

NEW VISION

The Newsletter for Noe Valley Ministry Presbyterian Church

Jan / Feb 2010

On the Spirit of Giving: Connecting Business to Spirituality

by Shari Arison

The spirit of the holiday season is now spreading all over the world. For most people, this is a time of good will. I believe that we should take the good will of the holiday season into our everyday lives. It is possible to give back to the community, to inspire the spirit of giving in all of us through everything we do: personal, business, philanthropic – in every aspect of our lives.

Many years ago, I tried to understand what my calling was and arrived each time at the same answer: world peace. I am not a prime minister and I do not intend to be a prime minister, so what is my connection with world peace? How can I contribute to world peace? But then I received a message: to achieve peace in the world, each one of us must achieve peace within ourselves and with our surroundings. Peace begins within us.

I commissioned an international study to check the means by which to facilitate this change. We examined programs for rehabilitating prisoners, educational programs in schools, drug and alcohol rehabilitation programs, and more. After about a year and a half of searching and review, I realized that all of the methods – both conventional and alternative – are used in Israel. Since I believe that each of us can attain inner peace, and is personally responsible for this, I understood that my contribution is to spread the message and to make the path to change more accessible.

Which path, however, do we choose? Each person is entitled to choose the path that is most suitable and correct for themselves. Therefore, I decided to create a pluralistic organization that includes representation of and references to these numerous methods

and various paths. Through this organization, each person can choose what best suits him, can find his path to inner peace, and thus plant the seeds for world peace. This is how the Essence of Life organization was created. It is a non-profit organization that is entirely financed from the family's funds via the Ted Arison Family Foundation, and works to raise awareness and provide tools for inner peace, in accordance with the vision we have formulated.

I also worked to promote a policy of contributing to the community – through mobilization, of course, and not through coercion. I brought Matan, an organization that encourages businesses to give back to the community, into Bank Hapoalim. I wanted everyone to understand how important it is in my view to give back to the community in which we live, because we are the community and the community is us – and to understand that giving is more than just a supreme value and obligation. Giving promotes a feeling of camaraderie among the workers and a knowledge that they are working for a place they can be proud of, a worthy place that has important messages and principles. Today, in my tours of the bank, when I see employees for whom each customer is important, who sit in branches that have a uniform and orderly appearance, who are proud of their giving –I feel great joy.

I began to understand that the business world is no less important than philanthropy, and perhaps even more so. It means investment in the State of Israel, creating employment for thousands of people, livelihoods for countless families. I realized that the bank is part of my mission, that there is a reason I am here, that I have a platform

from which I can create change that can influence, in ever-expanding circles, the country and the world. It is perhaps a difficult burden, but I have a purpose, and I must fulfill it. However, I am not alone. We all can contribute to this cause.

In my book entitled *Birth*, my goal is to share the path I have traveled in the spiritual sphere and in the business and philanthropic sphere, in order to reveal the essential connection between the two. In the book I explore the nature of the new world we are approaching with my business-spiritual model, a new model for a new world. This view will enable individuals, companies and even nations to move from collapse to positive change, and bring together the spiritual and the material, giving birth to a new future.

The State of Israel is not unique. Every country in the world faces the same issues we face here, either physically or morally. I feel we all have a stake in our community as much as we do in our own spirits, and seeking avenues of generosity is the direct path to peace among us. Whether it's an anonymous donation to charity, or a face-to-face, hands-on gift like helping a person in need in your neighborhood, we can each transfer a little of our positive energy toward greater ends.

Shari Arison is an American-Israeli businesswoman and philanthropist. Arison heads the Arison Group, a business and philanthropic group made up of leading corporations including Israel's leading bank, Bank Hapoalim, Shikun & Binui, one of the largest real estate and infrastructures companies in Israel, and Salt Industries Ltd. To learn more visit www.arison.com.



A (Very) Short Course on the Great Religions of the World

Shortly before church member Susan Olney and I boarded an overnight flight to Guatemala (to visit Margaret Bean), Dawn Summers and I had time to catch a talk by the venerable Huston Smith. This professor and author has spent 60 of his 90 years learning, teaching, and practicing all the major world religions. Wizedened and wise, he offered us some “jewels” he had pulled from his immersion in various religions, teachings and practices that have informed his unique spiritual journey – and I think a few are worth sharing with you. (Thanks to Dawn whose comprehensive note-taking helped make this report more complete and accurate.)

