



KENSINGTON PRESS

DECEMBER 2011/
JANUARY 2012

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF SAN ANSELMO
An Inclusive Community

From the Associate Pastor

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Are you ready for our *Annual Christmas Eve Family Service and Pageant*? For those of us who are new to the pageant process or want a refresher, here's the scoop: You need not be a member or a "regular" to participate. If your little one(s) wants to participate, then please sign her/him up! (Walk on roles available...keep reading.)

The six o'clock Christmas Eve Family Service will be a magical time when children of all ages dress in costumes—sheep, angels, shepherds, wise wo/men, Mary and Joseph—in a dramatic retelling of the birth of Jesus. Also known as the Nativity Story, we'll spend these first few weeks of Advent (December) preparing and waiting on the birth of Jesus as we check costumes, work on staging, resurrect sets, and manage chaos to ensure maximum participation and fun on the big night. Oh, and did I mention *fabulous* costumes, singing lots of Christmas carols, props, and a spotlight? All of this in one service led by our youth and children—very exciting!

In all of our creating and orchestrating towards a recognizable Nativity Story, we also look forward to the unexpected surprises that will mark the evening and make it our story. Many of you tell the tales of when great joy has appeared in unexpected ways during the pageant service: an over-protective Mary hovered over baby Jesus; a few

Continued on Page 11

December 11th: Choir Leads Worship With Bach's Magnificat

Don't miss the choir's special presentation of the J.S. Bach *Magnificat* on December 11 for our morning service!

Here are a few interesting points about Bach's *Magnificat*:

Bach wrote this piece very early in his tenure at St. Thomas Church in Leipzig, probably to impress his new employer, and it was first performed on Christmas Day in 1723. The piece was written over the course of six weeks prior to that—about the same time it took Handel to compose *Messiah*—but between that day and January 9 he also premiered six new cantatas, though only three survive. It is a grand and glorious display of sound, with more complex choral settings than his typical cantatas, scored for five-part choir, five soloists and a full orchestra.

The *Magnificat* is a hymn of praise based upon Mary's song of praise when she visited her cousin Elizabeth following the Annunciation by the angel Gabriel. (Luke 1:46-55) Originally written in the key of *Eb major*, a key usually associated with bold and heroic music, he later (1732 or 1733) transposed the music down a half-step to *D Major* to accommodate the trumpets of the time. The key of *D* is often used for festival music in many settings.

The structure of the work is remarkable in its tonal plan (key signatures) and is wonderfully symmetrical, Bach being the consummate mathematician. The work is divided into twelve parts which can be grouped into three movements, each beginning with an aria and completed by the choir in a fugal chorus, with the work as a whole framed by two amazing choruses.

Bach frequently employed word painting (the musical technique of writing music that reflects the literal meaning of the text) in his works, and the *Magnificat* is no exception.

The *Omnes Generationes* (27 bars of perfect counter-point) is actually an extension of the text of the previous movement – appropriate given the text “all generations”. Other examples of word painting include:

- *Dispersit*—“scattered”—the chorus notes are scattered about the score.
- *Deposuit* and *exaltavit*—“falling” and “rising”.
- *Tementibus eum*—“them that fear him”—repeated note = controlled nervousness.

The last movement is a wonderful musical joke – the text *sicut erat in principio* – “as it was in the beginning” – is set to the music of the opening *Magnificat*.

Bach's *Magnificat* is a stunning piece of writing; it is now one of the more popular Baroque works performed at Christmas time.

[Join in Celebrating Martha Wall! Details on Page 2](#)

Families, Children & Youth

Personnel Committee

DECEMBER

- 12/04 Christmas Eve Family Service Rehearsal (Mid-High Youth & Family Event)
- 12/11 Celebrate Martha Wall's ministry of music (All-church event)
- 12/18 Christmas Eve Family Service Rehearsal (Mid-High Youth & Family Event)
- 12/25 No Mid-High activity scheduled (come to the service!)

Christmas Eve Family Service is...almost here! (12/24)

Pageant Rehearsal Schedule

Sundays 11:15—Bring a bag lunch for you and your little ones and join us in the sanctuary.

