



THE NUGGET

Open Door United Church of Christ

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

Our Annual Christmas program, *Celebrating the Birth of Jesus* is going to be held on Sunday, December 22 at our 10 a.m. worship service. It is going to be a musical event of the Christmas Story. The Adult Choir, the Handbell choir and the children will share their talents. Enoch Samraj will sing, and Marguerite Close will sing *Mary Did You Know?* You don't want to miss this precious event!



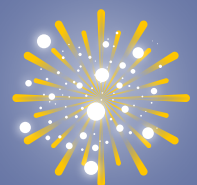
We will be having our Christmas Eve service on Tuesday, December 24 at 7pm.



On Sunday, December 29 we will have our special Lessons and Carols worship service at 10am.



Come jingle and mingle with us! 'Tis the season to be merry! Join us for food, drinks, and holiday cheer at our annual Christmas Open House here at the office on Friday, December 20th from 12 - 2pm. We've got the decorations covered, you bring the holiday spirit!





Pastor's Article

Why Celebrate Advent?

This time of year Advent can get lost in all the planning of Christmas and yet here at the parish we continue our traditions and liturgies to help us focus on the Hope of Christ.

In Advent, we proclaim and celebrate our hope and our trust that our God is faithful: that God will come again and again to rescue us, to heal us, and to console us. God calls us forward to a new world, to embrace a new future. That is God's deeper gift to us. God's call is not to return to a wonderful place where "everything was wonderful"—be that Bethlehem or the 'wonderful world' of our shared past.

We begin with hope but we know that for many, it is also framed by the experience of loss and continuing grief. Our anticipation of the joy of Christmas is all the greater for the depth of the crisis through which we have been travelling. Christian hope is not naive. It does not give rise to nostalgia, denial or conformity. Rather it is realistic in its faithfulness and bold in its imagination. Pope Francis tells us that hope 'is able to see a tomorrow; hope is the door that opens onto the future.' Hope changes everything.

As we prepare to celebrate the overwhelming gift of love that was the Incarnation, we are invited to take stock of how well prepared we are, not only to celebrate the Nativity of Jesus at Christmas, but to live the kind of life we are meant to live, loving one another and the whole human race as much as we are loved.

It is my prayer that you will fully participate in the Advent workshop, the daily devotionals provided to you and attend worship faithfully each Sunday. We are stronger by being together!

Waiting expectantly in Advent, Pastor Bonnie

Moderator's Message

Welcome to Advent! Such a joyous (and at times, exhausting!) time of year. I am certainly ready for the peace, joy and family closeness associated with the celebration of the birth of the Christ child.



Please be sure to pay attention to the Nugget and weekly emails, as there are lots of important events you won't want to miss. We start right off with the Advent Workshop on December 1st, from 3 - 6:30pm. This is an intergenerational time so be sure to come and help our wonderful young people make holiday crafts, worship, and to share a soup supper together.

As I hope you are all aware now, Pastor Bonnie and Dr. Daryl will be retiring on 5/31/25. One of the most important undertakings of church leaders now is to begin the Pastoral Search process. I will lead this effort and have assembled a team of 6 others to begin the process. Keep in mind, this process could take 6 to 18 months and will very likely involve us bringing on an Interim pastor. The process is highly defined by conference guidelings, and the team will begin meeting soon. The team will consist of: Barbara Olivier, Mark McCormick, Noel Helmbrecht, Judy Regalia, Tami Chesnut and Penny Sarvis. There will be an installation of the team during worship. We will welcome all congregational input and there will be many opportunities for the congregation to hear updates and be involved.

Please feel free to call me if you have any questions or suggestions about the search process and progress.

Have a wonderful Advent season, and I hope to see you in worship soon!

