

Annual Report 2008



Presented at Annual Meeting February 8, 2009

First Congregational Church of Berkeley

United Church of Christ



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First Congregational Church of Berkeley

2345 Channing Way
 Berkeley, CA 94704
 Phone: (510) 848-3696
 Fax: (510) 848-8207
info@fccb.org
www.fccb.org

Layout & Design: Margaret Copeland
 Editor: Louise Halsey
Cover photo by Robin Kempster

Moderator

JANET EADIE

Just about a year ago, during breakfast at Bette's Oceanview Diner, I told a friend from church that I thought one of the lessons I would need to learn as Moderator was how to ask for help. To a large extent, I never had the opportunity to learn this lesson because everyone has been so generous that all I have really had to do was remember to say "yes" when help was offered. I am sincerely grateful for the kindness, guidance and patience that have been shown to me, and am especially indebted to Milton Fujii who, as Moderator Elect, has supported me every step of the way.

Also about a year ago, I was trying to figure out what I was going to use as the theme for our Annual Meeting. I eventually settled on Sharing the Light of God. So, how did we do this last year? As individuals, we shared God's light every time we took a meal to someone who was ill or grieving, drove someone to church who wouldn't otherwise have been able to attend, and helped a youth obtain her GED. Collectively, we shared God's light when we stood against torture, worked against the passage of Proposition 8, and voted to be one of the congregations sponsoring a resolution calling for an Axis of Friendship with Iran at our denomination's General Synod this coming June.

This isn't to say that there haven't been a couple of bumps along the way — dare I say First Church? I was saddened when that experiment led to misunderstandings, mistrust and hurt feelings. But I was reassured when the controversy opened up beneficial dialog that resulted in the creation of an Identity Study Team. I am hopeful that the Team's report, which we should have in the near future, will provide guidance on how to map out our future together; and, regardless of what the next year brings, I look forward to continuing on the journey with you.

Moderator Elect

MILTON FUJII

I was privileged to serve this past year under the gracious tutelage of our Moderator, Janet Eadie. I learned a great deal about the operations and functions of FCCB and our UCC conference, and more importantly, the culture and values of our immediate and broader church community.

One of the designated duties of the Moderator Elect is to organize and lead the FCCB delegates who represent the church at meetings of our Conference and Association. Our corps of delegates in 2008 — Allison Addicott, Kerrigan Addicott, Stan Boghosian, Katie Brookes, Carmelle Knudsen, and Judith Norberg — served conscientiously at two Ecclesiastical Councils, the spring and fall meetings of the Bay Association, and the Annual Meeting of the Northern California/Nevada UCC Conference.

I found these meetings to be enlightening and inspiring. The Conference's Annual Meeting at Asilomar was particularly rewarding to me. As a first-timer, I wasn't sure what to expect. I had been to Asilomar many times before for work-related meetings, so the peaceful grounds were familiar to me; but this gathering turned out to be a totally new, and deeply satisfying, experience — spending several days in the midst of hundreds of people of common spirit. I found myself immersed in a round-the-clock series of thought-provoking and soul-stirring encounters. In addition to the scheduled events — which were well planned and engaging — I enjoyed the informal opportunities to meet and share ideas with UCC members from all over the region who warmly and graciously welcomed me into their midst. I was impressed with the inclusive participatory spirit that guided all the activities at the meeting. Business matters were decided openly by an informed body of the whole. I was especially encouraged by the active involvement of the youth delegates, who confidently and constructively critiqued some of the proposed actions. It was clear that they benefited greatly from Adam Blons' coaching and training in leadership skills!

The meeting's theme of "transformation" became very real to me as I left Asilomar with a broader awareness and deeper appreciation of the spiritual "extended family" that we have in the Northern California/Nevada Conference and the UCC denomination.

In addition to learning about our external church ties, I participated in a number of FCCB committees and groups that enhanced my understanding and appreciation of our own community. I am thankful to the members of the Church Council, the Long Range Planning Committee,

the Diversity in Community Ministry Team, the Stewardship Team, the Budget Committee, and the Identity Study Team, for serving as sources of insight and inspiration.

Knowing that I can count on the goodwill of the whole congregation and the commitment of all of our members to uphold this community, and with reliance on God's unfailing grace, I look forward to assuming the duties of Moderator and supporting the church as it continues to spread God's love through local and global action.

Clerk

DIANA GRAHAM

2008 has brought new challenges and opportunities for us all. A revised version of the Church Bylaws was approved at the annual meeting on February 8, 2008. Many Ministry Teams addressed issues in our community including preparing meals for YEAH and helping the youth to achieve their GEDs. Beyond our community, we supported work in South Africa to prevent the spread of AIDS and campaigned against torture and for action to reduce our carbon footprint.

During the approach to the election, the congregation unanimously voted to support the campaign against Proposition 8. Many members and friends as well as others in the community came to FCCB to work on this important campaign. It was exciting to sit in the Balcony Room and watch the Large Assembly completely fill up with FCCB and community members who came to learn how to work for an inclusive community.

In December there was another congregational Meeting to approve a Resolution: Axis of Friendship with Iran for General Synod XXVII of the United Church of Christ. The resolution

calls for establishment of an Axis of Friendship Day on the Sunday following September 12 and for the UCC to assert its opposition to war as a strategy and to promote friendship.

The duties of the Clerk include keeping a record of the Council and congregational meetings. Besides the meetings noted, other congregational Meetings were held as shown below.

- January 27, 2007: Budget approval. Approved a budget of \$1,094,278
- February 8, 2008: Election of Officers. 144 members unanimously approved nominees
- February 24, 2008: Approve Endowment recommendations. Special ministries money to Campus Ministry and capital projects money assigned to SF&A

Town Meetings were also held to discuss among other things, budget issues for 2009 in light of the current recession and how we see the church identity.

Our church is a vibrant place with people who are concerned about our local community and our world. It is a pleasure to serve.

Membership Report

Members Received 2008

Confession (Baptism)

None

Confirmation

David Ayer
Hannon Ayer
Chloe Bash
Brianna Contaxis-Tucker
Emma Dudley
Mae Petti
Amaya Rodriguez
Alexander Steutz
Xian Wong

Affirmation

None

Reaffirmation

Richard Braucher
William (Bill) Cox
Lisa Coronado-Morse
Cynthia Ganote
Jonathan Harvey
Kelly Hattel
Tinley Ireland
Kathi Mall
Bee Marrone
Zeus Yiamouyiannis

Friend

None

Letter of Transfer

Robyn Dondero-Wren
Troy Gilbert
Beth Hampson
Ann Muir
Kate Noson
Joyce Squires
Karen Lind Taylor
John Wright

Associate Member

Jocelynn Pearl

Voted in by CF&I

None

Reinstated from Inactive

None

Child Baptisms

Katherine Gilbert Wright
Randall Gilbert Wright
Mateo Leavitt-Alcantara
Evelyn Mance
Matthew William Mazzotta
Xian Wong
Phoenix Yiamouyiannis

In Memoriam

John Dillenger
Claire Graber
John Loper
Gladys Pedersen
Blanche Thomas
Nan Sands
Rick Sherman

Members Lost 2008

Transfer of Membership

*Brooks Berndt
Yasko Gamo
*Peggy Harrell
*Sandy Hulse
*Andrew Metcalfe
*Linda Morine
*Jurgen Schwing

Withdrew at their own request

Sarah Fernald
Christine Hartin

Requested Inactive Status

Margaret Birkhofer
Denise Dinwiddie
Betty Heath
Cordelia Jacobs
Julie Kramer
Frances Matzen

Voted inactive

Jenna Musselman
Ronnie Ong
Phil and Jane Rockwell
Kate Schroeder
Kent Stewart
Tom Wegner

Inactive, requested Letter of Transfer

David Wallace

Membership withdrawn

None

*Joined another church,
no letters requested

Six-Year Membership Report

GAINS	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
By Baptism/Confession	2	2	3	4	3	0
By confirmation	0	11	0	2	0	9
By reaffirmation of faith	21	19	11	16	11	10
By Letter of Transfer	5	9	10	10	12	8
By Reinstatement	1	1	0	0	1	0
Assoc or Friend to Full Membership	0	0	0	0	0	0
Friend	7	4	0	1	0	0
Voted in by CF & I	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	36	46	24	33	27	27
Associate Member received	4	5	4	1	7	1
Totals	40	51	28	34	34	28
LOSSES						
By Death	16	18	11	13	5	7
By Letter of Transfer	7	2	4	2	1	7
Dropped on own request	0	4	24	8	3	2
Placed on Inactive	0	19	23	15	27	13
Membership withdrawn	0	1	3	0	0	0
Totals	23	43	62	38	36	29
Net gain/loss	17	8	-34	-4	-2	-1
Membership at year end	604	612	578	574	572	571

Average Weekly Attendance by Month

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Jan	266	266	235	273	250
Feb	272	263	259	262	251
Mar	326	326	286	292	335
Apr	259	223	355	331	220
May	260	237	251	240	238
Jun	223	222	230	208	213
Jul	172	187	216	177	186
Aug	163	189	215	196	193
Sep	229	202	248	263	233
Oct	230	272	291	217	212
Nov	267	273	313	244	254
Dec	289	254	295	341	279
Total	2956	2913	3194	3044	2864

Care, Fellowship and Invitation

LIBBY AND STEVE SKRIPNIK, NANCY KNOWDELL AND MARY FUJII, CO-CHAIRS

The mission of the Care, Fellowship and Invitation (CF&I) Ministry is to promote fellowship and hospitality to the church family. CF&I provide the means by which all may be drawn to experience and understand God's love through fellowship and an extended hand.

