



The District Spirit

El Camino Real District of the United Methodist Church
October 2011

Grace Notes from Kristie

It's time for a new season of United-Methodist-speak. Just as we have started to use the words **circuit** and **rethink church** in our church conversations, we are about to add a whole set of words to our Methodist vocabularies.

Many of us did not grow up talking about **elders** and **staff parish relations committees**. We have come to understand that when a Methodist mentions **The Discipline**, they actually mean a book. We have learned and relearned what great things **deacons** can do and, for some of us, how they are different than in the Catholic or the Presbyterian churches. We pastors all know about **BOOM** (the Board of Ordained Ministry), and while these people greatly influence our work as clergy, they do not often blow things up!

Here is a preview of the next new words on our horizon here in the California-Nevada Annual Conference. Don't worry; there will not be a test!

Core team: A new small, focused, central leadership group in our just-forming Conference structure that will help implement programs and plans that are set in place by our Annual Conference votes.

Path 1: We have signed a covenant to partner with this national United Methodist effort to start new churches. Path 1 will bring us training, coaching, and ideas as we commit to starting new faith communities in all parts of the Conference.

Lay Missionary Planting Network: Can lay people start new churches? Certainly, right in their own living rooms or neighborhoods! There will be some training through the National Hispanic Plan – for all kinds of ministries – plus mentors and more.

Vital Congregations: United Methodist churches all across the nation and out into the world are praying, planning, and visioning to be strong, growing, and caring communities of faith. We are learning that there are some characteristics that such churches have, and we are making a commitment to pay attention to these characteristics. Get a sneak peak at www.umvitalcongregations.org

Big words; big ideas. In the next several months, we'll see how they all fit together toward the same goal: to help us be disciples and make disciples of Jesus Christ. Our focus is to support our local churches as we reach out with Gospel love and hope in these difficult times. May our strategies and dreams and ideas be open, prayerful, and graced by Holy Spirit wisdom.

In Christ, **Kristie**

Fall Church Conferences Are Beginning

We are walking into October so it must be church conference season! Are you getting ready?

The forms are all online at the Conference website, www.cnumc.org. They will not be mailed to you as paper copies. If you do not have access to a computer or are having trouble getting the forms, please ask your pastor, a nearby church or pastor, your circuit leader, or contact Jason at the District Administrative Center. His phone number is 916-374-1502 or email jasons@calnevumc.org

As in recent years, each circuit is planning the schedule for the church conferences. Some circuits are holding a combined event, with each church holding its church conference right after worship or before a meal. The Fremont/Milpitas/San Jose circuit is gathering on November 12 at Alum Rock, where most of the churches will participate. The Diablo Valley circuit, which includes Walnut Creek, Orinda, and Lafayette, will be gathering on November 20 with a combined choir and food to share. Other churches will have their own conference.

Most conferences will be presided by ordained elders of the circuit. They are authorized by the district superintendent for this responsibility. Rev. Kristie may attend some of the conferences and will preside at a few, but she encourages our connection being lived out in pastors reaching out to other churches to lead these meetings.

All completed materials and minutes are to be sent to the District Administrative Center in West Sacramento. The physical and email addresses are on the website and often on the forms. Please do not send items to the San Jose office. Rev. Kristie still works out of that office, but she will not be processing the forms.

Rev. Kristie is looking forward to reviewing all the compensation forms ahead of time and the other materials you submit, as we mark another year of ministry in the name of Jesus Christ in many languages and many forms across our area.



The voices of the new Youth Band of
the First Tongan UMC of Palo Alto

Hope's Corner

A Joint Ministry of Trinity and Los Altos United Methodist Churches

Hope's Corner is a program to provide comfort and assistance to people in need by providing a free breakfast and sack lunch. The location of the service will be at Trinity United Methodist Church, 748 Mercy Street, at the corner of Hope and Mercy Streets. The existing facilities and rooms will be used, mainly the social hall, which can accommodate up to 125 persons, and the kitchen.

According to Second Harvest Food Bank, 1 in 4 people in Santa Clara and San Mateo counties are facing hunger. In Mountain View, the Community Services Agency operates a Food Pantry on Monday–Friday (closed to clients on Tuesday), but there is only one free meals program in Mountain View, the Sunday "Breakfast with Friends" program at the Seventh Day Adventist Church at 1425 Springer Road. The other nearest meal programs are the Breaking Bread program in Palo Alto/Menlo Park and other programs in Sunnyvale.

In Phase I of the program, the service will provide a simple "continental style" breakfast, which requires no on-site food preparation and a bag lunch starting on Saturday mornings between 8:30–10:30am and expanding to breakfasts on other days of the week. Phase 1 of the program will also include occasional (up to 4 per year) holiday meals to be "catered" with food preparation at another church and then transported and served at Trinity.

The project sponsors anticipate a subsequent application to the City for Phase 2 in approximately 1–2 years, which would include a new kitchen to enable cooking up to 6 meals per week at Trinity United Methodist Church.

In developing this program, the organizers from Trinity UMC and LAUMC built on their belief that looking after persons in need is not only a communal responsibility, but also a way to live out Jesus' instruction to "Love your neighbor as yourself."



Wesley UMC of San Jose helped their neighbors of La Trinidad to build a new fence in August.

The City Circuit at work!

Campus Ministry at San Jose State University

If you have students now attending San Jose State University, please let them know about the campus ministry there with a United Methodist connection. The enclosed flyer has details. Call Rev. Jerry Fox (408) 292-4564 for the schedule and more information.



Join us for good food, fellowship and fruitful discussions!

OPEN TABLE

A DIVERSE COMMUNITY OF GOD'S LOVE WHERE ALL ARE WELCOME.
A PROGRESSIVE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY IN THE UNITED METHODIST TRADITION.



**TUESDAYS – NOON - IN THE STUDENT UNION
SCHEDULE ON THE BACK**

We understand Jesus as one who lived a life of love, compassion, and justice showing that God's table is open to all.

In the words of Fredrick Buechner, we understand God calls people to the place where their "deepest joy and the world's great need meet."

Sponsored by: St Paul's UMC, First Church
Downtown & La Trinidad UMC
<http://sjsuopentable.org>
Facebook – Open Table Sjsu
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Please send articles for the newsletter to ElCaminoReal@calnevumc.org or mail to El Camino Real Newsletter, P. O. Box 980250, West Sacramento, CA 95798-0250.