Can checking your email be holy? Can doing your laundry or mowing your lawn or going to a meeting be spiritual activities?

Every Sunday in worship we end with benediction—a fancy word for blessing—and we are sent forth. Week after week we are blessed and sent, blessed and sent. We are blessed with the awareness of God with us. We are blessed with the reminder of the Holy Spirit living in us. We are blessed with the mission to live that presence of God in the world. And then we are sent forth.

But we are often not sent to those big dramatic moments we may picture when we think of embodying the presence of God. Instead we are sent back home where there is laundry to be done, dishes to wash, and other chores to manage. We are sent back to our jobs where there are emails and meetings waiting. We are sent back to our every day lives and routines.

So can checking our email be holy? Can we carry that blessing of God’s presence back into the humdrum routines of our days? Of course! In Liturgy of the Ordinary, author Tish Harrison Warren writes, "I want to do the big work of the kingdom, but I have to learn to live it out in the small tasks before me—the work of God in the daily grind." Our identity as people who are blessed and sent into the world transforms how we live in the world, not just in the big moments but also even in our unremarkable days.

Tish Harrison Warren writes that the Protestant Refor-
Pastors’ Ponderings (cont’d)

(Continued from page 1)

formation 500 years ago was not just about a conflict in doctrine, but also about living vocation. "The idea that all good work is holy work was revolutionary. The Reformation toppled a vocational hierarchy that had placed monks, nuns, and priests at the top and everyone else below. The reformers taught that a farmer may worship God by being a good farmer and that a parent changing diapers could be as near Jesus as the pope. This was a scandal."

We sometimes are tempted look at some work as holier than others. And we certainly see some work as more glamorous than others. But the scandal we receive when we are blessed and sent into the world is that God's Spirit lives inside us, and so all work that does good and not harm is equally holy, equally awash with God's presence.

Living that identity as ones who are blessed and sent can seem distant when we are doing those annoying little tasks in our days that just need to get done but do not seem particularly holy. And yet we are people who live in that blessing that even when we are taking out the trash or doing the grocery shopping or responding to emails, the Spirit of God is alive and at work in us.

What would it look like to practice that awareness the next time you are doing a chore in your daily life? How would it change us to remember that we are blessed by God's presence and sent to live that presence even in those small daily tasks?

Pastor Chelsea

Growing In Faith

2018 Women’s Retreat
April 20-22, 2018

Our annual Women’s Retreat is the ideal time to relax in a beautiful setting, grow in faith, enjoy the company of other wonderful women, and eat tasty home-cooked meals (that you don’t have to cook!) I look forward to this time together at San Damiano Retreat Center in Danville. There will be single and double rooms available.

Retreat Title: God is Indeed Living Among Us!

Retreat Leader: Rev. Jennifer Goto, and her husband District Superintendent, Shinya, have two children (Dakota is in middle school and Reina is in elementary school). Jen is pastor at St. Paul’s United Methodist Church in downtown San Jose. She leads retreats by telling stories, reading Scripture, and inviting us to practice ways of prayer that can lead to living each moment as if God is indeed here among us.

Description: "The Word became flesh and made his home among us." John 1: 14. What does it mean that God is among us right where we live and work and play? What does it mean to follow a God who became like one of us? How will this truth shape how we live, and how we interact with our friends, family and neighbors? As paraphrased by Eugene Peterson in The Message, "The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighborhood."

Stepping Stones on Your Grief Journey
Thursdays, April 5-May 24, 7:30 p.m.

The Catholic Community of Pleasanton is offering a spring grief journey class that is open to all, regardless of religious affiliation. The death of a loved one is unlike any other loss. Whether the death was sudden and tragic, or one with warning and preparation, the reality of death leaves most of us in a state of shock, confusion, and sadness. Grieving people need time and space to honor their grief. Each person's grief journey has its own path and its own timeline. Although there is no right or wrong path, there are stepping stones that are part of each grief journey and we'll explore them in this eight-week series of workshops. The class meets on Thursday evenings at 7:30 beginning on April 5 and ending on May 24. Pre-registration is required and a one-time $15 donation is requested. For more information or to register, call Eleanor Flatley at (925) 846-8708. The class meets at St. Elizabeth Seton Church at 4001 Stoneridge Drive in Pleasanton.
Celebrate Community

Ladies’ Night Out
Tuesday, April 3, 6:00 p.m.
All women of Asbury are invited to Ladies’ Night Out in which we meet at a local restaurant for dinner. This month, we’ll be going to Anita’s Mexican Restaurant, 2124 Railroad Avenue. Please RSVP to Nancy Grover so can notify the restaurant how many to expect.

