

# CCSM PINE TREE

VOL. 67, #11 | DECEMBER 2018



## ADVENT SUNDAY CELEBRATIONS

We'll continue our recent tradition of each Advent Sunday being a special music Sunday along with Advent candles and a reflection.

- December 16** THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT: Love  
"Redeeming Grace"  
SPECIAL MUSIC: Children's Choir & Pageant. REFLECTION: Kibbie Ruth
- December 23** FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT: Hope  
"Let us Sing"  
SPECIAL MUSIC: Congregational Carol Sing. REFLECTION: *The Carols of Christmas and Their Stories*—Penny Nixon

## CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

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

**11pm Candlelight Service:**  
Chancel Choir & string quartet and communion



## LAS POSADAS

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15 • 6:00-9:00PM

Come celebrate this wonderful Mexican tradition commemorating Mary and Joseph's difficult journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem in search of a warm place to stay the night. This has also become our tradition of spiritual pilgrimage and hospitality... and delicious tamales too. Join us!

## A WORD FROM PENNY

Even as adults, we often wrap the holidays in childhood memories and traditions—traditions our families observed which we then pass on to the next generation; ornaments we drag out of the attic to adorn the tree; special recipes, faded on tattered yellowing paper, handwritten in Grandma's unique script.

Similarly, stories and traditions are woven into the Christmas carols we sing each year. We are celebrating the 200th anniversary of Silent Night and its varied history across the globe. Most carols have a rich history and interesting background. For instance, the Advent hymn O Come, O Come, Emmanuel invokes a series of "titles of Christ" found in the scriptures. The opening of each stanza calls on these names—*Rod of Jesse, Day-Spring, Key of David, Lord of Might, Wisdom, Desire of Nations*—mostly from the prophet Isaiah.

—cont. on p. 4—



The Carillon Bell Choir's perspective of the sanctuary decked out for the season on the first Sunday of Advent



Congregational  
Church of san mateo

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# CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES



Geneva (top left corner) leads the new CCSM Girl Scout troop. To her right is Shannon Sieckert, our new 4th/5th grade teacher.

## Remarkable Teens

Among our talented youth, several serve the church in noteworthy ways. Amelia Kyle comes almost every Wednesday night to help with the children whose parents are attending the Spanish services. Kyle Neil (pictured below) mentors our high school youth, even though he's busy with college and giving adults computer advice. And Geneva Williams started the new CCSM Girl Scout troop that includes younger girls from both Wednesday and Sunday gatherings.



Kyle Neil, forever hungry

## Christmas Pageant



SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16

Yet another twist on the nativity story! Of course, there will be a happy ending. Children come at 9:45AM to choose their costumes and roles in the anything-goes action.

## Martin Luther King, Jr. Multifaith Day of Service: January 21, 2019

Honor the life-changing service of MLK by changing some lives yourself on January 21. Participate with hundreds from other faiths and cultures to work side by side on dozens of projects from knitting to park restoration. Many of the projects are family-friendly and count toward community service hours required by many schools. Start with breakfast together with your CCSM friends, and finish before lunch. Click [here to Choose Your Project](http://tinyurl.com/ccsm-mlk-2019) before your first choices are overbooked <tinyurl.com/ccsm-mlk-2019>.

## Youth Group Schedule Change-Up

**Starting JANUARY 6**, the youth groups are changing their nights to meet. Please mark:

- **first and third Sunday evenings** for High School Youth Group (6-8PM with dinner)
- **second and fourth Sunday evenings** for Mid-High Youth Group (6:30PM, with snack only).

Of course, the crucial **Sixty Minutes** will continue with high schoolers on **second Sunday mornings** to discuss hot topics that the teenagers choose.

