



Monthly Publication of the Carson Valley United Methodist Church

January 2026

January Devotional “The Guiding Light”

Scripture - John 1:1-9



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During my studies at the Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, California, we had a citywide power outage that affected our dormitory living areas. It was reading week, which was utilized to study for finals at the end of the semester. The power outage lasted for a certain number of hours late in the evening, and students were trying to find ways to study for final examinations.

In our dormitory, we found a solution. We had gathered in the main lobby living room, with a surplus of candles used for personal prayer or student worship services to assist in our studies. We set up the candles in the main lobby and living room, and each person who came to study brought snacks to share with everyone in this incredible space. I would estimate there were at least 25 students in the main lobby living room sharing a candlelight, snacks, and conversation during our in-dark study session.

As the power came back on in the late hours, we were kind of disappointed. We had been gathered together in a time of temporary darkness, and we felt supported and safe. As I reflect on this experience, I am reminded that in times of grief, fear, sadness, or disappointment, Christ is our guiding light in the journey of faith. In times of darkness, we are called to support one another through the challenges life presents. We all have our “little candles” that we gather around, but when Christ turns the lights back on, we acknowledge in grace that we need one another as God’s creation.

The guiding light in Christ encourages us to carry one another in the darkest times in our communities, nation, and throughout the world. The apostle John describes Christ as a person who testifies to the light in John 1:8, meaning this light calls on us to be the “light of Christ” in the world. We testify that God’s forgiveness, love, mercy, and justice are portrayed in Jesus Christ. We are reminded every year that our task is to remain Christlike in our actions, words, and presence.

Furthermore, the church is called to be the light of the world. My question today is: How do you see yourself as a Christian who testifies to the light of God in Christ this year? How can you be a light to someone in the community? What are our plans as a church this year to bring Christ, the light of God, into the world?



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The banner photo of soft water and scratchy branches is a study in textures taken by Kathy Wicker at Washoe Lake. Kathy gets the credit for other photos in this issue as well.



Prayer Tree

God answers prayers, everyone needs a prayer said for them. A prayer of praise, a prayer of need or a prayer for comfort.

There is a prayer tree in the back of the sanctuary with several names and organizations that are in need of prayer. Please stop by and take a prayer slip and pray for that person during the week.

Scripture & Sermons For January

Worship Theme: For January & February -
Glory Revealed

January 4, 2025 - Epiphany Sunday

John 1:(1-9), 10-18

Sermon Scripture - John 1:5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it

Theme: Jesus the light of the world

January 11, 2025 - Baptism of the Lord

Matthew 3: 13-17

Sermon Scripture - Matthew 3:15 But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now, for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented.

Theme: The power of presence

January 18, 2025 - Second Sunday after Epiphany

John 1:29-42

Sermon Scripture - John 1:39 He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him that day. It was about four o'clock in the afternoon.

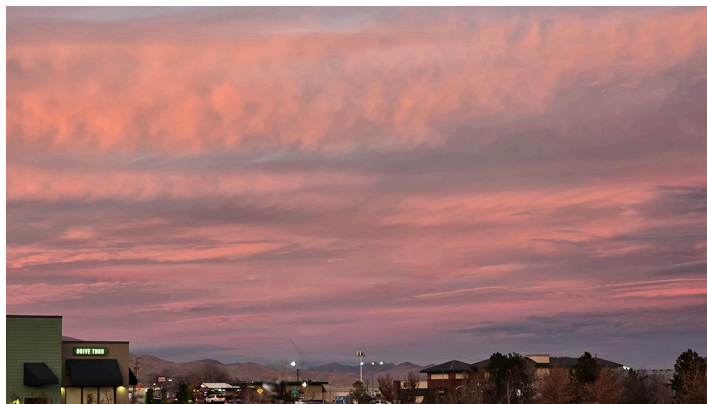
Theme: Come and See the light in Jesus Christ

January 25, 2025 - Third Sunday after Epiphany

Matthew 4:12-23

Matthew 4:19 And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fisher of people."

Theme: Following the light in Christ



More "glory" in a valley sunset from Kathy Wicker.



