

The Neighbor

The Orinda Community Church

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ

July 2011

A MESSAGE FROM THE RE-ENVISIONING STEERING COMMITTEE

Dear members and friends,

Enclosed in this newsletter you'll find a working draft of the new OCC vision Statement offered by the Re-envisioning Steering Committee for wide-ranging comment and conversation within our faith community. What's a vision statement? A vision statement is a declaration of what we consider to be the heart and soul – the essential identity and vision – of our church. It is a message to ourselves, a promise to the wider community, and a guiding light for the next steps ahead in our two-year re-envisioning process.

The primary source of the OCC Vision Statement is actually the congregation itself, and what we have learned and shared together over the course of ten insightful and revealing “town hall” meetings held between May 2010 and May 2011. We have investigated the cultural and demographic shifts of the past fifty years that have dramatically altered the religious environment of our country, nowhere more acutely than here in our secularized, highly-educated, post-modern, media-conscious Bay Area. We have probed the character and spirit of Orinda Community Church, and looked deeply into the nature and role of Christian faith in our world and in our lives. We have explored issues of organization, leadership, spiritual practices, mission and program. We have frequently been moved and challenged by the Holy Spirit. And we have tried to incorporate what we have heard and seen into our Vision Statement.

What happens now? The Re-envisioning Steering Committee is eager to receive your questions, comments, critiques and suggestions regarding the Vision Statement. You can speak directly with any member of the Steering Committee, the Church Council or the pastoral staff. You can also email the Committee in care of office@orindachurch.org.

A special Town Hall Meeting Luncheon will be held after church on Sunday, August 7, solely for the purpose of discussing the Vision Statement and seeking possible ways to improve it. By mid-September, we hope to have this working draft shaped up into a final form that can be confidently adopted by a Special Meeting of the Congregation. A projection of further “next steps” will also be found in this mailing.

Faithfully, your OCC Re-envisioning Committee,

Kurt Sunderbruch (chair), Sabine Hathaway, Anne Long, David Milnes, Susan Russell, Roger Samuelsen, Bob Winbigler, Frank Baldwin (ex. officio)

Office Subs

Many thanks to Liz Armstrong and Chrissy Siva who agreed on keeping the office running during Dagmar's vacation time. Liz will be in the office July 18 to July 22 from 8 to 4 and Chrissy will be working July 25 to July 29 from 9 to 12.

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

NEXT RE-ENVISIONING STEPS: [This Summer]

- 1) *Trusting in the Spirit that abides within our diverse but deep sense of purpose, craft a VISION STATEMENT that reflects, in our best shared discernment:*
 - Who we are as the Orinda Community Church
 - What God is calling us to be
 - What we are prepared to do to follow this call

NEXT RE-ENVISIONING STEPS: [Fall 2011]

- 2) *Taking into account all we have learned thus far in our Re-envisioning Process, and with the new Vision Statement as our guide,*
gather many ideas and design together a range of inspired and creative ways in which OCC can change, thrive, meet the spiritual needs of people, and be an instrument of transformation in this constantly-evolving cultural and spiritual milieu where God has placed us.

NEXT RE-ENVISIONING STEPS: [Winter 2011-2012]

- 3) *At the January 2012 Annual Meeting, adopt a PROVISIONAL PLAN OF IMPLEMENTATION having the following characteristics:*
 - *Faithful to our sense of purpose and vision of God's call*
 - *Respectfully aware of cultural and religious shifts*
 - *Focuses on real spiritual needs, concerns, issues*
 - *Projects OCC's progressive, inclusive, relational spirit*
 - *Creative, adventurous, aspirational, flexible, risk-taking*
 - *Takes advantage of our true strengths and gifts*
 - *Full of grace, gratitude, courage, joy and love*

NEXT RE-ENVISIONING STEPS: [Spring 2012 and beyond]

- 4) *Try new things, succeed or fail, try again*
 - *Implementation*
 - *Experimentation*
 - *Testing*
 - *Modification*
 - *Keep listening, keep moving (the Journey is our Home!)*

**ORINDA COMMUNITY CHURCH
VISION STATEMENT DRAFT, 7-13-2011**

Our Vision

1. We are moved by the grace of *God* to walk together on life's journey, caring deeply for one another.
2. We aspire to a *Christian* faith that is authentic, adventurous and inclusive of all generations.
3. We envision a path of spiritual formation illuminated by faith and knowledge.
4. We are called in these difficult and uncertain times to be people of peace and dauntless hope, relying on the spirit of *Jesus* in our midst.
5. We are committed to love.

