



CCSM PINE TREE

VOL. 71, #7 | ONLINE | ADVENT 2022




Say Yes



ADVENT AT CCSM
SUNDAY AND WEDNESDAY SERVICES

AND
BILINGUAL TAIZÉ SERVICES
FRIDAYS, DECEMBER 9, 16, & 23
7:30PM

ccsm-ucc.org 

A THANKSGIVING BLESSING

Happy Thanksgiving to all!

I wish you moments of gratitude in the chaos, the calm, the bounty of a traditional meal, and even in post-meal indigestion!

Please hold those who are less fortunate in your hearts and prayers when you gather at your table. These might not be unknown strangers but rather your friends and family who are struggling with challenges during the holidays. While many of you are blessed with families that belong on greeting cards or in movies. Some of us hold new grief and the reality of loss. Some of us will long for the traditions that have ended for many reasons. Some us pray to get to the other side of dinner without unhealed hurts being re-opened.

If you are so excited about the activities about to unfold, we are happy, oh, so happy for you! Take a moment for a mental snapshot of the sights of

those around you, the sounds from activities, and the smells of a busy kitchen to keep with you forever. These are the memories that will make you smile on a random Tuesday afternoon and will stay in your heart for a lifetime.



If this is not a year of giddy anticipation, allow yourself to lament, and honor the voids. I encourage you to do at least one new thing for yourself that brings a moment of joy: eating pumpkin for breakfast, a walk through the park, or calling a friend. Allow yourself a moment to be distracted by small joys. This day will pass and you will be grateful that you were kind to yourself.

[click to continue to p. 3](#)



Congregational
Church of san mateo

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

CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

This fall has been busy and joy-filled for our children, youth, and family ministries. On **Wednesdays**, we have had a variety of activities for the kids and youth that have focused on exploring identity,



team-building, community, art, spirit, and environmental sustainability. We painted with tea bags, wrote story books about ourselves, built structures that symbolize home, and created puppets and puppet shows,

amongst many other creative pursuits (special thanks to Elaine!). Our youth often bring homework, college applications, and other projects and it is always a great privilege to support, share, and encourage them while exploring their hopes and dreams for the future. Thank you to Elijah, Elaine, Chris, Jezz, Lily, and all of our other staff and volunteers!

On **Sundays**, we have a variety of engaging programs as well. Our nursery has been bustling as a number of families with pre-school aged children have been coming regularly. Thanks so much to Lily and our youth volunteers for supporting that space and making it so welcoming and joy-filled. Godly Play for our grade-school aged kids continues to explore Bible stories in an open, curious, and wonder-focused way. Kids are encouraged to respond, engage, imagine, and re-create the stories through art, drama, games, and service projects. Our middle schoolers have been having wonderful conversations about science and faith, focused on how the two can intersect, support, and dialogue with one another. We have talked about physics, space, pre-historic life, psychology, mystery, knowledge, truth, and much more. Our high schoolers have explored many important topics through 60 Minutes including diversity, culture, immigration,



and abortion. Thank you to Shannon, Elaine, Elijah, Mike, Dave, Lily, Kayla, and all of our other staff and volunteers.

Other **ongoing programs** include a monthly play group for families after church on the first Sunday of the month (thank you to the Helds and others for hosting!), Joyful Noise kids' music each Sunday after church (thank you to Julie for your leadership), monthly youth involvement in sandwich making for Open Cathedral and other service projects,



and a variety of one-off programs such as park clean-ups, hikes, and attending events in the San Mateo community. We are also working jointly with other UCCs in the area to offer youth retreats, sleepovers, and are working to plan a Confirmation class as well. We also hope to partner with the San Mateo Unitarian church to offer Our Whole Lives, a sexuality education program.

A very special event this fall was our CCSM Family Fiesta in September which brought together our Wednesday and Sunday families for an afternoon of games, crafts, conversation, and food! We look forward to more joint events coming up and are so grateful to Alicia Santamaria for her leadership and bridge-building in this one. We also had a wonderful homecoming in September and "wear your Halloween costume to church day" in October.

We are also working to have kids and youth help to **create some devotionals for our Advent daily devotional project**. Please let me know if your child or family would like to participate!

OTHER UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS:

Sunday, December 4, 11:45AM—Family Advent Play Date

Wednesday, December 21, 7:00PM—Las Posadas

event at church (for all ages) which commemorates Mary and Joseph looking for a room at the Inn. Come wear a costume, eat food, sing, walk, and celebrate this sacred story that is both historical and contemporary as we make connections to those who are turned away at our borders today.

Monday, January 16—Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service

Friday, Feb. 24 - Sunday Feb. 26 - Mid-winter youth camp for youth in grades 7-12 in Cambria.

