

THE NUGGET

First Congregational Church of Murphys, United Church of Christ

Advent and Christmas 2022

November 27 First Sunday of Advent - This is the Sunday of Hope. We will be having our Advent decorating workshop at 5pm and a soup supper.

December 4 Second Sunday of Advent - This is the Sunday of Peace. Holy Communion will be offered at worship.

December 11 Third Sunday of Advent - This is the Sunday of Joy. We will be collecting for the Christmas Fund.

December 18 Fourth Sunday of Advent - This is the Sunday of Love. We will present our Family Christmas Program during worship. We will also be collecting for the Christmas Fund.

JOY TO THE WORLD

December 24 Christmas Eve - We will have a special Christmas Eve service at 7pm

December 25 Christmas Day - worship service 10am, lessons and carols



Hope Peace Joy Love



Whoever you are,
Wherever you are on
your life's journey
You are welcome
here.

Pastor's Article



Recently I watched two children struggling to share a toy. The 4-year-old was tightly grasping the iPad as his 2-year-old sister was trying to strip it away from him. The parent was desperately pleading with the 2-year-old. "It's not your turn. It's your brother's turn. Now please let go of it. "

"NO," the young girl. Screamed. "I want it now!"

Suddenly the boy let go and said to his mother. "She can have it. I had it enough."

"What," his mom said, "but it's your turn. You do not have to give into her. "No, it's okay. She's upset. She can play with it. I'll do something else."

I was struck with not only his willingness to give it to her but what he said, "I had it enough." As I reflect on this season of thankfulness I am thinking about "enough." We live in a world where we are constantly barraged to get more, do more, have more, be more!

It's exhausting and it is not God's way. As we celebrate Thanksgiving and enter the coming season of Advent where we wait for God's guidance, let us be reckless with our generosity!

Maybe now is the time to examine what is enough and be thankful for all we have been given. Happy Thanksgiving!

Grateful to be in ministry with you! Pastor Bonnie



Laizé worship service Dec. 7



You are invited to gather in the candlelit sanctuary at 7pm for the simplicity of music and meditation, prayer and silence.

RING THE BELL FOR PEACE DEC. 7



PLEASE JOIN US AS WE GATHER ON THE FIRST WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH AT NOON IN PRAYERS FOR PEACE AND THE RINGING OF THE CHURCH BELL.



Treasurer's Article



The Budget Process-

The Budget Committee is in the process of developing the Church budget for next year. This is an involved process with the steps defined in the Church By laws.

The first step is for the Treasurer to gather information from the head of all the committees on their anticipated budget request for next year. The Treasurer also collects information from Staff (Pastor, Music Director, Secretary, Custodian, CE Director) on their anticipated budget requests and from the Finance and Facilities Team on the anticipated building repairs. The Budget Committee, according to bylaws, includes the Treasurer, Financial Secretary, a member of Finance and Facilities team, 2 members of the Church Council, one of them being the Moderator, a member of the Pastoral Relations committee and the Chair of the Personnel Committee. The Personnel Committee will meet and discuss salaries and salary increases and give their recommendation to the Budget Committee. All this information is gathered and put into a proposed budget form that is then given to the Budget Committee. The Budget Committee then meets and comes up with a proposed budget for next year.

After the Budget Committee completes their proposed budget, it then goes to the Finance and Facilities team for their recommendation. The Finance and Facilities team will then report to the Church Council on their recommendation for the proposed budget. The proposed budget will then be submitted to the Congregation for approval at the Annual Budget Meeting on January 8th.

Please let me know if you have any questions on this process.

Patty Haskell



UPCOMING REHEARSALS:

12/4
9am & 11:15am

12/10
9:30am Christmas Program
1pm Bells Choir
2:30 pm Adult Choir

12/18
9am Choir

12/24
7pm Choir



The Golden Eagles small group has changed their name to the South Grove Bunch. They are still meeting on the 2nd Tuesday of the month from 5:30 - 7:30pm in Eastman.

Vice-Moderator's Musings



Hard to believe, but here we are in Advent season once more! Advent literally means “to come” or “toward coming”, so what better time to talk about our Membership and Calling Team. Right now, we are very much in need of additional

members on this team. Their major goal is to welcome church visitors and encourage them toward becoming active members of our church. As such, the Membership and Calling Team works with the Pastor to connect with visitors, prospective members, and inactive members to encourage church participation. They participate with the Pastor in planning Inquiry classes, introducing new members to the congregation, and seeking to incorporate members’ gifts into congregational life.