Our Identity

6. We are creative, resourceful and open-minded. We honor the beauty and integrity of *God's* creation. We have fun.
7. We work to become instruments of mercy and justice in the world. We are unafraid of change, challenge and controversy.
8. We cherish our children, and we know them each by name.
9. We offer stirring, thought-provoking worship in an atmosphere of diversity, spontaneity and grace. We are enriched by music and the arts.
10. We seek connection with others who are looking for a spiritual home. We reach out to doubters and explorers. We respect those of other faiths or no faith.

SUMMER SENIOR LUNCHEON

Life Journey Forum July 24

Keith and Margie Brown (Margie is the daughter of John and Marilyn Welland) along with their two children Marissa and Josiah have returned from Bulgaria for the summer. They continue their work in impoverished Roma/Gypsy communities of central Bulgaria, focusing on teaching children and ministering to their families. A new area of focus, particularly for Margie, is anti-human trafficking work. Bulgaria is a major source country for human trafficking, and young Roma girls are among the most sought-after targets. We invite you to come hear about their work, including new developments in Bulgaria. Please join the Brown family in the Board Room on July 24 at 11:30 a.m.



What a sunny gathering! Our second annual Senior gathering was held on Monday July, 11 amidst sunny flowers and bright yellow tablecloths. The brightness of these items was matched by the sunny smiles of the many seniors who came for lunch and fellowship.

The luncheon was prepared under the leadership of Lani Shepp, with admirable help from Anna Johnson, Dorothy Ferguson, John Creech, Marjie Hitzl, Melody Ferreira, Dagmar Slovak, and Dion Maskaleris. The food was delicious!

What a surprise to have the Vacation Bible School students, under the direction of our own Leslie O'Brien, sing to us. We had tears in our eyes and smiles on our faces as we were blessed by these angels.

Lee Cruise shared stories from her days as a Minister with the homeless in Palo Alto.

God blessed this time together and we look forward to next year...

~Lee Cruise



A MESSAGE FROM YOUR CHURCH COUNCIL

The following motion was passed 11-0 at the June 22, 2011 OCC Council Meeting:

Especially, on the occasion to celebrate Jeff Crews' call to the Spring Glen Church, United Church of Christ, in Hamden, CT, the OCC Council expresses special appreciation to Frank Baldwin, the OCC staff, Gary Nye and the Parish Teaching and Support Committee members for mentoring and supporting all our interns at OCC over the past 13 years.



Women Helping Women News

BeadsforLife, the agency providing support for needy women in Uganda, received the proceeds of our bead sale to benefit the dedicated women of Uganda:

\$1425 is the final count!!

How special for Women Helping Women to reach out so significantly and kindly in joining hands with our sisters in Uganda. There was such a joyful spirit and we are blessed.

The loving spirit of our women has been palpable. The diligent cashiering of Elisabeth Kersten and Anne Long who were

VERY busy...the display lovingly prepared by Melody Ferreira (see picture)...the posters prepared by Elizabeth...the signs and newspaper articles prepared by Eartha Newsong ...the presale at Elisabeth Kersten's home...and the kindness of all who supported this event was wonderful and created an amazing event. Letters were written to our Ugandan sisters and are being sent to them by BeadsforLife. These are some words of gratitude Women Helping Women has received:

"The funds you raised make such a big difference in the lives of our beaders! Since founding BeadsforLife we have worked with over 1,200 women involved in making BeadsforLife products. The average family size is about 10 people, which means 12,000 people (and more) have directly benefited from the opportunity to earn a living. Your willingness to educate yourselves and others regarding global poverty and our work in Uganda is most appreciated." (Alicia McClure, BeadsforLife)

"Your ambition and compassion to help women across the world is admirable and sets an outstanding example in the 14th Assembly district. Thank you for being positive leaders in your community." (Nancy Skinner, Assemblymember, 14th District, Assembly California Legislature.)

God is good!
~Lee Cruise

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July 6, 2011

Orinda Community Church
Attn: The Women Help Women Group
10 Irwin Way
Orinda, CA 94563-2508

Dear Women Help Women Group at Orinda Community Church,

The BeadsforLife sale benefiting Ugandan women that was held on June 25, 2011, has come to my attention.

I am very pleased to know that The Women Help Women group has taken the time to raise funds for the women of Uganda. Your ambition and compassion to help women across the world is admirable and sets an outstanding example in the 14th Assembly District. Thank you for being positive leaders in your community.

It is an honor to serve you in Sacramento.

Sincerely,


Nancy Skinner
Assemblymember, 14th District

Mark Your Calendar!
OCC's Annual All-Church Picnic
August 28 after worship

At Kennedy Grove
Regional Recreation Area -
Abbie Lane



Our Next Gardening Day Is

August 13

from 9 to 12

All are invited to help spruce up our
beautiful campus.



