

2022 OCC ANNUAL REPORT

Orinda Community Church



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MINUTES OF THE 83rd OCC ANNUAL MEETING

Sunday, January 23, 2022

Kathleen Wiegand, Clerk

Fifty participants met via Zoom for the Annual Meeting. Moderator Kurt Sunderbruch called the meeting to order at 11:35 am. He mentioned the Annual Report wasn't sent out prior to the meeting but will go out tomorrow.

The minutes of the 82nd Annual Meeting, January 31, 2021, were moved and approved.

Stewardship Report: Per Bill Abriel, we met our stewardship goals for the coming year even while raising money for our Next 80 campaign. Pledges are 70% of our revenue so they're very important. They're used for operations and pastor/pastoral support. Bill acknowledged the contributions of the stewardship committee/pastor. He gave a special thanks to those who did stewardship testimonials about their connection to the church. He thanked everyone for their generosity. Kurt Sunderbruch thanked Bill for a job well done.

Budget Review and Approval: Lani Shepp reviewed the 2022 budget. As a result of the Next 80 campaign, we have banked about \$400,000 to sustain our campus. We ended this year with a \$48,000 surplus so we're moving into 2022 in very good shape. The budget allows for 2.5% raises for Elizabeth Robinson and Anna Gregory. Anna is continuing at 25 hours/week. Elizabeth's salary was adjusted upwards per UCC conference guidelines. We have money to pay for staff as Leslie O'Brien moves forward. Our income comes from pledges, rentals, endowment, and loose offerings. Extra loose offerings helped get us this surplus going into 2022. Bill Abriel mentioned we have an additional \$16,000 on what's shown as pledges now. That gets it up to \$340,000.

In response to congregation questions on additional staffing: there is someone waiting to do childcare when we go back to in person services and we are looking into having two people due to the requirements of being a safe church. It isn't a financial possibility right now to hire a part time associate pastor to help Elizabeth Robinson. Our concern is whether we can sustain paying an associate beyond 2022. We don't want to hire and then have to let staff go. We're looking at other possibilities including an intern. We've budgeted to pay for others to deliver eight sermons during the year. We're contending with pledge income that is declining each year while salaries are increasing per UCC guidelines. Maybe by 2023 we'll have the finances and future funding prospects to fund a part time associate pastor. The Council will continue to look at this staffing issue. It's been a battle each year to balance the budget. Council is working closely with

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(2022 Annual Meeting Minutes continued)

Elizabeth to juggle all these demands to support Elizabeth; the Council is very concerned about not overstretching Elizabeth. It's looking at the best interests of the church. Everyone is welcome to send in their thoughts and suggestions on the budget for consideration. The 2022 budget was moved and approved unanimously.

Lani reminded everyone that Winter Nights will be onsite starting 1/31/22. We have all the volunteer needs covered. A big thank you to everyone for their help.

Moderator's Comments and Report: Kurt Sunderbruch reflected on Dick Long who headed the first church committee on which Kurt served. Kurt was impressed with Dick's leadership style; how he served OCC as a leader. It was never about him but about making sure he fulfilled the need. Kurt mentioned Isaac Newton's quote, "If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulder of giants." Kurt acknowledged the tremendous level of effort by many church members in working with him on a variety of projects over the past two years. All of these "giants" have helped him do his job as moderator and we've been able to remain a vibrant church community through all the challenges. As we go forward, Kurt indicated there's always room to help; always room for more. Suggestions from congregation members included finding out the talents and expertise of our members so they can be called on, as needed, to help. Members are welcome to create church projects that interest them, following in the footsteps of Mary Volmer and Katrina Staten.

Pastor's Comments and Report: Reverend Elizabeth Robinson thanked Kurt Sunderbruch for helping her find her feet during a series of crises. She welcomed Anne Barr, the next Council moderator. Elizabeth has never seen a church where people give in every possible way as this church does. We are remarkable in this. So much has happened here in our church but our community is resilient. We have something truly fine here. Meeting in person again this past year was truly exciting. It's moving to Elizabeth to have the Covid Advisory Group looking out for the church and having people suggest what needs her attention. We may be isolating but we are still acting in a community and making a difference. She is so grateful to those who make suggestions and act on them to make our lives better. We have remarkable resources. Let's keep improvising. Let the church be your playground; people can try things out.

We have some challenges. We love our children and we want to create support/education that's important to them. Elizabeth will be contacting those with kids to find out what's important to families. She has looked to PSR for an intern and is in a conversation on that, possibly for a summer intern. Zoom Fellowship Hour time is important so we may do more hours but not necessarily right after the Sunday service. Maybe during the week. It's a hard time because lots

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of people have lost people. We may need a grief group. She's also wondering how to best support older folks who are less mobile. Also, can we make committees to help Mary Volmer and others? Her overall message is confidence, joy, love, and belief in our resilience.

Nomination and Election of Church Leaders: Kurt Sunderbruch shared the list of officers. It was noted that a few names were erroneously left off the list which will be updated in the annual report. Anne Barr indicated the Council's new vice moderator is Bill Abriel. We unanimously moved and approved the slate of officers.

Installation of Church Leaders: Reverend Elizabeth Robinson installed and blessed the church leaders. Kurt Sunderbruch indicated he will pass the Council gavel on to Anne Barr, the new moderator. Anne thanked Kurt. She has arranged for him to receive some gifts to be delivered to him in thanks for all he's done.

The meeting adjourned at 12:50 pm.

Kathleen Wiegand, Clerk

MODERATOR

Anne Barr

Over the last three years, all of us have experienced so many changes in our lives, that in many ways we welcomed 2022 as a year that was a transition and time of beginning to get back to the way things used to be. Of course, there isn't really any going back. We have changed permanently, but much of the spirit of who we are as Church, our beliefs, and our mission remain the same even though our behaviors and customs may be changing. For example, the way we worship with both in person and remote congregants and many of the excellent new programs Elizabeth and the ministries have created reflect a new normal. The extraordinary music at OCC has been a constant and as the choir gets together more frequently, we are reminded of how the beauty of our music program contributes to our spirituality.

There have been some great beginnings and some sad endings in 2022. Leslie left her role guiding the children, youth, and family programs, and sadly, many of our long-term congregants died. These events have posed challenges to Elizabeth our Senior Pastor, and to the council who support the operation of the church. However, they also have provided opportunities for us to experiment with new approaches, programs, and people to provide ministerial support to our congregation. I applaud the creativity, perseverance, and resilience of Elizabeth, David, and Anna as well as the ministry leaders, and the dedicated and thoughtful council members who helped us become a stronger church over the course of 2022.

Here is a chronicle of some of the major events at OCC this past year:

Balanced the Church Budget – With generous pledges and congregational giving, and strong fiscal discipline, OCC was able to balance the budget in 2022 and develop new programs. Our fall fundraiser auction and growth in rental income also contributed to our healthy fiscal position. Thanks to our hardworking finance team of Lani Shepp, Kathi Kling, and Gail Mead.

Boy Scouts Troop 237 – OCC transitioned from the prior BSA charter relationship to a new partnership that preserves our longstanding relationship with Troop 237.

Pastoral Support- Elizabeth was supported by several individuals to help manage her large workload better. Early in the year, Barry Cammer came back to OCC to help with preaching and the grief support group. When Barry transitioned, Gillian Murphy-Stephans came to support the Life after Loss group. Bev Blaisdell has helped Elizabeth with visitations. Lee Cruise, Mary Volmer, and Kurt Sunderbruch have all shared excellent sermons, allowing Elizabeth to periodically take a break from the pulpit. The Pastoral Relations committee, chaired by Jeane Samuelsen provided immeasurable support to Elizabeth as well.

Lecture Event – Mary Volmer received funding from Endowment to hold an in person and virtual lecture event for OCC church members and the community with Natalie Baszile.

(Moderator's Report continued)

Children, Youth & Family – Nearly 20 members of the congregation gathered to re-envision what kind of Children, Youth and Family program we want in light of the new California AB 506 law. Subsequently, Staff and a handful of volunteers completed Mandated Reporter training and fingerprinting. This enabled us to be compliant when Elisabeth Kersten organized August Adventures for kids which was a success for all those who participated. Amy Parlett organized a wonderful Advent event for the whole family in December. While we didn't have the traditional pageant, the tree decorating engaged families in a new way.

