# The Cornerstone

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

**November 2016**

## *Thanksgiving Dinner*
## *Saturday, November 19, at 6:30 p.m.*

Over three hundred years ago, the pilgrims celebrated their first Thanksgiving Feast in gratitude to God and the native peoples who helped them survive in the New World. On Saturday, November 19, we carry on their tradition with an evening of delicious food, fellowship and entertainment.

The menu will feature turkeys prepared in our Weber kettles, mashed potatoes, corn pudding, dressing, string beans, cranberry fluff and cranberry sauce, all prepared by our "experts" under the direction of Suellen Fung. Dessert will feature pumpkin, pecan and apple pies; sugar-free pumpkin pie will also be available for those watching their sugar intake! Wesley Hall and Mission Room will be decorated with pumpkins, corn stalks and fall décor under the watchful eyes of Doug Kemps and his dedicated helpers.

A donation of $30.00 per adult and $15.00 for children under twelve will put you on the guest list. Paid reservations will be taken on the patio after each morning service or you can contact the church office. Child care will be available upon request. Proceeds will help our junior and senior high kids participate in Sierra Service Project next summer, when they travel to the Indian reservations for their work assignments to upgrade their facilities.

If you would like to help decorate Wesley Hall or help cook in the kitchen, please call Suellen Fung at 310-541-8191 or Doug Kemps at 310-567-6340.

## *from the pastors* — *Jonathan Chute*

So, after 108 years of frustration and failure, disappointment and despair, the Cubs finally won the World Series. That seems like a long time – and in normal human terms, I suppose it is. The last time they won it all Samuel Clemens was in his early seventies. Winston Churchill was thirty-four years old. Babe Ruth was just thirteen. The Archduke Franz Ferdinand still reigned over the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The events leading up to the start of World War One were just rumblings in the background. As the TV reminded us of all the world-changing events that hadn't happened the last time the Cubs were victorious, I couldn't help thinking that our perspective on human history is woefully limited.

Generations of Cubs fans have asked themselves how long they would have to wait. It seemed as though the franchise was cursed. How unfair it seemed to the faithful. That's a perspective with which God's people are quite familiar. "How long, O Lord, how long?" is not only the (former) cry of Chicago sports fans, but is one of the central questions of our faith. From Exodus to Revelation, biblical writers have asked over and over again when it would be that God will deliver the people from injustice, oppression, suffering and struggle. The Psalms overflow with the pain of waiting.

Of course there are also stories of liberation and healing, restoration and hope! We don't know exactly how long it was that the Hebrew people were enslaved in Egypt, but their cries for deliverance were heard by God and they were set free. They wandered for forty years in the wilderness, and even when they got to the promised land it didn't exactly go the way they'd hoped. There were times of exaltation and joy in those next years, as well as of disappointment and devastation. King David sat on the throne for about forty years, and Solomon for another forty. The decades that followed were anything but easy, and the exile in Babylon lasted longer than either of the two kings' reigns.

So the question “How long?” is still with us. Psalm 90 offers the thought that a thousand years in God’s sight are like yesterday after it is gone. It reminds us that we mortals don’t get to see how things look from the perspective of eternity. We may go a long time before we ever know what God has in mind, or when it will come to be. But every once in a while, and this time in the unlikely form of a baseball championship, we catch a glimpse. This year Cubs fans saw the fulfillment of one of their deepest hopes. Next year, who knows?

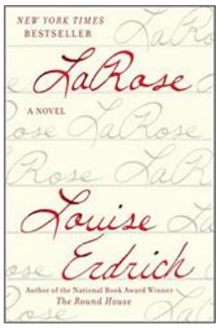
Grace and peace,

Jonathan

*April Herron*

Dear Friends:

“It was a story, and stories got to him. A story was the reason he had become a priest, and a story was why he’d not yet walked off the job.” -- from *LaRose*, by Louise Erdrich




I am enthralled by stories. I like to know the stories of what brought people to their current place and circumstances in life. I’m interested in the stories of what things mean to people, and why. I appreciate stories that teach me things, or help me see things from a new perspective. I welcome stories that give me a window into someone else’s experience of the world. I enjoy listening to stories. I am glad to read absorbing and well-crafted stories.

