



St. Jude the Apostle Episcopal Church in Cupertino

20920 McClellan Rd., Cupertino, CA 95014 (408) 252-4166

St. Jude's is a spiritual oasis where lives are transformed.

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the View from the orchard

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Carolyn Foster talks about Personal Choice in Transitional Times

Barbara Simmons



As a Stephen Minister, I know that all of us who serve in Stephen Ministry at St. Jude's (Gordon Mullin, Charlotte Pannell, Jan Panell, Judy Bailey, Laura Bryson, and Bet Messmer) are interested in opportunities to help us and others learn to make wise, clear choices to solve problems. We are trained to be caregivers, to offer listening, prayer, and a path to healing through God's grace. When we began to talk about inviting a speaker who could address life issues, we turned to Carolyn Foster. She shared that these days many of us find our time is characterized by a state of overwhelm, with too many priorities demanding our attention, and too little mental spaciousness in which to discern how to proceed. We asked her to use that as a launching pad from which to speak about "Managing the Power of Choice in the Midst of Change."

Carolyn Foster, a recognized author, life coach, counselor, professor, and national speaker, came to St. Jude's on November 7th, 2017, at the invitation of the Stephen Ministry teams of St. Jude's and St. Andrew's, who sponsored the event. Her talk centered on the question: "Who isn't in some kind of transition these days?" Whether transition is related to a job, a relationship, one's health, one's geography, or myriad other factors, there are four "D's" to acknowledge (as William Bridges, author of Transitions, states): Disengagement; Disidentification (who am I now?); Disenchantments (your old reality no longer works); and Disorientation (a feeling of being unmoored).

During a transitional phase, one inhabits what Carolyn called a "neutral zone": a threshold where, like a trapeze artist, one has let go of a fly bar before catching onto a new home base, and a new fly bar. One is literally hanging between an older version of oneself and the new version up ahead.

To help us along these transitions, Carolyn suggested several activities. First, deep breaths - allowing our deepening breathing to help us calm down. Next, "attentive inactivity": an ability to notice things without having an agenda, to simply "be". Thirdly, having a ritualized routine can also have a calming effect and set a smooth tone to our days, inviting an order to our lives.

Carolyn ended the forum with words from the Tao te Ching:

Fill your bowl to the brim

And it will spill.

Keep sharpening your knife

And it will blunt.

Chase after money and security

And your heart will never unclench.

Care about people's approval

And you will be their prisoner.

Do your work, then step back

The only path to serenity.

O come, Emmanuel - Comfort and Joy this Advent-Christmastide

Wilma



Greetings as we stand on the edge of a new church year. This edition of the View includes stories of giving in the season of advent - of our treasure, our talent and our time - of prayer, volunteering, and our personal choices.

A small group of us pondered the Scripture readings for advent, and the words '**comfort and joy**' resonated with us. In all the tragedies and traumas of these past months, the floods, wildfires, earthquakes and mass shootings, how can we find comfort and joy? It can be difficult to contemplate the possibility of comfort and joy in the midst of all the sadness and overwhelming difficulties, but this is what the people of God did in their time, and this is what we are invited to do. We can turn toward God and look for comfort and joy, to find hope and strength to deal with the challenges and obstacles that face us.

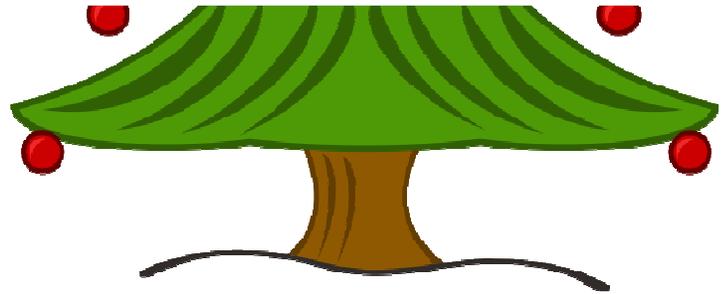
This will be our theme for advent as we explore the scripture lessons and sing our advent hymns and songs that remind us that God comes toward us as we come towards God through God's coming as a vulnerable, human baby at Christmas. We will explore this in our sermons. Our forums will focus on the Gospel of Mark, which are the source of much of our Scripture readings this year, and on the poetry and prose of Advent. See page 4.

