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Merry Christmas!

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Volume 71 Issue 08

Chiming In

NEWS AND EVENTS OF
 THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF THE CHIMES
www.churchofthechimes.org—www.facebook.com/ChurchofChimes



December 2020

FROM OUR SENIOR MINISTER

Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Bingham

FAITHFULLY YOURS

Christmas was coming in these weirdest of times
Leaving people perplexed at the Church of the Chimes.

How do we celebrate the birth of our Lord?

The question itself sounds a dissonant chord.

It was clear to us all that too much was missing

No trees, and no stockings...no mistletoe kissing.

The campus was quiet, no lights and no greens,

No carols, no Santa, no nativity scenes.

We had to accept a much quieter season-

Though admittedly Covid's a pretty good reason.

So we hunkered in safely and prayed not to sicken

Til one winter evening we felt the plot thicken.

Peering outside through the dark of the night

We saw in the heavens an unusual light.

It was brighter than all of the stars in the sky

And at the very same time we heard a faint cry.

We decided to follow its glistening gleam

To see what was waiting at the end of its beam.

We moved just as fast as we thought we were able

And found ourselves standing at the door of a stable.

We tiptoed inside as we heard a that faint coo

And saw a young woman whose gown was light blue.

Standing by her a man with love in his eyes

As they both looked down toward those soft gentle cries.

We got even closer to see what was there

And there was the answer to our Christmas time prayer!

A baby so small with a sweet tender face

That was bathed in the radiance of God's loving grace.

And suddenly we knew what was true from the start

Nothing could take Christ from our heart.

Love and blessings to all, Beth

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWS

Jan Long, Christian Ed Chair

A Moment in Time ~ Time Capsule 2020

As this unusual (to say the least) year comes to a close, how about you share your thoughts, dreams for the future and a letter to yourself that will be uncovered for you in five years?

The Time Capsule collection box is on the Hamilton House patio just outside the office door. Please put your baggie with your writings and even a little something else, such as a news paper clipping, an artificial flower if you're a gardener, etc. You get the idea!



We'll keep the box there through January and then seal all the baggies in a thermal holder to bury when we can all be in person again at church. Drop off your baggie, mail it to the church or call and I can come pick it up!

Hugs, **Jan** ~ and ~ Blessings to you all, **Jan**

PRESCHOOL NEWS

Ally Baker, Director

May we continue to have a healthy & safe school year!

A very Merry Christmas to everyone! **Ally**



Hope is hearing the melody of the future,

Faith is dancing to it today.



-Ruben Alvarez

JANE'S CORNER

Jane G. Poole, CE Director

HAVE FAITH...

It's been a turbulent year to say the least. Our country and world have endured things never before seen, felt and experienced. Down to our core, we've been effected by events beyond our control and imagination. Yet, With all this happening, we still have the opportunity to experience the awesomeness in life and have faith in the future.

Our awesomeness moments happen more than we realize. Grand Southern California sunsets, the sweet animal who looks at you with unconditional love, the tight, tight hug from a child. With wide eyes and open hearts we can experience the awesomeness that surrounds us.

And, THE most awesome moment is about to come. The birth of our Lord Jesus. When his birth is once again celebrated, the moment can be flooded with outside distractions. Searching, shopping, presents, wrapping paper. This is when we should step back a moment, to find and internalize the amazingness of Jesus. The WOW of his birth, and the WOW Jesus still has in our lives.

God is right beside us to guide us and help us focus on the true meaning of this Advent season. The amazingness of Jesus. The One who can help us to experience an end to 2020 on a *different* note. Wouldn't it be wonderful to experience the peace of Jesus Christ that puts all our worries and sorrows in perspective? Focus on the picture you want for Jesus' love to be in you and it will be there. Have faith, and... peace be with you this Advent season and Christmastime.



Blessings, love and hugs, Jane
(Remember to spend quiet time with God)



RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE
Thursday, December 17th
Sign up on-line at COTC's web link



THE LEGEND OF POINSETTIAS

The story of the poinsettia is one that spans hundreds of years and contains countless twists and turns as it wound its way into our holiday canon. Although it doesn't pre-date Christianity like its Christmas counterparts, the holiday season wouldn't be the same without the reds and greens of the poinsettia.

For us to begin, we have to go all the way back to the 14th century Mexico. The plant had a long history of medicinal use. It was said that its milky white sap, called latex, could be used to reduce fever symptoms. The plant was so highly prized in Aztec culture that "Cuetlaxochitl," as the plant was known, was also used to create red and purple dyes for clothing and textiles. It is said that Montezuma, the last of the Aztec emperors, was so captivated by the plant that he would have caravans of poinsettias shipped to the capital city of Teotihuacan because the plants could not grow at the high altitude. However, it wasn't until the 17th century that Cuetlaxochitl, now an established decorative plant in Mexican tradition, began its journey into Christmas traditions.