**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**TRAIN DAY**

**SATURDAY,**  
**FEBRUARY 2**  
**2:30PM**



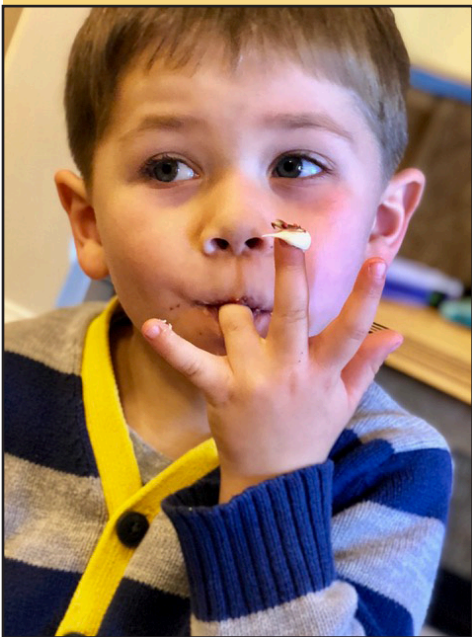
Wesley shows off his Advent wreath



# Advent Festival



Henry makes an Advent creation



Cookie Monster Linus



Cookie Monsters Paige and Charlotte



Clara and Cora concentrate on their Advent creations

## Youth Shop, but Don't Drop

If only we adults had their energy! Imagine almost two dozen of our youth on shopping sprees at Safeway! Imagine eleven more wandering the aisles of three different stores to purchase the gifts that LifeMoves families requested! Imagine the courage it took the leaders to sponsor these off-leash shopping trips! As a result, our dedicated youth helped *three families* celebrate Thanksgiving with holiday dinners. And, *two more families* will be unwrapping presents Christmas morning because our youth “adopted” them.

Soon, the mid-highers will stuff *100 gifts bags* with the tube socks you donated and lots more little surprises, so Open Cathedral can distribute the bags to homeless in San Francisco.

Even when young, our CCSM children and youth can be the hands and feet of God.



## A WORD FROM PENNY

cont. from p. 1

The carol in its original form is unimaginably ancient—most likely the oldest carol we sing. The text has been written and rewritten in a number of languages, and in the 1850s the words were set to the plaintive melody we sing today.

I believe this song is well-loved because it expresses our longing for God to be with us amidst the chaos of the world. The words are pregnant with promise, the promise of God's presence. The most ancient of carols speaks into our present day with new meaning.

On December 23rd we'll have a "carol sing" in the worship service and hear some of the stories behind our well-loved Christmas songs.

Penny



## – EPIPHANY SERIES – JESUS AND BUDDHA AS BROTHERS: THE TWIN PATHS OF CHRISTIANITY AND BUDDHISM

It was five years ago that I did a sermon series on the twin paths of Christianity and Buddhism. A lot has changed in five years. I've changed. CCSM has changed.

When we had our last ministry leadership meeting, we talked about what we each needed spiritually. We made a list that included: finding sanctuary (safe place); establishing a place to "put anger/hate/negativity/guilt"; creating time and intention; bringing spiritual life into personal family; participating in deep conversation; learning spiritual practices; growing in discernment; seeking ways to deal with loss and grief, to name just a few. When I presented different options for what we should explore together in the coming months, the majority thought what would be most helpful during this time would be to talk about real practice. Buddhism is a path, a path of spiritual practice. The truth is, Christianity is also a path. The first believers of Christianity were called "followers of The Way" because this newfound faith was a way of life, not a set of beliefs.

So in Epiphany, when we celebrate the coming of the light, we'll take a deep dive into the commonality and wisdom of Buddhism and Christianity and see if we can all be a little more "enlightened" during these somewhat dark days.

Penny

- January 6** *The burning bush and the Bodhi Tree.* Jhos Singer preaching.
- January 13** *The Jordan River and the Bodhi Tree.* Penny Nixon and Jhos Singer preaching.
- January 20** *Jesus, Buddha, and MLK.* Penny Nixon preaching.
- January 27** *The Three Jewels.* Penny Nixon preaching.
- February 3** *Cleaning the Windows.* Penny Nixon preaching.



The Sanctuary dressed for Advent



# Liturgical Arts Ministry *lights up* Advent

by Kay Harris

Last summer the Liturgical Arts Ministry started planning for this year's Advent decorations. Our goal was to create an uplifting, cohesive design worthy of our beautiful spaces.

The CCSM Memorials Committee agreed to underwrite the gorgeous LED lighted garland for the entire sanctuary. We hoped it would accent the beauty of the sixteen handmade wreaths and enhance the atmosphere of the balcony back wall. It exceeded our expectations. The installation took about 25 man-hours to plan and install. Team leader Mike Harris coordinated the installation team: John Fyfe, Kay Harris, Jim Lindsey, John Pierce, and Jim Schwandt.