The words comfort and joy do not only mean happiness and an easy life. The Scriptures remind us that our God is Emmanuel, God with us. In all that we go through, God's abiding presence gives us strength and hope, even joy. I commend the book 'The Book of Joy' that I have spoken of in sermons. It tells the story of a week that Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu and the Dalai Lama spent together, comparing their faith traditions and the meaning of joy in the midst of all the suffering they have seen and through their work for peace and justice. It is inspiring and profound.

We can so easily get comfortable in our own lives and ways of doing things, and become resistant to change, or being invited out of our comfort zones to help others. Advent is a time to remember those who lost their homes, those who are unhoused and live in their cars,

those who go to food pantries for their food. Opportunities for giving through our partner organizations Santa Maria Urban Ministry in San Jose, West Valley Community Services in Cupertino and environs, are below.

As we head into the season that is full of bright lights and celebrations, family and friends, we also remember those who are grieving and have lost ones, those who find this season difficult, and those who struggle to get through each day. May we be people who seek comfort and joy, and seek to give comfort and joy to others.



Opportunities for Holiday Giving and Volunteering

WVCS (West Valley Community Services, Cupertino)

Gift of Hope program: helps homeless and low-income families celebrate the holiday season. Of 230 families on the list, 71 still need sponsors.

Option 1: Pick a family you want to sponsor and donate financially towards their need list. The drive will end December 13th. You have the payment option of writing a check or using the online feature. please indicate *Gift of Hope* in the note section.

Option 2: Select the family you want to sponsor, then shop and purchase the gifts for all members of the family. Gifts have to be dropped off at WVCS between Dec. 5 - Dec. 8. Detailed Instructions for both options: <https://www.roonga.com/giftofhope/>

Wreaths Across America: The ceremony at Gate of Heaven Cemetery, Cupertino with the laying on of wreaths on Veteran's graves will be on **Dec. 16** at 10:00 am. All are welcome. You can still buy a wreath, contact Mike McNutt, (408) 446-9380.

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SMUM Gift Wrapping: 778 S. Almaden Ave. San Jose, CA RSVP to Becky Smith, beckys100@hotmail.com

Dec. 16: 9:30 am – 12:30 pm St. Jude's parishioners are encouraged to join other volunteers to wrap gifts at Santa Maria Urban Ministry. We need your help!

Dec. 17: Wrap remaining gifts for Santa Maria after the 10:30 am service. All ages welcome.

Dec. 17, 5:00 pm, Lessons and Carols Bring an item for the food pantry.

Sleeping Bags for Homeless People: SMUM (Santa Maria Urban Ministry, San Jose) Sleeping bags are given to homeless people who come to SMUM for assistance. Bring to the church any time in November or December.

St. Jude's Angel Tree: Pick up an angel from the Angel Tree in the Parish Hall, starting Nov. 26. Gift cards are needed in the amount of \$25.00 from Target, Kohl's or Old Navy. You may return them to the Angel Tree box in the Farmhouse office by Dec. 16. *(more Advent on page 4)*

Making Giving a Priority Together

Tony and Jana Chow

TONY: It was a struggle deciding whether to accept Wilma's invitation to share about our giving. After sharing my thoughts with Wilma, we agreed to share our story of faith and finances, our struggles with giving.



JANA: We have attended St. Jude's for almost four years, and in this time, a lot has changed in our lives. We got married, we both completed grad school programs – one here in the Bay Area, and Tony, in Monterey, I have changed jobs twice, and two years ago, when our rent went up to an amount we could not afford to pay, we moved in with Tony's parents in Fremont with the goal of paying off our grad school loans. We still live there, and we are living on one income.