Blessings,

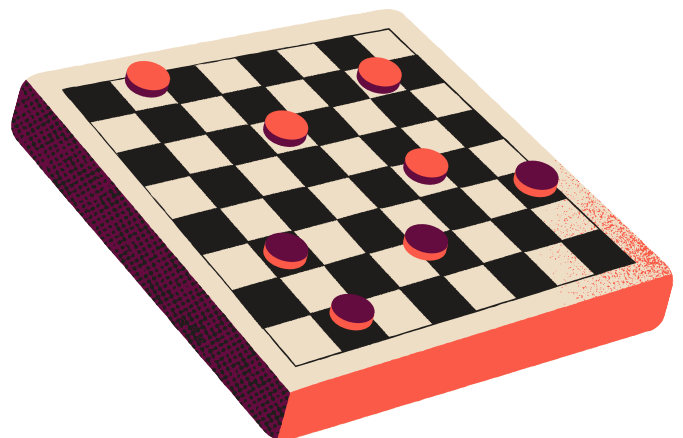
Carrie Shinn
Moderator



Christian Education



It is a busy time for the youth at our Church. We are preparing for the Christmas program which is on December 22 during worship. Pastor Bonnie has been engaging with the students in the Confirmation class. I am sure you have noticed how they have been helping with worship on Sundays. We are planning some special activities in the Spring for members of the class and their sponsors. I enjoy seeing the dedication of the confirmands and their sponsors as well as the parental support. The Family Program will be taking a break this Winter. The new day and time seem to be problematic to our families, so we will be discussing how to change that. I will be working on setting up some monthly “fieldtrips” for some fun and service activities in the new year. The Christian Education team is preparing a special Christmas gift for all the youth. All students should have received an Advent calendar provided by the CE team. ***We will end the year with our yearly New Year's Eve game night.*** We will gather for snacks and games and ring in the New Year. Everyone is invited to this event from 7:00-10:00. We celebrate New York New Year's, so it is not so late. Patty



Treasurer Report

The end of the year is a busy time of the year for the Treasurer. The budget committee has met several times and will present the 2025 budget to the Council on December 15th. If approved, it will go to the Congregation on January 12th at our Congregational meeting. Please feel free to attend the Council meeting on the 15th or call me if you have any questions about the budget. After December 15th, it will be sent out to the Congregation, so you can review it before the meeting. Please make sure that you pay your 2024 pledges this year, before the year ends. We can't give you credit if you are late. Also, don't forget to give your phone numbers to Sierra Hills and Angels Food Market so we can get credit for our e-script account. If you have questions about that, or have problems, please call me. Thanks for all your support, Patty



Its time to order your Christmas poinsettias! Every year, the Sanctuary is beautifully decorated with poinsettias that are in honor of the memory of our loved ones. They are available for \$15 and the deadline for ordering is DECEMBER 17 Order forms will be available at church or you can contact the office with the name of your loved one and payment info.



Outreach & Social Justice

Holiday Greetings from the Outreach and Social Justice Team! We are so excited about our Christmas projects this year! These projects will bring hope, joy, and connection to folks in our community, who otherwise, might be forgotten. To start with, we will again be going to Golden Nursing Home in San Andreas, so, mark your calendars for Tuesday, December 17 from 09:45am to 12:30pm. Join us at to celebrate with the residents by singing carols, eating Christmas goodies, and giving gifts to those residents who will otherwise receive no gifts, no visitors, and no Christmas cheer. This event is guaranteed to bring Christmas joy and happiness to all who join us!

The 2024 Giving tree is up in the Social Hall! This year we will again be filling gift bags for the residents at Golden Nursing Home. We will also be making gift bags for the women and men at the Women's Crisis Center. We are asking for a few children's gifts for the kids at the Crisis Center as well. Lastly, we are having a small gift drive for Tina, a regular at our church, and her grandkids. She is pretty much asking for winter clothes for the kids. The Giving Tree is adorned with gift tags. Please take as many tags as you like and bring the gifts back to the church by December 15. The Outreach and Social Justice elves will wrap them. There will be sheets by the Giving Tree with Gift suggestions on them. This has been a rough year for many of us. Let's find our Christmas spirit by helping make a better Christmas for those that otherwise would not have one.

Your O&SJ Team

SMALL GROUPS SCHEDULE

#1 Marilyn Baisel

3rd Friday at 10am

#2 Faye Morrison

2nd Tuesday at 5:30pm

#3 Pam Kimes

3rd Thursday at 10am

#4 Alan Horvath

1st Friday at 2pm

#5 Faye Morrison

3rd Tuesday at 5:30pm

#6 Barbara Olivier

4th Wednesday at 11am

If you would like to join a small group, please contact Pastor Bonnie.

**Tis the
Season**



A Response to the Nugget Article About Recycling - from Janis Ossa



I will be quoting from a July 15, 2024 article in Time Magazine:

- Only 10% of plastics being manufactured are recycled/recyclable.
- One quarter of the more than 16,000 chemicals added to plastics to produce useful characteristics (flexibility, water repellency, etc.) are known to be linked to inflammatory bowel disease, cancer, autism, ADHD, Type 2 Diabetes, disruption to the endocrine system, causing problems with fertility, immunity, and development.
- Humans have produced more than 11 billion metric tons of plastic since 1950. Only two billion tons of that are still used today.
- “Micro-plastics and nano-plastics” that are produced when plastic breaks down can be found almost everywhere in the human body from blood to breast milk.
- Some plastic is essential - medical equipment like blood bags and flexible tubing, but disposable plastic forks less so. “Eliminating disposable plastics would go a long way toward improving health.”

Let us resolve to use as few disposable plastics as possible and prolong the life of any that we must use.

Our dear Shirley
Soderer is so
happy to be
expecting another
great-grandchild in
June 2025. A new
baby is such a
blessing!
Congratulations!

