life experiences will certainly bring enough to the table.

As I had a chance to remark to the Church Council on June 17th, I've been serving as Pastor/Artist-in-Residence for about three months now at Orinda Community Church. It's been a joy to start to get to

know you all, and to start sharing in this congregation's passions. As we continue to plan for the months ahead, there are many creative opportunities and events that I'm looking forward to, including: summer concerts in the park, a storytelling potluck in September, weekly fall Scripture study, theological book clubs, and more!

It's a privilege to be serving God with you, and I look forward to jumping into Job this month.

Peace,

Rev. Nate Klug, Pastor/Artist-in-Residence

### **THE BOOK OF JOB & LIFE'S BIG QUESTIONS** July 5 - August 2

Summer sermon series and second-hour conversation in the Fireside Room (11:30-12:15).

July 5: Job, Chapter 1. Why do bad things happen?

July 12: Job, Chapter 8. How do you act as a friend when someone is suffering?

July 19: Job, Chapter 23. Should we pray for what we want?

July 26: Job, Chapter 38. Where is God in suffering and violence?

August 2: Job, Chapter 42. How do we respond to life's unexpected blessings?



**Legacy Circle**

The Church Endowment Fund recently hosted a luncheon at the home of Gail and Chris Mead honoring Members of OCC's Legacy Circle. Legacy Circle members are those who have remembered the Church in their wills, or trusts.

In July and August of this year, the Endowment Board will hold meetings to explain how Church members can remember the Church in their wills or trusts and thereby become members of the Legacy Circle.

### **A Note from Finance & Operations**

Summer is once again upon us, and although we may be spending special time with family and friends at fun destinations, life at Orinda Community Church continues.

It's important for us all to understand that summer is traditionally a slow time for contributions to the church, and our operations and programs rely on the continued giving of our pledges. Please consider paying your summer pledges in advance of leaving for your summer destinations to help us manage our cash flow.

Also, we will be starting our annual stewardship campaign this fall. Although the pledges received during our last campaign were better than the previous year, we were still approximately \$20,000 short of a balance budget. Some of our givers promised to review their pledge mid-year to see if they could give even more of their financial gifts to benefit the great programs that our "new" pastoral staff continue to introduce and maintain.

We at OCC have much to be thankful for, including the wonderful members and their generous giving of both time, talents and resources.

Dixon Grier



**Jam Camp 2015**

Our 3rd year of JAM Camp kept the OCC campus very busy last week! There were 20 campers, 18 youth counselors and more than a dozen adults each day. Friendship was our theme for the week.

Jim began each afternoon with a bible story, which many of the campers and counselors acted out as a way to make the stories come alive. Each group then sat together for a few minutes to talk more about each lesson. Using different questions, the counselors guided very thoughtful discussions with the campers.

Leslie O'Brien led Music and Skits with her usual energetic joy and love. All of the children, teens and adults were singing, moving and getting into the spirit of what JAM Camp is all about.

The Brains & Games rotation, led by Judy McCall, gave our campers a chance to move around, laugh together, and play many lively games throughout the week.

Campers made a different craft each day in the Arts & Crafts rotation. Kelsey Peterson and Allison Skidgel came up with some amazing projects this year. You can see some of those if you check out the JAM Camp display in the Narthex.

On Thursday we had a pizza party and ice cream social for family and friends. Over 50 people joined us! The afternoon started in the sanctuary where the campers shared what they had done and learned during the week. They also sang some of their JAM Camp songs. We then headed to the Olive Grove for food and fellowship.

I felt excited and energized at the end of the day Friday. In thinking about the week, I realized this was due to the amazing adults and youth who helped make JAM Camp a success. We had many wonderful hands and hearts during the week:

I give thanks to Jim for his fun songs and his calm guidance through all of our bible lessons, to Kelsey for

her creativity and for nurturing and guiding our youth counselors, and to Leslie O. for her amazing musical talent and ability to make everyone feel loved.

I am thankful for our Adult Shepherds, Hilly Hoppock, Karen Norris, Leslie Schonborn and Annie Weber, for keeping their camper groups on track throughout the afternoon and making sure everyone was safe, loved and having fun.

