
The Weekly RAG

For the United Ministries of the Presbyterian Church in Chinatown and Donaldina Cameron House

Sunday, November 12, 2017

We welcome to the pulpit today Deb McGuire. Today's service is a service centered on music and youth.

Happy Birthdays

November

Shane Dale Linden
Caleb Badillo
Eunice Bejar-Lee
Lorna Wong
Terry Chan
Calvin Chinn
Katherine Maya Lim Chan
Norma Chan
Norman Fong
Jeanne Quock
Mary Wong Leong
Marcus Wong
Harry Chuck
JoJo Woo
David Lee
Jessica Leong
Gilbert Lee
Jeanee Quan Linden
Jeanine Lim
JoAnn Lee
Margaret Tong
Benjamin R. Tong

Women's Fellowship

Women's Fellowship will meet on Monday, November 20, at 6:30pm in the Cameron House Library. RSVP for dinner to: Mary at mwongleong@gmail.com. For questions, ask Mildred at mildredhal@sbcglobal.net.

We will receive the Thank Offering of PW. Bring your Thank Offering (cash or checks made payable to Women's Fellowship with notation "Thank Offering"). You may use the

blue envelope distributed last month or just bring your offering.

Women's Fellowship Bible Study prepares for Advent by continuing our study of the book of Hebrews. Using the Horizons Bible Study: Cloud of Witnesses, we will look at Lesson 4- In Community with God's Messengers. If you have the study guide, read Lesson 4. Linda also encourages you to read the whole book of Hebrews if you can (it takes about an hour), or use the following Bible passages: Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:5-17 and 26-38; Hebrews 1:3-14 and 13: 1-2.

SRO Christmas Gifts

Give a gift that makes a difference! The Mission & Evangelism Committee is again collecting gifts for children who live in Chinatown SROs (single-room occupancy buildings). Pick up the gift tags during teatime on the next two Sundays. The gifts will be distributed on December 10th during Chinatown CDC's Super Sunday holiday celebration at Gordon J. Lau School.

There are currently 400 children (ages 2-12) living in Chinatown SROs. PCC has committed to providing 100 gifts; the remaining gifts will be donated by employees of Chinese Hospital, a company called HomeLending and other supporters of Chinatown CDC. The families will appreciate your generosity!

Suggested gift value: \$20-\$25

Gift ideas:

- Since their living space is small, toys that could be stored easily or are not too bulky
- Interactive games (to play with friends)
- No weapon toys
- Washable stuff toys (furry toys might collect too much dust)

- Remote control cars
- Drawing kits, do it yourself kits

Please wrap or use a gift bag and attach tag to outside of gift. Bring gift(s) to teatime by Sunday, December 3rd.

If you would like to volunteer at Super Sunday on December 10 from 1-3 pm, please contact Jeanette Huie for more information.

Mission & Evangelism will not be organizing an Alternative Giving Fair this year due to the additional logistics required without our church building. The committee still encourages us all to be mindful of our gift giving and holiday shopping and preparations.

Light the Night

Light the Night, a ministry of Cameron House, is open to the public every 3rd Sunday at 2pm at Cameron House.

- 11/19
- 12/24

We are also looking for clean socks, beanies, mittens or monetary donations for snacks as well.

To donate or sign up or for more info, contact: lightthenightCH@gmail.com for more info.

Online Giving

Some great news for our congregation. You can now make a gift online to support your church community! Click on the "Give Now" button at the bottom of the PCC home page www.pccsf.org. You select how you would like your gift to be made and which worshipping community you would like it to go toward. You can add a note if you want to dedicate the gift to someone special. For questions about how to give, see Tad Hopp. For questions about your gift, see Dave Soohoo or Winchell Quock.

Tea Time for November/December

The Deacons would like to give special thanks to the following people for taking the time to provide treats for Tea Time for everyone to enjoy.

11/12 Sabbath Sunday
 11/19 Doug Clark, Luke Lyu & Diane Go
 11/26 Birthday Cake & Donor's Treats

12/3 Sabbath Sunday
 12/10 Birthday Cake & Donor's Treats
 12/17 Sabrina Shin
 12/24 Sharing of Holiday Goodies
 12/31 Sharing of Holiday Goodies

If you're interested in providing treats, please sign up with Mary Wong Leong. If you'd like to make a monetary donation towards tea time, see Dayton Leong. We also are in need of volunteers to help clean up after Tea Time. If you are available to help, please stay after Tea Time.

Our Theme & Readings

November

12 Psalm 78: 1-7
 Amos 5: 18-24
 1 Thessalonians 4: 13-18
 Matthew 25: 1-13

19 Judges 4: 1-7
 Zephaniah 1: 7, 12-18
 1 Thessalonians 5: 1-11
 Matthew 25: 14-30

Minute for Mission

High incarceration rates, widespread unemployment and low educational attainment among African-American young men have led some observers to call them a "lost generation." However, the Rev. Mary Susan Pisano rejects this description.

