



# THE SPIRE

## Special Dates:

- **Westminster Woods Men's Retreat**  
February 17-19
- **High School Mexico**  
February 18-25
- **Book Sale**  
February 19 & 26
- **Movie Night: "The Way"**  
March 4, Potluck supper at 5 p.m. & movie at 6:30 p.m.
- **Ash Wednesday Service**  
March 1, 7:30 p.m. in the Chapel
- **Supper & Study**  
March 15 & 29.  
2 Wednesday nights during Lent! Details to come.

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*From the Pastor,  
Rev. David G.  
Watermulder*

### Sharpening The Axe

*"I have always  
imagined that Paradise  
will be a kind of  
library."*

-Jorge Luis Borges



If you walk into my office here at the church, you will notice that I have a big built-in bookshelf. And that's a good thing, because I love books. I love reading books, talking about books, and even the process of buying books! Like many of you, I enjoy reading for pleasure, to keep up with current events, to learn, to escape, and to relax.

On my night stand at home, I have a stack of books that I am working on and I am always on the lookout for something new.

But something I have noticed is that while my personal reading list continues to grow, the books on the shelf at the church haven't kept up. Many of them are classics, the kinds of things I read in Seminary. Others are reference books, things that I use to look up information. A number of them are current church "best-sellers;" books that are making the rounds right now.

But a challenge that I have, after a decade of pastoral ministry, is to dive deeper into the kind of learning that will push me further than I can go on my own. So I am looking forward to trying something new and different this Fall. Don't worry; I'm not going anywhere!

I will begin a degree program called a "Doctor of Ministry" (DMin) which is designed for pastors to study and learn while they work in their churches. This is not a "PhD" but it is a professional doctorate that will help me sharpen my thinking and continue to form me as a pastoral leader.

The program that I will be doing is through George Fox University in Portland, Oregon and my specific track is called Leadership and Global Perspectives. It is a distance-learning model, so each week I will have reading/writing to do, some online engagement, and a video call with my class and professor.

Part of the reason this program is so exciting to me, is each year we will take a trip and meet as a class in a different "global city."

*(continued on page 2)*

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Michael Taylor  
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(continued from page 1) This is a chance for some "on-the-ground" learning, and exploring, while meeting church and academic leaders in various places around the world. This September, I will be spending 2 weeks in Cape Town, South Africa. Subsequent courses will be in Hong Kong (2018) and London (2019).

I wanted to share about this with you all because it will be something new and different for me and hopefully something that I will be able to share and teach and preach about as we go. It's always a good idea to keep your Pastor in prayer, but as I head back into a structured learning program like this one, I'll especially need it!

You may remember that Abraham Lincoln once said, "If I had six hours to chop down a tree, I'd spend the first four hours sharpening the axe." I am looking forward to this chance to sharpen my axe, and to learn and grow in a new way, and even to update my bookshelf! My prayer for PCLG is that as I continue to be formed as a pastor, that our church will be blessed in the process!

Grace and Peace,

*Pastor Dave*

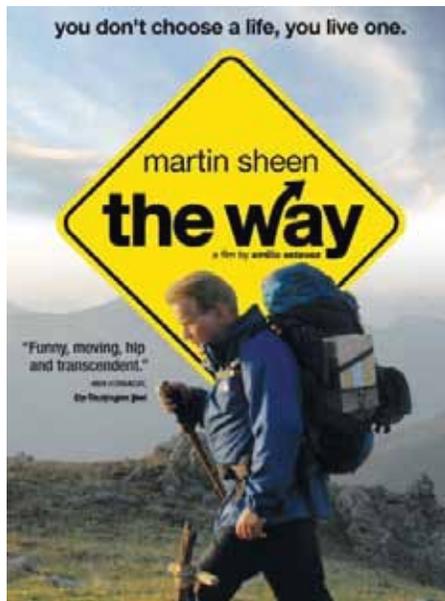


Men of the church, you are invited to attend a retreat this February at Westminster Woods with guest speaker Pastor Dave!

The retreat runs from Friday to Sunday and costs \$170 per person to attend. Scholarships are available if needed.

More information and a registration form can be found online at [www.westminsterwoods.org/adult-programs/](http://www.westminsterwoods.org/adult-programs/)

Please contact Deacon Dave Rader ([david@raderfamily.org](mailto:david@raderfamily.org)) to express interest. If you go on the retreat, Dave will help coordinate ride-sharing, making sure our folks room together, etc.



