



# STEWARDS OF OUR CHURCH

United Methodist Church  
of Westlake Village

Spring  
2015

“With ourselves it is impossible, but not with God; for all things are possible with God.” (St. Mark 10:27)

## “Let there be a Joyful Noise unto the Lord”



Stewardship comes in many forms. One of the ways many share their stewardship with the church is using their gifts and graces for ministry. One of those areas we see every Sunday, and are blessed by, is all those involved in our music ministry. Under the direction of Gloria Hilliard, Director of Music, Ron McBain, Organist, Nick Newkirk, Handbell Director, and each of our children’s choir directors, we receive the gift of vocal choirs,

bells, and music. However, to support our music ministry requires the dedicated volunteers who week after week meet for rehearsals and share their gifts of music on Sunday mornings.

Music is one of the ways God speaks in our worship to the people of God. It was always important within the Methodist movement; Charles Wesley, brother of John Wesley, wrote 6,000 hymns in his lifetime. Not all survived the test of time, but those that did, such as “Christ the Lord is Risen Today,” “Come, Thou Long

Expected Jesus,” and “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing,” among others, remain favorite hymns in all denominations and uplift the soul and spirit in worship.

Thank you to all those who give their time and music gifts to us each week. There is a place for you, too, to share that gift as well. Talk to me or Gloria Hilliard and we will get you hooked up! Keep on singing and making music.

*CARY*

## Trustees at Work

### Completed projects in last 3 months:

- ◆ Emergency plumbing repairs off the sanctuary bathrooms (unexpected cost \$12,000)
- ◆ Improvements to the Meditation Garden
- ◆ Basic upgrades around the campus
- ◆ Drainage system outside air handler room

### Goals by year’s end:

- ◆ Upgrades to the Sanctuary
- ◆ Landscaping upgrades
- ◆ Painting the Christian Education Building interior
- ◆ New phone system

### Attendance

January		February		March	
4	255	1	293	1	262
11	360	8	325	8	259
18	260	15	279	15	219
25	286	22	295	22	259
				29	353

## Treasurer’s Report

1st Quarter Income \$214,895

Fiscal YTD Income \$214,895

1st Quarter Expenses \$193,555

Fiscal YTD Expenses \$193,555

## Wish List Ideas

### Under \$250

- ◆ Shelving for The Pit

### \$251 - \$500

- ◆ Security cameras

### \$501 - \$1000

- ◆ iPad - new or used - for the Christian Ed. Committee
- ◆ 48" Flat Screen TV - new or used - for the Wesley Fireside Room
- ◆ Hearing impaired devices for the Sanctuary

### \$1001 - \$5000

- ◆ Automated Electronic Defibrillator
- ◆ LCD Projector for the sanctuary
- ◆ Plumbing

### \$5001 and over

- ◆ A/C for Alton Hall
- ◆ Sanctuary Flooring

*Any financial donations accepted*

## A Note from Finance: Rev. Brian Long



### INVOLVING YOU IN CHURCH FINANCE

The church is about more than the bottom line. The United Methodist Church is about making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. As a local church, we too seek to transform the world by building disciples. In order to make this happen, we allocate our resources, including our finances, as we believe we are called to do.

Yet managing donated money is only a portion of our responsibilities. We are also asked as a committee to keep you informed of our faithful stewardship of finances. Most people know the basics - money in, money out, but many probably don't think about church finances beyond our own gifts. Our efforts help to support both the local church and con-

nectional ministries - including facilities, administrative costs, service and outreach, mission and apportionments. The impact our ministry has had on the lives of people in the congregation, community and around the world is great, thanks to all of your generosity. Though we cannot show every line item here, we want to share with you some important information, to show you how we operate on a monthly basis.

*Finance reports for first quarter 2015:*

**Giving:** In-line with budget at 24.5 percent received.

**Growing Place:** Class sizes and revenues are meeting expectations, allowing contributions to the Church to meet the budget. Presently, \$4500 has been given.

**Expenses:** Most of these items are in line with budget this year, but our general maintenance and

equipment repairs are above budget.

**Apportionments:** One payment made out of three months. Expect to make some further payments before summer.

If you want more information about general church finances, please check out [umcsgiving.org](http://umcsgiving.org). It is a great resource to learn about connectional giving: *How We Give, Why We Give and the Impact of Our Giving*. The website explains apportioned funds, Special Sundays and shows where the U.S. local church expense dollars go. You can also pick up the free *United Methodist Church Handbook* in the church office, which explains this further.

