



*“Be still  
and know that  
I am God!”*

*Psalm 46:10*

*Asko Kuitinen*

Only a night from old to new;  
Only a sleep from night to morn.  
The new is but the old come true;  
Each sunrise sees a new year born.



The opening quote is from the last lines of the poem, “New Year’s Morning.” It was penned in 1892 by the famed writer and Native American advocate, Hellen Hunt Jackson. It perfectly elucidates the ethereal magic experienced on the evening when the old year exits and the new year expands its nascent lungs—breathing new breaths of possibility onto the clear slate of the January sky. Of course, this sense of magic also corresponds to the ecclesiastical celebrations of the Magi who journeyed through dark nights guided by the celestial light of a star. When I first began writing this article, I planned it to be like a star charting sextant to navigate your

launching of a new voyage; an essay of encouragement as you embark along your resolution-clad vessel onto the dark waters of the new year.

Then, right before I began to rhetorically smash the champagne bottle of my words against the exposed hull of your listening—and, right before I ran out of nautical references to ballast my jostling to find the right words, a question emerged: What does January mean?

Please allow me to reset.

The month of January is identified with the Roman god named Janus. In ancient myths, Janus is the god of beginnings, gates, time, doorways, passages, and endings. In paintings, coins, and statues, he is usually depicted as having two faces looking forward and back at the same time. While there is still some debate in the academic world about the nature of this Roman god, most scholars agree that Janus functions around a single principle: presiding over all beginnings and transitions. Janus symbolizes change and the movement from past to future, or from one condition to another. Janus, the namesake of January, was the gate-keeper of the new year and welcomed one’s journey into it.



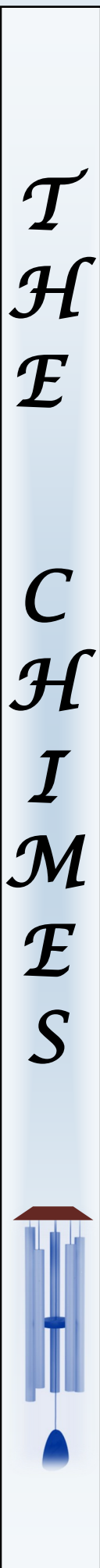
As I read about Janus, I also began to think about the Adinkra symbols that originated from the present-day country of Ghana. Though these symbols perform a decorative function, they also represent objects that evoke messages and convey life principles, cultural values, spiritual concepts, and traditional wisdom. They are used extensively in fabrics, logos, pottery, jewelry, wall decorations, architectural features, and stools used for domestic or ritual use. I have many objects with these sacred symbols in my office, home, and even my wedding ring.

The particular Adinkra symbol that came to mind when reading about Janus was Sankofa (pronounced SAHN-koh-fah). In the Akan Twi and Fante languages, it translates to “retrieve” or “go back and get it.” (literally: San - to return; Ko - to go; Fa - to fetch, to seek and take)



One of the popular representations of Sankofa is a mythical bird with its feet firmly planted forward with its head turning backward to itself, sometimes with a precious egg on its back. It roughly means that in order to go forward, we must not forget to look back to the past. It acknowledges the wisdom in retrieving or learning from the past in order to ensure a strong-footed future. Like Janus, it represents a looking forward and backwards at the same time. Sankofa is often associated with the proverb, “Se wo were fi na wosankofa a yenkyi,” which roughly translates as: “It is not wrong to go back for that which you have forgotten.” As such, the appeal is to “not forget” the hard lessons from what was, even while standing, full-face with optimism,

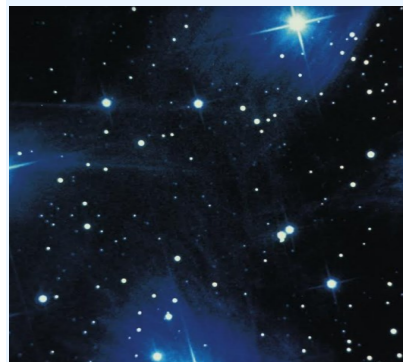
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into the virginal winds of what is to come.

From a 19th century poem, abandoned nautical references, a Roman god, and finally West African symbols, the question still remains; What does this all mean for us? Simply, as we move through the gateway of January into the new year of 2022, enrobed in our finest resolutions and newest intentions, let us not be afraid to “go back” and take with us the gifts of the past year.



Lastly, as we remember the words of the Psalmist who “considered the heavens... [including] the moon and the stars, which God has set in their place,” it is my prayer that our divinely hung stars will always shine bright in our night’s sky. In so doing, with the lessons of the past safely fastened within our heart’s satchel, may we take our place among the caravan of the Magi; allowing this new year to be one in which we are divinely guided to ever-new encounters with God; the One who is fully incarnated in the whole of our lives.