CF&I works to achieve a welcoming presence on Sundays by arranging for greeters, Welcome Table helpers, and coffee servers.

CF&I also participates in the new-member process.

CF&I attempts to create an atmosphere that welcomes visitors to FCCB and fosters fellowship among current members.

CF&I organized the following events in 2008:

- Maundy Thursday Soup Supper
- Easter breakfast, coffee hour and photos
- The Third Annual All-Church Picnic
- Welcome Sunday Ice-Cream Social and Fellowship Fair
- Advent Decorating, Advent Cookie Coffee Hour and Christmas Eve Coffee Hour

Highlights from 2008 include:

- An extremely fun-filled church picnic and the addition of a new volleyball net for the event.
- A Fellowship Fair including all of the FCCB Groups and Ministries providing information to all church members about their activities.
- Efforts to enhance a welcoming presence on Sundays for visitors and prospective members including new materials to draw attention to the welcome table. Also the addition of the beautiful new name tags boards in the Hall of Entrance. Encouraging all members to wear

their name tags and make an effort to say hello and greet visitors.

- Reconfiguring the Large Assembly set-up for Sunday mornings to encourage people to flow around the room as well as the addition of a new standing café table.
- A new artificial pre-lit Christmas tree to be placed on the stage in the Large Assembly. Also beautiful handmade photo ornaments of the children of FCCB to decorate the tree.

Hopes for 2009 include:

- Continuing to improve our welcoming presence through attracting attention to the welcome table, new means of reaching out to visitors and new members, and more efforts to inform new and old members of the many ways to participate in our vibrant church community.
- Continuing support for fellowship activities.
- Outreach to spread the good news about FCCB.
- Adding more social activities within the Church year to encourage members learning more about each other in fun interesting new ways.

Thanks to ministry members for their good work over the last year:

Mary-Ellis Adams, Jackie Dennis, Mary Fujii, Kathy Helliesen, Libby Crabb-Skripnik, Steve Skripnik, Charlotte Russell, Karen Lind Taylor, Myrtle Jones, Nancy Knowdell, Charlotte Russell, Tim Specht, Carrie Vermazen, and Betsy York.

Welcome to our new members! We look forward to the year ahead!

Ministry of Education

BOB STUMPF AND JENNY VENINGA, CO-CHAIRS

The Adult Education Committee had an active and productive year. It began with a four-part Lenten Second Hour Series entitled “*Prayer and Meditation*,” which included programs on centering prayer, meditation, Sufi dancing, and Benedictine spiritual practices by Brother David Steindl-Rast. April featured programs by Rev. David Matters on Church-property disputes within the Episcopal Church, a well-attended program responding to Barack Obama’s speech on race and religion, a presentation by Walt Davis on the “Keep Hope Alive” program, and a Town Hall meeting on Church identity issues.

May and June Second Hours included a Town Hall on “DCC Sacred Conversations About Race” with Sam Keen and Bill Jersey, a report by Cynthia Whitehead on her trip to Kabul and Kosovo, a TEARS program on “24” led by Louise Specht and Randy Summers, and a presentation by our Beatitudes Society intern Neichelle Guidry.

September featured a four-part series on “Politics and Religion,” with presentations by former Sacramento Bee editorial page editor Peter Schrag, well-known Lutheran religious scholar Martin E. Marty, and UC Berkeley political science professor Jack Citrin, and also a Congregational meeting to vote on Proposition 8.

October and November included a two-part series by Del Brown and Margie Allen on Del’s new book *What Does a Progressive Christian Believe?*, a program on UCC history by PSR professor Randi Walker, a report by Annis Kukulian and Freddie Bunge on their trip to South Africa, a program by Salvador Leavitt-Alcantara on the Nonviolence and Social Justice Summer Internship Program, and a presentation by Dr. Mark Graves entitled, “*The Healing of the Soul*.” November included a reflection by Milton Fujii and Pat de Jong on these times of economic uncertainty.

December featured *A Short History of Christ-mas* by Rita Brock and a congregational meeting and vote on the “Axis of Friendship with Iran”

resolution that will be presented to General Synod this year. Dorothy Streutker’s program *Forgiveness: A New Year’s Resolution for Good* kicked off 2009 followed by a two-part series on FCCB Culture and Identity led by the Diversity and Identity Study teams.

Evening and weekend programs included a Parables series by Allison Addicott, a showing of the movie “*Asphalt Jesus*,” a Saturday program entitled, “*Organizing and Letting Go*,” a showing of Bill Jersey’s wonderful film *Campus Battleground*, and a five-part DVD series called *The Wisdom of Faith*, featuring Huston Smith and Bill Moyers (with Huston being interviewed by Sam Keen in person at the last session).

Stay tuned for new and exciting programs in the coming year. Please attend, make suggestions for programs you’d like to see, and invite your friends to join us.

Library and Media Resources

Carole Wells

The Galen Fisher Library continues its mission to serve the congregation through its collection to support spiritual life and growth, education, and the love of reading. Sixty new titles were added to the collection of the library this past year, including several audio books. Many of these titles were donations and are greatly appreciated. These titles are compiled in a list of New Books and Media 2008 and is available in the library.

This year the book sale continued for several weeks in the spring and several weeks in the fall in the large assembly after worship. Two students in Haiti were sent to school for a year as the \$500 in proceeds was donated to the WhatIf? Foundation for that purpose. All the books sold were donations from the congregation.

Susan Stangeland has taken on the responsibility for the children’s collection and Mollyanne Brewer and Carol Copeland volunteer time for the routine tasks when needed. Comments and suggestions are always welcome.

Children, Youth and Family Liaisons to Church Council

BARBARA GRADY-AYER & RICK AYER, CO-CHAIRS

The Children, Youth and Families ministry at FCCB has strived to bring families together in fellowship and to assist with Sunday School visioning and curriculum. It also serves as a liaison for families and children to the FCCB Church Council, making sure that children's issues are represented in church decision making.

Recent activities sponsored by the ministry included a participatory Christmas story production and pot-luck supper. Near term goals are to institute an ongoing service program for teens to participate in and to create structures where groups of parents can get together to talk about parenting issues.

This past fall, the ministry organized itself into a committee consisting of Sena Perrier-Morris, Laura Leaverton, Richard Wong and Jody Parsons, Margaret Copeland, Nancy Alexander, Debbie Woods, Nancy Rader, Linda Sawyer, Steven Spielman, Rick Ayer and Barbara Grady-Ayer. Our staff advisor is Adam Blons.



Ministry of Outreach, Mission and Service

DON STAHLHUT, CHAIR

Our over arching goal in all that we do is a deepening of the faith by all of the members of FCCB by enabling participation in Ministry of Outreach, Mission and Service (OMS) sponsored programs and activities.

To do this as efficiently as possible four distinct OMS Subcommittees were established early in 2008 to enhance the potential of reaching our goal: The ministry team subcommittee supported the efforts of the eighteen different ministry teams that have been recognized by OMS. Each ministry team organizes itself to pursue a particular social justice area. The All Church Activities Subcommittee developed opportunities for the involvement of the entire congregation such as on every fifth Sunday of the year.

The Telling Our Story Subcommittee sought to publicize the many activities that fall under the auspices of the ministry. The Grants Subcommittee developed a process to solicit, review and distribute funds granted from the Cellar Thrift Shop. Over \$18,000 was given away by OMS to further the efforts of the ministry teams and non-

profit organizations. This Subcommittee also made recommendations for the recipients of Christmas and Easter offerings.

We move into 2009 seeking to be most effective in the work of our Subcommittees and to, at the same time, further develop our ideas about a special churchwide activity that would start small but, over a number of years, become a faith deepening activity involving a significant portion of the congregation.

Outreach, Mission and Service Account Summary

BENEVOLENCES IN 2008

Special Offerings

	Amount
One Great Hour of Sharing	\$6,476
Easter Offering: KUDO & Puente de la Costa Sur	\$9,897
Neighbors in Need	\$4,781
Christmas Offering: East Bay Sanctuary Covenant	\$8,906
Total:	\$30,060

2008 Grantees

Funds distributed annually by OMS to ministry teams and outside organizations. Funds come from the proceeds of the Cellar Thrift Shop sales. As always, we are deeply grateful for the hard work of the Cellar making this part of our ministry possible.

Berkeley Food and Housing Project	\$1,000
Creative Living Center, Bonita House (Berkeley)	\$1,000
Firm, Inc. (Fresno)	\$2,500
Mujeras Unida y Activas	\$2,500
African American Teaching Fellows (Virginia)	\$1,000
UCC Coalition for LGBT Concerns (Ohio)	\$2,000
Marriage Equality Ministry Team	\$1,000
Immigration Ministry Team	\$2,000
Homeless Youth GED Ministry Team	\$1,200
Rebuilding Together Ministry Team	\$3,000
Kitchen Community Ministry Team	\$1,700
TEARS Ministry Team	\$304
South Africa Ministry Team	\$500
Total:	\$19,704

Other Giving

Farmers Market donation to Berkeley Food Pantry	\$2,608
Church World Service	\$158
Berkeley Food and Housing Project	\$491
Women's Daytime Drop-in Center	\$100
What If? Foundation (from book sales)	\$742
Iraq Humanitarian Aid	\$420
The Nature Conservancy (Sunday School project)	\$82
Wren Yorkie Rescue (Sunday School project)	\$82
Home at Last Rescue (Sunday School project)	\$160
Animal Rescue Foundation (Sunday School project)	\$160
Gifts to the World	
YEAH	\$685
Common Hope	\$670
WhatIF? Foundation	\$1,150
loveLife	\$1,350
Death Penalty Focus	\$395
Total:	\$9,253

Partners in Mission

United Church of Christ/Our Church's Wider Mission	\$80,400
Pacific School of Religion	\$3,000
Berkeley Organizing Congregations for Action	\$3,000
Total:	\$86,400

Total 2008 Benevolences: \$145,417

Ministry of Stewardship, Finance and Administration

HANK LEEPER AND HANNEKE JANSEN, CO-CHAIRS

At our inaugural meeting of the Ministry of Stewardship, Finance and Administration (SF&A) last February each member of the ministry, old hands and new, shared why the work of SF&A is attractive to us. Without exception the answer we each gave included the notion that the ministry's work had a tangible and practical quality to it that appealed to us. It's been an honor for each of us to have had a hand in helping the church staff care for the physical and financial treasure of FCCB over the last year.

