

SALT & LIGHT

COMMUNITY CHURCH OF SEBASTOPOL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

DECEMBER 2023 NEWSLETTER

The Community Church of Sebastopol

United Church of Christ
707.823.2484
www.uccseb.org
office@uccseb.org

Lead Minister

Rev. Dr. Benjamin J. Broadbent

Associate Minister

Rev. Rachel Knuth

Congregational Administrator

Joy Richards

Choral Director

Andy DelMonte

Keyboardist

J. Althea

Handbell Director

Karna Roa

Bookkeeper

Deanna Euritt

Custodian

Keith Brown

Pastor Emeritus

Rev. Gene Nelson



THREE ADVENTS

Rev. Dr. Benjamin J. Broadbent, Lead Minister

One of my favorite Divinity School courses, "The Jewish Liturgical Year," covered the major and minor Jewish holidays, including Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkoth, Simchat Torah, Hannukah, Purim, Passover, and Shavuoth. It was an introduction to the cycle of the Jewish religious calendar, but it was also an introduction to Judaism itself, and the professor, **Dr. Jon Levenson**, was at once knowledgeable, challenging, and hilarious. Importantly, the course piqued my interest in the Christian liturgical year.

The Christian year begins on the First Sunday in Advent. While we often associate the word Advent with "beginning," its Latin root means "arriving at" or "coming to." You can hear it in the Spanish word "venir," or in the carol, O Come, O Come Emmanuel: "Veni, Veni, Emmanuel." During Advent, Christians anticipate the coming of Christ at Christmas, also known as the Incarnation, God coming in flesh.

While in seminary, I learned about another Advent, also known as the Second Coming of Christ. This second Advent can be imagined as a foreboding time, the end of the world, when Christ will come again to whisk away a few believers and leave the rest to perish for eternity. But there are other, equally prevalent views, including the one in which I place my hope, that there will come a day, soon or late, when God will heal and renew the whole creation. That day will be like a great banquet of rejoicing where all peoples will be reconciled with one another, and God will be all in all.

More recently, I learned about a third Advent, this one from **Bernard of Clairvaux** (1090 – 1153 CE). Later known as **Saint Bernard**, this abbot and mystic described a time in-between times, an advent in-between advents. This Advent is not of the past, nor of the future, but of the everyday. During this third Advent, God in Christ comes to us hidden amid our very lives. Christ offers his steadfast love, his assuring presence, and his guiding wisdom to us right here in the middle of the mundane. If we have eyes to see, we'll see it. If we have ears to hear, we'll hear it. We'll taste its zest. We'll smell its sweetness. We'll touch Christ when we give our baby a bath, dig in the garden, or embrace our beloveds.



Three Advents... Continued from page 1

I was at the grocery store recently and misplaced my debit card. I was fishing around in my pockets, apologizing to the customer behind me, to the clerk who had finished ringing up my items, and to the bagger who had already arranged them in bags.

"Ugh," I said, "I'm so sorry."

Then into my exasperation came a voice, "Don't worry. We've got time. All we have is time."

Thinking back, I'm not sure which of the three said it, but it was a "third Advent" kind of message that I needed to hear then and most of us need to hear every day.

Christ has come. Christ is coming. Christ will come again. Don't worry. We've got time. All we have is time.



Intergenerational Advent Workshops with Music

**For All Ages: Children, Youth, Adults
Fellowship Hall**

Join **Andy DelMonte** and **Pastor Rachel** as they join forces for an all-ages music and crafting extravaganza!

We'll sing traditional Christmas music, and rehearse a song to share at the 4:30 p.m., Christmas Eve worship service. And we'll craft lovely Advent art to take home, a different craft each week:

Dec 3: Advent Wreaths

Dec 10: Nativity Scenes

Dec 17: Stars

But most of all we will enjoy each other's company! No need to sign up, just come and participate. This intergenerational series is supported by Leadership Council Member for Faith Formation, **Pat Furber**, who will be assisting with crafts. All materials provided.

DECEMBER 2023 WORSHIP

Worship Details:

We worship in the sanctuary on Sundays at 10:00 a.m.
Services live streamed on our church's YouTube channel & Facebook page
Weekly bulletin and announcements available at www.uccseb.org

December 3 – 1st Sunday in Advent: HOPE

Today we begin the Christian liturgical year by lighting the first of four candles on our Advent wreath, the candle of "Hope." We celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Communion, the Chancel Choir sings, and **Rev. Dr. Benjamin J. Broadbent**, Lead Minister, preaches a sermon on Isaiah 64:1–9 entitled, "Too Much to Hope?"