Blessings,  
Pastor Mahsea

### A Contemplative Walk in the Dark

A few days before the New Year, I took a walk through the downtown area of Sacramento. It was one of those late December nights that was filled with heavy clouds. Though it was a little after 8pm, the streets were unusually quiet; a pallet of calm an hour before the Kings would finish their basketball game and release thousands of fans onto the streets. As I walked between 3rd & 5th on J Street on my way back to the parking garage near Old Sac, it began to drizzle. This prompted me to pick up my pace. However, I was unexpectedly paused when I turned to my right and realized that I was passing the Chinatown Mall.

Situated near the Sacramento Railyard, this location is a hallmark of cultural and historical heritage for the Chinese-American community. Though the area is now confined to one city block, it is recognizable by its buildings adorned in Chinese decorative flair and pagoda style roofs. During the Gold Rush era, this area was largely populated with Chinese immigrants. In the 1960s, the Sacramento Redevelopment Agency established the Chinatown Mall in the area where the Confucius Temple had just been built. Even today, it remains a vital hub of Chinese cultural significance.

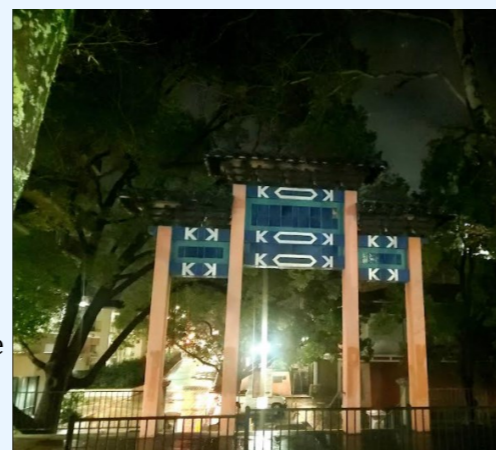
In my pausing, despite the rain, I felt compelled to take two pictures. One was of the large gateway at the entrance to the mall. For some reason, it looked imposingly regal against the backdrop of the heavy dark sky.



The other picture was from atop a stairway situated between two buildings. It perfectly framed an elegant tree that was located on the lower plaza. There was a subtle beauty to the tree that ushered me into a sense of contemplative calm. The juxtaposition between the activity on the street and the quietness of the tree reminded me that it is important to take the time to stop and notice the spaces of wonder and beauty that infiltrates our busyness. It seems like that is a good thing to remember going into the new year—even though it is probably not advisable to walk through downtown Sacramento in the rain at night.

Blessings, Pastor Mahsea

Note: The Chinese New Year comes on February 1 and 2022 will be the year of the Tiger.



Please keep the following people in your prayers. Please submit prayer requests to: [prayers@firstumcroseville.org](mailto:prayers@firstumcroseville.org)

#### Healing and Comfort:

Tanya and boys, Holly,  
Marie, Hazel, Auggie,



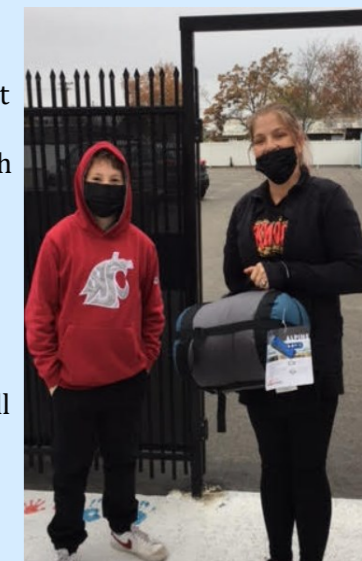
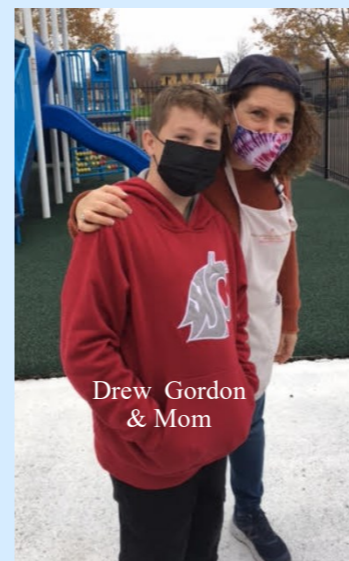
#### For Bereavement

Tanya and Family

## Sleeping Bag Exchange

Our young benefactor, Drew Gordon, initiated the project to give sleeping bags to our unsheltered brothers and sisters. Drew donated 10 bags, using money he raised through his GoFundMe page, as part of his BarMitzvah project. Drew’s parents donated several more bags, as did Barbara Hulse and Don Harris, so we had a total of 17.