Hinduism offers four *yogas* as a path toward wholeness, recognizing that people have differing strengths and temperaments. Wholeness includes *Jnana* (knowledge), *Bhakti* (devotion), *Karma* (service) and *Raja* (meditation). Curiously, this coincides with our Christian commandment to love God with all our heart and strength, and mind and soul.

Buddhism teaches that Buddha *nature*, or God, is inherent in everything and everyone. (Buddha said, upon awakening from 49 days of meditation, “Wonder of wonders, there is a Buddha in every grain of sand.”) The path to discovery is the four noble truths: Life is suffering, the cause of suffering is craving, the cure is nonattachment, and the means is the eight-fold path.

Confucianism proposes the *Silver Rule*: “Don’t do unto others as you don’t want done to you.” The foundation of family is its core teaching. Did you know there are 121 different words for relatives in Chinese? Veneration of age as a time of fulfillment was profound for Dr. Smith.

The word *Tao* translates as “Way”, as in the way and the power. The symbol for Taoism is water. Water is fluid, humbling, non-resisting; yet it is powerful. The Chinese will break apart boulders by stuffing cracks in the rock with wood and pouring in water to saturate, expand and break the stone.

The Muslim salutation is *A salaam aleko* or “Peace be upon you.” It is a significant greeting, similar to *Namaste* – “The God in me greets the God in you.” Islam can teach us much about embodied prayer, as a Muslim’s whole body participates in prayer five times a day.

Judaism offers us the *Sabbath*, a day of rest. Smith says that his one regret in life is not observing this practice. He talked about going to a conference a day early to catch up on work, and instead spending the time looking out the window of the hotel. His favorite line from the movie “Out of Africa” is when Karen Blixen and her African guide traveled to a designated tree to meet someone. As they sat on either side of the tree, the narrator commented, “Two humans sat under a tree, one to wait, the other to live.” Sabbath invites us to live every moment, especially the quiet ones.

In Christianity, the predominant gift is the incarnation of God in Christ; that is, how God is manifest in a human body. The Golden Rule is central, and Smith especially appreciates Chapter 5 of Matthew, and the series of sayings. “You have heard it said...but I say unto you...” Smith says, “Such words can only be from a madman or a Christ.”

And from the indigenous peoples, we can learn much from Shamanism, “the river out of which all great religions flow.” A Shaman’s task is to enter into the upper world to enlist good spirits to intervene on the earth plane. Smith also wryly mentioned that with indigenous people, all the chiefs may be men, but it is always the women who appoint them.

My very favorite line from Huston Smith was in answer to a question about aging. “People worry about death,” he said, “but I don’t see why, it’s perfectly safe.”

Lent

As we move into the season of Epiphany and discovery, we are also aware of approaching Lent. Ash Wednesday is February 17. We have approached several other congregations about joining for this evening service of ashes and communion, but at press time have no verifications. However, the art hanging in the sanctuary gallery during Lent is “Dancing Over the Chaos,” so we have adapted that as our Lenten theme. We will also underscore the idea of the journey toward the cross. Come and see how this plays out in our worship, worship set-up, and liturgical art. Lenten lunch studies (every Sunday a different Psalm), and a Lenten devotional booklet fill out the season.

Inspirational Words

I will leave you this month with some particularly poignant quotes from The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, whose life and work we honored in mid-January.

- Peace is not merely a distant goal that we seek, but a means by which we arrive at that goal.
- I believe in Christianity as I believe that the sun has risen – not only because I see it, but because by it I see every thing else.
- Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.
- We must accept finite disappointment, but never lose infinite hope.
- Our scientific power has outrun our spiritual power. We have guided missiles and misguided men.
- To be a Christian without prayer is no more possible than to be alive without breathing.

Blessings,

Keenan

A Simple Lesson about Giving and Receiving

by Heather Grantham

Giving and receiving gifts always makes me anxious. I never know for whom I should buy something, and then I never know exactly what to buy. And if someone gets me a gift, is it the proper thing to get him/her a gift of equal or greater value? Should I put a receipt in the gift bag so s/he can exchange it if it is the wrong size? What is the proper gift for a boss? An acquaintance? A co-worker? A friend? And, if I get something I don't like, can I "re-gift" it next year? The list of questions goes on and on.

Because of my anxiety and never-ending list of questions, this year I decided against giving any gifts at all. Of course, I explained to most people that the reason for my anti-gift giving plan had to do with the commercialization of Christmas: I was going to stand up to the capitalist man! However, I just didn't want to admit the real reason: giving and receiving gifts just creates too much drama in my life.