Warm Your Heart Potluck

Sunday-- February 1,
2026

Following second
service—11:30

Please sign up by Sunday
January 25 for Soup, Chili or
dessert, and Member Care will
provide Corn bread, Crackers
and Butter.

Save the Date-Spaghetti Fundraiser Dinner

Please save the date and join us for the First
Annual 'Love Your Neighbor' spaghetti fundraiser
dinner, Friday February 20. All proceeds go to
our Community Needs Fund. Tickets will go on
sale Sunday, January 25. They will be available
to purchase for \$10 (family discount available)
after each service. Happy New Year!



We need all hands on deck and plenty of
manpower to take down the Christmas
decorations and put them in storage.

When: Friday January 9

Time: 9:30.

2026 UWF Reading Program

All women of UWF are encouraged to
read! Women or men can start reading now to
complete the requirements for a 2026 reading
certificate.

All UWF books are located on the UWF
bookshelf in the conference room at church.
Books from 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025
suggested reading list are available and will count
for credit in 2026.

We are currently in the process of selecting
books to purchase from the 2026 reading list.
The 2026 books will be available by February for
checkout. To earn a reading certificate for 2026,
one book from each of the following categories
must be read:

Education for Mission, Leadership
Development, Nurturing for Community, Social
Action, and Spiritual Growth.

Ratified Amendments in the United Methodist Book of Discipline

My dear siblings in Christ, I come to you
bearing great news from the executive body of
the United Methodist Church, the Council of
Bishops. In 2024, the General Conference (the
legislative body of the United Methodist Church)
passed several proposed amendments to the United
Methodist Constitution. This year, these proposed
amendments were brought before the members
of the annual conference for a vote. The Book
of Discipline requires a two-thirds affirmative
vote from the aggregate members of the annual
conferences for the amendments to be ratified into
our United Methodist Church constitution.

Church family, I wanted to remind you that our
church is part of an annual conference, which is an
embodiment of churches within a state or region
in the United States. Each local church in the
annual conference has a representative who speaks
for their church. We are part of the California-
Nevada Annual Conference, which has over 280
local churches, along with other churches in the
process of being planted in their respective areas.
Moreover, our annual conference voted to adopt
the amendments proposed for inclusion in our
church's constitution.

The following are the amendments passed:

1 Regionalization

These amendments will allow each newly

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Ratified Amendments

Continued from page 3

created regional conference to make decisions best suited to their area's unique needs by adapting certain parts of the Book of Discipline within their region, giving regions more flexibility and authority.

2. Inclusiveness of the Church

This amendment changes our church membership policy by ensuring that no one can be excluded from membership in The United Methodist Church on the basis of gender or ability, in addition to existing protections.

3. Racial Justice

This amendment expands Article V to emphasize our church's explicit commitment to fighting racism, racial inequity, colonialism, white privilege, and white supremacy, shaping our ministries and advocacy.

4. Educational Requirements for Clergy

This amendment updates the eligibility requirements for clergy members to vote for delegates to General Conference, potentially affecting who within the clergy can participate in decisions at that level.

In conclusion, our Bishop, Sandy Olewine and her fellow bishopric council members have announced this fruitful step towards our mission as United Methodists: making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. May God's grace continue to work within our church conference in the United States and across the world.