The story of Jesus is the foundational story for those of us who are his followers. Louise Erdrich is right: once the Jesus story takes up residence in us, it becomes the compelling principle and the guiding force of our lives. She is also right that other stories can also touch our lives and make us wiser, more compassionate people. Erdrich's book *LaRose*, which is the story of several individuals who bore that name over the course of generations, and most especially the story of a young boy whose family life is shaped by an abrupt and shocking tragedy, invites readers into new angles of engagement with the Christian story. That’s one among many good reasons to read the book and join in a discussion with friends at Rolling Hills UMC.

Erdrich has been publishing novels, poetry, short stories, and children’s books since 1984. Her work focuses on the interface between indigenous tribes and more recent immigrants living in communities of the plains and prairies of North America. Spiritual themes are integral to her writing. Her books have won prizes and, in at least one case, influenced public policy. She is committed to honoring the stories of her people, as well as to making sure everyone has access to a diversity of stories. She is not only a writer, but also the owner of an independent bookstore in Minneapolis. For more than 30 years I have eagerly awaited and read each of her novels; I look forward to talking this one over with other readers!

All readers are welcome to our book discussion, which will take place on Wednesday, November 16th, at 7:00 p.m. in the choir room.

May this season of thanksgiving bring new depth and fullness to all of our stories,

April

## A Letter from Martha Rowlett

Dear Jonathan and the RHUMC congregation,

I am a bit giddy today as I adjust to the honor of being named Senior Pastor Emeritus for my favorite congregation, The Rolling Hills United Methodist Church. I am savoring the implications of being no longer just a previous pastor and friend, but being a current member of the family. Now I am related not just to the good folk who were there 17 years ago, but to everybody in RHUMC. And since you elected me and the Bishop did not appoint me, the Bishop cannot move me. We are in this together! North Carolina is a bit of a commute for regular worship with you. But I may write occasional messages for the CORNERSTONE, and do whatever Jonathan asks. I have just turned 80, and I am thrilled to have this new relationship as a delightful dimension of this new decade of life. I experience it very clearly as something God is doing now with what was once the empty sheet of my life. Thank you very much for the open-hearted gift of this new relationship and for the honor of the naming of Martha’s room.

Love and best wishes to all of you, individually and as a congregation,

Martha

## Mission News

**Missionary Paul Jeffrey** visited RHUMC on October 12 with a digital presentation mixing video and sound illustrating his activities over the past three years. He writes about the work of the church around the world as a senior correspondent for *Repose* (the magazine of the United Methodist Women). There was a good turnout with many Mission Committee members in attendance.

**Heifer Plus Sunday** will be held on **November 13** after each service. We will be joined by representatives from Habitat for Humanity and Heifer International and will share information on each of the four missionaries sponsored by RHUMC. Look for the revamped "Shopping List" which will be in your bulletin on that Sunday and choose for yourself how you would like your Mission dollars spent. The Mission Committee is also planning to set up tables for the pickles, jams, and Red Bird Mission crafts as well as baked goods sold by our Youth Group.

**"Trek to the Tree"** has been scheduled to begin on the first Sunday of Advent (November 27). The Church family will have the opportunity to select children's names from the Narthex Christmas Tree for which they will provide a Christmas gift card or appropriate gift. These cards go fast! So be ready to grab them while they are available.

## Announcing RHUMC International Service Trip for Summer 2017

RHUMC will be returning to Nicaragua next summer to partner with Seeds of Learning to build a school, interact with the local community, discover Nicaragua, and win a child's love. Seeds of Learning focuses on improving education in Nicaragua as a means of diminishing the overwhelming poverty in the country. This trip is open to anyone 16 and older. Dates are **June 25 to July 4, 2017**. Cost is approximately $2,400. Scholarships are available. Want more info? Check out our record of the 2014 trip at http://rhumc15.blogspot.com/ or contact Kathy Platnick at 213-479-6950. Space is limited, so sign up today!

## Tour the Toberman Neighborhood Center!

Toberman Neighborhood Center (TNC) is a charitable organization committed to assisting Harbor Area families and individuals by delivering life-changing services that encourage, inform, educate and empower them to live healthy and purposeful lives. The center focuses on family services, such as an after-school program, parenting classes and gang-prevention and intervention. To learn more about the valuable work they do, please join Dale Gehr, our Lay Leader and Toberman Board member, and Rachel Stam for an informative tour of the facilities. The tour will be held on **Thursday, November 10, from 10:30-noon.** To sign up, email Rachel at rachel@rhumc.org or call the church office at 310-377-6771. The tour is limited to 12 people, so please let us know your intent to attend as soon as possible.