We are complicated beings, we can smile even with weighted sadness in our hearts. And for that, I am grateful.

Break away from the crowd in the house and join us on Thanksgiving morning for a special online service with St. James AME Zion. Peace and blessings to you and yours, Rev. Melissa

THANKSGIVING WITH ST. JAMES!

Share gratitude in worship in an online joint service with St. James AME Zion 10:00am Thanksgiving morning, November 24

ZOOM link: type in tinyurl.com/2022-Thanks



GIVING THANKS: GIVE TO WHAT FEEDS YOUR SOUL

We are halfway through our Giving Drive. Thank you to everyone who has returned their pledge cards. The Stewardship Ministry is asking for 100% participation of our community—no pledge is too small.

This year we have a shorter drive in order to assist the Finance Committee and Board in preparing the budget. The drive ends on November 30, 2022—although we welcome giving and pledges anytime of year.

If you have not had an opportunity to watch the Testimonials given on recent Sundays, please do so by clicking on the videos below. They illustrate how each member of our community gives of their time talent and treasure.



<<< Martha Bronitsky testimony Peter and Gail Held testimony >>>



Leslie and Krystal Burndon testimony >>>



As we approach a time of year where we are focused on the joy of gathering together please take a few moments to fill out your pledge card and drop it by the church office or go to ccsm-ucc.org/give.

IT'S TIME TO DECK THE HALLS! FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 25 • 2:30PM

On Friday, November 25 at 2:30 PM in Kloss Hall you are invited to join Liturgical Arts Ministry (LAM) to install CCSM's bodacious Christmas decorations. It was last year's highlight and this year is going to include treats, too. There will be no limits on having a jolly good time together. Bring your work gloves. We will be assembling trees, draping and fluffing miles of garland, installing floral arrangements, hanging banners, wreaths, bows and red birds. Whew! Something for all skill levels. We will start in Kloss Hall and move decorations into the Sanctuary.

This is a great way to rev up your holiday spirit! Please RSVP to communi_ks@me.com so I can organize our installation teams. —Kay Harris, coordinator



GET READY FOR PICK-A-PARTY!

Did you know the Pick-A-Party tradition started more than 20 years ago, in 1998? Some of the parties offered that year included the Ruth/Granucci "Lumberjack Adventure Day Trip" in which guests cut firewood (!), a Fig Fanciers' Frolic at the Peterhans' home, a Shades of the Old West dinner, 4 bridge parties (2 with dessert, 1 with conversation, and 1 with lunch), and dinner parties featuring French, German, Italian, and Pennsylvania Dutch cuisine. Parties have been offered for kids (beach parties, cookie making), hobbyists (woodworking, stamp collecting, lapidary), hikers, wine lovers, athletes (tennis, golf, bocce, croquet), poker players, and more.

The one thing all the parties over all the years have had in common is the desire of CCSM members to come together for fun and fellowship. You can host a party as simple as coffee and donuts with a morning chat, or as elaborate as a multi-course meal with entertainment. And virtual members can host virtual parties — discussion groups, guest lecturers, cooking classes.... But **you need to let us know your party idea before November 27**. After that date, lists of parties will be put together and will be distributed at the **December 11 cookie exchange** (see below). You'll then have until January 8 to look over the list. On that date, the "stampede" for sign-ups will occur — **January 8 is when you (or your proxy) sign up and pay for parties you'd like to attend**. Then it's party season -- you'll be able to attend parties from **January through August of 2023**.

Please let us know what parties you'd like to host by **November 27**, join us in celebrating the season and the return of **Pick-A-Party at the DECEMBER 11 cookie exchange**, and get ready for the **January 8, 2023 sign up**. Let the parties begin!



Key Dates:

Last Day to Offer a Party: **Nov. 27**
Party Lists / Cookie Exchange, Kloss Hall: **Dec. 11**
Pick-A-Party Sunday: **Jan. 8, Kloss Hall, 9:45AM**
Pick-A-Parties take place: **January–August, 2023**

Questions? Check out the handout [HERE](#).

Or contact:

Sandy McNabb, sandra.j.mcnabb@gmail.com
650.678.5650

Michele Merfeld Hale, kaymerf@yahoo.com
206.612.6182 or

Diane Kalliam, dkalliam@gmail.com
415.279.1359

AUCTION SUCCESS!

The Share Your Love auction brought in over **\$7000**, thanks to generous donors and bidders. It was a great way to share treasures and talents with each other for the benefit of CCSM.

A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS COOKIE EXCHANGE

Christmas cookie exchanges were common at the church years ago. And we think it's time to bring back an old CCSM tradition. In the madness of the holiday season, who wants to make dozens of different kinds of cookies anymore? Practically no one. Yet who doesn't cherish eating dozens of different kinds of cookies and bars during the holiday season? Practically everyone. And aren't the holidays some of the best times to gather with friends and family? Yes!