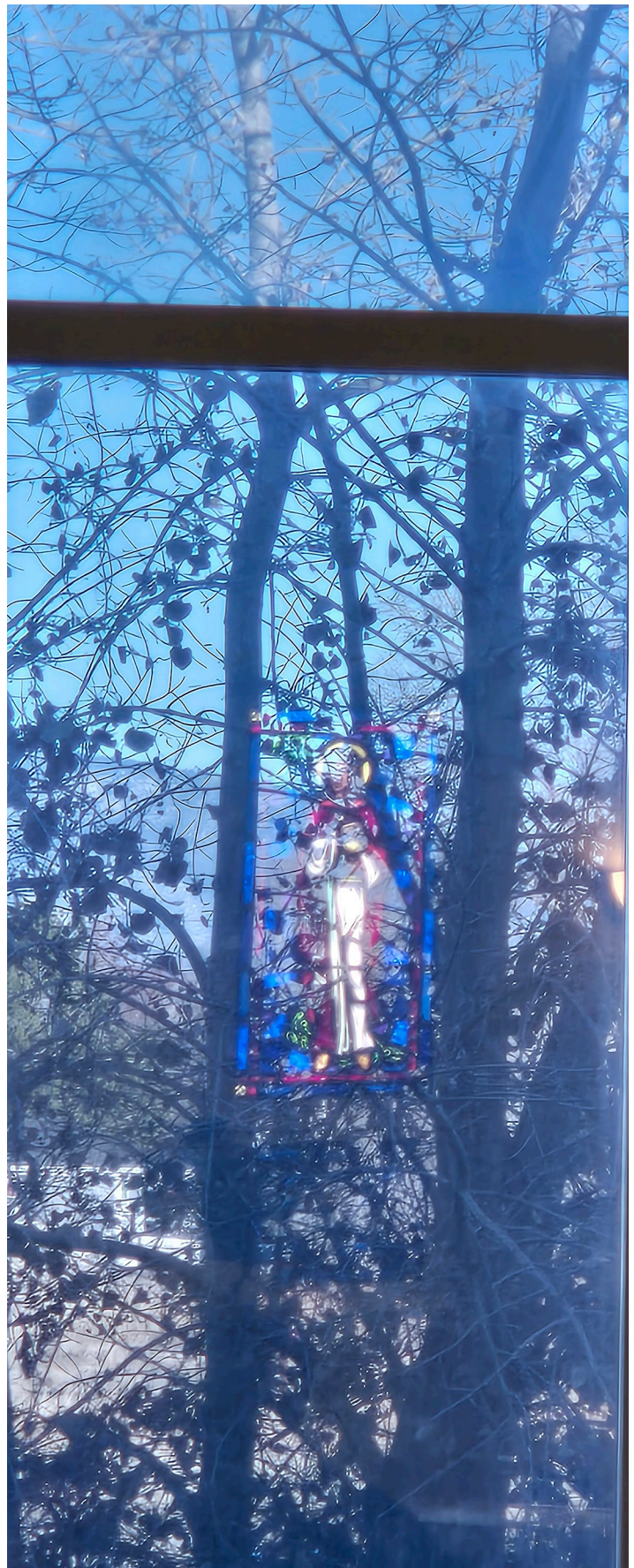
If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me or come into my office during the week.

Pastor Latu Paea

*Council of Bishops, UMC Bishops finish Canvassing of Amendments; All Four are Ratified, The people of the United Methodist Church, Nov. 5, 2025, https://www.umc.org/en/content/umc-bishops-finish-canvassing-of-amendments-all-four-are-ratified?_gl=1*gwe3nd*_gcl_au*MzI2MjU1MDQ3LjE3NTk2MzkxNTk. Accessed 12-11-2025*

The people of the United Methodist Church, Book of Discipline, Division 2: Organization, The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church -- 2020/2024, <https://www.umc.org/en/content/book-of-discipline-division-2-organization>. Accessed 12-11-2025

Council of Bishops, Nov 5, 2025.



The floating image of St. John is reflected in the photo of the window on the opposite side of the sanctuary in Kathy's December 16 photo.

January UWF Meeting

The United Women in Faith (UWF) will meet on Thursday, January 8 in the Carson Valley United Methodist Church, Education Room. The monthly potluck luncheon begins at 11:30 a.m. and the program begins at 12:15 p.m. with Installation of 2026 Officers and Call to Prayer and Self Denial. Everyone is welcome to start the new year with UWF.



Epiphany Night Service

On January 7, 2025, at 6:00 p.m., we will have a special worship service to honor the liturgical season of Epiphany. Through the grace of God, our staff has agreed to present this service during the week to preach on the importance of the church's mission in our conference: to follow Jesus, thrive in community, and heal the world.

Indeed, at the beginning of the year, we set goals, plan our events, or think about our next vacation with family and friends. The objective of the service is to consecrate us, God's church, to align our hearts and minds with the light of God in Christ.

When we ponder the subject of being the light of Christ in the world as the church, we ask questions such as: Are our church's ministries following Jesus? What can we do this year to thrive in our communities? Are there people or unknown places that need healing or support?

