



# THE NUGGET

First Congregational Church of Murphys, United Church of Christ



## LENT: A TIME TO HEAL

Our Lenten Season begins with Ash Wednesday on February 17 and for many will surely be a day to recognize the sorrow and pain we have all been facing.

Normally we would gather to pray, sing and place ashes on our foreheads as a sign of repentance and recognition of the fragility of life.

If there was ever a time when we need to consider the woundedness of our souls and bodies, it is now. We will take this time to embrace the all-encompassing love of God who stands with us through all things.

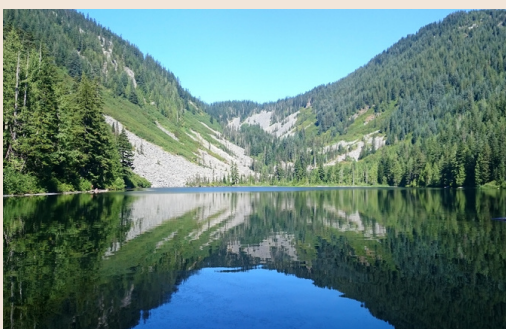
On February 17 at 7 p.m. we will hold a zoom service to pray together. You will receive an invite that week. In preparation for the worship, gather a candle, paper and pencil. We will be discovering the ways that God breathes new life into our spirits. Our theme for Lent is Holding On. Usually, it is a time of letting go, but we will hold on to God, one another, scriptures, prayers, song, joy and nature. Come join the Journey!

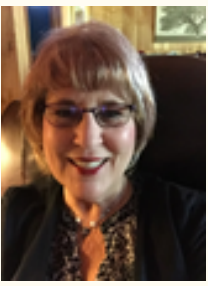
*Holding On*



*"Knowing God free us from the burden of our worries.*

*Heal us from the notion that we must face our brokenness alone".*





## PASTOR'S ARTICLE

### When You Can't Breathe, the Church Will Hold You!

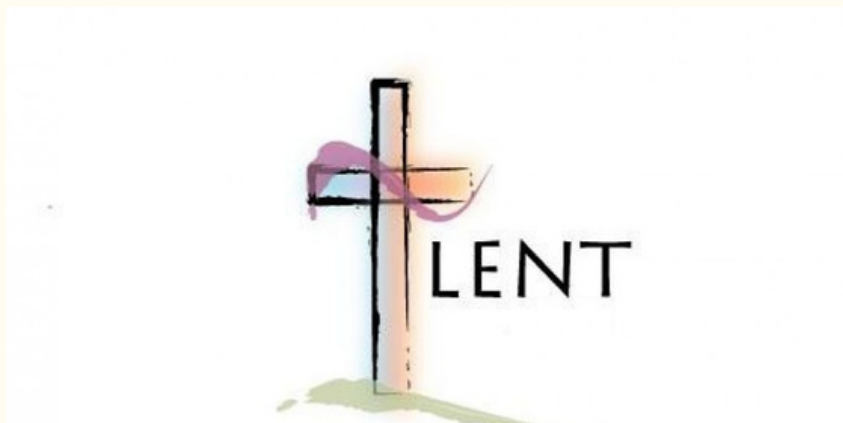
“Just Breathe” someone said to me recently when I was fretting about something. You know what? That did not help at all! “I am breathing” I glared at them. What I really needed was to vent, to cry, to wail and let it be okay. We somehow have this idea that we (pastors especially) are to be picture of calm at all times. Hold it together, don't show the real angst and act like it's all fine.

No way! Friends, I am here to tell you that first, I have never been able to pretend like something is okay when it is not. Secondly, I cannot put a smile on my face when there is sadness in my heart. Thirdly, I can't disguise what is actually going on inside of me. Call it a weakness if you will, but it's me. Now I know the difference in setting aside my own issues to provide pastoral presence but that is not what I am talking about at this moment. I'm writing here to emphasize the importance of just being present to each other.