On **SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11**, in conjunction with the distribution of Pick-A-Party Lists, **the Pick-A-Party Team will be hosting a Cookie Exchange**. Both will take place after worship service. Read the handout of guidelines and instructions at tinyurl.com/CCSM-Cookie-Exchange if you wish to participate. You only need to bring a dozen cookies/bars to take home a dozen cookies/bars.

This is an opportunity for families to bake together and share a favorite treat with other CCSM members and friends. Bake with your sister/brother, Mom/Dad, Grandma/Grandpa, best friend—and if you don't bake or have time, cookies from your favorite bakery are welcome. It's a truly inspired way to share the baking burdens of the holidays AND break bread together during the season. Christmas music will be playing in the background—please do sing along if you feel inspired—and holiday decorations will leave you feeling and sharing the Christmas spirit.



LAS POSADAS: TO WELCOME IS TO MAKE ROOM

For I was hungry and you gave me food,
I was thirsty and you gave me drink,
a stranger and you welcomed me...

—Matthew 25:34

“So... how did your family get here?”

Growing up, I was asked that question so many times. It seemed so odd that people wondered about this, especially because the story was mostly filled with depressing stories my mom and her sisters had to go through crossing the border from Mexico into the United States. They had to face robbers and people waiting to take advantage of them along their vulnerable journey to the north. They were at the mercy of nature and all her threats along the way. They were met by a barricade of people on the border to detain them. My mom and her sisters had to live in fear that they might one day be sent back.

Ever after arriving and making it safely across the border, fear was very much still a presence to my mother and her sisters, mostly of the unknown, of the newness of this country, language, and culture.

Yet, on the other side of that fear, my mother and sisters discovered something beautiful. A community of faithful and kind people, ready to help my mother and her sisters adjust to their new lives. One of the very first things my mom did as she and her sisters settled into their newly-found American lives was reach out to the nearest community center and Catholic parish where they found help. Eventually, when I was old enough to register for public school, the community center and Catholic parish helped her enroll me in the local elementary school and with any other kind of help. These people are the community center and local Catholic Parish, who became a presence to help my mom translate, carpool, suggest, accompany her in any way, and ultimately welcome her. These people were like a built-in family, showing us what radical hospitality looked like. Thank God!

I have seen this lesson on hospitality taught pretty concretely in the tradition of Las Posadas, an event that originated in Mexico that leads up to Christmas. The whole event recounts the experience of Mary and Joseph seeking a place in which to give birth to the Messiah.

At the start of the festivities, half of the participants head outside of the hall or home wherever the event is being held, while the other half remains inside. The group outside represents the Holy Family and asks for lodging by way of a (super catchy!) song. They are refused time and again by the group indoors, and this song persists, with

alternating verses between the inside and outside groups. In the final verse, the “outsiders” are finally permitted to enter. Prayer and song continue throughout the night, alongside food and piñatas.

The act of extending a welcome to a group of outsiders through this traditional celebration has confirmed that my faith in Christ means I should have a wholehearted commitment to receiving others. While I don’t necessarily live in an age or place where a young family might knock on my door hoping to deliver a baby safely, I do come across people who feel alone, outcast, and afraid. If I can go out of my way to welcome them into my life, heart, and prayers, I am actually welcoming Christ Jesus Himself.

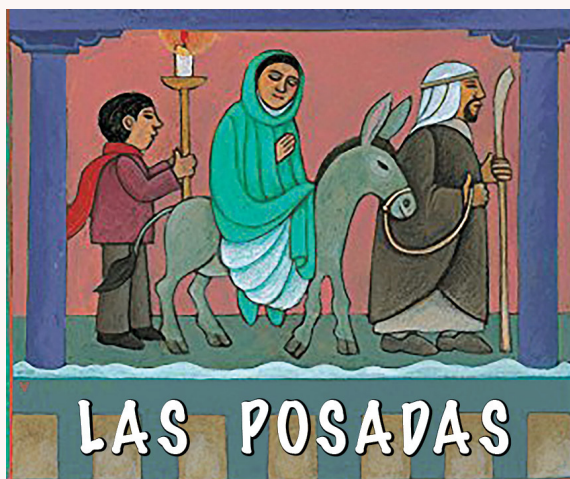
Las Posadas, for me, has always been about reminding me that my faith teaches me that we are all sisters and brothers in Christ and that we are responsible for one another. To welcome each other into our lives, to make room for us to encounter the promises we each hold, is a radical expression of our faith. Even if we won’t have the Mother of Jesus knocking on our door any time soon, we are still able to make room for people in our lives and allow our faith in Christ to lead us to live radical hospitality.