## October Finance Update

Our Giving Goal as a congregation through October was $826,362. As of the end of the month contributions totaled $762,455. That is about 6% behind where we had hoped to be. Fortunately our expenses to date are also below budget, by about $26,000 at the end of September. So the gap is smaller than it would otherwise be, about 3-4% of our goal.

Your generosity each year is remarkable, a witness to the compassion of our church family, the sense of community we share and our hope in God's future. As we move into this season of gratitude and grace, we invite your help with finishing the year in that same spirit. Thank you very much!

**Daylight Savings Time ends Sunday, November 6**

## Second Sunday Supper

We hope you will join on **November 13** after the third service for Second Sunday Suppers. This month the menu will consist of El Pollo Inka chicken, brown rice, and a tossed salad. The requested contribution for each meal is $5 per person, $15 per family.

## Managing Grief and Loss during the Holidays – Thursday, November 17, 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Losing a spouse or a loved one is a major life event that touches every part of our lives. The loss can be especially difficult during the holiday season. In the past, Thanksgiving and Christmas may have been times of anticipation and excitement, but this year, the thought of facing the holidays without your loved one may cause sadness and anxiety. To help, we are offering a grief workshop for those who are experiencing this journey. The seminar will include recognizing different stages of grief, learning coping skills, and managing expectations, emotions and stress during the holidays.

Our pastors, Jonathan and April, will lead the session, and a light lunch will immediately follow. To register or for more information, contact Rachel Stam at 310-377-6771, ext. 105 or email rachel@rhumc.org. You may also call the church office. There is no charge for the group, but pre-registration is strongly suggested.

## Opportunity for Bible Study

During the season of advent, the Sunday morning adult Bible study class will be using a book by James Moore called *All I Want for Christmas*. It is a five-week program and thus will begin on November 20th. The class meets on Sundays at 10:00 a.m. in the Aldersgate room, thus making it possible to worship at 8:30 and join in Bible study afterward. Larry Kittiver and others share in leadership. All are welcome.

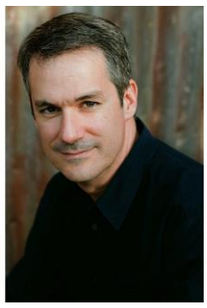
**Project: NEEDS**

The first Tuesday of every month, RHUMC volunteers provide cooked hot meals prepared in RHUMC's kitchen for Project: NEEDS, a mission and outreach ministry at St. Paul's UMC in Redondo Beach. The need is especially great during the holiday season. If you would like to volunteer or help with the meal preparation on **December 6,** Mary Jane Schwebel would love to hear from you! She can be reached at 310-377-8780.

## *Second Sundays At Two*

***Sunday, November 13, at 2:00 p.m.***

*~ presents ~*



### *Beverly Hills National Auditions Winner*

**IRIS MALKIN** *mezzo soprano*

*~ and ~*

### *International Prokofiev Competition Gold Medalist*

**ROBERT THIES** piano

Israeli-born mezzo-soprano Iris Malkin performed under the baton of Pierre Boulez during the Lucerne Festival, including collaboration with Boulez' celebrated Ensemble Intercontemporain. Iris graduated from the Jerusalem *Academy of Music with a Master's Degree in Vocal Performance and Piano.*

Robert Thies is an artist renowned for his consummate musicianship and poetic temperament. He enjoys a diverse career as an orchestral soloist, recitalist, and chamber musician. Thies is highly sought after as a recital partner and collaborator in both instrumental and vocal chamber music.

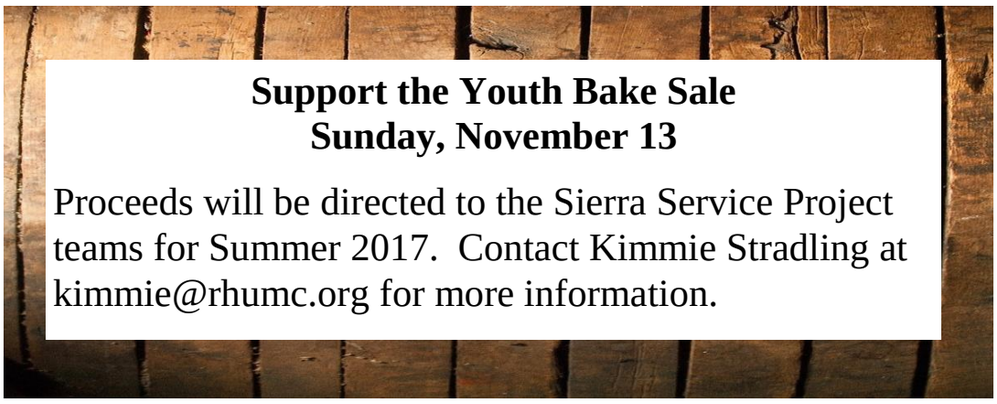
***Contribute What You Can ~ 100% for the Artists***
***All Are Welcome!***