One of the greatest gifts I believe God gives to us and we give to one another, is to accept us just as we are at any given moment. I don't hear God saying, “well shape up Bonnie and then we will talk.” No, instead, God's tender arms are wrapped around me and speaking in a feminine southern drawl, “ now honey, you just come here and cry a bit.”

I must say, you do this so well. I have been the blessed recipient of your tenderness, your cards, your phone calls and prayers and I want to thank you. You have held me when times are tough and celebrated with me when the joys abound. You are the Christian Community I treasure.

*Thank you for letting me exhale!! Still smiling in God's graces,  
Pastor Bonnie*



# Family Program

## For Kids

The first and third Tuesday of every month at 5.30pm via zoom



## for Parents

The second and fourth Tuesday of every month at 7pm via zoom

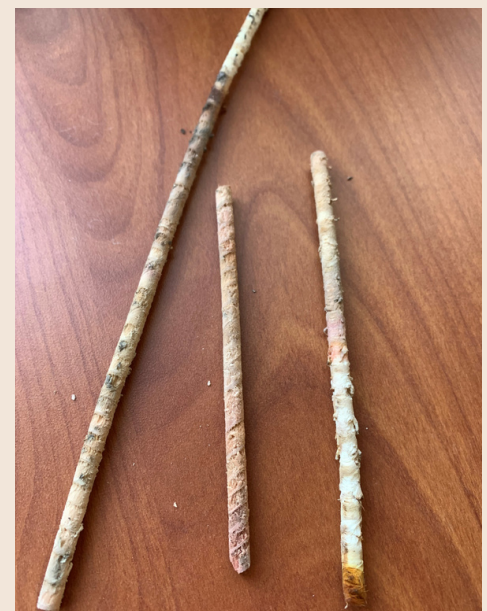




## MODERATOR'S MESSAGE



**We know that many of you were worried about our beautiful red wood tree. It has been examined by a certified arborist last week and we are so happy to see that the tree is healthy and it is going to stand for a while.**



As we have been ushering in 2021 these past few weeks, I have started to feel a sense of hope and renewal. Maybe it's just knowing that the days are lengthening a little bit each day, or the possibility that spring may be here before we know it, or the knowledge that many in our congregation are able to get Covid-19 vaccinations, but hope is starting to bubble inside of me! One of my most fervent hopes is that I can see all of your faces soon!

You may have noticed that you're hearing a new moderator voice this month. Well, it's true, I was named to the moderator position at the Council meeting on 1/27/21. We've had a few changes of late!

Maybe you already know this but Sally Elliott and Laura Argento are leaving us to return to the Half Moon Bay area to care for an aged parent. Sally and Laura will be so very missed! Sally has been very ably handling the treasurers' duties for the past couple of years, and she and Laura have been faithful in meal prep and assorted tasks for the Tuesday family nights. They will be sorely missed in so many ways, and we owe them a huge debt of gratitude!

In order to fill the position of treasurer, Mandy DeSchmidt has agreed to work with Sally to get up to speed, and take over the duties effective 2/1/21. That of course leaves the moderator position open, and I have agreed to fill that position. Both of these changes will be in effect 2/1/21 – 6/30/21. A new slate of officers and team leaders will be put forth in our annual meeting in June, and decisions about whether Mandy and I will continue in these positions will occur then, with a full vote of the congregation.

Please join me in thanking Mandy for her superb job as moderator. She leaves a big hole for me to fill! She has been diligent, approachable and very thorough in the exercise of her duties, and I thank her. Please feel free to call or email me if you have concerns or feedback. I am readily available at 209-986-9331 or [carolynrshinn@gmail.com](mailto:carolynrshinn@gmail.com).

May rays of hope be shining on you all...