I believe Las Posadas encourages us to look for ways to help and support refugee and migrant families detained at the border, and in that way giving them a glimpse of the hope they are searching for.

So join our 9th Las Posadas celebration at CCSM on Wednesday, December 21st at 7:15pm. And, as always the event will end with delicious tamales from my mom’s recipe, and with the help of others. Also, this year for the first time we will have Alicia Santamaria lead us in some fun cross-cultural activities in the sanctuary, and hopefully provide prompts for more cross-cultural conversations over tamales. Save the date, put it on your calendar and let’s have as many people attend Las Posadas as possible!

Peace and blessings!

—Jorge



**Wednesday,
December 21 •
7:15pm at CCSM**

**We'll go together
singing from "inn" to
"inn" seeking a place
for Mary to give birth.**

**Followed by games,
bilingual activities, and
a traditional tamale
dinner.**

Join us!

SPECIAL MUSICAL OFFERINGS FOR CCSM'S SEASON OF ADVENT

We are ringing in the holidays with special musical offerings throughout the season of Advent this year. The Sunday services will include the following:

- 12/4** Carols with the Chancel Choir
- 12/11** Advent Bells are Ringing with the Carillon Ringers
- 12/18** Joyful Noise Kids & Families morning
- 12/24** Christmas Eve Services — soloists, ensembles and caroling will fill our services
- 12/25** CCSM and St. James AME will join together to celebrate Christmas Day in song
- 1/1/23** Special Music celebrating the New Year

Please see the articles in this issue about CCSM's Taizé services which invite you to take a moment to reflect on the Season of Advent in sung prayers together as well as our Las Posadas celebration in December. In addition to these special services, holiday caroling, Music & Arts and the Burlingame Music Club will all be offering special holiday musical treats during December.

CCSM extends a special invitation to all lovers of music to come share your musical gifts with us this special holiday season. If you would like to join us, please contact Lynnelle Bilsey at ltbmusings@gmail.com.

BURLINGAME MUSIC CLUB AT CCSM

Celebrate the holiday season by joining the BMC on **Monday 12/12** for some great music. Several students (string & piano instrumentalists) will be performing first followed by holiday music with Angela Kraft Cross. Everyone is welcome to attend this free event which will begin at 1 pm in the Sanctuary. Come support these talented young musicians and kick off your holidays with Karen Hutchinson, Angela Kraft Cross and the Burlingame Music Club.

CCSM'S CONCERT SERIES RETURNS IN 2023

Please watch for more information in the next Pine Tree and future bulletins for concert dates and performers scheduled for CCSM's Concert Series which will begin with performances in January, February, March and May.

The voices joining together in song on October 16 from the Congregational Church of San Mateo, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, First Presbyterian Church-Burlingame, St Catherine of Siena Catholic Church-Burlingame, and our host congregation, St Paul's Episcopal Church-Burlingame were so moving. The return of this once annual interfaith choral concert was inspiring and LifeMoves was grateful for the donations and support of all the singers and attendees. Stay in touch with [LifeMoves](#) and come back for the music next year!



We normally think of history as one catastrophe after another, war followed by war, outrage by outrage—almost as if history were nothing more than all the narratives of human pain, assembled in sequence. And surely this is, often enough, an adequate description.

But history is also the narratives of grace, the recountings of those blessed and inexplicable moments when someone did something for someone else, saved a life, bestowed a gift, gave something beyond what was required by circumstance.

—Thomas Cahill (1940-2022), author of *How the Irish Saved Civilization*

LIFEMOVES / HOME AND HOPE: GET INVOLVED!

Now that Home and Hope has merged with LifeMoves, new opportunities for involvement are coming. First is the CHRISTMAS WISH LIST for the families—you can read more about this outreach program directed by Melodie Lew in the article just below.

Another area with opportunities to volunteer is the VENDOME on Claremont and 2nd Ave. This LifeMoves facility could use some much needed TLC for its 17 residents in the form of holiday decorations and parties. **Volunteers are needed on December 1 at 1:30 at VENDOME** to hang lights outside and put up some indoor decorations to add a little holiday spirit for the residents. If you have an extra (or more) set of outdoor lights, or decorations that still have life but not in your house any more, please let Donna Lindsay know and she will come pick them up to use for VENDOME. If you have two hours to help decorate on December 1, please contact Donna. Homemade goodies are always welcome and greatly appreciated.