## This Year Advent Begins with a Twang?

On **Sunday evening, November 27**, our 3rd service ensemble is putting together a special service for the first Sunday of Advent. The music that evening will be traditional bluegrass-inspired gospel. Our amazing and talented team will be joined by a couple of guest musicians for the night. Marty Rifkin has played the Dobro (steel guitar) in recordings by Bruce Springsteen, Glen Campbell, LeAnn Rimes and many others. John Rosen (banjo) has taught at McCabe's Guitar Shop in Santa Monica for many years, and played with Old Man Markley and the Dropkick Murphys among others. You won't want to miss it!

## Meet Our New Kid Zone/Mid Zone Director

Hello Rolling Hills United Methodist Church Community. I wanted to take a moment to introduce myself. My name is Megan Pelc. I started working with Kid Zone/Mid Zone in 2009 and am very excited to be continuing my work with this program and working with our families. Here are a couple fun facts about myself. One is I have lived in six different states: Ohio, Alabama, Virginia, Utah, Indiana and California. Another is I have previously worked with birds of prey (owls, eagles, hawks, etc.). Lastly I have a deep love for pizza and counterbalance it with kickboxing class. I am looking forward to getting to know the RHUMC community. Please feel free to swing by the Kid Zone office and say hello, my door is always open.



## Trunk or Treat

# Thanksgiving Lock-In

**November 19, 2016**

**5:30 pm - 8:00 am**

Kick off the holiday season by participating in the Thanksgiving Lock-In, where you will earn **10 service hours**. The night will begin by serving at RHUMC's Thanksgiving Dinner and raising money for SSP. Then we will complete 3 additional service projects throughout the night. Do not worry, this will not be all work and no play!!! Pizza, junk food, games and a surprise fieldtrip will be provided.

**Please RSVP to Kimmie at kimmie@rhumc.org**

## Club Maintenance

On October 8th, a hard-working group took care of several items on our maintenance work list, including tree trimming and spreading of wood chips, light bulb relamping with the Genie lift, construction of a new mailbox post foundation, some painting projects and other miscellaneous activities around the campus. The following people helped out in this Club Maintenance session: Jim Showalter, Keith Levan, Oren Sheldon, Bill Bails, Dave Larson, Clarence Fung, Eric Rasmussen, Gene Koester, and scouts Michael Valeri, Zach Phillips, Aidan Forsey, Michael Lui, Roman Enriquez and Harrison Lennertz. Our thanks to all of these individuals.

The next opportunity to participate in the Club Maintenance effort will be on **Saturday, November 12**, at 8:30 a.m. Please mark this date on your calendar and share in the ongoing work to keep our facilities in good repair. And note that Bill Bails will be the coordinator for this work day.

## Salvation Army – Ringing of the Bells

With the help of Christmas kettles, the Salvation Army aids more than 3 million individuals at Thanksgiving and Christmas. Over the past 3 years, RHUMC bell ringers raised over $4100 for needy families in the South Bay. During this holiday season, why not volunteer as a bell ringer? You can ring the bell as a family, with your friends or individually – it is up to you! Last year, we had groups that sang Christmas carols, played holiday music on their phones, or just rang the bell with a friendly smile. If you are interested in volunteering or learning more about this wonderful cause, Roxanne Morse will be out on the patio on **Sunday, November 13th** after all 3 services, with more information. You can also contact her at 310-543-2281. Your help will go a long way for people in need!

## Altar Flowers

The new flower chart for 2017 has arrived and is posted in the narthex! Sign up early to ensure you get your favorite date to honor, celebrate, or remember that someone special!