As in past years, SF&A is assisted in its work by a number of very talented people. In particular, Ken Iha proved invaluable in keeping the ministry up to date on the ongoing needs of the church as they developed and creatively managing expenses, and Moe Wright kept his finger on the pulse of the church budget on an ongoing basis, and Carmelle Knudsen was invaluable in her management of pledges and other monetary receipts. We thank them for their able assistance.

As we begin 2009, we do so thankful for the faithful support of the members of FCCB. Given the difficult economic circumstances our country is experiencing, we are heartened by the initial response to the 2009 stewardship campaign. As we have done traditional as a church family, by giving of our time, talents, and treasure, we will certainly have a 2009 at FCCB that we can look forward to with anticipation. SF&A is extremely thankful to all those who assisted in the campaign, but especially to Joanne Brown and Milton Fujii who co-chaired the campaign.

As we have in the past, last year we continued to battle father time in managing the upkeep of FCCB's physical infrastructure. We

carefully used our small allotment of endowment income as well as helpful grants from the Cellar Thrift Shop on the items on our perpetual projects list that were of the most urgency. Among last year's projects were the continuing effort to rekey the church, refurbishment of the two church apartments, continued replacement of inefficient refrigerators, replacement of doors damaged by vandals, purchase and installation of new exterior signs, and boiler repairs. Additional long-term projects we will continue to pursue include improvements to the church's life safety system (emergency signage and alarms), and eventual replacement of our ageing heating system.

As we move into 2009 we look forward to the challenges ahead and renew our commitment to helping FCCB continue to reduce its carbon footprint, remain a safe place to worship, teach and learn, and to continue to provide adequate maintenance of the physical plant so that FCCB can continue to be a beacon of progressive Christianity and social justice well into the future.

We, the members of the Ministry of Stewardship, Finance and Administration, remain thankful for opportunity to serve and support the inspiring work of FCCB.



Ministry of Worship and Spiritual Life

MELISSA MOSS & LOUISE HALSEY, CO-CHAIRS

The Deacons, who serve on this ministry, have had a very busy but rewarding year. Many have commented how much they love being Deacons — especially when we have the privilege of serving communion. If you have ever volunteered when we have one of our “open invitation” First Sunday communions — usually on summer Sundays — you may know what we mean. The act of serving communion is a very profound spiritual practice.

We kicked off the year by leading the Gloria in church on Easter Sunday. It was really fun! And, it gave the congregation an opportunity to see who was serving on our ministry for the year. We heartily recommend that other ministries and committees lead the Gloria sometime.

In addition to preparing and serving First Sunday communion, there is always a Deacon of the Day on other Sundays of the month to prepare the elements for chancel communion and sometimes deliver the Invitation and Dedication of the offering. If we have a baptism that Sunday, the Deacon of the Day has the honor of presenting a candle to the family.

We have a Deacon presence at memorial services, being available to the family as needed. We also attend ordinations, presenting a gift on behalf of the congregation. This year we had two ordinations: Dorothy Streutker (one of our own

Deacons) and Andrew Metcalfe. We would like to thank the In-Care Committee, under the leadership of Becky Wright, for their support of our In-Care seminarians (including fellow Deacon Royce Tevis).

Under the guidance of Dave Sutton, we have expanded our Spirit Talk program. We currently have four groups meeting with plans to form more in the future. One group has been meeting for two years now.

After the May 15 California Supreme Court decision on marriage equality we sponsored a “town hall” discussion that was well attended and became the kick-off for the Marriage Equality Ministry Team. Several couples shared their experiences, including a couple who had flown in from Eden Seminary in Missouri to get married at our church, and another couple who learned of the event on our website.

This year we expanded our appreciation luncheon to include ushers, chancel communion celebrants, ministers (including three and four-way covenant ministers) and the Memorial Services Guild. The event was a September picnic at Live Oak Park, with good weather, good food, and most important, good company. We thank everyone for their part in making worship possible.

We wrap up this year as we begin to coordinate the 2009 Lenten Devotional Booklet, and look forward to a new year in the life of the church and the opportunity to serve our community.

Many thanks to the 2008 Deacons: Margie Allen, Caleb Case, Bonnie Connor, Diana Graham, Louise Halsey, Melissa Moss, Dorothy Streutker, Dave Sutton, Royce Tevis, and Jim Weller.



Long-Range Planning

BONNIE HESTER, CHAIR

The committee looks to the future of FCCB. This year we focused on issues that have been identified in previous years and remain pertinent, as well as new ideas that emerged. Here are some highlights:

We remain concerned about the best use of our physical facilities especially Plymouth House and Durant House. Plans for Loper Chapel's use are exciting, but have stalled while it is decided how we might develop it in stages. We continued discussions on church growth. Attempts to identify new and better ways to improve communication about our activities and progressive Christian outlook to the broader community led to focus on effective publicity and our name. We joined forces with other groups to discuss a larger question of identity and diversity. A meeting led by Katherine Fulton helped us identify that we could put as much attention on an effort toward a human capital campaign as we have on a financial campaign.

The loss of Cody's-sponsored events at FCCB led us to consider how we might fill that void. The new Author's & Ideas @ FCCB program is beginning. The economic downturn and its impact on pledging and on FCCB members was a major topic. We considered how we might respond to support people as anxiety and need increases.

FCCB is good news in bad times. We identify our assets as our physical facility, our tremendous staff, our endowment, being a progressive Protestant church and the positive energy in the congregation.

Committee members: Barbara Addicott, Laszlo Bonnyay, Patricia de Jong, Milt Fuji, Wilson Hoffman, Phil Porter, Becky Smith, Scott Sporte, Kris Veldheer

Chancel Renewal

BONNIE HESTER, CHAIR

In 2007 a committee was formed to continue improving and unifying the Chancel. The committee looked at all the elements with consideration for portability and flexibility to enhance innovative worship while thinking about how the Chancel contributes to a visual and aural experience. The risers were moved back and opened up a bit with wedges added to fill in the gaps between them. The clamps needed to hold the wedges, however, have been lost and the wedges cannot hold weight. The old choir chairs have been replaced thanks to an anonymous donor. In 2008, the committee saw plans for a new pulpit, communion table, lectern, screen for the organ, and skirts for the risers. A presentation was made to the Council with a recommendation to put the project on hold due to the economic downturn and recognition that this is not a time to look for funding. The committee also came up with a plan for a new name tag system that has recently begun. We now have racks located in the hall of entry.

The committee has ceased to meet for the meanwhile, but hopes eventually to complete the projects that were left undone in the renovation of the Chancel.

Committee members: Barbara Addicott, Roger Bash, Laszlo Bonnyay, Patricia de Jong, Ken Iha, Larry Marietta, Phil Porter, Helen Wadman, and Betsy York.



Covenant and Discernment Committee (formerly In-Care Committee)

BECKY WRIGHT, CHAIR

Robin Kempster chaired this committee until Becky Wright took over in June. Our name was changed from the In-Care Committee to the Covenant and Discernment Committee because we support not only persons in discernment with FCCB, but also persons in covenant with our congregation, ordained into non-parish ministries.

Our committee oversees members who are seeking ordination in the UCC. When students attend seminary and seek ordination, they need to be taken In-Care with a UCC church. They then enter an In-Care (discernment) relationship with the Northern California Nevada Conference of the UCC. Our persons in discernment participate in a wide variety of congregational experiences. They are given an FCCB member to be their sponsor. We support them during their process of discernment as they seek ordination and their call to ministry. Our current persons in discernment are Allison Addicott, Salvador Leavitt-Alcantara, Marijke Fakasiieiki, Geoffrey Gaskins, Kevin Omi, Jim Schaal, Cordelia Strandskov, Royce Tevis and Jenny Veninga.

The C and D Committee also forms and maintains 3- and 4-Way Covenants with FCCB members who are currently ordained ministers

in the UCC and are working in positions other than parish ministries. The three partners in a 3-Way Covenant are the ordained person, the local church and the Bay Association of the UCC. Four-Way covenants include a calling body, usually the person's employer.

Judy Huston is in a 3-way covenant in her work as a Pastoral Counselor and Spiritual Director. Julie Cedrone (Chaplain/Spiritual Counselor at Pathways Hospice), and Bob Russell (Founder/Director of the Center for Theology and Natural Sciences) are in 4-Way Covenants. Dorothy Streutker was ordained at FCCB on Feb. 17 and installed in a 4-Way Covenant with the San Francisco Network Ministries as a Criminal Justice Outreach Chaplain. We have recently joined in a 4-Way Covenant with Ann Muir who is involved in interim ministry in Redding, CA.

Andrew Metcalfe was ordained at FCCB on May 4. He was installed at the Kenwood Community Church on Oct. 4.

C and D Committee members are Ken Rubardt, Dave Sutton, Michael Arighi, Lewis Perry, Margie Coates, and Terry Jackson. We are honored to support such a wonderful and gifted group of persons called to ministry.