12/04

12/18

Not able to attend the rehearsals? You may still participate in the big night! We'll have walk-on roles and costumes available that night so bring the children and join in the fun!

Adults, do you want "in" on the action? We need "wranglers" during rehearsals and during the service. There may be other jobs you can pitch in on, so let Diana Bell, Associate Pastor, know you are interested! [For more information, check out the cover letter in this month's KP]

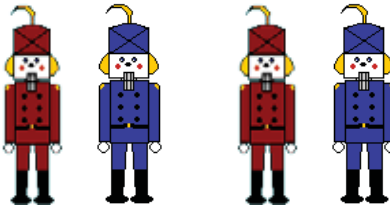
JANUARY

- 01/01 No Mid-High activity scheduled (come to the service!)
- 01/08 Mid-High Youth Group 11:30am Bowling? House of Air? Let's go play!
- 01/15 Mid-High Youth Group 11:30am Make your own Pizza
- 01/22 Mid-High Youth Group 11:30am Mission Project
- 01/29 Mid-High Youth Group 11:30am Inside Sports

SNEAK PEAK

Youth families... Let's start planning our Summer Mission Trip! There's a wide variety of service and learning opportunities on topics ranging from: Environmental Stewardship, Heifer (hunger/livestock/animals), Urban Poverty, Homeless/Housing...

Where do our talents and the world's needs intersect? Let's go figure it out!



Celebration in Honor of Martha Wall—December 11th

For seven years as our Music Director, **Martha Wall** has graced us with her boundless energy, and tremendous musical gifts. It has been sheer joy to watch her up there on the podium, where, (to paraphrase Frederick Buechner) her "greatest passion has met our greatest need".

Now the time has come for her to set aside her ministry with us, and so we must celebrate her as we wish her Godspeed on her life's new turning. On **December 11th**, following worship, we will have a **potluck luncheon and short program** in her honor. All are welcome, especially her friends from the music community who have sung in our church.

Please sign up at coffee hour to bring a dish. If you are not able to bring something, don't let that stop you from attending! (And maybe you can stay later and help with clean up. Many hands make light work!)



Keep Your Directory Up To Date!

GILLESPIE, Mary: 2127 Quail Point Court, Medford, OR 97504. (Phone and email stay the same.)



The Christmas Joy Offering Sunday, December 18



Good News of **Great Joy**

A Presbyterian tradition for almost seventy years, the Christmas Joy Offering is one of the four special offerings designated by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to provide congregations direct ways of supporting specific causes that help those in need.

Fifty percent of the receipts to the Christmas Joy Offering are distributed to the Board of Pensions for assistance programs that provide support to retired and active church workers and their spouses and families. The other

fifty percent supports Presbyterian-related racial ethnic education through the National Ministries Division of the General Assembly Council.

The Christmas Joy Offering is received the Sunday before Christmas, December 18.



ALTERNATIVE CHRISTMAS FAIRE

Habitat for Humanity
Freedom From Hunger
Church World Service
Keep Hope Alive

December 4th and 18th

Duncan Hall

During Coffee Hour

*"Gifts that make a difference
and don't clutter the attic!"*

Presented by Church and Society



Evangelia Philippidis, artist

Amahl

and the *Night Visitors*

2:00pm, Sunday, December 18
FPC Sanctuary

Contemporary Opera Marin,
the opera program of the
COLLEGE OF MARIN,
presents

Gian-Carlo Menotti's holiday
favorite in a fully staged,
English language production.

Directed by Paul Smith.

*This hour-long production is
suitable for the entire family.*

FREE Admission



Joy Snyder Reports

OUR "OPENING NIGHT" FOR THE WINTER SHELTER IN DUNCAN

Friday, November 18th was our first night hosting homeless guests in Duncan Hall. As it happened, it was also a night to be mentioned in the **Marin Independent Journal** next day. Hopefully most of you saw and know that the **REST program** made front page news on the next day (the 19th), and that we were the congregational sample they cited.