Senior/Retiree Luncheon
Thursday, April 12, 12:00 p.m.
Senior/Retiree Luncheon, Thursday, April 12 at 12:00 p.m., Fellowship Hall—You are invited to join us for Pizza, Salad, Dessert and BINGO. The cost is $5.00 per person. Sign up in the Fellowship Hall or call the church office at 925-447-1950.

Family Camp
Thank you Jim Lobao for volunteering to take on organizing Asbury's Summer Community/Family Camp Ministry for our church. We will have a camping date before the end of April.

Spaghetti and Bingo
Saturday, April 28, 6:00 p.m.
Spaghetti - Bingo is Back! Mark your calendars for Saturday, April 28 at 6:00 p.m. Join us in the Fellowship Hall for a spaghetti dinner (spaghetti with plain or meat sauce, garlic bread, salad, and cookies for dessert) followed by BINGO, with prizes for the winners! Look for the sign up in the Fellowship Hall. Cost is $5.00 per person; please sign up so that we know how much food to prepare. Sponsored by the Fellowship Committee.

Pastor Kim’s Last Sunday at Asbury
Pastor Kim’s last day with us will be on Sunday, June 17. Stay tuned for more details as to how we will celebrate Kim’s and Steve’s ministry among us.

Miscellany

Minimize Your Income Tax
It’s that time of year when income taxes are on people’s minds, and the Finance Committee would like to pass on a reminder. The new tax code has doubled the standard deduction starting in 2018, and this has created ways for some people to reduce their taxable income while still making their usual charitable donations. In particular, people over 70½ and taking RMD’s (Required Minimum Distributions) from their retirement accounts can see significant savings by sending all or part of the RMD directly to Asbury as part of their pledge. Another possibility, for those that can swing it, is to group two years worth of itemized deductions (e.g. charity or property tax) into a single year, then take the standard deduction the following year. We encourage you to talk to a financial advisor for details.

LOST
Small bushel basket with iris rhizomes (bulbs) left in front for fellowship hall doors by bathrooms on Palm Sunday, March 30. Please return the rhizomes/bulbs and bushel basket to church office if you find them. Thank you.
Easter Offering

April 1, 2018

A few years ago, Asbury launched the Garden of Grace. It has now become the remarkably successful Fertile GroundWorks. The vision of FGW is to feed the hungry and inspire our community to grow food sustainably. About 20,000 pounds of food is produced each year and donated to Open Heart Kitchen and several Livermore food pantries.

In addition, FGW assists with operation of twelve school gardens. Our Easter Offering, on Sunday, April 1 will go to support the important mission of this valuable Tri-Valley organization that Asbury helped start and continues to host on our campus.

Lenten Food Drive Ends April 1

Help us feed those in need by donating non-perishable food to the Alameda County Community Food Bank. This is a challenging time of year for donations and we can make a difference.

Donation barrels are in the Sanctuary and church office. Suggested donations include: canned vegetables, fruits or meats, pasta, tomato sauce, beans, rice, peanut butter, cereal/oatmeal or powered milk.

Habitat for Humanity April Workday

April 21, 2018, 8:30-4:00 p.m.

Each month Asbury volunteers are needed to join other faith communities to build Habitat homes. We are working on the last phase of the homes being built in Martinez. Our next workday is April 21. Join us! No experience is necessary.

Work is from 8:30 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. We carpool from Asbury, leaving at 7:40 a.m. from the parking lot by the office building.

To sign up, visit the Serve Others with Love Table, or contact the Church Office.

Help Needed in the Open Heart Kitchen

April 4, 2018

Each month, Asbury staffs the first Wednesday morning of meal preparation and serving at Open Heart Kitchen. Our next date is April 4. It is a great time of Christian fellowship and service. There are two shifts, 9:30-11:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Come work one or both shifts. For more information or to sign up, contact the church office or stop by the Serving Others with Love Table after worship.

Garden of Grace Workday

April 14, 2018, 9-12:00 p.m.

What better way to enjoy a nice spring day than working in the Garden! Join us for a morning in the Garden of Grace at the church. We will be out there from 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., Saturday, April 14, helping with the produce beds and engaging first hand in the mission of Fertile Groundworks.

This is a great family activity, perfect for all ages. Tools provided. Just wear work clothes. No signup required. Just show up!

Restarting Lives in Puerto Rico

September 20, 2017 – Two hundred miles per hour winds, torrential rain and twenty-foot tidal surges displaced hundreds of thousands of Puerto Ricans and left widespread destruction. Then months without electricity or other basic services and a massive cleanup followed. That is the legacy of Hurricane Maria, one of the most powerful storms on record and the backdrop for our recent mission trip.

