

Dec. 24, 2017 • Vol. 71 • No. 47

**FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT/  
CONTEMPLATIVE SERVICE**

**10:00 AM**

**Worship**, Phil Porter, leading; Amar Khalsa, musician; Derek Tam, Music Director, *Sanctuary*

**Musical Highlights**, Music by Amar Khalsa

**11:15 AM**

**After Party**, *Courtyard*

**4:00 PM**

**All-Ages Christmas Eve Service**, *Sanctuary*

**6:00 PM**

**Christmas Eve in the Cloister**, *Cloister*

**9:30 PM**

**Special Music**, before the 10 pm service, *Sanctuary*

**10:00 PM**

**Christmas Eve Candlelight Service**, *Sanctuary* (**Cookie Fest** after the service in *Loper Chapel*)

**SUN., DEC. 31 / CHRISTMASTIDE**

*Galatians 4:4-7*

**10:00 AM**

**Worship**, Phil Porter, preaching; Amar Khalsa, musician, *Sanctuary*

**Musical Highlights**, Abigail Vass, vocalist

**11:15 AM**

**After Party**, *Courtyard*

**Christmas Eve at First Church**



First Church will celebrate **Christmas Eve** with four services!

The **Contemplative Service** at **10 am** will offer stillness and silence along with singing, featuring the music of **Amar Khalsa**. There will be no sermon. The nursery will be open and the rest of the children will gather with **Carolyn Ash** in **Durant House** to make cookies for the evening service.

The **All-Ages Christmas Eve Service** at **4 pm** in the **Sanctuary** is a 35-45 minute, child-friendly service, with a reenactment of the story of Jesus' birth through story and song, accompanied by First Church musicians. Everyone is invited to join in; pick a costume (newly created last year after the fire) and be a shepherd, angel, cow or sheep!

At **6 pm**, the community is invited to gather for **Christmas Eve in the Cloister**. Songs, acoustic music, prayer, candlelight, warm beverages and gifts for our unhoused neighbors will testify to the stark truth of that early manger scene. Dress warmly!

At **10 pm** in the **Sanctuary**, a **Christmas Eve Candlelight Service** will include music by a string quartet, harpsichord and piano starting at **9:30 pm**. Be transported by inspiring music, powerful preaching and familiar carols surrounded by the gentle light of candles.

**Movement Workshop to Prepare for Christmas Eve**

All are invited to join InterPlay cofounder **Cynthia Winton-Henry**, **Rachel Bauman** and **Carolyn Ash** in a movement workshop this **Sat., Dec. 23**, at **2 pm** in the **Hall of Entrance** to help bring the nativity alive during the **Family Christmas Eve Service** the next day. Cynthia will be leading the workshop, which will include InterPlay forms of movement, voice and words. *Everyone* is invited (and friends, too!) to the workshop to reimagine the experiences of shepherds, sheep and angels on that Holy Night. Just show up!

We will workshop together from **2-3 pm**, and then join **Derek** and the **Amazing Family Ensemble** for a rehearsal from **3-4 pm**. For questions, contact **Carolyn** at 510/759-5935 or [clash@fccb.org](mailto:clash@fccb.org).

**Longest Night Healing Service**

First Church offers a **Longest Night Service** on **Thurs., Dec. 21** at **6 pm** in **Loper Chapel**. This service, held on the Winter Solstice, gives us room to acknowledge grief, overwhelm, loneliness and other feelings that don't ordinarily fit into the season of cheer. Come and pray, rage against the dying of the light, sing and



have a catharsis in community, while welcoming in the turn of the year as our part of the Earth begins to tilt sunward once more. The service will be led by **Rachel Bauman**, **Loi Almeron** and **Kim Druziako**.