On December 6th, we exchanged 11 bags, taking the old ones and giving the new. In the days that followed we gave away a couple more of them. I know there will be a need for the few remaining. Many thanks to Drew Gordon and all the others who donated bags to this cause. (If you donated to this cause and I did not mention your name here, please forgive me. Some came in when I was not present)  
Kathleen Mirtoni



# Christmas Gift Giveaway

Our annual event of providing Christmas gifts to families in need was a huge success through our partnerships with several agencies. First and foremost, we are grateful to the California Highway Patrol in Auburn, under the leadership of Officer Dave Martinez, who brought us over 600 new toys. The Parkside Church in North Auburn gave us about 120 more gifts, through our connection with Placer Prosper. The Health Education Council donated many \$50 Dutch Boy Coffee gift cards. Our own Clayton Witherow donated many Amazon gift cards.

Placer People of Faith Together created a beautiful, informative flier which was distributed to Woodbridge School and through text messages.

My deepest gratitude to Connie Witherow whose phone rang off the hook for days, as she scheduled appointments for families to come in and choose the gifts for their children. And our thanks to Alma, who returned calls from our spanish-speaking neighbors.

The event, which was scheduled for three days was extended to four days. The first three days, we were able to wrap the gifts. Thank you to all the folks who participated at the gift-wrapping station - Cathie, Shea, Qui, Leona, Ellen, Jesse, Don, Judy, Jan and Dave.

In 18 hours, over four days, we served 133 families with 342 children, and gave away 625 gifts!! We still had over 100 gifts, so we packed them up and Don Harris took them up to Parkside Church. The folks there were thrilled to receive them, as they had several agencies needing gifts.

We all felt God working with us through every moment of this project. On a couple of occasions, just when it looked like we wouldn't have enough gifts, they showed up. Personally, I was never in doubt, as Jesus has never forsaken me. This project was a perfect example of Emmanuel, "God with us", and of The Blessed Community working together. I wish you all could have witnessed the joy on the faces of all the parents who entered Backman Hall and left knowing their children would have a Very Merry Christmas.

All Glory to God.  
Kathleen Mirtoni



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Desmond Tutu died on Sunday, Dec 26<sup>th</sup> at the age of 90. He was a South African Anglican bishop and theologian, known for his work as an uncompromising foe of apartheid and as a celebrated human rights activist. This Nobel Peace Prize-winning icon, viewed as a moral compass in world affairs, was mourned by people from around the globe. I have always been moved by Tutu's deep faith, and my appreciation for him grew when I read his books including "The Book of Forgiving" and "The Book of Joy" which was co-authored by his friend, the Dalai Lama. I will continue to be inspired by Tutu's life, and I pray that we will all be strengthened in our mutual work to make real the "Dream of God" that animated his prophetic imagination.

*"God's dream is that you and I and all of us will realize that we are family, that we are made for togetherness,*

### Additional Archbishop Desmond Tutu Quotes

#### Forgiving:

"Forgiving is not forgetting; it's actually remembering - remembering and not using your right to hit back. It's a second chance for a new beginning. And the remembering part is particularly important. Especially if you don't want to repeat what happened."

"Forgiveness is nothing less than the way we heal the world. We heal the world by healing each and every one of our hearts. The process is simple, but it is not easy."

#### Apartheid:

"Differences are not intended to separate, to alienate. We are different precisely in order to realize our need of one another."

#### On loving yourself:

"Much depends on your attitude. If you are filled with negative judgment and anger, then you will feel separate from other people. You will feel lonely. But if you have an open heart and are filled with trust and friendship, even if you are physically alone, even living a hermit's life, you will never feel lonely."

#### On resiliency:

"Discovering more joy does not save us from the inevitability of hardship and heartbreak. In fact, we may cry more easily, but we will laugh more easily too. Perhaps we are just more alive. Yet as we discover more joy, we can face suffering in a way that ennobles rather than embitters. We have hardship without becoming hard. We have heartbreaks without being broken."

Additional quotes taken from National News/Arts & Culture website



### Agape Men's Group

At our December meeting in the spirit of the Christmas season, we shared our family Christmas traditions and our favorite Christmas songs. We discovered that many of our family Christmas traditions have been carried over from our childhoods. In preserving the traditions there is a sense of connectivity between past generations and future generations. Favorite Christmas songs included *Silent Night*, *O Holy Night*, and *Mary Did You Know*.

