



# Gathering



Volume 6, No. 1

February 2012

## HOLY WEEK



## WORSHIP SCHEDULE

### *Palm/Passion Sunday*

- April 1:** "Donkey Fetchers"  
 9:15am Worship Service  
 11:00am Worship Service

### *Monday of Holy Week*

- April 2:** The Stations of the Cross  
 7:00pm Worship Service

### *Tuesday of Holy Week*

- April 3:** Celtic Communion ~ Historic Church  
 12:00pm Worship Service

### *Maundy Thursday*

- April 5:** "This Is My Body..."  
 7:00pm Worship Service

### *Good Friday*

- April 6:** The Stations of the Cross  
 12:00pm Worship Service  
Tenebrae: A Service of Shadows and Darkness  
 7:00pm Worship Service

### *Easter Sunday*

- April 8:** Celebrating the Resurrection  
 9:15am Worship Service  
 11:00am Worship Service



## SOUP SUPPER SUPPORTS YOUTH MISSION

A selection of homemade soups highlights the menu when Federated Church youth serve supper on February 22, 5:30 pm, in Price Hall, preceding the 7:00 pm Ash Wednesday worship service. The dinner will be rounded out with rolls, seasonal fruit and beverages. Donations benefit the annual Mexico Home-building Mission trip in the spring and the summer Sierra Service Project.



## ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING SET FOR FEBRUARY 26

One Great Hour of Sharing, the ecumenical offering to assist those in need, will be collected at Federated on Sunday, February 26. Established in 1946, the offering is coordinated with Church World Service and targets long-term solutions to improve the quality of life for individuals and communities around the world.

## CHILDREN'S MISSION FEATURES FAMILIES



The annual Children's Mission this year will support two families from the United Methodist and Presbyterian mission fields – the Graners in Bolivia and the Boyds in the Congo. During the month of April, Federated children will get acquainted with these families, their cultures and their work. They will

keep the Federated congregation informed of the needs of the areas with a variety of presentations, as they work toward their goal of \$5,000.



## **LENT AND HOLY WEEK: THE MYSTERY OF CHRIST'S PAIN**

The prophet Jonah finds himself "in the belly of the beast" in the Old Testament book that bears his name. In this parable about God's love and forgiveness, Jonah is at one point swallowed alive by a great fish and he finds himself alone, defeated and desperate. "The waters closed in over me; the deep surrounded me; my life was ebbing away," he says.

Jonah is expressing the geometry of despair. It is no different for us than it was for him. We too feel abandoned when we lose a job or cannot find one, when a loving relationship ends, when someone we care about becomes ill. We feel powerless when we see the faces of the poor and hungry on television, and then their cries of anguish merge seamlessly with the voice-over of the luxury car salesman. We feel defeated by a culture that is soaked in violence, greed, and misery. All around us the strong hurt the weak. The rich are contemptuous of the poor. It feels as if we have been swallowed up by a society committed to mindless pleasure and stultifying materialism.

In this context, as disciples of the Crucified, we will once again mark the season of Lent and the mystery of Holy Week. We will hear again of One who "suffered under Pontius Pilate." The life of Jesus in which he expresses abandonment and despair is the raw material of our faith. From a moment of the deepest, darkest human brokenness, something new, something unimaginably good and kind erupts. In Jesus the Living God descends to the very abyss of abandonment in order to replace hate with compassion, violence with peace, death with life. My prayer is that you will know this season as a holy time, undergirded by prayer, fasting, and generosity as we identify with Our Lord in his loneliness and anguish.



Peace, *Andrew*

### **LENTEN DISCIPLINES**

During the season of Lent Christians have always engaged with three questions:

First, what can we give up at this time? Since we are created to be in control of our desires and not controlled by them, how can we eat less, sleep less, watch less television, worry less or spend less? Would one or more of these behaviors bring us closer to Christ, help us to live more simply, and develop as a mature disciple?

