



*How like a winter hath my absence been
From thee, the pleasure of the fleeting year!
What freezings have I felt, what dark days seen!
What old December's bareness everywhere!
-Shakespeare (Sonnet 97)*

The excerpt from Shakespeare's 97th Sonnet was not placed for any high-minded idea save that it rung a hidden bell within my soul with ringing reverberations that would not let me go. Something about the rippling-out words of absence, fleeting, freezing, and bareness took camp in my mind; inhabiting my thoughts such that I had no choice but to write. This is how poetry works at its best, and this is how my writing process is sometimes; no grandiose structure or plan, just a rung bell; just an insistent camped-out thought.



When reflecting on this last year, it would be easy to start by observing how the lengthening nights have seem to become nature's living metaphor of Shakespeare's words of "dark days seen." Even now, we are hunkering down in our homes, both to stem a pandemic's spread and to insulate ourselves from the chill of winter's weather.

Into this context, Advent has begun; a time of resetting, a time of starting anew, a time that accompanies us through the absences, the freezings, the darkness, and the barrenness. "Something is Coming!"

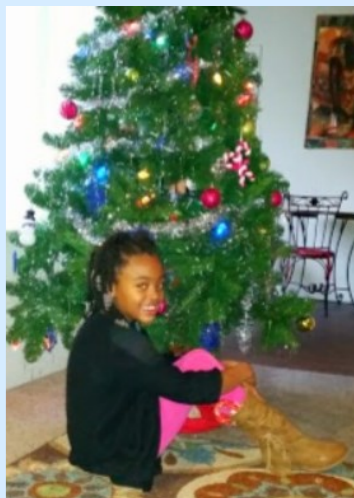
As I shared last year, celebrating Advent is still new to me. Though my parents grew up Methodists, I was raised in a nondenominational Christian setting that did not follow the liturgical calendar. In fact, the first time that I engaged with rhythms of Advent in a church setting was just a few years back at St. Mark's.

Last week, I witnessed Connie, Mel, and family participate in the ritual of lighting the first candle in the Advent wreath. It was done in the quickly darkening sanctuary on the Friday afternoon after Thanksgiving. As the family safely huddled around the singular flicker of the candle, I was led to marvel at a tradition that naturally pushed back against the catalyzing event of Black Friday; a day that has become the engine that powers the masses through a hyper commercialized Christmas; one that sometimes sprinkles in quick microwave oven-level reflections on the "reason of the season."

Advent offers something different. During this time that denotes the beginning of the Christian calendar, we are encouraged to reset and refocus even as the darkness abounds, and even as winter begins to bare her chilling teeth. This is a time to contemplate the fleetingness of the time that has passed, while we positioned ourselves into a posture of waiting and watching for what is to come.

This is the gift of Advent; the assurance of an "arriving-hope" that is greater than the despairing darkness of these present times. Further, Christmas is not rushed—like grabbing slashed sale items off the shelf within the revels of frenzied shopping. No! Advent allows our hunkering down to be constructive and fruitful. It allows us to be swaddled in a crock-pot level slow-cook immersion into what this season should be about. It allows us to be warmed by the promise of "God with us" despite the "freezings" that we have felt. It allows us to hope.

Do not get me wrong, all this musing does not mean to imply that we should not enjoy all the good things about this season without abandon. There is great fun in Christmas decorating, carol singing, exchanging gifts, and reading Shakespeare in the winter. While we should do those things enthusiastically, let us also put our trust in God's eternal hope that is ever-here and ever-coming; a truth that is beautifully embodied in the Christmas story. Until then, may you stay encouraged, may you stay safe, and may you stay warm.



Blessings, Pastor Mahsea

*All is Calm,
All is Bright*



"How the Great Guest Came"

by Edwin Markham



Before the cathedral in grandeur rose
At Ingelburg where the Danube goes;
Before its forest of silver spire
Went airily up to the clouds and fires;
Before the oak had ready a beam,
While yet the arch was stone and dream --
There where the altar was later laid,
Conrad the cobbler, plied his trade.

It happened one day at the year's white end --
Two neighbors called in on their old-time friend;
And they found the shop, so meager and mean,
Made gay with a hundred boughs of green.
Conrad was stitching with face ashine,
But suddenly stopped as he twitched a twine:
"Old friends, good news! At dawn today,
As the cocks were scaring the night away,
The Lord appeared in a dream to me,
And said, 'I am coming your Guest to be!'
So I've been busy with feet astir,
Strewing the floor with branches of fir.
The wall is washed and the shelf is shined,
And over the rafter the holly twined.
He comes today, and the table is spread
With milk and honey and wheaten bread."