We have lived on the periphery of the St. Jude's community over these years, attending church some Sundays, unable to commit much more due to geography and the demands of work, school and our families.

This community has cared for us through several waves of change in our lives, and we have really appreciated the intergenerational friendships we have found here. Members of this community have thoughtfully supported us. Frank and Diane Snow have invited us to stay in their home several times while they travel, just to get a break from life at the in-laws'. After my dad passed away, Mary Souza and Jennifer Stern wrote me letters that really touched me; and the Estradas and Jennifer and Jeffrey have consistently checked in to see how we are doing and encouraged us in our exploration of the Episcopal Church. There are of course others I could mention here, but these people are representative of the investment this church has made in us, despite little return on our side.

When it comes to giving, I actually don't find it easy or natural to put a check in the plate each month. Others who have shared this month have said that it's easier than they thought it would be, but I still have a feeling of dread when I know I need to write the check. While I feel gratitude for the way this church has invested in us, I still find it difficult to trust that this is the best place to put our money while the cost of living continues to rise and the housing market feels out of reach.

TONY: In our marriage, we've had to reconcile our beliefs for giving, and in practice, for marital harmony. We've been in evangelical churches most of our lives and have heard countless sermons and Biblical verses about giving tithes and offerings. Tithes to be meaning literally 10% to the local church and offerings anything beyond that.

Pre-marriage, it was my practice to set aside the first 10% of my earnings – or first fruits – towards the tithe. I liked doing this because I felt it reflected the right posture one ought to have before the Lord – that is, to recognize God as the source of provision, to train myself in viewing God as source of provision, and to order priorities in my heart – keeping the notion of his kingdom first. Thus, a form of spiritual discipline, and also a sense of financial discipline. I naturally have a fear of letting go of earnings to a mysterious offering plate. I wish to feel freedom - stemming from my hearing of the verse 'to give joyfully'. If this were the case, I would view myself as keeping 90% rather than losing 10%. That's much better than government tax rates.

In faith, together, we have made giving a priority – largely because it feels like the right thing to do, even if it's not comfortable. We do not know what our future holds, but we have made a decision together to invest in the faith communities that have invested in us.



Comfort & Joy – Advent 2017

Come Worship, Learn, Creatively Pray, & Rejoice together!

Pre-Advent | Nov 26

Advent Wreaths & Angel Tree

Make home Advent wreaths in the Parish Hall between services. \$10 wreath base & \$5 candles.

Advent 1 | Dec 3



Worship - 8 & 10:30a

At 10:30, children wear pajamas & then, when coming for the Eucharist, leave their shoes in the Narthex for a little treat.

Forum - 9:15a

Clergy offer an introduction to the Gospel of Mark as we begin a new lectionary year.

Jazz Vespers - 5p

An evening of reflection, rest, poetry, prose, & jazz.

Advent 2 | Dec 10

Worship - 8 & 10:30a
++ Food Truck Sunday & GOTS

Forum - 9:15a

Clergy discuss theological themes; comparison of Mark with other gospels & questions such as, Why is there no birth narrative in Mark?



Pick & Pray, followed by Taizé

Enjoy one or more prayer offerings:

- **2:00-4:30p** "Remember a loved one," walk the Labyrinth, Knitting comfort station, & more! Available throughout the campus (map & descriptions will be posted).
- **2:30p** Joy Hayter & Mair Dundon lead a special time of Mindfulness/Welcoming Prayer.
- **3:30p** Deacon Robin Poppoff leads special prayers at the labyrinth.
- **5:00p** Taizé prayers

Advent 3 | Dec 17

Worship - 8 & 10:30a

Forum - 9:15a

Barbara Simmons & GOTS writers share Advent poetry & prose.