The Methodist Church of Puerto Rico (MCPR), working with the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), developed short and long-term plans to assist in the recovery. This included setting up the infrastructure to host volunteer teams, warehouse supplies, and hire and train case managers and other support staff. In early 2018, Bishop Ortiz of the MCPR invited volunteer teams to travel to Puerto Rico to begin working.

Anxious to help with the recovery, a team of seventeen from five Bay Area Methodist Churches (Los Altos, St. Paul’s, San Ramon Valley, Asbury and Lynnewood) trav-
eled to Puerto Rico in mid-March. Stationed at a Methodist Women's retreat center on the South Coast in Patillas with electric power supplied by generators, we worked on two homes in a nearby town, Maunabo.

Half of our team was assigned to the hillside home of Rogelio's family. Untouched since the storm, we first removed the moldy household debris and stripped the walls down to the studs. We then replaced the roof and repaired other critical damage. This "can do" team completed all planned work, plus some, before the end of the week. Rogelio's firm handshake and effusive "Gracias" said it all. Now he can move back into his home after six months of displacement.

Team "A", as we affectionately called them, took on the challenge of restoring Sara's home. She, and her extended family, had been living with other relatives since the storm. This industrious group of missioners worked on rebuilding two rooms from the ground up and added a roof on the last day. Tearful goodbyes and the Lord's Prayer graced our departure. This is what living our faith is all about! Sara was moving back in minutes after we left.

We are proud to be Christian humanitarians representing our home churches and are grateful for the support of our sponsoring congregations. In addition to our labor, we were able to donate thousands of dollars in tools to the ongoing recovery effort. The recovery is expected to take eight to ten years.

Trips like this are chock full of special moments. We attended worship at Iglesia Methodist Puerta Del Cielo. What a warm welcome we received! We admired the host staff supporting our work. Their heartfelt commitment was remarkable. We savored getting to know a bit of the local culture. The people in rural Puerto Rico are so gracious and generous in all respects.

Now, as we look back on this experience we feel blessed to have the time, talent and the means to make a profound difference in the lives of two families in such an intimate way. We touched the lives of strangers who so deserve a chance to begin anew.

Pre-K through 5 Grade Sunday School will continue with a “Compassion: Learning to Love Like God” curriculum series.

**Easter Sunday, April 1**—During our 9:00 a.m. worship service, pre-K through fifth grade children will hear the Easter story, decorate Easter egg hunt collection bags, and do crafts in the Chapel. Nursery children ages 0 to 3 will decorate Easter egg hunt collection bags and hear the Easter story in the Nursery.

Following the 9:00 a.m. worship service there will be an Easter Egg hunt for Nursery children in the Toddler play yard, grades 3-5 in the Memorial garden, and pre-K through second grade in the Labyrinth area. If raining, it will be inside the children’s wing in rooms 4, 5, and 6. A huge thank you goes out to our youth for hiding the Easter eggs for us. During our 11:00 a.m. service, we will have childcare in the Nursery for ages 0 to 5 years of age.

Sunday school children have been collecting their Sunday school offerings throughout the school year for Fertile Groundworks, a garden behind our church which provides produce to feed those in need through the Open Heart Kitchen program, offered on our campus 3 days a week, and teaches others to garden as well. More information about Fertile Groundworks is available in the brochures located in each classroom or on their website at www.fertilegroundworks.org. Now that we have raised some money for them, let’s get our hand dirty and help them out: Save the date – Saturday, May 12th for a family work in the garden day. More details to come.

**Summer 2018 Opportunities**

United Methodist Summer Camps for third grade and up: Monte Toyon in Aptos, CA (near Santa Cruz): Sunday, July 8 to Saturday, July 14. Many Asbury children and youth have attend this camp and have loved it.

More information and Camp Registration can be found at: [www.calnevypm.org](http://www.calnevypm.org).

Asbury UMC’s 2018 Vacation Bible School will be Monday, July 16 to Friday, July 20. Registration forms for children and volunteers are now available in our church office, the Fellowship Hall following worship service, and on our website at www.asburylive.org.

Gratefully,
Jackie Bennett
Children’s Ministry Director

---

**Youth Ministries**

**Youth Happenings for March 2018**

- **April 1**: No youth groups, Easter break
- **April 8**: Youth Groups Movie and Discussion, A Wrinkle in Time, time TBD
- **April 15**: SSP Pancake Breakfast
- **April 22**: Laser Tag Youth Group, 4:30-6:30 p.m.
- **April 27-29**: Youth Winterish Retreat (No Youth Group)

**Laser Tag Youth Group**

April 22, 4:30-6:30 p.m.