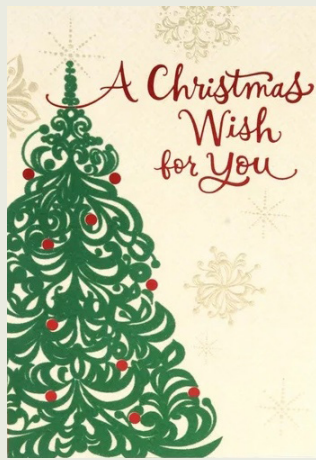
The Vendome

Maybe you love to give birthday parties! Starting in January the vision for CCSM and VENDOME is to **decorate the facility for each monthly holiday and also provide a birthday cake and small party for those residents who are celebrating their birthdays that month.** The dream is to also give each birthday person a small useful gift. A couple of volunteers would be very useful to make this idea a reality. Again, contact Donna if this is something you would like to participate in.

Watch for new and different ways that CCSM can reach out to the residents of VENDOME.

Donna Lindsay, Point Person for LifeMoves • releduc@sbcglobal.net, 650-345-8397

CHRISTMAS WISH LIST 2022



This holiday season, CCSM will again be working with LifeMoves' First Step for Families. Instead of "Adopt-A-Family" as it has been in the past, we are now calling it **CHRISTMAS WISH LIST.** First Step for Families provides temporary shelter and services for families experiencing homelessness in San Mateo.

This year, CCSM will not be collecting gift cards as in the past two years during the Pandemic. Instead, LifeMoves is finding that family members need very basic items, so we will be asking CCSM members/attendees/friends to **purchase gifts selected by LifeMoves staff for each individual.** Admittedly, donating necessities is not as personal and enjoyable as selecting fun gift items for each person as we have done in past years; however, the need is still as great as ever.

In addition, the 17 residents of the Vendome (another LifeMoves program) in downtown San Mateo are chronically homeless adults who will

not have much this Christmas. On our CHRISTMAS WISH LIST Christmas tree, CCSM would like to have a few extra ornaments listing **items to give the Vendome residents** so they may also experience some joy during this time.

Please look for the WISH LIST Christmas tree on the loggia on SUNDAY, DECEMBER 4 AND 11, after the service. Stop by and pick up an ornament or two with suggested gift items to purchase and **RETURN TO CCSM BY SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18** at the latest (earlier is better).

We are also looking for a few friendly and helpful people to **volunteer and assist** with this program this year. Volunteers should be available for about an hour after the service on either one or both dates (December 4 and/or 11).

Tasks involved are listed below:

- Help CCSM members pick out gift(s) to purchase and register their selection;
- Monitor the return of gifts;
- Help pack up gifts by families for delivery (no gift wrapping necessary) to First Step for Families in San Mateo.

Please contact Melodie Lew at boygje.m2000@yahoo.com or call 650.573.9765. Thanking you in advance.

A TIDBIT OF HISTORY FROM THE ARCHIVES OF CCSM

Have you ever wondered why we call our Coffee Hour and social Hall – KLOSS HALL?

If you are “new” to the CCSM congregation you might think about this from time to time. And if you are “old” to CCSM you might want a short reminder.

Dr. Charles Luther Kloss was the minister of our church from 1923 until his death in 1931. He began his ministry at CCSM shortly after the opening of the new Church Sanctuary, completed in 1922. It happens that the building which we now call Kloss Hall was that Sanctuary. Between 1923 and 1929, with the leadership of Dr. Kloss, the congregation grew in membership and the Sanctuary became too small to accommodate the growth. So, another sanctuary (our current worship space) was planned, built, and dedicated in 1931. Thus, he was the Minister who served nearly the entire time that the older building was the Sanctuary. In 1931 the current sanctuary opened, and the “old” sanctuary served as the Social Room.

In 1938, under the leadership of Rev. Dr. Sidney Buckham, the Church Council proposed to the

congregation that the social room be rededicated to honor Charles Kloss. The congregation approved and a dedication was held in November 1938 to christen the social room as the “Charles Kloss Memorial Social Room.” The room underwent a remodeling project that eliminated the Tilton entrance and established the current stage area and access to the kitchen.

So, if you have an interest in architectural history, take a short walk from the church office to the sidewalk on Tilton and proceed toward Ellsworth Street. Notice the stairs that lead up to a solid wall. That was the entrance to the CCSM Sanctuary from 1922 to 1931. And Dr. Kloss served for almost that entire time.

—Phil Lind, CCSM Historian



Kloss Hall when it was the sanctuary in 1923

GREG GRAVES ON THE HISTORY OF THE MUWEKMA OHLONE

A special thank you to Greg Graves for speaking to us about the history of the Muwekma Ohlone, who have belonged to the land here for thousands of years, and who are still here despite centuries of violence and oppression perpetrated against them. Listen to Greg's sermon [here](#).