**Come Watch “The Way”:** On Saturday, March 4, we’ll mark the eve of the Lenten season with a **Potluck Supper**, followed by a showing of “The Way,” an inspirational movie about a Christian pilgrimage called the Camino de Santiago. Supper will start at 5 p.m. in the social hall. It will be followed by brief remarks from some folks who have gone on this famed and ancient pilgrimage, which ends in Santiago de Compostela, Spain. The movie stars father-son duo Martin Sheen and Emilio Estevez,

and runs for about two hours. Showtime will be at 6:30 sharp.

For the potluck supper, we’re asking those whose last names start with the letters **A** through **H** to bring a salad or side dish, **I** through **R** a main dish, and **S** through **Z** a dessert. Babysitting will be available; contact the church office at 408-356-6156 to make a reservation. For more information, e-mail Adult Education Committee Chair Brenda Costanzo at [1brenda.costanzo@gmail.com](mailto:1brenda.costanzo@gmail.com).



## Bookends

### Book sale

It was a dark and stormy night.....the perfect atmosphere to curl up with a good book! February is here and so is our annual book sale. This year the proceeds will be divided between the Amor Ministries work in Mexico and the renovation of the PCLG Youth Center. We will collect books on Saturday, February 18 at 10am in the Social Hall. The book sale will be right after church during on February 19 & 26. Suggested donation: \$1 per book!

Questions/info??  
Contact Sue Hansen at

[paigeturner007@hotmail.com](mailto:paigeturner007@hotmail.com).

### Book Club

#### January

The Lost Garden  
by Helen Humphreys

#### February

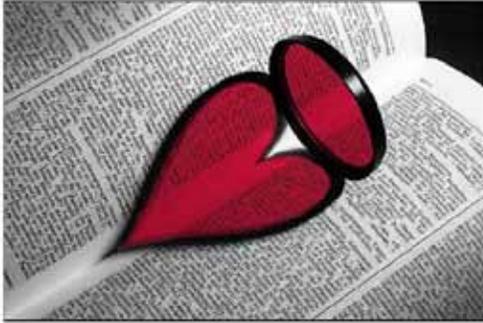
Swans of 5th Ave  
by Melanie Benjamin

#### March

The Secret Chord  
by Geraldine Brooks



# Children's Ministry



## God's Place February 2017:

February = Valentine's Day, hearts, love everywhere. Recently I read an article that got me thinking about the love shared in Children's Ministries.

The article was written by Phil Vischer, the creator of Veggie Tales. He shares about the role church played in his life when he was a youth. He says in the article "None of the things that actually changed my life at my church cost anything at all." Rather, God shaped his life through these things at church:

- The warmth found in the faces of volunteers who cared
- Lively conversations and connections with friends at church
- Older congregation members who showed encouragement through applause at performances in worship, or talking to them in coffee hour

The things that ended up mattering the most simply required people showing up and being the Body of Christ. This article caused me to pause, and think about the work we are doing in Children's Ministries at PCLG. After reflecting, I realized that the three points above are happening right here in our own ministry! It's not about the money we spend on a top-notch curriculum plan, or having a fancy room full of arcade games to hang out in, or providing the latest trend in ministry. As Phil Vischer states in the article "it's about you and me and God's amazing ability to show up whenever we gather together in love."

My hope is that that the children in our ministry know that our church is a place where we gather in love. The teachers who guide them each Sunday are helping shape their faith and they care about them. The silliness that happens each Sunday during God's place and the friendships created here at church are important. And each time they are in worship, they should know that the people in the pews surrounding them are their biggest fans. It is through these ways that God is working their lives right now.

Questions, comments, concerns, need to connect? Lauren Froman – [pclgl Lauren@gmail.com](mailto:pclgl Lauren@gmail.com)





## AP Sundays

by Rev Erica Rader

*“Why was Judas invited to the Last Supper?”*

*“Is the bread on the Communion table every Sunday real bread or plastic?”*

These are real questions from children in a recent AP Sunday class.

Something wonderful happens with children around the age of nine or ten;

they begin to develop a newfound capacity for deep inquiry and metaphor. There are physical changes to their brains, but they are still grappling with how to engage with their growing world so they need humor and physical play. As I described it to our 4th and 5th graders, it is as if their brains have become sponges, where previously they were like paper towels. They liked that metaphor, and they especially liked the messy water demonstration that I used, reverting to some silliness that was very true to form.