Friday night, we were flattered when the I.J. photographer showed up and immediately said, "You guys do a really nice job!" I'll hold close the expanded version of his comments, as I don't want to sound competitive with the other congregations. But seriously it was a wonderful validation of the high standards that **Jo Gross** set for us to keep. It truly does make a palpable difference when we pour our energies into creating the Duncan Hall "Restaurant" atmosphere. **Hillsman Heath,**

Royce & Sandy Truex, Carl Carter, Stan & Sharon Bluhm, along with **Barbara Shindelus** and her **grandson Anthony** helped to set us up to meet those standards on Friday. After set-up, **Barbara and Anthony** retired to the kitchen for training with Carl Carter on the dishwasher (Barbara had set a goal of joining other women who have broken through the "glass ceiling", and into the ranks of primarily male, Certified Dishwasher Operators!).

Our brand new lanterns burned brightly at the point of entry for the guests when they exited the bus, to be welcomed by **Royce and Carl**. 27 guests trooped in, along with St. Vincent's staff for the night. "We" were 12 volunteers, including 2 neighbors from the greater San Anselmo community, and 2 teenage youth (plus 2 alleged coordinators). Also new this year - the night-time staff from St. Vinnie's went online with their statistical reports and communications! A big thanks to **Dave Jones** for hooking up the Wi-Fi in Duncan Hall for us.

Alice Graham prepared enchiladas for the main course (we secretly thought there might be a lot of left overs, but

nooo). Several of the men came back for third (!) servings and then they kept moving on down the line for additional servings of the quinoa dish that **Stan Bluhm** contributed (which was also totally devoured). They even cleaned out the salad bowl of tasty greens w/ cherry tomatoes (**Wendy Cliff's** work), accompanied by Barbara's colorful jicama salad. Last, but never least, came dessert. It's hard to compete with **Sandy Truex's** Lemon Squares, but **Marita Mayer** made a strong showing with an apple/cranberry crumble as the best supporting role. Still, you know it's something special when you offer dessert to a complete stranger (i.e. the photographer from the I.J.) and he says, "Oh, are those the famous lemon squares?" And then he takes a bite and says, "Wow. They must have their own Meyer lemon tree; these are awesome!" **Seriously,** Sandy.

Meanwhile, our friends at St. Anselm's told us much later that on their hosting night, the men were still talking about the food we served the night before. More importantly, St. Anselm's took it all with good grace, i.e. they called me to ask for the recipes! 📖

(see next page)



PCUSA Missionary Presents, Church & Society Represents!

On Wednesday November 9th, the **Church and Society Committee** hosted a reception for PCUSA Mission Worker **Rev. Jane Holslag**, who was here visiting with her friends **Helen and Gordon Anderson**. Thirteen of us gathered in the Fireside Room, enjoyed some treats supplied by **Phyllis Schlobohm** and **Anne Towler**, and then listened to a fascinating talk by Rev. Holslag. She showed slides and a short video of her work at the **LCC University in Klaipeda, Lithuania**.

The university has 600 students and 60



faculty members and is composed of about 50% Lithuanian students with the rest being International students from countries across the globe, China, Africa, the US, from all over Eastern Europe and former Soviet countries. Klaipeda is directly across the Baltic Sea from Denmark and in its 1000-year history, Lithuania has only known about 50 years of independence. Twenty of those years were between the two World Wars, the others since the fall of the Soviet Union in the mid-1980's.

During the Soviet era, the native language was forbidden and nearly forgotten. All students must now study Lithuanian along with other subjects.



English is also required from 2nd grade on. All University courses are taught in English. Jane is the head of the Theology Department at LCC, but acknowledges that most students are interested in Business Administration. She teaches English and Theology. Lithuania is now officially a Roman Catholic country but many pagan traditions remain. Honey and bees, thunder and the moon are revered as divine. Jane's ministry sounds vibrant and optimistic. If you would like to know more about Jane and her ministry, check out her web page: <http://gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/missionconnections/holslag-jane/>

(See photos on opposite page...)

