

Sunday, November 30th, 2025
First Sunday of Advent



Congregational Church
of San Mateo
Iglesia Congregacional de San Mateo



New to our church? We're so glad you're here! To celebrate, we'd love to pledge a \$5 donation on your behalf to a charity of your choice. Supporting other non-profits is something we do every week, and we'd love to include you in that practice. **Simply scan the QR code and fill out the form!**

In the Time of Herod

I didn't live during Herod's time- that brutal, murderous king, *God save his soul.*

But even hundreds of years later, I know the prayers of his people.

I know the prayers of the mothers and the children under his rule.

I know the prayers of the young men under his angry arm.

I know their prayers, because anyone who has ever lived in this soft world for more than two days knows how to pray for a miracle.

We rub our hands together.

We fold weary shoulders in,

A cage of bone to protect our bleeding hearts.

We sing, we shall overcome and bind my wandering heart to thee.

We walk across bridges and in front of powerful buildings.

We cover our cars in stickers that scream, we will not give up!

We allow a hungry cry to slip from our lips,

giving our lament a life of its own (with room to dance!).

And when all of that is said and done, we whisper to our creator,

God break through the yelling and the fear. Break through the violence and the oppression.

Get past the Herods of this world, and come be here.

Like every bleeding heart before, we pray for a miracle.

Poem by Rev. Sarah A. Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

Because of who you are, and where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!

Prelude

Prepare the Royal Highway

Don Harper

John Behnke

Welcome

Rev. Jessica Vacketta

↑ Call to Worship

Alicia Santamaria

Leader: On Sundays and Mondays,

All: on good days and bad days,

Leader: early in the morning and very late at night,

**All: here in this room, and out in the world,
God, we long for you to break in.**

Leader: Meet us in this space.

All: Surprise us with your presence.

Leader: Fill this room with your good news.

All: With hope, we sing, we worship, we pray.

↑ Opening Song

Come, O Long-expected Jesus

Words by Charles Wesley/Music by Carlton R. Young

Come, O long expected Jesus, born to set your people free.
From our fears and sins release us; Christ, in whom our rest shall be.
You, our strength and consolation, come salvation to impart.
Dear desire of many a nation, joy of many a longing heart.

Born your people to deliver, born a child, and yet a king,
Born to reign in us forever, born your gracious realm to bring.
By your own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone;
By your all sufficient merit raise us to your glorious throne.
time to believe what love is bringing, laying to rest the pain that's gone.

Advent Candle Lighting

Boon & Siew Kang

Leader: In a world full of fear, where do you see hope?

All: We see hope when we look to the next generation. We feel hopeful when we gather together. We know hope, deep in our bones, when we dream of a better world.

Leader: Yes, even in a fearful world, hope is all around us. (*Light Candle*)

Leader: Today we light the candle of hope as a reminder of this good news. May this flicker of light help us remember that we have reason to hope.

All: Thanks be to God!

Advent Lighting Song

Christ Be Our Light

by Bernadette Farrell

Choir: Longing for Light, we wait in darkness. Longing for truth, we turn to you.
Make us your own, your holy people, light for the world to see.

**All: Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light! Shine in our church gathered today.**

A Lesson for All Ages: Advent

Revs. Jessica & Álvaro

Children of all ages are invited to come forward and sit on the front steps.

↑ Sharing the Peace

Rev. Álvaro Durán

*During the Peace, **children (4th grade and younger)** and **youth (5th-8th grade)** are invited to attend our faith formation programs in the Christian Education Building by exiting out the back door of the Sanctuary with our adult program leaders. Parents/guardians are welcome to accompany kids to help them get settled. Children and youth are most welcome to remain in the service if they would prefer. Activity baskets with goodies for our younger kiddos can be found in the entry hall (Narthex) at the Kids Table. After worship, kids can be picked up in their program room or Kloss Hall at Coffee Hour. We're glad you're here!*

Invitation to Offering

PRC (Positive Resource Center)

Randi Paul

PRC (formerly Positive Resource Center) has been transforming the Bay Area for decades, helping those affected by HIV/AIDS, substance use, or mental health issues realize their best selves by providing the support and services they need to reclaim their lives.

Give to CCSM with ease!

- **Church Center App:** Download the new Church Center App, tap the "Give" icon at the bottom of the homescreen, add your amount, tap next and select "Plate."
- **Scan the QR code** to make a gift to the plate offering or the General Fund.
- **Offering Plate:** Place your cash or check in the offering plate.
For checks, note on the memo line where you'd like the funds directed.
- **Online Giving:** Visit CCSM's ccsm-ucc.org/give/ and click the blue "Give" button.
- **Mail:** Send a check to the church office. (225 Tilton Ave, San Mateo, CA 94401)



In addition to our plate offering, we gratefully accept gifts to our General Fund at any time.

