



CONGREGATIONAL TIMES

Newsletter of EGCCUCC



Volume 1, Issue 6

July 2014

“What I See...” by Pastor James

I was in the spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet saying, "Write in a book what you see..." (Revelation 1:10-11)

Solstice

We just had the summer solstice of this year on June 21st. Our word *solstice* comes from the Latin word *sol* (sun) and *sistere* (to stand still). This is the point in the year when it seems the sun “stands still” at least for a few days before we can measure the later sunrises and earlier sunsets. It makes sense because summer is a kind of “time out” for us in many ways; school is out, we take our vacations and trips, and the beautiful weather beckons us away from house and office work.

Lest we think this is the time of year that we might naturally kick back, slow down, and take it easy...we also remember this is the season in which everything (with the exception of icicles) grows the fastest! Check your vegetable gardens for those wild zucchini, go pick up some Sloughouse sweet corn, and savor the ripe red tomatoes, and you'll know that summer is the time for fruitful growth that sustains life through the long cold winter!

Our congregation has planted a lot of seeds this spring; seeds that we

hope will bear fruit for worship vitality, financial growth, outreach, and mission. These seeds are our best hope for our longevity and well-being...just like those planted to sustain a family or community. I'd like to remind you that our congregation's original name is the German *Hoffnungsfeld*, which means “field of hope.” We have planted this field of hope not just for our congregation, but for those people who haven't found us yet and are looking for a worship home, just like us! We planted this field to serve the people of Elk Grove a feast of God's love they never knew existed! We planted this field as an inheritance for our children and others their age that will surely need a place to call their spiritual home as they face the challenges of their days.

Will this be a summer when we abandon these fields for the allure of ocean beaches and amusement parks, or will this be a summer of caretaking and nurture to sustain the work we've begun? My intuition tells me that we will engage our farming roots and tend this field of hope with care and love...a wonderful reflection of God's care for the whole world!

Blessed be,
Pastor James

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Help Wanted

The Christian Education Team is looking for someone who can commit to leading a Sunday School lesson once each month, which takes place during the sermon portion of the service. This is very similar to our previous "story time" but instead, a lesson is provided to the leader to read to the children present; if there is extra time, easy activities are also suggested to keep the little ones engaged. The total time commitment is about 25 minutes, and requires very little preparation work. Could you be the one to foster a loving environment for our kids? If so, please speak to Steven Hurley.

Council Happenings

- Steven Hurley has offered to donate a computer with a newer operating system than the one currently used on the computer in the office.
- Open houses are being held on three consecutive Saturdays to show our preschool rooms. Advertisements are being placed on craigslist, Facebook, and Elk Grove Online. Jim Addlesperger is calling preschools in the Elk Grove area.
- A pool party will be held on July 19, 2014 at the home of Beverly Withington (see article on this page). The council voted to guarantee up to \$100 to cover the cost of a certified lifeguard for the event.
- Jim Addlesperger and Mary Kay Rose will be working with the Marshallese Church to resolve facility care and storage space.
- The finance committee will be asked to contact the UCC Insurance Board for a quote on insurance for the church.

Family Night with Sacramento River Cats

We have already sold 24 seats out of our block for the game on Friday, August 1st at 7 p.m. Tickets cost \$13.50 per person, and are available while they last on a first come, first serve basis. We are in Section 121 on the 3rd baseline, which is shaded in the late afternoon!

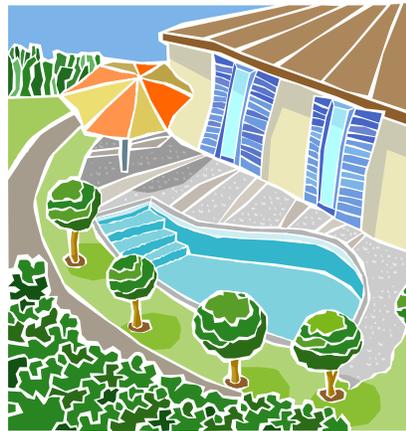
This is a great chance to involve kids, grandkids, friends, and neighbors, all while enjoying the

fellowship of your church family at a discounted price!

