The Cornerstone

Rolling Hills United Methodist Church
26438 Crenshaw Blvd.
Rolling Hills Estates, CA 90274
310-377-6771

January 2014

Progress!!!

It has taken much longer than ever expected – doesn't it always? – but we've made progress on a couple of important projects as the new year begins. First, after numerous meetings with several city related bodies, the Rolling Hills Estates City Council approved a Temporary Use Permit for the use of the new gate and path between our property and the Botanic Garden. The church, Rolling Hills Country Day School, and the South Coast Botanic Garden developed a plan to allow each other overflow parking for special events through the year. The city was concerned to protect the use of the equestrian trail on that side of the property and we were able to satisfy those concerns. We look forward to having a more useful parking lot for all our needs in the coming years.

We also received approval on our grading and construction plans for the first phase of the new facility project we have been working on for several years now. Our general contractor is seeking bids for the various pieces of the project, which will include new parking and an expanded choir room (with restroom!). We will have those in hand shortly and will be letting you know when we expect the actual work to begin. By the way, does anyone know if we still have those silver shovels from the last ground-breaking?

from the pastor

The other morning I read a lovely year in review note from a friend. Years ago he'd moved back to his home in Wales, where he now runs a bed and breakfast on the coast. It wasn't one of those activity reports that updates the reader on who got married, where everyone is in school, or what recent trips were taken. It was a bit more personal. The major events of the year were still there, of course – the loss of his mother, his brother-in-law's wedding. But there was a sense of grace throughout it all. It felt more like a reflection than a report.

This is the time for year-end reviews. Best songs of the year. Best sports highlights. New word of the year. Celebrities gone from us. Obviously, it's easier to look back than to look ahead. We can tell where we've been, but none of us really knows where the coming year will take us. That remains beyond our sight.

I have events on my calendar already – Hannah's graduation from college, a wedding at the end of May (Alex Salter's, not Hannah's!), a conference or two. I know when Lent begins (Ash Wednesday, March 5) and when Easter will be (April 20). I can create an outline for the year, and fill it with all kinds of events, but I really have no idea what they will mean. It's a true mystery – a story which won't let us skip ahead and read the last page.

In the weeks to come, I look forward to a number of good things. We will (finally!) break ground on Phase One of our campus update and new facilities. All of the work will take place on the southwest side of the sanctuary (toward Country Day School). We have received the necessary approvals and permits, and we are working with Del Amo Construction to determine the actual start date. It will be a bit messy over there, but the end result will be worth it. We will achieve about 15 additional parking spaces, a better handicapped ramp, and a larger choir room not only helpful to the music program but making possible a range of other groups and classes.

I can't help but wonder what the new year will bring. I know enough about it to be glad and hopeful. But I really don't know what's coming, or what it will mean when it gets here. I know that the same grace will be present in what's to come as in what has been. For that I give thanks, knowing that God will be with us as we go.

Grace and peace,

Jonathan

CONFIRMED!

Four months ago, twenty of our high school youth made the decision to affirm the grace of God in their lives and the vows that were shared in their baptism. Three confirmation classes and a service project later, we have confirmed all twenty of them as members of Rolling Hills United Methodist Church. On Sunday, December 8, we celebrated their achievement! Congrats to our confirmands and their families!

List of Confirmands

Grant Geiger	Caela Roach	Julian Szieff	Shannon Tsang
Bobby Jones	Megan Roach	Tyler Torcasso	Brigit Valeri
Kyle Kleinick	CJ Scharenberg	Cole Tournat	Connor Welch
Zoe Peterson	Danny Shultz	Melina Tournat	Abigail Whitman
Dylan Plunkett	Ryan Snaguski	Ryan Tsang	Steven Williams

