Sacred Moments: Advent Sunday Celebrations

Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take
but by the moments that take our breath away.

12/21 ADVENT 4: SACRED MOMENTS OF SURPRISE. Expect the unexpected – Penny preaching; Caroling following service.

12/24 CHRISTMAS EVE
SACRED MOMENTS OF KEEPING WATCH
5 pm: Family service
7 pm: Las Posadas
11 pm: Candlelight service

12/28 CHRISTMAS 1: SACRED MOMENTS OF WISDOM. CCSM College Students return and share their faith journeys with us.

Epiphany 2015: Testify to Love

Never forget that justice is what love looks like in public. —Cornel West

1/4: LOVE MEANS GOING TO GREAT LENGTHS. Baptism and Communion. Story of the Magi


1/18: Love in Many Colors. Feast of Martin Luther King, Jr. John 1:43-51

1/25: Love Beyond Ourselves. Congregational Meeting. Mark 1:14-20


2/8: Searching for Love. Mark 1:32-39

2/15: Love is More Powerful than Fear. Mark 9:2-9

For as long as I shall live, I will testify to love.
I’ll be a witness in the silences when words are not enough.
With every breath I take, I will give thanks to God above.
For as long as I shall live, I will testify to love.

(Chorus of Testify to Love by Avalon)

Justice is what love looks like in public
by Penny Nixon

This Epiphany season we will explore justice—what love looks like in public. Using the stories of Jesus primarily from the gospel of Mark, we will see all the ways we are invited to “testify to love.” Throughout Epiphany, we will hear the song Testify to Love sung by different groups of people. We will light a social justice candle each week and also provide opportunities for all of CCSM to lift up the ways we are all are involved in service. It is going to be an uplifting and inspirational time together, and there are many involved in the planning of this special theme.
Children, Youth and Families

Godly Play in the New Year

January 4  Godly Play work day: come ready to be creative and to play with the sacred story of your choice!

January 11 Epiphany

January 18 Baptism


“EPHAN Y is a Greek word that means “to go forth.” The date of its celebration is January 6th. It was originally concerned with the commemoration of the Baptism of Jesus and later became associated with the Magi (3 wise ones), an emphasis of the Latin Church of the West. Today it is often thought of as the manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles.” (excerpt from the intro to the Godly Play Story of Epiphany)

Godly Play Workshop with Di Pagel

Saturday, February 21 at CCSM

We have been invited to host a regional Godly Play training event here at CCSM on Saturday, February 21. Led by Godly Play Master Storyteller and Trainer, Di Pagel, we will enjoy a workshop full of stories, of sharing resources and of interacting with other Godly Play teachers from all over the Bay Area. Mark that date and make plans to come—it will be a wonder-full day!

CCSM 2015 Youth Mission Trip

2015 will be a big year for our Senior High youth. We are planning an international mission & service trip to San Jose, Costa Rica in June. We will travel with our friends from the First Congregational Church in Palo Alto. Our host in San Jose, CR will be Ruta Verde (The Green Way) a local company that offers service projects and environmentally educational experiences to youth and young adults.

We will be raising money this winter/spring and sharing our excitement about the trip with our church family. In January we will sell envelopes for $1 all the way up to $144 (and all the numbers in between). It is our hope that everyone will choose to participate—and receive an invitation to a special party when we return, when we will share about our experiences and serve delicious desserts and Costa Rican items we have brought back. There will be a dinner/auction in March, and we are happy to receive any donations for that event that you might want to share with us.

Our Senior High mission team is still forming, but we hope to take at least ten youth and several youth leaders with us. We will work hard for various ministries there, such as Hogar Belen (a home for teenage mothers and their babies) and Hogar Un Buen Samaritano (hospice care for men with HIV/AIDS). Other places are in the works.

Please stop by our envelope table January 11, 18 or 25, and ask the youth

Youth Calendar

December 21: BE OF SERVICE! Go caroling after worship with your church family!

December 24: Come to celebrate Christmas Eve at 5PM, 7PM or 11PM

December 28: SERVICE PROJECT: Make lunches for Open Cathedral during Church School; it’s also College Sunday in worship!

December 28-January 4: WINTER BREAK! Happy New Year!

January 11: 60 MINUTES; Sr High Youth Mission Team MEETING (planning fundraisers)

January 17-19: MidHigh (grades 6-8) NCNC MIDWINTER RETREAT

February 1: COMMUNION in worship; CONFIRMATION meets

February 8: 60 MINUTES; Sr High Mission Trip Team MEETING with youth from Palo Alto

February 14-16: Senior Highers to NCNC FEB CAMP at Monte Toyon in Apts, CA – Sr High Mission Team should participate!

Save the Date: February 17: SHROVE TUESDAY PANCAKE SUPPER FOR THE CHURCH. Start your Lenten season off with us!

