

THE BELL



Niles Discovery Church
United in God's love for everyone's journey ... no exceptions.

WORLD PAUSES TO PRAY FOR PEACE

Imagine if people all around the globe paused at the same moment and prayed for peace.

At noon, Greenwich Mean Time, on December 31, that happens.

That can be kind of tough for those of us living on the west coast of the United States. Noon in England is 4:00



a.m. here. But some of us are going to get up at 4:00 a.m. to attend the interfaith prayer service on December 31 (others won't go to sleep on December 30). This year, the service, which is co-sponsored by the Tri-City Interfaith Council, Interfaith Women of Peace, and Pax Christi, will

be held at Niles Discovery Church, 36600 Niles Blvd., Fremont.

Prayers from several different faith traditions will be shared by those present and special music will be presented. There will be a time of fellowship following the service. Invite your friends of all faith traditions to join us.



UPCOMING WORSHIP

January 1

"Resolutions"
Revelation 21:1-6a

January 8

"Jesus's Coming of Age"
Luke 2:39-3:14, 3:21-22

January 15

"Join the Adventure"
Luke 4:1-30, 5:1-11

January 22

"Significant and Wonderful"
Mark 1:21-28

January 29

"Jesus the Teacher"
Mark 4:1-34

CABINET SETS ANNUAL BUDGET MEETING DATE

Annual Meeting

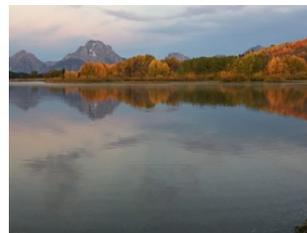


The church's Cabinet set the date for the annual budget meeting. It will be held on Sunday, February 5, following worship. We are planning to have the annual budget report available by Sunday, January 22 for you to read prior to the meeting. Since the meeting might include a vote on bylaw

amendments (we don't know for sure as of this press deadline), please make sure you look for a report before the meeting date.

PASTOR JEFF OFFERS A SABBATICAL REPORT

Pastor Jeff will offer a brief report on his sabbatical in the sanctuary following worship on Sunday, January 15. He will share a few pictures from his time away, along with insights he gained and his growing edges. Everyone is welcome to attend. Read more about this in his "Jeff's Jottings" column.



A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL WHO HELPED PROVIDE PUENTE STOCKINGS/GIFTS



We received 117 packs of colored pencils, over 20 board games, and Safeway and Target gift cards. Carol Easter, Alison Kieft, Ann Melious and Judy Smith had a wonderful day trip to Pescadero to deliver them in person. Our new liaison at Puente, Lina Mira, gave us a tour, and introduced us to the new Executive Director, Rita Mancera. Again, we thank you so much for your generosity.



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Jeff's Jottings

Happy New Year!

As we enter the new year, many of us make resolutions. I'll be exploring some powerful resolutions we all might want to take on in my sermon on January 1. In the meantime, let me invite you to consider adopting a resolution that is less life-changing, but can still help our church.

One of the things I did on my sabbatical was attend Pneuma (the Western Christian Educators Conference) at Bishop's Ranch in Healdsburg. This annual gathering includes keynotes and workshops. This year's (well, I guess technically it was last year's) keynoter was Bruce Reyes-Chow. Bruce is a Presbyterian author and pastor who started a church in San Francisco. His keynotes were on social media and how to leverage them for church growth and faith formation.

I'm pleased to say that we are doing some good things already with Social Media. I hope we can expand that. And now that I know some tools to make it simpler for multiple people to be engaged (thank you, Bruce), I'm hoping that some of you will want to explore the possibilities.



So here's "the ask": If you would like to explore how you might be able to be engaged in the church's social media ministry, please let me know by January 10. Once I have a list of people who are interested in exploring, we'll find a meeting time (using one of those tools Bruce talked about) and I'll do some teaching. No commitments until after the meeting, but once the meeting is done, you may resolve to participate in some aspect of the church's social media ministry in 2017.

Here's another ask: We need more church photographers. If you like taking pictures, would you do so at church? And then share the pictures with me?

The easiest way for you to share the pictures you take is probably by emailing them to me. However, if you're a little tech-savvy, I will share a google drive folder with you where you can upload your photos. If you don't feel very tech-savvy, don't let that last sentence scare you off! Just email your pictures to me.



