

OCTOBER 2022

THE GOOD TABLE NEWS



Gavin, Xina, Orlando, & Colleen

The Good Table Café and Nursery News

We are finally **fully back in construction** after the long gap while we settled the insurance claim and resolved various other issues with the Contra Costa building department.

The **rough electrical** that was stolen by wire thieves in June is now being replaced and soon **new windows** will be going into the clerestories. The **radiant heat** system will soon be installed in the floor of the gathering space and the cafe. Planting Justice is also very busy building out their **farm store** and beginning to build the “benches” that will hold the plants in the nursery.

One of the projects that will also be happening soon will be the installation of **low voltage wiring** for wifi internet service throughout the building and for the audio and visual equipment we hope to eventually

install to allow music to be streamed in the different spaces plus video equipment in the Gathering Space for movie nights, documentary screenings, and robotic cameras for live-streaming educational events and live music. These systems have been designed by local company **Desired Effect** and will give us the ability to reach well beyond our walls with all of our programming.

Right now, our **budget only covers installing the wiring** while the walls are still open, but we are now seeking particular funding for the audio/visual equipment needed to make our space fully functional for live music and for streaming our offerings. If you know of foundations or individual funders who can help with this very specific part of the project, please contact Melinda or Gavin.

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 October 29 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.

October birthdays

11th Joann Pavlinec
11th Michael Ray Wisely
13th Bonnie Hariton
17th Diane Young
25th Ali Edney

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



Live Edge Readers

Our spiritual book group, **Live Edge Readers** continues to read and discuss: *When Things Fall Apart: Heart Advice for Difficult Times* by Pema Chödrön. Here's the description from Goodreads: "The beautiful practicality of her teaching has made Pema Chödrön one of the most beloved of contemporary American spiritual authors among Buddhists and non-Buddhists alike. A collection of talks she gave between 1987 and 1994, the book is a treasury of wisdom for going on living when we are overcome by pain and difficulties.

The group meets each week on **Wednesdays, 2-3:30p** pacific via zoom. Meeting ID: 868 7644 9214 and zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86876449214>> You can also add to your calendar by clicking [here](#).

We've also decided that our next book after reading Chödrön will be: *The Thirst of God: Contemplating God's Love with Three Women Mystics* by SFTS professor Wendy Farley. In this enlightening volume, Farley eloquently brings the work of three female mystics--Marguerite Porete, Mechthild of Magdeburg, and Julian of Norwich--into creative conversation with contemporary Christian life and thought. Get a copy now and join us sometime in November.

Few Plans or Reservations

By Nancy Lemon



A distant view of Chief Mountain after a thunderstorm

This summer my husband Blaine and I took an eight-week trip in our minivan, which he converted last year into a campervan. We traveled over 4000 miles: up to Prince Rupert in northern British Columbia close to Alaska, then east to the Canadian Rockies and the many national parks in Alberta, south to Montana, west through Idaho and Washington, then south to Oregon and Northern California.

While visiting family across North-West, we had few plans and reservations, as we enjoy spontaneity; but always found a safe place to make camp. While Blaine drove, I read PG Wodehouse novels to him and navigated using our atlases. I also researched a lot of names and history as we went along, including learning about the local First Nations and Native American tribes.

When we got to eastern Washington we had internet access via our phones, so I looked up the Kalispell tribe, as I could see from the atlas that we were approaching their reservation. It turned out they were hosting a 4-day Pow Wow,

the first since COVID, and everyone was welcome. Blaine and I had planned to drop in briefly but ended up staying overnight, camping with hundreds of First Nations and Native American people on the reservation. It was quiet and grassy and mellow and had the cleanest Porta Potties we saw on the entire trip.

The evening's celebration at the Pow Wow inside the large round covered arena was very moving. There were drummers sitting and chanting in groups of six people around a large drum, and a drumming competition between the groups. There was an announcer with an excellent PA system. There were many benches to sit on and people selling traditional beef jerky, smoked salmon, and other food. And there were hundreds of dancers filing in and forming a huge spiral in the center, dressed in beautiful regalia.

At the cultural center in Alert Bay we had learned that for many decades it was illegal to have a Pow Wow, and children in Indian schools...