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about their trip. We are practicing our Spanish and learning all about the amazing cuisine of Costa Rica (coffee, chocolate, pineapples, black beans and many other delicious items!) Thank you!
IN PLAIN SIGHT
by Penny Nixon

For the past year I have convened a group of clergy now called the Anti-Trafficking Faith Leaders Coalition. One of our goals is to raise awareness about human trafficking in San Mateo County. On January 11, our worship service will be lifting up the issue of human trafficking, and that afternoon CCSM will also be the venue for a big event sponsored by a number of faith, non-profit and civic organizations. I hope a number of CCSM people will come out and learn more about this important justice issue.

I am also pleased to report that we were awarded a $5,000 grant from Silicon Valley Community Foundation to help fund this event. Bonnie Rambob has been working on this with me.

EXTRAVAGANT WELCOME APPRECIATED

The November 30 worship service featured experiences from eight CCSM members who visited immigrant communities around the county. What a special day of touching stories and delightful music! Afterwards our visitors from Half Moon Bay repeatedly commented on the warm acceptance and comfort they felt among us. Thanks to each of you, CCSM truly embodied “no matter who you are… you are welcome here.”

To our visitors’ surprise later, they received two-thirds of your generous offering that Sunday (half of that two-thirds for ALAS, the children’s performance group, and half for the mural in memory of Yanira Serrano-Garcia). Belinda Hernandez Arriaga, our coastside liaison and director of ALAS, wrote:

“Thank you so much! We were very touched and moved by the entire service and congregation. It was amazing and we are still inspired and reenergized by all of YOU! And your gift to our efforts! That is wonderful.

“We have a young girl whose father left to Mexico to go and see his mother who was very ill, and it turns out that he can’t return as he thought because he has gotten detained at the border trying to cross now three times. So the mom and her three children have been here struggling alone. ALAS has been there for them, so it’s been a gift that they have been in our program and vice versa. But they can’t pay for their class or costumes or anything, so your gift will go to support them for this year.

“Also, we have a new girl who just arrived from Mexico—a wonderful young girl. She is having a hard time in school as she doesn’t know English, but she danced ballet folklorico in Mexico. Now she is coming to our ALAS Ballet Folklorico class and so feels connected to home. Thank you so much! So it will be great to be able to support her as well.

“Also—the gift for the mural [honoring Yanira]. That is amazing, and we so appreciate it. This money will go directly to the artist Ernesto Olmos.

“What a blessing you all are to us!”

SUCCESSFUL HOME & HOPE Week

During the week of November 30 through December 7, Kloss Hall was home for 4 families. Those sixteen adults and children ate, played and slept in a warm, dry place thanks to your generosity—both of your time and your money. It was a great week. Many thanks to those of you who volunteered and cooked those great meals. Mark your 2015 calendars for April 19-26, June 14-21 and September 27-October 4 as that is when HOME & HOPE will return to CCSM.

—Donna Lindsay
HOME & HOPE Coordinator
Raise Your Hands!

• **HAVE A SPECIAL CAUSE OR PASSION?** If so, raise your hand! MSJ participants include **MEMBERS** who facilitate CCSM’s service and justice efforts, **PARTNERS** who are our liaisons to various non-profits (like Donna Lindsey to Home and Hope), and **ADVOCATES** who are passionate about a particular cause (like Veril Phillips and immigration). The list of those who work (or want to work) for justice is growing. Add your name!

• **LIKE SURPRISES?** If so, raise your hand! Sundays (any day actually) people drop off contributions for the **2015 RUMMAGE SALE** on the Kloss Hall stage, then Tuesday mornings volunteers sort the donations. You never know what you’ll discover (please, no stuffed animals, skis or exercise equipment) but it’s never boring. Proceeds from the March 13-14, 2015 rummage sale will fund justice projects locally and around the world. Come help!

• **GOT WHEELS?** If so, raise your hand! Many of our undocumented neighbors in San Mateo County lack transportation and are eager for their own wheels. If you have an **UNUSED BIKE**, one of our justice partners would be glad to pick it up and “recycle” it.

• **WANNA CROSS THE BORDER?** If so, raise your hand! March 20-24 a group from CCSM will **EXPLORE IMMIGRATION ISSUES ALONG THE BORDER** nearest Tijuana. From Centro Romero we learn more about the two most serious border concerns: human trafficking and unaccompanied minors.

• **INTERESTED IN AN EXPERIENCE?** If so, raise your hand! In the next few months, MSJ will sponsor **FIELD TRIPS** to meet the homeless and hungry CCSM helps. Join us for visits to the InnVision shelters, Night Ministry, Puente or Samaritan House sites—or do a personal ride-along with a Peninsula Food Runner

To “raise your hand,” just email msj@ccsm-ucc.org or call the church office (650-343-3694). We’re eager to hear from you.