His friends went home; and his face grew still
As he watched for the shadow across the sill.
He lived all the moments o'er and o'er,
When the Lord should enter the lowly door --
The knock, the call, the latch pulled up,
The lighted face, the offered cup.
He would wash the feet where the spikes had been,
He would kiss the hands where the nails went in,
And then at the last would sit with Him
And break the bread as the day grew dim

Matthew 25:35-36

...for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me."

Poem Submitted by Linda Kennedy

While the cobbler mused there passed his pane
A beggar drenched by the driving rain.
He called him in from the stony street
And gave him shoes for his bruised feet.
The beggar went and there came a crone,
Her face with wrinkles of sorrow sown.
A bundle of sticks bowed her back,
And she was spent with the wrench and rack.
He gave her his loaf and steadied her load
As she took her way on the weary road.

Then to his door came a little child,
Lost and afraid in the world so wild,
In the big, dark world. Catching it up,
He gave it the milk in the waiting cup,
And led it home to its mother's arms,
Out of the reach of the world's alarms.

The day went down in the crimson west
And with it the hope of the blessed Guest,
And Conrad sighed as the world turned gray:
"Why is it, Lord, that your feet delay?
Did you forget that this was the day?"

Then soft in the silence a Voice he heard:
"Lift up your heart, for I have kept my word.
Three times I came to your friendly door;
Three times my shadow was on your floor.
I was the beggar with the bruised feet;
I was the woman you gave to eat;
I was the child on the homeless street!"



Bright Shiny Star....A Memoir....1963

by Linda Kennedy

There is no need for shepherds, kings, angels, donkey, cow, or even a Mary and Joseph with no Baby Lord Jesus.

I sit on the floor searching crumpled balls of tissue paper for the tiny baby in yellow straw. He is made of the same cheap plaster of paris as the other figurines. I had bought Him last year with the others, the first year Tom and I were married. I look for Him, but He is not there.

I decide to arrange the scene beneath the Christmas tree anyway, hoping I will discover the baby as I continue to unwrap other decorations.

My husband leaves for his new job, looking very proud in his blue wool uniform with a shiny silver star on his jacket. Hours later, when he returns home, he is soaked to the skin from the pouring rain. As he shakes the droplets from his plastic hat cover, he tells me of his rookie experience....he had worked downtown helping shoppers in the holiday traffic.

Finishing his stories, he pulls off one wet glove, searches his pocket and pulls out a dry Baby Lord Jesus. He says it's from Woolworth's. Cost thirty-five cents.

The figurine is set in its place amidst the other members of the scene. I smile as I look at the new police officer, sworn in two days earlier, and the Prince of Peace. Our baby, due to be born in three more months, stirs within me. I smile again.

With Thanksgiving now in our rearview mirror, and Christmas just a few weeks ahead, we find ourselves reflecting on this past year. This Christmas will be unlike any other, not only because of the need to quarantine, but also because 2020 has been marked with significant loss; loss of life, jobs, travel, hugs, and gatherings. The lack of gatherings has been particularly hard for me.

In the 16 years that we've lived in CA, this year was the first (and hopefully the only) that we chose not to travel back "home" to the east coast. Adhering to the provided recommendations of how to remain safe during COVID, we had to forego visiting family and loved ones. Having elderly in-laws, growing nieces and nephews, and gracefully aging siblings and friends who I will not get to physically see, touch, and hug has proved emotionally difficult and psychologically taxing. However, even with loss, over time there emerges new opportunities and beginnings. And as I close out 2020, I know there is another year awaiting our welcome. I can see the silhouetted skyline of 2021 in a distance and I feel, rising within me, expectancy, wonder, hope, and joy.

Kawami Evans



Long Walk Part of Gift

...originally printed in Guidepost about 1984. Retold by Linda Kennedy

The missionary and his family arrived at the village and began setting up their home, establishing the school and place of worship...all the while learning the customs of the people.

At the same time, a little native boy was observing the missionary and his family, and was very curious about the customs they brought from their homeland.

One day, the little boy saw something that he just couldn't understand and he went to ask the missionary to explain what he saw. He told the missionary that he had seen Mrs. Pastor get a very pretty bundle that was wrapped in pretty paper and string. But then she tore it open! And then he saw a very pretty cake, but they set it on fire!

The missionary laughed and told the little boy that what he had seen was a birthday celebration. The fire was actually candles that signified how old Mrs. Pastor was. And the gift was a birthday gift...and that you give gifts to celebrate special days like birthdays. He then asked the little boy to recall the story of the three kings who brought gifts to the new born Prince of Peace.

