



ORINDA  
COMMUNITY  
CHURCH  
CONGREGATIONAL / U.C.C.

## **The Neighbor**

**December 2015**

**NEWSLETTER OF THE ORINDA COMMUNITY CHURCH**

---

*Dear Friends of Orinda Community Church,*

*Thanksgiving Day (along with Black Friday and Cyber Monday) has passed, and the season of Advent is now upon us. Our first Sunday of Advent reminded us of the Hope that Christmas provides. We lit the first Advent candle, filled the sanctuary with great music, and reflected on the way that Mary's story resonates with all of us. There is hope that we can all be carriers of God's grace and love.*

*Our Annual Advent Celebration was a great event, and a wonderful start to the activities planned during our approach to Christmas. The sanctuary decorations are in place, thanks to our dedicated volunteers, so we are well on our way.*

*Our Christmas Concert on Sunday, December 13, 4:00 p.m. is a new addition to the Advent Season. We hope that you will plan to attend, and bring your friends and neighbors as well. This promises to be a great event, with many guest musicians along with our own.*

*As we move toward the end of December, and the shortening of the days, we remind ourselves that light continues to shine in the darkness - and that a single flickering candle can still illumine the dark spaces. Advent is a time when we remind ourselves of the ways that Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love make our God known and manifest in the world. It is a time of waiting, but also a time of celebration.*

*Our December calendars will quickly fill with tasks to be accomplished, shopping trips to make, home preparations to complete, and decorations to hang. In the midst of our busy schedules, I look forward to our times together, as we make space to listen, pray, sing, and celebrate.*

*Wishing you many blessings this season,  
Jim*

---

**Summer Service and Immersion Trip  
(June 26-July 3, 2016)  
Informational Meeting  
This Sunday, December 6, 11:30 a.m.,  
Fireside Room**

*Do you have a passion for serving the world? Do you like doing basic construction? Would you like to see a new part of the world and learn the issues of a developing nation?*

*Our church has a long history of partnering with agencies near and far, and we are lucky to have an opportunity to work with Hand in Hand Ministries in Belize City, Belize the week of June 26-July 3. Rev. Jim Brommers Bergquist has worked with this agency several times before, and will help lead the trip.*

*During our week, we will build a small house from the ground up, and help with the construction of a community health center. Evening programs will allow us to learn more of the culture and history of the area, and the last days will include some sightseeing.*

*We can take 10-15 people, and hope to make this an intergenerational experience (high school age and older). Cost will be about \$1,500-2,000, and will include all travel and building expenses. Scholarships are available to help with the costs. To learn more about Hand in Hand, visit [www.myhandinhand.org](http://www.myhandinhand.org). And please contact Jim with any questions.*



## FAIR TRADE AFRICAN BAZAAR

**When:** Sunday, December 13, 2015  
Hours: Before and after worship service:  
9:00 AM - 9:45 AM 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM

**Where:** Orinda Community Church  
10 Irwin Way, Orinda CA



Baskets by Rwenzori Mountain Women's Groups



Waxed Batik by Michi Women's Group

**Asante Network** presents beautiful hand crafted gift items including baskets, jewelry, clothing, batiks, tablecloths, carvings, and purses. Asante Network is committed to helping Women's Groups in East Africa by finding markets for their crafts. All efforts are designed to provide dignity, hope and a better future for them. Bring your own shopping bag to carry home your treasures.

A proud member of the  
Fair Trade Federation



**Shopping With A Purpose!**

For more information about Asante Network, visit  
[www.asantenetwork.org](http://www.asantenetwork.org)

Help spread the word.  
Visit and like us on  
[Facebook.com/AsanteNetwork](https://www.facebook.com/AsanteNetwork)





*Thank you to everyone who made our annual Advent Celebration a huge success! It was a wonderful intergenerational event, with over 100 attendees. We had so many amazing people involved that it would be difficult to thank everyone by name. So, we would like to say thank you to the folks who planned the event, helped advertise it, purchased food and craft supplies, set up Fellowship Hall, collected money at the door, supervised a craft table, organized the Christmas carols, helped prepare and set up food, and cleaned up following the celebration. We couldn't have done this without each and every one of you! We also want to say a special thank you to our "Santa".*

*Our hearts are filled with gratitude and the blessing of community.*

*Children and Youth and  
Care and Fellowship*

Join us for two special  
**Holiday Events**

at Orinda Community Church

*Christmas Concert (& More)*

Sunday, December 13, 4PM

Featuring:

UC Berkeley Gospel Choir  
Campolindo High School Chamber Singers  
Guest Soloists and Musicians  
Spoken Word and Storytelling  
Humor, Laughs, and Fun!