Our Children’s director Lauren Froman and I wanted to give our 4th and 5th graders some Sunday learning opportunities geared for their developmental stage. We used the working title of AP “Advanced Placement” Sundays and the name grew on us. About once a month since September I have been teaching on topics such as “Communion”, “How we got the Bible” and the “Liturgical Year” (pictured above).

One of the best parts of being with our 4th and 5th graders is their questions. As we grappled with Judas’ appearance at the Last Supper table, something often bypassed in younger children’s lessons, they began to understand that Jesus knew he was being betrayed, and he could have prevented it because he had divine power but he chose not to use his power. As for the question about the bread, I had to investigate and report back to our AP class that the bread on the table each week is always real. Remember that game show, “Are you Smarter Than a 5th Grader?” Surprisingly, well-educated people failed the game because they had gotten narrow in their pursuit of learning. What our 4th and 5th graders remind me is that being “smart” at any age is about being inquisitive and eager to learn while being unashamed to ask questions. I think this is a great reminder for our new year!





## Music Notes



### From *the* Music Director

This month we will singing some wonderful music.

The choir will begin the month of February with the haunting duet and chorale, "I waited for the Lord" by Felix Mendelssohn with soloists, Vicki Campbell and Danielle Wells. Later in the month we will sing a rousing gospel tune featuring Danielle once again. We will finish the month with another movement of the Schubert Mass in G, the Credo.



One of my favorite composers featured this month is Felix Mendelssohn. He is most famous for his symphonies, concerti, oratorios, piano and chamber music. His famous works include "Overture and incidental music to A Midsummer's Night Dream," "Elijah" and the "Scottish" and "Italian" symphonies.

Mendelssohn was a child prodigy much in the same way as Mozart. He was an accomplished pianist, organist and conductor. As I mentioned in another spire article, Mendelssohn was responsible for a revitalization of Bach's music, which after Bach's death in 1750 became largely unknown. Bach's sons were rumored to be embarrassed by their father's "old" style of composing and may have hidden away much of his music.

Mendelssohn found and performed much of what comes down to us of Bach's music. Mendelssohn also promoted music of his contemporaries including Schubert's 9th symphony. A copy was sent to him from Robert Schumann, the famous German lied composer. He was also sent a copy of a symphony from the young Wagner, but for reasons unknown, Mendelssohn misplaced the copy, to the consternation of the future opera composer .

Mendelssohn was born of a Jewish family, but his parents weren't practicing and eventually converted to Christianity. Despite the conversion, Mendelssohn's career was sometimes thwarted due to anti-Semitism. Regardless, his career as composer and conductor was an highly successful one. He tended towards more conservative approaches to music in contrast to Wagner and Berlioz. He died at the age of 38.

*Michael Taylor, director of music*  
*michaeltaylor@comcast.net*



## Youth News



High School students and their adult advisors (including four ex-youth groupers) leave this month for Tijuana, Mexico in our annual effort to build homes and good will with our neighbors to the South. This is our 17th year in a row of partnering with Amor Ministries to serve the families of Northern Mexico. Through the extravagant generosity of our congregation and this year's Pancake Breakfast, we are fully funded for this mission trip and look to June with confidence.

As relations at the border become increasingly complicated, we are looking for ways to bring less stuff every trip. Everyone's best friend, Carlo, has been negotiating with Amor about the purchase of a shipping container for us to store much of our gear at Amor's camp. In the future, this will reduce vehicle needs, time spent packing in LG and time spent at the border. And this great plan is also possible because of your generous giving.

I am looking forward to a larger group than we've taken the last few years, including 17 freshmen and sophomores. Things do get a bit more sophomoric in such a crowd, but it's a good chance to teach and learn alongside the next generation of PCLG youth. I'm also thrilled to have ten adults going, including three for the very first time.

We always depend upon your prayers and baked goods as we depart for Mexico. We'll be leaving Saturday, February 18, so please consider sharing your baking talents with us in the few days before our departure.

For the family or families we serve and from the families who send their loved ones on this trip and from the students and adults being sent, thank you so very much! You have blessed us and we will do our best to be a blessing in turn.