Offertory

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

CCSM Chancel Choir

Prayer of Illumination

Rev. Álvaro Durán

Scripture Readings

Lamentations 3:55-57

Alicia Santamaria

I called on your name, O LORD, from the depths of the pit; you heard my plea, "Do not close your ear to my cry for help, but give me relief!" You came near when I called on you; you said, "Do not fear!"

Luke 1:5-13

In the days of King Herod of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly order of Abijah. His wife was descended from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. Both of them were righteous before God, living blamelessly according to all the commandments and regulations of the Lord. But they had no children because Elizabeth was barren, and both were getting on in years.

Once when he was serving as priest before God during his section's turn of duty, he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to enter the sanctuary of the Lord to offer incense. Now at the time of the incense offering, the whole assembly of the people was praying outside. Then there appeared to him an angel of the Lord, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. When Zechariah saw him, he was terrified, and fear overwhelmed him. But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John.

Sermon

We Long for God to Break In

Rev. Jessica Vacketta

Hymn of Response

Prepare the Way of the Lord

Prepare the Way of the Lord

① E $\flat$ A $\flat$ E $\flat$ A $\flat$ ② E $\flat$ A $\flat$

Pre-prepare the way of the Lord. Pre-prepare the way of the

③ E $\flat$ A $\flat$ ④ E $\flat$ A $\flat$ E $\flat$ A $\flat$ E $\flat$ A $\flat$ E $\flat$

Lord, and all people will see the sal-vation of our God. Pre -

Congregational Prayer

Rev. Álvaro Durán

In Unison *(This beloved prayer has been adapted and translated countless times. We've included two versions below—feel free to pray in whatever words resonate with you.)*

Our Creator, Who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the Kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Padre nuestro que estás en el cielo, santificado sea tu Nombre, venga tu reino, hágase tu voluntad, en la tierra como en el cielo. Danos hoy nuestro pan de cada día. Perdona nuestras ofensas, como también nosotros perdonamos a los que nos ofenden. No no dejes caer en tentación y libranos del mal. Porque tuyo es el reino, tuyo es el poder, y tuya es la gloria, ahora y por siempre. Amen.

↑ **Closing Hymn**

In the Time of Herod

Sung to the tune "In the Bleak Midwinter." Sheet music located at the back of your bulletin.

↑ **Benediction**

Rev. Jessica Vacketta

↑ **Choral Response**

Chancel Choir

Please remain standing for the choral response

Postlude

Allegro
Boellmann

Don Harper

Music in today's bulletin printed with permission, CCLI #11035805. CCSM endeavors to use inclusive language in our worship services. Exceptions occur when we must be compliant with copyright laws.

Special Thanks to those helping with today's service:

Our "Advent elves" who decorate the sanctuary and our campus last Sunday

Our Coffee Hour Hosts: Katie Bylander, Alicia Santamaria, Amy & Tommy Occhiuto, and Heather Setrakian

Our musicians leading worship: Don Harper, Dr. Ondine Young and the CCSM Chancel Choir

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**DREAMING
GOD'S DREAM**
No gift too small, no dream too big.

Join us in Dreaming God's Dream! Make your Estimate of Giving pledge today and help invest in CCSM's ministry and mission. We have **76 households/individuals who have pledged so far, totaling \$356,343. Our 2026 Goal is \$560,000 in pledges. Scan the QR code or fill out a pledge card** (found in your pew or at the Welcome Table in the Narthex). *Cards may be returned to an usher or the CCSM office (Attn: Cheryle Matteo)*



Joys and Concerns

Each week, the pastoral care team gives prayerful attention to the congregation's joys and concerns. Many of these come with a request to hold the contents in confidence; therefore, they are not published below. The wonderful thing about prayer is one doesn't need a specific reason to lift another in the light of love and care. Join us in holding the named and unnamed in God's light and love. Prayers will be listed below for two weeks, unless otherwise requested.

Recent Prayer Requests:

Please keep **Matthew Bunn** in your prayers following the death of his **Grandma Marjorie** this week. Matthew shared she passed peacefully while listening to Christmas music, her favorite.

Sue and Mike Hill ask for prayers for Sue's brother, **Barry LaClair**, as he goes through treatment for cancer.

Please hold **Sue Ingles** in prayer as she recovers from a stroke on November 9.

Please continue to pray for **Heather Morgan** who is out of the hospital and recovering at home from her leg amputation surgery.

