

# The Chimes

## THE DEFINITION OF FAMILY

As many of you know, last month I became engaged to my partner John while on vacation in Hawaii. While John and I have often discussed the idea of getting married, the proposal came as such a surprise that until I saw the ring I thought he was merely asking a hypothetical question. I know, to most, the question "Will you marry me?" doesn't sound hypothetical. But when you've lived with someone for awhile and often discussed the concept of marriage with all of its implications, both personal and practical, I thought he was simply making a romantic overture at a beautiful location. Turns out this time the question and the answer were real.

Now after just a few weeks we've begun to plan a wedding. We've begun talking to our families about possible dates and searching the Bay Area for all of the elements that go into "the big day." Except I'll admit that while my brain is focused on the spreadsheets, my heart is in a very different place—maybe it has something to do with all of the advertising for Valentine's Day or my work with Eden's "Love Makes a Family" photo exhibit in March, but my heart is going through a metamorphosis.

Marriage means more than changing my status on my tax form; part of my identity will change. Now I realize that many, many people have been married before us, and that many people will be married after us, yet the complexity of all of these people managing this change is amazing to me. We live in an age when I don't have to change my name or share a bank account or even get pregnant on my honeymoon, but when I say my vows to John I will be accepting him as my family, my brand new immediate family. For while I will always be a daughter, sister, niece, cousin; on my wedding day I will be adding another title to my name: that of life partner, wife, and emergency contact in sickness and in health.

Every family looks different. Right now ours includes two cats and a fish. In a few years, it may include children and possibly even more pets. Yet every family includes love. It is this love that binds me to John and this same love that will keep me connected to my roles as daughter, sister, niece, and cousin, and which gives my family an opportunity to include a son-in-law, brother-in-law, etc. It is also love that has allowed my family to grow over the years to include friends with whom my life would not be complete.

As we as a community begin reflecting this month on love and families, I'd ask you to look at how you define family and how your definition may have changed over the years. As you meditate on this, know that one thing will always be true; we are a part of God's family, and the family of Eden Church, and no matter who you are or where you are, that love will never change.

~Liz



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

*February 2010*

*Late Edition*

Eden UCC has been an Open and Affirming Church since 1995. We believe that all people are children of God; that persons of all ages, races, and sexual orientations are part of our increasingly diverse culture; and we welcome all persons into the full life and ministry of this church.

**Tel:** 510-582-9533

**Sunday Worship:**

10:00 a.m.

**Church Office Hours:**

Monday to Friday:

9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Saturday: Closed

**Visit our church website:**

[www.edenucc.com](http://www.edenucc.com)

### Welcome to Eden!

Eden is a diverse and growing church. At Eden, people of all ages and backgrounds join together to grow spiritually, do good in the world, and develop healing and nurturing relationships.

At our church, you will not be told what to believe. We feel that the way we treat one another is more important than holding uniform beliefs. And, while the Bible is important to our faith, it is not the last word. We believe that **God is Still Speaking** through science, nature, personal experience, other faith traditions and more.

On Sunday mornings, our church services and kids' programs are open, friendly and innovative. Every week at Eden, you'll find all kinds of activities—retreats, yoga classes, service projects, music programs, labyrinth walks, study groups—to nurture mind, body, and spirit.

At Eden, we are on a journey together to understand and live God's truth for our lives. Come and join us on the journey. Check out our website. Give us a call. Come by and see us. We look forward to welcoming you!

## Serving Up Great Programming

The confirmation kids and their families hosted a delicious brunch in Oliver Hall on Sunday, Jan. 31, and after food costs raised almost \$600 to send the kids to the NCNC camp in March. Donations to the "Campership" fund are always welcome at church to help sponsor more great camping activities for all.



Confirmation Brunch Team



Confirmation Parents and Pastor Arlene

## Ash Wednesday Service

We will mark the beginning of our journey into Lent as a faith community on Wednesday, **Feb. 17**, at 7 p.m. with a contemporary worship service in Pioneer Chapel led by the Confirmation Class, Pastor Arlene, and other members of the Worship Team. Come as you are. Receive the imposition of ashes or not. All are welcome. Children are welcome in worship, and childcare for children Pre-K and younger will be available in the Loving Arms Nursery in the West Wing.