“I don’t believe anybody is lost,” says Pisano, co-moderator of Western Reserve Presbytery’s Race Action Network. “If they are lost, we have done it to them. They are not lost unless we leave them by the wayside.”

Pisano and the network’s other co-moderator, Ajah Hales, facilitate their presbytery’s involvement in Freedom Rising, a Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) initiative to “address and improve the worsening plight of the African-American male.” The 222nd General Assembly (2016), which approved the effort, designated Baltimore, Charlotte, Cleveland, New York and Pittsburgh as pilot cities.

In Western Reserve Presbytery, which encompasses Cleveland, Freedom Rising leaders want to address the structural issues that surround employment and business opportunities for African-American men.

Hales explains there are many budding African-American entrepreneurs who could strengthen communities and create jobs, but they often lack networks and opportunities to sustain and grow their businesses. “One of the ways we would like to impact Cleveland is to connect Presbyterians to low-income business owners to help sustain and support these businesses,” she says.

Pisano says she would like to see Freedom Rising help ex-offenders successfully reenter society. Lack of job opportunities often sends them to homeless shelters or back to a life of crime, she says.

The General Assembly set a \$5 million fundraising goal for Freedom Rising. It invited congregations and mid councils to devote a portion of the Peace & Global Witness Offering they retain to Freedom Rising. Congregations keep 25 percent of the offering for local peacemaking ministries, 25 percent goes to their mid councils for similar efforts on the regional level, and 50 percent funds the PC(USA)’s national and international peacemaking ministries.

In Pittsburgh Presbytery, Freedom Rising is focusing on mentoring and leadership development programs for African-American boys and young men. “We will work with African-American

males as early as the third grade in cohorts and stay with them through high school and beyond, helping them to focus on education and talking with them about leadership and talking with them about the church,” says Freedom Rising leader the Rev. Johnnie Monroe, retired pastor of Grace Memorial Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh. “We want to develop leaders for the community, for the country and for the church.”

Monroe says the presbytery will implement congregationally based programs, but he also envisions the presbytery partnering with nonprofit groups. Various sectors of society need to work together to change attitudes, he stresses.

“Sometimes there is a belief that children who come from poor homes can’t learn,” Monroe says. “We are facing that in the church and in the schools. We are going to have to wrestle with that problem to turn that kind of thinking around.”

In Charlotte, the presbytery is approaching Freedom Rising drawing on the groundwork it has laid through its Dismantling Racism training sessions, says the Rev. Betty Meadows, Charlotte Presbytery’s transitional general presbyter.

Meadows calls the sessions, which include an equal number of black and white participants, “a profound two days” that emphasize the importance of working together to bridge the racial divide. The presbytery is still determining its precise focus for Freedom Rising, but she expects it will partner with black fraternities and/or nonprofits whose missions are consistent with the goals of Freedom Rising. She adds that the relatively large black Presbyterian presence in Charlotte will be a huge asset to its Freedom Rising work.

Like Charlotte, Baltimore Presbytery is also still considering its specific emphasis for Freedom Rising. Baltimore’s racial divide, often referred to as the “Two Baltimores,” was made all the more visible in the death of Freddie Gray Jr. in 2015 and the ensuing uprisings. Gray died of spinal cord injuries while in police custody, and none of the six police officers who were charged in connection with his death were convicted.

Since then, the presbytery has formed the “Apostles of Reconciliation,” which has begun identifying potential partnerships under the Freedom Rising initiative.

In New York, Freedom Rising is working to expand Project Connect, a ministry with incarcerated individuals started by the Church of Gethsemane two decades ago. Members of other congregations in New York City Presbytery join Gethsemane in this effort to build relationships with incarcerated people and help them transition back into the community after their release. The Church of Gethsemane was founded by formerly incarcerated men and women, and most of its members have spent time in prison.

Ending mass incarceration is another priority for Freedom Rising in New York. It has supported a campaign to close Rikers Island, one of the world’s largest jail complexes. The goal is to reduce “the jail population from 9,500 to 5,000 and transferring to smaller jails within the borough communities,” says Dave Ehlke, a member of the presbytery’s Committee on Witness to Society and the World.

“Eighty-nine percent of those who are incarcerated are black or brown, and 80 percent are pre-trial people who are too poor to post bail,” he notes. Freedom Rising in New York advocates for the reform of bail procedures and for speedier trials. For those accused of nonviolent crimes, the group wants to see expanded use of pretrial diversions, where people complete a program of supervision rather than face prosecution.