Please keep **Peter Pierson** in your prayers who is recovering from surgery in the VA hospital.

Please hold **Melanie Dresbach** and family in your prayers following the death of her brother, **Rev. Michael Dresbach**, on November 24.

Ongoing prayer requests:

Continuing prayers for our beloved siblings: **Larry Anderson**, friend of Frank Garritano; **Joaquín**, Nadia Hernández father; **Paul Nieberding**; **Sanjana**, friend of Susan & Warren Long; **Mike and Lee Mullery's nephew, Wally**; **Lynn and Paul Nieberding**; **John**, Sharon Tobin's son; **Renato Floresca**; **Lynne and Peter**, friends of Lynn Nieberding; Chona Tendero's friend, **Feljohn Rancap**; **Aprille Espinuevas**, friend of Robert and Johann Leung; **Lani Leydig**; **Cheryl Granucci**; Allison Rock and Chris Wuthmann's friend, **Karen**; **Veril Phillips and Bev Knowlton**; **Mike and Lee Mullery**; **George Vail**; **Dottie Scott**; **Caroline Reinke**.

Bulletin Board

If you wish to have an announcement added to the "Bulletin Board," please email Kim Rey at kim@ccsm-ucc.org

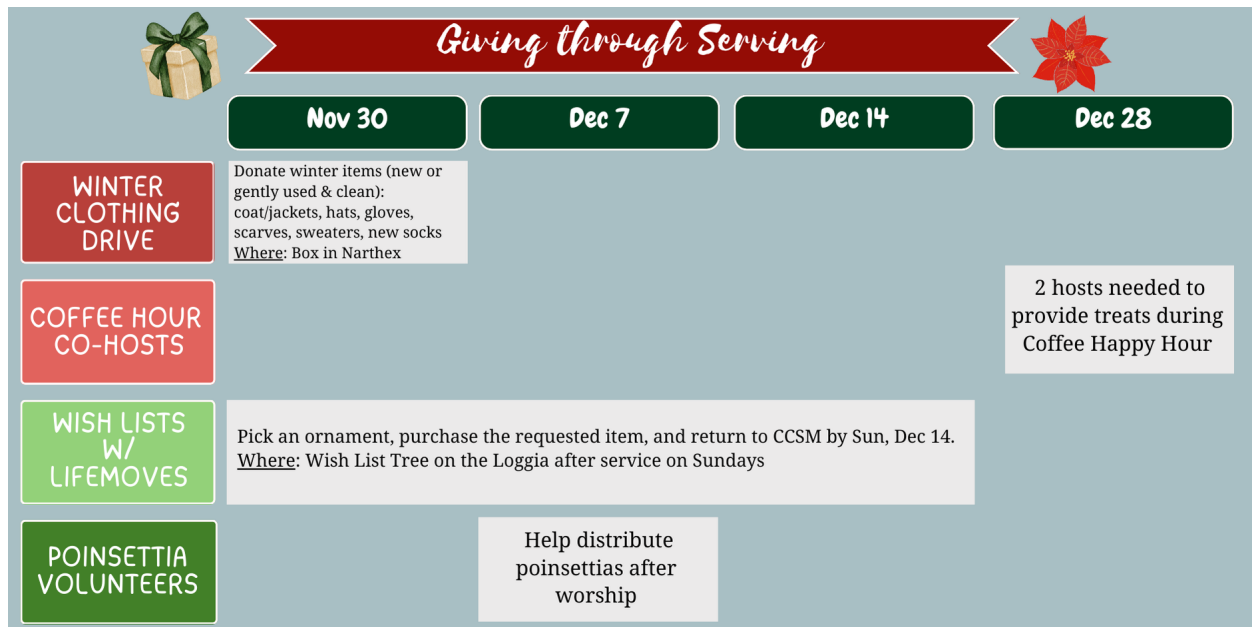
PLEASE PICK UP YOUR DIA DE LOS MUERTOS FAMILY PHOTOS IN THE MAIN OFFICE

****Family Tree Lighting Festival, November 30, 5-7pm TONIGHT**** CCSM's Tree Lighting Festival is coming! Let's kick off the Advent season with our neighbors — with chili, cocoa, carols, cookies, and crafts. Join in the countdown to our outdoor tree lighting at 6 PM. It's the perfect way to welcome the season of hope and light — bring your family, invite your friends, and come celebrate!

Join CYF for Christmas Caroling: Spread Christmas cheer after service on December 7th! Everyone is invited to join our kids and youth for pizza in the Community Room (CE Building) before we carol to three church members (12-2pm); please RSVP to kim@ccsm-ucc.org if you're able to join.