Greg identified three phases of organized exploitation and attempted extinction of the Indigenous People: the Missionaries, the Gold Rush, and the 1850 [Act for the Government and Protection of Indians](#). If you were not able to see the service, do yourself a favor and view it. Hear the history of the victims, not the victors. Below are two articles to continue the education that we did not receive in school about the Native American genocide.

“Indigenous people have often been erased from the country’s historical record – a survey from the [National Congress of American Indians](#) found that 87% of state history standards don’t mention Native American history after 1900, while 27 states don’t mention Native Americans in their K-12 curriculum.” (Click [HERE](#) to read "What Indigenous Peoples' Day Means to Native Americans.")

Historians say the 1863 Bear River Massacre left at least 350 Northwestern Shoshone Indians dead. But it was overshadowed by the Civil War and remains mostly forgotten. (Click [HERE](#) to read "This was the worst slaughter of Native Americans in U.S. history. Few remember it.")

As Christians called to love all our neighbors, we need to be intentional in our edification and deconstruct the white-washed history to begin conversations around apologies and healing.

—Rev. Melissa



FROM CHASE'S DESK

CHASE MONTARA, OUR DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS, HAS A NEW SCHEDULE

When I was first hired in December 2019, my schedule included working every other weekend. But when the pandemic hit, it was all hands on deck and Rev. Penny had asked that I work every Sunday. Now that a more predictable routine has been settled into, Rev. Melissa suggested that I shift my hours to Monday through Thursday each week, and also on the Second Sunday of each month when the Board of Directors meets. My number of hours has not changed, just the days I work those hours have changed. Of course, I will still coordinate Memorials and other events on Saturdays, as need be, and shift some weekday hours accordingly. I am grateful, as always, to work for CCSM, and grateful, too, for this new schedule.

VOLUNTEERS AT THE FRONT DESK

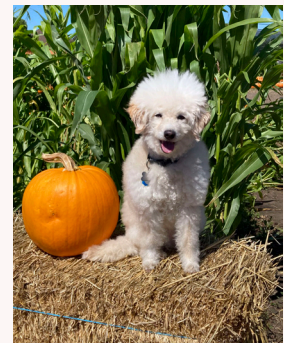
We are so appreciative of the volunteers that have stepped up to work in the Main Office. On Monday afternoon, Linda Hodges volunteers from 12-3. On Tuesday afternoons, Siew Kang is behind the desk. On Wednesday mornings, Sue Bullis has just begun to fill that time slot. Austin Mader-Clark helps out on Wednesday afternoons when she is in town. On Thursday mornings, Stan Higgs faithfully shows up to help. And on Thursday afternoons, Diane Kalliam reports for duty. A big thanks to all!

Our Main Office Volunteers answer phones, respond to questions, greet visitors, help those who show up to our door in need, send out bulletins and PINE TREES, stuff envelopes, put away office supplies, organize file drawers, and all manner of helpful tasks. We are in the process of purchasing a laptop so that volunteers can help with additional duties, like checking on rental space availability and keeping spreadsheets up to date.

We have open slots on Monday and Tuesday mornings, and it would be great to also have a volunteer at the desk on Sunday mornings before and after worship for an hour or so. If you are interested to share your time and talents in this way, please let Chase know at cmontara@ccsm-ucc.org.

LET'S ALWAYS ASSUME THE BEST FROM OUR FELLOWS

There is a lot happening at the church, have you noticed? The church is feeling alive and robust. With all the activity, there are a lot of details for everyone to keep track of. And with lots of details comes lots of opportunities to miss something. And with lots of opportunities to miss something, comes the need for lots of grace. If someone neglects to inform you of something, please don't assume they left you out intentionally. If someone forgets to provide you with something you asked for, assume it wasn't out of neglect. Instead, ask if there is some way you can be of help to them. I don't mean to be preachy. This graceful approach is something that I am needing to ask of myself, too. But I hope in calling attention to this need for grace, we can look for ways to support each other as we navigate this vibrant time.



GETTING YOUR EVENT ON THE CHURCH WEBSITE CALENDAR

Do you know how to find the church's calendar of events? Events that are open to the public are marked as "published" when they are booked, and will appear on our online calendar. If you go to ccsm-ucc.org/events, you will see the calendar. It looks like this:

Today

November 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
OCT 30	31	NOV 1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	DEC 1	2	3

Wednesday, November 23rd

- 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary)
- 7:15 PM - 8:30 PM Wednesday Gathering with Rev. Jorge (Fireplace Room)

Thursday, November 24th

- 8:30 AM - 4:00 PM THANKSGIVING/ OFFICE IS CLOSED
- 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM Virtual Community Gathering (ZOOM)

Private rentals and closed groups do not appear on the online calendar. Recently, someone reported that the calendar is not up-to-date. So, we need to explore the reasons for that, if that is the case. If your event is not showing up on the online calendar, please let Chase know at cmontara@ccsm-ucc.org. Every effort is made to be sure everyone has access to all that is happening here at CCSM.