## Hanging of the Greens

Before the month of November is over, we will be in the Advent Season! The Worship Committee invites you to get into the holiday spirit by helping us transform the church. There will be several opportunities for you join us:
Saturday, November 26th, 8:30-10:30 AM – Decorating the huge Narthex tree
Saturday, December 3rd, 8:30-11:00 AM – Decorating the Sanctuary
Saturday, December 17th, 8-9 AM – Decorating with poinsettias

**Come share the spirit!**

## Chancel Choir to Present Christmas Concert

The Chancel Choir will be joined by the Inner City Youth Orchestra of Los Angeles in our Christmas Season Concert to be presented on **Saturday, December 17**, at 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary in a performance of the Christmas portion and other sections of Handel's epic *Messiah*. Our very own Jessica Tisdale will perform the soprano solos. Internationally claimed bass/baritone Cedric Berry of Los Angeles opera will sing the bass solos. Friends from the community will also join the choir. This is a ticketed concert, and tickets are $10. Please contact the church office for more information.

## Celebrating the Festival of the Nativity

The Missions Committee is thrilled to announce a return this year of the beautiful Festival of the Nativity. We encourage all members of our church family to display your own personal family nativity (or multiples if you have more than one) during the Festival. The nativities will be on display in Wesley Hall on **Saturday, December 17**, after our Christmas Concert that evening and also before and after all services on **Sunday, December 18**. You can participate in two ways: (i) register to display your nativity by completing the registration form--available in the office and narthex--and we will contact you about participation logistics and (ii) come by Wesley Hall that weekend to witness the beauty of the birth of Christ artistically depicted through an array of nativities. For more information, contact Kathy Platnick at ksanders@omm.com or 213 479 6950.

## Calling All Shepherds, Angels, Kings and Animals of the Manger!

Parents: put Saturday**, December 17**, 9:00 a.m. on your calendar. That's the date for the rehearsal of the Christmas Eve family worship service. At the rehearsal, which runs from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., children will be fitted for their costumes and practice their part. December 17 is the one required rehearsal for all participants who plan to be part of the December 24 Christmas Eve (4:00 p.m.) worship service.

## Calling All Youth!

Your leadership opportunities for the Family Christmas Eve service include reading scripture, litany parts and prayers; lighting candles; ringing hand bells; greeting and ushering. Your **Saturday, December 17**, rehearsal time is 11:30-12:30 p.m. You can also earn service hours by assisting with the younger kids' rehearsal.

For information and to sign up, contact Kimmie Stradling at kimmie@rhumc.org, Jan Johnson at janaleejoh@aol.com or call the church office.

## Poinsettia Sales

We try to make it easy for you to order poinsettias to be given *In Honor of a Loved One, In Memory of a Loved One* or *To the Glory of God*. Just fill out a form and turn it in with payment of $15 a plant, or 2 for $25. You may send it to the office, give it to the Worship Committee volunteer at the poinsettia table on the patio Sundays, November 27th, December 4th or 11th or place it in the offering plate. Orders must be received by December 11th.

### *Help us decorate the Sanctuary with poinsettias for Christmas!*

You are invited to purchase one or more poinsettia plants to decorate the sanctuary for Christmas. The plants can be dedicated a few different ways.

☐ To the Glory of God

☐ In Honor of: _____

_____

_____

☐ In Memory of: _____

_____

_____

Given by: _____

Number of plants: _____ Amount paid:

Cash: _____ Check number:

Please make checks payable to RHUMC for $15 per plant, or 2 for $25. Give this order form and payment to the volunteers staffing the table on the patio, place in the offering basket, or send to the office. Thank you!

**THE LAST DAY TO ORDER POINSETTIAS IS SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11TH.**

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|---|---|---|---|
| Senior Pastor | Jonathan Chute | Music Director | Chuck Dickerson |
| Assoc. Pastor | April Herron | Organist/Pianist | Althea Waites |
| | | 3rd Service Ensemble | Patti MacLeod |
| Preschool Director | Myra Ghabrial | Adm. Assist. to Pastor | Curt Wuestenhagen |
| Director of Children & Youth Ministries | Kimmie Stradling | Church Office Admin. | Peggy Roulette |
| | | Admin. Assistant | Ana Ysabel Lopez |
| Family Ministries Dir. | Rachel Stam | Treasurer | Robin La Tourette |
| KidZone Director | Megan Pelc | Bookkeeper | Nicole Lowery Zakman |
| Junior High Youth | Nicole Benson | Facilities Manager | Rick Mitchell |
| Parish Nurse | Annette Matsuda | Custodian | Miguel Portillo |

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| Church Office Phone | 310-377-6771 | | |
| Fax Line | 310-544-4123 | Resident Bishop | Grant Hagiya |
| Web Site | www.rhumc.org | District Superintendent | Mark Nakagawa |

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 November 21**
www.rhumc.org