

News from Live Oak – February, 2011

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Woo-Hoo! Meet Our New Director of Religious Education

Our Children's Religious Education (CRE) Committee is excited to announce Reena Burton will start as our ¼-time Director of Religious Education (DRE) on March 1. Some of you may have had the opportunity to meet Reena last Sunday. If not, do introduce yourself on Sunday, March 6.

Reena who has worked with youth and adults in secular, spiritual, cross-cultural, and camp settings, says she is called to serve youth and families in a way that invites reflection, contemplation, and renewal through many paths and religions. The skills she brings to Live Oak are enhanced by her education in fine art, art therapy, and the divinity program at Pacific School of Religion (PSR) in Berkeley.



Reena served as Youth Minister in a UCC Church in Palo Alto. More recently she has been Volunteer Coordinator (with her partner Zeb) at Old First Reformed Church in Pittsburgh, PA. They facilitated a mens' shelter and food/clothing cupboard at the church, organized volunteers, and planned and implemented mission trips for youth & intergenerational groups.

Many thanks to past and current members of the CRE who reviewed resumes, interviewed candidates, and, with joy, selected Reena. This includes committee members Lisa Fry, Kate Hand, Laura Prickett, and Kim Rankin, plus past members Vera Gassner, Nanci Armstrong-Temple, and Kathryn Duke. If you would like to work with this committee, please contact any of us or Reena.

She and Zeb recently returned to the bay area. We look forward to the contributions Reena will bring to our growing community.

Small Group Ministry Kick-Off -- Friday, March 11

Live Oak UU will kick-off our new Small Group Ministry (SGM) program with a large group gathering on Friday, March 11 (7:30 p.m.) where we will explain more about these groups AND enjoy a program together. We will watch and discuss one episode of Bill Moyers' *On Faith & Reason* program to start the evening.

What is SGM? *Small Group Ministry* is intentional lay-led small groups that deepen and expand the ministry of a congregation. Groups of 6-10 people agree to meet over the next year on a regular schedule of either once or twice a month. Each gathering is 90-minutes long and is facilitated by one (or revolving) leaders. Sessions have a simple format that includes an opening reading, a check-in, a time for exploration and discussion, and a closing. Themes are chosen to help the group members get to know themselves and each other more deeply.

Twenty-some Live Oak'ers expressed interest in joining a group. Others have asked for more info about SGM. We have enough people to start several new groups (definitely one weekday daytime group, plus probably two that would meet on two different weekday evenings).

Join us at the home of David & Lisa Fry near Lake Merritt in Oakland for this Kick-Off Event. All are welcome, but we do need RSVPs. Please reply to lisafry@gmail.com by Tuesday, March 8. Address and details will be sent to respondents later.

Participants establish
new and deeper
connections
with one another
and find a place for
religious exploration
and
spiritual growth.

Want to know more about the Bill Moyers' DVDs?

Moyers asked some of the world's most provocative writers questions such as, "In a world where religion is poison to some and salvation to others, how do we live together?"

Their responses, their stories can help us see into the truth of experience that is obscured by the different meanings each faith assigns to the same language. Their tales of suffering and redemption, war and peace, violence and love reflect the lived experience of human beings baffled by the language of theology and the abstractions of reason. Depending on interest, we'll provide opportunities to explore other episodes in this series.

Save the Date! Congregational Meeting: Elections & More

Join us on Sunday, March 13, 2:00-4:00 p.m. in the cottage at The Home of Truth. We will elect trustees, discuss a proposed method to discern our mission, discuss a draft budget for the coming fiscal year, and address a few other topics. An agenda and slate for election will follow. If you are interested in being on the board of trustees, please email our nominating committee through jaybroller2002@yahoo.com.

Feeding Our Roots: Stewardship Campaign

Watch for more information soon about Stewardship gatherings, parties where we have an opportunity for socializing, some dessert, and talking about our commitments to Live Oak. Folks who attended these gatherings last year had a good time and were glad to participate.

Roger Hallsten and David Fry, Co-Chairs of Stewardship this year, will soon announce the dates and locations of the parties. The plan is to have them all between March 18 and March 27, some in the daytime, some in the evening; some with childcare, some without; and in different geographic locations (Alameda, Berkeley, and Oakland).

We are looking forward to yet another opportunity for folks to spend time together in more intimate settings, helping to build our community.



Circle Suppers

A number of Live Oak'ers are interested in gathering in each others' homes for friendly, casual evenings. Does this include you? Circle Supper fits the bill. We are looking for:

- Hosts for suppers (organized potlucks)
- Someone to coordinate (set the dates, match hosts with guests)
- And people hungry for conversation and food

We're hoping to set some of these up for April. If you want to coordinate the next round of Circle Suppers -- or if you want to host one or attend one, email lisasfry@gmail.com.

Greeters Needed

We need a couple of people to alternate greeting visitors and to set up and put away the nametags & brochures at worship services. It's easy and fun! Email lisasfry@gmail.com.