COMING BACK TO COMMUNITY



The Coming Back to Community project ended on a high note with Rev. Jorge's Carne Asada party on October 8. Twenty-five people attended, and they were treated to fine Mexican food, music, and friendship on the CCSM lawn. This event had been postponed due to Rev. Jorge's bout with Covid, but all guests agreed it was worth waiting for.

A big thank you goes out to Rev. Jorge, Chris Wuthman and Allison Rock (hike which had to be canceled due to Chris' Covid experience), Siew Kang and Melanie Dresbach (Ice Cream Social Sing Along), Kay and Mike Harris (SJ Giants game), Sheryl Johnson and Emily Czarnik-Neimeyer, (hike in Laurelwood Park which Emily led due to Sheryl's turn with Covid), Jennifer and Chris Yeh (family fun night at their home), and Chuck Rosenthal, Zoe Mullery, Chase Montara and Oscar Rosa (coordinating, creating slides, sending out announcements, and setting up/taking down tables and chairs). Please thank these volunteers personally for the role they played in helping all of us come back to our CCSM community.

CCSM'S BLESSINGS BOX

As most of you have noticed, there is a "Blessings Box" outside of the entrance of CCSM. This is a project of the Ministry of Service and Justice, which has identified the need for families in our neighborhood to access food. This project is an expression of our call to be the "hands, feet, and face of God" in our community.

Before the pandemic, CCSM had a nonperishable food collection for Samaritan House on the first Sunday of each month. We are now reinstating a food collection for each first Sunday, but it will be to supply our Blessings Box. Please take the opportunity to bring nonperishable food (canned, dried and boxed, no fresh food please!) on the first Sunday of each month. There will be helpful reminders before that Sunday in our congregational bulletins and the Connections, and the Pine Tree.

In addition, the Ministry of Service and Justice would encourage members of CCSM to consider adding a few appropriate nonperishables to your grocery list, and just drop them in the Blessings Box anytime you are at the church. If we make this a habit, we can keep the Blessings Box filled with nourishing food for the people of our neighborhood.

Thank you in advance for your continuing generosity!



Joys and Concerns

CCSM Pastoral Care Team

Please share your prayers with the pastoral care team, **Rev. Melissa Douaire**, **Rev. Jorge Bautista** and **Rev. Sheryl Johnson**. You are invited to share your prayers, your hopes, and your lives. You may connect in the following ways: by **filling out an [online prayer request](#)**, by **contacting us via staff emails** listed in your bulletin, or through the website's Contact Us link, ccsm-ucc.org/contact. You may also contact the church office at cmontara@ccsm-ucc.org or call 650-343-3694, and Chase will make sure one of the pastors contacts you as soon as possible.

PRAYERS OF JOY AND GRATITUDE

Mo Weimer would like to extend her deep gratitude for all of the support she received around the Memorial Service for Jim (Ingwersen) on November 11, 2022. Please know that your support meant a great deal to her. She was very pleased with the service and that so many friends paid their respects.

Leslie, Krystal, and Theo Burndon share the exciting news that they are eagerly awaiting a baby sister for Theo mid-February!

Krystal Burndon shares: "Praise and continued prayer request: My younger sister, Janelle's, cancer has been responding well to the new treatment. We are praying that it continues to work well."

PRAYERS OF LOVE AND STRENGTH

Genel Morgan's cousin **Leslie** passed away after a brave battle against breast cancer. She was only in her 30's. Prayers for the whole family.

Barbara Knees' son **Bill** sent along a lovely recap with photos and a short video of the celebration of life for his mom. You can find it at tinyurl.com/Barbara-Knees.

PRAYERS OF HEALING AND SUPPORT

Please keep **Lee Mullery** in your prayers. She is recovering after suffering from a brain aneurysm on November 20, followed by a surgical procedure. Please also remember **Mike** in your prayers as well as **Zoe, Jen**, and the rest of the family.

Rebecca Ruedy-Whelan is recovering from successful shoulder surgery at Stanford on 10/31 but is still dealing with significant discomfort. Please keep her in your prayers.

Prayers for **Martha Pierce**, mother of **Laura Pierce-McKenzie**, dealing with ongoing health issues.

Please pray for **Sandee Schlickman's** daughter **Emily** as she nears the end of a very high risk pregnancy. Please pray for her health and safety and that of her baby boy.

Frank Garritano requests prayers for his good friend **Alex Carr**, who was recently diagnosed with testicular cancer. Prayers for a successful and complication-free treatment.