Carrie Shinn



## FEBRUARY 2021 FCN THOUGHTS: BLOOD PRESSURE MATTERS

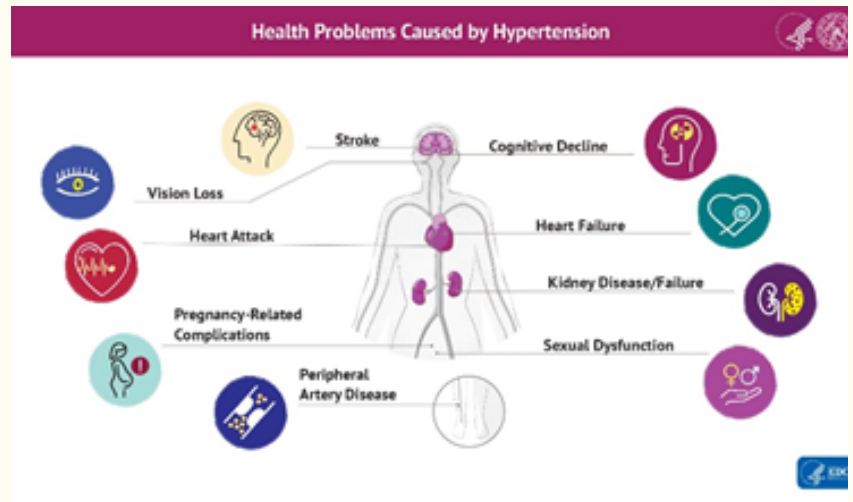


February, the month of Valentine's day and love is the month we focus our attention to heart related care and health problems. Blood pressure is one way of telling how healthy our circulatory systems are and provides us the opportunity to focus on those things we can change.

Hypertension (high blood pressure) is known as a "silent" condition because you aren't likely to be aware of it until it causes a problem. Heart disease and stroke are the most well known of the problems cause by hypertension, but others can be profoundly serious.

The only way to know is by taking your blood pressure. In these days of social distancing, we have been unable to have blood pressure clinics at church and you may not be at the doctor's office as frequently as you may have in the pre-COVID days. Your doctor may recommend you obtain a blood pressure machine to do blood pressures at home.

But did you know there are right ways and wrong ways to do a blood pressure? Recent activities, when and what you eat, exercise, being nervous and your position during the reading may all affect your blood pressure.



- **Don't eat or drink** anything 30 minutes before you take your blood pressure.
  - **Empty your bladder** before your reading.
- **Sit in a comfortable** chair with your back supported for at least 5 minutes before your reading.
  - Do some slow, deep breathing and relax.
  - **Put both feet flat on the ground** and keep your legs uncrossed.
  - **Rest your arm with the cuff on a table at chest height.**
- **Make sure the blood pressure cuff is snug** but not too tight. **The cuff should be against your bare skin**, not over clothing.
  - **Do not talk** while your blood pressure is being measured.

If you find someone is not following these above rules, ask that they do. Some recommend taking your blood pressure 2-3 times and record it. If you do, be sure to wait a few minutes between readings. Try to take your blood pressure at the same time of day. You may find your provider follows newer guidelines of 130/80, rather than the older 140/90 that was previously considered high blood pressure. New research brings updated guidelines. Check this link to understand blood pressure readings <https://bit.ly/3sxcqC1>.

Many things which affect our blood pressure are not things we can change. Genetics, family history, age, race and ethnicity are our lot in life. The CDC has developed a tool My Family Health Portrait to help you examine those risks at <http://bit.ly/2N3NXnu>. Eating healthy food, becoming more active, not smoking, and limiting alcohol and getting enough sleep are all things we can work on to improve our heart health. Your body will thank you for it. "So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." 1 Corinthians 10:31 ESV

# The Resource Connection

Engaging Families  
Empowering Communities  
Enriching Lives

DEAR MEMBERS OF THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF MURPHYS,  
ON BEHALF OF THE RESOURCE CONNECTION FOOD BANK, I WOULD LIKE TO THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATION OF \$560.00.