Come have some fun playing laser tag on April 22! We will meet at Asbury at 4:30 p.m. and carpool over to Zone Lazer in Dublin for an hour of laser tag. We will meet back at Asbury at 6:30 p.m. We will not be eating dinner, the cost is $20. RSVP with Chelsea by April 15.

**Youth Winter(ish) Retreat**

**April 27-29, 2018**

Save the date for the youth winter retreat to the snow this April 27-29! We will leave in the evening of Friday April 27 and head up to the Everett's cabin in Arnold. We will return Sunday afternoon. There will be fun in the snow (we hope!), time to play games, and time to connect more deeply with each other and God!

Please sign up for the retreat with Chelsea by March 25! The cost of the retreat is $45.
Fertile Groundworks Update

After a warm, dry winter, March rains painted verdant and abundant life in the Garden of Grace and the surrounding hills. Fertile GroundWorks broccoli, kale, collards, beets and lettuce provided nutrient-dense food to our neighbors in need at the Open Heart Kitchen.

The Garden has been buzzing with energy as spring seedling trays have been planted, both for Garden of Grace crops and potted spring and summer vegetables for our annual plant sale. We upgraded a high tunnel installed last year, to make it into a screened greenhouse that is now overflowing with seedlings. Every week we are prepping garden beds and planting in cool season veggies to reap their nutritious bounty before the hot weather sets in. At the same time we are growing out hundreds of tomato, eggplant and pepper plants, which will be transplanted along with squash and cucumbers in late April throughout May.

The Garden community is growing. We are blessed with the untiring support of a growing number of faithful garden volunteers who supply us with the daily elbow grease and thoughtful care to keep the harvests rolling. We also added two new board members who are bringing their passionate love for gardening and our mission, along with needed skills and experience, to help make our business sustainable.

We are grateful for the partnership of love and service that we share with Asbury. Together we are making a positive difference and touching the lives of many.

Youth Fundraisers (Food!)

Youth Missions Pancake Breakfast

April 15, 2018, 9-10:00 a.m. and 11-11:50 a.m.

Do you like delicious breakfast food? Do you like supporting a great cause? So do we! Come support the youth’s summer mission trip to Smith River at our annual pancake breakfast.

Tickets will be on sale after worship on April 1 and April 8 and at the door on April 15. All you can eat pancakes for $7 per person or $25 a family! We will serve before worship from 9-10:00 a.m. and after worship from 11-11:50 a.m. Your support will help our amazing team of 15 youth and four adults make a difference in the Smith River community this summer. Thank you!

Troop 900 Fundraiser

May 1, 2018

Who likes eating pizza and helping the Boy Scouts? On Tuesday, May 1 you can do both at Patxi’s Pizza (2470 First Street) in downtown Livermore. As part of Patxi's "52 Weeks of Giving" program, Troop 900 will receive 15% of the day's sales "flagged" for the troop. No flyer is required, but you need to mention that you're supporting Troop 900! Take out, dine-in, and delivery order's are all included. Please consider supporting Asbury's troop by eating at Patxi's anytime on Tuesday, May 1 (open 11:00 a.m.-10:00 p.m.). The proceeds will help buy new equipment for the rapidly growing troop.
## Birthdays

- Tim Arnold
- Chloe Bennett
- Ty Bothwell-Mitlitsky
- Zoey Bothwell-Mitlitsky
- Edwin Cassidy
- Thomas Cayton
- Tova Christensen
- Lesleyann Coker
- Nick Constant
- Danielle Cowgill
- Christie Crozier
- Christine Cummings
- Eric Cummings
- Cameron David
- Tucker Dawes
- Shelby Deis
- Jill Edgar
- Dave Gamble
- Laura Giannotti
- Bob Hoffman
- Rhonda Item
- Dean Juan
- Greta Kohlmoos
- Jean Lerche
- Laura Linden
- Peggy Loomis
- Kent McCammon
- Gabrielle McClung
- Hal Miller
- Martie Muldoon
- Allen Northrop
- Adam Paiso
- Justin Pettis
- Mark Piscotty
- Christina Pomykal
- Riley Rood
- Amelia Schell
- LaNor Smith
- Ron Tripp
- Jennifer Wakefield
- Adam Walker Cleaveland
- Pam Wilson
- Steve Wilson