Holden High School – We renewed our lease with Holden for the next ten years and continued to support their mission helping teens thrive in a less traditional educational environment.

Vista Verde Housing Project – We secured Orinda Planning Commission and City Council Support to begin construction of a 52-unit Affordable Senior Housing Project with Orinda Senior Housing Foundation on land leased by OCC supporting our mission around housing, and ensuring a future income stream to the church.

Re-activated Ministries – In the aftermath of the most intense phase of the pandemic, Nancy Thursby and Karen Sanford agreed to merge **Creation Justice** into **Mercy and Justice** and take on co-chair responsibility. Mitch Breitweiser assumed chair of **Lifelong Learning** and Kurt Sunderbruch re-invigorated **Worship and Music**. Bill Abriel worked to forge an improved process with Tom Norris for Council to work with **Building and Grounds**. We are grateful to have a full calendar of programs and for the support of all of those who make those programs possible.

Alta Mesa Center for the Arts – Mary continues to attract interesting writers to numerous events that bring community members and the OCC congregation together in thoughtful dialogue.

Next 80 - The Next 80 committee initiated multiple projects with the generous donations from the congregation to keep our campus updated.

Caretaker Duties – Security, campus cleaning, minor repairs, and facility set-up are key roles that the Council with Bill Abriel's leadership focused on filling since we do not have a full-time caretaker.

Music Program – The choir was able come back together for the first time since the start of the pandemic at Easter and is increasingly enriching our worship with beautiful music. Nik Nackley also helped in the fall when David's schedule got very busy.

As I look forward to 2023, there are many things that we as a church council can do to continue to strengthen our church further. Some of the priorities for the year will be continuing to support Elizabeth, the music program, strengthening our programs for Children, Youth, & Family, identifying additional approaches for the caretaker roles, and engaging new volunteers to serve the ministries and the administration of the church. We also have the ability to grow church participation through our rich programs. Special attention will be needed on Next 80 capital

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(Moderator's Report continued)

projects and working with the OCC individuals on the OSHF Board as we begin construction on Vista Verde.

This work couldn't happen without the commitment, talent, and generosity of our congregation. I continue to be humbled working alongside so many great volunteers who bring their passion, faith, and an amazing set of skills to bear to help Orinda Community Church be a vital and relevant place to worship, give back to our community, and nurture our own church community. I am very grateful to serve with Bill Abriel - Vice Moderator, Lani Shepp – Treasurer, Kathleen Wiegand – Recorder, Mitch Breitwieser, Bob Winbigler, and Gail Mead on the church council, and to all of the many volunteers that I haven't mentioned specifically in this report. It is remarkable to feel how we are coming together to support each other and support our deeply caring Senior Pastor Elizabeth. This sense of collaboration and community has struck me more in the past year than it did in my previous 22 years in the church.

CLERK'S REPORT

Kathleen Wiegand

Membership as recorded on 1/1/22: 183

Membership as recorded on 1/1/23: 177

Baptisms 0

Additions to Congregation in 2022 0

New Members:

Losses to Congregation in 2022 6

Moved out of Bay Area 2

Transfers 0

Resignations 0

Deaths 4

In Memoriam (Members):

John Creech

Connie Doty

Dick Long

Liz Simmonds

TREASURER'S REPORT

Lani Shepp

2022 has been another unusual year for everyone including church finances. Thanks to the steadfastness and generosity of our congregation we have come out in good shape and ready to go into 2023.

The money remaining from the Tuth campaign of 2012 has been spent this year on upgrading our water service system.

As we approach 2023 preparing a budget has to consider many unknowns. Staffing needs continue to fluctuate and how we meet those needs for the coming year is not clear as we prepare that budget. Allowance is being made for temporary and part time staff support in the 2023 budget.

The Church Council recommends a budget for 2023 with an initial deficit. This budget is the result of generous pledging in the campaign just completed and careful review of all expenses. There is a 4% increase in salary for Pastor Elizabeth and Office manager, Anna Gregory. This is larger than usual in thanks for their wonderful care of our congregation. Fortunately, there is a cash balance ending 2022 and this will provide the additional needed funds to balance the 2023 budget. Some of that cash appears under the Additional Sources line item in the budget.

Our volunteer financial staff is Gail Mead (Financial Secretary-income management), Lani Shepp (Treasurer-Accounts Payable) and Kathi Kling (Assistant Treasurer-Accountant). Many thanks for the hours spent by this staff keeping OCC on the right track financially. All have worked throughout the year, coming to OCC weekly to manage necessary financial business.

ENDOWMENT FUND

Fred Matteson (interim chair)

The Endowment Fund of Orinda Community Church was established in 1984 with initial contributions by members of the church. They had the foresight to create an enduring mechanism to support many non-budgeted items that enhance the activities of the church. Another core mission of the endowment fund is to support our Senior Pastor with her housing needs in our high cost of living community. The goal of the endowment fund is to continue to grow principal through investment returns and new gifts while setting aside a portion of each year's income to fund grant requests.

2022 Grants

In 2022, the Endowment Board made several significant investments to support the future growth and vitality of Orinda Community Church. We provided support for our lecture program including funding the speaker and various marketing activities associated with that event. We also provided funding for our grief support group, which not only provides support to members who are going through loss, but other members of the community, as well. We plan to continue our funding of this program in 2023. Also, we provided funding for a new sign at the base of the hill to replace our existing marquis. The old sign has suffered from years of weathering and will be replaced with a sign in early 2023 that will be substantially the same, but with a new cover and new letters that will allow us to resume seasonal messaging and notifications of special events. We had allocated additional funds to support the hiring of support for our youth and for additional wireless networking around the church, but since those funds were not spent, they will be rolled over and our needs will be reexamined in 2023.

Endowment Fund performance and Legacy Circle

There were no new contributions to the endowment, and no new commitments made to our Legacy Circle. The Legacy Circle is an important way you can consider giving to the endowment from your estate. Please see the Legacy Circle Page in the Annual report which lists our current Legacy Circle Members.

The assets of the Endowment Fund are invested in United Church Funds, an organization who invests on behalf of the United Church of Christ. As most of us know, 2022 was a painful year for all of the markets, with significant declines in both stocks and fixed income. That said, our portfolio held up relatively well (did not lose as much as the broad indexes) owing to our

(Endowment continued)

conservative mix of value stock funds, and fixed income. As the market stabilizes and begins to recover, the portfolio is well positioned to participate in future market growth.

Endowment Fund Members

2022 endowment members were: Allison Skidgel, Gail Mead, Andy Weber, Kathi Kling and Fred Matteson, serving as interim chair as Anne Barr took a leave of absence while serving as church moderator. Lani Shepp and Elizabeth Robinson serve as ex-officio members. During 2022, Allison Skidgel rotated off the board, and Tom Beatty agreed to serve. I appreciate the input and perspectives of each of the members of the Endowment Board. A copy of the 2022 year-end Endowment Fund financial statement is available from Fund Treasurer, Gail Mead.

LEGACY CIRCLE

Fred Matteson

The Legacy Circle of Orinda Community Church was established in 2004. Its members have modified their will or trust to leave a bequest to the Church upon their death. If, in the future, we expect the Church to be able to support its physical plant, to provide affordable housing in the Lamorinda area for its ministerial staff, and to support vibrant Church programs, then we must continue to grow the basic Endowment Fund of the Church. Bequests from past members of the Church have been the primary source of funds for the Endowment during its first 30 years. Similarly, future bequests from current members will determine if the Endowment Fund can continue growing and supporting the type of needs described above.

To join the Legacy Circle, you need to set aside some assets in your estate naming Orinda Community Church as the designee. A simple way to join the Legacy Circle is to put Orinda Community Church as a beneficiary or partial beneficiary of your Individual Retirement Account (IRA or similar retirement account).