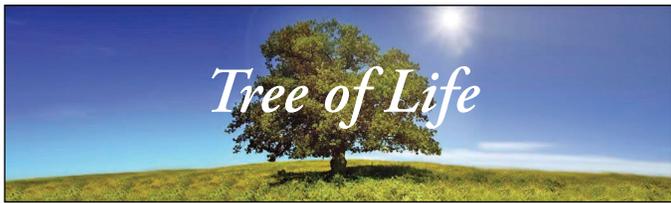
**Cookie Fest Invitation**

Come to the **Cookie Fest** in the **Pillar Room** after the **10 pm service** on **Christmas Eve**. Contact **Mary-Ellis Adams** if you'd like to make cookies for the Fest. On Christmas Eve, **before the 10 pm service**, drop off the cookies in **Loper Chapel**, located off the **Hall of Entrance**.

**Preaching Schedule**

**December 31** — Phil Porter

**January 7** — Rachel Bauman



Prayers of healing for long-time First Church Point Person **Frankie Wei** and his family in Frankie's recent cancer diagnosis. Cards can be mailed to Frankie at 1460 Dwight Way, Berkeley CA 94702.

## Thanks, Chinh!

First Church honors **Chinh Nguyen** for his years of volunteer service helping his partner **Phil Porter** hang banners in the Sanctuary.

In the photo at right, **Chinh** is shown with **Phil** and grandson **Kobe**.



The large painted banners are hung with a manual pulley system that is installed in the open space between the vault of the Sanctuary and the church roof. Most often, Chinh was the one up in that space raising and lowering banners with Phil directing from below, either by walkie-talkie, cell phone, or most often, just shouting ("down on the east just a tiny bit!").

The process of aligning the banners, which are 16-20 feet long, is an exacting task and Chinh became a master at managing the pulley lines single-handedly. He did it countless times and their relationship survived!

Chinh is happy to set that task aside and others will be taking on the banner-hanging task in the future.

Thanks so much, Chinh! If you want to add your own thanks you can email him c/o **Phil** at [phil@interplay.org](mailto:phil@interplay.org).

## Sunday Video

View the video from the **Sun., Dec. 10** 10 am service at: [www.fccb.org/live-sunday-morning-webcasts](http://www.fccb.org/live-sunday-morning-webcasts).

## THE CARILLON

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Email submissions to: [mcopeland@fccb.org](mailto:mcopeland@fccb.org)

*All submissions are subject to editing.*

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## The View from Here

**Molly Baskette**  
Senior Minister



Most of you know by now that my younger brother Jesse died last week at the age of 42, in the Philippines, where he lived. You might not know that he died in horrific circumstances: in a jail, where he'd been brought on specious charges. Though the authorities told us he took his own life, we have ample evidence to believe he was killed extrajudicially, and that they are now covering up his murder.

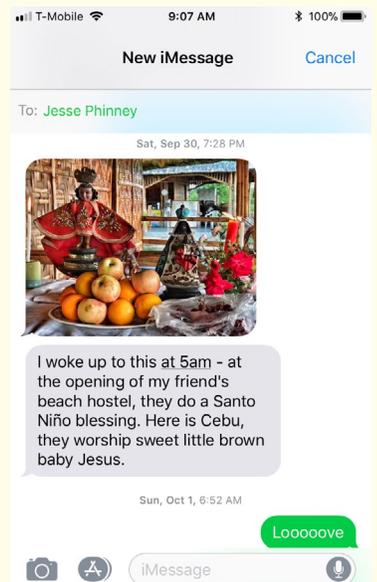
Jesse was just with us for Thanksgiving. He wasn't planning to come home for the holidays, but a convergence of East Coast family and cheap airfares prompted him to get on a plane at the last minute and come to Alameda for 30 hours before flying to Vietnam for a cameraman gig. We fit a lot of pie and late-night talks into those 30 hours.

Grief is a funny thing. Especially when death happens at a distance like this, and suddenly, it is hard to feel the reality of it. Then something simple will suddenly bring the loss into focus. I was in New Orleans when I learned of his death, then flew to Boston to support my family. When I got home to the Bay Area, I cleaned out the fridge, pulling Thanksgiving's mashed potatoes out of the back. Mashed potatoes Jesse had eaten with us 10 days earlier. The floodgates broke, and I wept in front of the open refrigerator. The mashed potatoes had lasted longer than Jesse.