Another thing we discussed at the Conference was appropriate pastoral boundaries in social media. Because I was early to the Facebook game, those best practices hadn't been set yet. Now, they are coming together. Here are the guidelines that Pastor Brenda and I will be following for

Facebook. Because your Facebook page is essentially your cyber living room, you need to invite us in. That means you need to initiate a friend request. If you are already one of our Facebook friends and you'd really rather not have us in your cyber living room, just quietly "unfriend" us. No offense will be taken. I promise. While we like having this additional way to keeping up on what's important in your life, we're okay with you setting whatever boundary works best for you. By the way, I can be found at www.facebook.com/RevJSS and Pastor Brenda can be found at www.facebook.com/brenda.loreman.

Pastor Brenda isn't doing Twitter or Instagram, but I am. Like with Facebook, if you want me to follow you on Instagram, please let me know. If I am following you already and you'd rather I didn't (again, these best practices weren't developed when I started using social media), feel free to block me; I will not be offended. I'm at www.instagram.com/revjss if you want to follow me (you're welcome to).



Because Twitter is so much less conversational than Facebook or Instagram, I assume that if you tweet publicly, you are fine with me following you – but if I'm following you and you'd rather I wasn't, just tell me and I'll unfollow you.

Continued; See "MORE FROM JEFF" page 3

Pastor Jeff's personal blog is at jeffsjottings.wordpress.com. He is publishing his sermons there so you can leave feedback or comments. He has started another blog, "Does God Care When My Mom Kills Slugs?" where he answers kids' theological questions. You can read it at askrevjss.wordpress.com.



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MORE FROM JEFF

I welcome you to follow me (www.twitter.com/revjss). You might also want to follow the church

(www.twitter.com/nilesdiscovery). And if you'd like me to follow you, please let me know.

Now, the Pneuma Conference was only one week out of thirteen, and you may be curious about what else I did during my sabbatical.

Several people have asked about it – which, I must say, feels pretty nice. While I presented a simple, one-page report about the sabbatical to the Cabinet and the Pastor Parish Relations Committee, people may want a little more story. So I'm planning on doing a brief presentation (with a time for questions and responses) on Sunday, January 15.

After you've had a quick nibble (and I've had a chance to take off my robe), we can gather back in the sanctuary. I'll share a few (I promise, only a few) pictures from my travels. I'll share a few stories, focused primarily on how I've grown from the experience and what I hope the church will gain from this time of rest, renewal, and growth. I hope you'll join me.

May the new year bring you a renewed sense of purpose, a deeper relationship with God, and a firmer commitment to your life as a disciple of Jesus.

Peace,
Pastor Jeff

STRATEGIC PLAN TAKES SHAPE

The Strategic Planning Team is very close to having a finished plan ready to share with the Cabinet and with the congregation. The action plan, which includes the steps the whole congregation will take to meet our two goals every year, is complete, and the Team has also compiled a list of possible service projects and activities the congregation may choose from to implement in the coming year. The Team will be putting the finishing touches on the plan in January, and then will take it to Cabinet in February for their approval and feedback.

Once the Cabinet reaches consensus on the plan, it will be shared with the congregation for comment and feedback. The congregation will then vote to accept and implement the final plan at our annual congregational meeting in May.

Members of the congregation will also have a chance to consider the ideas for service projects and decide if they want to become a "champion" for a particular project that fires up their passion for mission and service in the community. Only the projects that have a person or group willing to lead them will come before the congregation for a final vote after the plan is approved.



Watch this spot and the weekly announcements for the dates for Town Hall Meetings and other venues for congregational questions and feedback. If you have any questions or input now, please speak with Team Chair John Smith, or Pastor Brenda

DEEPENING MEMBERSHIP CLASS EXPLORES HOW HISTORY SHAPES US



It is not only our personal histories or even our family histories that shape our spiritual journeys. Church history and denominational history shape our sense of identity and can even influence the maps we follow on our spiritual journeys.

On Wednesday, January 25, 7:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., Pastor Jeff and Pastor Brenda will hold a "Deepening Membership" class that will focus on history. Subtitled "Faith – Then and Now," the class is open to everyone. Both people new to Niles Discovery Church and people with a life-time connection to our denominations (Disciples of Christ and United Church of Christ) should find the interactive class equally interesting.

If you need childcare to be able to attend, please let Pastor Jeff know by January 11. Desserts and warm beverages will be provided.

PLEASE WEAR YOUR NAME TAG

One easy way to offer hospitality to first-time visitors and newer members is to wear your name tag. Please pick up your name tag before worship and wear it throughout coffee hour. If you need a new one, check the box on the green attendance form, or send an email request to Roxanne (roxanne@nilesdiscoverychurch.org).