## Upcoming Confirmation Events

### February 2010

- ◆ Sunday, **Feb. 14**, 10:20–11:30 a.m., Intergenerational Worship
- ◆ Wednesday, **Feb. 17**, 6:45–8:00 p.m., Ash Wednesday Service, Pioneer Chapel (Arlene, Pepper, Liz, Tom Tyler)
- ◆ Sunday, **Feb. 21**, 10:20–11:30 a.m., Church School (P. Cowick & Tylers)
  - Mid-High Church School (P. Cowick & Tylers)
  - Senior High Church School (Michael Stuber)
- ◆ Sunday, **Feb. 28**, 10:20–11:30 a.m.,
  - Mid-High Church School (P. Cowick & Tylers)
  - Senior High Church School (Bill D'Anjou, Sr.)
  - 11:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m., Lunch (Jennifer Aguilar & Cheryl Fields Tyler)
 Rites & Sacraments, Prepare for Holy Week (Arlene, Pepper & Suzie)

### March 2010

- ◆ Sunday, **March 7**, 9:30–11:30 a.m., Greet, Usher, Serve Communion (Arlene & Pepper) —Youth in worship
- ◆ Friday to Sunday, **March 12-14**, NCNC Confirmation Camp (Arlene, Russ Miller & Dave Wallace)
- ◆ Sunday, **March 21**, 9:45 a.m., Worship, Mission Moment (Arlene & Pepper)
  - 10:20–11:30 a.m., Church School (P. Cowick & Tylers)
  - 10:20–11:30 a.m., Senior High Church School (Michael Stuber)
- ◆ Sunday, **March 28**, 9:30–11:30 a.m., Palm Sunday (Arlene & Pepper)
  - 10:20–11:30 a.m., Church School (P. Cowick & Tylers)
  - 11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m., Potluck Lunch at Church
  - 12:00–12:30 p.m., Rehearsal for Holy Week Services (Arlene & Pepper)

### April 2010

- ◆ Thursday, **April 1**, 6:45–8:00 p.m., Lead Maundy Thursday Service in Pioneer Chapel (Arlene, Pepper & Liz)
- OR**
- ◆ Friday, **April 2**, 6:00–7:00 p.m., Participate in Good Friday Labyrinth Walk (Arlene, Pepper & Suzie)
- ◆ Sunday, **April 4**, 9:30–11:15 a.m., Easter Sunday, (Arlene, Pepper & Lee) —Youth in worship
  - Arrive by 9:30 a.m. and help hide Easter Eggs



## Stretch Your Mind and Body with Yoga

Beginning this month, the yoga schedule has changed to offer two classes: an evening class on Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m. and an afternoon class on Wednesdays at 2:30 p.m., both in the Jensen Room. For more information see Jacque Blake. The cost of each class is \$5–10; pay what you can. Wherever you are in physical fitness, you're welcome here!

## Small Group Ministry Kicks Off

Eden's new Small Group Ministry will kick off with a "Meet Your Group" orientation this Sunday, **Feb. 14**, immediately following worship. If you have signed up to participate in the Small Group program, be sure to drop by the Fireside Room to meet your fellow group members, receive your reading materials, and hear a brief presentation on small group organization and practices.

## Building an Inclusive Church

Eden Church is hosting an ecumenical "Building an Inclusive Church" training **Apr. 9–11** for people interested in learning more about how to make their church open, welcoming, and comfortable for people of all sexual orientations and gender identities. This three-day event will help participants develop the skills and knowledge they need to help their own and other congregations through the tough conversations and actions needed to build more fully inclusive churches. If you are interested in attending or would like to be a volunteer at the event, contact Pepper Swanson for more information or pick up a handout in the Church Office.

*Chimes* is a semi-monthly publication of Eden United Church of Christ. Proposed submissions should be sent to office@edenucc.com, or mailed or delivered to the church, by the first and third Sundays of each month. We reserve the right to edit all materials submitted. Publisher: the Rev. Dr. Arlene K. Nehring, Senior Minister. Chimes Staff: Liz McKay, ESLO Coordinator; Kathy Miller, Church Administrator



All the Performers at Cabaret Night



MC Lee



Loris at the Piano



Jenifer and Paul

### Have You Fed Your Sheep?

One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) is the Lenten offering of the United Church of Christ that carries God's message of love and hope to people in more than eighty countries. The 2010 OGHS theme is inspired by John 21:15-17 when Jesus asks Peter, "Do you love me?" Peter replies "Yes," and Jesus says to him, "Feed my sheep." Three times, Jesus passionately repeats his instruction, pressing his followers: If you love me, take care of the people I love.