December 10 – 2nd Sunday in Advent: PEACE

Today we light the second caof Advent, the candle of "Peace." The Handbell Ensemble shares worship music and **Pastor Benjamin** preaches a sermon on Isaiah 40:1–11 entitled, "Peace When There Is No Peace."

December 17 – 3rd Sunday in Advent: JOY

Also known as "Gaudete Sunday" (Gaudete is Latin for "Joy"), today we light the third candle on our Advent wreath, the pink one. The Chancel Choir shares two choral pieces and **Pastor Benjamin** preaches a sermon on Isaiah 61:1–4 entitled, "Uncontrived Joy."

December 24 – 4th Sunday in Advent: LOVE

On this final Sunday in the season of Advent, a Small Ensemble provides worship music and **Rev. Rachel Knuth**, Associate Minister, preaches a sermon on 2 Samuel 7:1–11 entitled, "Love with Skin On."

December 24 – Christmas Eve

4:30 – Family–Friendly Service with Pageant & Intergenerational choir.
7:00 – Traditional Service of Lessons & Carols with Sermon, Choir & Handbells.

December 25 – Christmas Day (no services)

December 31 – 1st Sunday after Christmas

Today we gather for an informal service to sing additional carols and hear more of the Christmas story: Luke 2:22–40.

Coming in January... Feast of Epiphany, Baptism of Christ Sunday, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Weekend, New Members Join, Annual Meeting of the Congregation



Feed Your Soul

at Faith Formation Hour

Sundays, 11:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.



December 2023 Church Chats

Bible Study: "Understanding Christmas"

Pastor Benjamin will be leading a three-part Advent Bible Study (plus 1 DIY session) in the Chapel during Faith Formation Hour, 11:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. Drawing on the podcast, "Strange New World," we will deepen our understanding of Christmas by deepening our understanding of the Bible.

December 3 – Part I: Hope Against Hope

December 10 – Part II: Silent Night

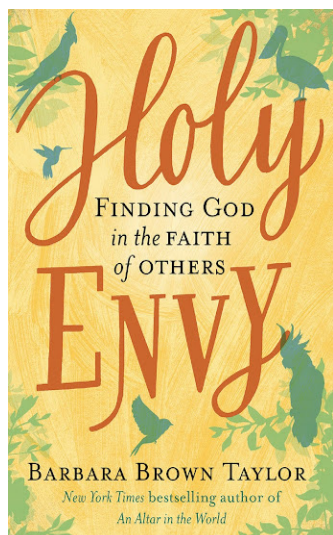
December 17 – Part III: Heart of the Matter

December 24 – No Church Chat Today (Listen on your own to Part IV: Rethinking Christmas)



Advent & Epiphany Book Study: Holy Envy

—Jane Huneke



For Adults
Fireside Room

Love to read? Come join a new book discussion group, facilitated by Rosemary Manchester, during the Faith Formation Hour on December 3, 10, 17 and January 8, 15, 22. We will be reading *Holy Envy* by Barbara Brown Taylor, an Episcopal priest and the emerita Butman Professor of Religion at Piedmont College in Georgia. As part of teaching the world's religions, Taylor brought her students to mosques, synagogues and Buddhist and Hindu temples. She writes about how teaching the different religions changed her student's (as well as her own) understanding of faith. She reminds us that God is bigger than any one religion. Come join us for lively discussions of our beliefs. For more

information, contact **Jane Huneke** jane.huneke1@gmail.com. Books are available at Copperfield's or through Amazon.



The Story of the Poinsettia & How to Participate in our Poinsettia Dedication Program

– Pastor Rachel

On Christmas Eve, lovely white poinsettias grace our Chancel, their starry faces shining out. But what is the story of poinsettias, and what might they mean?

My favorite re-telling of the story of the poinsettia is a children's book by the wonderful Tomie DePaola. He shares the 17th century legend from Mexico, about a poor child who had no gift to present to the Christ Child on Christmas Eve, as was the custom. Worried and ashamed, her cousin encouraged her, saying "even the humblest gift, presented in love, is acceptable in God's eyes." But she was truly empty-handed. Not knowing what else to do, on her way to church that evening, she gathered up a handful of weeds and laid them at the foot of the Nativity scene. People were not sure that weeds were a very good gift for the Christ-Child. But suddenly her bouquet burst into blooming: Flores de Noche Buena, Flowers of the Holy Night. Like the biblical story of the widow with only two coins to offer, the humblest and simplest gift, offered with a genuine heart, is more than enough.