The concert is free, and will be followed by Christmas treats.  
A Free Will Offering will benefit Winter Nights Family Shelter.

*Christmas (Eve) Pageant & Worship Service*

Thursday, December 24, 5PM

Join us for worship in the sanctuary, grab a costume if you'd like, and be a part of the celebration. In this service for all ages, fun and carols pave the way for reflection, sacred music, and candlelight.

Both events will be held in the church sanctuary

Orinda Community Church is rooted in Congregationalism, and is a member of the United Church of Christ. We are an Open and Affirming Congregation, believing that all are welcome - no matter who they are, or where they are on life's journey.

Orinda Community Church  
10 Irwin Way, Orinda, CA 94563  
[www.orindachurch.org](http://www.orindachurch.org)  
925.254.4906

*Youth Group*

*Merry Christmas*



*Youth group has a few exciting events coming up in December!*

*Saturday, Dec. 12 will be a service day followed by watching Pixar's new film, *The Good Dinosaur* (more information on time/location coming soon!).*

*Sunday, Dec. 20 is our Youth Group Christmas Party from 5-7pm at Leslie O'Brien's home.*

*For the Advent Season, we are doing an Advent Social Media Challenge! Every week, youth are to post a photo that has to do with that week's theme: **Hope (week 1), Peace (week 2), Joy (week 3), Love (week 4)**; write a brief description, use the theme in a hashtag (i.e. #hope), and tag Kelsey in it. At the end of the week, youth who have posted a photo for all 4 weeks will get a prize.*

*Coming up in January and February, the Northern California Nevada Conference of the UCC is hosting youth retreats. The middle schoolers will be going on retreat MLK weekend and high schoolers will be going on retreat President's Day weekend. Parents and youth, please check your emails for more information about location and cost.*



*Jill Stewart with Center for Early Intervention for Deaf picks up donation of quilts from OCC congregation and Sewing Circle for the children at the center.*

**65+ Christmas Dessert, Coffee, and Gift Exchange  
Monday, December 21, 1 p.m.**



All "seniors" are invited to a time of treats, drinks, and Christmas games and celebration.

Please bring a wrapped "White Elephant" gift.

RSVP to [jim@orindachurch.org](mailto:jim@orindachurch.org)  
so we can have ample food. Cost is \$5 per person.

**Adult Sunday School  
Dec. 6, 13, and 20**

**8:45 - 9:40 a.m. Fireside Room**

**In these three sessions we will conclude our study of Acts by focusing on the work and legacy of the apostle Paul.**



**Women's Spirituality Group  
Tuesday, December 15, 6:30-8:00 pm**

**"Finding Peace in the Holiday Busyness." Led by Kelsey Peterson. Hosted by Leslie O'Brien.**



**New 2015 Directories  
are available for you in the narthex or church office.**



**The Giving Tree**

**Bring new adult-sized socks, underwear, and blankets and put them under the tree in the narthex.  
They will be delivered to San SF Night Ministry in the weeks ahead.**



**Our Christmas Offering  
Central to the Christian story is the need to care for those without homes or food. Special envelopes**

**will be available during our Christmas Eve Offering, and donations will support various shelter and housing partnerships.**



**Christmas CD featuring Grammy Award winners and Leslie Darwin O'Brien**

**Dear Church Family,**

**Looking for a fun Christmas gift?**

**Some of y'all know that we just released a CD that will benefit Holden High.**

**It's called Merry Christmas from Terry's Kids.**

**Terry's Kids is a non-profit that provides music to kids of all ages and they sponsor a music class at Holden.**

**This jazzy, fun Christmas CD features Tom Scott and Shelly Berg They're \$20 bucks a piece. Call me (Leslie) at 925-285-0996 if you want to order one and I'll set you up.**

**Peace,  
Leslie**