Second, how can we be more intentional in our praying during Lent? Perhaps we could get up a little earlier to pray, or maybe pray at lunch time instead of eating then?

#### **A Sermon Series for Lent: PRACTICE MAKES POSSIBLE**

Ash Wednesday, February 22

"Practice Makes Possible: Finding the Way Back"

Joel 2:12-17 & Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

Lent I, February 26

"Practice Makes Possible: Yes, We Can!"

Genesis 3:1-7 & Matthew 4:1-11

Lent II, March 4

"Practice Makes Possible: The Importance of 'We'"

Genesis 12:1-4a & Romans 4:1-5, 13-17

Might we read a book about prayer and then try to practice it every day during Lent?

Thirdly, how are we called to give more sacrificially of our time, talent, and treasure in this season? How much money can we give to the church, to the poor, to the hungry that is above and beyond what we do at the other times of the year? Can we give some time to work at the Upper Room or the SHARE food closet? What could we do to be a blessing to a child in need or a neighbor in distress?

Serious questions for an important season.

The peace of God be with you as you struggle with them.

Lent III, March 11

"Practice Makes Possible: The Tyranny of Abundance"

Exodus 17:1-7 & John 4:5-15

Lent IV, March 18

"Practice Makes Possible: Fast Food"

Amos 5:8-13, 23-24 & Matthew 9:14-17

Lent V, March 25

"Practice Makes Possible: Habits That Give Rise to Virtues"

Ezekiel 37:1-14 & Romans 8:6-11

## INCLUSIVE COVENANT STATEMENT PROPOSED

Personal stories of exclusion, discrimination and betrayal populate the narrative of daily life, hidden in a closet of fear. Not the stuff of paperback novels, this is the real experience of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender Christians. Seeking to open wide the doors of the church to all who follow Christ, on Sunday, January 8, Federated consecrated a team of 15 people to lead the congregation in a several months process of discernment of readiness to declare full inclusion of all persons in the life of the church.

Focal point of the current process, the following covenant statement is proposed by Federated's More Light/Reconciling Ministries Team and approved by Church Council:

All persons are welcome to participate fully in the ministries of Federated Church, regardless of age, race, gender identity, sexual orientation, cultural background, disabilities, marital status or financial circumstances.

Recognizing that this may be a new experience for some persons in the congregation, the leadership team dedicates the next several months to questions and discussion around scriptural, moral and ethical considerations for full inclusion, and are currently meeting with small groups to share stories and encourage discussion in preparation for considering the new covenant statement.



Anyone with questions is urged to contact either Pastor Andrew Headden, 622-0273, or Pastor Bob Olmstead, 295-5561, or any member of the leadership team:

Judi Angell, jangell@earthlink.net; Shirley Edwards, shirleyedwards@sbcglobal.net; Linda Gates, linda.gates@earthlink.net; Irene Goleski, pvillecalif@yahoo.com; Pam Hagen, pamhagen@att.net; Charlotte Higgins, coachcharlotte@yahoo.com; Susan Hunn, shunn@comcast.net; Carolyn Mansfield, goldbud@comcast.net; Gail McGuire, mcguire1225@yahoo.com; Pete Peters, plvpete@comcast.net; Becky Salmon, becca\_salmon@comcast.net; Robin Stanley, birdwomanca@comcast.net; Cathy Styles, 642-2918; Don Vanderkar, donvdk@gmail.com; Peg Vanderkar, dpvanderkar@comcast.net.

*More Light Congregations are the Presbyterian-USA expression and Reconciling Congregations the United Methodist expression of churches who proclaim full inclusion of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender persons in their life and ministries.*



*"Gail McGuire, one of a group of Federated congregation members, greets Bishop Gene Robinson, first out gay bishop elected in the Episcopal Church, when he was featured speaker at the Moon Lectures at St. Mark's UMC."*

## YOUTH HOME-BUILDERS RETURN TO MEXICO

At least eight Federated youth and five adults are preparing to spend their Spring Break from school building homes in Mexico, departing March 31 and returning April 6 for the annual mission trip. Donations are welcome, to provide water purification systems for the community and to support scholarships for the youth.

