

CCSM PINE TREE

VOL. 66, #10 | DECEMBER 2017



SUNDAYS IN ADVENT 10:30AM

December 17 • ADVENT 3:
#morejoy. Reflection:
Amie Giordano
Children's Christmas
Pageant / Children's
Choir

December 24 • ADVENT 4: **#morelove.** Reflection:
Penny Nixon. Special Music: Chancel Choir

The church office will be closed Dec 25-Jan 1.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

5pm Family Service: Carillon
Ringers, cello, and special
children's story

11pm Candlelight Service:
Chancel Choir & string quartet



Penny sharing post-baptism delight with John Bailey, November 19, 2017

What the World Needs Now

2018 Epiphany Series



- 12/31 Epiphany Sunday
- 1/7 Baptism of Jesus Sunday/Communion. Sermon: *The Voice of Love*
- 1/14 MLK Sunday. Sermon: *The Body of Love*
- 1/21 Blessing of ISM. Sermon: *The Net-work of Love*
- 1/28 Congregational Meeting. Sermon: *The Ever-Expanding Circle of Love*
- 2/4 Communion and Healing service. Sermon: *The Search for Love*
- 2/11 Transfiguration Sunday: Rabbi Jhos Singer and Penny. Sermon: *The Power of Love to Transform*

A Word from Penny

As darkening days lead us closer to the year's end, they seem to invite a reflective look back. Thinking about 2017 causes me to draw in a deep breath—what a year it has been. Even as I write this, waves of violence



—cont. on page 4—



Congregational
Church of san mateo

225 TILTON AVENUE, SAN MATEO, CA 94401
650 343-3694 | CCSM-UCC.ORG

CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES



TOOT-TOOT!

The trains arrive Saturday, January 27, at 1:00PM in the Buckham Room. Come play with Thomas the Train or

“drive” lots of big electric trains till 4PM. Food and fun for all ages!



For Linus and Henry, the best part of church may be the snacks



SANTA'S ELVES

Did you know that CCSM has sponsored a Girl Scout troop for eight years? Recently, the girls helped our children create their fabulous Advent wreaths. Elf Megan missed being in the photo, but left to right are elves Michele, Geneva, Zoe, Sofia, Camille, Mimi, and Holly. In the spring, the girls turn into cookie sellers, so save up your pennies.



Clara makes an advent chain to count down the days till Christmas



Two BoyScouts helping future Eagle Scout Kyle Neil install the AV screens in the CE Building



The Verduccis creating a special Advent wreath

Las Posadas

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 15 • 7-9PM

Dear sisters and brothers,

I am excited about the upcoming 5th annual celebration of Las Posadas, commemorating Mary and Joseph's difficult journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem in search of a warm place to stay the night. As we do every year, we will gather in the lawn area at 7:00pm and a procession will take to the streets as we walk around our church with children dressed as Mary and Joseph, angels and shepherds. Religious figures, images and lighted candles are a part of the festivities as well. As we walk around the church we follow the children representing the Holy Family as they knock on seven doors, singing with them and asking for lodging. They are refused time and again until the group finally is allowed in and are permitted to enter in Kloss Hall. Prayer and song continue inside Kloss Hall and there we celebrate with tamales and the evening ends with a piñata in the shape of a star.

Las Posadas is more than just a feel-good tradition. It deepens faith and strengthens ties within the community at a holy time. Just as Mary and Joseph faced the cold weather and even colder inn-keepers that night, we too as participants will brave the elements in bringing love for the Christ Child to the streets. Las Posadas isn't about being somber and still during Christmas. It's about pilgrims on a pilgrimage, rousing song, prayer and deep faith—all of it in motion. Every year it is always a good experience for everyone.

I do hope many of you can come out and participate in such a wonderful Mexican tradition. If you do come out, you will get a chance to meet many of the families from the Wednesday Gatherings, and will get to taste my mom's infamous tamales which she has made for us the past four years and they are always a hit.

See you at Las Posadas and be blessed!

Peace,

Jorge P. Bautista



Soup Lunch and Christmas Caroling

DECEMBER 17

CFE is hosting a soup lunch for the entire church, followed by Christmas caroling in a group to visit Seniors at their homes or at senior living homes in the area to share CCSM voices of cheer. Check in with Dakota at the soup lunch to receive an address to visit and sheet music; then you will be on your way.



Pick-A-Party Receipts Rise to \$19,000

Proceeds from our Pick-A-Party fundraiser continue to arrive. We've already raised almost \$19,000. If you are holding an IOU we hope you will settle up soon.