**Columbia College
Community Chorus**
with orchestra
Dr. Daryl Hollinger, Conductor

Sounds of the Season

FRI, DEC 6 - 7:30 PM
SAT, DEC 7 - 3:00 PM
SUN, DEC 8 - 3:00 PM

Sonora Opera Hall
250 S. Washington St., Sonora

TICKETS \$20
(\$25 at the door)
18 and under FREE
(must reserve seat)



Thanksgiving Dinner

All of us who attended the Thanksgiving meal wish to acknowledge the Glessman and Jackson families, and especially Wendy Glessman, for working so diligently to assure we all had a terrific meal! This wonderful gift that Wendy makes certain is planned every year is most appreciated.

Blessings to our Thanksgiving angels!!



Advent Workshop



Once again, The Christian Ed team planned and executed another successful Advent Workshop for our youth and families. This event would not happen without the teamwork of such dedicated people. Everyone worked so hard and a good time was had by all. Thank you, dear ones!





Sadie Oneto 1
Carrie Shinn 6
Jodie Gibson 8
Ilona Logodi 8
Bob Mulvaney 17
Judy Hanson 18
Dylan Shinn 29

Don't see your birthday listed? We promise it isn't on purpose. Please contact the church office to have your special day added to our list.

Directory Updates:

Paula Smith
P.O. Box 544
Railroad Flat, CA 95248
(209)293-3270

Jodie Gibson
1025 Martin, Space 52
Lake Port, CA 95453

The scriptures tell us:

"The Lord will give us unyielding and impenetrable strength to his people. The Lord will bless his people with peace."

Psalms 29, verses 11 - 12

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:

Prayer List:

Family of Gail Williams
Dodi Horvath
Brian (Nancy Burton)
Peter & Marian Egbert
Alison Gist (Mary Kelly)
Andrea Tucker (Elaine Lewis)
Hank Fletcher's daughter
Cindy Luna (Marci Duggan)
Ed and Carole Whisman (Wendy Glessman)
Sandy Fox-Hill
Norma Fritsche
Lynda Goodman (June Perry)
Jeff Sather
Bob & Terry Lewis (Barbara Olivier)
Rev. John Randlett
Eber Hampton (Jesse Hampton)
Corky, Annette, Lars (Mark McCormick)
Kara, Max, and Allie Bechtel (Penny & Mickey)
Tabitha Kremesec
Laura Miller (Noel Helmbrecht)
Daniel Smolich (Liz Tussey)
Rev. Marty Williams

DECEMBER 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 9am Adult Choir 10am worship Holy Communion 3:30 - 6pm Advent Workshop	2 6:30pm Al-Anon	3 1pm budget mtg. EEC	4 12:30pm AA & Al-Anon 6:30pm Al-Anon	5	6 12pm Women's AA 7:30pm Columbia College Concert	7 11am Bell Choir 3pm Columbia College Concert
8 9am Adult Choir 10am worship 11am OSJ mtg. 3pm Columbia College Concert	9 6:30pm Al-Anon	10	11 1pm F&F mtg. ZOOM 12:30pm AA & Al-Anon 6:30pm Al-Anon	12 9am - 4pm WIC in Social Hall	13 12pm Women's AA	14 11am Bell Choir
15 10am worship 11am Council EEC 12 - 2pm Family Program/Confirmation	16 6:30pm Al-Anon	17 17:45am OSJ visit Golden Nursing Home 10am Family Connections, EEC 11am Knitters and Hookers	18 10am Exec mtg. Fisk 12:30pm AA & Al-Anon 6:30pm Al-Anon	19	20 12 - 2pm Office Open House 12pm Women's AA	21 11am Bell Choir
22 9am Adult Choir 10am Worship All Church Christmas Play	23 6:30pm Al-Anon	24 7pm Christmas Eve service	25 MERRY CHRISTMAS	26 CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY OFFICE CLOSED	27 12pm Women's AA	28 11am Bell Choir
29 Lessons & Carols worship service 10am	30 6:30pm Al-Anon	31				

God's love echoes through us to all creation.

Webpage: www.fccmurph.org

Email: nugget@fccmurph.org

Phone: (209)728-3141

DECEMBER 2024

DATED MATERIAL - DO NOT DELAY

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Murphys, CA 95247

509 N. Algiers Street

PO Box 48

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

First Congregational Church of Murphys

THE NUGGET



www.ucc.org

Staff

Pastor Rev. Dr. Bonnie Hollinger

Pastor Emeritus Rev. Dr. John Randlett

Music Director Dr. Daryl Hollinger

Secretary Jenny Fuqua

Custodian Lucie Tardif

Christian Ed Director Patty Haskell

Childcare Shayanna DuCharme

Officers

Moderator Carrie Shinn

Vice Moderator Barbara Olivier

Treasurer Patty Haskell

Assistant Treasurer Shad Sundberg

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.