WE BEGIN EACH NEW DAY WITH THE RESOLVE TO ENSURE THAT NO ONE IN CALAVERAS COUNTY HAS TO GO HUNGRY. THIS YEAR HAS BEEN MORE OF A CHALLENGE THAN ANY OTHER TO KEEP THAT RESOLUTION. THE PANDEMIC HAS LEFT SO MANY OF OUR NEIGHBORS STRUGGLING TO MAKE ENDS MEET.

IT HAS ALSO TESTED US TO FIND NEW WAYS TO PROVIDE SERVICES TO OUR COMMUNITY. YOUR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE ALLOWS US TO TAKE ON THIS CHALLENGE EACH DAY! COMMUNITY SUPPORT IS AT THE HEART OF OUR EFFORTS. WITHOUT YOUR HELP, THERE WOULD BE SO MANY MORE OF OUR NEIGHBORS WONDERING HOW THEY WERE GOING TO BE ABLE TO PUT FOOD ON THE TABLE. TOGETHER WE CAN DO EXTRAORDINARY THINGS!

THANKYOUFOR BEING CHAMPIONS FOR THE HUNGRY IN OUR COMMUNITY!  
WITH VERY WARM WISHES,



TINA MATHER  
DIRECTOR  
THE RESOURCE CONNECTION FOOD BANK

THANK  
YOU



Thanks to Connie Cook who worked hard to make our front area look nicer!





## 2020 Treasurer's Report

Hello to all our congregants. I for one am glad to see 2020 go and I am looking forward to a great new 2021. I am hopeful that as the year progresses that things will slowly return to a somewhat normal state. We have much to be thankful for. As it turns out we posted a pretty strong 2020. Our endowments funds grew by about 10% over the calendar year and we were able to put some money away in a new fund to reserve for our Pastor's sabbatical which comes due in 2023.

We posted reasonably strong income from both pledges and non-pledge income, falling short by \$6,000 from our budget. However, we were able to make up for this with careful control of expenses and the grant from the CARE Act PPP application. As a result, we have finished the year with a small gain of just under \$4,500 instead of a planned loss of (\$7,500).

As most of you know Laura and I are relocating to Half Moon Bay, but we will continue to support the church throughout the 2021 year. Mandy is taking over as treasurer and she will provide a steady hand in these turbulent times.

I wish all of you a blessed new year. Stay healthy and safe.

Your Treasurer, Sally

Hope

Faith

Love

# Recycling



**With your help we were able to raise \$117.12**

**Thank you for your contribution! We are doing recycling every other month on the first Wednesday of the month. We would like to remind you that we can't take any more glass items and please have your items sorted, and crushed if its possible.**

**Thank you!**

**Men's Fellowship**



## **Sally Elliott and Laura Argento are Moving!**

**Sally Elliott has been our treasurer for two years and guided us through the difficult time of Covid. It is her expertise and incredible time commitment that helped us receive the small business loan. We were able to have the entire amount forgiven and this kept us on a sure financial ground.**

**Laura has been a member of the choir ever since she came here and also headed up the meals for the Family Program. She is a wonderful cook and we loved the meals! Sally and her spouse, Laura, are moving back to Half Moon Bay, a place they love. They will also be spending time taking care of their elderly mothers. We are really going to miss them.**

**It will be our great joy to remember them both every time we play the handbells as they were the donors of this fine gift. Our prayers and love go with you.**



# Habitat for Humanity Makes Good Progress on Teri's House

Framing is complete, roof sheeting is on. The roofing, rough electrical and plumbing, hvac, insulation and windows should be done by the first week in February. Housewrap, siding and sheetrock should be done by the end of February and the house should be complete by mid-April.

When helpers are needed to do some work, we will let you know via emails.

We will be having a housewarming for Teri and her family in the future. This will be coordinated by Celine Breen and her small group. It will be sometime in April or May when Teri feels she is ready for us to celebrate with her. Stay tuned for more news in this exciting project!