Joining Brentwood Presbyterian Church in their trip to Baja California, the group will camp in an Amor Ministries campground with other church groups from the US and Canada.

The group expects to construct two houses during the week for Mexican families.

Adult leaders include Don Vanderkar, Gordon Prow, Jim Hughes, Kathleen Gleason, and Carol Olmstead. Youth participating are Jake Peterson, Alec Martin, Cole Fraser, Bryce Bowen, Carl and Ryan Hughes, Ellen Tiedemann and Emily Bonham.



## MINISTRY MOMENTS – Notes from Ministry Staff

### HOME SWEET CLASSROOM – by Jodie Regan, Children & Families Minister

Have you seen the children's classroom downstairs? It doesn't feel like a classroom at all! It feels like a family room, with soft yellow walls, accented by one wall in a deep burgundy/berry color. The carpet is fresh and there is new flooring in the kitchen. A couch, a piano and very large pillows, as well as tables and chairs, make for a comfy experience.

Every Sunday morning the children of our church family come down to enjoy prayer time, Bible lessons, activities and a healthy snack. Before gathering on the pillows, the children find their hand-colored "grape clusters" from the mural on the wall – a grape vine with the scripture, "I am the vine and you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit." John 13:5. Children bring their grape clusters to the circle to give them the opportunity to be selected as the special Sunday helper. I can't thank John Gray enough! He and Glen Lyons and Dave Price have transformed this basement room into a place where we all love to spend our time. Come visit!



See The Children's Ministry Page for More Pictures...



### "HOTEL BETHLEHEM" GETS RAVE REVIEWS – by Bonnie Green, Music Minister

This past year's Christmas Musical was so exciting to prepare. The teens' mini-musical was exceptional, and the children's understanding of the Christmas Story, of being inclusive, and of family were just some of the wonderful truths they learned. It was wonderful to see the presentations so packed with people supportive of our Children's Music Ministry. Every year the Christmas Musical and Kamp Koinonia collect special offerings from the children and those who attend the presentations. This year we were able to raise \$750 to give to the Pastor's Discretionary Fund, which is used to help people in financial crisis. Many thanks to all who gave so freely and lovingly!

See The Music Ministry Page for More Pictures...

### A BETTER BUCKET LIST – by Karen Shelnett, Faith Community Nurse

"A journey into the second half of our own lives awaits us all," according to Richard Rohr, author of *Falling Upward: A Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life*. As we prepare for any journey, we consider the way we will travel, and with whom, and what we need to take along. Often we talk to others who have traveled there previously. The new monthly forums, *Insights into Growing Older*, could be considered a travelogue into some of the many questions that we encounter on our journey into the later decades of life. Exploring these thought-provoking questions with some of our local "travel guides" will invite us into planning our journey, knowing that there are many paths that lead to the same destination. The itinerary follows:

March 15 – "Hearing, Listening and Being Heard: Exploring Hearing Loss," Bob and Carol Olmstead; Sandy Danz, Hearing Aid Specialist, AccuQuest

April 19 – "Resources, Legacies, and Gifting," Susan Peters, Executive Director of the CA-NV United Methodist Foundation

May 17 – "A Spirituality for the Second Half of Life," Rev. Dr. Andrew Headden, Pastor of Federated Church

Come, explore and plan the journey on the third Thursday of each month, 10:30 am.





**Youth Clowning  
Around for Jesus**



**Federated Youth  
at College Now**



**Serving at the Upper Room**



**Girls at the  
Tahoe Retreat**



**Seniors Building the  
Wall of Jerico**



**Winter Retreat Seniors**



**Adam Leading  
Worship Songs**



**Juniors Building  
a Temple**



**Serious Game of Spoons**



## SCENES OF THE CHILDREN'S CLASSROOM

What goes on in the children's classroom during the week?