So what might you do as a member of this team? You might call visitors, answer questions they might have, encourage them to return to more church services and events. You might plan and host Inquiry classes, or schedule events to introduce new members to the congregation. You might even create new ways to encourage full participation in the church. Does any part of this sound like something you would enjoy doing? If so, please let us know of your interest. Call or text me, Pastor Bonnie, or one of the current members of the team. We would love to talk with you about it, and would certainly appreciate the help!

As we prepare for the Christmas season, may you each be blessed with Jesus’s coming into your lives in new and deeper ways. And may we all find ways to share our blessings with our congregation, our community, and our world.

With love,
Barbara Olivier



Knitters and Hookers

The Knitters and Hookers will have their next gathering on **December 21**. They meet in **Murphys** on the **3rd Wednesday** of every month from **11am – 2pm**. Contact **Liz Tussey** for more info.



Caity Johnson has completed her internship! Many thanks to all who contributed to make this possible for her. We can't wait to see what she will be cooking up in the future. Congratulations, Caity!



Did you turn in your pledge?

We would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to all who have turned in their pledge cards so far. Folks have pledged over \$122,000 so far and we are hoping to see that number grow. The practice of exercising financial stewardship is a spiritual discipline and a way to grow our faith. Thank you again for your part in the life-changing work of this congregation!



Christmas Fund Offerings are on December 11 & 18

The Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund is a Special Mission Offering that congregations have been supporting for over 100 years. The offering is administered through the United Church Board for Ministerial Assistance, the charitable arm of the Pension Boards. Funds provide direct financial support to those who serve the church and are facing financial difficulties. Please consider contributing to this fund, either in person at church, by going to www.fccmurph.org and scrolling down to the Engage link, or by going directly to www.christmasfund.org



Christian Education Recap

Advent season is such an exciting and busy time of year. The Advent Workshop is scheduled for November 27th at 5:00. This

workshop is always a fun time making crafts and sharing a meal. Everyone is welcome!!! During the Family Program on December 6th and a special dress rehearsal on December 10th we will be practicing for the Christmas Program. The program will be December 18th at 10:00. Hope that everyone can be there and enjoy it.

As we conclude this year, I am starting to plan for next year. I have talked to some parents and students about starting a service project. Jeri Carson-Hull is teaching us how to stock the Blessing Box every Sunday. I am also looking into other local service projects like helping with the recycling or helping at a local charity. The other idea I had was to have some fun projects also. When my children were young the Church had snow activities and ice skating trips. I will be talking to students about getting a list of fun projects. So many things happening. Now that we have some older students we need to improve our Sunday School to include other activities. Please let me know if you have any ideas for service projects or fun projects.

Thanks , Patty

LOVE
⇒ JESUS ←

grows
in faith

CHANGE
THE WORLD



*Please join us
for our
Children's
Christmas
Program on
December 18
at our 10am
worship. This
is a wonderful
way to
celebrate
Jesus and the
Christmas
season!*

BRINGING OUR FAMILIES TOGETHER



OUR FALL FAMILY PROGRAM IS IN FULL SWING, WITH THE KIDS GETTING THEIR SCRIPTS FOR THE UPCOMING CHRISTMAS PROGRAM. REMEMBER THAT FAMILY PROGRAM IS THE 1ST AND 3RD TUESDAY OF EVERY MONTH FROM 5:30 - 7:30PM IN THE SOCIAL HALL AND THE EASTMAN EDUCATION CENTER. SUPPER WILL BE PROVIDED. ALL ARE WELCOME! TAKE A NIGHT OFF FROM COOKING, ENJOY A SIMPLE MEAL AT THE CHURCH, AND JOIN IN GREAT ACTIVITIES FOR BOTH PARENTS AND KIDS!



OUR HOSTS AND COOK, PATTY, LAURA, AND EVELYN. LAURA MADE A LASAGNA FROM SCRATCH THAT WAS DELICIOUS!



THE WHOLE GROUP SHARING A MEAL AND GOOD CONVERSATION.



Caring for our members in need.



We are pleased to hear that our dear Gail Withuhn has been out of the hospital since mid-November! While she still has quite a long and uncertain road ahead of her, she remains in good spirits and is showing promising progress. Here she is pictures in one of the Prayer Shawls made for her by the Knitters and Hookers. Gail said that it is a precious gift and she loves how warm it keeps her while she is receiving treatments. What a wonderful way to quite literally wrap our sick people in our love! We are so grateful to have a group like the Knitters and Hookers to spearhead this truly amazing project.