We are most thankful for the thoughtfulness and generosity of the following Church members who are already members of the Legacy Circle:

- Bill and Vangie Abriel
- Anne Barr and Fred Matteson
- Tom and Sandra Hill
- Hillary and David Hoppock
- Kathi Kling
- Gail and Chris Mead
- Jeanne Milligan
- Roger and Jeane Samuelsen
- Katrina Staten
- Frank Baldwin
- Bruce and Trudi Garland
- Peter Hartdegen
- Margie Hitzl
- Kay and Dalton James
- Elisabeth and Michael Kersten
- Anne and Richard Long
- Elva Rust
- Lani Shepp

If you would like more information about the Legacy Circle, or about various methods for leaving a gift to the Church, you are invited to contact Fred Matteson or a member of the Endowment Fund Board.

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MINISTER'S REPORT

Reverend Elizabeth Robinson



painting by F. Wallotton

Every healthy community works out a balance between change and continuity. That has certainly been true of Orinda Community Church in the past year. I enter 2023 with confidence that we are a healthy church—a place of living faith, energy to pursue justice, and affection and commitment abounding amongst us. I am very grateful for you.

The last year did see some losses, and we mourn beloved people we've lost. Our community saints remain with us in spirit; I feel that daily. We also saw Leslie Darwin O'Brien leave her position at O.C.C. Many thanks to Leslie for her dauntless spirit and generosity and the ever-so-many ways she has enriched this church.

I want to thank our amazing council and thank Anne Barr for her work as moderator. I also continue to appreciate Anna Gregory as my trusted day to day colleague in the office.

What remains the same:

The church's deep love of music continues to be evident, and we've enjoyed music in so many ways—our soloists, Judy McCall's cello playing, Greg McCall's bass, some wonderful jazz interludes, Pete's Dixieland band, our chancel bell choir, and, to the great joy of many, the return

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of the choir! As David Milnes has had his hands full with his many projects at Cal, we are happy that Nik Nackley has sometimes been able to help direct the choir. What a musical team!

Our small groups remain sites of fellowship and learning. The Mercy and Justice Committee made sure that we provided funds to build another house with Common Hope and that our ties with Hope Solutions remain strong through the backpack drive, the Christmas gift program, and making dinner for residents. We thank Lani Shepp for (among so many things!) being our contact with Winter Nights; in the coming year I am happy to report that we will host families for two separate two-week periods. Thanks to your generosity, our Christmas Offering raised around \$2,500 to support this important ministry.

The Writers' Group welcomes all with conversation and attentive response to writing. This year, our writers provided Lenten reflections on hunger which were posted in both the sanctuary and the fellowship hall. Our writers also provided the text in our church Christmas card (Thank you, Gary Nye!) and our advent candle-lighting reflections. This is a wonderful integration of individual creativity and community service and participation.

The Theology and Scripture group hosts truly meaningful conversations every week. We have read books on Celtic Christianity, religion and science, mystical hope, and models of Jesus. We continue to add books to an ever-expanding list of things we plan to read and discuss together.

In addition, Katrina Staten has expertly led a group of readers through the Gilead novels of Marilynne Robinson.

One very important part of my life at the church has been our contemplative services. We continue to hold centering prayer time at 9:30 on Mondays and a brief contemplative service at 10 a.m. Wednesdays, both in the chapel. I also take great pleasure in creating an electronic contemplative service that we email out each week.

While each of these groups is relatively small, they carry meaning and kinship that is extremely important to the life of the church. Many of these groups have also grown a little bit in the past year. While growth is good, the intrinsic value of even small groups is what really matters. My sense is that God is very present with us in these groups and that they are truly a vital part of the church.

Once again this year, we offered moving Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, and Easter Services, a magically musical Christmas Eve service, and three Advent Wednesday services—our annual reading of *The Velveteen Rabbit*, a reflection from Sarah Elovich on Hanukkah, and our Solstice/Labyrinth service.

Huge thanks to Mary Volmer for keeping Alta Mesa Center for the Arts perking along. Mary is working on ways to offer workshops and on-site activities at the church while hosting a monthly Zoom literary reading series each month with highly regarded authors. This is a real calling card for our church.

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(Minister's Report continued)

Our relationships with the Boy Scouts, TOPS, and Holden remain warmly collaborative.

As you will remember, Barry Cammer served at the church for several months and I am sure that you, like me, appreciate his preaching. Behind the scenes, Barry was making pastoral calls, facilitating the loss and grief support group, and helping to get our Lifelong Learning and Spiritual Formation committee ignited again. LL/SF is setting up programming for spiritual journeys, a discussion of Christian Nationalism, and other topics.

Thus, while we have some gratifying continuities, there are also changes. It has been a significant loss for the church that we have less staff, especially in relation to our children and youth program. I do want you to know that we have posted a job description widely and did not receive a single response. I have also attempted to reach the PSR field education office about working with a student intern but am unable to get a response.

Within all this, I want to make note of what a remarkable bunch of children and youth we have. Though we are not serving them as well as I would wish, I do recognize how rich their gifts are and how important they are to our community. Many thanks to Elisabeth Kersten for the summer programming she provided for our younger children.

I have been talking with local pastors about offering a collaborative youth and confirmation program, and currently we are planning a youth confirmation retreat March 18-19. We are also talking at the council about the possibility of finding substitute preachers once a month so that I can take a Sunday each month to be with our kids. Specifically, I have found a good service curriculum from the United Church of Christ, and I believe we can bond as a group and start building some habits of service and reflection that will help build faith and justice work for a lifetime.

Recognizing that our congregation has experienced many deaths in the past few years, we began a grief and loss support group on Thursdays at 12:15 pm in the Fireside Room. It is now facilitated with great sensitivity by Gillian Murphy-Stephens.

I congratulate all who worked so long and hard on the Hillside Project (now called Vista Verde) which has been approved and will most likely break ground in fall of 2023. Not only will Vista Verde provide affordable housing for seniors, it will help to ensure the financial stability of the church. This is good news all around.

Recognizing that the cottage would remain vacant until Vista Verde is underway, the church made the decision to offer the cottage to tenants who needed stable, short-term housing. I appreciate the church's generosity in this support, and we have been pleased to have Lucina and Lukas living in the cottage and also helping to make sure that our facility doors are locked and secure! Lucina will be sharing about her work with undocumented people later this year, and we look forward to having Lukas share some of his music during a church service.

Another change this year was in our Christmas Eve service. Without the extensive work Leslie did to present the pageant, we had to do some creative rethinking, and so we introduced the

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"Advent Tree," in which families decorated a Christmas tree in ways that represent the four virtues of advent: peace, hope, love, and joy.

Karen Norris and others have restarted congregational dinners for small groups. I very much hope this continues on through 2023!

There are so many people to thank—not only our council, but the Next 80 committee, the Endowment Board, and Tom Norris and all those who contribute to the operation of our campus. Other steadfast volunteers—our ushers, Lin Lyons who schedules our terrific lay readers, staffing and personnel, and our pastoral relations committee work behind the scenes in ways that are largely unseen, but which make all the difference at the church. Thank you, thank you.

So where are we at the start of 2023?

As I had said before, this is a remarkable community. But we are changing. As people age, we lose beloved people who have died or moved, and we need to recognize and respond to the changing needs and capacities of the congregation. Some people are not driving at night or at all now: is it time for us to do more carpooling? We have already become adept at Zoom and congregation members are making good use of our livestreaming services.

We have the most incredible volunteers, but we do need to circulate folks from within the congregation to bring new energy to our committees. Our finances seem pretty solid, but we need to be practical and reasonably frugal.

As I said at the beginning, we have reassuring continuities and the challenge of change. I pray that God will make use of both. I have confidence that God's direction will help us to keep assessing what God's call is and how we can use exactly who we are to model the ministry of Jesus, all while holding each other in kinship, inquiry, and love.

This leaves me in a state of optimism. I've seen what this church can do in its modest size and mighty generosity. I feel keenly the love we share and the presence of God in our midst.

If you have questions about any of this, please contact me! I'd love to talk further. In the meantime, blessings upon you and upon us. We are so fortunate to work and worship in a community where God is—so clearly—still speaking.