Something happened at NVM on Sun-

day, January 3, 2010 which made me rethink my whole gift-giving abstinence. It wasn't a special day – it was like any other Sunday. I had just two kids in my older Sunday School class, so we decided to make some crafts while talking about Jesus and Epiphany. Alex Keene asked about a particular picture of a rainbow I had on my office wall. This rainbow picture was given to "Heather" – but I explained that it was to the previous Heather – Heather Reichgott who preceded me in the position of Family Ministry Director. Since she and I share a first name, I decided to leave the rainbow up for decoration. But Alex seemed troubled and wanted to know more.

"So were any of those pictures drawn for you?" he asked.

"No," I answered hesitantly.

Alex scratched his head and asked, "What's your favorite animal?"

"Penguin," I answered.

I then steered the conversation back to Jesus – the obvious topic for a Sun-

I just didn't want to admit the real reason: giving and receiving gifts just creates too much drama in my life.

day School class. We talked about Christmas and Epiphany for about 20 more minutes before we decided to just work on our crafts. At the end of the hour, Alex asked me to close my eyes. As soon as I did I felt him place something in front of me. When he told me to open them, I saw a multi-colored, 3-dimensional penguin, which he had worked on through the whole class. It was simply fabulous! When I told him how wonderful it was, he eagerly told me that he had made it for me so I could have something that was mine and not the other Heather's.

Alex gave me a gift, not because he had to, but because he genuinely wanted to. He didn't stress about what to give, nor did he expect anything back from me. He made me a picture of a penguin because he knew I liked penguins – pure and simple. His innocent act of making art for my office wall reminded me of the simplicity of gift giving – the simple act of showing another person how we feel. We give because of the inner feeling of gratitude we have towards another human being. And while Christmas is the most visible manifestation of our human need to give gifts, perhaps we should take a lesson from Alex and give gifts year-round – or whenever the Spirit moves us.



Pastor George Dan Little Remembered

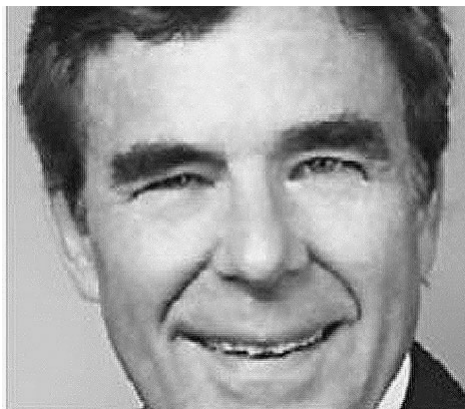
by Keenan Kelsey

Reverend George Daniel Little was a pioneering leader in urban ministry and theological education in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A). He died November 16th after a battle with brain cancer. His career included work in London with the Presbyterian Church of England, organizing pastor of a new church development in a Pittsburgh multi-racial neighborhood, and pastorships in Ithaca, New York, Prairie Village, Kansas, Minneapolis and Madison, Wisconsin, and interim president and life trustee at McCormick Seminary.

After the church's reorganization in 1970, Little became director of budgeting for the General Assembly Mission Council. He was then named executive director of the GAMC, a position he held for seven years.

In 2004 Little wrote a sort of faith statement in which he said, "Retirement (in which I no longer have responsibility for the institutional church) and advancing years are changing my views and priorities." Following is a summary of his movement:

NVM to Serve Dinner to Brothers at Winter Shelter Jan. 24-25
 Again this year, the Ministry will participate in the Interfaith Winter Shelter program. We will serve dinner to 60 homeless brothers at St. Boniface Catholic Church, located at 133 Golden Gate Avenue, in San Francisco. We are looking for people to cook casseroles and brownies, help shop (and contribute monies for food), and to serve and mingle with the men on Sunday, January 24, and Monday, January 25 (5:30 – 8 pm). This is a very meaningful and satisfying service opportunity. Call or sign up at the church.



Rev. George Dan Little.

What I care about more deeply

- Hospitality and inclusiveness, in a world of rejection and exclusiveness.
- Instances when the church loosens its grip on safety and familiarity in order to make contact with the world around us – and to let it contact us.
- Becoming conversational with people of other faiths, and with people who express their spirituality through no faith tradition, in order to maximize resources for a human community that has a chance to be peaceful and just.

What I care about less

- Propositional orthodoxy as the essence of faith.
- The institutional survival of the church.

What I am more indignant about

- Certainty which is arrogant and condemning in the name of Jesus.
- Our denomination's constitutional stance which bars homosexuals from church office before anything else is known about them.
- How language is used increasingly to con rather than to clarify.
- Corporate welfare and hegemony.