There are openings at several parties in January including the "Oklahoma" movie night with the Carillon Ringers (Jan. 6), Organ Camp for Adults (Jan. 14), "Yentl" Movie Night (Jan. 19), and Breakfast with Beethoven (Jan. 20). Contact Carol Henton if you wish to sign up. To see the full list of open parties, visit ccsm-ucc.org/pick-a-party2017 and click "2017 Open Parties."

—Jennifer Jacoby-Yeh and Carol Henton



Second Hour

SUNDAYS AT 11:50

JANUARY 14 • Screening of *The Bail Trap: American Ransom.*

The Ministry of Service and Justice is sponsoring the screening of this short film, by Brave New Films. The cash bail system is an example of the institutionalized racism in our criminal justice system and contributes greatly to oppression of the poor. Only two countries in the world require cash payments to secure release from jail pending trial: the U.S. and the Philippines. This short film exposes the devastating effect this practice has on individuals and families. Filmed locally in the East Bay and distributed widely by the ACLU with support from the Public Defenders office. Discussion afterwards, facilitated by Carole Wilson, (a regular CCSM participant), in Public Health at Cal.



JANUARY 21 • *Implicit Bias with Dr. Rebecca Hetey.* Dr. Hetey earned her PhD in Social Psychology from Stanford University in 2013, her MA in Social Psychology from Stanford, and her BA in Psychology from Yale University. She has worked with the Oakland Police Department (OPD) for four years, and continues to be involved with the implementation work on the ground with OPD command staff. Dr. Hetey will present some of her research on implicit bias, particularly as it relates to racial inequality in policing. In addition, she will lead us in implicit bias training, in order to uncover how implicit bias affects our perceptions, judgments, and behavior.

FEBRUARY 4 • *Planting Peace After War—W4W.* In patriarchal cultures, women and children suffer from war in unimaginable ways—loss of income, trauma, and marginalization. The non-profit Women for Women International helps these impoverished women rebuild their lives after unspeakable tragedy in countries like Iraq, Afghanistan, Rwanda and South Sudan. Through social, emotional, and vocational programs, the women triple their income, develop stronger voices in their homes and communities, and can support their children.

Delaney Steele (Kibbie and Gary's daughter) is on the Board of Directors. She and her husband recently traveled to Rwanda to see the program

A Word from Penny—cont. from p. 1

are erupting in Jerusalem, the #MeToo movement is upending gender politics, housing prices are continuing to rise in San Mateo, and undocumented youth are fearful and uncertain of their future. In the midst of all of this, and so much more, how are we to hear the annual Christmas greeting of PEACE ON EARTH, GOODWILL TO ALL?

This Advent season we have been talking about *Angels Among Us*. “Angel” just means messenger, someone who brings a message. Those messages come to us in a thousand different ways. Maybe that is how peace and goodwill come too—in a thousand different ways, in ways beyond our imagining and comfort zones. I feel unsure about a number of things, but what I do know is that the Christmas story is a ray of hope that breaks into the harsh reality of the world. The poet Marilyn Nelson expresses this poignantly in her poem entitled “Where Humanity Begins:”

Abba Jacob said:
Perhaps our humanity begins
in receiving the consolation
of the ordinary.
So many people wish to find God
in some parallel world outside or beyond
this one.
We do not need to search for God.
We need to be open to this world
of pain and beauty. It is in our attentiveness
to this broken world
that God
finds us.

So this Christmas, and beyond into the New Year, may God find us. Find us open-hearted like Mary, overcoming fear like the shepherds, and willing to search like the Wise Ones. May we, in all our frail and wondrous humanity, become messengers of peace, become messengers of goodwill, become messengers of love.

Merry Christmas, everyone.

Penny

first hand and will share their experience and the broader work on the organization.

FEBRUARY 11 • “A Minister and a Rabbi walk into Jerusalem...” Come hear Penny and Rabbi Jhos share about their trip to Israel from their different perspectives.

REGISTER NOW!

MLK DAY
MONDAY JAN 15, 2018

6th Annual Multifaith Day of Service

Please join us for this unique opportunity to work side by side with those of other faiths and cultures to benefit our local community. The day begins with an inspiring welcome from faith leaders at our volunteer breakfast at 8am. After breakfast, pre-assigned groups of volunteers work together on 20+ family friendly projects. Children ages 5+ welcome to participate in most projects.



Register by January 7 at
<https://pmcmlk2018.eventbrite.com>



Bringing together our diverse community to build bridges of understanding and respect.