In faith,
Elizabeth

MUSIC REPORT

David Milnes

The church continues to support our splendid music program very well, and our gifted musicians have responded with inspired and beautiful performances of music of many types, stretching back to the 14th century, through the great classics of the Renaissance, Baroque and Classical eras mixed with great hymns of several different dominations and centuries, and including contemporary classics by Ned Rorem and Jake Heggie together with a healthy dose of jazz, spirituals, gospel, Broadway favorites and popular song from Gershwin and Bernstein through Joni Mitchell and Leonard Cohen to Andra Day.

Last spring as Covid continued to threaten our vulnerable members, the choir performed occasionally through the early weeks of the year including a wonderful Easter service. Meanwhile our incredible soloists continued to turn out week after week of divine spiritual music-making. Many thanks to Jesslyn Thomas, Julia Hathaway, Judy McCall, Chris Jackson, Nik Nackley, Fred Matteson, Greg McCall, Trudi Garland, Miles McCall, Weston Carpenter and Prudence Hurley, all of whom contributed to the year's success. Special thanks go to Kathi Kling who acts as librarian, cataloger, and conservator of our large music collection.

The choir was able to return to near- full-time participation this fall (still masked), and has enjoyed revisiting old favorites and learning new pieces. David was given a few weeks off in the fall to attend to his academic duties as chair of the music department at Cal, and Nik Nackley stepped in to help out with able and imaginative leadership. The year culminated with a radiant Christmas Eve service, designed by Elizabeth and filled with new music. We will continue to shape and mold this wonderful annual festival service and are delighted to see (and hear) it evolve so magically.

The bell choir is thriving under the energetic leadership of Maestra Nancy Thursby, and their steady upward trend in polish and sophistication is a great joy for all of us.

Music is such an important component of our spiritual practice at OCC, and all the musicians (especially me) are thrilled to be at a place with people who seek and value deep, soulful experiences. We are challenged and inspired to continue our work

Sincerely,
David Milnes
Director of Music (since 1998)

OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR

ANNA GREGORY

The office ran smoothly in 2022. The calendar continues to be busy, with recitals, renters, and our own church events. We had a wedding take place in June of 2022, which was nice to see.

I continue to work in the office, as well as acting as part-time caretaker when the need arises, which is often, setting up and breaking down events, and helping volunteers with physical work here and there. I was able to find someone to take all of the Aquarium equipment and supplies left behind by Dion, which is nice that it didn't go into a landfill.

We now have an Office Procedure Manual. This is a "living" document that gets added to and amended on a regular basis. The idea is to help guide whomever has to work in the office, should someone need to work as a substitute, or if I should leave one day (perish the thought!)

To cut costs, we eliminated one of the extra phone lines and have a new contract with the printer company that saves a bit of money each month. I am always looking for ways to save a few dollars.

Dave Hoppock has worked dutifully on the developing the photo directory. It looks great, but we need more photos to attach to folks, so that is a goal for 2023.

Another goal is to sell off some of the superfluous office equipment in 2023. I got a start on it, but it is difficult to find the time to do it along with my other tasks.

I am grateful to Reverend Elizabeth Robinson for her support and guidance, as well as David Milnes and all the members of the Church. I am truly grateful to work in a community of compassion, love, and faith. I am awed by the generous hearts in this congregation. It's a pleasure to come to know you.

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Children and Youth Ministry

Amy Parlett

OCC's Children and Youth Ministry continues to find footing to rebound in the (almost) post-pandemic world. The challenges include new state legislation, the loss of a staff member overseeing both families and children, and difficulty hiring a point person for children and youth programs (as well as loss of Ministry members). Despite this, we still managed to have some highlights during 2022.

The continued efforts of Karen Norris in leading the acolyte program are quite applaudable. Karen has done an amazing job of rounding up one to three kids each Sunday to usher in the light and ring the bell and to keep this tradition alive. It is wonderful to see the young folk included in such an integral way into our service.

Another highlight of the year is due to the efforts of Elisabeth Kersten. She came up with and executed the wonderful August Adventures for elementary aged children during the four Sundays in August. The Adventures included 2.5 hours of games, crafts, scavenger hunts, cooking, instruments, dog training, and even campout activities each week. Three of the four Sundays we had seven or more kids attend (some of them guests/first timers to the church). Adult helpers included: Anne Barr, Hilly Hoppock, Karen Norris, Amy Parlett, Leslie Dickson, and Mike Kersten, along with teen helpers Ava Skidgel and Elvyre Kiki. Thank you so much Elisabeth for bringing this summer fun to our kids!

One of the necessary requirements of all the adults that served August Adventures (as well as any adults working with children and youth in the future) is to go through Mandated Reporter Training. This is due to a new state law that requires adults to take an online course and to follow guidelines to make sure two unrelated adults are always present when working with children. We appreciate the group that has already gone through the training. It will be necessary to have others participate in the training as well if they want to help/lead things like Sunday School (and we will always have to have two adults present). Although hardly insurmountable, this additional layer of duty has delayed some of our efforts in bringing back other programming around children. I am hopeful we can restart some regular gatherings for kids very soon.

This brings up another challenge faced: the difficulty in hiring a part time person to assist with children and youth programs. Several people worked on putting together a detailed job description, but we have yet to find anyone for this position. New efforts are needed to push out the job request again and perhaps revise the description to a smaller role that may be more enticing.

(Children and Youth Ministry continued)

December did bring two highlights that involved young people. The first was the Advent Celebration that is intended for people of all ages, but it definitely brought families and people together. This annual gathering once again included crafts, caroling, and food and was enjoyed by all. The second December event was the Christmas Eve service itself, and while the Children and Youth Ministry was not involved per se, many thanks goes to

Elizabeth Robinson for building a service that included many young people speaking and joining together to decorate the tree.

Going forward into 2023, the intention is to provide more children programming/events for children and youth. If we set up some regular happenings, it may also lead to more kids at church each Sunday. Thank you to all who are so supportive of our young folk!

Respectfully submitted,
Amy Parlett

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

Tom Norris, Chair

Buildings and Grounds maintains our beautiful campus; both visible and hidden components. In addition to the project work listed, we are grateful for the counsel of Bob Winbigler, who worked on projects many more years than I know of. We also welcome Bill Abriel who is joining us.

Memorable projects in 2022:

Lighting: In general, we are changing to lamps with higher efficiency, more light, and longer life. The latter is to reduce labor for future B & G volunteers, as we have 720 light bulbs to watch over. Some specifics:

Put in extra bright LED bulbs in two narthex hanging light fixtures to reduce dimness and save power costs. Thank you, Les Simmonds

Installed three trial LED bulbs in outdoor lighting, and minor repairs as needed. The brightest two are in front of the main entrance to Fellowship hall, for increased safety, especially for children at evening parent pickup times. One bulb type was chosen for the remainder of the outdoor pole lamps. Installation is pending. Thanks to Les Simmonds and others.

In Sanctuary high theater flood lights, identified and replaced all bulbs, reset dimmer program. Thanks to Kier DeAnda.

Designed and supervised improved drainage patterns within in the elevated concrete balcony the surrounds the sanctuary on two sides. It works well. Thank you, to Pete Hartdegen!

Designed and supervised replacement of Music Room non-functioning roof drainage system, including a new underbuilding pipe. Thank you, Karen Sanford and Pete Hartdegen!

Installed new roof drainage system serving several downspouts around Mayflower and Agape. Thank you, Karen Sanford!

Designed and supervised replacement of leaky main water supply pipes from water meter to sanctuary. The old pipes were galvanized steel, were rusting, and probably date from when the sanctuary was built in 1958. We expect that all galv. steel main water pipes have now been replaced. Thank you, Pete and Karen! Now, only the small pipes at most sinks and toilets left to replace!

(Buildings & Grounds continued)

In process: Replacing commercial disposal in Fellowship Hall. Thank you, Karen!

Outdoors, had tree company remove three dying large Monterey pines above lower parking lot. Thank you, Mike Kersten!

In Music Room lawn, pruned and shaped two mimosa trees in Music Room lawn. Thank you, Mike!

Remove juniper shrubs below sanctuary, a fire department requirement for safety. (To be replanted with safer greenery, so don't worry about present appearance!) Thank you, Mike and others!

We are undoubtedly looking forward to a busy 2023.