As we endure the long year of 2026, let us worship together to remind one another that we have a calling as God's church to be the light in a world living in the shadows. See you there.

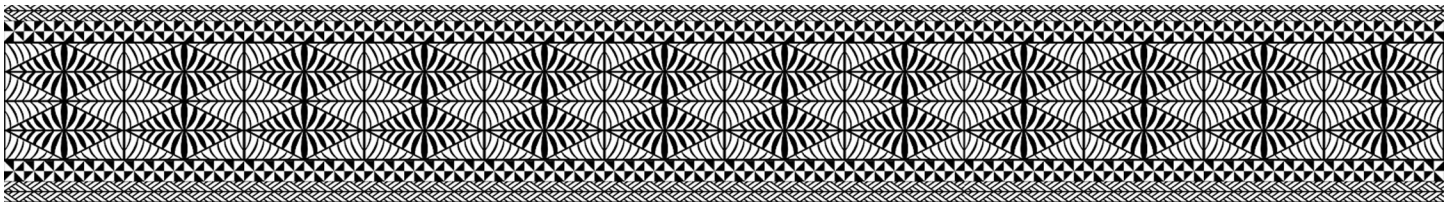
Pastor Latu Paea



Music! Music! Music!

Above: on Saturday, December 13 the Tahoe Symphony & Chorale performed Handel's Messiah and other holiday favorites before a packed house - balcony too!

Right: on December 6 the Campana Ringers joined Tintabulations for a lively holiday bell concert.



Glory Revealed

Happy New Year! We have arrived in the year 2026. I pray that the Lord has great plans for you this month and throughout the year. We join in the words of Psalm 147:1, Extol the LORD, O Jerusalem! Praise your God, O Zion! Our hope this month is to walk with God affirmingly while opening our hearts and minds to a fruitful year. As we have witnessed holiday season celebrations last year, we might be exhausted by the time of preparation and time with family due to travel or attending certain events throughout the last month.

This month, I invite you, as a sibling in Christ, to emphasize the importance of beginning the new year with the light of God in Jesus. When we enter a new year or period, we are unfamiliar with how it will turn out as we continue our journey together with the Lord. A source that can guide us throughout the new year is the light of Christ. January is not only the first month of the new year, but also a liturgical season of Epiphany. Epiphany occurs on January 6 of this year, which is the 13th day within the Christmas liturgical season.

Epiphany is the Christian celebration of the journey of the three Magi who visit Jesus, bringing their gifts of frankincense, gold, and myrrh. The Greek word for Epiphany is *epiphania*, meaning manifestation or bright appearance. As the Magi visit Jesus, they are witnessing a birth recognized in the heavens to the whole world that God the Incarnate will be the guiding light to bring us closer to the Divine prophesied in Isaiah 43:5 *Do not be afraid, for I am with you; I will bring your children from the east, and gather you from the west.*

Furthermore, our worship series for this month is to celebrate that Christ is God's glorified light revealed to the world. God's light guides, advocates, encourages, and renews our journey within the year 2026. We are expecting challenges, joys, blessings, and grief, as this is a 365-day journey. However, as Christians, we sometimes find ourselves in unfamiliar territory in life that can complicate our journey through this new year. The encouragement is to remember that God is here through Christ and that God's graciousness is displayed in the availability of grace, fulfilled in His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ.

The encouragement for this new year is to journey with Christ as the guiding light of God in your prayer, worship, acts of mercy, and justice. Epiphany reminds us that God is here through Christ, for when we have Christ, we draw closer to the presence of the Divine and prosper in grace. May the glory of God be revealed in you, my church family. Be well.

Pastor Latu Paea

Thank YOU! Holiday Bakers!


Thank you for everyone who shared their baking expertise this holiday season. Our United Women in Faith provided cookies for the two receptions after the bell concert and Choir Cantata in December.

They also shared cookies with our shut-ins and first responders. Thank you for your generosity and sharing your baking expertise



Worship Schedule
Sundays
Worship 8:30 and 10:30 a.m.
Fellowship time follows morning services
Loving child care provided

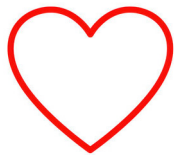
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