THE SECOND SHELTER NIGHT IN DUNCAN TURNED OUT DIFFERENTLY

As most of you know by now, the most unusual and sad shelter night the program has experienced, occurred on Saturday night the 19th. **That night, our friends from St. Anselm's hosted their first evening.** And sometime after they were long gone, and lights were out for the night, one of the guests (named Steven) passed away quietly in his sleep. Additionally sad news was that he had apparently been struggling with two kinds of cancer, while at the same time juggling the challenge of being homeless.

When I arrived at Duncan Hall that morning, **Walker** (REST Program Director) had called me and was there, along with the morning crew from St. Anselm's (who had just arrived to double check on Duncan Hall's preparedness for our Sunday morning). Steve's death had not been discovered until the early morning wake-up time. So, you may easily imagine that in some ways, the people most traumatized by this event were the other guests as they awoke. The police needed and proceeded to take statements in the Hall

from each and every one of them. And "we" all stood around in the courtyard together for a while, just watching, and occasionally reassuring each other of whatever silver linings we could come up with. It wasn't that hard to do, esp. as the police were reassuring, that there were no apparent signs of foul play or anything else untoward.

"This wasn't just a dinner ..."

But, I've never witnessed the technical processes involved with someone's unanticipated death, and now I know what happens. You wait ... a lot. Meanwhile, most of the homeless men were limited to sitting in the bus after their statements, waiting to be taken to St. Vinnie's for breakfast and then to return to their day on the streets. I could only stand outside, waving gently, and hoping to represent a sign of our support and concern. Some of them waved back and smiled sadly.

That being said, as the morning progressed, I was reassured and greatly heartened by the fact that *everyone*

involved - from St. Vincent's staff, to our police officers, to the crew from St. Anselm's, and most of all to you our congregation and friends—expressed the same appropriate concerns, but also similar gratitude for the fact that the program had begun early this year (in time for Steve to be inside for dinner, and cared for immediately after his passing). Additionally, gratitude that *he was in a warm and safe community environment*, rather than out on the street, in the rain. And followed by a certainty that our involvement with the REST program is a good thing, and that *we are blessed to be where WE are!*

I keep thinking of a comment that **Phyllis O.** shared with me this weekend. At dinner Friday night, she said to a guest at her table that she hoped he had enjoyed his dinner. He responded, "This wasn't just a dinner ...". I think that we all know what he meant ... and that the feeling is mutual ... every week.

If you are interested in volunteering, or just want to get on the volunteers' newsletter email list, contact **Joy Snyder** or **Phyllis Ongaro** (we're in the directory).



Photos by Richard Schobohm



Nurture

Marin IJ Celebrates a Job Well Done!

The following editorial, reprinted in full, from the *Marin Independent Journal*, (11/14/11) is a very public commendation of (our very own!) **Sharon Jackson's** dedicated service to the citizens of Marin and her role in helping to restore civility to the debate over the future of Marin General Hospital. Well done, Sharon! You ROCK!

Jackson Brought Civility Back to MGH Debates

Editorial ©Marin Independent Journal 11/14/2011

WHEN SHE STEPPED down from the Marin Health-care District board recently, **Sharon Jackson** could take pride in her hard work, her courage and her vision.

Jackson did not arrive on the board as a political force. She never really filled those shoes after she joined the long-troubled board in 2004.

Jackson was one of the few residents willing to brave the dysfunctional Marin General Hospital politics during a period when personal attacks too often trumped policy debates and important decisions were left unresolved.

Jackson stubbornly insisted on bringing civility back to the debate over the future of the hospital and Marin's largest health-care provider. She helped restore order and decorum at the board's stormy meetings and reopened an important community dialogue that had become too acerbic for most others to stomach.

Jackson helped make sure both sides of the debate felt welcome to speak. That had not always been the case before she joined the board.

She was elected to the board in 2004 as a candidate backed by supporters of Sutter Health's controversial lease of Marin General. Jackson said she soon realized that the bitter struggle over control of Marin General would not end as long as Sutter ran the hospital.