What we know as "poinsettias" were originally called *cuetlaxochitl* (kwet-la-sho-she), cultivated by the Aztecs long before the European colonization of the Americas. The Aztecs used *cuetlaxochitl* for a variety of purposes, including decoration and the production of red and purple dyes, as well as for medicines derived from the plant's milky white sap. From what I understand, the actual "flower" part of the plant is the yellow center, but what appears white (or traditionally, red) are actually its leaves. Evidently, *cuetlaxochitl* need 14-16 hours of darkness in order to ensure blooms. It's like they know it's Advent: a time to slow down and spiritually steep in holy darkness.

According to a Mike Kohfeld, who's connected to a nursery that sells the plants, "In 1828, *cuetlaxochitl* was taken from its native home and brought to the United States by Joel Roberts Poinsett, the U.S. Ambassador to Mexico. After successfully cultivating the unique plant in his South Carolina greenhouse, Poinsett began sharing the plant with friends and colleagues who marveled at the plant's colorful transformation during the holiday season. Poinsett is celebrated for introducing the poinsettia to the United States and for co-founding the Smithsonian Institution. However, his legacy as a slave owner and his role in the displacement of countless Native Americans has led some people today to reject the name "poinsettia" in favor of the plant's Native name, *cuetlaxochitl*."

Learning about the difficult aspects of the plant's past does not make the plants any less beautiful— but it does help us reflect upon a complex history that includes cultivation, colonization, and legend. It helps us to think about cultural appropriation. It helps us wonder what legacies we want to leave behind for the generations that follow us.

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The Story of the Poinsettia cont from page 6...

Whether you call it a poinsettia, la flor de Nochebuena, cuetlaxochitl, or something else, you are invited to dedicate a plant to someone you care about. If you'd like to order one (or more), Click [HERE](#) to Dedicate a Poinsettia or pick up a form in the office or rainbow lectern.

The details: Plants are \$15 each, and the deadline to order one is December 8th. The plants will arrive in worship on December 17, and will bless the sanctuary through the Christmas Eve services. You may pick up your poinsettia after the 7:00 p.m., worship service on Christmas Eve to bring home and enjoy. Or you may donate your plant to be delivered to a homebound church member.

If you would like to help deliver poinsettias to our homebound members, please contact **Pastor Rachel** at pastorrachel@uccseb.org.

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Our New Labyrinth debuts at two events on December 21

–Pastor Rachel



Quiet Day in Advent

Take a break from the hustle and bustle, and do something completely counter-cultural this Advent: Come and walk our new portable canvas labyrinth. On December 21, the

Chapel will be open from 9:00am - 4:00pm, and the labyrinth will be prepared for you to experience. Drop in any time, and stay as long as you like. Breathe. Walk the ground beneath you. Step forward when you are ready. Feel like a human again in the midst of the busyness around you. When you arrive, please enter quietly. There will be a place to sit down and take off your shoes and settle into a spirit of prayer. Taking off your shoes is both a spiritual practice— acknowledging you're in the presence of God — and a practical one— our canvas labyrinth must be walked in socks to protect the material. The pace of your walk is up to you, and you're welcome to take a holy pause and linger as you like. Whether you've never walked a labyrinth before or are experienced on the journey, you are welcome. People of all ages can participate fully, and children can be especially engaged in walking meditation. If you're accompanying a child, it can be helpful to share with them what it means to you to hold reverence and in a spirit of prayer as you walk. Come and find your quiet center.

Longest Night Worship Service: The Advent & Christmas Seasons can be a complex time and bring up complicated feelings-- it can be for us both a time of joyful hope, and it may stir within us memories of loved ones we've lost and feelings of grief. You're invited to a quiet, candle-lit worship service on the longest night of the year. This simple, spacious, grace-filled service will include ample time to walk the labyrinth while supported by music and prayer. No matter where you are in metabolizing grief, you are welcome at this service. The Longest Night, December 21, at 5p.m., in Faith Chapel.

