A Message from the Pastor

By: Rev. Jola Bortner, Pastor

District Superintendent Schuyler Rhodes has announced the appointment of Rev. Jola Bortner as Pastor of St. John’s as of July 1st.

Rev. Jola writes . . .

Dear People of St. John’s,

I spent time in my garden this morning! One of my favorite pastimes, it reminds me of how our Good Gardener tends to the gardens of our lives. This morning I deadheaded my roses and pulled weeds. It seems appropriate that those tasks were needed, as I am doing the same activities in my accumulation of personal things and relationships... preparing for a new round of growth and abundance.

My garden has two components: flower beds to provide color, and four-by-four plots to provide food. In the flower beds, I have had three rounds of fragrant, colorful roses. Deadheading will make another round possible for the rest of my family here to enjoy. The saying of “good-bye, God will bless you,” to my people at Emanuel UMC makes saying “hello, God will bless us,” to you, my new church family.

(Continued on Page 7)
A small gathering was held at the First Methodist Church, Stony Point Campus, on Friday, June 12th to celebrate the launching of the churchtogether.today website. The new church in our district was blessed and consecrated by Rev. Kelley O'Connor.

You are invited to visit the website, www.churchtogether.today, and discover the new postings daily.
When the idea of a Ladies’ Tea was first suggested, there began to be an excitement within the Outreach Group that just kept growing. It was soon realized that excitement alone was not enough. The committee needed to share ideas and work out all of the details. Louise Graves, chairperson of Outreach, was proud of each member’s commitment, hard work, and encouragement given.

A big thanks goes out to Hans Verhoeff and Dave Graves for their willingness to serve the tea and sandwiches in their proper attire suitable for the occasion.

The Ladies’ Tea was a success beyond the committee’s wildest dreams. A total of 38 ladies attended. Adding to the festive mood was a variety of hats worn by some of the women, conversations and laughter happening at each table, and, of course, the wonderful food. The tables were decorated with china belonging to St. John’s, tea cups and saucers from members of the committee and the very cute napkins folded by Julie.

Thanks to all who participated. The committee is looking forward to making this a yearly event.

Don’t forget . . .

The women’s monthly breakfast is now held at Shari’s Restaurant, 301 Rohnert Park Expressway, on the fourth Saturday of the month at 8:30 a.m. All women of St. John’s are welcome and you are encouraged to invite a friend. If you are not already on the list to receive a reminder, email or call Louise Graves (lovethesax@pacbell.net – 707-318-1297).

The Outreach Committee continues to collect the ‘Box Tops for Education’. To participate, just clip box tops from each participating company package.
It’s official . . .

Rev. Israel Alvaran, Regional Organizer, Western Jurisdiction, Reconciling Ministries Network, announced that St. John’s has completed all of the required documentation to become a reconciling church. Below is the official listing of St. John’s on the Reconciling Ministries Network. He sends his congratulations.

New Reconciling Congregation in Rohnert Park, CA

by Reconciling Ministries Network | Jun 10, 2015 | New Reconciling Communities | 0 comments

Our Welcoming Statement

St. John’s UMC

“The people of St. John’s UMC are grounded in the gospel of Jesus Christ that calls us to be a people of inclusion, justice, and love. We believe all are created in God’s image and are of sacred worth. We welcome all to full participation in the life and ministry of our church regardless of age, race, ethnic background, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical or mental health condition, marital status, family situation or economic standing. In our quest to follow the example of Jesus, we commit ourselves to loving acts of invitation, welcome, forgiveness and reconciliation.”
A SPECIAL THANKS FROM KELLEY . . . (Written Sunday, June 14th)

I can’t even find words to tell you how much this morning filled me full to overflowing! Your words were so kind, your gifts amazing and the love I felt overwhelming. The sanctuary was beautiful and fun (loved the pineapple candles!) The music was fantastic!

I’m sitting here looking over the photo album, the quilt, reading cards and snoozing! I have lots to do but I can’t seem to move!

I will always remember my time at St. John's as some of the best of my ministry. We are friends and that won’t stop because I’m moving to San Francisco. You will love your new pastor I know and I wish you all the best as St. John's moves into the next chapter.

Thank you, thank you, and thank you!

Love and deep blessings,

Kelley

(Pastor Kelley was appointed to Temple UMC in San Francisco by the District Superintendent Schuyler Rhodes as of July 1st.)

From SPRC Chair

I want to thank everyone for helping to make Sunday June 14th special as we said goodbye to Kelley. To all who brought food, helped with serving and cleanup, Mahalo.

I would like to extend a special thank you to Mike Hopkins, Rick McMenomy, and Cindy Sawyer who showed up at 9:00 a.m. to set up the canopies, tables and chairs.

Cindy stayed all day to help with food service and kitchen detail until after the memorial. Thanks Cindy for always being willing to pitch-in at a moment's notice.