Loper Chapel Committee

ROGER BASH, CHAIR

Over the past six months we have been exploring the possibilities for making Loper Chapel a more inviting, multi-purpose space that would support worship as well as musical performances, lectures, meetings and workshops. We have engaged the services of Ratcliff Architects to address the building code and ADA egress issues as well as to provide designs for new bathrooms in the former library between the chapel and Plymouth Assembly. We have solicited the input of Terry Ohm, the lighting designer for the sanc-

tuary as well as Tim Caton, the colorist for the sanctuary. We have generated estimates for the construction and furniture costs and have looked at the possibilities for phasing the work, given the finite amount of money that has been set aside for the project. The information we have generated is being passed on to SF&A for their input and then on to Council for their direction.

Committee members: Barbara Addicott, Roger Bash, Pat de Jong and Phil Porter

Personnel

MARGIE ALLEN, CHAIR

The Personnel Committee is appointed by, and serves at the discretion of, the Church Council. The Committee advises the Council and the Senior Minister on employment matters for all Church Staff.

In 2008, the committee consisted of Patty Contaxis, Bob Helliesen, Robin Kempster, Scott Sparte, Terry Jackson, and me. Patricia de Jong, Senior Minister, represented the staff, and Ken Iha provided financial data as needed.

The Committee:

- Reviewed the 2008 Personnel budget as the year unfolded,
- Reviewed preparation of and then approved the 2008 budget,
- Met with all staff for discussions relating to their job descriptions and job satisfaction,
- Approved sabbaticals as appropriate,
- Considered requests of staff members,
- Considered and recommended to Council adoption of a Family Leave Policy
- Recognized the dedicated efforts of all our clergy and lay staff in ministering to the congregation.

It is a pleasure to serve on Personnel and to be able to support the fine ministry of FCCB.

Ministry of Involvement

(formerly Nominating Committee)

NICK KUKULAN, CHAIR

The Ministry of Involvement (MOI) does its intensive work from September to December. The first step is to evaluate the needs of Church Council, ministries and committees. The next step is to reach out to church members to encourage their interests in service to the FCCB community. Through the conversations and through articles in the Carillon and a contact table in the Large Assembly, we educate members on the activities of the different ministries to match up individual interests with ministry needs. MOI also continues to work on a ladder of leadership development in the ministries with the concept of two-year co-chair leadership. This means a senior chair with one year of previous experience mentors an incoming junior chair. The goal is to provide a consistency of experienced leadership and continuity of program and direction.

Thanks to all the MOI members for their service.



Officers, Ministry and Committee Members for 2009

	2009	2010	Council
OFFICERS			
Moderator	Milton Fujii		Milton Fujii
Moderator Elect	Becky Smith		Becky Smith
Clerk	Diana Graham		Diana Graham
Treasurer	Moe Wright		Moe Wright
Council at Large	Amy Hiestand	Alice Clark	Amy Hiestand
	Christian Stuetz	Paul Tomasiello	Christian Stuetz
MINISTRIES			
Care, Fellowship & Invitation	Mary Fujii	Charlene Abina	Mary Fujii
<i>Karen Lind Taylor and Mary Fujii, Co-Chairs</i>	Karen Lind Taylor	Mary-Ellis Adams	Karen Lind Taylor
	Carrie Vermazen	Diane Brenum	
		Santiago Canez	
		Jackie Dennis	
		Nina Dodonova	
		Demetrhea Terrien	
		Betsy York	
Adult Education	Troy Gilbert	Rita Brock	Patricia Kelly
<i>Patricia Kelly and Jennifer Veninga, Co-Chairs</i>	Patricia Kelly	Pat Cross	Jennifer Veninga
	Jennifer Veninga	Tim Culvahouse	
		Cynthia Ganote	
		Geoffrey Gaskins	
		Beth Hampson	
		Kelly Hattel	
		Isa Phillips	
		Charles Taylor	
Children and Family Education			Rick Ayer,
<i>Rick Ayer, Barbara Grady-Ayer, and Sena Perrier-Morris, Co-Chairs</i>			Barbara Grady-Ayer, & Sena Perrier-Morris
Media Resources	Carole Wells		
Outreach, Mission & Service	Ann Jensen	Phil Adams	Don Stalhut
<i>Don Stalhut, Chair</i>	Brianna	Robert Bradley	
	Leavitt-Alcantara	Nick Kulkan	
	Salvador	Jean Sturges	
	Leavitt-Alcantara		
	Carolyn Thiessen		
	Maura Tucker		
	Wilfred Ward		
	Joanie Wickstrom		

Officers, Ministry and Committee Members for 2009 (cont.)

	2009	2010	Council
MINISTRIES (cont.)			
Stewardship, Finance & Administration <i>Hanneke Jansen, Chair</i>	Allison Addicott Hank Leeper Hanneke Jansen Sharon Paik Linda Sawyer	Drew Cannon Jim Conning Ileana Dorn Tim Specht	Hanneke Jansen
Worship & Spiritual Life <i>Melissa Moss & Louise Halsey, Co-Chairs</i>	Margie Allen Cal Case Diana Graham Melissa Moss David Sutton Royce Tevis	Stan Boghosian Adelina Canez Carmelle Knudsen Louise Halsey Dorothy Streutker Cordelia Strandskov Sarah Stuetz Jim Weller	Melissa Moss Louise Halsey
Campus Ministry Liaison			Zeus Yiamouyiannis
DELEGATES	Allison Addicott Carmelle Knudsen	Carol Ingram Judy Norberg Lewis Perry Helen Wadman John Wadman	
COMMITTEES*	Long Range Planning Margie Allen Laszlo Bonnyay Joanne Brown Troy Gilbert Bonnie Hester Wilson Hoffman Phil Porter Bob Stumpf Kris Veldheer		Investment Cal Case Nick Kukulan Ken Rubardt Scott Sporte
COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL*	Endowment Laszlo Bonnyay Mike Casendino Bruce Copeland Bonnie Hester Nan Joesten Linda Koretz BJ Spitze		Personnel Margie Allen Patti Contaxis Bob Helliesen Terry Jackson Robin Kempster Jody Parsons Scott Sporte

**Classes not shown. Terms may vary.*

Senior Minister

PATRICIA DE JONG

I've been rereading a wonderful book by Barbara Browne Taylor called *Leaving Church; a Memoir of Faith*. She writes that the church is not a stopping place, but a starting place for discerning God's presence in the world. The church is a place where we "engage the steady practice of listening to divine words and celebrating divine sacraments; church can help people gain a feel for how God shows up — not only in Bibles and Communion but also in neighbors, mysterious strangers, sliced bread and grocery store wine. That way, when they leave church, they no more leave God than God leaves them."

This year we brought the church with us into the world, we paid attention to the cries of the world and our hunger for peace and justice. We trained some of our members to help homeless youth obtain a GED. We embraced torture as a moral issue and supported a church-wide stance opposing Proposition 8. We traveled to South



Africa to learn more about supporting Queen and loveLife. We went to Iran with Fellowship of Reconciliation to practice the art of civilian diplomacy and interfaith witness. We began to make plans for an Immigration witness on the southwest border of United States and Mexico and prayed for peace as we anticipated visiting Israel Palestine in the midst of war in the Gaza.

In short, we practiced the spiritual intention of recognizing that God is not found solely by coming to church, but by leaving it to move into the world to witness to the ministry of Jesus in the midst of daily life. God was with us as the congregation sought to strengthen its prophetic stance in the midst of a demanding world. We discovered new courage and the abiding faithfulness of God as we responded to the financial crisis, a national Presidential Election and an unjust ballot measure as a Christian community. If there was despair about the stock market, hope was palpable as our nation voted to elect the first African-American President. Even our stewardship program took on a Yes We Can! attitude this year.

The church is a starting place, a place to begin the spiritual discipline of raising our children to be moral and ethical human beings, a place to dream about making a deeper connection with God and Jesus and each other, a place to imagine what it might mean to live in Christian community without being cast into a mold. It is a place to grow in faith and be challenged intellectually and spiritually, a place to bring our insecurities and our humble ambitions; it is a place where we can discover the light of Christ shining in the faces of God's people.

A year ago, Moderator Janet Eadie asked us to share the light of God in whatever way the light shone in us. God's light has shined on the people and the darkness has not put it out. As always, it is a profound joy to share in the light of Christ's ministry with all of you at FCCB. Our community of faith is a starting place for discerning God's abundant presence in the world.

Assistant to the Senior Minister/ Administrative Assistant

LOUISE HALSEY

Little did I know what really goes on in the church office, during the week, behind the scenes — until I became part of the church staff in September. It's a lively place, to put it mildly, with relevant communications/activities happening daily. By "relevant" I mean the stuff in life that really matters, the joys and sorrows, triumphs and losses. I get to be part of a team that shares in these moments — from producing the order of worship for a memorial service to printing out a baptism certificate, to giving a person in need directions to the nearest homeless shelter, to making sure there are enough forks on hand for the same-sex marriage celebration. The details are staggering but the rewards are immeasurable.

These "relevant" activities of the church are supported by dedicated church staff, amazingly resilient Cal students (Remedios Barrera and Fran Guzman during the fall semester), tireless order of worship staffers (Evelyn Sellers, Carol Copeland, Bernice Brissette, Roxie Tyson, Mitsie McKenna, Jerri Ricca et al.), dependable front desk volunteers (Lewis Perry, Helen Bliven, Joy Service, Ginny Miller, Eleanor Lyness), our flexible, patient, and caring parking lot attendant and print shop expert, Amare Gebreyesus, and our many amazing church members and friends who volunteer their time and resources in countless ways.

If the last few months on staff are any indication of what's in store for 2009, I'm preparing myself for a wild and wonderful ride. I'm in the core of a vibrant community and I feel blessed and energized to be part of this delightful mix we call the First Congregational Church of Berkeley. When I head home at the end of yet another full day, I'm deeply satisfied that my contributions are indeed relevant.