Dawn Unity Group's Interfaith Discovery Series

The second program of the Dawn Unity Group's Interfaith Discovery Series will be held on **Tuesday, January 14th**, at 7:30 p.m. at the St. Francis Episcopal Church, 2000 Via Rosa, PVE. "Religious vs. Spiritual II", is a follow-up to one that prompted a lot of discussion on this timely topic last year. There are differing opinions within all faith communities on whether the search for a connection with the Divine is best pursued as an individual or within the structure of organized religion. Last year's panel discussion was among pulpit clergy without the input from someone whose search involves more personal methods. So this year, such an individual will be on the panel to present his perspective. Mr. Jonathan Whittle-Utter is a yoga teacher and holistic bodyworker currently earning his PhD in Somatic Depth Psychology at Pacific Graduate Institute; he is on the board of the Southern California Committee for a Parliament of World Religions, and he grew up in a clergy home. The other panelists are our very own Rev. Jonathan Chute; Rabbi Brian Schuldenfrei, Congregation Ner Tamid; Fr. Alexei Smith, Director of Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles; and Bob Rothman as Moderator. Join us for this evening which is free to all including the cookies after the ninety minute program. Call (310) 833-7008 for questions.

Youth – Visiting, Caring & Caroling

Fa-la-la-la-la La-la-la-la!

On Wednesday, December 11th, our junior and senior high youth wrapped up the 2013 year with Christmas caroling and poinsettia deliveries! They formed five teams and visited homes in San Pedro, Redondo Beach, Lomita, Torrance, and Palos Verdes. Stories were shared. Goodies were eaten. Songs were sung. Laughter abounded. Upon their return, they had warm bread bowls and soup waiting for them! A great time was had by all in the spread of Christmas cheer! Merry Christmas!

Feeding the Homeless

On the day before Thanksgiving, 28 senior high youth spent the night at the church to prepare 100 Thanksgiving meals for the homeless in conjunction with Walteria UMC's homeless program. With the help of many parents, they prepared turkey meals with all the fixings and filled them in take-out containers. On Thanksgiving morning, they traveled to Walteria UMC to hand them out. It was a day of service for our youth as they shared the spirit of Thanksgiving with others!

Sunday, January 12, 2014 at 2:00 p.m.

Sundays At Two

~ presents ~

THE SCHUMANN DUO

Fast-rising East Coast-based duo pianist sisters **Elizabeth** and **Sonya Schumann** return to Southern California to perform the great Romantic-Era chamber music masterpiece of their namesake **Robert Schumann** - the Piano Quintet in E-flat Major, Op.44 - lovingly transcribed for piano four hands by his virtuoso pianist wife **Clara.**

As young children, Elizabeth and Sonya Schumann shared cacophonous practice time on their family's second-hand spinet piano. Finally, their mother gave in and purchased another! The furious practicing which ensued resulted in prizes in major national and international piano competitions for both, and eventually led to a dynamic and harmonic musical and theatrical collaboration between the sisters.

The sisters share a kinetic connection with their audience, providing an opportunity for listeners to enter the world of the composers through artistic excellence, innovative programming, and insightful narration. Often receiving standing ovations, this duo was called "attractive, unique, and immensely engaging" by the Fine Arts Initiative, and has been garnering international attention since their debut. More about the Schumann Duo by clicking: http://www.elizabethschumann.com/#!schumann-duo/c1ny4

News from the Missions Committee

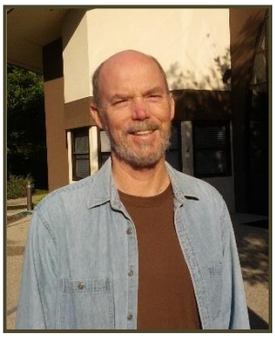
Happy New Year to all, and . . .
A big thank you goes out to all of you who supported the "Trek to the Tree" this year. Once again, our congregation made the most of the opportunity to brighten the Christmas for children at Toberman Neighborhood Center in San Pedro. We donated gifts for approximately 200 children! Special thanks to Noucha Jasanis for leading the charge on the Trek.

Are you interested in supporting missions work at RHUMC? Do you like working with nice people? If so, you are invited to join the Missions Committee! All ages are welcome - we need input and support from all generations! Meetings are only once a month, for an hour . . . please email Kim Hall at kimhallhomes@gmail.com, or Susie Lines at lines1@cox.net if you are interested.

RHUMC Women's Retreat

We still have 2 openings available for the women's retreat scheduled **January 24th-26th** at the Casa de Maria Retreat Center in Santa Barbara. The retreat's theme is Brokenness and Blessings. Cost is $350 which includes two nights' lodging and six meals. Scholarship monies are available. For more information, contact Patty Koester at Pattyk414@att.net or at 310-530-5185.