Call Steven Hurley at (916) 479-5522 to reserve your tickets!



All-Church Pool Party and Picnic



The all-church pool party and picnic will be held on Saturday, July 19th from 2 to 6 p.m. at the home of Beverly Withington and

Deb and J.C. Williams at 8930 Park Trail Drive.

A certified life guard will be on duty, so bring all of the kids in your life!

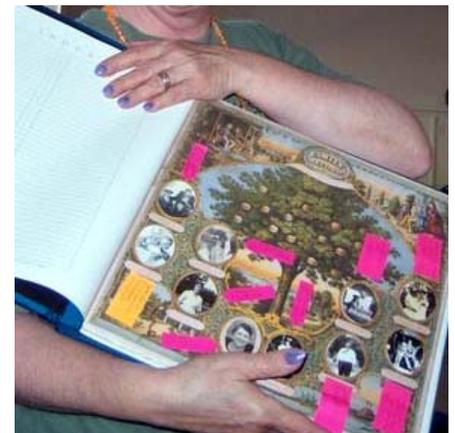
Hot dogs and buns are also being provided, but you should bring an appetizer or side dish to share, as well as your own drinks (adult beverages are OK, but NO glass bottles by the pool). There will be plenty of shade to sit in for those who don't want to swim!

Your RSVP is required. The cost is \$5 per adult to cover the hired lifeguard, but children are free! Contact Steven Hurley to sign up.



Scrapbooking Puts the *Fun* Back into Fundraiser!

Barbara Russell, our volunteer Church Secretary (a.k.a. Scrapydragonfly), loves to help you put your memories on paper in creative ways! Therefore, she has organized scrapbooking fundraisers where she provides beautiful supplies, in-depth knowledge, and unintimidating inspiration. You bring your personal photos and memorabilia while enjoying snacks, beverages, games, and prizes, and
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Stewardship is one of those *churchy* words we hear from time to time when the conversation turns to budgets and building programs. But it's not really a part of our everyday vocabulary, and as a result, I think it gets a bad rap. The idea of stewardship in the Bible has a much bigger meaning. It's about:

1. Ownership

The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it. (Psalm 24:1)

In Genesis, God creates everything, and puts Adam and Eve in the Garden to work it, and to take care of it. This is the fundamental principle of our role as stewards. God really owns everything – we are simply managers or administrators acting on God's behalf to care for things as best we can. So stewardship expresses our thankfulness, love, and obedience in taking care of everything God has put under our control.

Remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to

produce wealth. (Deuteronomy 8:18)

2. Responsibility & Accountability.

The old saying "You can't take it with you" is as true today as when it was first coined. Since nothing really belongs to us, and God owns everything, we're responsible to God for how we treat it and what we do with it. Owners have rights; stewards have responsibilities. We answer to God for our lives, talents, time involvement, and treasure, and not just our whims.

Jesus taught in the *Parable of the Talents* (Matthew 25:14-29) that stewards will be asked to give an account of how they administered everything they were given. What does that mean? Will we all end up in some big courtroom in the sky? I don't know! But I do know that I want my time, money, abilities, information, wisdom, relationships, and whatever authority I have to be used for God's purposes. Not out of fear, but out of thankfulness.

3. Reward.

Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness! (Matthew 25:21)

As Christians in the 21st century, we need to embrace this larger biblical view of "stewardship," which goes beyond checks and offering plates. We need to connect everything we do with what God is doing. If we align our purposes with God's, it glorifies our Creator and makes God's love real in the world.