Ahmadiyya Muslim Community • Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints • Congregation Beth Jacob • Congregational Church Belmont • Congregational Church of San Mateo • Episcopal Church of St. Matthew • First Presbyterian Church of Burlingame • Holy Trinity Lutheran Church of San Carlos • Island United Church • Jewish Community Relations Council • Local Peace Initiative • Pacifica Institute • Peninsula Sinai Congregation • Peninsula Temple Beth El • Peninsula Temple Sholom • St. Andrews Lutheran Church of San Mateo • Saint Bartholomew Parish • Saint Paul's Episcopal Church • Sanatan Mandir • Shinnyo-en USA • Trinity Baptist Church • Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Redwood City

We are a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, consider donating to help cover the cost of supplies peninsulamultifaith.org/donate.

Music & Art

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 15, NOON
PAT PEPPER'S HOME

This month's Music and Art gathering will offer a program of two-piano music, selections by a small vocal ensemble, and group singing of carols. Bring your own sandwich; beverages and dessert are provided. Program begins after lunch.

Please make your reservation with Susan Duty, susanjd52@gmail.com or 650-533-6830.



10th Anniversary for CCSM and Open Cathedral

Yes, this marks the 10th year CCSM has been providing and bagging 100 lunches every 4th Sunday of the month for Open Cathedral (OC). WOW, that is **12,000 PBJ sandwiches!**



How does this happen, you may ask?

It starts with you, the congregation, who twice a year dedicate the plate collection to Night Ministry/Open Cathedral. Then there is the shopper, Jan Leonard, who prudently shops for best price and reliably, miraculously, delivers the right amount of everything needed to Kloss Hall kitchen. Then there are the volunteers who show up at 9 AM every 4th Sunday to slather PB & J on bread and bag the lunches while enjoying camaraderie and lively conversation. And then there is Valerie McEntee, a pastor of OC, who arrives with her big blue cooler and manages to stuff 100 bag lunches in it, which she delivers to OC.

Open Cathedral meets at Civic Center in SF every Sunday at 2pm. The worship service includes praying and preaching, readings and singing, and a celebration of Holy Communion. This is followed by a lunch and time for pastoral care, counseling, and crisis intervention.

A huge thank you to Jan Leonard who after 6 years of shopping and faithfully delivering the supplies is going to retire. And a big thank you to Sue and Mike Hill who will take over the vital task of shopping.

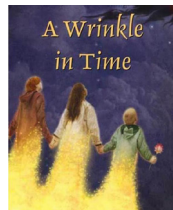
And of course **THANKS TO ALL OF YOU** who have participated in this wonderful service; giving of your time, spirit, JOY, and expertise. You would be surprised how many different approaches there are to making PB&J sandwiches!

We are putting together the schedule for 2018 and will be contacting the coordinators for all the groups: WiWo's, BOBS, Girl Scouts, Book Club, SIS, Music and Art, Church School, Mens, Knitting, and Youth Group.

If you would like to join a group of 4-6 from 9-10AM on a 4th Sunday for this fun and interactive service, please contact Nancy at nancy.dieguez@live.com or 650-773-3232.

First Tuesday Book Group

The First Tuesday book group will reconvene on **January 9, 2018** (surprise, this is the second Tuesday!). The book we will be reading is the children's classic, soon to be a movie: *A Wrinkle in Time* by Madeleine L'Engle.



Questions? Contact Susan Stoehr at s_stoehr@hotmail.com.

Wise & Wonderful

2ND & 4TH WEDNESDAYS, 10:30-NOON

JANUARY 10 • Bob Jarmusz will begin the year with peaceful meditation and New Year's reflection.

JANUARY 24 • Deb Flaherty will share resources about The Village of San Mateo County

FEBRUARY 14 • *Love Poems From God: Twelve Sacred Voices from the East and West* by various authors, translated by Daniel Ladinsky. Reading and reflection.

FEBRUARY 28 • Rev. Jorge Bautista will share his experiences in Palestine.



Altar from Dia de los Muertos, October 2017

Iglesia San Mateo Update

Iglesia San Mateo (ISM), CCSM's Latino congregation-within-a-congregation, is still in its start-up stage, but it is experiencing great progress. Each Wednesday evening participants gather in the Fireplace Room for worship, communion, potluck dinner, and fellowship.

In its early meetings last December, six to ten people gathered. During the summer, regular attendance grew to 20 or 30. By this November participation had increased to between 40 and 46. Generally, more than half of the participants are adults. The rest are children who play separately during worship and communion, and then join their parents for the meal.

The participants have shown an increasing sense of ownership of Iglesia San Mateo. As reported earlier, they have developed clear statements of mission and vision for ISM. Although their financial means are limited, participants bring multiple hot dishes to share during the potluck dinner. Each Wednesday

“Iglesia San Mateo is becoming a real community”

several members of the congregation read parts of the liturgy during worship. Other kinds of resources are emerging from within the new congregation as well. For example, two participants have volunteered to provide music for the worship services. Another participant who has some theological education has offered to contribute to leadership of the worship services.