This part of the journey began in the small town of Taxco de Alarcon, Mexico where Franciscan monks began using the shrub in their Nativity processions. Coincidentally, it is also around this time that the Mexican legend of Pepita and the "Flowers of the Holy Night" began, forever tying the red and green shrub to Christmas folklore.

As legend has it, a young girl named Pepita was traveling to her village to visit the Nativity scene at the chapel. Pepita did not have enough money to buy a present to give the baby Jesus at the services, so she gathered a bundle of roadside weeds and formed a bouquet.

She was upset that she didn't have more to offer, but she was reminded by her cousin that "even the most humble gift, given in love, will be acceptable in His eyes." Upon entering the chapel and presenting her bouquet to the Nativity Jesus, the bouquet of roadside weeds miraculously turned into a bouquet of beautiful red flowers that the locals knew as Cuetlaxochitl.

It wasn't until about 1836 that the plant formally attained its popular name of "Poinsettia" after the man who first brought the plant to the United States and ignited a holiday tradition that continues to this day.

If you would like to honor a loved one with a Poinsettia during this Christmas season, you may order one through the Church Office for \$12 each to be displayed on the Chancel in the Sanctuary and then can be picked up by you anytime after Monday the 28th. A list of the loved ones honored will be in the Christmas Eve Order of Worship. Merry Christmas!



COMMUNITY & WORLD SERVICES NEWS Diane Delaney, Chair



The CWS Board sponsored Samaritan's Purse **Operation Christmas Child (OCC) for the 12th year.** The program's mission is to demonstrate God's love to needy children around the world, and to share the Good News of Jesus Christ. COTC Family and Friends packed 52 amazing shoeboxes



which will be distributed around the world to help give children basic things and a few toys that they would not otherwise receive for Christmas!



And here's an update on donations received by our COTC Team of 12 who "walked together apart" to end hunger in our SFV and around the world. We received a few more donations which brought the COTC donation total to just over \$6,000 - which is \$1000 more than last year! We were by far the #1 congregation giving. The San Fernando Valley Crop Hunger Walk raised \$11,200 - less than last year but still amazing!

A huge thanks goes out to all who contributed to both special projects!!!

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**Let us gather together in fellowship, worship and prayer...  
—LIVE ON-LINE—  
knowing God is with us, connecting us together in His wisdom with His love.**

**OUR STEWARDSHIP DRIVE: Reach in to Reach out!**



This year we are asking you to reach as deeply as you can to support our church so that we can reach out by sharing our faith and our gifts with the community. The Estimate of Giving Cards we sent are important for the trustees as they prepare a budget for 2021. Thanks to the number of you that have returned them already! Knowing this is also a difficult time for many people, we are grateful for whatever you can manage. You have been amazing in your support of our church, in your gifts, and also in your outreach, your acts of kindness and your prayers. We are indeed a congregation that is blessed.



**CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE**

Although we still cannot meet in person we WILL be having a service on Christmas Eve. We will be using Facebook Live, which you can reach through our website or our Facebook page. We will be live at 5p.m. and the service will be available for viewing all evening as it will be recorded.

It will be, though remote, a wonderful way to begin our Christmas Day celebrations. We will have our musicians singing the carols you have missed, and you can sing with us! You will hear the Christmas story. There will be a meditation, a special story and a message for children.

At the end of the service we will have our traditional candle lighting, and sing Silent Night together. Join us with your own candle, and let its flame kindle the Christmas spirit and the joy of Christ's birth.

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JOIN US STREAMING LIVE ON FACEBOOK

Sunday Worship Service — 10:30am Every Sunday Morning

Sermon Topics for December:

- | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <i>December 06:</i> | <i>Isaiah 11: 1-10</i> | <i>Disturbing Peace</i> |
| <i>December 13:</i> | <i>Luke 1; 26-38</i> | <i>Mama Mia</i> |
| <i>December 20:</i> | <i>Luke 1: 39-56</i> | <i>Kissing Cousins</i> |
| <i>December 24:</i> | <i>Luke 2: 1-16</i> | <i>The Christmas Story</i> |
| <i>December 27:</i> | <i>Luke 2: 17-20</i> | <i>What Next?</i> |

10 at 10 — 10 minute devotional at 10am every weekday
Lively and Relevant Conversations with Beth & Curtis

VIDEOS of past Sermons and Devotionals are on Facebook and YouTube

FROM OUR ASSOCIATE MINISTER

Rev. Curtis Peek

DO YOU HEAR WHAT I HEAR?