Love,

Steve Fainer, Director of Youth Ministries  
fainer@gmail.com

### Youth Group Sunday Schedule

**SNiFF** - Middle School Youth Group meets 5 to 6:30 p.m.

**Y.G.** - High School Youth Group meet 7:30 to 9:15 p.m.

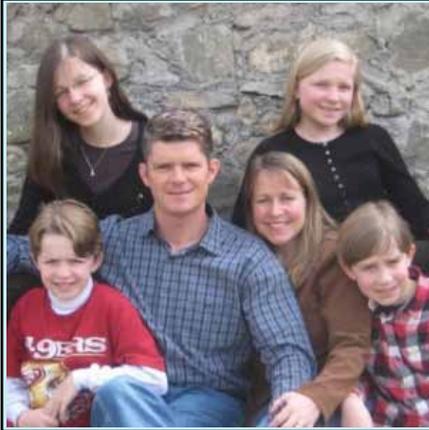


Please Contact Elder Essie Asher  
seasher@comcast.net

If YOU are available to prepare a Meal for our Youth Ministry Staff on a Sunday Evening between Middle School and High School youth groups. Thank you in advance for your help!



## Mission Minute



**Join a missionary for lunch!** On Sunday, February 5, Mark Stoscher will be at PCLG. A former PCLG youth director and now mission co-worker in Albania (one of our overseas missionaries!), Mark will share about his ministry during the annual meeting. After the meeting all interested folks are invited to a light lunch in the Fireside Room to hear more and to learn about an exciting “mission tourism” trip being planned to Albania, Greece and Macedonia. Come and see!

## Correctional Institutions Chaplaincy

I work in the Chaplain's office at Elmwood Jail in Milpitas ([cicministries.org](http://cicministries.org).) I'm proud that my church home is a strong supporter of Jail Ministry. We donate time, money, talent, and material goods like Bibles and Christian reading.

PCLG's gifts reached 32,000 men and women attending more than 2,600 worship services and Bible study classes in county jails last year. The sheriff's website reports daily population statistics: Approx. 3,500 men and women are incarcerated in our county on any given day. To meet their spiritual needs, 300 CIC volunteers lead bible studies and worship services, conduct group classes, and provide one-on-one pastoral counseling in English, Spanish and Vietnamese.

Jail Ministry works. Deputies report that floors of Main Jail are calmer after chaplains visit. It's because volunteer chaplains bring the light of God to a place of loneliness and despair, reminding inmates that they are neither alone nor forgotten, that God loves and is with them. Thank you for helping to make that possible.

Yours in Christ

*Collette Lynner*

# Financial Report

Dear friends,

The year-end results for 2016 are in and we have had another good year at PCLG.

Our pledged offering was 98% of budget and our unpledged offering was 118% of budget. Our overall income was 102% of budget. Meanwhile, we stayed within our budget on the expense side, which was 99% of budget. The result is that we have a surplus of \$34,883 for 2016.

Our investments made a gain in value of \$177,244 in 2016, in spite of the fact that we liquidated \$49,000 from the New Covenant Funds investment to cover some of our 3% endowment fund spending.

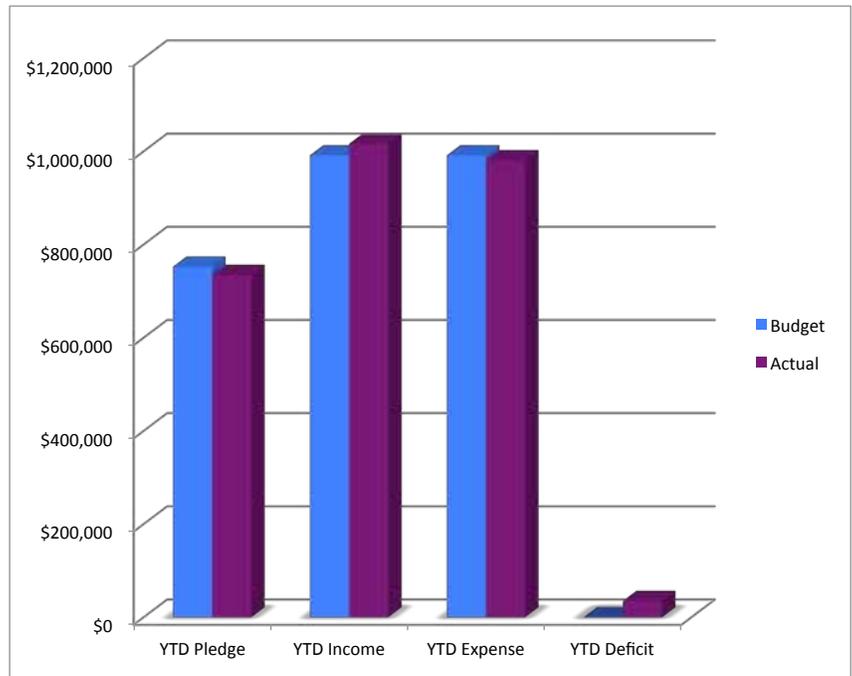
2016 giving statements that have not been picked up will be mailed at the end of January. Giving envelopes are available, should you request them. Please call or email me if you have any questions or would like envelopes.