## Anniversaries

- Preston and Nancy Carter
- Larry and Kathy Chase
- Herb and Judy Guidry
- Dennis and Melanie Henderson
- Rick and April Rood
- Larry and Karena Sanford
- Scott and LaNor Smith
- Larry and Karena Sanford
- Scott and LaNor Smith
Please visit the Asbury website calendar for the latest updates: https://www.asburylive.org/events

Weekly Recurring Events

Sundays
- 10:00 a.m. Worship, Sunday School, Sanctuary
- 11:15 a.m. Butterfly Gardens is open
- 11:30 a.m. Coffee Fellowship, Fellowship Hall
- 11:30 a.m. Children’s and Youth Choir rehearsals
- 11:30 a.m. Small Group, Room 13 (first and third Sundays only)
- 5:00 p.m. Stephen Ministry, Fireside Room (first and third Sundays only)
- 7:00 p.m. Bible Study, Room 10
- 7:00 p.m. Asbury Ringers rehearsal, Sanctuary

Mondays
- 3:30-5:30 p.m. Open Heart Kitchen, Fellowship Hall
- 7:00 p.m. Fertile Groundworks, Conference Room (second and fourth Mondays only)

Tuesdays
- 11:00 a.m. Loose Canons
- 11:00 a.m. The Long Good-bye, Fireside Room (second and fourth Tuesdays only)
- 12:00 p.m. Open Heart Kitchen, Fellowship Hall
- 6:30 p.m. At the Table Worship, Fireside Room (starting February 20)
- 7:00 p.m. Alanon/Alateen, Rooms 13-15
- 7:00 p.m. Band Rehearsal, Sanctuary

Wednesdays
- 12:00 p.m. Open Heart Kitchen, Fellowship Hall
- 5:30 p.m. Partners for Change, Fireside Room
- 7:30 p.m. Faith Choir rehearsal, Sanctuary

Thursdays
- 10:30 a.m. Women of the Spirit, Fireside Room
- 7:00 p.m. Small Group, Room 10
- 7:00 p.m. AA, Rooms 11-12

Saturdays
- 8:00 a.m. Lawn Crew
- 9:00 a.m. AA, Rooms 11-12

Other Events and Meetings

April 1, 2018 (Sunday)
- 6:30 a.m. Easter Sunrise Service, Fire Pit
- 9:00 a.m. Easter Service, Sanctuary
- 11:00 a.m. Easter Service, Sanctuary

April 3, 2018 (Tuesday)
- 6:00 p.m. Ladies’ Night Out (Anita’s Mexican)

April 8, 2018 (Sunday)
- 8:30 a.m. SPRC, Room 10
- 11:30 a.m. Finance, Conference Room

April 9, 2018 (Monday)
- 9:30 a.m. UMW Morning Glories, Fireside Room

April 12, 2018 (Thursday)
- 12:00 p.m. Senior/Retiree Luncheon, Fellowship Hall

April 15, 2018 (Sunday)
- 9:00 a.m. Trustees, Conference Room

April 17, 2018 (Tuesday)
- 7:00 p.m. Fellowship Committee, Room 10

April 20, 2018 (Friday)
- 12-6:00 p.m. Livermore Community Blood Drive, Fellowship Hall

April 22, 2018 (Sunday)
- 11:30 a.m. Church Council, Conference Room

April 28, 2018 (Saturday)
- 6:00 p.m. Spaghetti Bingo Night, Fellowship Hall
Asbury United Methodist Church
4743 East Avenue
Livermore, CA 94550

Time Dated Material—Deliver Promptly

Address Service Requested

Asbury UMC Staff

Pastors
Chelsea Constant
Kim Risedorph

Children's Ministry Director
Jackie Bennett

Youth Director
Chelsea Constant

Secretary
Terri Gamble
Karen Bauman

Facilities Use Manager
Sharon Gach

Music Director
G. Allen Schell

Choir Coordinator
Jean Braun

Nursery Coordinator
Pam Tegge

Lay Leader
Martie Muldoon

Livermore Community Blood Drive

Friday, April 20, 12:00-6:00 p.m. (NEW TIME!), Fellowship Hall

Every day, bay area hospitals need over 300 units of blood. If you’re 17 or older and in good health (or 16 with parental consent) help save a life of someone in need by giving blood. Go to redcrossblood.org and use sponsor code: ASBURY925. Call Tom Petty for more information.

Thank you for helping to save a life by giving blood!

www.AsburyLive.org

Church office hours are:
Monday-Thursday, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon
Closed for lunch.

The deadline for the next Asbury Articles is Friday, April 20, 2018