This is the third time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established.

I hear the Lord saying to someone: "It is going to be a special Christmas this year for you. I am repaying you for the years of loss, tears and pain. The desires of your heart will unfold in 2021. I am positioning you to help bring understanding to this season so you can see how your losses and setbacks on Earth are your gain in Heaven.

My love for you has been great. I have captured your tears and your cries have not gone unnoticed. You are about to be freed up to serve Me. A new season is coming of health, along with an increased healing anointing. You will receive financial blessings and your crossing over to this new season will happen fast. I am with you, so do not give up."

Today I want to encourage you to do what you need to do to not give up in tough times. Pray and remind God of the promises you have over your life.

Do practical things that bring you closer to God, such as praying, worshipping, taking communion, reading the Bible or simply walking and connecting with God.

Positioning yourself involves getting deeper healing, growing in intimacy, learning to love and coming into agreement with God's will and ways for your life.

It may also mean you will change the people you are hanging around. It is time to move upward, so find people who are on the same path and who bring encouragement to you.

Get ready to do what it takes to align yourself to receive in this new season. If necessary, and when God confirms these things, then expect to see changes in your living situation, job changes, business partnerships or whatever God shows you for 2021.

Merry Christmas; Happy New Year *Curtis* ~~~~~

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**Wear a mask...Save a life**



**NOMINATING COMMITTEE NEWS**

Robert Jones, Chair

**THE ANNUAL MEETING WILL BE HELD WHEN WE CAN ALL GET TOGETHER AGAIN**

Until then, we thank those currently serving on Boards and Committees for continuing to do so. All members are invited to consider offering your time and talents to an area of interest to you. When doing so, you will be helping Church of the Chimes on our continuing path of being recognized as a vibrant and deeply caring church. If you would like more information on the various opportunities available, please call the church office, and we'll connect you with the right person. Thanks, Robert

**THEN I HEARD THE VOICE OF THE LORD SAYING**

*"Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?"*

**AND I SAID "Here I am; send me!"** ISAIAH 6:8

**SOME DRINK DEEPLY FROM THE WELLS OF KNOWLEDGE.**

**OTHERS JUST RINSE AND SPIT.**

**GREAT RECIPES FOR A GREAT SUNDAY MEAL TO ENJOY**

**Pat Olsen's Pot Roast**

Night before cover beef roast with spices.

Next morning put in the slow cooker with dry onion soup & water to cover.

Six hours Later add cooked carrots, parsnips, potatoes and onions.

Use the available cooking liquid to make a rich gravy

Serve it to your church family :) And then for dessert...

**Barbara Menendez's Lemon Jell-O Cake**

1 package of lemon cake mix

1 small package of lemon Jell-O

Follow the directions on the back of the cake mix box. Just add the Jell-O.

Topping:

2 cups of powdered sugar

Juice from 2 lemons and grated rind

Combine sugar, lemon juice and rind.

After the cake is baked, make holes with a fork all over the top of the cake and pour on topping. Gets better with age, store in the fridge. Serves 16.

## GET AMUSED...

Went to my first social distancing Christening last Sunday



A day without laughter is a wasted day!



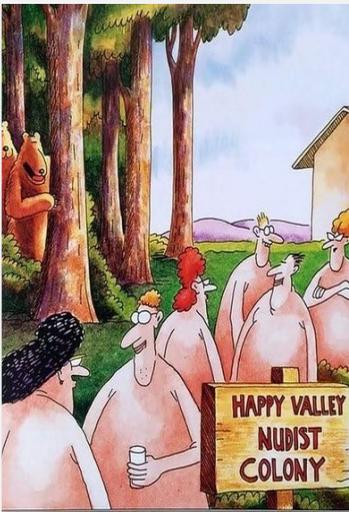
Germany is now advising people to stock up on cheese and sausages. This is called the **Wurst Käse scenario**

I finally realized it!



People are prisoners of their phones. That's why they are called cell phones!

TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN SOMEONE'S LIFE, YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE BRILLIANT, RICH, BEAUTIFUL, OR PERFECT. YOU JUST HAVE TO CARE



"Well, there goes my appetite."

Singing in the shower is great until you get shampoo in your mouth. Then it's a soap opera.

NOT QUITE SURE.....IS THIS A COPY CAT



OR A CAT-SCAN?

If you see my kids crying outside and picking weeds just keep on driving. They're on a field trip.