A legal fight with Sutter and demands that the district board be disbanded shifted the debate and ultimately resulted in Sutter's lease being ended early.

It was a courageous stand by Jackson — just as courageous as her work to restore order to the board's meetings, even though it appeared, at



Photo by Richard Schobohm

times, more like she was a teacher doing yard duty rather than a health-care professional working to make sure Marin's largest hospital lived up to its potential. Jackson even brought in a professional parliamentarian to help her.

"I ran to stop the fights. We stopped the fights," she said.

She and fellow director Dr. John Severinghaus, even though coming from different political camps, worked together as the architects of the plan that put Marin General back under public management.

As a veteran of the board's darkest days, Jackson pushed for the creation of a so-called "firewall" and a second board of directors that minimized the politically charged elected board's day-to-day management of the hospital. It was an important step toward retaining the hospital's talented medical staff.

Today, Marin General's management gets high marks from doctors, nurses and patients. Impressive progress has been made in putting its controversy-mired history behind it. Jackson helped chart that course.

That was not the course she envisioned when she first joined the board. But she had the wisdom and courage to adjust and embrace the political realities that led to the end of Sutter's lease and the installation of today's management. Those steps have ended the venomous political battles that stood in the way of Marin General's progress. Jackson's tireless public service made a difference.

In San Anselmo News...

The Town of San Anselmo presented the *Quality of Life Silver Award* to FPC member **Dick Stutsman** for 35 years of volunteer firefighting with the Ross Valley Fire Department and his participation on the Town's Flood Committee. *Congratulations, Dick!*



Pregnant Pause

*Perhaps our mistake is thinking
that love will always come*

in the shape we have known it:

*a happy ending
a new beginning*

a christ-child.

In this pregnant pause

*while the earth holds its breath
waiting for what
it does not know,*

let us have the faith

that even we,

with all our wise

and cynical

knowing,

would not imagine

the shape that love

will take

and instead just

have the faith

that it will come.

~Cheryl Lawrie

<http://holdthisspace.org.au/>

Buildings and Grounds Thank You!

A big thank you to all who made our church-wide spiff-up day such a rousing success. On November 5, over 40 people spent the morning together cleaning the buildings and shaping up the landscape. Windows were cleaned, roof gutters emptied of leaves, solar panels washed, cobwebs swept, bathrooms scrubbed, a kitchen stove scoured, and rugs vacuumed. Outside, shrubs were pruned and shaped, and concrete pavers placed around a tree adjacent to the street to reduce tripping hazards. The volunteers ranged in age from middle school students to grandparents. Everyone showed up ready to work, but from the laughter and lively conversations heard and smiles seen, it seemed that this community of saints was enjoying their work. The morning of work ended with lunch and further conversations. If you had to miss all the fun, there will be another church workday next spring.



Photos by Richard Schobohm



Together We Serve Sunday



Photos by Richard Schobohm



Chris, Bond, Joe and Gracie Francisco Celebrate Chris' Ordination



Ex Libris



Many of you are probably wondering what in heaven's name a duck has to do with the library. When I first began as your Editor, I would get an email every month—without fail, from our dear librarian, Nan Harle. So I began a column titled, **Notes from Nan**. How very typical of our unassuming Nan, who asked me not to use her name in these little articles. So I devised a joke. The waterfowl in question is called a "hooded merganser"; and wouldn't you know, this little critter is also known as a **harle!**

Continued prayers for a return to good health and vitality, Nan! I need your columns to fill up this paper!
xox, MVT

A Listening Church

Inspired by Sunday's *Together We Serve* service, I later reread the bulletin and reviewed the hymns. Lines like the following stay with me:

- Let courage be our friend, Let wisdom be our guide.
- To catch the vision, dream the dream.
- In bold accord, come celebrate the journey now and praise the Lord.

My favorite line, however, comes from the Introit:
We do not always know the task we're meant to do,
But if we listen well the answer will come through.