For more information, please contact **Pastor Rachel:** pastorrachel@uccseb.org.

CHRISTMAS OUTREACH PROJECTS

Christmas Gift Bags for Residents of Sam Jones Hall. Each year, we join with several other groups to fill bags with a towel and items for personal care for the residents of the local shelter for people experiencing homelessness. There are 165 residents and the staff said they really look forward to the gift bags! It IS their holiday. Collecting 165 bags is a big task! Please try to do one or more and ask your friends or family to fill one. Please follow the attached list carefully and bring them to church anytime before Dec. 17, and put them in the Entry Hall. If you would rather donate money, please send it to the church by Dec. 8, so we will have time to shop.

Warm Hats, Scarves and Gloves for the Christmas Tree. This year we want to decorate the Christmas tree in the entry way with hats, scarves and gloves for the youth at SAY (Social Advocates for Youth). SAY works with teens and young adults who are experiencing homelessness. Often they are youth who have aged out of the foster care system and need a helping hand adjusting to adulthood.

Alternative Gifts. If you are wondering what to get your friends and family, let us help! We will have Alternative Gift catalogs available. An alternative gift is a charitable donation designated in honor of someone else. Gift recipients receive a description of the gift made in their name and a card. You can turn in your order at church and pick up your cards and inserts the following Sunday. Here are a few examples: \$6 provides seeds for a woman farmer, \$14 provides food or therapy for a Ukrainian refugee, \$20 provides 30 books for a Donkey Mobile Library in Ethiopia.



Christmas Caroling & Potluck December 10, 5-7pm Meet in Fellowship Hall

If you love singing Christmas Carols and bringing cheer to neighbors, this is the event for you! There's no sign-up, simply come as you are (dress warmly!). Sheet music with words to all the songs will be provided.

What to Bring: Enthusiasm and a dish to share

Carolers will split into two groups: those who walk to sing to our neighbors around the church, and those who drive to some of our elder-members. Then the group will reconvene in the Fellowship Hall at 6:15 p.m., for a post-caroling potluck. Contact: **Andy DelMonte**: delmontemusic@yahoo.com.

Christmas Gift Bags for Residents of Sam Jones Shelter

A joint outreach of the Community Church, Stone Creek Zen Center, and Sequoia School

You are invited to fill a reusable shopping bag with the items on the list below. Please use full size items and include everything on the list. (Hints: 1. There is a Dollar Tree by Food Max and Ross on Sebastopol Road and Stony Point in Santa Rosa. Saves a LOT of money! Dollar Tree has almost everything. Ross has nice towels and Food Max has nail clippers and tweezers (in a set for \$2.99-front of store, far L.) 2. You can split the list with a friend.)

Leave filled bags by the tree in the entry hall of the church by December 17. There will be ribbons by the window near the tree. Please tie one to the handles of your bag to indicate who it is for.

Pink – woman

Blue – man

Green – gender neutral

If you need us to shop for you, please send a check to the church office before Dec. 8. Please be sure to indicate that it is for a "Christmas Bag." The men's list costs \$35 and the Women's List - \$40. Gender Neutral List - \$40.

There are 165 residents at Sam Jones Hall. The lists were put together with the help of the staff at Sam Jones. The staff and residents deeply appreciate your help! This IS the holiday for the residents. Please include a card or note of good wishes.

Man's List

- ☐ Deodorant
- ☐ Hand Sanitizer
- ☐ Lg. Bar of Soap
- ☐ Shampoo/Conditioner
- ☐ Pocket comb
- ☐ Pk. of Tissues
- ☐ Toothbrush
- ☐ Toothpaste
- ☐ Chap stick
- ☐ Good quality Disp. Razors
- ☐ Shaving Cream
- ☐ Mug microwavable
- ☐ 2 candy bars
- ☐ Disinfectant Wipes
- ☐ Deck of Cards
- ☐ Nail Clippers and Tweezers
- ☐ Shower towel
- ☐ Net scrubby

Woman's List

- ☐ Deodorant
- ☐ Hand Sanitizer
- ☐ Lg. Bar of Soap
- ☐ Shampoo/Conditioner
- ☐ Brush & mirror
- ☐ Pk. of Tissues
- ☐ Toothbrush
- ☐ Toothpaste
- ☐ Chap stick
- ☐ Good quality Disp. Razors
- ☐ Net Scrubby
- ☐ Mug microwavable
- ☐ 2 candy bars
- ☐ Disinfectant Wipes
- ☐ Hair Ties
- ☐ Nail Clippers and Tweezers
- ☐ Shower towel
- ☐ Coloring book
- ☐ Markers or Colored pencils