- It is a kitchen, a break room, a classroom
- Preschool teachers eat lunch and catch their breath here, then prepare daily snacks for the preschoolers
- Three preschool groups come to see Jodie every Thursday morning at 9:30 for "Shepherd's Circle" where they hear stories from the Bible and learn hand-movement songs to accompany the stories. They get a glimpse of God's love through being joyfully welcomed and loved in this cozy classroom.



Chuck Le Pere used 14 squares of wood to make this cross for the children's classroom, each depicting a "Station of the Cross" from Holy Week.

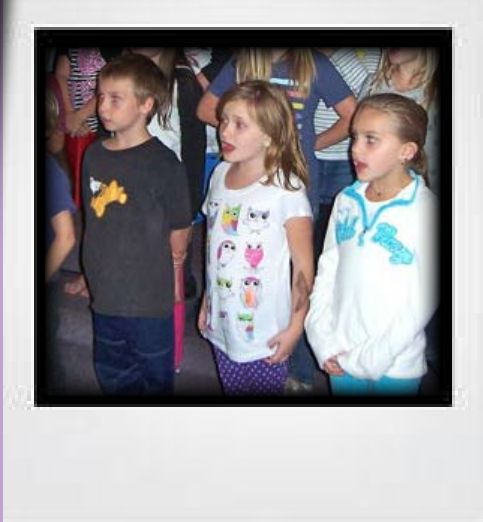
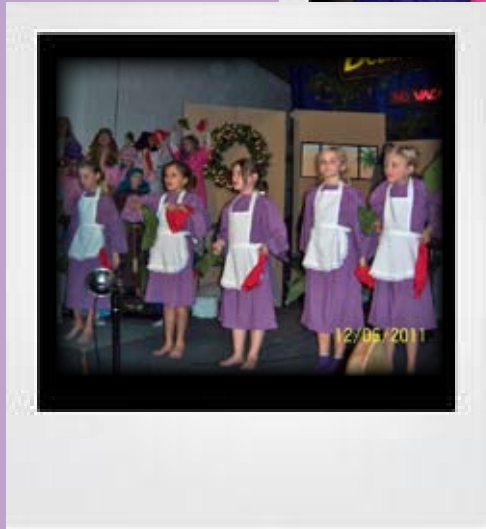


Sunday mornings Jodie often uses miniatures to teach Bible lessons. "The children love it when she uses little wooden people and real rocks with blue silks for water. Often, she will use a prop that the children made themselves. They are riveted by a story for which they have created something. Also, the Vanderkars have given the children ministry quite an array of miniature houses, animals, trees and more. The kids often get to play with them and create their own stories when their lessons are done."





**MUSIC  
MINISTRY  
is Alive and  
Well...**



### **MUSIC MARKS THE SEASONS**

“Choirs’ involvement during the Lenten and Easter season seems to pick up the pace,” asserts Music Minister Bonnie Green. Choirs of all ages are learning seasonal anthems to enhance worship services, including music for Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday. On Good Friday the Celebration Singers adult choir will lead worship with “The Reflections of the Cross.” Bonnie remarks, “We always pray that your hearts be moved when you sing and praise God!”

### **“KAMP KOINONIA” DATES ~ Don’t Miss the Fun!**

Mark your calendar!! Kamp Koinonia summer Bible camp will happen at Federated from June 18 through 24. Registration begins on May 7, with a limit of 100 children.

## ONCE UPON A TIME IN HAITI...

- By Carol Olmstead

A poor rural village clung to the mountainside in Haiti. With no running water or electricity, no school or church, doctor or nurse, the people eked a living from the soil and depended upon seasonal rains for irrigation. Many of their young moved down the mountain to the capital city to try to find work.



One day a huge earthquake toppled the capital city! More than 300,000 people died; more than a million people in the city became homeless. Hundreds of relatives returned to the rural village, hoping just to survive, when a cholera epidemic struck and claimed many more lives. Things went from bad to worse in the village.

