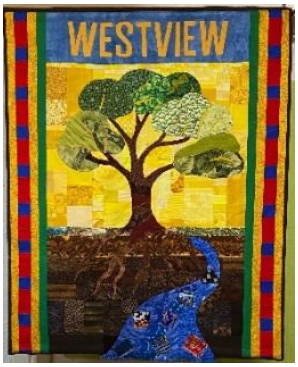
Happy Birthday Westview!
127 Years of being the Light & Love of Jesus in our Community

On November 23 we had a 127-year anniversary celebration at Westview. We viewed slides from our 127-year history including an explanation of our history, thoughtfully put together by Ian Hoffman as he worked at Pajaro Valley Historical Association. A highlight of the celebration was the unveiling of our new 125-year banner (right photo) which will grace the front of our church for years to come. It was thoughtfully designed and made by Rachel Clark (left photo), world renown quilter and member of our congregation. She conscientiously interviewed members to come up with themes to be represented.



Enjoy her explanation of what is so profoundly represented on the banner as she introduced the banner at our celebration:

"When I talked with several people in the congregation about what they wanted the banner to say I kept hearing 'we don't want to be defined by the concentration camps. We want a happy hopeful banner.' However, I reflected on how I grew up in Louisiana in a totally segregated community. I am proud of who I have become coming out of that community as a Black woman. For me it was difficult to ignore that there was a period of time in which our country put people into concentration camps who were actually citizens of this country, and while I don't want to be defined by slavery and segregation, that is a part of me and I don't want to ignore that that is a part of you, our church, as well. So, I had to find a way to put that in the banner and make a positive statement out of it, therefore the tree's leaves have gold inserts inspired by kintsugi, a Japanese tradition in which broken pottery is repaired with lacquer and gold powder to make the cracks stronger. Gold-threaded seams in the design show how suffering can be turned into beauty.
And part of that is that we stand on the shoulders of our ancestors, and I refuse to ignore those people who withstood the trials and tribulations. We are standing here because of them.
The tree symbolizes community, growth, stewardship, and renewal.
The roots represent our ancestors, while the branches symbolize ongoing work for justice and care for the community. Westview does so much in serving the community through social commitment.
The river stands for moving into the future and the church's multicultural community. Each fabric piece floating on the river represents a different culture: denim for American heritage, woven fabric from Mexico, silk from China, Ankara from Africa, and shibori and yukata from Japan. Each fabric tells its own story, showing how many traditions come together as the congregation moves forward.
The border is inspired by the design of church's windows."

Wow, what a beautiful piece of art representing our past and our course into the future. I especially love that the river not only represents moving into the future and a more multicultural membership, but in addition can represent the River of Life flowing from the temple of God (and the church) out into the desert (the community and the nations), growing from a trickle to a mighty river as it flows bringing healing, life, and abundance!

"On its banks are abundant vegetation, trees, and fruit bearing trees, and it eventually flows to the Dead Sea, a saltwater sea that is so salty nothing can live in it, yet as this abundant fresh water flows into this dead sea, it makes the water fresh and an abundance of fish now flourish there--many different kinds of fish!" (Ezekiel 47:7-12 paraphrased)

I pray we can continue to be part of God's River of Life bringing healing and abundant flourishing life to all the many different kinds of fish in our community!

And speaking of being a part of God's redeeming River of Life, **Tiny Homes official name is now HOPE Village** (Housing, Opportunities, Programs, Employment). The village is planned to open January 5 with 30 single rooms and 2 double rooms for a total of 34 people. Being unhoused is very traumatizing. A traumatic experience usually caused them to be unhoused: eviction, job loss, fleeing domestic violence, divorce, sickness or a severe accident often accompanied by exorbitant healthcare bills, or the difficulties of mental illness. Then once they are unhoused the trauma continues in which they are often robbed or assaulted, raped, freezing, hungry, ostracized/outcast, lose their job, lack of means to keep clean so further ostracized, self-image takes a beating, exposed to lots of drug trafficking, unwanted and often removed from their place of sleeping, and sometimes arrested. Please pray for the new residents to get the healing, yes healing, they need so they can begin their lives again and move to more permanent housing in 6-12 months. Please pray for them as they get jobs or sign up for disability, receive counseling for various issues, apply for lost or stolen documentation, reunite with family and friends, and feel loved and welcomed by the Westview Family, feeling embraced by the God who adores them! (Photo above -volunteers building furniture) I am so delighted our church has been able to support this project which was initiated, funded, and facilitated by Monterey & Santa Cruz Counties in partnership with Community Action Board of Santa Cruz County! I pray we can continue to care for the hurting in our community as we provide homes and healing. As said before, this project aligns so clearly with the heart of Jesus, who said, **"**Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." -Matthew 25

I appreciate you, Westview Family, you have the heart of Jesus! Here's to another 127 years of loving this community!
-Pastor Dan