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**ALL CHURCH CAROLING**

O Come, All Ye Faithful and all the new folks here at CCSM. Every year we gather together to go Christmas Caroling to our folks who can’t get out to worship with us. On December 21 following worship, we will share a quick meal, divide into teams, each with their own list of places to stop to bring Christmas cheer and warm greetings from CCSM. All carolers return to the church for hot cocoa and Christmas cookies.

Sleigh Bells Ring, are you listening? Yes we have bells to ring, so come ring a bell and join in the fun. This is for everyone, babies to grammmies. Let us know you are coming by sending an email to care@ccsm-ucc.org or call the church office.

(Apologies to Over the River and Through the Woods)

Over the hills and through the streets
to senior houses we go.
Google knows the way to guide our car
to each home assigned that day.
Over the hills and through the streets
to senior houses we go.
We’ll have lots of fun as we greet everyone
for it’s almost Christmas Day.
Mexico with our Global Mission Partner, Albergue Las Memorias. CCSM is already partnered with this HIV/AIDS Hospice center. With Marge and myself commissioned to serve there, CCSM’s partnership will also be strengthened.

"My last Sunday with CCSM as paid staff will be April 12, 2015. This is the Sunday after Easter. That is a long way off. We have work to do together in this place, and saying goodbye to this community will be difficult, so, we will not be holding any goodbye events until at least March. Let us live in this present moment.

"With a mixture of great joy and sadness and a deeply grateful heart, I submit my letter of resignation."
Wise and Wonderful Seniors (WiWoS)

Ever wonder what Wise and Wonderful Seniors do on the second Wednesday and fourth Thursday of each month? Here is the line up for 2015.

WiWoS are great fun and you don’t need to be Wise or Wonderful to join in the fun… You don’t even need to be a senior. Wherever you are on your life’s journey, you are welcome to join us for any or all of these activities.

2nd Wednesdays in the Buckham Room

1/14 10:30-12:00 Hopes for the New Year
      † Bring one idea for a project Wise and Wonderful Seniors (WiWoS) can participate in being the Hands, Feet and Face of God in our communities.

2/11 10:30-11:30 A Parker Palmer experience.
      † Poetry and image support knowing our own wisdom.
      † Facilitator: Rev. Dr. Faye Orton Snyder
      † Bring notebook and pen.

3/11 10:30-11:30 What is a member portal?
      † Bring your ipad, tablet, smartphone or notepad and pen. Veril Phillips will be supporting us through an hour of learning how to access our online church directory.
      † We will have some extra tablets, etc, available.

4/8 10:30-11:30 Out with the Old
      † A time for sharing with Pastor Jerri and send-off to Mexico.

5/13 10:30-11:30 In with the New
      † A time to regroup and look ahead.

4th Thursdays: Please sign up in church office to make reservations. This helps us to create carpools—more fellowship, less cars. Each 4th Thursday we gather at CCSM at 10:30 a.m., and leave at 10:45.

1/22 Jack’s Restaurant, El Camino Real and Highway 92.
2/26 CuriOdyssey. $6 parking per car at Museum, and lunch at Poplar Creek. 1700 Coyote Point Dr.
3/26 Barbara’s Fish Trap, north of Half Moon Bay on Hwy 1.
4/23 Paul’s Diner, 4000 S El Camino Real; free parking on north side of building.

Sunday, January 18, 9:15 a.m. in Church Kitchen: Making Open Cathedral lunches. All materials for sack lunches are provided. Come join in the fun of creating 100 lunches in less than an hour.

Family Worship and Bible Sunday, November 16, 2014

The worship service was led by our fifth graders who also received their bibles as a gift from the church.
**Joys and Concerns**

**Prayers of Gratitude...**
- 90+ and home bound birthdays this month: Marjorie Griffin 12/14; George Kromhout 12/16.
- Our Global Ministries personnel Rosalind Gnatt (Germany), Xuyen Dangers (Laos), Joel Cooper (Lebanon), Alison Stendahl (Turkey), as they serve along side our mission partners around the globe.
- Jimmy and Joyce Green, parents of Trish Green, celebrate their 51st wedding anniversary.
- Mark Grossheider and Michael Griffin exchanged vows in a beautiful wedding ceremony on November 16. Congratulations and may your marriage bring joy to you, your families and friends.
- Carolyn Eidson and Kristine “KP” Poggioli exchanged wedding vows on November 22 in a beautiful touching service. We celebrate with you in this new life together.
- Betty Brookes fell last week on her way into the church. She is doing well and her daughter Linda thanks CCSM for all the prayers and support shown to her mother and to Lourdes her caregiver. Betty has 3 tiny stitches but other than that all is well.