A little over a year later a team of Americans showed up for about a week, along with a few Haitian laborers. They began work on completing a church which had sat unfinished for seven years. They cleared a field where a school could be built in the future. They worshipped with the villagers and led a Bible School for the children on a Sunday afternoon.

Another year passed; other American teams arrived and building progressed. A woman from the first team came back to visit. She saw that a very small school had been started, but it lacked books, supplies and desks. The parents needed income so they could send their children to the school. A piece of land had been given to the villagers

for a cooperative farm but there was no water supply for irrigation. The people told the woman they wanted literacy classes so they could read stories to their young children. They wanted classes on better farming techniques. They wished for an electricity source, in the early evening at least, so children would have light to do their homework.

The woman went back to her church in the U.S. She told them what she had learned and how she hoped they could help. Could her church forge an on-going relationship with this village?

There would be much to learn and plan. A second team was formed to return to the village and strengthen the ties. They could continue construction of the church, providing a community center for the village. They could bring school supplies and non-prescription medicines, help at the school and perhaps run a simple clinic. They could look at the farm site and the water situation. Maybe they could raise money for that project when they returned home.

### TO BE CONTINUED!

The first team to Haiti included John Roberts, John Prock, Sara Munday, Pete Peters and Carol and Bob Olmstead from Federated Church. The woman who returned to Haiti is Sara Munday. The next team from Federated, including Pastor Andrew Headden, returns to Haiti in May, led by Sara Munday and Carol Olmstead. Work is under the auspices of the United Methodist Committee On Relief.



## FEDERATED WOMEN SPONSOR CHOCOLATE-DIPPED INSPIRATION

Noted businesswoman and author Shari Fitzpatrick, of chocolate-dipped strawberry fame, will highlight a Federated Church Women event on Saturday, March 3, 10:00 am, at the church. All women are invited to hear Shari tell the story of making her dreams a reality with faith and perseverance, describing how anyone can aspire to achieve their highest goals. Former owner of Shari's Berries, her book, *Berried in Chocolate: How I Built a Multimillion-Dollar Business by Doing What I Love to Do and How You Can Too*, will be available for purchase. Tickets are \$5 per person and can be obtained from Elaine Livingston, 530-620-7223, [elainelivingston@hughes.net](mailto:elainelivingston@hughes.net), or at the door.

More than \$1600 was raised at FCW's Craft and Bake Sale, part of the church's Alternative Christmas. With additional FCW funds, \$1000 was donated to the Pastor's Discretionary Fund for local families in need, \$500 to the youth group's Mexico Mission Fund, and \$500 to the FCW Haiti Fund. President Ruth Humes congratulates Special Events Coordinator Linda Gates for the successful event, and thanks all who donated and purchased the crafts and baked goods.



### WHO IS FCW?

- All the women of Federated church;
- All other women who sympathize with the purpose of FCW and desire to help put this purpose into action;
- A group of joyous women, both quiet and rowdy, who love God through Jesus Christ;
- A group of about 60 women who meet monthly;
- Groups of 6 to 14 women who meet in designated Circles to study God's Word, to support one another and to accomplish some outward gesture toward all of God's people;
- An organized unit of Federated Church, committed to knowing God and experiencing freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to building an inclusive caring community of women that strengthens the church and witnesses to the promise of God's kingdom; to supporting the mission of the church in the community, the nation and the world; to working for justice and peace.

## GROWING IN FELLOWSHIP, FAITH AND FUN AT ZEPHYR POINT

*A testimony from Christine Rorden*

Many Federated members are veteran retreaters, migrating to Lake Tahoe every August to share in the church-wide camping weekend. I listened to annual retreat announcements and thought to myself, “Sounds like fun, maybe one of these years...”

Last summer my family finally took the plunge and signed up for a cabin. This was our very first church retreat of any kind, and we had no idea what to expect. We were not disappointed—in fact, it turned out to be one of the highlights of our summer!