I very much believe we are a "can do" listening church, a love in action community, dedicated to building justice and peace while honoring all people with our caring concern. If we put together a dream list of what we desire to become, allowing our minds to follow the lead of our hearts, the outcome is positive. We are empowered to catch the vision and dream the dream. The glorious energy and ingenuity among us is telling. We older members are letting go and encouraging younger members to assume leadership. This "crossing over" from the way we were or are to a new reality in which new voices

are heard and new talents revealed is the strength of our song. There is reason to celebrate our journey together.

Yet, there is something more: Lest we allow our minds to carry our banner to do and serve in ways that get ahead of our hearts, or aggrandize ourselves, let us remember to highlight our call to be Listening Christians. Our convictions matter and so do the convictions of others. Before we claim to be in full accord with our mission to serve, we must be bold to find new ways to listen effectively to one another.

I don't mean just listening to one another in our particular church, but learning to listen in the public square, where cultures cross and other ways of faith are discussed. To build a united community and sit at the same table with people unlike ourselves has to be the goal of the church in the world today. There is a cultural shift going on: theology and philosophy is far less regarded now than in the past decades. Today the culture looks to the virtues and outcomes from blending Neuroscience with the Humanities. This is what people are talking about. The voice of the church is not as strong as it once was.

This means we have to be more intuitive and creative to make the dream come true. Rather than rely on mere words, which have something of quicksand about them, we are challenged to consider the power of restraint and presence, and called to live well, so that the message comes through us.

This requires an interior practice of how to pray and how to listen. People in our pluralistic neighborhoods and around the world are not interested in what the church has to say but do pay attention when we pray with our feet and hands. They are much more apt to catch the vision and dream with us. This is why the service Sunday was so inspiring. We may not always know the task we're meant to do, but if we listen well the answer will come through.

We are on an inward journey with the Risen Christ. May we continue to empower one another, lead from the heart, follow with the mind and pray to be known as Christians by our love. Come Sing, O Church, in Joy! We've got it right—we just have to keep practicing and remember to listen well.

~ Jo Gross (11/15/11)

Worship

Blue Christmas Service December 21 7:30 pm, Montgomery Chapel

Cries of “Merry Christmas!” and non-stop caroling contrast with the feelings of many people at this time of year. For those who are out of work, in a family crisis, or have recently suffered illness or the loss of a loved, the holiday season can be a very isolating and dreary time. Every greeting and every carol makes them feel out of step with the world around them.

Many churches have begun to recognize that our traditional Christmas Eve worship services do not meet everyone’s needs. To fill this gap churches offer a *Blue Christmas* service. People who are not having a very merry Christmas, and friends who support them, are invited to come and sit with one another in a liturgy that speaks of the love and comfort of God for those who are struggling, and offers us hope.

For the second year, we will offer a Blue Christmas service, which will take place at **7:30 pm on December 21st at Montgomery Chapel** at the corner of Richmond and Bolinas. This year, *Sleepy Hollow Presbyterian Church* will join with us in extending this ministry to the community at large. We have chosen Montgomery Chapel because the smaller space feels more intimate than our sanctuary, and may appeal to unchurched people who have no positive associations with a Presbyterian church. There will be a great deal of music and an informal, grace-filled order of worship. Consider telling your friends and neighbors who might be hurting this time of year about Blue Christmas.



Nativity, by Midori Shibata (Japan)

Christmas Day and New Year’s Day Sunday Worship 10:00 am (as usual)

This year both Christmas Day and New Year’s Day fall on Sunday, as they do every seven years or so. We will have our regular Sunday morning worship service at 10:00 a.m. on both Christmas and New Year’s Day. There will be no children’s Sunday school, Sunday morning adult Bible study, or Sunday Seminar (adult education) on those Sundays. There will be coffee hour following worship.



Conversation Regarding the Service for Wholeness and Healing Sunday, December 4, 11:45 am

Since November 2005, people from our congregation and the community have gathered on the first Wednesday of each month for the Service for Wholeness and Healing. Originally, it was an hour-long service beginning at 7:30 pm, with a homily (a short sermon). In the fall of 2006, the service became one-half-hour long, beginning at 7:00 pm, with no homily, using an order of worship based primarily on Iona Community resources—the Iona Community is an ecumenical Christian community off the coast of Scotland that works toward justice and worship renewal—and using primarily Taizé music. From the beginning, the service centered around prayer for ourselves, our loved ones and the world, and included anointing and laying on of hands. Anointing is not a mystical or magical “cure,” but rather is a symbol of God’s grace and blessing, and of the power of the Christian fellowship to transform our lives.