Program Associate

MARY-ELLIS ADAMS

This fall we added another class to the Sunday school line-up to make class size more manageable. This has been especially appreciated by the teachers, but makes it harder to find parent helpers each week since the parent pool has been reduced. Our Sunday school program includes a nursery for infants and toddlers, staffed by our paid childcare providers, a pre-school class, a K-1 grade class, a 2nd-3rd grade class, a 4th-5th grade class, and a middle school through high school class, all taught by parent volunteers! Overall the biggest Sunday school program since I began this job in 2004!!

The pre-school and K-1 classes decided to stay with the lectionary-based curriculum Seasons of the Spirit, which we are in our third year of using. The 2nd-3rd and 4th-5th decided to go in a different direction: the 2nd-3rd grade teaching team wanted to focus on values that would be applicable to the daily lives of our children. They are also using some lessons from Growing in Spirit, our home-grown curriculum created by Adam Blons in 2002, which is a Biblical and values-based curriculum. The 4th-5th grade class is using a smattering of Seasons of the Spirit, Growing in Spirit, and a Bible-based self-esteem curriculum aimed at this age group which will be moving on to middle school soon. In summary, Adam and I have tried to be receptive to the wants and desires of our teachers, who are the backbone of our Sunday school program, and have enjoyed seeing the children grow in their experience of this Christian community.

Minister of Community Life

ADAM BLONS

I am grateful for God's presence throughout our many ministries. Here are some highlights:

- Confirmation: We had the largest ever confirmation class with 14 youth. An amazing group of mentors worked with them throughout the year and supported their discernment as did our fine Minister in Training, Cordelia Strandkov.
- Workcamp: We said goodbye to a very strong group of Seniors again this year with a return to All People's Christian Center in South Central Los Angeles for our annual mission trip. It was an intense experience of inner city life from the perspective of children and all of us were touched by the way lives were being changed by the center.
- YES: This fall, we worked one Saturday morning with the Friends of Five Creeks doing watershed restoration work. Ouch! Pompous grass hurts.
- Sunday School: The 2nd/3rd and 4th/5th grade classes painted a tent for the Tents of Hope project. It was sent to Washington DC



to be displayed with thousands others to raise awareness of the genocide in Darfur. The 4th/5th grade class also made stars which shimmered and gleamed in our chancel on Christmas Eve. The

Church Council passed the Child and Youth Protection Policy and we will "live into" it in the coming year.

- Family Ministry: Attendance at Faith in Family Life programs was down this year causing me to rethink the model. At the same

time, a reconstituted Children and Family Committee emerged under the leadership of Barbara Grady Ayer and Rick Ayer. This may provide a new way for family ministry to develop. This fall, Hilary Perkins invited families to make pledges to change habits that impact the environment.

- Ministry of Outreach, Mission and Service: The culture of ministry teams continues to develop and the number of active ministry teams is growing. This form of ministry has been successful at empowering small groups to educate and activate the congregation around key justice issues such as poverty, climate change, torture, immigration, marriage equality, AIDS in Africa and many others.
- Jazz/Gospel Worship: We continue to experiment with our worship life once a month trying new music and new participative forms. Peter Meredith has been a valuable addition to the worship team as band leader. While some folks are not finding it worshipful, others love the change of pace, upbeat music and opportunity to share testimonies of faith during the service.
- Identity Study Process: We began a process to define our key values and culture with an eye towards church growth. So far a comprehensive congregational survey has been completed.

It is also a year of transition as we said goodbye to Mary-Ellis Adams who served almost five years as a program assistant in children and youth ministries. We will miss her welcoming and supportive presence in our programs and on the staff. I believe we are poised in the coming year to be more bold with our ministries and to reach out more visibly in our community. I will work to make children and youth central in that effort. I also want to thank the many volunteers, youth leaders, children and youth choir directors, Sunday School teachers, ministry and ministry team members who support and lead these programs.

Minister of Seniors and Care

CHARLOTTE RUSSELL

“O taste and see that God is good; happy are those who take refuge in God.”

2008 has been a year of nourishing relationships and deepening faith in the community of FCCB. I have enjoyed sharing this ministry with so many as I continued my usual responsibilities which include visiting and arranging Alden Club programs and Advent and Lent gatherings for our older members; participating in the liturgy of worship, preaching, memorial services and performing weddings; staff events and continuing education; serving as Clergy Advisor the NCNCUCC, and assisting with the FCCB Covenant and Discernment Committee, I grew intellectually and spiritually at my annual week of study at Zephyr Point, Tahoe. I also enjoyed the following:

- The Caring Ministry programs:
 - Five Wishes Workshop with Pathways Hospice Chaplain Julie Cedrone (January)
 - Spirituality of Dying (May)
 - Secrets of Life and Death with filmmaker Dr. Michelle Peticolas (September)
 - Contemplative Listening Groups with co-leaders Kevin Omi and Geoffrey Gaskins
 - Staff representative to the Care, Fellowship and Invitation Ministry and New Members programs with Kathy Helliesen

- Criminal Justice Support Team for Dorothy Streutker
- Preparatory materials and gatherings for the Israel/Palestine Peace Seeking Pilgrimage (taking place in Feb. 2009)
- Climate Action Ministry Team, Tim Specht and Chris Coelho, chairpersons whose activities included:
 - Carpool system through the internet
 - New bike racks in the Cloister (thank you, Cellar Thrift Shop)
 - Movies and 100 miles potlucks: “What a Way to Go,” “11th Hour” and “the Lorax”
 - First Hour on environmental propositions
 - Second Hour on candidates’ positions
 - Solar Richmond fundraiser
 - Solar Living Institute in Hopland excursion (April) and “Solfest” (August)
 - Coastal clean up
 - Light bulb give-away

I ended the year with deep gratitude for the caring ministry that each of you shares with one another, for your hospitality to our guests on Sunday mornings, for your attentiveness to and appreciation of the presence of our older members, and for your faithful delight in bringing God’s grace and peace into our community and world.



Minister of Campus Life

SHELLY DIETERLE

It's been almost four years since we began our ministry to the university which means we will bid farewell to our first class of Cal undergraduates in May, 2009! This core group of students has both taught us how to better connect FCCB with the university and led the way with incredible leadership gifts. **Our Student Leadership Council**, a new initiative in our campus programs, provided support, accountability and spiritual formation for students seeking to put their faith in action. These student leaders enabled us to:

- Launch the **Interfaith Action Initiative** (IAI) on campus and execute its first year of activities. I served as a primary supervisor for the interns who launched the initiative and now FCCB member, Lisa Coronado-Morse, is serving as a current intern in IAI's second year.
- Utilize the Service-Learning model to engage students in two local justice issues. Tinley Ireland designed and led over 20 students in a DeCal course (student-facilitated course for academic credit) on **Malnutrition and Hunger in the Bay Area**. Andrea Ford and Gracy Huntley coordinated a Spring Break Immersion into the farming communities

of Salinas/Watsonville in order to examine why strawberries are considered *la fruta del diablo* (the fruit of the devil) to farmworkers.

- Publish the **Lifesjournez ENews** to inform a student and

professional audience of a wide range of educational, service and spiritually celebratory opportunities. Peter Torrey designed and implemented our first bi-weekly and then weekly ENewsletter.

- Host a **Student Art Auction** to raise money for Katrina Relief and Darfur. FCCB member and Cal student artist, Jocelynn Pearl, envisioned and executed a silent art auction in collaboration with two campus organizations. Cal student artists donated their pieces to be viewed and purchased by FCCB and community members.

In my collegial relationships, I worked closely with Dorothy Richman, Rabbi in Residence at Hillel, to provide education and support around campus. Together we launched an **Interfaith Text Study** as well as led **Spiritual Inclusion Training** for all of Cal's Resident Hall Staff. We also continued to shape the **Spirituality Work Group**, led by Cal's Dean of Students.

Our outreach continues to change and evolve as time and experience reveal new ways of ministering to the university and building connections with FCCB. A **Campus Ministry Representative** was added to the Church Council. Geoffrey Gaskins was the first member to serve in this position due to his involvement on the Student Leadership Council. The summer and fall seasons generated new leadership, programs and ideas with two new positions — one for a recent Cal graduate in the **Lifesjournez Fellowship** (see Tinley Ireland's report) and the other for shaping new, innovative programming. Both were made possible by the generous **Fund for Innovation**. I was grateful to be away on maternity leave in the fall and knew that Campus Ministry would remain vital under the leadership of Geoffrey, Tinley and Salvador.



Browne Barr Intern/Minister in Training

GEOFFREY GASKINS

My internship for 2008 was dedicated primarily to FCCB's Campus Ministry program. Working with Rev. Shelly Dieterle, and during her maternity leave, with Tinley Ireland, Salvador Leavitt-Alcantara, and Carmelle Knudsen, I have participated in program planning and helped pull off several Campus Ministry events, including First Sunday Student Lunches. I also provided administrative support during Shelly's absence, updating and maintaining the Ministry's database and producing regular communications to students, the congregation and other campus ministry professionals. Networking within the campus ministry professional community associated with Cal was also an important 2008 activity for me.

Worship was another important focus of my internship in 2008. I regularly participated in Sunday worship services, and preached my first public sermon as a seminarian December 28.