MERCY & JUSTICE MINISTRY

Nancy Thursby

The Mission of the Mercy & Justice Ministry:

- To promote Mercy and Justice according to the tenets of the United Church of Christ.
- To provide current, reputable information about organizations doing mercy and justice work so the church may donate funds wisely.
- To provide ongoing information to the congregation about local service opportunities.
- To provide church sponsored service trips locally, nationally, and internationally.

Local Service Opportunities:

- ✓ Orinda Community Church participated in Winter Nights providing housing from January 31st to February 14th, 2022.
- ✓ In February, Alta Mesa hosted a guest speaker from Boulder, CO., Jennifer Livovich, founder of Feet Forward, an organization that empowers unhoused individuals.
- ✓ In March, M&J donated a basket to the Hope Solutions Ruby Slippers Gala fundraiser.
- ✓ During Lent, Elizabeth created two sets of six meditative stations, which included a photo and a writing from the writers' group. One set was posted outside around the church campus and one set was posted in the niches on the art wall of the sanctuary.
- ✓ In April, M&J held a sock and belt drive for Trinity Center.
- ✓ Roger Samuelsen hosted a second hour presentation on Common Hope on May 29th.
- ✓ OCC participated in the Contra Costa Interfaith Housing (now Hope Solutions) Backpack Project during July. Members and friends were able to donate backpacks and supplies online.
- ✓ Elizabeth contacted the Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity. As a result, OCC was able to provide housing for a deserving couple in the cottage from August 1 until it is demolished to make way for the new OSHF project, Vista Verde.
- ✓ In September, Nancy Thursby created a knitting circle in memory of Connie Doty. Projects being made are chemo-caps for cancer patients who have lost their hair due to treatment and prayer shawls for shut-ins.
- ✓ On October 9th, Elizabeth conducted worship focused on Indigenous Peoples. On October 13th, members and friends provided and served dinner at the Hope Solutions apartments in Pleasant Hill.

(Mercy and Justice continued)

- ✓ On October 23rd, Nancy Thursby hosted a Faithful Voting second hour. During the program, she demonstrated what is available at the League of Women Voters of California site, Voters Edge. The propositions that appeared on the ballot were discussed.
- ✓ M & J again participated in the Hope Solutions Christmas gift program helping 27 people in 6 families to have a merry Christmas.

Mission Trips: Mercy & Justice has developed a three-year rotation for mission trips: international, national, and local. These plans had to be abandoned due to the pandemic. Mercy & Justice is hoping to sponsor a mission trip in 2023.

Creation Justice:

- ✓ On March 20th, the church held its first annual Public Lecture. The guest speaker was Natalie Baszile, author of *We are Each Other's Harvest: Celebrating African American Farmers, Land and Legacy*.
- ✓ Interfaith Power and Light's Faith Climate Action Week, "Sacred Trust: Our Children's Right to a Livable Future" was April 22—May 1st. In observance of this we:
 - Held a postcard signing, during which members agreed to vote with the climate in mind,
 - Encouraged participation in the National Earth Day Climate Prayer, April 22nd at noon,
 - Supported MCE for Orinda, and
 - Recommended the reading of three climate books: *Sacred Earth*, *Sacred Soul* by J. Philip Newall, *Nature's Best Hope* by Douglas Tallamy, and *Climate Stewardship* by Adina Merenlender, and
 - Elizabeth emphasized creation justice during worship on the Sundays during Faith Climate Action Week.
- ✓ Elizabeth conducted a field trip to the Ruth Bancroft Gardens on June 3rd.
- ✓ Nancy updated the Waste Management Policy, with more specifics as to what goes in which container and wrote an eblast to inform the congregation.
- ✓ Nancy Thursby continues to attend meetings of the Interfaith Council's Interfaith Climate Action Network.
- ✓ Bills on which Creation Justice members took action:
 - SB-54 Plastic Pollution Producer Responsibility Act
 - SB-260 Climate Corporate Accountability Act
 - SB-582 Climate Emergency Mitigation, Safe Restoration, and Just Resilience Act
 - SB 1010 Air Pollution: State Vehicle Fleet: Zero Emission Vehicles
 - SB-1137 Health Protection Zones for Frontline Communities
 - SB-1482 Building Standards: Electric Vehicle Charging

(Mercy and Justice continued)

- AB-1738 Building Standards: Installation of Electric Vehicle Charging Stations
- AB-2700 Transportation Electrification: Electrical Distribution Grid Upgrades

All-Church Offerings:

- The Easter Offering totaled \$1,449. Half was donated to Trinity Center and half was split into donations to the Alameda and Contra Costa/Solano Food Banks. Other donations to the food banks, including the proceeds from the garden fruit/veggie sale, totaled \$335.
- Donations to the “Build a House” fundraiser for Common Hope totaled \$1,125.
- Donations to Hope Solutions throughout the year totaled \$675.
- The Winter Nights Christmas Offering totaled \$2,508.00.
- The One Great Hour of Sharing and Neighbors in Need UCC Offerings were not promoted this year, however members and friends are able to donate directly at the UCC website.

Mission Giving:

Our Church’s Wider Mission Fair Share: Our church made a donation of \$10,000 to support the Northern California/Nevada Conference of the UCC.

Gift Recipient Organizations in 2022:

➤ Common Hope	\$1,800.00
➤ Hope Solutions	\$1,500.00
➤ Holden High School	\$1,500.00
➤ Winter Nights	\$1,500.00
➤ Trinity Center	\$1,067.00
➤ Alameda Food Bank	\$ 948.00
➤ Contra Costa/Solano Food Bank	\$ 948.00
➤ Back Bay Mission	\$ 335.00
➤ Honor the Earth	\$ 335.00
➤ Interfaith Council of Contra Costa County	\$ 335.00
➤ The Rainbow Center	\$ 335.00
➤ San Francisco Night Ministry	\$ 335.00
➤ Common Humanity Collective (Air Purifier Project)	\$ 300.00
➤ Restore the Delta	\$ 335.00
➤ Sister Carmen Community Center (Colorado Fire Recovery)	\$ 250.00
➤ John Muir Land Trust	\$ 200.00
➤ UCC Ukraine Relief Fund	\$ 200.00
➤ Donation for Tonga Relief (Care Australia)	\$ 180.50

(Mercy and Justice continued)

Financial Assistance: Our church continues to assist anonymously those in our community who are in need.

Thank You!: The Mercy and Justice Ministry is grateful for everyone who donated and participated in its programs during 2022.

M & J Ministry Members: Tre Frane; Michael Kersten; Eartha Newsong; Janet Rosefield; Gail Mead, Church Council Member at Large for Outreach; Karen Sanford, Chair; and Nancy Thursby, Secretary, and Creation Justice and Knitting Circle Chairs; with much support from Reverend Elizabeth Robinson.

PASTORAL RELATIONS

Jeane Samuelsen

The purpose of the PRC is to facilitate, build and maintain relationships and communication between clergy and lay leadership and members of the church, and to evaluate the performance of ministers and communicate its evaluation to the Council.

Elizabeth continues to delight and inspire and it is a pleasure meeting with her each month. As a single pastor during these challenging times, she seeks ways to support her ministry through occasional guest preachers- Barry, Lee, Kurt and Mary- and we are hoping that the return of Ministries will spread the duties of Children and Youth and Worship and Music. She finds she is becoming a grief counselor as she has supported 20 families through their losses.

We are all glad to have choir back. Elizabeth is singing when she can. She and David are working well together and Anna's staff support continues to be a blessing.

We support Elizabeth in her continuing education which she makes great use of and finds it a way to connect with other clergy. She also, miraculously, seems to find time for writing her beloved poetry. She shared with us recently that she has been named a 2023 Pushcart Prize winner, a huge honor awarded each year to top poetry, short fiction and short non-fiction writing published by small book presses. PRC will put the latest volume in the OCC library!

Congratulations Elizabeth!

We hope you will always feel free to contact any one of us with your comments and suggestions.

