

News from Live Oak – July, 2011

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Live Oak Makes Two Commitments: To Stay in Alameda and to Becoming Wheelchair Accessibility

We have two pieces of news regarding the process of finding a new church home. First, the Live Oak Board of Trustees made the decision to focus the search on the island of Alameda. Our survey from some months ago showed that Alameda was the first choice for most of the folks who were then members of the fellowship. And since then almost all of our new members and friends have come from Alameda.

The board believes Alameda is the best place for Live Oak to thrive and grow. We felt the time had come to make a commitment to Alameda -- and to let everyone know about it. We recognize that some members may be disappointed by this decision. We hope you will all hang in there with us as we build our future.

Nearly a year ago, our congregation made a commitment to becoming wheelchair accessible. We currently see two ways to achieve that goal:

- Find a facility that already meets the American Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements for wheelchair accessibility
- Financially assist The Home of Truth to meet those requirements

Looking at New Venues

So far, we've found two viable alternatives for new rental space.

We already looked at the first venue, Christ Episcopal Church (CEC) in Alameda. We held a congregational meeting there, giving a large number of members and friends the opportunity to evaluate the facility. CEC is still on our list of possible places to rent. Their board is open to having us there, they are wheelchair accessible, they have excellent facilities for our children, and they even have a small parking lot. The rental cost is within our budget.

Now, we invite you to help us evaluate a second venue.

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On Sunday, July 17, our worship service and potluck will be at First Congregational Church (FCC), 1912 Central Avenue, Alameda (just 3-4 blocks from The Home of Truth). This will be an opportunity for many of us to evaluate the aesthetics, hear the acoustics, and see how the facility works for our congregation.

Again, the board of FCC is pleased with the idea of renting to us, the space meets our needs for wheelchair accessibility, and the rental cost is within our budget.

Please join us for the service and potluck – and for the opportunity to scope out a possible new home for our congregation.

Staying at The Home of Truth

Our board also decided we should find out what it would cost to make The Home of Truth wheelchair accessible. To determine that, we will arrange for an access specialist (someone recommended by the Center for Independent Living in Berkeley) to take a look at THOT. We would want to make the entries to both the sanctuary and the cottage ADA-compliant and safe and provide ADA-compliant bathroom facilities. Cost is obviously the major factor – and a question of how we might partner with THOT to share the costs. The building is also historic, which complicates the process some, too. But that is yet another option for all of us to consider.

Congregational Meeting

Please mark your calendars and plan to attend a congregational meeting on Sunday, August 14 (2:00-4:00 p.m.) in the cottage at The Home of Truth (THOT). This meeting will provide us with an opportunity to discuss the two venues (Christ Episcopal and First Congregational) and to hear about the alternate idea of helping improve THOT. We hope we can make a final decision at that meeting.

Questions?

If you have any questions or concerns about this process, please feel free to speak with any board member (Peter Hand, Jody Savage, Darlene Pagano, Vicky Jensen, or Lisa Fry).

Congregational Meeting: Sunday, August 14

Join us in the cottage at The Home of Truth at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, August 14th. We will provide ample time for discussing two possible sites (Christ Episcopal Church and First Congregational Church) for us to use for our new church home. We will also learn more about what the costs would be to stay at The Home of Truth. Watch for more information soon.

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July 4th: Great Fun – and Gratitude to Many

We had a wonderful turnout for the July 4th parade in Alameda. Those who participated – and those who watched – all agree that it was a terrific event. We are looking forward to doing this again next year. So mark your calendars now!

This would not have happened without lots of helpers:

- Kate Hand, instigator, organizer, and maker of signs for the sides of the truck
- Darlene Pagano who arranged for the truck and sent out promotional emails
- Jim Freschi who drove the truck
- David Fry who set up the sound system so the throngs could hear our singers
- Kim Rankin who played the keyboard and led the singing
- Debra Temple who brought the keyboard
- Lisa Fry who went early and snagged a great viewing spot for those of us who watched the parade
- Vicky Jensen and Jonathan Spencer who provided their home, back yard, and food for all after the parade
- All the folks (20 of them!) who sang and waved from our float for the entire 3.2 mile parade. The group included friends of the Hand family, Susan Sonnemaker's son and his Dad, and a friends of Kathryn Duke's from the UU Church of Berkeley.