Thank you to Grace Johnson and Wendy Horton for helping in the kitchen during and after the memorial service. Grace also served as Hostess for the Memorial. Thank you, Grace

Thank you again to Mike, Rick, as well as Dave and Becky Jackson for helping put away the canopies, tables and chairs. I know many others pitched in during the day -- it is impossible to name them all.

It was a lovely day at St. John's., Kelley was very appreciative with her heart overflowing.

The Webb family was pleased with the memorial service and the hospitality. St. John's future is bright as long as we continue to pull together as we did today. Aloha and Mahalo.

Becky McMenomy,
UMW READING PROGRAM SCHEDULED FOR AUGUST 12TH

The next book in the UMW reading program to be reviewed will be No Longer Silent: The Empowerment of Women in the Gospels by Susan Dehn Matthews. The story of Jesus of Nazareth has been called “the greatest story ever told,” but what role do women play in that story? In No Longer Silent, author Susan Dehn Matthews attempts to highlight the women in the Gospels and provide the background behind those important women, but also about women whose stories are never told. By changing the vantage point from masculine to feminine these stories unfold as a new articulation of Jesus’ own vision: the Kingdom of God is within you.

Matthews starts by noting that women in the Gospels were deliberately dis-empowered in order to maintain their presumed dependence, both in Scripture and in society. She then gives a voice to the minds and hearts of the women of the gospels who have been marginalized or ignored altogether. As she writes, “Each woman whose story is recounted here is remarkable precisely because, through the power of an encounter with Jesus, she discovered within herself the Divine energy that allowed her to offer her unique gift to the world.” Some of the women Matthews writes about include: Elizabeth, Mary of Nazareth, Mary at the Wedding of Cana, the widowed mother of Nain, the woman accused, the mother of James and John, the sisters of Lazarus, the wife of Pilate, Mary Magdalene, and Joanna.

The portraits in this book attempt to give voice to the minds and hearts of these women of the gospels. The book is available online at www.amazon.com.

The UMW plan to schedule their reading program bi-monthly.

TRUSTEE’S REPORT . . .

The trustees schedule a work day from 9 a.m. to noon on the second Saturday of each month. There is always lots of projects to complete and your help is always appreciated.

The installation of the new bench by Larry Wofford has been completed. The project began with Phil Horton doing the necessary extended cement work under the entrance awning. Larry completed the project with the assembly and installation of the bench. It’s a nice addition to the entrance to the church.

Our thanks to Karin Godolphin for posing in the picture and our thanks to Phil & Larry for their work. The bench was purchased with “Undesignated Memorial Funds”.

With the transition of pastors, it has given the trustees the opportunity of upgrading the parsonage. New flooring and carpet will have been installed in the parsonage as well as the installation of a new dishwasher. Funds for the project were taken from the Parsonage Fund that was created with sale of the former parsonage.
LIFE AFTER THURSDAY SET FOR JULY 3RD

Oh what a delight it was! Twenty-two BEAUTIFUL souls gathered at 823 Debbie Street on June 5th for a delightful evening of camaraderie and food, and food, and wonderful food, in delectable flavors and tastes. Each time we come together we learn a bit more about each other, and leave with such a warm feeling in our souls. Thank you one and ALL!

On July 3rd, we will come together at 6:30 p.m. at Dave and Louise Graves’ home, 6046 Country Club Drive, RP. Please bring your table setting and cold drink of choice. And bring food to share: main dish, salad, bread, or dessert. Please RSVP 584-8947 so the Graves know how many tables and chairs to ready. We encourage all who haven’t come to give the evening a try. It is the best way we have found to get to know your fellow parishioners on a deeper level. (Julie and Hans)

The Pastor's Message (Continued from Page 1)

My garden provides me with a metaphor for life. With each appointment in our system of itineracy, plans for ministry are made, projects started and planted, harvests experienced, and occasional harvests not realized. In all gardens, there is a season for preparation and new beginnings. Emanuel's new pastor will help the people do that in their next season of growth.

I am blessed to be moving to a new flower bed. Your dreams and visions, plans for your garden of faith and ministry, will be a joy to learn. Together we will plant seeds. While we can plan and plant, water and fertilize, we cannot make them grow! Our Good Gardener and the Spirit of Life and Growth do that. God is already active at St. John's. I am honored to be joining you and am looking forward to what growth God has in store for us!

One of my favorite hymns is “Hymn of Promise.” And, its words are both poignant and promising for us all. I have changed some of the phrases (with permission!) for this occasion...

In the bulb there is a flower; in the seed, an apple tree,  
in cocoons, a hidden promise: butterflies will soon be free!  
In the [change and growth in moving] there’s a spring that waits to be,  
unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

There's a song in every silence, seeking word and melody,  
there's a dawn in every darkness, bringing hope to you and me.  
From the past will come the future; what it holds, a mystery,  
unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

In our endings are beginnings, in our time, infinity,  
in our growth there is believing, from our lives, come ministry.  
In the change, a resurrection and new life for all to see,  
in July, it starts its season, something God alone can see.

Blessings to you and yours, in this season of change,

Jola
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