**LGBTQ**  
**Youth and supportive friends**  
**are**  
**invited to join us for**  
**dialogue,**  
**education, friendship, and**  
**support!**  
**~Currently meeting online via**  
**Zoom~**  
**When: The 1st and 3rd Tuesday**  
**of every**  
**month at 7pm**  
**RSVP with your email address**  
**at**  
**CalaverasGSRM@gmail.com**  
**or call**  
**(209)352-1828**







**Our Worship Services Will Take on a New Challenge**

**Friends, due to the recent health changes of our pastor, we are temporarily going to go to online ZOOM worship services. The first one will be at 11 AM on Sunday, January 31 using the meeting website ZOOM. You will receive the invitation on Saturday.**

**If you are using a browser, such as Chrome, Firefox, or Safari (highly recommended), you only need to click on the link provided in the invitation information.**

**If you are going to use a smartphone or tablet, you will need to download the ZOOM app. You can download the proper app for your device by clicking here [zoom download](#)**

**Our service will include songs, prayer, and interactive dialogue about a scripture passage. We are all frustrated by the inconvenience of the virus crisis. We remember that God is in control and will see us through. In the meantime, we are finding new ways to worship. We will worship God!**

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR JOINING OUR WORSHIP ON ZOOM. Please click the invitation a few minutes before 11 AM. If you have difficulty getting on due to some technical issues, don't worry, we are allowing about 10 minutes for everyone to gather. You may join at any point, so even if you're late, please join us.**

**Using a computer, This is the preferred method for maximum quality. To Join Zoom Meeting, Click the link that was sent to you.**

**Using a phone Dial-in by phone with the instructions in the invitation.**

*We are  
the  
Church*



Happy

irthday

Happy

**BIRTHDAY**



## *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  
Bobby & Celine Breen & Family  
Susan Giannini Chadwick  
Jara & Max Clark  
Tracey & Kelly Ellefritz  
Tara Glessman  
Hilary Oldenkamp  
Angela Patterson  
John Randlett & Family  
Alan & Dodi Horvath  
Gail Withuhn  
Josephine Zimbe & Family  
Kim Plowman  
Anna Abando & Family  
all of the children at the orphanage