Gender Neutral (neutral colors & odors)

- ☐ Deodorant
- ☐ Hand Sanitizer
- ☐ Lg. Bar of Soap
- ☐ Shampoo/Conditioner
- ☐ Brush & comb
- ☐ Pk. of Tissues
- ☐ Toothbrush
- ☐ Toothpaste
- ☐ Chap stick
- ☐ Good quality Disp. Razors
- ☐ Shaving Cream
- ☐ Mug microwavable
- ☐ 2 candy bars
- ☐ Disinfectant Wipes
- ☐ Black hair ties
- ☐ Nail Clippers and Tweezers
- ☐ Shower Towel
- ☐ Sudoku Book
- ☐ Net scrubby

YOUTH NEWS!



Youth Groups meet twice a month on Sunday nights:
4:00 - 5:30pm Middle School Youth Group
5:00 - 7:00pm High School Youth Group
(5:00 - 5:30pm is a shared meal with both groups together)
Friends always welcome!

December 3

4:00 - 5:30 Middle School: Dance Off & Christmas Party
Youth Lounge
5:00 - 7:00 High School: "Relaxtify" with a Movie
Youth Lounge

December 17

Special Schedule:

Both Groups meet at 4:00 for the Joyful Noise Gospel Concert,
followed by pizza and a service project for people living without shelter
Sanctuary

Halloween Mash-Up: Youth Groups & Inter-Church Food Pantry



In late October, our Youth Groups volunteered at the Inter-Church Food Pantry. We handed out boxes of food, organized shelves, cleared cobwebs, and took out the compost. In our spare time, we decorated pumpkins to take to some of our elder church friends, including some who live right next door to the pantry. It was a fun, sunny morning of service.

If you've never volunteered with the Inter-Church Food Pantry, it is a great way to help our West County neighbors who are food insecure. Volunteering at the Pantry is something families (with parents supervising children) can do together. They're frequently looking for someone with a pickup truck, along with strong people who can help unload boxes from the Food Bank. The Pantry is an Outreach Ministry of our church, located at St. Stephen's Episcopal on Robinson Road. If you'd like to check it out or get involved, contact Mark Albin, Chair of the Inter-Church Food Pantry Committee, at malbin@sonic.net.

Christmas Eve at Community Church of Sebastopol

10:00 a.m.

Worship Service for 4th Sunday in Advent - Love

On this final Sunday in the season of Advent, a small ensemble provides worship music and **Rev. Rachel Knuth**, Associate Minister, preaches a sermon on 2 Samuel 7:1-22 entitled "Love with Skin On."

4:30 p.m.

Family-Friendly worship service

with Inter-generational choir and a pop-up pageant written by **Pastor Rachel**.

At this all-ages worship service, you'll be invited to participate in acting out the Christmas story in a spontaneous pageant. Costumes will be provided as you enter the sanctuary, and anyone can choose any part. Acting cues will be given throughout a narrated version of the story. Familiar Christmas songs will be sprinkled throughout, and the service will end with a candle-light benediction in the courtyard.

7:00 p.m.

Traditional Service of Lessons & Carols

with Sermon. Chancel Choir will sing, the Handbell Ensemble will ring and the two shall gather together for a Christmas Musical Celebration.

Christmas Eve Offering

The Christmas Eve Offering will be divided between two worthy organizations: The UCC Christmas Fund and the West County Accompaniment Team of the North Bay Organizing Project:

The UCC Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund are a national collection taken up to provide direct financial support to those who serve the church and are facing financial difficulties. Active and retired clergy, lay employees, and their surviving spouses may be eligible for the Supplementation of Small Annuities, Supplementation of Health Premiums, Emergency Grants, and/or Christmas "Thank You" Gift Checks.

The West County Accompaniment Team which is a part of the North Bay Organizing Project. This local team is made up of church members and community members. We are helping a mother with three children, ages 3, 7 and 10, from Honduras, who are seeking asylum. We are helping with housing costs, providing tutoring for the children, rides to medical and dental appointments and access to food. The mother is working every day she can. She is also learning English and how to drive. We have a donated car for her and once she has her driver's license, she will be able to seek full time employment.