We are still hoping to get some more pledges in. If you have not pledged yet, please contact me. Rest assured that all pledge and giving information is kept confidential. You may pledge and give online at [www.pclg.org](http://www.pclg.org). My email address is [kristy.cole@pclg.org](mailto:kristy.cole@pclg.org), should you wish to contact me.

Thank you for your wonderful generosity.

God Bless you and Happy New Year,

*Kristy Cole, Church Administrator*



## News

During the month of February our chapel focus will be love and the importance of supporting local mission outreach projects. We look forward to the children learning more about those who are less fortunate and how the simple act of giving shows how much we care.

We will begin tours for fall soon and at this time (mid January) we have limited space due to current students who have requested additional days/hours! We are thankful for the opportunity to serve the children and families in the community!

Blessings,

*Cory Mullins, Growing FootPrints Director* [growingfootprints@yahoo.com](mailto:growingfootprints@yahoo.com).

# On the Bulletin Board

Have a short note for the next issue of *The Spire*?  
Submit your bulletin board items to  
[carlo@pclg.org](mailto:carlo@pclg.org)



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# PCLG at-a-Glance

## WORSHIP ON SUNDAYS

Adult Education	9 a.m.
Worship in the Sanctuary	10 a.m.
"God's Place" Sunday School	10:15 a.m.
Fellowship Time	11 a.m.

## BIBLE STUDY GROUPS

Men's Bible Study	Wednesday	6:30 a.m.
Pastor's Bible Study	Wednesday	2:00 p.m.
Theology on Tap	1st Monday	8 p.m.

## FELLOWSHIP GROUPS

Friends, Food, Fellowship	2nd Saturday	6 p.m.
The Voyagers	3rd Saturday Fellowship & Service	
Buoys & Gulls	Various	Various
Mates	Various	Various
Senior Stretch & Movement	Wed/Fri	9:30 a.m.
Happy Paint	Thursday	10:00 a.m.
Bookends	Various	Various
CoveKnit Group	Wednesday	7 p.m.

## PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Home AM Groups	3rd Thursday	9:30 a.m.
PCLG AM ("WoW") Group	Thursday	10 a.m.
PCLG Noon Group	2nd Thursday	12 p.m.

## COVENANT GROUPS

Baker/Attwood Covt.	Monday	10:00 a.m.
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## MUSIC MINISTRIES

Los Cascabeles	Tuesday	6 p.m.
Chancel Brass	Wednesday	7:45 p.m.
Worship Band	Thursday	7 p.m.
Chancel Choir	Thursday	7:30 p.m.
Chancel Strings	Friday	7:30 p.m.
Joyful Voices	Sunday	11:30 a.m.
Youth Choir	Sunday	6:30 p.m.

## YOUTH MINISTRIES

Middle School SNiFF	Sunday	5 p.m.
High School YG	Sunday	7:30 p.m.

*Don't forget—  
Deadline for the  
March SPIRE  
is 2:00 p.m. Friday,  
February 24.*



## *February Birthdays*

4	Margaret Kvamme	16	Caroline Caselli
6	Aline Banduenga		Tanya Kruse
7	Joyce Strandberg	18	Betty Rayfield
	Nancy Smith	22	Laurel Loomer
9	Don Wolf	23	Paula Stoner
10	Bev Wright		Michael Shusterman
	John Gruber	24	Martha Wills
	Bill Cole	25	Ben Fong
	Kathryn Smith		Paul Booth
11	Jerry Ulrich	27	Sandy Alzaidi
	Jim Snyder	28	Bea Scheible
12	MacKenzie Daly	29	Oliver Acosta

## *Anniversaries*

4	Jerry & Betty Ulrich
17	Barney & Shirley Byle



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The poster features a vibrant, multi-colored background with a grid pattern. The text is centered and reads: "THE START OF LENT" in a small, sans-serif font. Below it, "ASH" is written in large, bold, black letters with a distressed, splattered texture. Underneath "ASH" is "WEDNESDAY" in a clean, sans-serif font. A decorative flourish is positioned below the text. At the bottom, the service details are written in a cursive font: "Service at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 1".