What I see more clearly

- Our relationship with God is nine parts mystery and one part understanding.
- God's love is for the entire world.
- Because we know God in Christ, faith is an available treasure.
- Faith is a matter not of certainty, but of trust.
- It is easier to manipulate how I state my beliefs than how I live my life.
- How I live is a better indicator of my faith than my beliefs.
- Fear is a low-grade infection driving our nation and church.
- Our church mirrors the nation's crisis rather than confronting it.
- Survival-anxiety dominates our church.
- Presbyterians are so accustomed to defining the terms for understanding the world that we neither comprehend nor participate in a world which no longer allows for a single workable world view.
- Worship is the church's unique and powerful art-form, but we have allowed it to be limited to our tastes.
- The world around us (and within us) is more destructively anxious and violent than we are aware of *and* potentially more constructively open and spiritual than we act upon.
- Our theology is wrong if what we are indignant about doesn't include ourselves.

Thanks to Tricia Dykers Koenig, Covenant Network National Organizer, for forwarding this. Which items resonate with you? How would you fill in the "what" questions? May we, indignant and inspired, carry on Dan's legacy, in Christ's name.

An Open Letter to Noe Valley Ministry

by Richard Van Kooy

An occasional gaffe is the price of spontaneity. This I demonstrated at a Christmas party given by the pastor of my wife's quite liberal Presbyterian congregation. They are a nice bunch of people.

Because there were two hard-to-assemble quorums serendipitously present – I think they were the elders and the deacons – an ad hoc, very informal meeting was held.

The pastor posed a question for her flock. "How do we think of ourselves as a church?" – something like that.

A few perspectives were aired, and then the light in the pastor's bright eyes shone on me. How did I, as husband to a church elder, regard their community?

Uh oh. I hate platitudes and clichés. I just couldn't bring myself to utter banal praise. Instead I blurted out a facetious descriptive phrase which I had once used for comic effect when explaining my wife's church to my more irreligious friends. How did I regard the church community? "The lunatic fringe of the Presbyterian church."

As soon as I said it, I knew that it was the wrong thing to say. I would have

done better to keep my mouth shut and fart. The worst thing was that the guests were all nice, giving, forgiving Christians. Picking on them was like beating up Amish pacifists.

Because the congregation is generous, I am bold enough to ask for a gift. Please, for Christmas perhaps, can I have a mulligan?

That's what I'd like for Christmas – a mulligan, a do-over, a second chance.

Please.

So here is what I would have said if I had taken time for cogitation before setting out on the wine-darkened sea of my brain.

I see the Noe Valley Ministry as a motley group of peace-loving, inclusive, friendly, tolerant and generous worshippers. Well, that could be said of other congregations, Christian and non-Christian.

Virtues are both well and good, but strengths are more interesting and distinctive. What strikes me is that the one distinguishing characteristic of NVM is how its modus operandi resembles the British model of muddling through.

Here are a group of people with actual lives to live. They go to work, care for children, care for elders, cook dinner, tend their gardens, worry about the precarious state of our world and yet take on almost Sisyphusian tasks. Their efforts to raise money by renting a bit of steeple to a communications company are thwarted. Undaunted, if a bit annoyed, they go back to their Aegean task of "keeping it all together." They persevere and find a way to finance a multi-million-dollar restoration of their ancient, foundation-free, landmark building. How do they do it? They muddle. How do they keep everyone happy? They muddle. How are they going to succeed? By muddling.

A fine congregation of muddlers. Muddle on. Muddle on.

Keep on muddlin'.

And that's my mulligan!

Richard Van Kooy
husband of Phoebe McAfee.

Richard Van Kooy walks his dog on Bernal Hill. His wife Phoebe is a longtime member and elder at Noe Valley Ministry.

Ministry Member Pens First-person Narrative

***Danger to Self: On the Front Line with an ER Psychiatrist*, University of California Press, 2009.**

In an engaging first-person narrative, Paul Linde takes readers behind the scenes at an urban psychiatric emergency room, with all its chaos and pathos, where we witness mental health professionals doing their best to alleviate suffering and repair shattered lives. As he and his colleagues encounter patients who are hallucinating, drunk, catatonic, aggressive, suicidal, high on drugs, paranoid, and physically sick, Linde examines the many ethical, legal, moral, and medical issues that confront today's psychiatric providers. He describes

a profession under siege from health insurance companies, the pharmaceutical industry, government regulators, and "patients' rights" advocates – as well as biomedical and academic psychiatrists who have become checklist-marking, pill-peddlers. While lifting the veil on a crucial yet gritty area of psychiatry, *Danger to Self* also injects a healthy dose of compassion into the practice of medicine and psychiatry.