Volunteer Spotlight

Roxanne Fisk grew up in the tiny town of Basin, Montana. At the age of 19 when she and Marty married, they moved to California where they have lived ever since. They moved to Elk Grove 36 years ago, and though she grew up in the Methodist Church, she has been a member here at EGCCUCC for the last 33 years! You know that you'll see her here almost any time the doors are open, but below includes a partial list of the duties and activities she takes on. Officially, she is on the Board of Deacons and a member of the Church Council. Unofficially, she lights candles every Sunday as well as tends to the candles in the sanctuary (they burn oil, not wax!), prepares Communion elements, cleans the sanctuary regularly, takes turns providing food for Fellowship Hour in addition to setting and cleaning up the space, sings in the choir, joins in as part of the Fabric Arts Ministry (knitting), is involved in the Convalescent Home Ministry at Carlton Plaza, has volunteered for the new Stewardship Committee, and does much, much more!

Her love of the church is rooted in the belief that we are all family, and that family sticks together through thick and thin, whatever comes their way. She gets the most joy from serving and supporting Senior Citizens and fellow church members through times both good and bad, and keeping the family spirit alive. Thank you Roxanne!



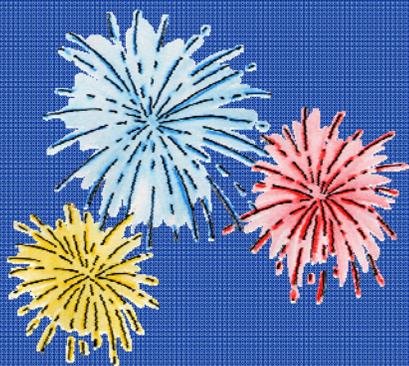
Scrapbooking

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walk away with creations that you'll cherish. It's even more fun when you bring along a friend!

The next scrapbooking fundraiser is held in the Fellowship Hall on Saturday, July 12th starting at 10 a.m., and the cost is \$20.00 per person to cover all supplies, food, drink, and prizes! Come one, come all for part or all of the day and experience the fun of scrapbooking!

RSVP to Barbara Russell,
(916) 895-6718 or
ladydragonfly3@yahoo.com



News from the Garden

Many hands make light work!

A big thank you goes out to everyone who participated in planting trees at the parsonage on June 21st. It was a wonderful turn out of members, friends, and Boy Scouts to help make the landscape more beautiful and drought tolerant. Four chaste trees and one pistache tree were planted. Great job!



Some of our tree planting volunteers!



Upcoming Events

Please mark your calendars for the following July events.

Saturday, July 5 th	Open House for Preschool, 10 a.m. to noon
Sunday, July 6 th & 20 th	Communion Sundays
Tuesday, July 8 th	Church Council, 7 p.m.
Saturday, July 12 th	Scrapbooking Fundraiser, 10 a.m. (see article, page 2) Open House for Preschool, 10 a.m. to noon
Saturday, July 19 th	Men's Breakfast, 8 a.m. Stewardship Committee, First Meeting, 9 a.m. Open House for Preschool, 10 a.m. to noon All-Church Pool Party, 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. (see article, page 2)
Saturday, July 26 th	Open House for Preschool, 10 a.m. to noon Interfaith Dinner at Wackford Community Center
Friday, August 1 st	Supper Club, Family Outing to River Cats Game at Raley Field (see article, page 2)

July Birthdays

July 4th – Doris Loughner, July 8th – Cindy Celey-Butlin, July 17th – Kimberly Lucchesi,
July 20th – Paula Job and Pastor James Kosko, July 21st – Anni Maynard,
July 23rd – Shirley Sales, July 28th – Beth Erickson, July 29th – Vicky O'Brien

July Anniversaries

July 22nd – Allen and Vicky O'Brien





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ELK GROVE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
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UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Office Hours: 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., Tuesday-Friday (please call ahead, just in case)

Sunday School: All ages, 9:00 – 10:00 a.m.

Sunday Choir Practice: 9:00 – 10:00 a.m.

Sunday Worship: 10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Wednesday Prayer Circle, Knitting Ministry: 11:00 a.m.

Wednesday Bible Study: 7:00 p.m.