Because he thought he wouldn't be home for the holidays, in October Jesse sent us a statue from his adopted hometown of Cebu. The Santo Niño, little brown baby Jesus, was originally a gift from the Portuguese conquistadors to the indigenous Filipinos in 1512, and is considered to have sacred healing power. Santo Niño heralds a Christmas season that starts as early as September and doesn't end until January's feast of Sinulog, in which the figure of Santo Niño figures prominently. (Some people just can't get enough Christmas.)

As I reread the texts from my brother teaching me about Santo Niño, I learned more about the story: the original recipient of the statue had fallen deathly ill, and awakened to discover a small child sitting on him, tickling him, and calling him to get up and dance. The dance, which was "two steps forward and one step back," became known as the Sinulog, "the movement of the river," and is danced as part of the post-Christmas feast to this day in Cebu.

*(continued on next page)*



(View, cont.)

Why does Christmas still figure so prominently in the cultural imagination, worldwide? Even in non-Christian, syncretist Christian, and post-Christian climates? Maybe it's because Christmas, with its simple joys and habits, throws our life—our blessings, our losses, our griefs and joy—into sweet and sharp relief. It is a moment that helps us to mark the movement in our lives, which often seem like the Sinulog, a dance of two steps forward/one step back. Christmas is a call to love more deliberately, dropping everything for a chance to be with family, to tell stories, to remember to be tender with one another and not take any of our time together for granted. It is an invitation to be tickled by the sweet little brown baby Jesus.

Our “sweet little brown baby Jesus” now lives on the top shelf in our living room, watching over us. It may be some time before my family can get up and dance with Him. But I'm so glad, since my brother is gone, that He can be with us.



## Mental Health Promotion Seminars

We are getting ready for the **Mental Health Promotion Seminars** by assembling books and materials for the series, sponsored by both the **Mental Health Ministry** and **Adult Education**.



**Kerrie Hein's** first seminar (of six), **Mental Health: What is It and Why Should I Care?** will be offered on **Sun., Jan. 14, 11:45 am–1 pm** in **Loper Chapel**.

## Help Fill Christmas Gift Bags

Even though Christmas is fast approaching, there's still time to help! Last year, we added a **6 pm service** in which we welcomed the community at our **Christmas Eve in the Cloister service** and distributed essential items and treats to the unhoused among us.

We are continuing this new tradition. Please help us fill gift bags that we'll distribute to folks **after the 6 pm service** and to the men at the **Berkeley Food & Housing Men's Shelter**.

Specifically, we're asking for:

- **Warm, small items:** mylar blankets, socks, hats, gloves/mittens, scarves
- **Individually wrapped snacks:** granola bars, peanut butter crackers, single-packaged trail mix, Vienna sausage in pop-top can, foil tuna packs, jerky, bottled water
- **Grooming and hygiene products:** lip balm, hand sanitizer, hand lotion, band aids, nail clippers, hand wipes, tissue packs, tooth paste
- **Useful items:** plastic utensils, gallon ziplock bags, duct tape, small liquid soap
- **Gift cards:** from local drug, grocery and dollar stores, coffee shops.
- **We can also use your cash or checks** to buy needed items. (Make out the check to FCCB and put “Christmas Eve gift bags” in the memo line.)

Please bring in your donations to church this **Sun., Dec. 24**. Look for our table in the **Hall of Entrance** or drop off your donations in the **church office**.

## Companionship Training: Still Time to Sign Up

There is time to sign up for the **Companionship Training** being held on **Sat., Jan. 20, 9 am–4 pm**. **Rev. Craig Rennebohm** will lead us as we explore practices of Companionship and our natural capacity for human connection and community. All are welcome: church members, visitors and community friends and neighbors. This training is sponsored by our **Mental Health Ministry**. RSVP at <https://goo.gl/1JC86f>. For more info, contact **Robin Kempster, Parish Nurse**.

## Did You Know...?

...that you can see all “**Word Takeaways**” videos created by **Loi Almeron**, in which preachers at First Church Berkeley share highlights from their sermon of the morning in two minutes, at <https://goo.gl/cyn92d>?