Lessons & Carols - 5p

Candle lit service, with cookies, hot chocolate & brass ensemble carols following. As able, bring an item for the local food pantry.



Advent 4 | Dec 24



Worship - 9:15a

ONE contemplative service in the Parish Hall with poetic reflections, contemplative music & communion.

In this full holiday season, ways to give back are outlined on an alternate flier.

Christmas Eve | Dec 24

Worship - 4p

Interactive, intergenerational pageant & carols, with communion.



Worship -10:30p

Festive Choral service with sermon & communion; carol singing at 10 pm.

Christmas Day | Dec 25

Worship - 10a

Simple service with carols, sermon, & communion.

Healing Service | Dec 31

Worship - 9:15a

Centering worship service with sermon, communion, & healing prayers to start the new calendar year.

**Whoever you are, wherever you are
on your journey of faith, you are welcome here!**

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Giving to Further the Vision of God in the World

Mary Lyn and Gwyn Azar

Mary Lyn: I am a cradle Episcopalian. There was never a time in my memory that I don't remember putting money in the plate. From the time I was a small child I put my dollar into the plate as it went by. Of course saying it was my dollar is a bit of a stretch, as it was a dollar that my parents shoved in my hand about 30 seconds before the plate was passed.



So when I became an adult, and Steven and I were in our 20s and expecting our first child, we joined our first church out here in California, and it wasn't a question of whether or not we would give, but how much. We started by working out how much we could give where it would hurt a little bit, but not too much. Our plan was to increase the amount by a certain percentage every year until we reached our eventual goal of tithing.

As we added more children and struggled to get by in the Silicon Valley on a single income, our plan to increase each year started to become more difficult. Eventually, we decided we could not increase our pledge each year but again the question is not whether or not we would give, but only how much.

We believe in the mission of the church, and of serving others in our community and around the world. We feel that one way we can help to do this is by contributing money through our faith community. We faithfully give a pledge each year, sometimes holding the amount steady and sometimes increasing, with the hope that our money combined with that of all of yours, will be able to be used to further the vision of God in the world.

Gwyn:

As a kid, you sorta learn by following your parents' examples, and those around you. And, considering I'm a jobless 13 year old, pledging my own money isn't really an option. So I give back to the church in other ways, whether that be with time, talent, or something else. One thing I love about this church and where our money goes is the social justice and outreach committee.

Giving to the broader community is something that I feel passionate about, and I continue the church's work by being the "community service organizer" of my class at

school. The church is a resource I can lean on for community service opportunities for my fellow students, and I find it very helpful. I've taken a group to Santa Maria Urban Ministry to paint a wall, another to do a lake clean up, and I'm organizing for some of them to tag along to cook at the San Jose Family Shelter.

Safe Park Program will return this winter

Wilma

The number of homeless people in Cupertino almost tripled in 2016, according to the annual homeless people count conducted by West Valley Community Services (WVCS). "The median rent in the San Jose metro area is \$3,500 a month, yet the median wage is \$12 an hour in food service and \$19 an hour in health care support, an amount that won't even cover housing costs. The minimum annual salary needed to live comfortably in San Jose is \$87,000, according to a study by personal finance website GoBankingRates."

The pilot program run by St Jude's for five months this year, in partnership with WVCS, was our first attempt to address the housing crisis, and part of our practical research for our PACT (People Acting in Community Together) community organizing project. The vestry agreed to repeat the program this winter.

We are connecting with other congregations through the San Jose Winter Faith Collaborative and need to increase the number of volunteers from St Jude's and other faith communities. The planning has begun and we need your prayers, support and help! Please contact Becky Smith if you are interested in volunteering or assisting with planning for this winter: beckys100@hotmail.com or 408-257-4690

Welcome the Rev. Dave Rickert

The needs of the youth group have become more diverse just as the youth mentors' time has become more stressed. So, to honor the various needs of both mentors and youth, we hired the Rev. Dave Rickert. According to a clergy friend of Wilma, Dave is "one of the most inspiring, talented new clergy from the Diocese of Northern California!"