The scope of my internship begins to broaden beyond campus ministry as I go into 2009. Worship, pastoral care, church organization, and adult/young adult faith formation and religious

education started to take up more of my time toward the end of 2008. I assist Rev. Charlotte Russell in leading one of our Contemplative Listening Groups, and worked with her on the Circle of Spirit Bible Study. I have started to work with Adam Blons and Shelly Dieterle on the jazz/gospel service and with Pat de Jong and the Adult Education Committee for planning the 2009 program year. I spent some time in 2008 developing a study that seeks to identify the faith styles of our congregation as compared to the faith styles of Cal students and other young adults. The interviews (congregational members and college students) required to complete this project will take place over the next few months.

Being the Browne Barr Intern at FCCB for the past five months continues to be one of those experiences that defies articulation. It is my very great privilege to be influenced by the ministerial staff and other church leaders at FCCB and to do this training within a congregation that so obviously values its role as a "teaching parish." I am blissfully thankful for the opportunity to learn my craft within this warm and loving congregation.



Lifesjournez Fellow

TINLEY IRELAND

For the 2008-2009 academic year, Campus Ministry developed a new position to further improve the congregation's connection to university life. The Lifesjournez Fellow, who is a recent graduate supported by the Fund for Innovation, works with students, fellow campus ministry staffers, and other local faith leaders to develop programs that encourage community involvement, promote social action, and foster leadership. The position is designed so that the fellow, who maintains recent ties to the campus, may provide campus connections to the ministry while offering the resources and support of the church to students. The Lifesjournez Fellowship not only increases the level of interaction between church and campus, but it also supplies an invaluable leadership opportunity and an environment of spiritual nurturing and theological discernment for a recent graduate.

We had a very eventful fall semester, rendered both more challenging and exciting by Shelly's absence. My responsibilities as Lifesjournez Fellow involved coordinating monthly service and community involvement activities, supporting students in their leadership endeavors, acting as a liaison to the Interfaith Action Initiative, and co-leading our voter mobilization effort in Denver with Hillel. Some highlights:

We served the community by sorting food at the Alameda County Community Food Bank, chaperoning children at the library with Superstars Literacy, and decorating the community room for the holidays at the Youth Emergency Assistance Hostel.

Sophomore Jocelynn Pearl, who coordinated the "Student Art for Student Causes" auction last April to support awareness of the genocide in Darfur, collaborated with Wesley Student Center and STAND student group to host Tents of Hope on campus. The event promoted discussion, reflection, and action regarding the genocide in Sudan.

The Interfaith Action Initiative, led by sophomore Lisa Coronado-Morse, facilitated a very successful Interfaith Leaders Project, fostering dialogue on religious topics among students of diverse faith practices and backgrounds. The program culminated in an expressive art project on campus.

Together with Berkeley Hillel, we led 16 students in an Interfaith Voter Mobilization effort in Denver on Election Day.

The spring semester promises new opportunities for spiritual growth and community action as we plan for our Interfaith Text Study, Tahoe Ski Retreat, Immigration Immersion experience, Lenten reflections, and student-led service and

fellowship. I am eager to continue working with such a genuinely passionate group of students, and I am thankful as always for the chance to be a leader in my community, campus, and congregation this first year out of college.



Music Program Director

LARRY MARIETTA

Thomas Carlyle, the Scottish philosopher and author, said, *“Music is well said to be the speech of angels; in fact nothing among the utterances allowed to humans is felt to be so divine. It brings us near to the infinite.”* Fortunately for us at FCCB, we hear the musical speech of angels in many languages, each speaking to our members on an individual and collective basis. Here are some 2008 angel-speak highlights:

The music of our Jazz/Gospel Service has provided a wonderful opportunity for worshiping with an expanded musical horizon. Led by the service’s master keyboardist and improvisation man, Peter Meredith, the Spirit Band and Vocalists are now virtually all FCCB members. Under Peter’s firm guidance and fertile music imagination, the service’s musicians have become a unified group that continues to provide an excellent blend of contemporary and traditional music with a cohesive sound and focus.

Our new middle school choir, Joyful Sounds, made its first appearance in December, receiving an enthusiastic response from the congregation. Director Linda Crebbin-Coates’ perseverance in not giving up on these young adults has yielded wonderful results that will continue to blossom and grow.

With a number of members having graduated last spring, Songs of the Soul, also directed by Linda, presented an initial challenge of acquiring new members. By careful preparation and planning to sing in Worship when SOTS alumnae were home, this cherished vocal ensemble gave uplifting and inspired renditions of songs and spirituals, complete with choreography, solos and an infectious spirit in which the congregation rejoiced. Especially appreciated was their full participation in major church celebrations such as Easter, Pentecost and Christmas Eve.

Our Carol and Pilgrim elementary Choirs continued to flourish under the loving leadership of Gretchen Parr (Carol Choir) and Larana McVay (Pilgrim Choir). From these immensely

talented ladies our children learned why music is such an important part of our Worship. And, our kids had a lot of fun along the way, inspired to do their best from the ebullient spirits of Gretchen and Larana.

Our Chancel Choir experienced a decrease in numbers on a weekly basis, as many members’ lives faced new challenges that prevented participating as often as was once possible. A serious study was begun in dialogue with church members, and many new ideas for growth are being explored. That being said, the Choir had a marvelous influx of singers for December’s Christmas Festival of Choirs. In addition to Sunday mornings, the Choir also sang at many events outside the Church, including the National Conference of the American Hymn Society, the Interfaith Thanksgiving Service at Temple Beth El, the South Berkeley Senior Center Holiday Party and the Interfaith Inaugural Prayer Service at St. Paul’s AME Church.

Our organ continues to receive increasing local and national attention and is becoming more and more in demand. The organ and our music program’s reputation was a deciding factor for the Hymn Society to come to Berkeley and have one of its major events at FCCB. The San Francisco Chapter of the American Guild of Organists is now using it on a year-round basis and will feature it when the Chapter hosts a major Regional Convention in 2011. A commercial recording with John Walko and Larry Marietta at the console will take place this coming summer, and a recording was made last fall for Freddie Bunge and Annis Kukuluan to take to South Africa.

The entire FCCB staff and congregation have been incredibly supportive and appreciative of all our musical offerings and the wealth of gifted musicians within our midst. Working in such a nurturing environment gives me continued inspiration to eagerly explore new music, to honor the best of classic choral and organ compositions and to give daily thanks and praise to God, our Divine Creator. SOLI DEO GLORIA.

Minister of Art and Communication

PHIL PORTER

I have to begin my report by thanking my partner Chinh Nguyen for all the times he has crawled up into the scary places above the sanctuary to haul up banners as I stand below shouting directions. He has become the Zen Master of banner hauling-up. We have set some world record banner-changing times this year!

Otherwise it has been a year of telling Bible stories, littering the pews with postcards, updating the website constantly, laying down the design infrastructure for Authors & Ideas (this is really a wonderful series — check it out!), serving on Long Range Planning, the Diversity Ministry Team, Worship Planning, the Chapel Committee, Church Council, and other ad hoc committees, schlepping poinsettias and lilies, making the star installation with the 4th & 5th graders, new banners for Lent, Pentecost, etc., decking the halls with boughs of evergreen with the help of many friends and then taking it all down again, pushing for the use of credit cards so we can take donations online, setting up the webcam (that only took a year and a half and we're still refining!), working with Karyn on the Carillon (thanks so much!) and then welcoming Margaret Copeland (another great gift!) new to the post, and last but not least in just two words — “First Church.” As we say in Indiana, “well, see, there ya go!”

And I must end my report with a note of love and gratitude for my wonderful colleagues on the staff. What fun we have. In particular, I celebrate 30 years of collaborating and trouble-making with Patricia de Jong!

Serving the Wider Denomination

I am currently serving on two national UCC committees. I am part of the Second Governance Structure Team (GST2) and the Search Committee for the next General Minister and President.

The denomination has been in process of restructuring the national setting over the past couple of years. A team had met, created a plan and presented it to the five bodies that would need to vote on it to move it along. The proposal ran

into trouble, primarily because of some opposition from members of what are referred to in the UCC as “historically underrepresented groups” which include racial/ethnic minorities, the lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender community, people with disabilities and youth and young adults.

As a result of the controversy a special meeting of the “HUGs” was held in Minnesota, which I attended as a representative of the United Church Coalition for LGBT Concerns. And because a new Governance Structure Team was to be formed incorporating some of the original committee, HUGs representatives, and new members, I ended up on that committee as well. We met twice in Cleveland and developed a variation of the previous plan that was then presented to the five boards that would need to pass it in October. It passed with some minor alterations and will be presented to General Synod this summer for a first vote. One of the primary elements of the new structure is that a single board will be formed to replace the five boards that currently exist (this is a much longer story!) I think the new structure will create more responsiveness to the times and will be able to more clearly handle the complicated finances of our denomination.

It was fascinating to be involved in this process, to get another view of the interesting dynamics of our denomination, to see how racial politics play out and to get to collaborate with a fascinating group of people including all five members of the Collegium who head up our denomination.

This summer will be the end of the second term of John Thomas, our current General Minister and President. I am on the committee that will recommend the person who will next take that role. We have met several times, have a really interesting and inspiring group of candidates from which to choose. In early February, we will do face-to-face interviews and, with God's help, choose our candidate.

I appreciate our church's support of my work on both of these committees!

Creative Arts Coordinator

KATHARINE KUNST

There have been 42 art exhibits in the Sunburst Room since it was transformed into a gallery and meeting space during the summer of 2001. Many of you come to the opening receptions, meet the artists, and peruse the art. Others of you enjoy the exhibits as you sit in the many church committee meetings held in the room.

The five artists who exhibited this year are Michele McGeoy (Calm Comfort), Mark Stichman (Waiting), Wesley Wright and Malia Landis (Metamorphosis and Abalone Shells), Robin Kempster (Images of Faith) and Anne Hoffmann (Paper Worlds).