As one person who has been devoted to this service observed, the service has never really “caught on.” While those who regularly attend the service find it a rich and meaningful experience, their numbers are few. It is time to ask:

- Is this service not a good “fit” for our congregation?
- Might it be better attended if it were held at a different time? Might a different format or different music work better for us?
- Does the service suffer from lack of publicity or from a lack of understanding of its purpose?

All those who care about this service, or have ideas about how it could be saved, salvaged or scrapped, are invited to a conversation following worship, at 11:45 on December 4 in the sanctuary.



Worship in December 2011

- December 4 2nd Sunday of Advent**
Communion
While We're Waiting: Be at Peace
2 Peter 3:8-15a
The Rev. Dr. Joanne Whitt, preaching
- December 7 The Service for Wholeness and Healing**
Wednesday, 7:00 pm, the Sanctuary
Prayer, Taizé Music, Iona Liturgy
- December 11 3rd Sunday of Advent**
Choir Concert
While We're Waiting: Rejoice and Sing
Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11
Psalm 126
- December 18 4th Sunday of Advent**
While We're Waiting: Lift Up the Lowly
Luke 1:47-55
The Rev. Dr. Joanne Whitt, preaching
- December 21 Blue Christmas**
A worship service for those for whom Christmas is a difficult time, and for those who stand in solidarity with them.
7:30 pm, Montgomery Chapel
While We're Waiting: Hold onto Hope
Luke 2:1-20
Isaiah 40:1-5
The Rev. Dr. Joanne Whitt, preaching
- December 24 Christmas Eve**
Family Christmas Eve Service and Pageant
6:00 pm
- Candlelight Service**
10:30 pm
While We're Waiting: A Child Is Born
Isaiah 9:2-7
Luke 2:1-20
The Rev. Dr. Joanne Whitt, preaching
- December 25 Christmas Day**
A New Beginning
John 1:1-14
The Rev. Diana Bell, preaching

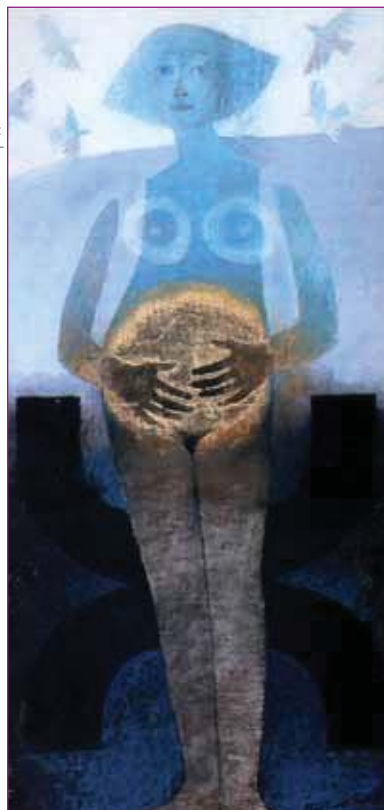
Le Soleil Dans Le Ventre (The Sun in the Belly),
by Arcabas, a contemporary French artist.