Trained as an architect and later a partner in an architectural practice (and creating a school for children ages 5-18 with autism), Dave Rickert thought he was in

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Mississippi after Hurricane Katrina to help repair and rebuild what had been destroyed in the storm, but he soon discovered that he was there to do something else that was just as important: "I found myself being with individuals telling me their stories." He discovered that people needed someone to listen, to understand, and to care for them.

After his kids were grown up, Dave began the discernment process, and in 2012, he started classes at the Church Divinity School of the Pacific in Berkeley, receiving his Master of Divinity degree in 2015. Dave was ordained to the diaconate in June 2017, and is scheduled to be ordained to the priesthood in February. Dave lives in Sacramento, is married, and has three adult children. His first grandchild, a girl, was born in 2016.

Dave+ joined our team in November, serving as a transitional Deacon twice a month and leading the Youth Group movement-based learning through June 3, 2018. He is super creative and fun, has a lot of theological and "out of the box" practical experience, and is very young at heart. The youth mentors love him, Sarah+ loves him, and Wilma and the wardens love him. And we're all excited that he'll be joining us at St. Jude's!



We give thanks for ...

...The Harvest Dinner was another beautiful gathering around thanksgivings and hopes for our ministry and mission together. A special thanks goes out to Rick Felton and to Jani and Deb Wild for sharing that night, to Juneann McDonald and the Stewardship team, Steve Rudd, Tony Chow, Kris Austin, Carlos Estrada, for organizing the evening and for their work this financial promise season, and to Wilma and Carlos for their great support throughout the season.

...Those helping Sarah+ and those participating honestly and with hope in this year's interactive, intergenerational Confirmation, Reception, and Reaffirmation of Faith exploration group! Please keep us all in your prayers!

...Our new Social Services Volunteer: We have many people who come to the church for financial and other assistance. Their needs can be overwhelming, and the



help we can give is minimal. John Butcher, whom I met at DeAnza College, now retired, offered his volunteer services to us, so that we can do more! John is on campus in the West Room, Mondays and Thursdays from 12:30 -2:00pm. He will be available to listen to those who come for help, advise clergy and Donna whether to help, and make thoughtful referrals to outside agencies and resources that can provide further help. John has considerable experience – 42 years in social work – we are so grateful!

... Sherry and Ned Snow: After more than three decades of worship and service at St Jude's, the Snows are moving to Santa Fe, New Mexico. We are so grateful for Sherry's work as interim treasurer. Words are not adequate for all she has done in the last two years. Ned has provided great leadership to Parish Camp and the brass ensemble BOTS (Brass of the Spirit), Sherry was in MOTS (Musicians of the Spirit), and together they have sung in the choir. We will miss them and pray for God's blessing and grace in the transition. They will be joining St Bede's Episcopal Church in Santa Fe.

...Bev and Glenn Bennett: After eleven years of bringing their joy and presence to St Jude's, Bev in health ministries and providing the ministry of Intercessors and Prayers that coordinated the prayer requests, Bev and Glenn feel called to return to their former church, St Andrew's in Saratoga. We will miss them, and they are not going too far, so they will visit us.

...All the adults and youth who came together in November for chili-palooza! The youth group made more than 31 gallons of chili. From their record sales, they were able to sponsor 5 families through Gift of Hope, WVCS.



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Tuesday Taizé Prayer

Mair Dundon

In the mid-80's, a brother from the Taizé community in France came to train our Santa Clara University groups in the music and chanting that serve as the core of the Taizé Community "Prayers Around the Cross" service. The chants were simple and meditative – powerful in creating a contemplative and loving space for those who attend. Together we learned the flow of chanting, readings, silent reflection, intentions and time for prayer at the cross.