Not long after that, the little boy heard that the missionary was having a birthday. He went and found a gift and because he didn't have fancy paper, he wrapped it in a beautiful leaf. He didn't have pretty string, so he tied the gift with a vine. He went to the missionary's home and knocked on the door. When the missionary answered the door, the little boy said, "This is your birthday gift, Mr. Pastor."

The missionary looked at the gift and told the child that it was such a pretty package. He then carefully untied the vine and opened up the leaf. In the leaf was a beautiful sea shell. The missionary told the boy that it was the most beautiful sea shell that he had ever seen, and asked where he had found it, because they didn't live anywhere near a seashore.

The little boy stood proud, and with a sparkle in his eyes, said, "Long walk part of gift."

The pandemic has caused me to bring this story to mind many times over. We are surrounded by angels "taking long walks as part of gift" Look.

OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE

From your home:

Sanitize headsets for Woodbridge Elementary School.
All materials will be delivered to you.

Christmas gifts for children:

We can get gifts from the CHP, wrap them and deliver them to families who sign up. A small team of people will be needed for this ministry. Last year we gave away 70 gifts and 4 bicycles, all donated by the CHP. Connie has already received inquiries from needy families about our gift-giving program.

**"It's not how much we give but how much love we put into giving."
Mother Teresa**



Historical Christmas at First Church Roseville

For a number of years the Chancel Choir would put on a Christmas Cantata for Christmas Eve Services. It was a special night with the luminaries placed from the front door of the church down the sidewalks along the front of the church. The choir led by Choir Director Ruth Coltart, would have special music for the evening. Marit Fulk would design a large special Christmas card that would hang on the Narthex wall and everyone would sign their names as a way of sending Christmas greetings to the members of the congregation, instead of each family sending out cards. The manger with baby Jesus, was always front and center of the Chancel area. One year there was a special surprise, everyone was singing the closing song, "Away in the Manger" when a surprise visitor entered the sanctuary very quietly and went to the front of the church and knelt before the manger and bowed his head. When everyone one finished the song, he quietly got up from his kneeling and left the sanctuary. You will never guess who it was. It was Santa Claus, played by our own Robert Carson. I still get chills when I think about that very special service.

Merry Christmas to All!

Phoebe Astill, Church Historian



Meaning of the Advent Candles

The **first candle** symbolizes **hope** and is called the "Prophet's Candle." The prophets of the Old Testament, especially Isaiah, waited in hope for the Messiah's arrival. The purple color symbolizes royalty, repentance, and fasting.

The **second candle** represents **faith** and is called "Bethlehem's Candle." Micah had foretold that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem, which is also the birthplace of King David. The second candle is also purple to symbolism preparation for the coming king.

The **third candle** symbolizes **joy** and is called the "Shepherd's Candle." To the shepherd's great joy, the angels announced that Jesus came for humble, unimportant people like them, too. In liturgy, the color rose signifies joy. This candle is colored pink to represent joyfulness and rejoicing.

The **fourth candle** represents **peace** and is called the "Angel's Candle." The angels announced that Jesus came to bring peace-He came to bring people close to God and to each other again. This color is also purple to represent the culmination of love through the Messiah.

The **fifth candle** represents **light and purity** and is called "Christ's candle." It is placed in the middle and is lit on Christmas Day. This candle is white to represent pure light and victory.

**"BLESS US LORD, THIS CHRISTMAS,
WITH QUIETNESS OF MIND;
TEACH US TO BE PATIENT
AND ALWAYS TO BE KIND. "**

- Helen Steiner Rice

Woodbridge Walk

Join us each Sunday morning at 9 am at Woodbridge School, 515 Niles Avenue, Roseville for a "walk and talk" around the school. Or if you prefer there's a bench to "sit and visit". Of course masks and social distancing are the way we stay safe. Hope to see you Sunday!

Gifts for the Gathering Inn

As The Gathering Inn looks forward to Christmas, they have requested a few gifts to add to their celebration: Gingerbread house kits, cookie decorating kits, hot cocoa and apple cider packets, and small gift cards from such as Target, Ross, Dollar Tree and grocery stores. Of course, they also need warmth for the winter: coats, new underwear, socks, blankets. If you will purchase the above, the Mission Team will see that they get delivered (with FUMC's name) to the Gathering. You can put items into a plastic bag and deliver it to church before noon on any Monday OR call Cathie at 916-315-8047 for pick-up from your porch by someone on our team.