**Prayers of Comfort**
- Harvey Moder, father of Sue Mennear, passed away December 1, 2014. Sue will be traveling to New York for the memorial service. Please pray for Sue and the extended family.
- June S Palmer, mother of Ellen Palmer, passed away November 16, 2014. Ellen was able to be with her mother and her sister, sharing loving tender moments. Ellen’s partner Mindy lost her mother just a couple of months ago. Please pray for Ellen, Mindy and the girls as they grieve this loss.

**Prayers of Healing and Support...**
- Syd and Ann Lambertson are home while Syd is on hospice care. Please send prayers of comfort as Syd’s health has declined in recent days.
- Tom and Rae Banks, members of CCSM who spend summers in Maryland, were unable to return as Rae has declined and is unable to travel. Tom also broke his hip in early November. He is hoping to have the news that he can increase the weight load as he continues to improve. Tom thanks CCSM for our prayers.
- Lorna Stroy, mother of Carol Boes, is now in hospice care and nearing her final days. Pray for a peaceful transition. May these last few days be filled with love.
- Ruth Black had surgery last week and is recovering at home.
- Bill Melish had back surgery on 12/12. Please pray for a speedy recovery.
- Chuck Charlton has entered hospice care. Please pray for him and the family as they walk this journey together.
- Lauretta Flaherty, mother of Len Flaherty, fell and broke her hip. Her recovery is going well; she has been cleared to return home. Len and Deb will be visiting her soon.
- Prayers for Jessie Kane & Robert Cowell, extended family of Mel Thrash. Jessie has had surgery for pancreatic cancer.
- Shirley Kavanaugh, mother of Janet Bower and Louise Coughlin, mother of Phyllis Lunardi, need our prayers.
- Angela Castro, friend of Janelle Bradford, dealing with chronic pain.
- Dazore Bradford, daughter of Janelle Bradford, facing challenges of college. She has been experiencing anxiety. Pray for peace of mind and heart.
- Larry Handy (brother of Jerri Handy), Michelle (friend of Gail Evans), Chris Williams (family member of Jeanne Back), and others remain in our prayers as they walk their unique journeys with cancer.

**Please know that all of your joys and concerns are important. You may contact the church office or email Rev. Jerri Handy jhandy@ccsm-ucc.org, if you need support.**

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**Connect and Care**

**CONNECT:** a sense of belonging, being valued; someone knows your name.

**CARE:** not alone, a helping hand, a smile a card, a visit. Connect and Care ministry connects people who would benefit from a deeper connection. We have only a handful of folks who are still awaiting partners. If you are new to CCSM and would like to share visits with some of our older and or homebound folks, this is a great way to step into the life of the church. Conversations will be rich and meaningful.

If you are interested, please email or talk to Pastor Jerri. She would be happy to help you get your Connect and Care partner.

For those of you who already have Connect and Care partners, please send an email to care@ccsm-ucc.org to let us know you have had contact via phone, card or visit.

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**First Tuesday Book Group**

**January 6, 7:30 pm, Fireplace Room!**

The First Tuesday Book Group is taking a hiatus in December. January’s book will be bestseller The Orphan Train by Christina Baker Kline, a gripping story of friendship and second chances. Penobscot Indian Molly Ayer is close to “aging out” out of the foster care system when she accepts a community service position helping out an elderly woman.

In February, we will focus on The Silkworm by Robert Galbraith (aka J. K. Rowling). Her newest series features a private detective, Cormoran Strike, and his young assistant Robin. A compulsively readable crime novel with twists at every turn.

In March, we’ll read The Elegance of the Hedgehog by Muriel Barbery. This engaging story is set in France where the lives of Renee, the concierge of an apartment building, and Paloma, a 12 year old resident, become intricately connected. A bestseller in France!

All are welcome to join us! Please contact Susan Stoehr to be added to the email list (s_stoehr@hotmail.com) or Betsy Woodward for questions (betsdce@comcast.net).
Las Posadas

Wednesday, December 24, 2014 • 7:00 pm

Beginning at the Front Lawn of the
Congregational Church of San Mateo
225 Tilton Ave, San Mateo

Following the musical procession around the blocks of Tilton, San Mateo Drive, Monte Diablo Avenue and N. Ellsworth Avenue there will be a piñata to break, tamales, buñuelos, champurrado, and punch to celebrate.

Please join us in community for this wonderful time of year.

FREE PUBLIC EVENT!
For information: 510.684.8529 | jbaulista@ccsm-ucc.org

Christmas Eve
at CCSM:

Sacred Moments of Keeping Watch

Staying awake to experience the coming of the Christ in our midst

5pm: Family service
7pm: Las Posadas
11pm: Candlelight service

Save the Date!
Annual Meeting January 25

Please plan to come to the budget discussion right after worship.

New members who joined the CCSM family in November

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