Our next gathering will be on Saturday, January 8, 2022, at 9:00 a.m. in Heritage Chapel. Since New Year's resolutions no longer seem to be in vogue, our *burning question* of the day will be: What are your personal goals for 2022? Any questions please contact any of the Agape Team members (Don Harris, Cliff Williams, Dave Sechrist, Thom King, and Jim Wecker) or Dennis Bull at 630-781-6110. If you are a new participant at Roseville FUMC, please make it your personal goal for 2022 to *give us a try*. You might just like it! Happy New Year!!! Dennis Bull

### 3C's

**"Kindness, kindness, kindness.  
I want to make a New year's prayer,  
not a resolution.**

**I'm praying for courage."**

Susan Sontag

3C's, Creative Christian Crafters, want to wish you a Kind and Joyful New Year. Remember we always welcome new people to 3C's, We are currently meeting on the first and third Thursday of the month at 10:00 AM in the craft room on the second floor. We are busy planning a Bake Sale in February just in time for Valentine's day. Check your February Chimes for the date. Nancy Bray



### JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 2<sup>ND</sup> DONNESE BREWER
- 5<sup>TH</sup> CAROL TREXLER
- 7<sup>TH</sup> JACK PRESTWICH
- 10<sup>TH</sup> MADISON KUFFOUR
- 15<sup>TH</sup> JOHN HANDLEY
- 16<sup>TH</sup> SANDY WILLIAMS
- 17<sup>TH</sup> KEVIN HUBERT
- 18<sup>TH</sup> ISACC KUFFOUR  
ISACC KUFFOUR JR.  
ISALAH KUFFOUR  
BARBARA SCHWARTZ  
STEPHANIE TRILLO
- 22<sup>ND</sup> RUTH ANN BAKER
- 24<sup>TH</sup> ELMA MORRIS  
CLIFF WILLIAMS
- 25<sup>TH</sup> SHEREL HARRIS  
PAUL WOICICKI
- 27<sup>TH</sup> PAT BUNCE
- 31<sup>TH</sup> AL NEWTON



### November/December Noses, Dollars, and Cents

#### Basic Monthly Statistics

Income Nov. 2021: \$ 11,847.57  
Expenses Nov. 2021: \$14,339.95  
Net Income Nov. 2021: **\$2,492.38**  
Transfer from Lending: \$ 0.00  
New Total: **\$2,492.38**

#### Basic Yearly Statistics 2021

YTD Income: \$125,097.31  
YTD Expense: \$150,968.09  
Net Income: **\$25,870.78**  
Transfer from Lending: \$ 2500.00  
New Total: **\$23,370.78**

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

December Worship Attendance  
For 5 Worship Services  
Total: 316 Average: 63

The Monday Feeding Program  
for the homeless served  
248 meals in December.



### Second Shot Vaccine Clinic

A second shot vaccine clinic will be held on Friday January 14th from 3:30-7:00 pm. All vaccines will be available, even if you need a first vaccine. A couple of volunteers are needed. Please contact Cathie Wierbick at 916-315-8047 if you can volunteer or need additional information.

### PRINTER/COPIER NEEDED

The Historical Committee would love to have a printer/copier that they could use upstairs where the historical papers are stored. If you have one you would like to donate please contact Phoebe Astill at 916-786-2338.

### FIRST CHURCH ROSEVILLE TEAM LEADERS

Pastor—Mahsea Evans  
Certified Lay Minister—Kathleen Mirtoni  
Church Council Chair—Liz Harvey  
Lay Leaders—Kathleen Mirtoni  
Jan Sechrist  
Ruth Ann Baker  
Treasurer—Chris Handley  
Financial Secretary—Elizabeth Harvey  
Finance Team Chair—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

### Email Contact Information:

#### Pastor:

mevans@firstumcroseville.org

#### Certified Lay Minister:

kmirtoni@firstumcroseville.org

#### Administrative Assistant:

cwithrow@firstumcroseville.org

#### Church Email:

firstumc@firstumcroseville.org

#### Prayer Requests:

prayers@firstumcroseville.org

#### Chimes Article Submissions:

chimes@firstumcroseville.org

#### Office Volunteer:

nbray@firstumcroseville.org



On 12/11/2021 the church received \$90.00 from recycle cans and bottles. This brings the year-end total to \$981.00.

Thanks to all the people who save cans & bottles for the church and bring them to the church parking lot between 9-11 AM each second Saturday of the month.

Every bit helps us pay our bills and keep our church open.  
Don Harris, Trustee President

**NEXT RECYCLE IS JAN. 8TH, 2022**