

JULY 2022

THE GOOD TABLE NEWS



Nancy Lemon and Roger Ridgway

The Good Table Café and Nursery News

We are so grateful for all the kind words and contributions from the community in the wake of the **burglary that occurred on or about June 12th**. Losing all the rough electrical is a very large setback for the project (our current estimate to recover from this loss is well over \$180,000), but we continue to move forward. If you have any leads for new funding or want to know more about the burglary, please check Melinda's blog post on June 19. We are also in need of an experienced construction project manager, so if you know of someone with these skills, speak with Gavin or Melinda.

We discovered the burglary on Monday, June 13th and on Wednesday, June 15th, the Planting Justice farm in El Sobrante **lost about 300 trees** - ripe with stone fruit - to a fire that began on a neighboring property. Seriously, it was a very bad week for us.

But, in the good news department, **Planting Justice** is now building out the nursery part of the project and they have now hired a **Kitchen Manager, Sam Lustig** to begin developing their business plan for creating jams, jellies, honey, tinctures, and baked goods that will be created onsite for sale through the cafe/marketplace and through our weekly Farmer's Market. Sam has most recently been in charge of the production kitchen at Swanton Berry Farm and is a welcome addition to our team. Welcome Sam!

Thanks to everyone who has **financially contributed** to the project and if you haven't given yet, please help as you are willing and able. We're delighted to receive **your tax-deductible contributions in any amount** and we would really appreciate **introductions to other individual donors and/or foundations** that would be interested in our project.

You can give online through the-good-table.org or save the processing fees by mailing a check to: The Good Table LLC, 780 Ashbury Avenue, El Cerrito, CA 94530. All donations are 100% tax-deductible.

Please plan to come to our next **Community Work + Fun Day** on **Saturday July 30 from 12p - 3p**. We always have a variety of gardening and cleaning projects that can be done while construction is happening. Be sure to wear sturdy shoes, bring work gloves, and please wear a mask as we continue to weather this omicron surge. We are likely to begin scheduling some **additional workdays for specific projects**. Do get on our direct e-list if you'd like to come help - we need you and are so grateful for all your support.

July Birthdays

13th: Brady Morales-
Woolery

24th: Barbary Bly
29th: Brian Campbell-
Miller

July Anniversaries

July 3 Margaret and Mhel
Kavanaugh-Lynch

*Let us know your birthday or anniversary date
and we'll celebrate you here!*

Choice Tidbits

The **Mindfulness Circle** is on hiatus until August. We're in the process of selecting our next book, so this would be a great time to join the group when we begin meeting again on Wednesday August 3 from 2-3:30p pacific via zoom.



We will **celebrate the life of Wendy Wisely** with an English tea followed by a memorial service on **Sunday, August 7 with tea at 5 and the service at 6:30p**. The event will be held at our sibling congregation **Skyline Community UCC, Oakland** and catered by Chef Deirdre Davis of Pinole Farmhouse Kitchen. While it may seem odd to have the reception before the service, this will better accommodate Wisely friends in the theater who have Sunday matinee performances. The service will also be available via zoom and COVID restrictions will limit the number of in person attendees to 150.



The Gift of Grace

by Rev. Dr. Melinda V. McLain

Pastor for The Good Table UCC



When despair for the world grows in me, and I wake in the night at the least sound in fear of what my life and my children's lives may be, I go and lie down where the wood drake rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds. I come into the peace of wild things who do not tax their lives with forethought of grief. I come into the presence of still water. And I feel above me the day-blind stars waiting with their light. For a time I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.

- [Wendell Berry](#), American author and essayist

What does grace look like to you? What does it feel like? When do you experience grace? I distinctly remember hearing the word grace a lot growing up in the church. We said “grace” at meals, we were often encouraged to pray “God, in your grace”, we sang songs about “amazing grace”, and I’m sure I heard a few sermons about grace too. I was taught that grace is the free and unmerited gift of favor from God. And I still believe that, but it seemed as if this gift of grace was not always easy to unwrap.