...that videos are now available from the August 2017 **Learning Hour** series **Contemplating Loss and Death: A Zen Hospice Project Perspective** at <https://goo.gl/nEJA12>?

## Christmas Offering

**Soccer Without Borders–Oakland** and **YEAH! (Youth Engagement, Advocacy & Housing)** will receive this year's **Christmas Offering**, which will be collected this **Sun., Dec. 24** at all of the **Christmas Eve services**. You may also **donate online** at <https://goo.gl/49f1F6>.

## Save the Dave!

Save the date for a concert called **Creating Sanctuaries of Love**, on **Mon., Jan. 15** (Martin Luther King, Jr. Day) at **7 pm** in the **Sanctuary**, a fundraiser organized by the musicians of **City of Refuge UCC** and **First Church**. It will benefit **Regina's Door**, a local organization that supports victims of sex trafficking. There will be many musical acts! Suggested donation: \$20.

## Pledge Update

To date we have **\$711,000** with **164 pledges** in. Our goal is **\$850,000**. Please send in your pledge this week, if you have not already done so.

## Coming Up!

### Mental Health Promotion Seminar

Sun., Jan. 14, 11:45 am, Loper Chapel

### Companionship Training

Sat., Jan. 20, 9 am, Loper Chapel

# THE CARILLON

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## Bits and Pieces

### FCCB Book Group Gatherings

- **Fri., Jan. 12** — We will share poetry of our own choosing at the home of **Helen Wadman**
- **Fri., Feb. 9** — *Daughters of the River* by **Uyen Nicole Duong** at the home of **Mary-Ellis Adams**

## Weekly Calendar

### Sunday December 24

SONGS OF THE SOUL REHEARSAL

9 am, Room #4, EBSB

CONTEMPLATIVE WORSHIP

10 am, Sanctuary

AFTER PARTY

11:15 am, Courtyard

ALL-AGES CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

4 pm, Sanctuary

CHRISTMAS EVE IN THE CLOISTER

6 pm, Cloister

CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

9:30 Special Music/10 pm Service, Sanctuary

### Monday 25

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED THROUGH JAN. 1

### Wednesday 27

BIBLE STUDY

7 pm, Durant House Main

### Sunday 31

SONGS OF THE SOUL REHEARSAL

9 am, Room #4, EBSB

WORSHIP

10 am, Sanctuary

AFTER PARTY

11:15 am, Courtyard

### Monday 1

MINDFULNESS MEDITATION

6 pm, Loper Chapel

### Tuesday 2

STAFF MEETING

1 pm, Durant House Main

### Wednesday 3

OPEN CHAPEL

7 pm, Loper Chapel

BIBLE STUDY

7 pm, Durant House Main

### Thursday 4

BELL CHOIR REHEARSAL

7 pm, Pillar Room

SANCTUARY CHOIR REHEARSAL

7 pm, Sanctuary

## Winthrop & YES News

### YES & Winthrop

On **Christmas Eve**, there are a couple of opportunities for youth to participate in the celebration! **All youth** are invited to be ushers and greeters for the **4 pm All-Ages Christmas Eve service**. The **Winthrop** group with their families are invited to be the ushers and greeters for the **10 pm service**. Contact **Trust** at [thilton@fccb.org](mailto:thilton@fccb.org) if you are interested.



Clockwise from top left: Songs of the Soul performed last Sunday; First Church Gospel Choir also performed; Youth at the second Red Cross first aid training class. All attending kids passed the Red Cross exam and are now CPR certified; Small statues of pregnant Mary and Elizabeth were made in Sunday School, one of which you can see above, along with a beautiful pie from the Sunday School teachers' Christmas party lunch.

## Church Office Closed

The Church office will be closed **Christmas Day through New Year's Day** and will reopen **Tues., Jan. 2**. For **pastoral emergencies**, call **510/859-8876** to speak with one of our ministers.

## No Carillon Next Week

The *Carillon* is taking a break next week. The next issue will be **Sun., Jan. 7**.