At the November Wreath Making Workshop we added eight more colorful bulb wreaths to last year's collection. Leaders Alexandra Gillen and

Laura Pierce led the following team: Maggie Alegria, Jean Chamberlain, Kay Harris, Isabel Hernandez, Andrea Masterson, Alice Morison, Pam Ridelhuber, and Betty Till.

On November 30 we installed all the decorations, floral displays, exterior door wreaths, banners in Kloss Hall, and a special Kloss Hall window display designed by Laura Pierce. Also the Kloss Hall Christmas tree and Fireplace Room's nativity sets were installed. It took many hands to pull everything together: Alexandra, Laura, Jean, Kay and Alice were joined by Susan Campo, Anne Fuller and Donna Summers. The Advent glitter will accent our nooks and crannies far into Epiphany.

The sanctuary is beautiful in the Sunday worship service but you should consider attending a Christmas Eve service to see it twinkle in the nighttime. It's stunning!

## Soup and Caroling

**DECEMBER 16TH AFTER SERVICE**

After service 11:45 in Kloss Hall we will have a soup lunch open to everyone, followed by Christmas caroling to houses and senior residences of our older members.



Eat up the love, sing out the joy!

## Music & Art

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 21 • NOON  
PAT PEPPER'S HOME**

The program will feature a small ensemble of "Pop-Up" singers from Masterworks Chorale, directed by CCSM's own new member, Robin Hansen.

The group will present a variety of Christmas and seasonal songs and members will also join in singing favorite Christmas carols. Bring your own sandwich/salad; beverages and dessert will be provided. Be sure to RSVP to Susan Duty at: [susanjd52@gmail.com](mailto:susanjd52@gmail.com) or phone 650-533-6828 or 650-533-6830. Pat's phone number is 650-343-4286 and her address is 325 W. Bellevue, San Mateo.



*Jim Lindsay on the installation team pauses to herald the Advent stars*



*The Solstice concert took place just after the sanctuary was decorated for Advent*

## Iglesia San Mateo in Solidarity

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

On May 23rd of this year, outside of Marta Martínez' tall frame house in the Texas border hamlet of Rio Bravo, a Border Patrol agent shot and killed Claudia Patricia Gómez Gonzáles, 20, a young Guatemalan woman, after she'd crossed the nearby Rio Grande. US Customs and Border Protection (CBP), the parent agency for the Border Patrol, issued two contradictory statements about the shooting, and the FBI and Texas Rangers, three months later, are still conducting investigations about which virtually nothing official is known — not the name of the agent who fired the fatal shot nor the names of the three undocumented immigrants who were taken into custody as material witnesses. Nor is there a definitive account of what led to the shooting. The case faded quickly from the news, overwhelmed by fury over the Trump administration's "zero tolerance" policy and the resulting family separations.



*Claudia Patricia Gómez Gonzáles, killed by U.S. border patrol 5/23/18*

Now immigrant advocates along the border are calling for more information, saying that the shroud of silence over the case is typical of incidents involving the Border Patrol, an agency that has been criticized for years over its use of force. Ilse Mendez, a spokesperson for the Laredo Immigrant Alliance, an advocacy group in the area, said it's hard to get the Border Patrol to release

any information on who the agent was and any relevant history such as whether the agent had been involved in prior shootings.

Because of this, members of the Wednesday Gatherings made a video to Claudia's parents in Guatemala (you can find it on Facebook under the page [Iglesia San Mateo Unidos](#)

**Members of the Wednesday Gatherings made a video to Claudia's parents in Guatemala to let them know that we have not forgotten about their daughter, that we are still here, present, and willing to call out these injustices.**

[en Cristo](#)), to let them know that we have not forgotten about their daughter, that we are still here, present, and willing to do our part to call out these injustices, and that we know that this is not the first time that this has happened to many of our immigrant sisters and brothers seeking for a better life.