Worship in January 2012

- January 1 1st Sunday after Christmas**
Communion
The Heartbeat of God
Luke 2:15-35
The Rev. Scott Clark, preaching
- January 4 The Service for Wholeness and Healing**
Wednesday, 7:00 p.m., the Sanctuary
Prayer, Taizé Music, Iona Liturgy
- January 8 Baptism of the Lord**
Baptized in Water and Spirit
Mark 1: 4-11
The Rev. Diana Bell, preaching
- January 15 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time**
Speak, Lord
1 Samuel 3:1-20
The Rev. Dr. Joanne Whitt, preaching
- January 22 3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time**
More Than a Whale of a Tale
Jonah 3:1-10
The Rev. Dr. Joanne Whitt, preaching
- January 29* 4th Sunday in Ordinary Time**
A New Teaching
Mark 1:21-28
The Rev. Dr. Joanne Whitt, preaching

*Annual Congregational Meeting following worship

<http://www.artible.net>



Was there a moment, known only to God, when all the stars held their breath, when the galaxies paused in their dance for a fraction of a second, and the Word, who had called it all into being, went with all his love into the womb of a young girl, and the universe started to breathe again, and the ancient harmonies resumed their song, and the angels clapped their hands for you?

~Madeleine L'Engle

Continued from Page 1

creative types dressed as Christmas bats, holy knights, and angels of love; a pint-sized assistant director helped out; and the little ones too tired to make it through the service slept in the pews. It is in these unexpected moments that we embody the spirit of the story—joy and the Holy Spirit breaking into our midst—and make it our own.

After all, Christmas is the story of when God burst into the world as a child in the most humble and astonishing circumstances. God took human flesh, came and dwelt among us (John 1:14) and we believe that something in that mysterious moment changed the world and us forever. So, come, participate, and keep an open heart for the in-breaking of the Immanuel (“God with us”) as we embody this most sacred of stories.

Where ever you may be this holiday season, may you experience the excitement of the carol: “This, this is Christ the King.” This Christ can be recognized symbolically by the babe in the hay as well as in the light of each smile, the joy of scampering sheep, and the feast of being together for such an awe-some occasion.

Merry Christmas!

TWS,
Diana



The Details

Sign-up

Call or email Diana or simply show up to the first rehearsal (Dec 4th)

Rehearsals

Sundays Dec 4th and 18th

Bring a bag lunch and join us in the sanctuary for two rehearsals. We will start about 20 minutes after Worship and be done by 1pm (at the latest—non-speaking parts go first). We will need extra adult “wranglers” to corral our sheep.

*For those of us who will not be able to be here on Christmas Eve, you will be missed! If you’d like to help us prepare, then come by during a rehearsal and lend a hand.

***Do you have family coming to town for the holidays? You are in luck! Once again, we will have an open casting call at the beginning of the service for extra sheep and angels to don costumes and join in the pageant.

The Big Night

December 24th; arrive by 5:45pm.

(kids arrive dressed; costumes provided during rehearsals)

The 6pm service lasts almost an hour; the pageant is woven into the service. Pageant participants sit in pews with their families until it is their time to enact the story.

Questions or Sign-ups?

Diana Bell

Associate Pastor for Families, Youth & Children

456-3713 ext 202

dianabell@togetherweserve.org

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH
OF SAN ANSELMO
an inclusive community

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415.456.3713

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ADULT BIBLE STUDY

9:00 a.m.

SUNDAY WORSHIP
& SUNDAY SCHOOL

10:00 a.m.

(Nursery Care)

The Rev. Dr. Joanne Whitt
Pastor and Head of Staff

The Rev. Diana Bell

*Associate Pastor for Families,
Children & Youth*

The Rev. Julie Love
Parish Associate

The Rev. Doug Olds
Parish Associate

J. Carolyn Johnston
Business Manager

Tom Lannert

Church Custodian

Kathleen McCalla

Office Administrator

John Parfitt

Organist

Martha Spears

Coordinator of Older Adult Ministries

Martha Wall

Director of Music

Mary Wright Gillespie

Associate Pastor Emerita

Sally Johnson

Director of Music Emerita

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The Work of Christmas

When the star in the sky is gone,
When the Kings and Princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flocks,
The work of Christmas begins.
To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry
To release the prisoner,
To teach the nations,
To bring Christ to all,
To make music in the heart.

~Howard Thurman



Upper right, The Flight into Egypt: The Holy Family Arriving at a City Gate, Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo (1753).

Lower right, from Anna Baltzer, "Palestinians wait on foot to get through Zatar checkpoint." <http://www.annainthemiddleeast.com/photos/checkpoints/40/>