Notes From the Outreach and Social Justice Team

Thanks to all of you who have, thus far, taken a tag from the Giving Tree in the Social Hall. Your love and generosity will undoubtedly brighten Christmas for a deserving child and their family. This year's gifts will be going to deserving children receiving gifts from Toys for Tots (in partnership with the Resource Connection) and to children residing in homes through Sierra Hope. Please select a tag from the giving tree which has the age and gender of a child on it. Bring your unwrapped gifts to the church on or before December 11 and the Outreach and Social Justice Team will deliver them to Toys for Tots and Sierra Hope. Please attach the tag you took to the gifts you bring.



The Resource Connection

Engaging Families
Empowering Communities
Enriching Lives

Since 2014, our church has faithfully donated filled bags of food every two months for The Resource Connection Food Bank. Since the pandemic there have been fewer bags being donated for a variety of reasons. I have talked with Tina Mather, the Executive Director of the Food Bank about taking a break from our church bringing bags of food and having people donate money instead. Here is her response:

“It really does make sense to step back from donating food to making a monetary gift. With the rising costs of gas and food it so much more expensive for you to donate the same amount of food that you have in the past. Allow us to stretch your dollars into so much more food. As an example, two weeks ago, we were able to find 16 oz jars of peanut butter for 10 cents a jar! These bargains are often hard to find but we are dedicated to feeding as many people as possible with each dollar that is donated.

Checks can be mailed to: The Resource Connection Food Bank, PO Box 1656, San Andreas, CA 95249-1656 (Please put FCC on your check so we are sure to track your gift).

Online donations can be made at:

<http://weblink.donorperfect.com/CalaverasFoodBank> (you can check a box on the form to dedicate your gift, the type of tribute to select is "in honor of" and put FCCM in the tribute name to allow us to track your gift).”

Thank you all for your compassion and dedication to the people of our county. Those struggling to make ends meet have found the Resource Connection a blessing. Our county has many families who struggle with food insecurity and our church has helped alleviate some of that for the past 8 years! Please continue to give to the Resource Connection with your monetary gifts. You can send checks to the church, bring them on Sunday or go online to <https://fccmurph.org> and scroll down to the online giving heading.

Make sure to write ‘Resource Connection-Food Bank’ in the memo section.

Thank you all so much!

Jeri Carson-Hull

Celebrating the Ways Our Members Give Back



In 2014, when we first began our ministry with the Food Bank, we were able to collect over 480 lbs of food to give to our neighbors! What a meaningful offering to those who are struggling. Strong work, FCCM!!





- Carrie Shinn 6**
- Fred Cooper 8**
- Iлона Logodi 8**
- Jodie Gibson 8**
- Marcus Collogne 8**
- Larry Buchanan 13**
- Bob Mulvaney 17**
- Judy Hanson 18**
- Elizabeth Machado 19**
- Faith Roberts 19**
- Patty Turcotte 19**
- Ann Pestalozzi 23**
- Charlotte Hunt 27**
- Dylan Shinn 29**



Prayers answered



The scriptures tell us: “Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.

Philippians 4:6

We continue to witness the stories of how God answers our prayers! God hears our cries and answers them.

Let us pray daily for the following members and friends of our community:

All those who are ill

Family of Joanie Singleton

Tabitha Kremesec

Hilary Oldenkamp

Angela Patterson

Tracy Ellifritz

Alan & Dodi Horvath

Elsbeth Mann

Don Ancia

Caity Johnson

Jamie Leigh's family

Tutthill Family

Gail Withuhn

Sergio Pena

God's love echoes through us to all creation.

Webpage: www.fccmurph.org

Email: nugget@fccmurph.org

Phone: 209.728.3141

DECEMBER 2022

DATED MATERIAL— DO NOT DELAY

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Murphys, CA 95247

509 N. Algiers Street

PO Box 48

*FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF CHRIST
of Murphys*

THE NUGGET

Staff

Pastor Rev. Dr. Bonnie Hollinger

Pastor Emeritus Rev. Dr. John Randlett

Music Director Dr. Daryl Hollinger

Secretary Jenny Fuqua

Custodian Peter Marai-Muro

Christian Ed. Director Patty Haskell

Officers

Moderator Carrie Shinn

Vice Moderator Barbara Olivier

Clerk Marie Studebaker

Treasurer Patty Haskell

Assistant Treasurer Shad Sundberg

Financial Secretary Gary Carson-Hull



www.ucc.org

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, MURPHYS MISSION STATEMENT

We believe that all people are beloved by God and we strive to serve as a welcoming and nurturing church community to discern the Bible with insight for today and to live out Christ's teachings.

The Nugget Committee invites you to submit articles of interest and wishes to stress that the deadline is always the 15th of each month.

The Committee reserves the right to edit submissions for length and content.