The members of the family of God, including those in parts of the world we may never visit, are God's flock—the sheep of God's pasture (Ezekiel 34:31). Yet, God's flock is often forcefully scattered as people are chased from their homes and livelihoods by brutal expressions of war, or as communities are blasted by natural disasters such as the earthquake-ravaged Haiti.

Already, money donated last year is providing disaster victims in Haiti with shelter, food, clean water, and medical supplies. However the recovery effort in Haiti will continue for several years, and it is anticipated that the UCC will be responding to the disaster for the next five to eight years. Much more money is needed to help the community rebuild.

In challenging times we often wonder how much we can afford to sacrifice to help feed Jesus' beloved sheep, when our needs remain pressing. Perhaps only through prayer can we decide how to respond to Jesus' call to feed His Sheep. Remember the feeding of the 5,000: when Jesus asked the disciples to feed the hungry crowd, the disciples despaired (Mark 6:34-44). The five loaves and two fish seemed insignificant compared to the massive need. Yet when each gave sacrificially from what they had, through God's blessing, their gifts turned into a miracle of compassion for all.

We have an opportunity to offer our gift to One Great Hour of Sharing, empowering the United Church of Christ to offer disaster relief and refugee aid to countries and communities such as Haiti that have been ravaged by natural disasters. Our OGHS offering bank cubes are currently available to anyone in the congregation and will be collected on Dedication Sunday, **March 14.**

### "Love Makes a Family" Eden Photography Exhibit

Join your "Eden Family" at the "Love Makes a Family" photography exhibit from **March 5-7.** Family photos will be displayed in Oliver Hall beginning on Friday, March 5, from 10–12 noon. Then on Saturday, March 6, from 12 noon to 3 p.m., bring your family with a picnic lunch to view the pictures, participate in art activities, and hear our special guest author Jenifer Miller read from her stories, *The Turtlebees and A Family Has In It The People You Love.* The gallery will also be open on Sunday, March 7, after worship from 11 a.m.–2 p.m. Invite your friends to be a part of our church family and see all the different ways love abounds in the Hayward and Castro Valley areas.

### March Performing Arts Series

The next Performing Arts Series concert will be on Sunday, **March 21**, at 3 p.m. Soprano Rebecca Krouner will perform a recital for women's history month featuring music by female composers from the Baroque to the present. The concert will include works by Barbara Strozzi, Clara Schumann, Amy Beach, and the premiere of a song cycle by Berkeley composer Elizabeth Baker. Rebecca is currently singing Lady Ella in "Patience" with Lamplighters Theatre, and will be singing Clorinda with Pocket Opera's "La Cenerentola" in February. Rebecca holds a Masters in Music from Manhattan School of Music and a BA in Comparative Literature and Italian Studies from Brown University. This concert's beneficiary is Eden I&R, a nonprofit agency dedicated to connecting Alameda County residents in need to the agencies who can help them. Tickets are \$15 and may be purchased from the church office during regular business hours.

### Calling All Goodies

The Fellowship Pantry is seeking donations of cookies, crackers, cheese, fruit, and apple juice. We especially appreciate healthy snacks that are kid-friendly. You may bring these items to the Oliver Hall kitchen a few minutes before worship on Sunday. Nonperishable items may be left in the church office during the week. Thank you for your stewardship of our Fellowship Ministry!

**Coming Attractions—  
Mark Your Calendars!**



- February 13–15**, NCNC Sr. High Feb. Camp Retreat
- February 14**, Small Group Ministry Orientation
- February 15**, Eden Church Office Closed
- February 17**, Ash Wednesday Worship
- February 17**, Small Group Ministry Begins
- February 28**, Spirit-in-Action Worship Service, Confirmation Class
- March 5–7**, "Love Makes A Family" Photo Exhibit
- March 7**, Inquirer's Gathering
- March 12–14**, Confirmation Camp at Cazadero
- March 14**, One Great Hour of Sharing Offering Received
- March 19**, Eden Singles Women Group
- March 21**, Performing Arts Series presents Soprano Rebecca Krouner singing songs by female composers Strozzi, Schumann, and Baker
- March 27**, Retirement Community & Congregational Care Visits
- March 28**, Palm Sunday, Souper Sunday, Baptism & Reception of New Members
- April 1**, Maundy Thursday, Service of Holy Communion and Tenebrae
- April 2**, Good Friday Labyrinth Walk
- April 4**, Easter Sunday



*Joys*

"Eden United Church of Christ" has well over 300 fans now on Facebook. That's more people than we have on our snail mail list. Tell your Facebook Friends, **"You're welcome here!"** and become a Facebook "fan."