You may remember Michele's multi-media guitar which when pressed played a melody, as well as her daughter Helen's piece entitled Life is Like French Berry Lemonade. Mark's lovely drawings of performers, friends, and places in Oakland filled the Sunburst room to the brim. Wesley and Malia, our next generation of emerg-

ing artists, offered their ceramic works for sale and were well supported by the FCCB community. Robin's black and white photographs transformed familiar images around the church into objects filled with meaning. And finally Anne showed us her mysterious and ethereal photographs made by throwing tissues into the air and catching them as they settle.

Please get in touch with me at 510/528-8203 if you would like to exhibit your work or if you know someone whose work needs to be shown. The Sunburst Gallery can hold eight to ten pieces, depending on the size. The exhibits stay up for about two months. I urge you to take advantage of this rare opportunity to show your work in a felicitous and supportive environment.



Works by (starting from top left, going clockwise): Anne Hoffmann, Malia Landis, Robin Kempster, Mark Stichman, Wesley Wright, Michele McGeoy

Business Administrator

KEN IHA

“It is good to be part of this radically generous community.” Those are the words that closed my report a year ago, and how true they have been during this past year. What a difference your radical generosity has made. Our nation’s economy (and the world’s) went downward, but your generosity didn’t. We ended the year with a small surplus, even though there were moments when I thought otherwise.

Similarly, your generosity helped us deal with major issues with our facilities. Nine second floor office doors had to be replaced after the offices were broken into. In the process, we rekeyed Pilgrim house and the Sanctuary. Sixty-one locks and many keys later we’re still getting used to the new system. One of the windows in the bell tower was repaired after being blown out during a storm. Then a part of our heating system failed, and we are in the process of replacing it. Our dishwasher stopped working, but is working again after repairing the water line. Many of our downspouts were stolen or damaged and need to be replaced. But our facilities are still standing and functioning and continue to provide a gathering place for us and the wider community.

While dealing with those concerns, we refurbished the Plymouth apartment and replaced some of our refrigerators, stoves and water heaters

to more efficient models. We replaced a vacuum cleaner, shades in Durant House, and some of our computers and printers. We installed a DSL line and purchased a camera for our worship web casting. We installed a new cross in the Sanctuary and a new name tag rack system in the Hall of Entrance. Durant Main got a fresh coat of paint.

Special thanks to:

- the Investment Committee
- the Endowment Committee
- the Stewardship, Finance and Administration Ministry
- our Treasurer, Moe Wright
- the Cellar Thrift Shop
- the Deckers
- John Wadman and his cadre of capable volunteers — Milton Fujii, Lewis Perry, Terry Jackson, Patti Hoffman, Wilson Hoffman, Bob Uhrhammer, and Helen Wadman
- my staff colleagues
- our facilities staff: Amare Gebreyesus, Bruce McNaught and Frankie Wei, and our bookkeepers, Myrdell Dybdal and Sharlet Gilbert.

Much thanks to all of you. It is really good to be part of this radically generous and caring community.



Parish Life Associate (volunteer)

MARGIE COATES

Parish Life Associates have an exciting, varied, and ever-old-ever-new kind of life here. Here are some of the areas of service and learning in which I've been involved this year; each with old and new aspects:

- Laikos, a lay ministry group which I convened.
- The Retreat Resource Center, which gave assistance to several retreats this year:
 - Cazadero, a rollicking outdoor overnight camp experience in October, including all ages — babies to octagenarians
 - The Advent Retreat, a day-long time of preparation and focus
 - The Women's Voices Retreat, and overnight at Ralston White Retreat Center in Marin County
 - Two Friday Group Retreats, one a stimulating three-day experience, the other a one-day inspirational time together
- I assisted the New Members' Committee with Kathy Helliesen; the Friday Group, with Carolyn Ocheltree; and Alden Club, with Charlotte Russell.

Parish Life Associate / Membership Secretary (volunteer)

CARMELLE KNUDSEN

Membership

- Kept database current
- Wrote Letters of Transfer and requested Letters of Transfer
- Assisted with new member classes
- Kept membership statistics

Stewardship

- Provided staff support for the annual stewardship season
- Kept statistics on pledges
- Mailed statements three times a year
- Ordered and distributed pledge payment envelopes
- Kept Legacy Circle updated

Other

- Provided power of attorney for health issue forms
- Provided assistance in estate gifting to the church
- Tracked attendance of members and visitors



Webmaster

BRUCE STANGELAND

Our church's website continues to grow as a valuable resource for our congregation and for the community in general. Just look at the front page of the Jan. 4, 2009 Carillon to see some of its uses:

- Watch a video of the Children's Choirs performance. Go to the home page and click on the photo of the choir.
- Read a report on the Synod Resolution which promotes an "Axis of Friendship" with Iran
- Download a copy of the Church Identity Study

In addition, you can find many additional uses for our website:

- Watch the Sunday morning worship service streamed live at 10 am PST
- Download a full-color copy of each Carillon as it comes off the press.
- Read about new member classes.
- Check the schedule for the "Authors & Ideas @ FCCB" program.
- Read over 400 sermons dating back to 1996.
- Read Larry Marietta's Music Notes from over 200 Sunday services.

Last February after uploading some Music Notes, I received this email from Larry: "Thanks, as always, for putting them up. You never know who's going to see them. There were two visitors here on Sunday that said they chose to come to FCCB (while vacationing in Berkeley) after reading the music notes. God does work in mysterious ways, doesn't She?!"

One Sunday in November I was surprised to see an old colleague from work enter our sanctuary. In a recent sermon their minister in Walnut Creek had urged his congregation to support Proposition 8. My friend's wife then decided to start looking around at other churches. She did a Google search on "church" and "No on Prop. 8." She found a church in San Jose, but that was too far to drive. She then added "Berkeley" to her search and FCCB popped up. They and their teenage sons came on a Jazz/Gospel Sunday and

stayed for coffee hour. I introduced them to Winthrop leaders and to people active in the No on Prop. 8 campaign. Their sons said we looked like a good church.

We moved our website last August to a new company because of increasing problems with our old one. We're sorry for any problems you had last summer and hope they are solved. If you do have any problems with our church's website, feel free to contact us.

One unusual fact buried in our hits: People using Macintosh computers represent 9.6% of the computer market and yet they represent 20.5% of the visitors to our website. Curious.

The Cellar Thrift Shop

REPORT BY BARBARA ADDICOTT

This has been another good year for the Cellar, with profits higher than since 2002!

2008 Profits	\$34,509
50% to Outreach.	17,255
40% to Church Projects	13,803
10% to Operating Budget . . .	3,451

High quality items donated from our members, on a consistent basis, plus a great volunteer corps makes it all work so well.

Our thanks to these wonderful volunteers! Nancy Adams, Mary Macmeeken, Barbara Addicott, Fran Matzen, Martha Anderson, Mitsie McKenna, Mollyanne Brewer, Marian Merrill, Bernice Brissette, Judy Norberg, Katie Brookes, Dina Rasor, Dorothy Cahill, Jerri Ricca, Cal Case, Sufi Riley, Carol Copeland, Jan Snyder, Imogene Crebbin, Henry Snyder, Dorothy Doudna, Ella Sponseller, Phyllis Fleischer, Cathy Sponseller, Mary Fry, Jean Sturges, Peggy Fuerstenau, Karen Summers, Shirl Henderson, Frances Townes, Sally Hopkins, Roxie Tyson, John Howell, Kathy Wheadon, Jean Huston, Sarah Stuetz, Mary Loar, Ruth Young, Jonell Lucas.

With additional support from staff members Bruce McNaught and Amare Gebreyesus who help out whenever they are asked.

Alzheimer's Services of the East Bay

S. MICHEAL POPE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Alzheimer's Services of the East Bay (ASEB) has a long 20 year history to celebrate with the First Congregational Church of Berkeley! Since 1988 FCCB has partnered with ASEB from its ability to serve 1 person a day living with Alzheimer's to the present day. ASEB now serves over 120 people a day at locations in Berkeley, Oakland and Hayward. ASEB has received funding from the FCCB's Ministry of Outreach, Mission and Service that has supported caregivers with financial subsidies so that their loved one could attend ASEB's programming. FCCB has partnered with ASEB's nutrition program over the years thus insuring that program participants would have a balanced lunch daily. Currently, ASEB and FCCB are working together to make sure that individuals from the community are able to worship every Sunday. James, ASEB van driver is enjoying this weekly outreach! ASEB looks forward to continuing our partnership in the years to come. Thank you for your support.

Berkeley Organizing Congregations for Action (BOCA)

SUBMITTED BY ADAM BLONS

FCCB helped to found BOCA, a faith-based community organization, which now includes 18 congregations in Berkeley. We work together to challenge the inequities of our society that promote poverty, separation, and fear. Key issues for the organization include education, immigration, health care, community safety, housing, and poverty. BOCA is part of the PICO Network, a national coalition with more than 1,000 member institutions representing one million families in 150 cities and 17 states. Involvement by FCCB members in BOCA increased some during this past year. A handful of FCCB members have

participated in BOCA-sponsored events including a candidate forum and annual fundraiser. BOCA's lead organizer, Belen Pulido-Martinez, came to speak and train FCCB members on how to register people to vote. In addition, the Immigration Ministry Team co-sponsored a Spring Immigration Teach-In with BOCA. Belen brought a family to the teach-in from the congregation at St. Joseph the Worker that is facing deportation as well as an immigration lawyer to discuss opportunities for action. This fall, I served on the search committee that helped select the new Executive Director, Rev. Michael McBride. Don Stahlhut also serves as a consultant to BOCA on behalf of the PICO Network. With the new Executive Director, I am encouraged that more will be asked of us in the coming year and we will respond.