Paul's book is available at local bookstores and on Amazon.com.



Paul Linde.

Prayer Walking? Try It for Lent

from the Internet

At its most basic level, prayer walking is simply walking and praying at the same time. How one walks and prays, however, takes many forms around the world and in different faith traditions.

To some people, prayer walking is a deeply contemplative exercise in which a person walks at a very slow pace while opening one's self up to God. Others use prayer walking as a form of blessing the world, asking that God bring peace or other benefits to the lives of those whose footsteps fall on the same pavement or path.

Still others understand prayer walking in more simple, practical terms. They wear a pedometer (step counter) all day, which gently reminds them that each step throughout the day is devoted to God. At various times they may very deliberately walk and pray at the same time. Other times, they may simply walk, trusting that wearing a pedometer makes them unconsciously aware of the fact that their day has been devoted to God.

Prayer walkers of all stripes report feeling more connected with their spiritual selves throughout the day. Many choose to record the steps or mileage counted on their pedometers at the end of each day in a journal. Recording steps provides an opportunity to look back over the day, calling to mind and perhaps writing down any insights or breakthroughs before they are forgotten.

Getting Started

We recommend using a pedometer to count your steps as you prayer walk. These may be purchased at any sporting goods store.

In the morning, you may wish to spend at least five minutes envisioning where your feet will take you throughout the day. Turn these steps over to God, asking that each one bring you into an awareness of God's presence and love, even if that awareness is, at times, only unconscious awareness. Ask that your prayer walking help you, your community, and our nation embody better the love of God, love of neighbor, and love of self – the Three Great Loves.

You may wish to set aside distinct times during the day in which you will walk and contemplate the Three Great Loves, or the Phoenix Affirmations, which are based on these loves. Or you may reflect on the Center for Progressive Christianity's Eight Points. (*See page 7.*)

You may also wish at times to walk while praying over a specific topic, either of personal or community concern. For instance, you may wish to pray about a conflicted relationship, seeking insight into ways your mutual interaction may lead to transformation for both of you. You might pray for the poor and marginalized in your community, opening yourself up to ways God may be guiding

you to get involved in alleviating their suffering.

A walking prayer might also be more open ended, paying attention to whatever thoughts enter one's mind while one walks and contemplating their potential meaning.

Prayer walking can be done alone or with others. When walking with others, one may wish to alternate between time in discussion and time in quiet contemplation.

As you get used to prayer walking, you may wish to establish weekly goals. Studies show that the average healthy adult walks 10,000 steps per day and the average steps per mile is 2,000. You may wish to make this your goal - to average 10,000 steps, being as aware as possible during periods of the day that each step is in some form a prayer. Some days, you may walk less, other days you may walk more. The key is to set an average goal tabulated each week.

What if I Can't Walk?

If you are unable to walk, you can consider prayer movement. You might devote part of your daily movement towards prayer and experience the deepening that comes with linking physical movement to prayer.

Prayer Walking Groups

Prayer walking groups are a great way to build community and spiritual growth. Some churches designate Lent - the forty days minus Sundays before Easter as a special time of prayer walking. People record their steps each day and turn in their totals, with the grand total being announced Easter Sunday.

Other churches sponsor single-day prayer walks on Pentecost Sunday and other occasions in which as many people as possible walk a designated circuit. If 250 people prayer walk for 10 miles, this equals the total number of miles the CrossWalk America Core Walk Team walked from Phoenix to Washington, DC over five months.



“And all shall be well...”

Here we are in the cultural New Year as well as continuing the liturgical and ecclesiastical New Year.

As Julian of Norwich assures us, “And all shall be well and all manner of thing shall be well.” Hope is what assures us and love is what carries us. Strong relationships and characters are at work in our winter Gospel narratives. They do

not shy away from bold words and deep trust. Signs abound that something important is being done by God and by those who trust in and work toward God’s ways. In keeping with the whole of Luke’s gospel, these ways are revealed as seeking justice for all. The theme continues as we enter Lent with Ash Wednesday on Feb. 17th. Come and see! *KK*

Calendar

Sunday, January 3
 9:30 am Choir Rehearsal
 10:30 am Worship and Communion
 The Rev. Keenan Kelsey preaching
 10:45 am Children’s Church School
 11:45 am Fellowship and Refreshments
 Noon Pastor’s Lunch

