

November 2011 Good News

Pastor's Article

"You have unused icons on your desktop..."

My computer reminds me in regular intervals that I have "unused icons" on my desk top. Meaning I have a number of small pictures or symbols which could serve as a shortcut to a software tool or a data file and which I either do not need or do not use.

"Icon" is Greek for "image" and long before the word "icon" became associated with computers, it referred to the religious images of Saints which feature so prominently in Eastern Orthodox tradition. You might think those two uses of icons have little or nothing in common: one belongs to the modern world of graphical user interface, and the other belongs to the ancient world of Byzantine Christianity. Yet both of them are there to help us make connections.

In the Eastern tradition Icons are often called "windows to heaven". They are windows to a world of beauty and delight, a world which is our birthright, but from which we feel often far away. David J. Goa writes: "While the Biblical hymns beautifully declare the glory and wonder of creation, most, if not all human beings often experience the world as a place of struggle, if not battle, and, all too often, a place of agony and alienation. Yet, deep within the human spirit, and often in the story and song of human cultures, we hear the distant echoes of another way of knowing the world."

Icons are meant to help us to remember and connect with that grace-filled world which is our true home. This connection can also be made in private prayer and especially in communal worship when our liturgy calls us out of alienation and into loving communion with God and with each other. Worship invites us participate in the mystery of a little bit of "heaven on earth" right here, right now. And as the faithful enter into this mystery and then begin to work together on behalf of all creation, a congregation can become an icon for the neighborhood.

But will our neighbors know that such an icon exists in their midst? Or will we be to them as useless as some of the computer icons on my desk top?

Council Nominations

On Sunday, November 20th after worship there will be a Congregational Meeting.

We'll be electing:

- 1 treasurer, to a 1-year term
- 4 council members to 3-year terms
- 2 council members to 1-year terms
- 1 council member to a 2-year term

The following people have stated that they would be willing to serve:

- Janet K (council, one-year term)
- Lewis M (council, 3-year term)
- Suzanne B (council, 3-year term)

Several of them have submitted brief statements to introduce themselves. Ask Laura in the office if you would like to see the statements.

Social Action Update

The holiday season is quickly creeping up on us. We would like to encourage donating turkeys to Martha's Kitchen for Thanksgiving. They feed many hungry people Thanksgiving dinner. When I talked to them they said they would prefer to receive turkeys the week before Thanksgiving when possible. The week of November 14 they are open Monday through Friday 5:30 am to 5:30 pm. Their address is 311 Willow Street. This year due to logistics and storage we would like those of you who are able to take your donation directly to Martha's Kitchen. If you are unable to do this you can bring the turkey to the church office on Tuesday November 15 by noon and we will take them.

This year The Lord's Pantry has asked us to donate Christmas gifts for six year old boys and girls. The Lord's Pantry is located at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church in east San Jose. During the year they provide food for 35 to 60 low income families a day. They will be providing food for up to 500 families at Christmas and in addition to this they make an effort to have a gift for their clients' children from newborn through 13 years of age. Many of the families are referred to them from Second Harvest food bank. We will have a tree in the narthex during Advent with a tags indicating the age and gender of the child. We will have more details and a list of needed food in December's Good News.

We encourage alternative Christmas giving and will have information available on meaningful Christmas gifts. We also have ordered some fair trade chocolate bars and cocoa as well as coffee and teas from Equal Exchange that make excellent gifts. We will have them available in November.

2nd Mile Giving for November is the Mt. of Olives Housing Project

Adapted from the ELCA website

The shortage of affordable housing in Jerusalem is a key factor contributing to the departure of many Palestinians from the Holy Land, especially Jerusalem. Increasing demolition of Palestinian homes and revocation of residency rights as well as the dramatic increase in Israeli settlement building in East Jerusalem are making it very difficult for Palestinians to find affordable housing in Jerusalem.

We are especially concerned about Christians, since they are becoming such a minority in Jerusalem. Since 1946, the Christian population in Jerusalem has decreased from 30,000 to less than 10,000. In a few decades, if the housing shortage and other difficulties continue, there could be no Palestinian Christians living in the Holy City, according to the Right Reverend Munib Younan, Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL), and President of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF).

In an effort to address this crisis, the ELCJHL, the LWF, and the Kaiserin Auguste Victoria Foundation have teamed up to build the Mt. of Olives Housing Project. Through the construction of 84 apartments on the LWF property, organizers hope to help Palestinians who, without an affordable housing option, would be forced to leave the city.

These housing units will be located near Augusta Victoria Hospital on the Mount of Olives property of the LWF. The units will be different sizes and leased to couples, families and singles (there are more and more elderly people who have no one left to care for them) at subsidized rates, providing an affordable housing solution within Jerusalem. This solution will enable many Palestinian Jerusalemites to maintain their Jerusalem residency and keep the right to work and live in Jerusalem and to move freely within its boundaries. Jerusalemites also receive health care and pensions that are critical to maintaining family life. Without

adequate housing, these families are being forced to leave the city of their heritage and to relinquish their rights.

When completed, this project will not only offer hope to many Christian Palestinian families, but will also be a visible reminder to every Jerusalemite that there is hope for a lasting peace.

If you wish to donate in support of the Mt. of Olives Housing Project for this month's Second Mile Giving, look for the striped basket after worship or contact Chelsea Mathis.

Birthdays and Anniversaries

November	1	Adolfo	R
November	9	Ruth	H
November	9	Ward	Z
November	10	Jose	L
November	11	Annika	T
November	14	Kalia	N
November	15	David	S
November	16	Eric	N
November	17	Marion	E
November	20	Sue	C
November	20	Michael	K
November	20	Bethany	P
November	23	Joshua	T
November	25	Nicholas	B
November	27	Julia	T
November	29	David	P
November	29	Brian	P

CGS History Night –Sat, Nov 12 — 6:00 p.m.

Come explore, share and learn about 40 years of amazing ministry at CGSLC. This interactive evening will leave you with a deeper sense of how God has “Shaped by Love, Built for Grace” the outreach of CGSLC. The evening will begin with a potluck dinner. Sign-up on the kiosk in the narthex, including what to bring to the potluck dinner

Education Today discussion panel: Interpersonal Relationships — Sun, Nov 13 - 11:45 a.m.

The November meeting will cover interpersonal relationships such as bullying, and human trafficking. Some participants attended conferences on those topics and will share their experience.

The education panel meets monthly on the Second Sunday of each month at 11:45 a.m. in the fireside room. All educators, parents, plus interested parties are invited.

Annual Congregational Meeting— Sun, Nov 20, 2011 after worship

Please mark your calendars now for the annual congregational meeting which will take place on Sunday Nov 20, 2011 after worship. We will elect new members to the church council and discuss the budget for the year 2012.

Daylight Savings time ends—Saturday November 5

New Books—October 2011

Take a look at the new book shelf on the Library book cart right inside the door of the Library, or go to our New Books page (<http://www.cgslc.org/newbooks.php>) to see our latest acquisitions. We've added 30 new titles for children and youth and 9 books for adults. These include Greg Mortenson's Three Cups of Tea, Greg Boyle's Tattoos of the Heart, and Anne Rice's (yes, that Anne Rice of vampire fame) Christ the Lord: the Road to Cana. Happy reading!