Rev. Brian Long

## Highlighting Children & Youth Vocal & Handbell Choirs: Steve Ames

### Children's Vocal Choirs Clarita Williams, Sonshine Singers, Nancy Phillipson, Melody Makers

Music fills the air. And a big part of that is by the youth of the United Methodist Church of Westlake Village.

Two of the vocal choirs are the Sonshine Singers, kindergarten to 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, directed by Clarita Williams, and the Melody Makers, grades three to six, directed by Nancy Phillipson.



Clarita Williams

As Williams sees it, it's important to help children learn how their contribution to the music program is special for them and the church congregation. "We explain that the church has done everything for them, and this is their opportunity to give back to the church. When they get up there they are sharing their love of Jesus with everybody in the congregation. I always tell them they have one chance to make it. They can't do it again. Once you get up there, it's your time. I think that gives them the incentive to really sing well. I have individual microphones and I am teaching them to sing in front of a group, which I think is important."

Also, Williams works on tone with the children, trying to get them to sing on the notes. "This is challenging for a 5 year old," she says. In addition, she also tries to bring in some music games so that these children learn to lose as well as to win because, she says, she's found that's a problem. "All in all, I just really love them and they love me," Williams says.

Ever looking for ways to grow the Sonshine Singers, she works to encourage as many as possible to become a member of the choir. On balance, Williams says, "I think that's difficult because the Sunday School is down (in numbers). Also, there are not a lot of children to

## Highlighting Children & Youth Vocal & Handbell Choirs: continued

bring in. I encourage them to go out in their neighborhoods and bring in neighbor children. I think they've done that in a few cases. Children who were in it (choir) before have come back. I encourage the children. I encourage the parents. One thing that's important in this group is that I think the parents have a prayer group at the same time. That's important to them."

Williams graduated from UC Santa Barbara with a Bachelor of Arts degree, majoring in education with a minor in music. She grew up in Laguna Beach, lived in Texas 57 years and has always been in a church choir. Williams has taken piano and violin, and is learning the mandolin. She taught pre-kindergarten and the second grade in the public school system for 18 years in Ventura and in Texas. She directed the 3-4-5-year-old choir at the First United Methodist Church of Irving, Texas.

Phillipson enjoys the opportunity to direct the Melody Makers. "I think it starts with loving music and loving kids. Even though they are children, they have a lot more capability that a lot of times

people give them credit for," she said. "We really work hard on technique to sing. It comes off amazing. People just don't expect that." The children work on pitch, intonation, when to breath, the dynamics. "That's why I remain enthusiastic about it. I get such a great sound out of them," she says.

New members often join the choirs from word of mouth or after participating in the Pizazz Music Camp. "They hear that it's a great program at the church," Phillipson says. "Also, on the first Sunday at (Fall) Kick Off, I see someone who I think is the right age for my choir and I walk up to the person and talk. I will say that 'we are excited about the choirs this year' and I hope the person will come. I also really promote the musical (this year on Sunday, May 17) because they love it. It's a lot of work, but they love it."

An interest in the youth choir started with her because she grew up in a family with a lot of music. "My parents were just so involved," Phillipson says. "I was involved as a youth in my church. I think that's how it started and that's why I ended

up taking music (classes) later on in life." She has sung in the Chancel Choir for 27 years. Phillipson earned an Associate in Arts degree in vocal performance at Moorpark College, and a Bachelor of Arts in history and a teaching credential at Cal State - Channel Islands.



*Nancy Phillipson*

Phillipson and her husband Don are the parents of three children, now adults.

"I started doing this choir directing when my kids were little," she says. "They were involved in the choir program and I thought that's a way to give back."

### Children/Youth Handbell and Vocal Choirs

#### Nick Newkirk: Tintinnabulators, Praise Ringers & Footprints

Nick Newkirk directs handbell and vocal choirs for children and youth, in grades two to 12. The handbell choirs are the Tintinnabulators, grades two to six, and the Praise Ringers, grades seven to 12, and the vocal choir is the Footprints, also grades seven to 12.

"It's so special to watch kids learn to do music, especially with handbells, because they'll come in with no musical training whatsoever," he says. "The way I teach handbells is very simple. They learn to be basically part of an

orchestra."