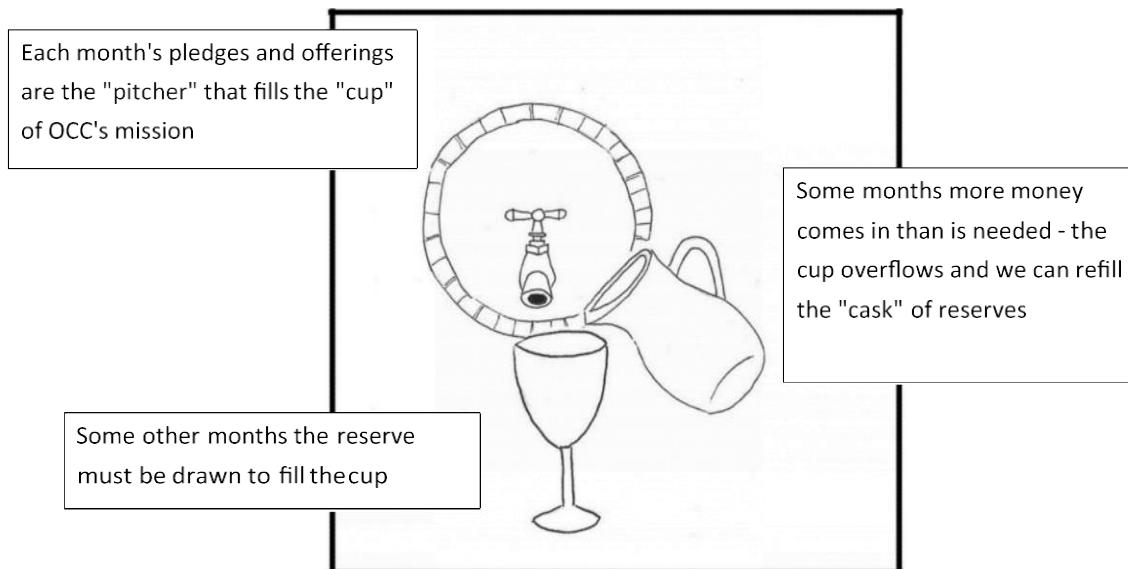
Chris Mead, Jeane Samuelsen, Chair, Craig Taatjes, John Thursby, Joan Upshaw

FINANCE AND STEWARDSHIP

Craig Taatjes (chair)
Bill Abriel (stewardship chair)
Gail Mead (Financial Secretary)
Lani Shepp (Treasurer) (Ex Officio)
Kathi Kling (Asst. Treasurer) (Ex Officio)

The finance and stewardship committee works to maintain the financial operations of the church through development of the annual budget, administration of licensing or leasing agreements for the use of Church property, design and management of stewardship and fundraising campaigns. The Finance and Stewardship Committee also works closely with the Staffing and Personnel Committee on budgetary aspects of church staffing.

During the year the Committee watches the flow of funds from income to reserves to operations, as offerings and pledge fulfillment bring money in to balance ongoing expenditures:



(Finance and Stewardship continued)

In 2022, the Finance and Stewardship committee has continued to respond to the changes in our church and our world. Having Elizabeth Robinson as our settled senior pastor has been a great blessing for all of us, and has opened up many new channels of ministry and care. Fortunately, the impact of COVID has lessened and so our cash offerings and facility rental income increased somewhat. Pledges make up about 70% of our revenue. The 2023 stewardship drive was carried out and the congregation responded as usual with tremendous generosity. Pledges to date have very nearly reached our goals. This response is a reminder of how deeply we are tied by God's love and our commitment to doing God's work.

During 2022 we have been able to draw on the backing of our endowment board and the steadfast support of our members to maintain operations. Our OCC community has held each other in care and fellowship. Thank you to all of you for helping support OCC's mission.

NEXT 80 CAMPAIGN

Fred Matteson

Background:

To ensure our place as Orinda's Community Church, Church Council and our Endowment Board sponsored a new capital campaign in June of 2021 to fund important and urgent church campus improvements. Because of favorable market returns in the endowment fund over the previous year, the Endowment Board generously committed to a matching fund grant of up to \$100,000 to jump start this effort. Every donation made by the congregation was matched by the Endowment Board, up to a total of \$100,000. At that time, we estimated the cost for these improvements at \$300,000, and we hoped to raise an additional \$200,000 over the Endowment Board's contribution from church members through pledges paid out over three years.

Results:

Through the generosity of all of you, 40 members contributed 25 pledges totaling \$293,367, meeting our match goal with the Endowment Board, who then contributed their promised \$100,000, for a total campaign raise of \$393,367. So far, we have received approximately \$310,000 of the pledged donations including the \$100,000 seed donation contributed by the endowment. We anticipate the remaining \$83,000 to be paid over the next 12 months.

Status:

Through the June of 2022, the end of the first year of the Next 80 program, we have approved and spent \$81,660 on the following projects:

- \$52,900 - Painting of exterior of Washington/Mayflower building, Agape building, Holden School, Music Room and corridor including ceiling, trim and windows around lower front and side of Sanctuary.
- \$ 3,035 - Replacement of 2 windows with dry rot in Mayflower room
- \$18,706- Carpeting and interior painting in Narthex and Sanctuary
- \$ 4,962 - Sanctuary lighting
- \$ 2,057 - Preliminary seismic consultation

(Next 80 continued)

Since that time, we have approved (and mostly completed) a number of additional projects, including:

- Replacing windows in the TOPS space to provide better insulation and protection from the elements for the pre-school.
- Significant drainage work around the church to improve the health of our grounds and foundation
- Resurfacing and repairing the external balcony. We had originally voted to continue our painting work, but put it on hold until we were convinced that the leaks were fixed. So far, so good – we have been monitoring it through all of our various atmospheric rivers this winter.
- We also conducted a comprehensive seismic study of the Mayflower Building to understand any risks that this church structure might be facing that will require Next 80 funding. Since that study has just completed, the Next 80 committee will be reviewing it over the next month and determining what projects must urgently be funded out of the remaining balance.
- We have just started an engineering study of the sanctuary and narthex north walls to identify causes of settlement, cracking and conceptual routes toward resolution

The above five projects represent additional committed funds of approximately \$31,500. Once the committee has reviewed the seismic study, we will begin prioritizing additional items in 2023.

Thanks again to all of the generous donors to the campaign and to the hardworking committee comprised of Fred Matteson, Chair and members Gail Mead, Lani Shepp, Andy Weber, Bob Winbigler, Karen Sanford, Pete Hartdegen, Mike Kersten, and Tom Norris. If you have any questions, comments or suggestions for the committee, please reach out to any of us.

Respectfully submitted, Fred Matteson

SEWING CIRCLE

Melody Ferreira

We were very busy this past year:

- We donated 30 quilts to CEID (Center for Early Intervention on Deafness) in Berkeley. Each December Santa distributes our quilts to the children at their annual Christmas party. CEID is very appreciative and often sends us pictures of the children with their quilts. It is a remarkable place doing wonderful things for the children in their care.
- We sold children's quilts, artisan quilted pieces, and bottle bags, raising \$1064 for the year. We donated \$609 of that to the church as part of the auction proceeds. The remainder will help fund our ongoing sewing projects and other OCC mission projects.
- We once again donated a Christmas tree to the Orinda Women's Club for their annual Festival of Trees fundraiser.

A big "thank you" to all of you for supporting the Sewing Circle. Your quilt purchases and sponsorship donations help the Sewing Circle buy essential quilt supplies so we can continue making the quilts. You are welcome to visit us in the sewing room!

Melody Ferreira, Karen Norris, Paula Beatty, Barbara Beck, and Kathleen Wiegand

HANDBELL CHOIR

Nancy Thursby, Director

After a break due to a COVID surge, the handbell choir resumed rehearsals on March 1, 2022.

The choir played *Variations of the Doxology* by Sondra K. Tucker during worship on Palm Sunday, April 10, 2022. This piece is in four sections, a chorale, a toccata, a fughetta, and a finale. It was written especially for the Bay Area Spring Ring to be held on April 30th in Sunnyvale, CA. Unfortunately, this event was canceled due to COVID.