Wednesday, January 6
 Day of Epiphany
 10:00 am Prayer Circle
 6:15 pm Book Group
 7:30 pm Choir Practice – All Welcome

Sunday, January 10
 Celebration of Epiphany
 9:30 am Choir Rehearsal
 10:30 am Worship
 Heather Grantham preaching
 10:45 am Children’s Church School
 11:45 am Fellowship and Refreshments

Wednesday, January 13
 10:00 am Prayer Circle, Communion

Sunday, January 17
 Martin Luther King Jr Sunday
 9:30 am Choir Rehearsal
 10:30 am Worship
 The Rev. Keenan Kelsey preaching
 10:45 am Children’s Church School
 11:45 am Fellowship and Refreshments

Wednesday, January 20
 9:45 am Prayer Circle, Communion
 6:15 pm Book Group
 7:30 pm Choir Practice – All Welcome

Sunday, January 24
 Annual Meeting Sunday
 9:30 am Choir Rehearsal
 10:30 am Worship
 The Rev. Keenan Kelsey preaching
 10:45 am Children’s Church School
 11:45 am Fellowship and Refreshments
 Gala Congregational Potluck

Monday, January 25
 Tuesday, January 26
 5:30-8:00pm Feeding our Homeless Brothers,
 St. Boniface Church

Wednesday, January 27
 10:00 am Prayer Circle, Communion

Sunday, January 31
 9:30 am Choir Rehearsal
 10:30 am Worship
 The Rev. Keenan Kelsey preaching
 10:45 am Children’s Church School
 11:45 am Fellowship and Refreshments

Wednesday, February 3
 9:45 am Prayer Circle, Communion
 6:15 pm Book Group
 7:30 pm Choir Practice, All Welcome

Sunday, February 7
 9:30 am Choir Rehearsal
 10:30 am Worship and Communion
 The Rev. Keenan Kelsey preaching
 10:45 am Children’s Church School
 11:45 am Fellowship and Refreshments
 Noon Pastor’s Lunch, all invited

Wednesday, February 10
 10:00 am Prayer Circle and Communion

Sunday, February 14
 Transfiguration Sunday
 9:30 am Choir Rehearsal

10:30 am Worship
 The Rev. Keenan Kelsey preaching
 11:45 am Fellowship and Refreshments

Wednesday, February 17
 Ash Wednesday
 9:45 am Prayer Circle, Communion
 7:00 pm Ash Wednesday Service
 Communion and Imposition of Ashes
 8:15 pm Choir Practice, All Welcome

Sunday, February 21
 First Sunday in Lent
 9:30 am Choir Rehearsal
 10:30 am Worship
 The Rev. Keenan Kelsey preaching
 10:45 am Children’s Church School
 11:45 am Fellowship and Refreshments
 5:00 pm Jazz Vespers: Music of Forgiveness

Wednesday, February 24
 10:00 am Prayer Circle, Communion

Sunday, February 28
 Second Sunday in Lent
 10:30 am Worship
 Heather Graham preaching
 10:45 am Children’s Church School
 11:45 am Fellowship and Refreshments

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Center for Progressive Christianity: The Eight Points

By calling ourselves progressive, we mean we are Christians who:

1. Have found an approach to God through the life and teachings of Jesus.
2. Recognize the faithfulness of other people who have other names for the way to God’s realm, and acknowledge that their ways are true for them, as our ways are true for us.
3. Understand the sharing of bread and wine in Jesus’s name to be a representation of an ancient vision of God’s feast for all peoples.
4. Invite all people to participate in our community and worship life without insisting that they become like us in order to be acceptable.

5. Know that the way we behave toward one another and toward other people is the fullest expression of what we believe.

6. Find more grace in the search for understanding than we do in dogmatic certainty – more value in questioning than in absolutes.

7. Form ourselves into communities dedicated to equipping one another for the work we feel called to do: striving for peace and justice among all people, protecting and restoring the integrity of all God’s creation, and bringing hope to those Jesus called the least of his sisters and brothers.

8. Recognize that being followers of Jesus is costly, and entails selfless love, conscientious resistance to evil, and renunciation of privilege.

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NEWVISION

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To receive the newsletter via email as PDF attachment, send your request to John Bird at birdlandia@gmail.com. There is no charge.

Pastor Keenan Kelsey is available for private consultation, by appointment. Her office phone number follows.

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Pastor Keenan hosted an annual Christmas dinner and gift-sharing at her home on December 12th.