

Divine Gifts

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Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. 1 Cor. 12: 4-6

In this time of giving and receiving, we remember how God fulfilled God's promise to a faithful and patient people in the birth of Jesus. However, this gift did not grow up to be the Messiah people expected. The impossibility of a Messiah who dies before all creation is made right, is made possible when Christ was given new life again and brought renewed hope, love and peace to all of creation. God's gift is unexpected.

Many other unexpected and unconventional gifts have come to the Welcome Ministry in the past couple of months. Excluding money and blankets, more people ask for Bibles than any other item. Now that Old First is replacing the Bibles in its pews, the Welcome Ministry now has hundreds of old Bibles to give its homeless and hungry friends. Other churches have also given the Welcome Ministry great gifts. St. Peter and Paul Church, in North Beach, is able to supply the Welcome Ministry with more than enough food to feed its homeless and hungry friends (the extra food is given to the Senior Center). Also, The Welcome ministry is supported by volunteers from churches throughout the bay area (as far as Navado).

After church support, The Welcome Ministry receives most of its support from seminarians. It may have something to do with the fact that I live and learn with these individuals, but seminarians have become integral part of our ministry. Beyond their faithful volunteering, the Seminarians at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary have decided to work with Luther Seminary in Minneapolis on a program they call "Socks for San Francisco." For a month, both Seminaries are going to collect socks and underwear for The Welcome Ministry.

Along with the gifts mentioned above, we have also received more love, support, prayers and blessings from Old First Church, our volunteers and our homeless and hungry neighbors. Thank you for all of your help, hard work and hospitality. The Welcome Ministry has been truly blessed this year!