**JOIN
THE PROGRESSIVE
DINNER**

There is still time to sign up for the NDC Friendship themed progressive dinner taking place on Saturday, February 11 starting at 4:30 p.m. The attendees will be separated into groups. Each group will visit one home for hor d'oeuvres and another for salad. Everyone will end up at the church for the main course and dessert. If you choose to participate, you will be told what dish to bring and given maps members' homes. This is a wonderful chance for us to be social and get to know each other! To sign up, contact Melissa Palleschi.



LET THE PPRC KNOW

The Pastor Parish Relations Committee (PPRC) wants to hear from you. Contact any PPRC member – Mark Twist, Judy Molander, Cindy Sojourner, Ken Rasler, Beth Armstrong, Debbie Keesis, Pastor Jeff Spencer and Pastor Brenda Loreman – if you have a concern about the life of the church that you want to explore. If you have a church relationship that's hurting and want some assistance in healing it, speak to one of them.

SPECIAL OFFERINGS

The January Special Offering will be for the wonderful work done by Tri-City Volunteers. TCV has an important historical connection to Niles Discovery Church, so we are pleased to continue our support of this agency that runs a thrift store and provides emergency grocery assistance to almost 6,000 families in Alameda County every month.



This special offering will be received on

January 8, though you are welcome to give to any of our special offerings at any time (always make checks payable to Niles Discovery Church). You can see the schedule of special offerings at <http://j.mp/specoff2016> or call the church office and Roxanne will mail you one.

Thanks to your generosity, the December special offering raised \$755 for the important work of Puente.



CONGRATULATIONS TO ...

... Judy Smith, on the birth of her granddaughter, Laurel Ruth Smith.

SECOND SATURDAY DOCUMENTARY SERIES

DOCUMENTARY EXPLORES HOMELESSNESS



Storied Streets, an intimate look at how individuals cope with the challenges of homelessness, launches a new year of Second Saturday Documentaries at Niles Discovery Church, 36600 Niles Blvd. at Nursery Ave. The 1:30

p.m. screening on January 14, is free and open to the public.

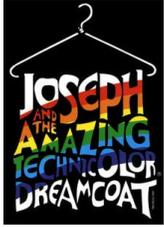
Louis Chicoine, Executive Director of Abode Services, will moderate the post-screening discussion. Abode Services is a non-profit that secures permanent homes for individuals and families experiencing homelessness in Alameda and Santa Clara Counties.

Starting in 2011, recent film school graduate Jack Robbins and several friends traveled from Los Angeles to New York, visiting 13 cities to dig deeply into the stories of people who live homeless every day. They used unobtrusive cameras and cell phones to film frank conversations.

There is the story of the high school student abandoned by his mother in ninth grade who lived under the school bleachers and continued to go to school with no one the wiser about his situation. Another story is that of a man who cannot bear to lie down on the ground so has slept upright on public transportation for 20 years. The subjects are articulate while the stories are poignant and sometimes hopeful.

Robbins released his film in 2015 with a little help from Executive Producer Susan Sarandon, award-winning actress, political activist and his mother.

The Second Saturday Documentary Series is co-sponsored by Niles Discovery Church and the San Jose Peace & Justice Center. For more information, call 510 797-0895 or visit www.nilesdiscoverychurch.org.



ENJOY A PRODUCTION OF JOSEPH AND THE AMAZING TECHNICOLOR DREAM COAT

Join Niles Discovery Church at Starstruck Theatre's production of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* at the 2:00 p.m. performance on January 15 at the Ohlone College Theatre. If you haven't purchased tickets yet, purchase them at Starstrucktheatre.org. Please see Melissa Palleschi to pick up your tickets if you purchased them through her. Anyone attending is welcome to join the group for lunch at Cantaritos Restaurant, 1530 Washington Blvd., in the Ohlone Village Plaza at 12:15 p.m.

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP NEWS



DAYTIME FELLOWSHIP

Daytime Women's Fellowship will meet in Fellowship Hall at 11:30 a.m. on Monday, January 16. Bring a bag lunch and join us for Bible study, fellowship, and dessert. All are welcome!



EVENING FELLOWSHIP

The Evening Women's Fellowship will meet at the home of Judy Molander on Wednesday, January 11 at 7:00 p.m. They will resume their study on hospitality with a lesson entitled, "Shake Off the Dust from Your Feet." The scripture is Matthew 10:1-15. All women are invited.