A big thanks to Judy, our very organized Brains & Games leader, who was able to keep all of the games safe and entertaining for everyone; to Allison for her leadership and guidance during Arts & Crafts, and for cleaning up the Board Room each afternoon; and to Theresa Marable, who took many photos throughout the week.

Thank you to Ingrid, Amy, Vanessa and Ylana for the snacks, and to Nate and Elisabeth, who both gave an afternoon of their time to be with us.

A special shout out to our 18 youth counselors who were wonderful leaders and role models to our campers. You all rock!

I am also thankful for all of the parents who graciously allowed their precious children to spend the week with us, and to the campers themselves. You are all awesome!

Thank you Dagmar, Lee and the many others who gave us support and said prayers for us, and to Dion for the extra time he spent keeping the OCC campus clean. Finally, thank you to Andy, who patiently tolerated my scattered moments and helped things run smoothly at home.

A big JAM Camp thanks to you all. We wouldn't have had a safe, fun and organized week without your help. My heart is filled with love and gratitude.

Peace,  
Robin

## **CONTRA COSTA INTERFAITH HOUSING BACK PACK DRIVE:**

Contra Costa Interfaith Housing needs our help in collecting backpacks and school supplies for the children who attend their Homework Clubs. July and early August are good times to buy school supplies as many stores have "Back to School" sales. The enclosed list gives you a guide to the supplies that are needed to get the formerly homeless children ready for a year of learning and success. As buying and filling backpacks can get rather pricey, CCIH is encouraging people to buy what they can and they will pair the supplies with unfilled or partially filled backpacks that others donate. The backpacks and/or supplies can be bought to the Narthex anytime from now until the middle of August.

Orinda Community Church has been a member congregation of Contra Costa Interfaith Housing since its inception in the late 1990's. In 2004 CCIH realized its dream of opening the Garden Park Apartments on Lisa Lane in Pleasant Hill, which provided 28 units of permanent supportive housing for formerly homeless families. One of the extremely successful supportive services CCIH provides has been the Homework Club, where a staff Academic Specialist and dedicated volunteers guide the tenant's children through the rigors of their schoolwork. For most of the children it is the first time they have had success in school, and it is having a profound influence on their families.

The academic achievements that have occurred because of the Homework Club have been so impressive that the County Social Services have recognized them and requested that CCIH provide services to several other existing low cost housing projects that did not have supportive services. CCIH took on the challenge, and is now running Homework Clubs in Bay Point, Pittsburg, and Concord as well as in Pleasant Hill. As more formerly homeless children are being helped, there is a need for more backpacks. Thank you for helping with this project. It is helping to break the chain of homelessness.

If you would like to learn more about CCIH and volunteer opportunities there, please explore their website [ccinterfaithhousing.org/volunteer](http://ccinterfaithhousing.org/volunteer)

Liz Simmonds

**Caring for the Caregiver Thursday, July 2 6:30-8:00  
p.m.,  
Church Library**

**Do you feel the weight of caring for another? Whether it be a spouse, family member, friend, child, or co-worker, we know it can be difficult and tiring to be someone's support system. This support group is designed to give you a forum for discussion, support, and encouragement, as you meet with others. Facilitated by Robin Weber, MSW. Contact her to RSVP, or with questions ([raweber7@gmail.com](mailto:raweber7@gmail.com))**

**Summer Concert  
in the Park Series**

**Join friends and family from O.C.C as we take in some live music in Orinda Community Park, just down the hill from our church! Bring a blanket and some snacks and some friends. All ages and family configurations welcome.**

**Tuesday, July 7, 6:30-8:30: Floorshakers - Funk Soul & Rock n' Roll.**

**Tuesday, August 11, 6:00-8:00: Cami Thompson - Big Band Jazz.**

**Lee Cruise Retirement Celebration August 30**

**Join us in honoring and celebrating Adjunct Pastor Lee Cruise after church on Sunday, August 30. Lee Cruise is retiring after seven years of service to OCC. Her ministry involved leading worship, offering guidance and support for church members through life events, and church programs including the Memorial Wall, senior luncheons and seminars, and a safe church policy for OCC's Learning community. Lee worked with women of all ages in the church to create an outreach program, Women Helping Women (WHW), to take action on issues affecting women globally and domestically. WHW has supported BeadforLife sales to benefit Ugandan women, the family violence reduction agency STAND, and most recently victims of human trafficking. Her life in ministry began with the homeless in Los Angeles and led her to take responsibility for OCC's Winter Nights Program last year. Join the party to celebrate her work with us!**