## CHURCH OF THE CHIMES IS LIVE ON-LINE



Visit our website:

<https://www.facebook.com/ChurchofChimes>

Find an abundance of information regarding all the various activities on campus; listen to audios of past sermons, plus you can view past copies of Chiming In and/or request future editions be emailed to you.....

Visit, Like, Share, Follow our Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/ChurchofChimes/>

View up-to-date information on programs and live stream events such as Sunday Services and Daily Devotionals (10 at 10 with Beth & Curtis).

Visit various productions on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCrLl2TLj2XfbBtgAOY0rjA>

Weekly Worship Services and Daily Devotions are now available on YouTube. We'll keep you posted as we add other things.

Get this app on your smart devices and then arrange conference call events to meet with Church Boards, Committees, Bible Studies\* and/or other groups up to 100 participants. \*e.g., Wednesday night Women's Bible Study with Jane. <https://zoom.us/meetings>

If you need help connecting to and/or otherwise utilizing any of these on-line tools, please call the church office and we'll find someone to get you started.



The earth has grown old with its burden of care,  
But at Christmas it always is young.

- Phillips Brooks

*Merry Christmas*

Let's Keep In Touch

When we can't embrace we can send our love through the mail.

If you know someone who would like to receive a card or note from the Women's Association, please call or send an email with their name, address & phone number to the church office

[office@churchofthechimes.org](mailto:office@churchofthechimes.org)

818-789-7124

-or-

Joi Staves

[joistaves@gmail.com](mailto:joistaves@gmail.com)

818-648-1638

Band of Prayer

A church that prays together, stays together especially during these challenging and uncertain times when we are separated by the need for social distancing and don't know what happens next...

What is certain is that God is with us, filling in the spaces between us and He hears our prayers.

Band of Prayer requests may be sent via email to Sylvia McCormick;

[miss\\_daisy1226@yahoo.com](mailto:miss_daisy1226@yahoo.com)

or feel free to call or email the Church Office;

[office@churchofthechimes.org](mailto:office@churchofthechimes.org)

818-789-7124

**DEACON NEWS**

Nancy Nelsen, Chair

**CHILDREN’S BUREAU CHRISTMAS FAMILIES PROJECT FOR 2020**

Due to the pandemic, this year the Children’s Bureau is sponsoring an E-card donation system to help their needy families. There are two ways for the Chimes’ Family and Friends to participate.

- 1) You may send or drop off a monetary gift of any amount to the church office, and a check for the total amount received on or before December 10th will be sent to the Children’s Bureau from the Church of the Chimes. Please make check out to Congregational Church of the Chimes and specify in the memo line that it is for the Christmas Families Project.
- 2) You can otherwise make donations on-line in \$25 increments. To donate on-line, go to [allkids.org/toydrive/](http://allkids.org/toydrive/). Again, the deadline for purchasing the e-cards will be Dec. 10th. The Children’s Bureau staff will need time to forward the E-cards to the families, and the families will need time to do their own shopping.

Please know how very much the families appreciate your generosity!  
Thank you in advance for your donations! Merry Christmas! Nancy

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TRUSTEE NEWS

Greg Abbott, Chair

Not a lot new to report. The Trustees will next meet on December 8 and will hopefully finalize the 2021 budget. Some good news is that we have had a number of shoots on campus over the last couple of months. While this doesn't change the fact that we will need to make cuts to next year’s budget, it does mean that we will not have to dig as deeply into our endowments. I want to thank you all for your continued financial support. If you have not yet done so please submit your estimate of giving card as soon as possible. If you can please consider a small increase in your giving. Merry Christmas to all. Greg

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**WOMEN’S ASSOCIATION NEWS**

Natalie Karp, Chair

On Thursday, December 17th, all women of the church are invited to gather together virtually to enjoy a little Christmas Cheer. Self-provided libations and the company of each other will be a sure hit! The link to this ZOOM GET TOGETHER will be provided in Beth’s daily emails that week. Until then, stay safe and remain healthy. Please continue wearing a mask and social distancing to help stop the spread! Merry Christmas! Natalie

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HAPPENINGS

ZOOM Coffee Hour: December 6!

After worship on Sunday, December 6 we are inviting you to grab a cup of coffee and join some of your Church of the Chimes family on Zoom for a virtual coffee hour. There is no agenda, just lots of conversation and sharing what we’ve been up to, what we’re thinking about...it is all great fun. The ZOOM link will be in the eblast on Friday December 4. Let’s keep in touch with each other. Join us!