On June 4, 2022, the choir played at the wedding of one of its members, Kelly Connolly, and Roberto Samame. The piece chosen for this event was *Canon of Grace* by Linda R. Lamb. This piece includes the melodies of the Canon in D by Pachelbel and Amazing Grace. The choir played this piece again at the memorial service for Connie Doty on July 9, 2022.

On October 30, 2022, the choir played *Joyful Praise* by Susan E. Geschke during worship. This is a simple piece with several handbell articulations (different ways of making sound with the bells): martellato – a staccato technique in which the bell is tapped on the table and then pushed into the table foam, echo – in which the bell is rung and then tapped on the table in time with the tempo, and tower swing – where the bell is rung and then swung down by the side of the body and brought up again to imitate a bell ringing in a bell tower.

Canto Amoroso by Fred Merrett, a piece planned to be played on December 18, 2022, had to be postponed until January, 2023, due to the illness of one of the ringers.

Choir members this year were Kelly Connolly, Peter Hartedgen, Robin Holmes, Kathi Kling, Sharon Kurk, Cheryl MacDonald, Gail Mead, Ellen Prater, and Kathleen Wiegand.

If interested in joining us, contact Nancy Thursby at nlthursby@comcast.net

ACOLYTES

Karen Norris

Due to missing time during the Pandemic, the acolytes decided to serve year-round with no summer break. Prudence and Robert Hurley joined the team and enthusiastically served more weeks than not. Nicole Parlett and Ava Skidgel took on strong leadership roles, aided by Mimi McCall. The rest of the talented team included Amarise Gonzalez, Josephine and Beatrice Nackley, Elvyre Kersten—and Albert (In Suk Kim-Andersen's nephew visiting from Korea.) These youth also participated in other church services, like Christmas Eve.

We tried substitute bells to replace the one we used that was stolen earlier, but came back to the Tibetan Singing Bowl. We are still thinking about obtaining an actual bell choir bell.

We are *very* appreciative of all of the parents and grandparents of our youth who get them to church and encourage their participation.

Thank you also to our helpers and supporters: Tre Frane, Kathleen Weigand, Nancy Thursby, Lin Lyons, Lani Shepp, Leslie O'Brien, David Milnes and Reverend Elizabeth.

Any youth in Fourth Grade or older is welcome to join and be trained.

–Karen Norris (925) 360-4704

RUDY'S BIZARRE BOUTIQUE

Karen Norris

Did you know that this is the full name of our cute little store by the entrance to Fellowship Hall? Again, *despite* COVID, it is still in operation and fully stocked with simple gifts, games, framed artwork, clothing and more. You can always make an appointment to browse by asking Vangie Abriel or Karen Norris (925-360-4704.) We did manage to display many of the beautiful items donated by Pete Hartdegen at the FunD Raiser both in 2021 and 2022. Last year, TOPS (the Orinda PreSchool) parents and faculty dropped by at pick up time and found unexpected treasures. Our FunD Raiser tables added an air of festivity to the event with their Christmas décor and also provided amazing value for those wanting to spend a little less, including one band member! Thank you as well to Vangie for her charming donations and to the family of Betty Ann Williams for lovely clothing. The Karplus family contributed their Betty's amazing collection of Parisian and Norman Rockwell plates, some of which we still have available for purchase.

DINNERS FOR 8

Karen Norris

We brought back the idea of dining in each other's homes with a semi-potluck formula. The host or host couple provide the main course, and guests bring appetizers, salad or side dish and dessert. Signups in late Spring resulted in five groups of 7 or 8 people each, plus ten residents of Ross Moor and Walnut Creek --who resumed their Lunch Bunch. The latter was spearheaded by Nancy Thursby. Since we are gradually getting back to somewhat normal, we decided to meet twice per group, rather than the four times in the past. Several groups completed both dinners (thanks to hosts like the Samuelsens and Beattys) and others are off to a good start this January.

We plan to form groups again this Summer or early Fall, though some members would like to stay together an extra year. Despite not always knowing each other very well, the casual parties helped us become better acquainted in very enjoyable settings—which was definitely the goal.

WORSHIP & MUSIC

Kurt Sunderbruch

Members

- Kurt Sunderbruch – Chair
- Fred Matteson
- Bob Winbigler
- Kathi Kling
- Mike Kersten
- Elizabeth Robinson – *ex officio*
- David Milnes – *ex officio*

For most of 2022, Worship & Music had fallen dormant as a result of the pandemic. In early October, Anne Barr asked Bob Winbigler, Fred Matteson, and Kurt Sunderbruch to reinvigorate the committee in order to provide more direct oversight and support of the work that Elizabeth and David do in the creation of weekly worship.

We held our first meeting on November 1st, including only Bob, Elizabeth, Fred, and Kurt. The purpose of this first meeting was for Elizabeth to solicit input on her plans for Advent worship and the balance of the calendar year.

The next scheduled meeting of Worship & Music, with all members invited, is scheduled for January 12th. Topics for the meeting will include confirming the roster, discussion with Elizabeth and David regarding how we can best support them, discussion of worship and music plans for the first calendar quarter of 2023.

The initial plan is to meet at least quarterly, more frequently as circumstances require.

Respectfully,

Kurt Sunderbruch

ALTA MESA CENTER FOR THE ARTS

Mary Volmer



In 2021, the Endowment gave OCC a \$10,000 grant in seed money to found the Alta Mesa Center for the Arts. Half of these funds were directed toward administrative costs and development. The remaining \$5,000 was directed toward instructor fees, promotion, marketing, and materials.

- Creation and maintenance of the [AMCA website](#); providing Brian Shepp information to monthly update the [OCC website](#).
- Planning four, and teaching two writing workshops
- Created (with Elizabeth Robinson) the [AMCA Reading Series](#) which occurs on the second Sunday of each month at 4:00pm.
 - To date, we have hosted over 40 writers and poets including many prize winners like Pulitzer Prize winning poet Rae Armantrout.
 - We have averaged upwards of 30 registrants for each reading
 - Three-hundred and three people have signed up for the AMCA mailing list
 - Through the reading series we have supported and promoted numerous community organizations including the [Sogorea Te Land Trust](#), and Lamorinda Arts Council, and [Feet Forward](#).
 - Upcoming readers include: January 8th - Iranian American Author Susanne Pari; February 12th - Palestinian Poets, Issam Zineh and Carolina Ebeid.

In 2023, I hope to build on the success of the reading series and establish a contemplative writing conference (May?) that is both affordable and accessible to people of all physical and economic realities. The larger goal of this venture, beyond serving the art community, is to bring awareness to Orinda Community Church's long tradition of excellence in the arts, and hopefully welcome more people to some more people into direct participation in the church. OCC and AMCA could yet be the center of a movement to bring the arts and interfaith Christian communities together.

AMCA Reading series: <https://www.maryvolmer.com/alta-mesa-center-reading-series.html>

ORINDA SENIOR VILLAGE BOARD

ORINDA SENIOR HOUSING FOUNDATION

Gwen McNeilus

Orinda Senior Village (OSV), was created by the Orinda Community Church and has been providing affordable housing for low-income seniors for almost 40 years. OSV is a subsidized housing project begun in 1983* when members of the Orinda Community Church congregation and other Orinda residents combined to support the establishment of subsidized senior housing to be built on land donated by the Church. Since then OSV has provided housing for approximately 1,000 seniors. Orinda Senior Village is one of OCC's oldest and historically longest lasting mission partner. The Bylaws of OSV require that a majority of the members of OSV's board be members of OCC.

The Orinda Community Church 2022 OSV Board Members include:

- Chris Mead - OSV Officer, Treasurer
- Gwen McNeilus - OSV Officer, Secretary
- Fred Matteson
- John Thursby
- Lee Cruise

A few of the projects at OSV this past year included:

- WiFi: Internet access is essential to keep up with modern society and engaged in the community. To help cross the digital divide OSV expanded internet services to the residents in the hallways, common areas, and throughout all five floors.
- Transportation: Bus transportation has resumed which was put on hiatus due to Covid.
- Maintenance projects included a) Energy Efficient Lighting upgrades complete in 121 units and to continue when the apartments turnover until all units are complete. b) Elevator Modernization: SF Elevator has called for the State inspection on the first elevator. Once the first elevator passes, they will start to work modernizing the next one. c) Plumbing Upgrades have been completed
- Garden Relocation: A plan has been developed to relocate the garden to the OSV lower courtyard area and is currently under consideration and further refinement.