Furthermore, Iglesia San Mateo is becoming a real community. Greetings and conversation are lively before the worship service begins and during the fellowship time following worship. Participants' concerns for each other are expressed in conversations as well as in community prayer. Rev. Jorge Bautista has communicated regularly that CCSM is open and affirming. ISM has welcomed gay participants from the outset, and recently it welcomed the two transgender women who have taken sanctuary with us.

Opportunities for mutual acquaintance and assistance. One way to get acquainted with an ISM member is to offer help. For example, some of the ISM members would welcome assistance in learning about computer use or setting up social media to advertise their home business. Others would appreciate having someone accompany them for meetings with their children's teachers or for immigration hearings. For some, Spanish/English interpreters would also be very helpful in such meetings. These and other possible activities may be one-time, short term, or ongoing, but they are certain to be mutually beneficial. If you are interested in meeting an ISM member, please contact Jorge or any member of the Latino Ministry Team (Sandra Sotograndona, Cristina Summer-ville, Valerie Wong, Betsy Woodward, Mike Mullery, Julien Phillips, Veril Phillips, Javier Ruiz).

—Latino Ministry Team



The new sign at the corner of Tilton and Ellsworth which now includes Iglesia San Mateo



Members of the transgender community and supporters, including our sanctuary guest Estefany and CCSM member Chris Sturken, walked silently down El Camino Real to bring to light the loss of 25 transgender and gender non-conforming people that died violently in the past year. (photo Nick Rose/Daily Journal)

Joys and Concerns

CCSM Pastoral Care Team

Please share your prayers with the pastoral care team: Rev. Dr. Penny Nixon, Rev. Jorge Bautista, Rev. Dakota Brown, and Rev. Amie Giordano. You are invited to share your prayers, your hopes, and your lives. You may connect with us in the following ways:

- in person,
- by filling out a blue prayer card at Sunday service,
- by filling out a ccsm-ucc.org/MyCCSM online prayer request,
- by contacting us via staff emails listed in your bulletin, the website, or the Pine Tree newsletter.

You may also contact the church office or email Dakota at dbrown@ccsm-ucc.org or call 415-244-3696 if you need support during the week, and Dakota will make sure one of the pastors contacts you as soon as possible.

PRAYERS FOR THE WORLD

Deep peace of the running wave to you.
Deep peace of the flowing air to you.
Deep peace of the quiet earth to you.
Deep peace of the shining stars to you.
Deep peace of the gentle night to you.
Moon and stars pour their healing light on you.
Deep peace of Christ,
of Christ the light of the world to you.
Deep peace of Christ to you.

—Celtic Blessing

SPECIAL DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Marjorie Griffin turns 94 on December 14th.

Jim Ingwersen turns 92 on December 15th.

George Kromhout turns 100 on December 16th.

Arnold Duncan turns 91 on December 29th.

We wish you all a joyful year!

Prayers of Joy

We welcome **Pearl Amelia**, new grandbaby of **Sandee Schlickman**. Sandee's son and his family have adopted Pearl Amelia who joins her two big brothers and big sister. This family is grateful and continues to pray for the biological parents. May they have peace in their heart one day for this difficult decision.

Congratulations to **Jessie Kottka** who received her American Red Cross Babysitting Certificate

with a 100% grade.

PRAYERS OF LOVE AND REMEMBERING

Maxine Bell, mother of **Judi Powell**, passed away on Wednesday November 22, after a long battle with cancer. Prayers of love and comfort for all her loved ones.

Mark Mitchell passed away on Thanksgiving Day, November 23, after a long battle with cancer. Prayers of comfort for his wife, **Tracy Mitchell**, and his mother, **Adrienne Mitchell**, as they are grieving. Mark grew up at CCSM, and served as an usher for many years. We will all miss him.

Pray for the passing of a beloved friend, **Paula**. She will be loved and remembered by her family and friends.

Prayers for the community of Rancho Tehama Reserve who were devastated by the shootings last month. We are heartbroken for everyone. God, please heal this community.

PRAYERS OF STRENGTH AND HEALING

Prayers for the fire victims, firefighters, and communities devastated by fire in southern California. God, stop the winds and bring winter rain.

Alice Morison is having minor back surgery on December 22. It

will be an overnight stay, but she hopes to be home by the following day.

Prayers of comfort and healing for **Molly O'Neill**, friend of **Mel Thrash**. Molly's body has gone through so much. We pray for her healing and financial well being.