Gingerbread House Decorating: Get ready for sweet, festive fun! All ages are invited to decorate gingerbread houses on Saturday, December 7th, from 5:30 PM - 6:30 PM in Kloss Hall; please RSVP to Rev. Jessica (jessica@ccsm-ucc.org), so we are sure to have enough supplies.



Giving through Serving

	Nov 30	Dec 7	Dec 14	Dec 28
WINTER CLOTHING DRIVE	Donate winter items (new or gently used & clean): coat/jackets, hats, gloves, scarves, sweaters, new socks <u>Where:</u> Box in Narthex			
COFFEE HOUR CO-HOSTS				2 hosts needed to provide treats during Coffee Happy Hour
WISH LISTS W/ LIFEMOVES	Pick an ornament, purchase the requested item, and return to CCSM by Sun, Dec 14. <u>Where:</u> Wish List Tree on the Loggia after service on Sundays			
POINSETTIA VOLUNTEERS	Help distribute poinsettias after worship			

Winter Clothes Donation Drive (Jericho Road) ENDS TODAY: Please place your new or gently used, clean, warm clothing donations in the box in the Narthex.

Sign up to Co-Host Happy Coffee Hour: Thank you Happy Coffee Hour hosts for strengthening our CCSM community! We still need 2 hosts for the 2025 schedule on: Dec 28 (2). Also, 2026 sign ups are open. Please sign up by emailing Melodie Lew (boygie.m2000@yahoo.com).

Wish Lists: CCSM is partnering with LifeMoves (First Step for Families & The Vendome) this holiday season to collect essential necessities for local families experiencing homelessness. Select an ornament from the WISH LIST Christmas tree on the loggia after the service, and return your purchased gift to CCSM by Sunday, December 14. Questions, contact: Melodie Lew (boygie.m2000@yahoo.com) or Siew Kang (internationalchoir@gmail.com).

Poinsettia Volunteers Needed: Help distribute poinsettias on **December 7** and spread Advent joy and connection throughout the congregation. Contact Diane Kalliam (dkalliam@gmail.com).

Advent Flash Text Prayers: Throughout Advent, you'll receive one brief prayer sent by text at a random time between 8am–8pm, a gentle reminder that the holy can break through at any moment.

To sign up, text **JOIN** to **510-488-5810**. *Advent Flash Text Prayers is a ministry of Into the Wilderness, a church "pop-up" supported by Plymouth Jazz & Justice UCC. This year's prayers are written by Rev. Penny Nixon in celebration of the 10th season.*

Holiday Bell Choir: If you'd like to ring in the season—literally!—join our **Holiday Bell Choir** for the 11am Christmas Eve service. Rehearsals with Dr. Ondine Young will take place in the Choir Room from **12:00–1:00pm** on **December 7, 14, and 21**. To learn more or let her know you're coming, reach her at ondine@ccsm-ucc.org or catch her at coffee hour!

More info in the Children, Youth & Families bi-weekly newsletter. If you'd like to receive this email, please contact kim@ccsm-ucc.org.

Pick-A-Vent Submission Form Live: We're excited to announce a new name and sign-up date for our annual fundraiser! Formerly called Pick-A-Party, we are rebranding to Pick-A-Vent (short for "Event") and shifting the sign-up date to February 22, but activity submissions are available now (<https://forms.gle/QsMBSPb6vcWas7h67> or clickable in Connections). This popular fundraiser connects members through unique hosted activities, with proceeds supporting CCSM's goals.

SAVE THE DATE:

Masterworks Chorale Festive Family Fun (12/13 at 4pm) & Warm, Glowing & Joyful (12/14 at 4pm). For tickets and more information, go to masterworksbayarea.org/season

Blue Christmas 12/20 at 7pm If the holidays feel heavy this year, you're not alone. On the eve of the Winter Solstice, we'll gather for a quiet "Blue Christmas" service—a space for grief, healing, and hope.

Las Posadas 12/21 5-8pm This event brings together people from all ages, both Spanish-speaking and English-speaking. It begins with the candlelit procession around the church grounds, knocking at every "inn" door. Afterward, we will share a dinner together.