ORINDA COMMUNITY CHURCH 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

(Orinda Senior Village continued)

- Parking: With the resumption of activities at OSV and OCC parking was a key focus in 2022. Both short term and long-term strategies were pursued. Currently OSV has 63 resident spots and 10 visitor spots. At the beginning of 2022 ten people were on the waiting list for a spot. Immediate measures included a sign in sheet for guest parking upon entry, closing the waiting list for a parking space, clarifying the staff parking area for TOPS and OSV and utilizing the services of a parking consultant. The parking situation has improved and OSV is committed to finding a long term sustainable solution.

A few updates at Orinda Senior Housing Foundation (OSHF):

- The mission of the Orinda Senior Housing Foundation (OSHF) is to provide affordable housing for seniors. In 2018, OSHF was founded and collaboration began to build a second senior affordable housing community next door to the existing Orinda Senior Village. Find out more on the OSHF website: <https://vistaverdeorinda.com/>
- The project was approved by the Planning Commission in July 2022 and given final approvals by the Orinda City Council in August 2022.
- Groundbreaking will be in 2023 and expected project completion will be in Fall 2025.
- We look forward to the OSHF project servicing the ever-growing needs of the Orinda seniors in our community.

*Contract of intention signed in 1983.

ENGAGEMENTS AND NOMINATIONS

Bill Abriel, Vice Moderator

Vice moderator, as member of the council, has the responsibility to report on positions for elected and administrative positions and ministries of the church. Orinda Community Church has very active and engaged members who contribute greatly to the ministry and administration of our spiritual community. We hope that you feel welcome to join in the many activities our church does. Please do contact any of the many ministry or administrative chairs in our committees.

In the very recent past, OCC has managed to overcome very significant operating complications brought on by the COVID pandemic. Now that we can re-engage, we feel we need to have a second look at the governance rules for church positions. In some cases, we have had to extend the terms of some positions in committees in order to get through the turmoil. Now we feel it is time to re-look at those rules and recommend a more workable set. So please bear with us as we do this in 2023 in the months to come.

For the following year 2023, there are many active and enthusiastic volunteer church members willing to act on our behalf. The following are those who have graciously offered their time:

Council Elected Officers		OSV/OSHF Members	
Moderator	Anne Barr	Chris Mead	
Vice Moderator	Bill Abriel	Fred Matteson	
Financial Secretary	Gail Mead	Gwen McNeilus	
Treasurer	Lani Shepp	John Thursby	
Clerk	Kathleen Wiegand	TBA	
Council At Large Members		Delegates to NCNC UCC	
Gail Mead		Conference and Bay Association	
Mitch Breitweiser		John Thursby	
Bob Winbigler		Nancy Thursby	

ORINDA COMMUNITY CHURCH 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

Endowment Board	Fred Matteson (Interim Chair)
	Anne Barr (Inactive) 2022-2024
	Andy Weber
	Gail Mead (Treasurer)
	Tom Beatty
	Elizabeth Robinson (<i>ex officio</i>)
	Lani Shepp (<i>ex officio</i>)
Pastoral Relations	Jeanne Samuelsen (chair)
	Craig Taatjes
	Chris Mead
	John Thursby
	Joan Upshaw
Buildings & Grounds	Tom Norris (chair)
	Mike Kersten
	Bill Abriel
	Karen Sanford
	Pete Hartdegen
	Les Simmons
	Andy Weber (<i>ex officio</i>)

Governance	Gail Mead (chair)
	Kurt Sunderbruch
	Craig Taatjes
	Roger Samuelsen
Finance and Stewardship	Bill Abriel (stewardship chair)
	Gail Mead
	Lani Shepp
	Kathi Kling
	Elizabeth Robinson (<i>ex officio</i>)
Justice & Mercy	Karen Sanford (co-chair)
	Nancy Thursby (co-chair)
	Jan Rosefield
	Eartha Newsong
	Mike Kersten
	Tre Frane
	Gail Mead (<i>ex officio</i>)
Elizabeth Robinson (<i>ex officio</i>)	

Children, Youth, & Families	Amy Parlett (chair)
	Allison Skidgel
	Robin Weber
	Leslie O'Brien (<i>ex officio</i>)
Lifelong Learning & Spiritual Formation	Mitch Brietweiser (chair)
	Roger Samuelsen
	In Suk Kim-Anderson
	Katrina Staten
	Mary Volmer
	Gail Mead
Elizabeth Robinson (<i>ex officio</i>)	
Care & Fellowship	Vangie Abriel (chair)
	Nancy Peterson
	Karen Norris
	Leslie Schonborn
Worship & Music	Kurt Sunderbruch (chair)
	Kathi Kling (Asst Chair)
	Mike Kersten
	Fred Matteson
	Bob Winbigler
	David Milnes (<i>ex officio</i>)
	Elizabeth Robinson (<i>ex officio</i>)

HOLDEN HIGH SCHOOL

Abby Tuttle

Holden is a private, non-profit, WASC-accredited high school that has been addressing the needs of teenagers since 1969. Our student body comprises a max of 40 students in grades nine through twelve with a student-teacher ratio of 5:1 or smaller. Students graduate from Holden with academic confidence and intellectual curiosity, the ability to advocate for themselves, a strong sense of community, a passion for learning, and solid plans for their futures. Students come from all over the Bay Area and reflect its diversity. 2022 marks our 52nd year in the lower level of the Orinda Community Church, and our 53rd year in existence!

Seven students graduated from Holden last year. In June, we were thrilled to be able to hold an in-person graduation ceremony without limiting the guests. Some Holden graduates headed off to colleges including Prescott College in Arizona and Western Colorado University. Others went on to internships in community college, and jobs.

Our work against racism and for equity continues. In 2022, our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion committee continued to meet monthly open to all staff. Several staff members also participated in a professional learning community cohort called Equity Teams which gave Holden staff a chance to collaborate with other schools. We are working on a land acknowledgement to honor the Ohlone and Bay Miwok peoples.

Throughout the year students presented grade level projects. 9th and 10th graders completed community service projects including volunteering at animal shelters, foster care programs, arts organizations, the Steam Train, food banks, and the Lindsay Wildlife Museum. 10th graders completed passion projects involving a variety of student passions such as raising chicks, equestrian physical therapy, art portfolios, game design, tiny house design, and driving. 11th graders completed jobs and internships. 12th graders completed transition projects exploring post high school options including jobs, internships, creative and independent living skills, vocational schools, colleges, and scholarships.

As always, we are working hard to recruit families who would be a good fit for our small nurturing program. If you know of a young person whose needs would be met by our unique and innovative school, please refer them to us.

Holden is eternally grateful for the generosity of the Orinda Community Church in supporting our mission. We would like to thank the Rev. Elizabeth Robinson, members and volunteers John Creech (rest in peace), Pete Hartdegen, Dalton and Kay James, Les Simmonds, Andy Weber, Tom Norris, Chris Mead, Leslie O'Brien, The OCC Sewing Circle, Mission and Outreach, and, last but certainly not least, members of the OCC who serve (or have served) on our board: Lani Shepp, Gail Mead, Lee Cruise, Elisabeth Kersten, Kay Norman, and Joyce Crawford. We could not be the school we are today without you!

LIFE LONG LEARNING & SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Mitch Breitwieser

The Lifelong Learning and Spiritual Growth Committee began meeting again in September, 2022, and we've gotten together once every other month since then. Roger Samuelson has taken charge of Spiritual Journey presentations by friends and members of the congregation, organizing one in October with another coming in February. February will also see a panel discussion of Christian nationalism, with a presentation by Lucina Lopez, the current tenant of our cottage, talking about her work with immigrants in March. We took enthusiastic note of the Alta Mesa presentations, the fiction reading group, and the Scripture and Theology reading group, and we encourage the members of the congregation to consider joining these vibrant sessions. We have a number of pending possibilities. Most of them came from Elizabeth, who has been a vigorous contributor to our work. We are eager for more suggestions from the congregation at large.