It is not unusual, Newkirk says, that even the children who don't like to sing by the end of a year a lot of times they will have had at least one piece where they enjoyed it. He adds that kids like to sing for the most part. "The kids want to sing and be a part of the church choir and I think we have lot of fun doing it," he adds.

To encourage children to ring and sing, he tries to make it fun. "I definitely treat each choir differently, each age group perspective. From the little kids I'll probably be a little

bit more structured because they need the structure. Also, they're still learning and because with the handbells most of them have never done it before. Once we get to the Praise Ringers and the Footprints it's an older group, teenagers who are a little bit more responsible."

For this age group that Newkirk directs, he relates a little more and makes it more fun. "They're the ones who will lose interest and leave," he says. "The little kids will kind of hang with you if they don't like it. The teenagers I have to work a little

## Highlighting Children & Youth Vocal & Handbell Choirs: continued

harder to keep their interest. I kind of become their buddy.”



*Nick Newkirk*

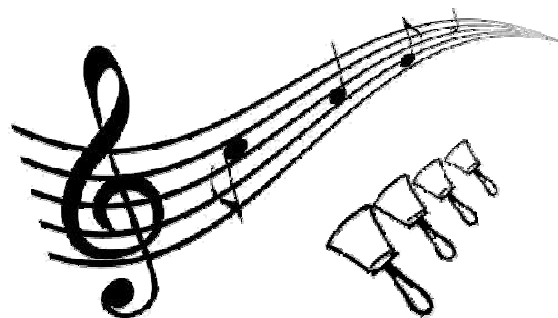
Regarding recruiting, for the little kids he targets the parents because they're apt to be the ones who are going to lend their encouragement. "I use the teenagers to bring other folks in," Newkirk says. "I will ask the person to find someone in the youth group who is not in the choir and recruit them. Once they are in, I become more of a buddy and make it fun and a less structured atmosphere. The kids see that it wasn't as lame as they thought it was going to be."

The youth choirs, handbells and vocal, are often benefactors of the Pizazz Music Camp, sponsored by music ministry at the church, which during Aug. 3-7 will mark its 23<sup>rd</sup> year. Pizazz has participants from the church and the community each year. Some of the students attend churches that don't have an active music program for children and youth. All of the Pizazz participants are invited to participate in the UMCWV church choirs - and many have. More information about Pizazz is available by calling the church office: (805) 497-7884, e-mailing to [pizazz@umcwv.org](mailto:pizazz@umcwv.org) and on the church website: [www.umcwv.org/events/special-events](http://www.umcwv.org/events/special-events).

On Kick-Off Sunday in September, if he finds a teenager who is not in the group, Newkirk will go up to him or her and invite the person to join the Tintinnabulators, Praise Ringers and/or the Footprints. "When I first started this (14 years ago), it was a terrifying experience, but now I look forward to Tuesday nights (practice time)," Newkirk says. "It's a lot of

fun watching kids have fun doing music because I did it when I was a kid."

Newkirk has a Bachelor of Arts degree in music education from Cal State - Northridge and studied under notable directors. He also has diverse stage experience, performing in more than a dozen musical productions. He has many years of experience instructing children in various activities - including voice, general music and acting, and is the Recreation Supervisor for the city of Agoura Hills.



---

## Lay Leaders

<b>Trustees</b>	
2015	Phil Severance, <i>chair</i> Janet Todd Ron Glass
2016	Sharon Kenney Mike Stone Tom Sutphen
2017	Margie Price Sunny Benjamin Bob Each

<b>Finance</b>	
	Phil Severance Boyd Donavon Charles Laing Janet Todd Karen Keever Lee Friel Gene Cooper Mark Suzumoto

<b>SPRC</b>	
2015	Bob Carman Tom Hopkins James Lawson
2016	Jon Birmingham Natalie Ruge Lynn Guess
2017	Dorr Looman Janet Todd Sunny Benjamin

### *The Focus Statement of Our Church*

The United Methodist Church of Westlake Village is a caring Christian community that welcomes everyone to experience the loving embrace of God, nurtures one another, and reaches out to the community and the world through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

**INVITE INVOLVE GROW SHARE**

*Serving the people of the greater Conejo Valley and beyond in ministry since 1969.*