MILDRED REYNOLDS LAP ROBE TYING GROUP

The lap robe tying group added another meeting, which was held on November 30, to their regular schedule. Five members attended and tied six lap robes. During 2016, 75 lap robes were given – 9 to SAVE, 10 to Fremont Life Eldercare (5 to Peer Counseling and 5 to Giving Hope to a Senior), 4 to members of Niles Discovery Church, 12 to Veterans Hospice in Palo Alto, and 40 to Adopt an Angel (which provides for children in protective custody). If you know of someone who would like a lap robe, notify Judy Molander. There is no charge for the lap robes. The next meeting will be January 25 in the Fellowship Hall from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. All women are invited, but let Dorletta know if you plan to attend as lunch is provided.



GREAT FOOD & FUN AT THE CHRISTMAS TEA

This year's Christmas Tea was, once again, held at the elegant home of Laurel Beebe. Laurel's home was decorated with Christmas-themed Winnie the Pooh memorabilia. The luncheon was a superb mix of homemade soup, scones, salad, sandwiches, and festive desserts. All proceeds from the tea are donated to Adopt an Angel, which provides gifts for children in Alameda County who are in protective custody (removed from their homes but not yet in the foster system). What a privilege to be treated with so much grandeur and still know that we were providing for others.

Save The Date: The Spring Women's Retreat will be Saturday, March 11. More information will be coming soon.

PASTORS' AND OFFICE SCHEDULES

Because of appointments and meetings, it is difficult for our pastors to have regular, posted office hours. Please call your pastor if you would like to make an appointment or have him/her come by for a visit. None of the staff is available on Mondays, 2:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m., because they are in a staff meeting.

Pastor Jeff's Sabbath is on Friday,

and his day off is Saturday.

Pastor Brenda is not in the office Thursday-Saturday. Pastor Brenda

Church

510-797-0895

Pastor Jeff's mobile

510-579-8851

Pastor Brenda's mobile

510-828-4107

will be on study leave through January 9.

Cecilia Le's hours are Mondays, 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., and Thursdays, 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Roxanne White's hours are Mondays and Wednesdays, 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., and Tuesdays, 8:00 a.m. to noon.



Please Pray For...

BECAUSE OF THEIR HEALTH CONCERNS:

Don Anderson;
Cindy Corey;
Isabel Moreno;
Bill Ball;
Jean Crossley;
Maxine Foster;
Mara Williams;
Becky Moreno;
Rebecca BoyerTaylor;
Charlotte O'Donnell;
Maureen O'Donnell;
John O'Donnell;
JoAn Parker;
Charles Lovato;
Barry Kean;
Grace Rankin;

Jack Rankin;
Diana Roeding;
Edrea Espinoza;
Isaiah Espinoza-Carter;
Sarah Boyer;
Ryan BoyerTaylor;
Ken Young;
Jerry Hollands;
Jan Filip;
Janet Butcher;
William "Butch" Butcher;
Diane Kindle;
Peg Tait;
Michelle McConville's mom, Marie Maguire;

Dorletta Larsen's cousin, **Carol Garret**;
Dorletta Larsen's daughter-in-law, **Chris Dungan**;
Rich Gallegos' mother, **Esther**;
Mark Twist's father, **Arnie**;
Ken Young's friend, **Marlene Balan**;
Tom Olkowski's brother, **Paul**;
Ed Espinoza, Sarah Boyer's and Isaiah and Aiyanna Espinoza's grandfather;
Jo Carroll, Suzy Mahusay's sister;
Mike Foster's mother, **Jan Richards**;
Carol Easter's mother, **Barbara**;
Dorothy Williams' daughter, **Belinda Williams**.

ALL WHO ARE GRIEVING, ESPECIALLY:

The **family of Bert Knight** as they grieve his death on December 2;

The **family of Judy Zlatnik** as they grieve the death of Judy's sister, **Susan Brooks** on November 13;

The **family of Helen Boyer**, as they grieve the death of Helen's sister **Vieno** on October 13;

The **family of Saundra Jordan**, as they grieve the death of Saundra's sister, **Deanie** on March 27 and Deanie's son, **Junior**, on August 28;

Diane Harvey and her family as they grieve the death of Diane's father, Sanford "**Doc**" **Harvey** on September 19;

Joy Hurst and the **Clevenger family** as they grieve the death of **Russ Clevenger** on August 28;

Bill Parks, Glenda Chui, and the Parks family as they grieve the death of **Julia Parks** on August 7;

Dorothy Kusumoto and her family, as they grieve the death of her brother, **John**, on July 18;

Ann Melious and her family, as they grieve the death of Ann's mother, **Mary "Molly" O'Meara Melious**, on July 6;

PEOPLE WHO ARE STRUGGLING ON THEIR SPIRITUAL JOURNEY, including **Isabel**.