Continued on page 4



Dancers in the Big House on Alert Bay

were beaten for speaking their languages. But here on the Kalispell Reservation, at this gathering, everyone was bursting with energy and joy and pride. I made a video of this processional while I cried for joy that in spite of genocide, in spite of overwhelming pressure to give up their languages and cultures, in spite of high rates of poverty and domestic violence and COVID, these First Nations and Native Americans from many tribes were united and thriving. And that we were truly welcome.

When the Golden Age women (those over 60 like me) had their time to dance, they moved like queens, stately and dignified, and the whole audience rose to honor them. This was a major contradiction to the way that older women are often treated in white society, dismissed and seen as unimportant.

The next morning I followed the sound of a flute and struck up a conversation with an Apache man named Geronimo. He was playing a Japanese Shakahachi flute made of resin rather than bamboo, which makes it much

easier to take on travels without damaging it. He graciously and eagerly answered Blaine's and my questions about many things we had seen and wondered about -- totem poles are commemorating important historic events, the Thunderbird signifies a major treaty or agreement, differences between Southwest and Northern Indigenous practices, etc. Geronimo explained that the upcoming canoe event on the river next to the Pow Wow grounds was not about speed but about skill in making the boats and paddling as a team skillfully and silently. He encouraged us to stay for the rest of the Pow Wow but we were ready to move on.

While of course we had many wonderful experiences during the trip -- swimming in mountain lakes, hiking, seeing glaciers, making popcorn over the campfire, etc. -- this account is focusing on the aspects of our trip that dealt with Indigenous people, as those were particularly significant for me.



Nancy, Geronimo and Blaine at the Kalispell Pow Wow

Dia de Los Muertos/All Saints Day on Sunday, Nov. 6



For many years now, The Good Table UCC spiritual community has designated the first Sunday in November for **remembering those beloved folks who have died** in our communities and families.

In Mexico and for our members of Hispanic descent or those with cultural ties to Hispanic cultures, celebrating **Dia de Los Muertos (the Day of the Dead)** is a tender and important time of remembrance. In our community, we build an ofrenda (altar) each year during this worship service using photographs and mementos of family and friends who have died as a way to honor them and the ways that they continue to inspire us in our current lives.



GTUCC Picnic 09-25-2022

In the Christian tradition, **All Saints Day** now follows All Hallows' Eve (Halloween) on Nov. 1 and is an ancient tradition that originally focused on the lives of Christian martyrs in the early church who were tortured and executed because of their resistance to the Roman Empire. With the conversion of Roman Emperor Constantine, the first in 312 C.E. to Christianity, this liturgical feast shifted focus and was expanded to include the remembrance of all the faithful who had died. Over the centuries, the date for All Saints has changed during various periods, but is now uniformly celebrated on Nov. 1 or on the first Sunday in November.

Do plan to join us for our **Sunday Gathering on Sunday, Nov. 6th at 12n** if you would like to participate in building the ofrenda as a way to honor your beloveds who have died. Bring photos and or small objects that remind you of your beloveds for the altar. If you have questions or want more information about this service, please contact [Pastor Melinda](#).



Sally and her pup Lilly

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 Live Edge Readers 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

- Joy Barnitz will be our guest preacher on Sunday, Oct. 9.
- The Good Table UCC Council meets via zoom, Wednesday, Oct. 19, 6:30p
- Our Social Action Team (SAT) will meet on Sunday, Oct. 23 @1p after the Sunday Gathering via zoom.
- Sat. Oct. 29 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.

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!

- Oct. 2 *"The Gifts of Exile"* Psalm 137: 1-4
Reception of Neighbors in Need offering and World Communion Sunday
- Oct. 9 *"The Need for Heart Surgery"* John 8: 39-45
- Oct. 16 *"True Grit"* Luke 18: 1-8
- Oct. 23 *"Being Held in Contempt"* Luke 18: 9-14
- Oct. 30 *"Giving to Lose"* Luke 19: 1-10
- Nov. 6 *"Generational Joy"* Psalm 145: 1-5
Celebrating All Saints Day/Dia de Los Muertos



Receiving Donation from El Rancho

The Good Table
780 Ashbury Avenue
El Cerrito, CA 94530

Address Change Requested
Dated Material - October 2022



The Good Table News
published monthly by

The Good Table
United Church of Christ
An Open and Affirming
Congregation

Rev. Dr. Melinda V. McLain, pastor
info@the-good-table.org
780 Ashbury Avenue
El Cerrito, CA 94530
510-526-0110
the-good-table.org