We have **newcomers** in worship every Sunday.

Congratulations to **Dianne and Fred Dorn** on the birth of their granddaughter, Ella Marie, who was born two weeks ago in Modesto.

**Melinda Jones**, Dianne and Fred Dorn's niece from Georgia, has been declared cancer-free!

**Liz McKay and John Jobst** are excited to announce their engagement. No wedding plans yet; they're just enjoying the moment.

**Zachary Sherwood's** brain tumor is gone!

*Prayer Requests*

For **Gene Bass**, Jan Bass' father, who is currently undergoing chemotherapy.

For **Todd Bove**, who is in the midst of a job search.

For **Nancy Buchanan** who recently underwent surgery for thyroid cancer. Nancy is the mother of Liz McKay's childhood friend, Molly.

For **the Casey family**, who recently moved to Fremont.

For **Rindie Chase**, who is undergoing chemotherapy. Rindie is a friend of the Payne family.

For **Mish Denlinger**, a friend of Susan DuPree's, who is preparing for back surgery.

For **Katie Egan**, Audrey Wood's granddaughter, who is preparing for a cardiac procedure at Stanford on Feb. 16.

For **Curtis Fuller**, who is living with cancer.

For Jennifer Aguilar's **Aunt Greta**, as she prepares for surgery, and strength through tribulations; and her uncle's mom, Gladys Borges, who has been hospitalized and is receiving treatment for pneumonia.

For **the family of William Guier**, who died on Feb. 6. William was Brent Guier's father, and Natalie Guier's grandfather.

For **Susan Henson**, a friend of Susan MacDonald's, who collapsed last month and has been in the hospital.

For **Diane Hurd**, a close friend of the Smith-Bove family, who is living with a recurrence of ovarian cancer.

For **Betsy Lauchstedt**, who is back at Eden Hospital.

For **Everett Lewis, and his daughters**, Nancy, Janis Lee, and Patricia, and their families. Everett is a former member of Eden Church who is now receiving Hospice care.

For **Hans Mohring**, who underwent surgery on Jan. 21 to remove a malignant tumor. Hans is a very good friend of the Smith-Bove family.

For **Jim Schmidt**, who is in the midst of radiation treatments. Jim is a friend of Susan DuPree's.

For **Zachary Sherwood**, who is in the final weeks of radiation treatment. Zachary is the grandson of Billie and Cliff Sherwood.

For **Dave Wallace**, who is looking for full-time employment and developing a math tutoring business.

For **Lori Woolman**, Mary Haro's sister, who is continuing treatment for Lyme disease and related back pain.

For **persons and families** who are seeking housing and employment, and for all who are grieving the death of a loved one, and for those who are experiencing pain associated with these and other losses.

For the victims, and the families and friends of victims, of the **Haiti earthquake**.

Continued prayers for **Anita, Bryan, Justin, Mel, Nick, Richard**, and all in the armed services; and for peace and justice in the world.

And for **Carlton Alexander, Mary Babikoff, Mary Bernstein, Jim Burgess, Juanita Chavez, Ann Dodd, Regina Fischer, Susan Fivelstad, Allen Gardiner, Clyde Howell, and Angie Payne**.



*Birthday &  
Anniversaries*

**Mid-February—Mid-March Birthdays**

- 2/16 **Jamison Rose**; 2/17 **Elma Wagle**;
- 2/20 **Jerry Crans**; 2/21 **Nora Crans and Mike King**; 2/23 **Ruth Jenkins**;
- 2/24 **Maryellen Lentz**; 2/26 **Sophia Inverno**; 2/28 **Christopher Baucox-Jordan**; 3/1 **Jeremy D'Anjou**;
- 3/3 **Keith Smith**; 3/4 **Carlene O'Keefe and Jessica Stanley**; 3/6 **Brenda Loreman**;
- 3/9 **Michael Stuber and Robert DerMinasian**; 3/10 **Jan Bass**;
- 3/11 **Sally Kusalo and John Wagle**;
- 3/12 **Melissa Phillips**; 3/13 **Liz McKay**;
- and 3/14 **Marilyn Knipe**.

**Mid-February—Mid-March Anniversaries**

- 3/15 **Suzi & Kevin Casey**