In 2015, while recovering from a severe illness, I came back into the embrace of Taizé here at St Jude's. Wilma had brought the tradition with her from her other churches and provides us with constancy, musicality and a prayerful support that allow the practice to thrive.

Tuesdays from 6:30 to 7:15 pm have become a much treasured time in the week for many in the St. Jude's community. We often laugh at how each of us run to the practice in times of chaos – as it grounds us and allows us to continue on – gently reminded that we are cherished and surrounded by love.

Come for all or part of the service to rest, renew and receive the warm, gentle welcome of this beautiful community of practice. This is a special way to remain centered during the season of Advent, and throughout the year.

A few reflections from people who attend Taizé:

"When I first experienced Taizé prayers...I had been working on including more meditation and quiet practices in my life as a way to deepen my spiritual experience and to become healthier in general. I fell in love immediately with this quiet, contemplative approach to worship. All of the things that I loved about worship in a sanctuary were combined with meditative moments, music that invited contemplation, and listening to scripture and prayers in a manner that allowed for a deep soaking of the soul."

~LeMel

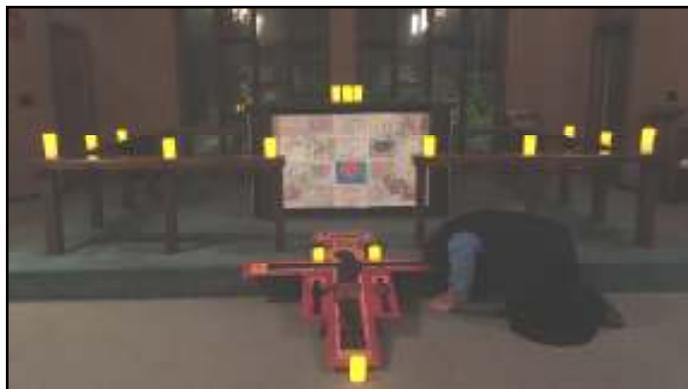
"Taizé prayer on Tuesday evenings is a small but powerful service that I look forward to all week. It's an active, yet incredibly peaceful time that can bring me solace all week."

~Mary Souza

"Taizé is a place where I hear God say, 'I see you. You matter. I am holding you and all the intense feelings within you. I am with you and we will get through this together.' It is a place I come to leave my burdens at the cross and Jesus

says, 'Go in peace. Your faith has made you well.' Sacred space. Holy Ground." ~Anonymous

"A Taizé service is a step out of time. It dips your spirit in quiet, tranquil beauty. All the cares, preoccupations and faults you bring are sloughed away - leaving the new creation in Christ we have been promised. You emerge fortified to love and serve in your daily life." ~Ailsa



November Vestry Notes

Mary Hultquist

Each November vestry meeting is a Mutual Ministry Review. Wilma led us in a lectio divina of Ephesians 1 to ground us for the night's work. For the business portion, we approved the new Financial Team. Jeffrey Pugh was approved as official Treasurer and ex-officio CFO of the Corporation. There is a Finance Committee that will be responsible for the financial workings and reporting on a regular basis. The Social Justice & Outreach committee was granted autonomy to act on its own for small grants, providing vestry visibility on any action on a quarterly basis.

Sarah led us in the Mutual Ministry Review in relation to our Mission Covenant Goals (i.e., "strategic plan"), with an interactive small group discussion of three areas:

- Which goal resonated with you in 2017?
- Which goal was most evident with the parish in 2017?
- Which goal seemed the most challenging to implement?

We ended this activity with a whole group discussion on how might we reaffirm our goals in a way that is more integrated, relational, and organic. Stay tuned for more at the Annual Parish Meeting. Vestry discussion to be continued at the Vestry Retreat in February 2018.

Finally, Wilma reported that we have received just over half of our 2018 pledges, and an email will be sent to those who have not yet pledged, with follow-up phone calls in December.