*Those wishing to contribute to a gift may write a check to OCC with "Lee's retirement" on the memo line and send it to Dagmar in the church office.*

**Berkeley Rep: Saturday,  
July 25, 2 pm.**

**A few FREE tickets still remain for Anna Deavere Smith's upcoming show at the Berkeley Rep Theater! "Notes from the Field: Doing Time in Education, the California Chapter," Anna's new play, uses her method of interviews and impersonations to examine the "the school-to-prison pipeline." Expect a fierce, thoughtful, and spirit-filled performance perfect for a faith community like ours. If you'd like to reserve free tickets for July 25 at 2 pm, RSVP to [revnateklug@gmail.com](mailto:revnateklug@gmail.com). And let Nate know if you'd like a ride, or are willing to drive others.**

## **Backpack Drive 2015-2016: Equipping Students for Success!**

Thank you for your support to help provide school supplies to formerly homeless and low-income children in the upcoming school year. Please let us know if you, your congregation, or group is able to contribute backpacks and supplies. We very much appreciate your generosity and involvement!

### **Elementary School Requirement (35 girls, 61 boys)**

- Backpack
- Large pink erasers (2-pack)
- Plastic pencil box
- #2 Pencils (Box of 12)
- Package of Lined Paper (**Wide-ruled**)
- 3 Notebooks (Wide Ruled)
- Medium box of crayons (Box of 24)
- Pkg. of 8 washable colored markers
- Package of glue sticks (3-pack)
- Pencil sharpener that catches pencil shavings
- Kid scissors
- 12" Ruler
- Colored pencils (12 count)
- Water color paints (Basic 8-color set)

### **Middle School (34 boys & 19 girls) & High School Requirement (9 boys & 9 girls)**

- Backpack
- 1 **Scientific** calculator
- 2 - 1 inch 3 ring binder
- Protractor & rubber tip compass
- 1 set tabbed dividers (1/6th cut)
- 6 Clear Report Covers with sliding bar
- Large pink erasers (2-pack)
- #2 Pencils (Box of 12)
- 2 Mechanical Pencils and Replacement Lead
- Pens (3 blue, 3 black, & 3 red)
- Pkg. of 8 skinny washable colored markers
- 3 Highlighters (variety of colors)
- Pencil sharpener that catches pencil shavings
- 4 -folders with fasteners and pockets
- 2 Composition books
- 5 Notebooks (**College Ruled**)
- Pack of Lined Paper (**College Ruled**)
- Graph paper
- Glue Sticks (3-pack)
- Colored Pencils (24 Count)
- 2 pkg. 3x5 Index cards
- Post it notes

## **Supplies Needed for Homework Club and College Prep Program**

- Graph paper
- Poster Boards
- Mechanical Pencils and Lead
- TI-89 Calculator
- Expo dry-erase markers
- Printer Paper
- Paper plates and cups
- Disposable spoons and forks
- Computer paper
- Water colors
- Multi colored tissue paper (school projects)
- Electric pencil sharpener
- Post-it easel pads
- USB Flash drives (4 GB or higher)
- Math manipulatives (toys & objects that develop counting and organizing skills)

### **Additional needs:**

- Safeway gift cards for after school snacks
- Lakeshore gift cards for learning materials
- Target Gift cards for unexpected supplies throughout the year
- \$5 gift cards to Starbucks and Jamba Juice for good report card incentives
- AAA batteries

**DUE DATE: AUGUST 10-11, Noon-3pm, CCIH, 399 Taylor Blvd #115, Pleasant Hill, CA 94523 (Parking is off Lucille Lane)**

**Please call Gloria Bertolozzi before making delivery. To get involved, or for more information, please call (925) 944-2244, ext. 114 or email [gloria@ccinterfaithhousing.org](mailto:gloria@ccinterfaithhousing.org).**