Welcome Rick Mitchell



We welcome Rick Mitchell to our staff as our new Facilities Manager. Rick is also currently working as a self-employed handyman and is a member of the Carpenters' Union. He started out his career as an apprentice for a contractor who built homes and later worked 18 years for the maintenance contractor to the Air Force in El Segundo and San Pedro. Rick grew up in Torrance and is a graduate of the George Williams College in Illinois. Most summers, Rick keeps busy as a backpacking guide for the Sequoia Natural History Association. He and his wife Ann have been married for 28 years.

Rick doesn't sit idle for very long for he is fortunate to have many hobbies. Besides spending family time with his two grown daughters, Christy & Leann, he sings with community vocal groups, plays volleyball and enjoys camping and backpacking. Welcome Rick!

Basketball Update

"People are so worried about what they eat between Christmas and the New Year, but they really should be worried about what they eat between the New Year and Christmas."
– Author Unknown

Our dates and times for January are:

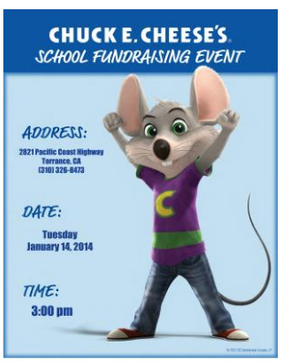
	Thurs., Jan 2nd, 6-8 pm	Sat., Jan 4th, 2-4 pm
Mon., Jan 6th, 6-8 pm	Thurs., Jan 9th, 6-8 pm	Sat., Jan 11th, 2-4 pm
Mon., Jan 13th, 6-8 pm	Thurs., Jan 16th, 6-8 pm	Sat., Jan 18th, 2-4 pm
Mon., Jan 20th, 6-8 pm	Thurs., Jan 23rd, 6-8 pm	Sat., Jan 25th, 2-4 pm
Mon., Jan 27th, 6-8 pm	Thurs., Jan 30th, 6-8 pm	

If you would like to be sent reminders/updates regarding our schedule via email, please forward your email address to John Kwan at john@rhumc.org. We look forward to seeing you there!

Club Maintenance will next meet on **Saturday, January 11th** at 8:30 a.m. Please save this date and help in needed repairs around the church.

Preschool FUNraiser

Come bring the kids and help support the Rolling Hills United Methodist Preschool by dining at Chuck E. Cheese's on Tuesday, January 14th, starting at 3:00 p.m.



Children's Ministries

A Great Place to Grow

Lisa Williams
Director of Children's Ministries

By the time you read this article the holidays will be over. The excitement of Christmas will have faded and all we are left with are memories.

I have never been one to make New Year's resolutions. Since I tend to never follow through with them, I have to ask myself, "Why start?" My friend has a "grateful jar" that her kids made in preschool years ago. Every Christmas she gets it out. Inside the jar are small pieces of paper that have activities on them, like, "read a Christmas story to your kids," "make a cup of hot chocolate." The activities are simple, easy and fun.

To me, a new year is a sign of hope. As we ring in a new year, I thought it would be fun to continue the grateful jar. You can make up your own activities or use some of my ideas:

Thank God for a new day
Read a story with your child
Call a friend just to say "hi"
Go outside and look at the stars
Watch a sunrise
Go for a hike
Bake cookies
Family night – pizza and a movie
Play an old fashion board game
Take a walk
Smile and say hello to someone you don't know
Tell a teacher how much you appreciate them
Create a fun snack – what kinds of animals can you make with veggies
Share a favorite memory from Christmas
Thank God for family and friends
Go to church as a family
Pray for others
Give thanks for a new year!

What's Happening in January?

January 14th – 15th
Preschool Snow Day

January 21st
Kid Zone Piano Recital

Gearing up for Summer Camp 2014!

If you or someone you know would like to apply for a summer job at Kid Zone, applications are now available.

Contact Lisa Nagy
Kidzone.midzone@gmail.com
310-377-7302

Save the Date…

Join us for Spring Break Vacation Bible Camp 2014 "Workshop of Wonders"

March 24-28th
April 7th-11th

Imagine and Build with God!