Then in the mid-90’s, I began to genuinely understand much more about grace and spiritual practice. The greek word for grace is “charis” which is related to charisma. Charis and charisma cannot be earned, taught, bought, or learned, but you can simply have more grace in your life by engaging in spiritual practice.

So how do you “have” more grace? Take Wendell Berry’s advice and make a list of things, activities, images, whatever where you have experienced grace. Do more of that and indeed you will have more grace. If you doubt the efficacy of this, you can also make a list of things that produce stress and when you do more of those things . . . well voila! You will have more stress in your life.

This project is without question THE hardest thing I’ve ever done and this summer has felt completely impossible. Just about everything on my must-do-now list (I went beyond a to-do list a LONG time ago) is also on my stress list and the time to seek and experience grace has been short and limited. And so, I keep moving forward by remembering to listen to music (while working), to notice the beauty of the sky and the trees (in quick glances), and to vicariously experience the joy of our sweet pup Teja when she has a playdate with her best doggo friend, Marcie.

Grace-filled spiritual practices are essential in times of stress, grief, and transition. They are also even more potent when practiced in spiritual community and that my friends, is another answer to the question, why church. For the past few weeks, if I wasn’t part of a spiritual community already, I’d probably have found it impossible to get out of bed in the morning, but like clockwork, I spend time in the company of the community and I gain just enough grace to get through. Plus, in this moment, I’m aware of how grateful I am for all the great volunteers and supporters that keep showing up to help us with this big vision. And perhaps gratitude is the greatest gateway to grace. May grace abound!

Regular Ways to Connect



Sundays at 12 noon - Music, prayer, and preaching via Zoom. Our style is relaxed and interactive. Our music includes many genres from chant to gospel, and pop/rock to classical. We celebrate Holy Communion on the first Sundays of every month.



Wednesdays, 2-3:30 pm - How do we find our true self? What are the similarities between Buddhism and Christianity? Is there something that is real beyond the limits of our perception? These are just some of the questions that our mindfulness circle has explored while reading and pondering together. If you are interested, kindly send an email to Pastor Melinda to get added to the list: info@the-good-table.org



Thursdays, 6 pm - Interfaith Meditation via Zoom. There is an old Zen saying, "Everyone should meditate for 20 minutes each day unless you're really busy, and then you should meditate for an hour." We sit in chairs in silence for about 45 minutes and no previous experience with meditation is required.



Worth Noting

- **The Good Table UCC Council** meets via zoom, **Wednesday, July 20, 6:30p**
- **Colleen Rodger** and **Melinda V. McLain** will be in Santa Fe, NM, **July 26-Aug 2**.
- **Sat. July 30** will be our **Community Work + Fun Day @5166 Sobrante Ave, 12-3p**. Wear sturdy shoes and clothing and bring work gloves and favorite gardening tools. And please bring a good quality mask so we can all stay safe from COVID and construction dust.

- **Save the Date**

We will celebrate the life of **Wendy Wisely** on **Sunday, Aug. 7** in person @ **Skyline Community UCC, Oakland** with an English tea at 5p and memorial service at 6:30p.

The Good Table UCC Worship Offerings

Join us on **Sundays at 12 noon** for our celebration with music, prayer, and preaching in person AND via Zoom . We celebrate the sacrament of **Holy Communion every First Sunday**. All are welcome at our table in El Cerrito and online everywhere!

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| July 3 | “Joy in the Morning” | Psalm 30 |
| July 10 | “More than Mercy” | Luke 10: 25-37 |
| July 17 | “The Worries of Martha” | Luke 10: 38-42 |
| July 24 | “Prayer 101” | Luke 11: 1-13 |
| July 31 | “Dividing the Inheritance” | Luke 12:13-21 |
| Aug 7 | “Getting Ready” | Luke 12: 32-40 |

Celebrating Wendy Wisely, 5p @Skyline UCC, Oakland



Gavin Raders and Sam Lustig

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