Covid-19 at The Gathering: Finally in late November, after months with NO Covid-19, one of the clients tested positive. All church visits stopped immediately. 24 guests who were exposed then quarantined at the Gateway for over 2 weeks. FUMC has continued to schedule 4th-Sunday dinners all year long. During the quarantine, we also provided sack lunches for guests and employees every Monday. Thank you to Kathleen Mirtoni and her Monday crew!
Cathie Wierbick

PRAYER



Please keep the following people in your prayers:

For Bereavement:

Carol and Ray Green and Family
Julie and Arianna
Barbara Schwartz
Josette and Gil Humpherys
The Family of Bonnie Hunt

For Healing:

Linda Kennedy
Bill Newton
Billy Friend of Linda Kennedy
Johnna Stauffer
Kate Maldonado
Jim Wecker

Please submit prayer requests to: prayers@firstumcroseville.org



Come celebrate the Advent season with the Agape Men's Group on Thursday, December 3 and 17, 2020 @ 9:00 a.m. at the entrance to Backman Hall. The Agape Team guarantees that our meeting on December 3, will be festive and boost your Christmas spirit!
Shalom,
Dennis

First Church Roseville Email Addresses

Please make note of these email addresses for First UMC Roseville

Church Email: firstumc@firstumcroseville.org
Prayer Requests: prayers@firstumcroseville.org
Chimes Article Submissions: chimes@firstumcroseville.org
Pastor: mevans@firstumcroseville.org
Certified Lay Leader: kmirtoni@firstumcroseville.org
Administrative Assistant: cwithrow@firstumcroseville.org
Office Volunteer: nbray@firstumcroseville.org



3 C's members keep working still, making things to sell to raise funds for the church and community. The individuals from the group send things to Barbara Hulse to add to what she is making for sale in Barbara's Boutique. Donna Hall has given a ton of fabric and sewing supplies for the project over the past several months.

Good news is Barbara's Boutique had a one-day sale for residents at Sierra Pointe which brought in more funds. Looks like we will be able to help the general fund of our church with a gift. Thanks be to God for keeping us safe and also busy.

Hope all of you have a Blessed Christmas.

*Barbara Hulse, Susan Reining,
& all the 3 C's members*

Thank You

3C's wants to express our appreciation to Barbara Hulse and Hazel Nofz for the contributions of their time and talent in making numerous craft items. They are both lights to our path and we love them abundantly. You are amazing women!

We thank you Barbara & Hazel!
Lovingly,
3C's members



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

2ND JUDY SOLARI
4TH SAWYER STAUFFER
7TH BETH AITKEN
10TH REBECCA MCGUIRE
JACKIE BEYER
16TH GRACE DOWNING
20TH CHRIS HANDLEY
21ST SCOTT EHLMAN
22ND GARY BREWER
23RD RYAN PERDUE
24TH ELLEN BULL
27TH RAY DAVIS
29TH CHASE WITHEROW
DICK HULBERT
SAMANTHA LUMLEY
DIANE MCGUIRE
30TH LARRY KONCEWICZ



UMW of Roseville had a very successful online pledge drive in October due to Linda Kennedy's efforts on our behalf. We welcome several new members to our group. We are looking forward to being together in the new year.

We want to wish all of you a very Merry Christmas and A New Year filled with togetherness. In the meantime stay safe and know that God is with us in this time.

The Members of UMW



October Noses, Dollars, and Cents

Basic Monthly Statistics:

Income Oct. 2020: \$9,946.50
Expenses Oct. 2020: \$15,691.71
Net Income Oct. 2020: **\$5,745.21**
Transfer from PPP: \$0.00
New Total **\$5,745.21**

Basic Yearly Statistics 2020

YTD Income: \$114,392.70
YTD Expense: \$138,531.12
Net Income: **\$24,137.42**
Transfer from PPP: \$25,180.00
New Total: \$1,042.58

Thank you for your continued financial support. It is very much appreciated.

September Worship Online Views
Total: 271 Average: 90

*Numbers available for only 3 Sundays

The Monday Feeding Program for the homeless served 245 meals in October.

FIRST CHURCH ROSEVILLE TEAM LEADERS

Pastor—Mahsea Evans
Lay Leader—Sandy Williams
Certified Lay Minister & Church Council Chair—Kathleen Mirtoni
Treasurer—Chris Handley
Financial Secretary—Donna Hall
Finance Team Chairperson—Dave Sechrist
Trustees President—Don Harris
Staff Parish Chair—Dennis Bull
Mission Outreach—Kathleen Mirtoni
Memorial—Barbara Schwartz
Worship Team Leader—Nancy Bray
Congregational Care—Gail Provine
Music Director—John Handley
Communications—Kristi Kinzel
Lay Leadership Training—Kristi Kinzel



Recycle November 14, 2020
\$76.00

Please keep saving your recyclables to bring in on Saturday December 12, 2020 in the parking lot between 9-11am. Thanks to all! It all helps our church pay our bills.
Don Harris, Trustee President