Offer to Share

Those in attendance at the June 25 Memorial Service for Mary Grah heard stories of the myriad adventures and experiences that colored her life. Many other aspects of her life are found in her wonderful book. I was privileged to be given a copy of 'The Personal Narrative of Mary Beahrs Grah' and would be happy to lend it to anyone looking for a good read.

~ Babs Winbigler

BENEFICIO COFFEE PRICE INCREASE

Due to the higher costs now being charged for high quality, shade-grown, songbird friendly coffee from Costa Rica, our supplier has recently had to increase our wholesale cost for OCC's Beneficio Coffee to **\$9.00** per lbs. As always, Beneficio Coffee Company will return a portion of their proceeds to grower villages in Central America, and to the UCC's Wider Mission Fund

Lifelong Learning Opportunities at OCC

Tuesday Night Bible Study meets Tuesday at 7 pm in the church library and is led by Frank Baldwin. The group will not meet on July 26 and through the month of August. Join us beginning September 6th!

Senior Connection Senior Connection usually meets at Orinda Senior Village 6th floor meeting room on the first Wednesday of the month at 10:00 a.m. The group will take a break during the months of July and August.

OCC Theology Book Club will be on summer hiatus for the months of July and August.

Dear wonderful ones,

What a joy it has been for me to share music with about seventy kids this week during Pandamania, our Vacation Bible School. The kids are full of energy and joy. In our songs we learn about sharing God's love. We have two more opportunities to share during the next week. I'd love to have you join me for either or both of these activities:

Sunday, July 17 We're heading to Shelter, Inc. in Martinez to serve dinner. Dinner begins at 6:00. Let me know if your family would like to bring some food or help serve. (My email is ldarwinobrien@yahoo.com. Cell is 285-0996.)

Tuesday, July 19 We're taking sandwiches to People's Park in Berkeley, then we're going to Fenton's for ice cream! Meet at the Orinda Community Church kitchen at 6:30 to help make sandwiches. We'll carpool over. (If your parents are not driving, please fill out a permission form.)

~Leslie O'Brien

Ignite that CAZ SPIRIT and let's SHINE ON!!

Come to beautiful **Camp Cazadero** with us to reignite that AMAZING CAMP CAZ Spirit.

We have an awesome group coming to up and ALL are welcome (newbies and veterans) to join us for a fun-filled weekend filled with wonderful people, camp tradition, experiences and meaning! We will laugh, dance, create, and simply...connect. Bring a friend!! Even if you haven't been to Caz in years or have never been, you will be warmly welcomed and instantly filled with Caz spirit!

Remember these from Caz?

- TNT
- Morning Watch
- Firebowl
- Vespers
- Music (hearing our voices echo through the redwood trees?)
- Hiking
- Swimming
- Haymond, Minor, Kiononea
- Crafts in Redwood

- Deer on the meadow in the morning
- Sardines
- Watching the stars while laying on the meadow
- Laughing, laughing, laughing
- Games in Gill Lodge
- Just relaxing alone or with friends
- Hugs, hugs, hugs!
- Caz Clap!

Here are the details...

2011 Theme: SHINE ON!

Retreat Leaders: Dr. John Osborn, Brian Wetzel, Jeannie Merchant-Stadler and you!

When: **Aug 12th – 14th** Program runs from Friday at 7pm through Sunday brunch.

Cost: \$120, Adults serving as Tam or Caz camp staff receive a \$20 discount. This price may go down if we decide to do some of our own meals.

Car Pool: We may arrange car pools if interested

What about my kids? Parents are welcome to bring children for the weekend for a reduced fee, but no children's programs or childcare will be offered. Parents will be responsible for supervising their children during the retreat. Children 5 and under are free, 6 and over are \$60.00.

Step outside your daily schedule and familiar surroundings to encounter the Still Speaking God!

Have questions? Call Jeannie Samuelsen at 925-451-5325 or jeannie_merchant@yahoo.com or find our evite on facebook! Follow this link for more info, registration, etc

<http://www.ncnuc.org/category/youth-outdoor-ministries>

Wednesday Morning Breakfast Group

We will be on summer hiatus until after Labor Day.

Have a good summer!

How to be 'Saved'?

There is born again and there is born again

by Dion

One night, a juror came to Jesus and he wanted to know what he could do to be saved. Jesus didn't get bogged down in the kind of isolated approach of what he shouldn't do. Jesus didn't say, "Now Nicodemus, you must stop lying." He didn't say, "Nicodemus, you must stop cheating if you are doing that." He didn't say, "Nicodemus, you must not commit adultery." He didn't say, "Nicodemus, now you must stop drinking liquor if you are doing that excessively." He said something altogether different, because Jesus realized something basic - that if a man will lie, he will steal. And if a man will steal, he will kill. So instead of just getting bogged down in one thing, Jesus looked at him and said, "Nicodemus, you must be born again.