Christmas Eve Services 12/24

- 11am-12pm Traditional Service with Communion
- 5-6pm Bilingual Family Service
- 11pm-12am Candlelight Service

Calendar visit CCSM-UCC.ORG/EVENTS for the full calendar of events and meetings

Below is a snapshot of this week's events, meetings, and activities. For more information—or to add something to the calendar—please reach out to the event host or contact Chase Montara at cmontara@ccsm-ucc.org

Sunday, November 30

9:00-10:00 AM	Chancel Choir Rehearsal Choir Room
10:30 - 11:30 AM	First Sunday in Advent Worship Service in person and online (FB and YouTube)
10:45 - 11:30 AM	Youth & Children's Programs , CE Building
11:30 AM - 12:30 PM	Coffee Hour , Kloss Hall
4:00 - 5:00 PM	Sunday Afternoon Faith Formation , CE Building
5:00 - 6:30 PM	Family Tree Lighting Festival , Kloss Hall, Front Lawn

Monday, December 1

4:00 - 6:00 PM	Samaritan House Meal Service , Kloss Hall
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Tuesday, December 2

10:00 - 11:00 AM	Men's Coffee Group , Hillsdale Mall Terrace; contact Peter Held, paheld1417@gmail.com
4:00 - 6:00 PM	Samaritan House Meal Service , Kloss Hall

Wednesday, December 3

4:00 - 6:00 PM	Samaritan House Meal Service , Kloss Hall
7:15 - 8:45 PM	Bilingual Worship Service , Kloss Hall

Thursday, December 4

9:00 - 11:00 AM
10:15 - 11:30 AM
4:00 - 6:00 PM
7:30 - 9:00 PM

Casual Bike Riders, CCSM Parking Lot; contact John Ebnetter, jebnetter@aol.com
Women's Coffee Group, Fireplace Room; contact linda.skromme@gmail.com
Samaritan House Meal Service, Kloss Hall
Chancel Choir Rehearsal

Friday, December 5

4:00 - 6:00 PM

Samaritan House Meal Service, Kloss Hall

Saturday, December 6

8:30 - 10:30 AM

CC Riders Weekly Bike Ride; contact Peter Held, paheld1417@gmail.com

Sunday, December 7

9:45 - 10:15 AM
10:30 - 11:30 AM
10:30 - 11:30 AM
10:45 - 11:30 AM
11:30 AM - 12:30 PM
12:00-1:00 PM
12:00 - 2:00 PM
4:00 - 5:30 PM
5:30 - 6:30 PM

Joyful Noise Children's Choir, Fireplace Room; contact Julie Berk, teacherjulie7@gmail.com
60 Minutes High School Discussion, Fireplace Room
Worship Service in person and online (FB and YouTube)
Youth & Children's Programs, CE Building
Coffee Hour, Kloss Hall
Holiday Bell Choir Rehearsal, Choir Room, contact online@ccsm-ucc.org
Christmas Caroling and Pizza, CE Building and homes of CCSMers
Sunday Afternoon Faith Formation, CE Building
Gingerbread House Decorating, Kloss Hall



For Staff, CCSM Board, and Ministries leads, go to ccsm-ucc.org/welcome/#staff or scan the QR code. To contact your CCSM Board, email Board@ccsm-ucc.org. To contact anyone in the Council of Ministries, email COM@ccsm-ucc.org. To contact the church office, email cmontara@ccsm-ucc.org

If you didn't receive the Saturday Worship Links email, please contact kim@ccsm-ucc.org.

Learn More!



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In the Time of Herod

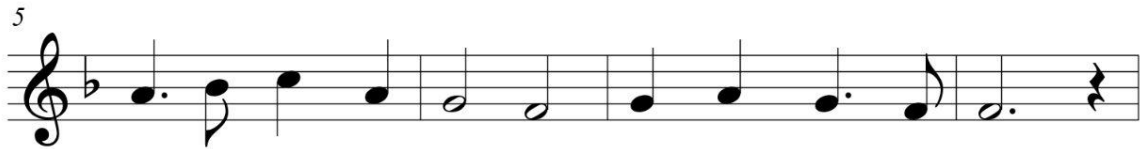
CRANHAM 11.11.11.11

Words by Anna Strickland, 2025

Music by Gustav Holst, 1906



In the time of Her - od, fear had ta - ken hold
Thick as fog the fear grew, slow - ly creep - ing in
Pierc - ing through the stra - tus comes the an - gels' song
In the time of Her - od, fear has ta - ken hold



Hope was bur - ied deep and hid - den, rare as gold
Day by day the peo - ple bent and drew with - in
"Do not fear!" rings hol - low when we've feared so long
Still we share a long - ing for a glimpse of hope



Or - di - na - ry peo - ple dared not speak a - loud
With the clouds so hea - vy, who could see the stars?
Still in the re - cess - es of our wea - ry souls
Or - di - na - ry peo - ple shout the truth we trust:



Dreams of the Mes - si - ah break - ing through the clouds
Hope - less - ness had trapped them, strong as pris - on bars
Some - thing is a - wak - ened— could it be our hope?
God will stop at no - thing to be here with us