Our Whole Lives (OWL) Celebration!

—Pastor Rachel

On November 19, we celebrated our 5-6th Grade graduating OWL class. Together with their Co-Facilitators, **Brooke Bell** and **Larry Stallings**, the class spent 10 weeks learning about... sexuality and values, images in popular culture, body image, puberty, gender, feelings, and attractions, staying healthy, reproduction, healthy decision making, consent, peer pressure, and healthy relationships. In worship, our whole congregation blessed the class and their parents, and celebrated sexuality as a gift from God.



If you have a moment to heap mountains of praise upon **Brooke** and **Larry**, they really taught their hearts out leading this class. They had 10 weeks of material to plow through, classroom dynamics to manage, posters they laminated, prep work and debriefs. They really gave it their all. We could not be more grateful! Here's the blessing prayer we shared in worship to celebrate the class:

Blessing Prayer for the OWL Class & Their Families

Holy One, Source of Love, you create us to delight in relationships and the beauty of creation. Sexuality is one part of what gives us wholeness as human beings. We thank you for our bodies that can give and receive love and affection, and that allow us to move in the world.

God, we ask your blessing on these young people and their parents (and grandparents) as they go forth into the world. May they be ambassadors for a justice-filled world that celebrates people of all genders and sexual orientations, and honors healthy relationships and healthy sexual expression. And may these people inspire us to embrace sexuality as a God-given gift, our whole lives. Amen.





Thresholds

We release with care...

...**Melody Anderson**, church member, who died November 1.

May God's comforting Spirit and the love of our community surround her whole family as they grieve.



From the DIY Blessing Class in November...

The November DIY Blessing class during Faith Formation Hour spent time exploring blessings and writing their own. As Ruth Burgess of the Celtic Christian Iona Community in Scotland says, "There is a biblical tradition that those who pray prayers of blessing for others will themselves be blessed."

Here's a blessing they wrote together as a class:

Blessing for Those Who Are Depressed
 May the God of Holy Light and Holy Darkness hold you
 when all the life goes out and you feel flat,
 when you feel stripped down to the bone,
 That you might know: Even bulbs overwinter in the dark
 And in time they rise up,
 Feeling your light and hope.



Wondering Circle

—Pastor Rachel

On a Sunday in November, the children in Wondering Circle considered a parable of the deep well. One of our volunteers, Joanne Matson, was inspired to create a lego version of the Samaritan woman at the well with Jesus. The children were enthralled and helped build a whole nearby town for the woman to live in! They had such fun, they wanted to stay and keep playing when it was time to be picked up. This is what an imaginative spiritual practice looks like! Studies have shown that when children truly imagine themselves inside of a story, they remember it deeply later on, and they grow in compassion for different points of view.

Wondering Circle is our program for children K-5th Grade during the worship service, following the Children's Message. Children, accompanied by adult volunteers, wonder about a story together in a playful way. Bonus: It gives parents a chance to hear a sermon and participate in worship too.

Wondering Circle will meet December 10 & 17, if there are volunteers to support the program. To get involved, contact **Pastor Rachel**: pastorrachel@uccseb.org.

INTER-CHURCH FOOD PANTRY
BENEFIT CONCERT

Lead with Love



Joyful Noise! Gospel Singers
presents
an evening of music with

**Benjamin Mertz
Melanie DeMore**

Sunday, December 17th
4:00 pm



Lead with Love lyrics by Melanie DeMore

\$10 Suggested Donation
Community Church of Sebastopol
1000 Gravenstein Hwy North

**Special Concert:
Joyful Noise Gospel Singers,
featuring Benjamin Mertz and Melanie DeMore**

Holy Moly, this is going to be a great concert you won't want to miss! I'm thrilled to share with you that, on December 17, at 4:00 p.m., we are hosting the Joyful Noise Gospel Choir in our Sanctuary, featuring Benjamin Mertz and Melanie DeMore. It's going to be an awesome, high energy concert, with excellent musicians, benefitting our very own food pantry. We're expecting a large crowd to attend from the wider community– I'm imagining us church members packing the house, wearing our name tags and telling people about our church! Additionally, the Inter-Church Food Pantry Committee will have a table in the courtyard, ready to answer questions about the work of the pantry at the event. If you'd like to get involved, we're looking for volunteers – everything from parking lot monitors to help with traffic flow, to ushers, to bakers who can provide cookies at intermission. It's going to be fun, let me know if you're willing to support in some way. Pick up a flyer in the church office to hand out to friends, because this is going to be amazing, and everyone will want to be there.