The venue is wonderful—Zephyr Point Presbyterian Conference Center sits on the east shore of Lake Tahoe and includes a private beach, a meeting hall for group activities, an outdoor amphitheater for Sunday morning worship, comfortable accommodations ranging from deluxe to rustic, and all meals served in a central mess hall. Don’t expect gourmet – the food is cafeteria style—but it is wonderful not to have to cook for the entire weekend, and to just focus on worshipping and playing together!

Our family opted to share a rustic cabin with another family, allowing quiet space for the children to play and rest, plus a deck for relaxing with a good book. Many campers prefer the comfort of the Tahoe Center – upscale motel-like rooms with easy access to the mess hall and other meeting areas.

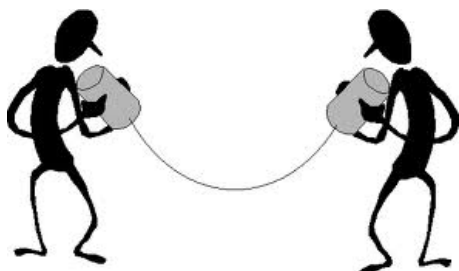
Federated’s dedicated retreat team has the process down like a well-oiled machine. Pastor Bob Olmstead acts as registrar and will also lead us in the spiritual part of the August 2012 retreat. Our theme is “The Essence of the Christian Way: Seeing Life through the Beatitudes,” reflecting on these principal teachings of Jesus to gain new perspective and appreciation for what God is doing in our world.

Optional activities include:

- A group art project expressing the retreat theme. Last year, “making a joyful noise” resulted in the beautiful wind chimes that now hang in the church courtyard.
- Fun, creative activities for kids providing material on their level
- Singing, maybe even folk dancing
- A talent show that sheds a whole new light on people you thought you knew!
- Swimming and hiking
- Not into activities? Take time to sit quietly by the lake and pray or connect with nature.

My family gained so much from our retreat weekend last August, we are eagerly awaiting the next one! To us, one of the biggest draws is the opportunity to get to know our Federated family better. There are so many wonderful personalities in our congregation, and spending time with people in this context truly builds community and deepens relationships. And how amazing it is that we can meet in one of the most beautiful places on Earth, surround ourselves with emerald waters, rugged granite outcroppings, pine-scented air, blazing sunsets, and carve out a little time and space to get back to what matters most.

Mark your calendars for August 24-26, 2012, and watch for registration packets. You can also visit the Zephyr Point website at [www.zephyrpoint.org](http://www.zephyrpoint.org).



## LEARNING TO COMMUNICATE

An improved website design and email programs are among the goals of a new team forming to assess the communications needs of Federated Church. The team includes Jodie Regan, Becky Salmon, Pete Peters, Carl Hagan and Maggie Bush, and is committed to determining how to achieve better communication to all audiences.

*Gathering ~*

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*News from Federated Church*

## *What's Happening at Federated*

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### *February*

20 - Holliday, Office Closed

22 - Soup Supper, 5:30pm

Ash Wednesday Service, 7:00pm

26 - One Great Hour of Sharing

### *March*

2 - World Day of Prayer

3 - FCW Brunch and Event, 10:00am

31 to April 6 - Senior Youth to Mexico

### *April*

1 - Palm/Passion Sunday Worship Services, 9:15am & 11:00am

2 - Stations of the Cross, 7:00pm

3 - Celtic Communion in the Historic Church, 12:00pm

5 - Maundy Thursday Worship Service, 7:00pm

6 - Stations of the Cross, 12:00pm

Good Friday Worship Service, 7:00pm

8 - Easter Sunday Worship Services, 9:15am & 11:00am



### *Looking Ahead:*

May 3 - National Day of Prayer

May 7 - Registration for Kamp Koinonia Starts

June 18 to 24 - Kamp Koinonia Week