PEOPLE WHO ARE UNEMPLOYED AND UNDER-EMPLOYED, ESPECIALLY MEMBERS OF OUR CHURCH, that they find employment that fills their hearts and souls.

PEOPLE WHO ARE CARING FOR SICK, FRAIL, AND/OR ELDERLY FAMILY MEMBERS.

THE SAFETY (AND IN SOME CASES THE SAFE RETURN) OF MEMBERS OF THE CONGREGATION AND OUR FRIENDS AND LOVED ONES SERVING IN THE MILITARY, including: **Chris Swint, Scott Swint, Ben Gonzales**.

THESE LEADERS OF OUR CONGREGATION: members of the Cabinet; Pastor Jeff Spencer; Pastor Brenda Loreman; the Care Team; the Strategic Planning Team.

EVERYONE IMPACTED BY THE POISONS OF RACISM AND FOR THE DAY WHEN OUR SOCIETY NO LONGER SUFFERS FROM THAT AFFLICTION.

January 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<div style="background-color: #e0ffe0; padding: 5px;"> ◀ From Dec 26 Pastor Brenda on Vacation </div>						
Pastor Brenda on Study Leave						
9:30a Choir Warm up (R1)		3:30p Fall Prevention Class (FH)		3:30p Fall Prevention Class (FH)		
10a Worship & Sunday School				6:30p BSA Den 5 (R3 & R4)		
7p BSA Patrol Leader Council meeting (R3)				7p ACA Group (FH)		
				7:30p Choir Rehearsal (Sanc, R1)		
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Pastor Brenda on Study Leave	2:30p Staff Meeting	3:30p Fall Prevention Class (FH)	1:30p Worship Planning Meeting	3:30p Fall Prevention Class (FH)		1:30p Second Saturday Documentary Series (Sanctuary)
9:30a Choir Warm up (R1)	5p SSDS Producers Mtg (R3)	6:30p BSA Troop Meeting (FH & R2)	6:45p BSA Pack 112 Leader Committee (R3)	7p ACA Group (FH)		
10a Worship & Sunday School	6:30p Finance Committee (R3)		7p Evening Women's Fellowship (Judy)	7:30p Choir Rehearsal (Sanc, R1)		
11:30a Choir Lunch	7:30p Ministry Team Meetings		7:30p Spiritual Direction Group A (R1)			
11:30a Rainbow Ukulele Club (R3)						
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
9:30a Choir Warm up (R1)	11:30a Daytime Women's Fellowship (FH)	3:30p Fall Prevention Class (FH)	7:30p Care Team meeting (R3)	3:30p Fall Prevention Class (FH)		
10a Worship & Sunday School	2:30p Staff Meeting	5p Bell deadline	7:30p Care Team meeting (R2)	6:30p BSA Den 5 (R3 & R4)		
11:45a Sabbatical Report (Sanc)	7:15p Cabinet (FH)		7:30p Strategic Planning Team Meeting	7p ACA Group (FH)		
				7:30p Choir Rehearsal (Sanc, R1)		
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
9:30a Choir Warm up (R1)	2:30p Staff Meeting	3:30p Fall Prevention Class (FH)	10a Lap Robe Tying Group (FH)	3:30p Fall Prevention Class (FH)	BSA Troop 112 Overnight, Tentative (FH, R4, R3, R2, R1)	
10a Worship & Sunday School		6:30p BSA Troop 112 (FH & R2)	7:30p Deepening Membership (FH)	7p ACA Group (FH)		
11:30a Rainbow Ukulele Club (R3)		7:30p Book Group (Adamson's home)		7:30p Choir Rehearsal (Sanc, R1)		
29	30	31	Notes:			
9:30a Choir Warm up (R1)	2:30p Staff Meeting	3:30p Fall Prevention Class (FH)				
10a Worship & Sunday School						



Niles Discovery Church

Rev. Jeffrey Spencer,
Senior Pastor
Rev. Brenda Loreman,
Associate Pastor
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Fremont CA 94536

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nilesdiscoverychurch.org



Niles Discovery Church

The Bell is First Class

If you received this issue of *The Bell* through the US Mail, then you received it first class. You can help reduce our costs (roughly \$1.50 per issue you receive in the mail) by receiving *The Bell* via email. Simply go to our website www.nilesdiscoverychurch.org, look for the "Our Email Lists" paragraph toward the bottom of the front page, click on the link, and start filling out the forms. You can select what email lists you want to join – for the newsletter, the weekly prayer requests, the weekly announcements, and more. Then, please let Roxanne White in the church office (510-797-0895; roxanne@nilesdiscoverychurch.org) know that you don't need *The Bell* via the US Mail any more.