ZOOM Discussion: The Church and Racial Justice and Equity

We are inviting all of you to join us for a group discussion via ZOOM on the church and racial justice and equity on **Sunday, December 13, 2020 from 1pm – 2pm**. So far our conversations have been terrific! We are reading a book Why are all the Black Kids Sitting together in the Cafeteria and using it as a discussion starter. Some are also reading the book by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Where Do We Go From Here. You don’t have to have read them to participate, however, we do have a few copies of each in the office. Please call the office if you would like one of them. The ZOOM link will be in the e blast on Friday, December 11, or you may call the office so that we can give you the link.

WOMEN’S BIBLE STUDY WITH JANE

All women are invited to the virtual gathering of this caring, sharing, loving group of women on Wednesday evenings @ 7:00pm via ZOOM. Jane sends out the ZOOM link every week via email. A new series “Everybody Always” by Bob Goff begins next week that focuses on love in a world full of set-backs and different people.

Join us when you can.

HANGING OF THE GREENS

On the Sunday after Thanksgiving the Chimes’ Family begins the Christmas Season with Hanging of the Greens; we all stay after the worship service, enjoy a light lunch and then starts the decorating of our beautiful campus—inside and out. This year we will be doing things a bit differently. First of all, there will only be minimal interior decorating—primarily Christmas trees placed for maximum viewing impact. The main decorating will be done exteriorly with mass quantities of lights, and WE NEED HELP to accomplish this!! And to accommodate our “Stay Safe; Stay Healthy” Policy, we are proposing that all family &/or friend units who want to participate with **bringing the Christmas Spirit Alive** for our surrounding community, to please call the church office to choose the date and time that works best for you. All the lights and other supplies needed will be provided, you just need to show up and decorate your chosen area to bring that **“Light Up the Night” experience to everyone passing by Church of the Chimes**. Thanks in advance for your support! May God Bless us all during the 2020 Christmas Season and throughout the New Year. *Merry! Merry!*



DECEMBER



Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
		<u>1</u> 9:00am Preschool 10:00am Ten Minute Devotional via Facebook	<u>2</u> 9:00am Preschool 10:00am Ten Minute Devotional via Facebook 7:00pm Women's Bible Study via ZOOM	<u>3</u> 9:00am Preschool 10:00am Ten Minute Devotional via Facebook	<u>4</u> 9:00am Preschool 10:00am Ten Minute Devotional via Facebook	<u>5</u>
<u>6</u> 10:30am Worship Service Streaming Live via Facebook	<u>7</u> 9:00am Preschool 10:00am Ten Minute Devotional via Facebook	<u>8</u> 9:00am Preschool 10:00am Ten Minute Devotional via Facebook	<u>9</u> 9:00am Preschool 10:00am Ten Minute Devotional via Facebook 2:30pm AquaBuddies 7:00pm Women's Bible Study via ZOOM	<u>10</u> 9:00am Preschool 10:00am Ten Minute Devotional via Facebook	<u>11</u> 9:00am Preschool 10:00am Ten Minute Devotional via Facebook	<u>12</u>
<u>13</u> 10:30am Worship Service Streaming Live via Facebook	<u>14</u> <u>Preschool Closed until January 4, 2021</u> 10:00am Ten Minute Devotional via Facebook	<u>15</u> 10:00am Ten Minute Devotional via Facebook	<u>16</u> 10:00am Ten Minute Devotional via Facebook 7:00pm Women's Bible Study via ZOOM	<u>17</u> <u>RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE</u> 11am to 5pm in Bower Hall 10:00am Ten Minute Devotional via Facebook	<u>18</u> 10:00am Ten Minute Devotional via Facebook	<u>19</u>
<u>20</u> 10:30am Worship Service Streaming Live via Facebook	<u>21</u> 10:00am Ten Minute Devotional via Facebook 2:30pm AquaBuddies	<u>22</u> 10:00am Ten Minute Devotional via Facebook	<u>23</u> 10:00am Ten Minute Devotional via Facebook 7:00pm Women's Bible Study via ZOOM	<u>24</u> CHRISTMAS EVE 10:00am Ten Minute Devotional via Facebook 5:00pm Christmas Eve Service Streaming Live via Facebook	<u>25</u> CHRISTMAS DAY	<u>26</u>
<u>27</u> 10:30am Worship Service Streaming Live via Facebook	<u>28</u> 10:00am Ten Minute Devotional via Facebook	<u>29</u> 10:00am Ten Minute Devotional via Facebook	<u>30</u> 10:00am Ten Minute Devotional via Facebook 7:00pm Women's Bible Study via ZOOM	<u>31</u> NEW YEARS EVE 10:00am Ten Minute Devotional via Facebook		