Prayers of strength for **Bill Holbrow**, **Maureen Martin's** father, recently diagnosed with cancer. We pray for his healing and his family as he prepares for treatment.

Prayers of healing and love for **Rene, Dawn Graves'** father, who had a successful emergency surgery to repair several aneurysms. He is recovering in Austin, Texas. Prayer for his recovery, and for his wife Elaine.

Prayers for our beloved friend **Trudy Duncan** and her son **Mark** who are both dealing with separate battles with cancer. We send prayers of healing and comfort.

Please pray for **Judith Cunningham**, sister of **Walter Rees**, who is suffering from an unknown and very painful joint disease.

Prayers for all of us in this church who have health challenges, big and small. Please know God hears your prayers.

CONTINUED PRAYERS

Please continue to pray for our beloved brothers and sisters:

Andrew Lind in Bangladesh, **Cathy**, mother of **Travis Woodmansee**, **Dave Karlin**, **George Kromhout**, **Julie Lenden**'s cousin, **Pico Soriano**'s friend **Alexandria Christakos**, **Dawn Graves**' mother **Donna Stanger**, **Bill Daniels**, **Sandee Schlickman**'s friend **Mike**, **Jim Groundwater**, **Judy Hemmer**'s friend **Mark**, **Ruth Black**, **Marjorie Griffin**, **Cathy Latta**, **Martha Grannis**, **Phyllis Mead**, **Adrienne Mitchell**, **Genevieve** and **John Parsons**, **Fred Petri**, **Gordon Smith**'s sister **Janet Smith Roberts**, and others as they walk their unique journeys with cancer and other health challenges.



All these poinsettias were brought to CCSM members who have been bereaved or are unable to get out. Many cheerful deliveries were made on December 3.

Pine Tree Farewell

by Tony Gallo, Moderator

As you are all aware, we are moving forward with the removal of our historic and beloved pine tree. Our contractor will start this work on December 20 at 8:00 a.m.

I know many of you will want to pay final tribute to the tree with photos etc., but I urge everyone to be very safe and not enter the area blocked off with yellow caution tape when you do so. Please do not attempt to take pictures close to or under the tree, as tempting as that may be!

This is a massive tree and a large crane will be on site to safely take down the tree. Exits from the offices and sanctuary will be blocked off to make sure no one wanders into the active work area. Cars along the North side of Tilton Avenue will have to be cleared. Please refrain from parking in that area starting on Tuesday evening so that the contractor can bring in all the heavy equipment without delays.

Sections of the main tree trunk will be saved to make some chairs and a bench, and mementos such as trays and trivets will be made from some branches. But these pieces will have to dry slowly, lest they crack. Patience is the key word here; we expect the drying to take at least 18 months!

If you are able to help collect the branches and gather the pinecones after our historic tree is taken down, please join us on Wednesday, December 20 at 10:30 a.m. at CCSM. For safety reasons, adults only please! We will meet in Kloss Hall and discuss the work to be done and assign teams to be ready when the

workers stop for lunch.

Please be sure to wear work clothes and sturdy shoes, and if you have gloves and heavy gardening shears, bring them!

Some heavy lifting will be required but other lighter work will be needed as well, so please don't be shy. We anticipate needing about 12 people to carry out the activities in the short amount of time we will be given.

If interested, please contact me, Tony Gallo, at argallo3119@gmail.com so we can get a head count.



Original pre-1906 earthquake building with our pine tree, on the corner of Tilton and San Mateo Drive, facing south

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CCSM PINE TREE

A newsletter for the families and friends
of the Congregational Church of San Mateo, UCC

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Home and Hope Returning

JANUARY 28-FEBRUARY 3

Home and Hope returns to CCSM! This week of hosting homeless families is a major outreach of CCSM and one of the ways we can be the hands and feet and face of God. Volunteers are needed to provide part of an evening meal, spend time with the families in the evening, and spend the night at the church to ensure the safety of our guests.

Volunteers are also needed to set-up the tents and cots on Sunday afternoon, January 28 at 3:30pm, then take down the tents and cots on Sunday morning, February 3 at 8:00a.m.

It takes approximately 35 volunteers to make this week happen. All ages can participate.

If you have questions or want to sign up, contact Donna Lindsay at releduc@sbcglobal.net or phone at 650-345-8397.



Christmas Eve at CCSM

Join us in the morning at 10:30am and then come back for one of our evening services

5:00pm FAMILY SERVICE:
Carillon Ringers, cello, and special children's story

11:00pm CANDLELIGHT SERVICE:
Chancel Choir and string quartet



art by Nicholas Markell