I am so proud of us for making this video, because it reminded me that one of the goals we had in creating a new spiritual space at CCSM for the Latina community was that we would focus on meeting and advocating for the community's social needs such as education, employment, immigration, housing, and providing health care. In my experience, Latina churches often tend to focus on evangelism and not social justice work. In order to increase the community service in the Latina church the ministry will need to address the social needs of the local and national communities, and we are beginning to see this happening at the Wednesday Gatherings.

Keep us in your prayers as we continue to be one church.

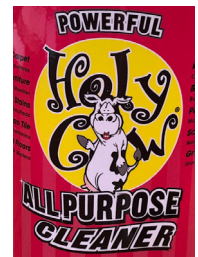
Peace and blessings!

Rev. Jorge

## Cleanliness Is...

Our building gets a lot of use and keeping it spick-and-span for concerts, meetings, worship, coffee hour, children's activities, rehearsals (take a breath), recitals, parties, baptisms, weddings, memorials (take another breath), organ lessons, dinners, quilting, knitting, reading, meditation, spiritual practices, renovations... well, you get the idea... can be challenging! Our custodian, Oscar Rosa, is doing excellent work in both the main and Christian Ed buildings to ensure that rooms are clean, welcoming, and ready for each group or individual who has an event scheduled. He takes care to use the right products for the job and I had to share with you the brand he recently purchased for heavy duty scrubbing. Although perhaps not intentional, he selected the perfect solution for our church:

In addition to all of the work that Oscar does, this building could not run without the amazing contributions of all our volunteers.



Lights need to be checked; furnace filters changed; sprinklers tested; the fountain tended; storage areas organized; paint touched up; carpets shampooed!! Jeff Chandler has agreed to lead the ministry of Buildings and Grounds. He and I will be establishing a facilities checklist. I'm thrilled to welcome Jeff to our Council of Ministries and we will all benefit from his experience, expertise, and organizational skills. To support this critical ministry, we are always in need of resources for the "care and feeding" of our beloved building and grounds. If you have some time and are passionate about a building or grounds project, please send an email to me at [mboyd@ccsm-ucc.org](mailto:mboyd@ccsm-ucc.org). Let me know the type of thing you'd like to do so that Jeff and I will make sure your interest and skills are utilized according to the time you have available.

Thank you,

Marge Boyd

Director of Operations





# Joys and Concerns

## CCSM Pastoral Care Team

**Please share your prayers with the pastoral care team:** Rev. Dr. Penny Nixon, Rev. Jorge Bautista, and Rev. Amie Giordano. (Rev. Dakota Brown is on medical leave until mid-January.) 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](http://ccsm-ucc.org/MyCCSM) online prayer request**, by **contacting us via staff emails** listed in your bulletin, the website, or this newsletter.

You may also contact the church office at [mboyd@ccsm-ucc.org](mailto:mboyd@ccsm-ucc.org) or call 650-343-3694 if you need support during the week, and Marge will make sure one of the pastors contacts you as soon as possible.

### SPECIAL DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

**Marj Griffin** will celebrate her 95th birthday on December 14, and her neighbor **Jim Ingwersen** will celebrate his 93rd birthday the following day, December 15! Right behind those two. **Arnold Duncan** will turn 92 on December 29, just before the year turns. Happy birthday to you all!

### PRAYERS OF GRATITUDE

Prayers of joy for **Donna Summers** who was blessed with a new great-granddaughter, **Faith Ann Marie Boydston**, on December 3.

Prayers of celebration with the **Ashbaugh** family for new additions to the family these past few months! **June Louise Staudenbaur** was born June 7 to parents **Renee Ashbaugh-Staudenbaur** and **Marc Staudenbaur**, Pacifica, and **Maximo Ricardo Ashbaugh** was born September 30 to parents **Reid Ashbaugh** and **Zulma Quispe-Ashbaugh** of San Carlos.

Prayers of gratitude that **Jim Ingwersen** has recovered from a difficult bout of pneumonia.

### PRAYERS OF LOVE AND STRENGTH

**George Kromhout** passed away peacefully at home on the morning of Saturday, December 8. Prayers for **Thelma**—she and George were married for 77 years and members of CCSM since 1953. George would have turned 101 on December 16.