-Martin Luther King, from the speech: "Where do we go from here?"

The problem with the so-called 'Born Again Christians' and most of us - is we get 'bogged down in one thing'. You know there is many ways to be saved. If you have a Gmail email account and you are writing an email and you want to practice restraint of pen, tongue and keyboard and not send the email right away - you can click "Save Now" and that icon will then say "Saved". I can save some Pussy Willow seeds [so soft and delicate] and send them to a friend folded in a letter in an envelope and by saving these seeds and then giving them away I cherish my friend, I cherish Art, I cherish the world and I cherish love. This is how and these are some - of the many ways I save and I am saved.

And I am not "born again" once only and then have the smug and false assurance that I have the ticket to heaven - that my way is the best or only way to heaven. I am open to being born again and again every moment as I find new ways that I am unkind and new ways to learn to turn the unkindness's around to doing real actions of loving kindness. So it is an ongoing process to be saved and it is saving others - which is affirming and cherishing others and cherishing the Earth and cherishing God - cherishing God not by asking God to save us or to fix us or give us what we want like spoiled children - it is cherishing God by we ourselves saving God by helping God - by we truly loving ourselves and others - for God loves us and cries tears of sorrow because we are so separated from love - by what we call love - which is false and selfish. God needs our help and protection. So I believe it is not for God to save us - it is for us to save God by truly loving others. By protecting others, we are all protected. By helping others, we are all helped. By loving others, we are all loved. By helping God, we are all helped by God. God is the Light - we are the eyes to see that Light. God is the force - we are the actions of that force. It is up to us to see and to do the actions of love.

Copyright pending Dionysos Maskaleris

Going the Extra Mile

I want to thank the Orinda Community Church for graciously hosting the event. Rarely have I worked with an organization and individuals who are so willing to go the extra mile like the Orinda Community Church.

Comment from Woody Karp, Executive Director of Eden Housing, in a memo to Orinda City Council and Staff regarding OCC's hosting a third public meeting on the proposed senior housing project at the old library site.

* * * * *

Concert Notice

UC Berkeley's Summer Symphony Orchestra
presents

their Concert in Hertz Hall, Berkeley campus
Friday and Saturday, August 5-6, 2011, at 8:00 PM.

The program includes
Beethoven's *Coriolan Overture*,
Mussorgsky's *Night on Bald Mountain* and *Pictures at an Exhibition*, and
Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique*.

Admission is free with donations gladly accepted.

* * * * *

Thank you for all your faithful contributions!

OCC FINANCIAL SPOTLIGHT, JULY 15, 2011

January - June 2011 Income/Expenses

Income	\$223,269
Expenses	\$173,022

As reported last month, the stewardship campaign for 2011 resulted in total pledges and gifts in the amount of \$317,802, which is \$31,138 over the budget amount. This amounts to about 111% of the pledge budget for 2011. This will make up for potential income shortfalls in facilities use charges, interest income, and prospective fundraising, all of which were experienced last year. So far this year fundraising has produced about \$1,500, and additional events are planned for later this year.

Note that income generally exceeds expenses through the spring of each year. If you are paying your 2011 pledge in installments, please plan on continuing installment payments through the summer months.

Discussions continues with Eden Housing and the City of Orinda with respect to the proposed construction of a 10-car parking lot on the hillside below the Sanctuary. Eden is obtaining estimates for parking lot construction, landscaping, drainage, and other costs which will have to be paid by Eden if their proposal is to be seriously considered by OCC. Further reports on this proposal will be forthcoming.

701/411-999999, 8421497-1



August 2011

Worship at Orinda Community Church - Sundays 10 a.m.
Fellowship 11:15 a.m.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	10 Sewing Circle 2:30 Staff Meeting		11:15 Lifelong Learning & Spirituality			
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
9:15 Reflection Café open 10 Worship 11:15 Re- envisioning Town Hall Meeting	10 Sewing Circle 2:30 Staff Meeting		7 PM Pastoral Relations			9 Gardening Day at OCC
14 Neighbor Deadline	15	16	17 Neighbor published	18	19	20
9:15 Reflection Café open 10 Worship Dave Sandberg preaching	10 Sewing Circle 2:30 Staff Meeting					
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
9:15 Reflection Café open 10 Worship Liz Armstrong preaching	10 Sewing Circle 2:30 Staff Meeting		7:30 PM Church Council	9:30 Parish Callers		
28	29	30	31			
9:15 Reflection Café open 10 Worship 11:15 Annual Picnic at Abbie Lane, San Pablo Reservoir	10 Sewing Circle 2:30 Staff Meeting					

Neighbor deadline: **August 14**. Please submit your articles to office@orindachurch.org
All submissions subject to editing. Visit our website www.orindachurch.org