Prayers requested for **Mike and Sue Hill's** granddaughter **Maggie**, who is struggling with the effects of long COVID; she is 15.

Please continue prayers for **Lorna and Jim Groundwater's** granddaughter, **Yalda (age 3 ½)**, who continues to recover from a leg injury. Also for **Yalda's Mom, Kate**, who is understandably concerned.

Prayers for **Mary Ann Mayo** as she recovers from eye surgery on 11/18.

Rev. William Flemr would like to have prayers for his wife, **Rev. Susan Flemr**. She has neuropathy in her feet and legs along with much pain. She uses an electric chair to travel distances. They both enjoy our services from Des Moines, Iowa.

Genel Morgan requests prayers for her daughter's friend **Sarah** and her family who recently had a house fire and lost everything, including their cat. May God comfort them through this difficult time.

Please pray for **Rebecca Judd's** mother, **Ann Ritter**, who has been diagnosed with Stage 4 melanoma.

CONTINUING PRAYERS

Mel Thrash, Ben Schroeter's family, **Dana Scadden, Mary Ann Notz, Cari Parker, Judy Hermann, Jan Eustis'** friend, **Sue Kane** and her brother **Bob** and sister-in-law **Peggy**; **Mo Weimer; Andrew Lind, the Neil/Cinq-Mars** family, the family of **Kyle Caverly, Jo Buckham, Albert C. Read III; Ruth Black; Gene Chelberg and David Meisner; Dorothy Gorman; Dr. Jim Groundwater; Mike and Lee Mullery; Clare Naegle; Dottie Scott; Gary Steele; Jim Dresbach; Don and Jonathan's** brother **Chuck Ruthroff**.

WE NEED GRAPHICS VOLUNTEERS!

We need volunteers to learn how to run the graphics for the online services during Sunday service. You will receive training. If you have questions, contact Chuck Rosenthal at chuck@ccsm-ucc.org. Thank you!

SAN MATEO CLIMATE ACTION TEAM DECEMBER 7, 4:00 - 6:00 PM

The San Mateo Climate Action Team has had a tremendous year of progress in getting SM City Council to pass one of the strongest REACH codes in California, which will help phase out the use of methane gas in homes and buildings. All are welcome to come to their strategic planning meeting in Kloss Hall 12/7.

ADVENT TAIZÉ IN DECEMBER

Start your weekends in a meaningful way on Friday evenings. In December we will have Advent Taizé services to ground us in the season of love beyond the commercialism that attempts to own the Season.

Friday, December 2 we will attend [Mercy Center's Taize service](#)—more details forthcoming.

Fridays, December 9, 16, and 23 we will host bilingual Taizé here at CCSM at 7:30pm.

IN THIS ISSUE

CLICK TO NAVIGATE TO PAGE

Say Yes! Advent at CCSM	1
A Thanksgiving Blessing	1
Children, Youth and Families	2
Giving Thanks: Give to What Feeds Your Soul	3
It's Time to Deck the Halls! Nov. 25 with LAM	3
Get Ready for Pick-A-Party	4
A Very Merry Christmas Cookie Exchange	4
Las Posadas: To Welcome is to Make Room	5
Special Musical Offerings in Advent	6
LifeMoves / Home & Hope: Get Involved!	7
Christmas Wish List 2022	7
A Tidbit of History from the Archives of CCSM	8
Greg Graves on the Muwekma Ohlone	8
From Chase's Desk	9
Getting Your Event on the CCSM Calendar	9
Coming Back to Community Gratitudes	10
CCSM Blessings Box	10
Joys and Concerns	11
We Need Graphics Volunteers!	11
San Mateo Climate Action Team, Dec. 7	11
Advent Taizé in December	12
25 Days of Christmas	12
Poinsettias are Coming!	12

25 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

CONTRIBUTE TO OUR CCSM ADVENT CALENDAR

Each day has a scripture and one of your contributions. Consider a drawing, poem, photograph, or short reflection of



250 words about what is meaningful to you during the Christmas season, and email it or enter it directly on our [Google doc spreadsheet](#) to save your date. This advent calendar will be delivered electronically each day in December featuring contributions from participants in our Wednesday and Sunday services.

Liturgical Arts will be making a large life-sized calendar for us to open. [Click here](#) to contribute to CCSM's Christmas Advent Calendar!

POINSETTIAS ARE COMING!

Poinsettias are coming! The tradition of delivering a plant to members of our congregation during Advent continues. We are moving up the distribution dates this year. On **DECEMBER 4**, you can pick up a plant (or several) on the loggia after the service and deliver them to the people you have selected. If necessary, they will also be available on **DECEMBER 11**.

More instructions to follow, but wanted you to know that they will be coming earlier this year.