Berkeley Pilgrimage Foundation/Amistad House

BOB HELLIESEN, PRESIDENT

Amistad House is a federally subsidized residential apartment building in Berkeley operated since its inception by the Berkeley Pilgrimage Foundation (an independent charitable organization whose board members are FCCB members). Amistad House has been providing housing to low-income seniors for more than 25 years.

In 2006, the Foundation decided to sell the house (its only asset) to a buyer who would commit to continuing its mission. The house was scheduled to be sold in September, 2008, but the sale was interrupted as an outcome of the banking crisis, as the proposed lender withdrew at the last moment. It is not clear at this time when the sale can be completed.

Once Amistad House is sold, the Foundation will become a general-purpose foundation whose income will be used in the best interests of the community and the church. Work for the coming year will involve overseeing Amistad House activities and — following the expected eventual sale of the house — changing Berkeley Pilgrimage Foundation to fit its new role.

Church World Service

Founded in 1964, Church World Service is a cooperative ministry of 35 Protestant, Orthodox, and Anglican denominations (including the United Church of Christ), providing sustainable self-help and development, disaster relief, and refugee assistance around the world. The CWS regional office for Northern California and Northern Nevada has been housed on the ground floor of the Durant House since August of 2003. Through this office, the CWS Assistant Regional Director coordinates a variety of activities designed to educate and activate congregations and communities and to raise funds for the life-saving work of Church World Service. These activities include the CROP Hunger Walks, the Blankets+ Program, Alternative Holiday Fairs, and the CWS Kits program, among others. Church World Service continues to value and appreciate its partnership with FCCB.

Creative Living Center

The Berkeley Creative Living Center (CLC), a program of Bonita House, Inc., continues (since 1971) to provide services for poverty-level adults living with psychiatric disabilities. In a relaxed, safe environment members participate in the work program, individual or group therapy, art therapy, or socialize. For many it is the only place to be in community with people who accept and understand them.

In 2008, 136 adults were served, 3988 client days of service were provided. An average of 40 people attended each day. The transitional employment program provides wages for jobs within the program including: program set-up, janitorial work; kitchen assistants, chairing community meetings, teaching other members computer skills. These jobs go a long way in increasing members' sense of competence, confidence, self worth, and of being productive members of their community. It has a profound impact on the lives of people otherwise very isolated,

stigmatized and limited by their mental illness. They often feel outsiders in a world that does not understand or accept them. They long to be productive members of society. CLC helps them towards this goal.

Some recent examples of the program's success: one woman who had been very paranoid, barricading the door to her apartment. After gradually doing more janitorial and kitchen assistant jobs in the program, she felt confident enough to obtain a paid janitorial position in the community several hours per week. She is extremely proud of her job and feels she is now a contributing member of society. One very bright and skilled man who was depressed and isolated for years gradually began attending the program. He started doing jobs at CLC and now, about six months later has begun to look for paid work again. Another member, after doing jobs here gained the confidence to apply for a position in the county library system. She has taken the exam, is on a waiting list and has begun doing volunteer work in libraries tutoring reading. She too feels a greater sense of self worth and pride in herself. Another member's career path in psychology was interrupted by a psychiatric hospitalization, exacerbated by alcohol abuse. After attending the program for some months she has restabilized and obtained a full time internship working in a school setting. She returns to CLC during school breaks and reports the CLC support she receives has significantly helped her be able to work in the community.

Periodically members are asked what CLC means to them. Some examples of comments written last month: "CLC is community, real and honest, we share our being and become whole. It sustains us..." "CLC Yoga is the only exercise I do. I have really brushed up on computer skills." "CLC helps me get out of my room even on the worst days." "CLC means to me everything, especially people. People who are different. Varied. Subtle."

A video of members talking about their art and experience with CLC made during CLC's Exhibit at Somarts Cultural Center, SF can be seen: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MDQXcdTTa9U>

Lloyd Center Pastoral Counseling Service

The Lloyd Center of San Francisco Theological Seminary has offices in the Durant House offering individual and couples counseling and spiritual direction to members of the East Bay Community. Counseling and Spiritual Direction are available to FCCB members and their families. Most of our clientele are GTU and UCB students. Scott Sullender, Licensed Psychologist, ordained minister and Diplomat of the American Association of Pastoral Counseling, directs the Center.

Staff at the Berkeley office are Susan and Gary Pohl, Becky Wright, Tim Mooney and Scott Sullender. The entire staff would like to express our gratitude to FCCB for its support over the years. For more information about our services, we can be reached through our main phone number: 415/258-6652.

METTA Center for Nonviolence Education

The Metta Center, situated in the former ‘meditation room’ in Durant House since 2006, had an extraordinarily good year. They partnered with FCCB this summer on the internship program that places young people in Bay Area nonprofits and gives them training in nonviolence that they can apply in their work — and later lives (this coming summer they will go it alone, having received a generous grant for the purpose). Their weekly “hope tank” has generated some wonderful discussions and built up a strongly bonded Metta community, with their new Programs Director, Shannon Wills, and two others on staff. Metta ends 2008 with four ambitious projects being run from their modest space and resources:

- a training video and other support services for LaOnf, the network of nonviolence activists that has sprung up in Iraq (see their website for the video, with its Arabic subtitles: www.mettacenter.org),

- a major effort to provide a coherent framework for all peace and justice-related operations around the world, called the Progressive Unity Project (PUP),
- a ground-breaking documentary film on nonviolence, titled *Weapon of the Brave*, being done in collaboration with FCCB’s Lorenzo Llanillo (who did the video that formed the final project of the internship program last summer), and
- a monthly film-and-discussion series on nonviolence topics, likely to begin this fall and possibly to be held at FCCB.

In addition, Metta shared a booth at the recent Green Festival with noted nonviolence activist Starhawk, where PUP attracted a good deal of attention, hosted writers and editors compiling a three-volume work on Peace Movements Worldwide for Greenwood Press, and has other interesting projects underway or under consideration. FCCB members are invited to contact them at Durant House, through 510/548-5550, or visit their website for further developments with this dynamic organization whose mission is “to inspire, educate, and support the practice of nonviolence.”



Pacific School of Religion

The relationship between the seminary and this congregation is deeply historical and vividly current, with FCCB and PSR sharing many relationships and connections. There are many students who are In-Care with us and studying at PSR. We have a rich history of PSR-interns serving the congregation, most recently as Browne Barr scholars. Geoffrey Gaskins is with us in that capacity this year, and Minister of Community Life Adam Blons was the first Browne Barr scholar. Two members of FCCB serve on the Board of PSR: Margie Allen and Moe Wright, and Patricia de Jong also serves on a Board Committee. Bill McKinney, the President of PSR, and his wife, Linda, are FCCB members, and Linda has been a member of the Peace and Justice task force. Other members of the seminary community worship at FCCB and also contribute their talents to our congregation through adult education, music, university ministry and worship. Our commitment to being not only a university congregation, but also a congregation supportive of ministers in training and theological education is made visible in our relationship with the Pacific School of Religion.



United Church of Christ

“GOD IS STILL SPEAKING”

FCCB is a member of the United Church of Christ, whose predecessor bodies trace their history back to the Puritans and Pilgrims. The UCC was formed in June 1957, by the merger of the Congregational, Christian and Evangelical and Reformed Churches. First Congregational supports the denomination financially through its contributions to what is called Our Church’s Wider Mission (OCWM) which also supports the work of the Northern California Nevada Conference and several special offerings taken throughout the year.

The denomination also initiated the “God is Still Speaking” campaign which has included some creative national television ads. Various agencies of the national setting address issues of the local church including new church starts and ministerial placement, the wider church including global ministries, and many different justice issues.

The official national church meeting, called General Synod, takes place every two years. This summer it will take place in Grand Rapids, Michigan. That meeting is a place where resolutions are debated, worship is held, and the wider church family has a grand reunion.

Several national staff members have visited FCCB in the past few years, including President and General Minister John Thomas, Executive Minister of Justice & Witness Ministries Linda Jaramillo, Associate General Minister Edith Guffey and Financial Development Team Leader Don Hill.

A Seeker's Statement

Finding a home in God's wilderness,
we seek to savor God
and magnify the longings of Jesus.

We dare to be uncertain.

Practicing compassion and awakening
conscience,
we bear hope for a suffering world.

In this Spirit, we honor one another
in beloved community.

*Long Range Planning Committee
Fall 2003*

Our Mission

To bring ourselves and others to God,
and to develop within us spiritual maturity
so that we may be equipped for ministry
in our lives and for mission in the world.
To celebrate the Good News
of God's inclusive love for all people.

We are called to be a community of faith that
invites spiritual transformation through the
power of love, affirmation and inclusion;

to come to know ourselves as whole and healed;

to embrace our unique gifts;

and to act out of gratitude to help create a world
of love, justice and harmony.

With God's love, following the teachings of
Jesus, we recognize and celebrate the diversity
of paths that will fulfill a vision of love and
justice for all the world.

We are called to be a growing and inspired
community, a beacon in the East Bay,
renewing, reaching out, rejoicing.

January 2002

Open and Affirming Statement

We, as a diverse body of believers seeking to live in
the light and image of God in Christ, do affirm:

that every person has worth as a special and unique
creation made in God's image;

that in the Spirit of love, openness, and
inclusiveness we welcome persons of every sexual
orientation, race, nationality, ability, age and gender
to participate fully in all aspects of our Church's life
and ministry;

that as agents of reconciliation and wholeness we
embrace justice and seek to support all who suffer
discrimination or who are disenfranchised from the
religious community;

that in light of the Gospel we will continue
to comprehend and appreciate more fully our
differences and gifts;

that through grace our love for God and neighbor
may flourish.