Angela Patterson 9

Paula Smith 11

Tracey Ellifritz 12

Carol Dougherty 14

Shad Sundberg 16

Monika Riedel 18

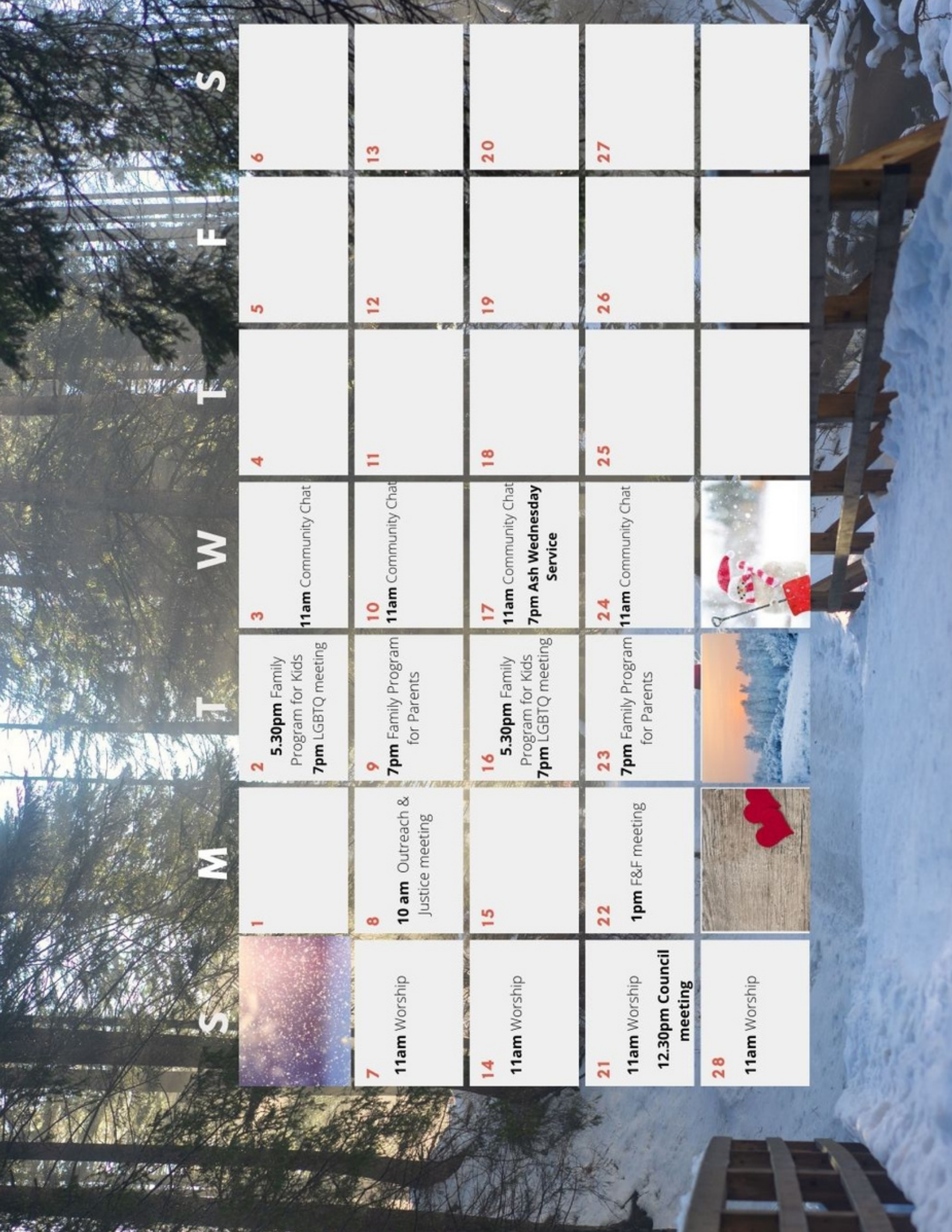
Vena Graves 19

Chelsea Page 19

Colleen Silva 21

Hilary Oldenkamp 28

Joanie Singleton 28



S T W T F S

	<b>1</b>		<b>2</b> 5.30pm Family Program for Kids 7pm LGBTQ meeting	<b>3</b> 11am Community Chat	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b> 11am Worship	<b>8</b> 10 am Outreach & Justice meeting	<b>9</b> 7pm Family Program for Parents	<b>10</b> 11am Community Chat	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	
<b>14</b> 11am Worship	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> 5.30pm Family Program for Kids 7pm LGBTQ meeting	<b>17</b> 11am Community Chat 7pm Ash Wednesday Service	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	
<b>21</b> 11am Worship 12.30pm Council meeting	<b>22</b> 1pm F&F meeting	<b>23</b> 7pm Family Program for Parents	<b>24</b> 11am Community Chat	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	
<b>28</b> 11am Worship							

*God's love echoes through us to all creation.*

*Website: [www.fccmurph.org](http://www.fccmurph.org)*

*Email: [nugget@fccmurph.org](mailto:nugget@fccmurph.org)*

*Phone: 209.728.3141*

**FEBRUARY 2021**

**DATED MATERIAL— DO NOT DELAY**

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

*Murphys, CA 95247*

*509 N. Algiers Street*

*PO Box 48*

*First Congregational Church of Murphys  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST*

**THE NUGGET**

*Staff*

*Pastor Rev. Dr. Bonnie Hollinger*

*Pastor Emeritus Rev. Dr. John Randlett*

*Music Director Dr. Daryl Hollinger*

*Secretary Peter Marai-Muro*

*Officers*

*Moderator Carrie Shinn*

*Vice Moderator Patty Haskell*

*Treasurer Mandy DeSmidt*

*Financial Secretary Shad Sundberg*

*Clerk Joe Silva*



*[www.ucc.org](http://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 3rd Monday of each month.*

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