January is ***Patience*** Month. Song from my favorite children's musical… "Have patience, have patience. Don't be in such a hurry. When you get impatient, you only start to worry. Remember, that God is patient too. Just think of all the times when others have to wait for you."

Family Ministries

Rachel Stam
Director of Family Ministries

The Purposeful Readers

The Purposeful Readers will next meet on **Sunday, January 12th**, at 6:30 p.m. in the Aldersgate Room to discuss MIT's technology and society specialist Sherry Turkle's *Alone Together*. Amazon.com wrote, "*Alone Together* is the result of Turkle's nearly fifteen-year exploration of our lives on the digital terrain. Based on hundreds of interviews, it describes new unsettling relationships between friends, lovers, parents, and children, and new instabilities in how we understand privacy and community, intimacy and solitude."

Christmas Caroling

Jingle Bells, Jingle Bells…The halls of Canterbury and Belmont Assisted Living Centers were filled with Christmas carols on the evening of December 16th. Twelve carolers, led by Nancy and Eric Rasmussen, shared the Christmas spirit with members of our community. Thanks to everyone who came out and sang!

Parents "Day" Out

Fifteen preschoolers enjoyed an afternoon filled with crafts, movies and games, while the parents got some much needed time off. We will be offering "Parents Night Out" on a regular basis in the upcoming year, so stay tuned for days and times!

Walking/Hiking Group

On December 17th, five of us had a wonderful time hiking the Pointe Vicente and Ocean Front Trails. We were blessed with a clear and beautiful day to enjoy the views!

Our **NEXT HIKE** will be on **Tuesday, January 21st,** at **10:00 a.m.** at the Trump Golf Course. Details will be announced in church and noted in the bulletin in January. For questions, please call Annette Matsuda at 310-618-8122 or Rachel Stam at the church office.

Health & Wellness

Annette Matsuda, RN, BSN
Parish Nurse

"He will yet fill your mouth with laughter,
and your lips with shouts of joy."
Job 8:21 (NRSV)

Did you know that the average child in the USA laughs 400-500 times a day, versus the average adult who only laughs around five times daily?

Did you know that laughter

- increases endorphins (the "feel good" neurotransmitters) in the brain
- decreases harmful adrenaline and cortisol levels by dissipating stress
- increases cardiovascular health and blood circulation to the brain
- implements our abdominal muscles to massage our internal organs?

Visit and participate in our popular Laughter Yoga Class. In 50 minutes, our instructor, Nina Bradbury, a retired Nurse Practitioner and Certified Laughter Yoga instructor guides the class in flexibility and balance exercises and in the sharing of humor and laughter, all in a warm, friendly, and supportive group. The group meets each Thursday morning at 9:00 a.m. in the Mission Room. For questions, call Nina at 310-780-9131.

Our Next Hike **. . .** will be on **Tuesday, January 21st,** at **10:00 a.m.** at the Trump Golf Course. Details will be announced in church and noted in the church bulletin.

"Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh." Luke 6:21b (NRSV)

Senior Pastor	Jonathan Chute	Music Director	Chuck Dickerson
Assoc. Pastor	John Kwan	Organist/Pianist	Althea Waites
Children's Min. & Kid/Mid Zone Dir.	Lisa Williams	3rd Service Ensemble	Patti MacLeod
Preschool Director	Myra Ghabrial	Admin Asst. to Pastor	Michele Nelson
Family Ministries Dir.	Rachel Stam	Church Office Admin	Peggy Roulette
Jr. High Youth	John Kwan	Treasurer	Robin La Tourette
Senior High Youth	Evan Griffiths	Bookkeeper	Nicole Lowery Zakman
Parish Nurse	Annette Matsuda	Custodian	Miguel Portillo

Church Office Phone	310-377-6771	Resident Bishop	Minerva Carcaño
Fax Line	310-544-4123	District Superintendent	Kathey Wilborn
Web Site	www.rhumc.org		

SUNDAY WORSHIP HOURS
8:30 & 10 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.
CHURCH OFFICE HOURS
Monday – Friday 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Next Cornerstone deadline is January 24th
www.rhumc.org