We are sad to share the news that **Irv Stern**, husband of **Karen Stern**, passed away peacefully surrounded by his family on December 1st. Cards may be sent to Karen at 1800 Atrium Parkway #210, Napa, CA, 94559. Let Karen know that her CCSM family supports her from afar.

Prayers for the family of **Richard “Dick” Thompson Stuart**. Dick was **Anne Galli’s** brother who died at the age of 75, in NH on November 30, 2018 after complications from heart surgery. He died peacefully with loving wife **Ruth** and loving daughter **Liz** by his side. Dick was also a beloved UCC minister. Prayers for all who grieve his loss.

### PRAYERS OF LOVE AND HEALING

Prayers for **Shirley Robertson**, who has just been placed on hospice.

**Genel Morgan** asks for prayers for John, the husband of her cousin Marty in Arizona. John recently had a heart procedure and acquired an infection, which is serious because of his artificial heart valve. Prayers for his return to good health, and for Genel and Marty in this difficult time.

Prayers of healing for **John Sizemore**, nephew of **Priscilla Storms**. John is suffering from complications due to diabetes. He is out of the ICU but still needs our prayers for full recovery.

Prayers for **Chris Sturken’s** partner, **Jason**, still recovering from jaw surgery.

Prayers of recovery for **Jeanne Back’s** mother, **Carolyn Reinhard**,

doing really well after heart valve replacement.

**Grace Yoo’s** 84-year-old father who has been living with dialysis for 8 years has had some recent setbacks and her family requests prayers for his recovery.

Continuing prayers of strength and healing for our beloved brothers and sisters: **Rita Mancerea**, **Travis Woodmansee’s** mother **Cathy**, **Julie Lenden’s** cousin, **Bill Daniels**, **Sandee Schlickman’s** friend **Mike**, **Jim Groundwater**, **Ruth Black**, **Marjorie Griffin**, **Cathy Latta**, **Martha Grannis**, **Adrienne Mitchell**, **Genevieve** and **John Parsons**, **Fred Petri**, **Gordon Smith’s** sister **Janet Smith Roberts**, **Deanna Riding’s** friend **Lydia**, and others as they walk their unique journeys with cancer and other health challenges.

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR HOME AND HOPE

The Home and Hope families return to CCSM the week of January 13 - 20. People are needed to set up and take down, provide meals each evening, spend the night and show our Extravagant Welcome.

Contact Donna Lindsay for more information. Email is best: [releduc@sbcglobal.net](mailto:releduc@sbcglobal.net) or in person.



Mattias helps clean up

## IN THIS ISSUE

Sunday Celebrations	1
Christmas Eve and Las Posadas	1
A Word from Penny	1
Remarkable Teens	2
Christmas Pageant	2
MLK Day of Service	2
Youth Group Schedule Change	2
Save the Date: Train Day	2
Advent Festival	3
Youth Shop but Don't Drop	3
Epiphany: Jesus and Buddha as Brothers	4
Liturgical Arts Ministry Lights Up Advent	5
Soup & Caroling	5
Music & Art	5
Cleanliness Is...	6
Iglesia San Mateo in Solidarity	6
Joys & Concerns	7
Volunteers Needed for Home & Hope	7
Save the Date: Men's Breakfast	8
Save the Date: Pearly Masters	8
Save the Date: Jhos Singer	8
Save the Date: Congregational Meeting	8

# CCSM PINE TREE

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of the Congregational Church of San Mateo, UCC

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## Save These January Dates

### SUNDAY JANUARY 6: RABBI JHOS SINGER

Rabbi Jhos leads Second Hour talking about Judaism and Buddhism.

### SUNDAY, JANUARY 13: THE LIFE & TIMES OF PEARLY MASTERS

Come out and celebrate Pearly's long-time service at her retirement luncheon on Sunday, January 6th, immediately following the service. RSVPs will be required.

### SUNDAY, JANUARY 27: CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

This will be our first Congregational Meeting under the new structure. We'll be voting on the budget and more. Stay tuned.

### SAVE THE DATE

**SUNDAY,  
FEBRUARY 10  
9:00AM**

## CCSM MEN'S BREAKFAST

Come to Kloss Hall for brotherhood and bagels, and for conversation about how the men of CCSM can experience even more connection with one another. More details to follow.

*Seneca poses with and for an important question...*