–Pastor Rachel

A Communi-Tea of Women

- Bobbie Johanson, LC Member for Care & Fellowship



Our first gathering, on November 4th was a success. Ten women participated and are looking forward to our next one. Those in attendance decided that we will hold the meetings on the second Saturday of each month from 2 - 4 p.m. We ended the first one by 3:15 p.m. The next one will be a *Christmas Joy* themed gathering at Bobbie Johanson's home on December 9. We will then go back to Fellowship Hall on January 13. Please mark your calendar and join in the fun to deepen friendships and connect to other women in the church.

What: An opportunity for women to connect and get in the Christmas spirit.

When: Saturday, December 9, 2-4 p.m.

Where: Bobbie Johanson's home: 765 Pinecrest Avenue, Sebastopol

Bring: a Christmas ornament or a special Christmas book that you treasure would like to share about with the group.

Details: Bobbie will provide goodies to nibble. Please bring your own water. You will be able to check out one of her five hundred Christmas books to take home and enjoy.

Feedback: Please let me know if you intend to come. You are welcome to come last minute. If you can't make this one, I hope you can come in January.

Bobbie Johanson

bjohanso@sonic.net

cell: 707 494-9599

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

December 1	Alina Peterson	December 16	Craig Allender
December 2	Jean Polley	December 16	Josephine Hole
December 3	Jen Bredesen	December 19	Jack Dunlap
December 3	Santiago Basso	December 19	Patty Raney
December 4	George Drennon	December 19	Shawn Nichols
December 5	Deanna Euritt	December 19	Chris Malone
December 6	Victoria Nelson	December 20	Dick Zimmer
December 7	Alvin Hukins	December 21	Lorilee Desantis
December 7	Emma Steyn	December 24	Suzanne Albin
December 10	Ginny Embry	December 24	Maryjane Grotting
December 11	Jim Jenkins	December 27	Paula Matzinger
December 11	Amelia Cassells	December 27	Nicole Whitehorn
December 12	David Peterson	December 28	Mat Keller
December 13	Elizabeth Thomas	December 28	Josie Malone
December 13	Judy Bredesen	December 29	Christine Field
December 14	Ruby Wood	December 30	Joanna Caldwell
December 14	Marquesa Durairaj	December 31	Sonia Cuppova
December 15	Daniela Kingwell		



December 2023 Events at Community Church

December 3	1st Sunday in Advent - Hope , Worship Service, 10:00 am, Sanctuary Kinship Time, 11:00 am, Bell Tower Courtyard Faith Formation Hour, 11:15 am, Various Locations Middle School Youth Group, 4 pm, Youth Lounge High School Youth Group, 5 pm, Youth Lounge
December 4	Prayer Shawl Ministry, 10 am, Fireside Room
December 5	Grounds Team, 9 am, Church Campus Shower Program, 9 am, Memorial Hall Men's Discussion Group, 6 pm, Fireside Room
December 6	Staff Team, 10 am, Fireside Room Women's Bible Study, 10 am, Room 6 Handbell Ensemble, 4 pm, Sanctuary
December 7	Chancel Choir, 6:30 pm, Choir Room
December 9	Second Saturday Luncheon, Noon, Fellowship Hall Women's Discussion Group, 2 pm, Johanson home
December 10	2nd Sunday in Advent - Peace , Worship Service, 10:00 am, Sanctuary Kinship Time, 11:00 am, Bell Tower Courtyard Faith Formation Hour, 11:15 am, Various Locations Youth Rehearsal, 4:30 pm, Sanctuary Christmas Caroling/Potluck, 5 pm, Fellowship Hall
December 12	Grounds Team, 9 am, Church Campus Shower Program, 9 am, Memorial Hall Facility Committee, 11 am, Fireside Room Personnel Committee 4 pm, Fireside Room Lead Minister PPRT 5 pm, Fireside Room Outreach Committee, 7 pm, Fireside Room
December 13	Staff Team, 10 am, Fireside Room Women's Bible Study, 10 am, Room 6 Handbell Ensemble, 4 pm, Sanctuary
December 14	Chancel Choir, 6:30 pm, Choir Room
December 15	No Salt & Light Newsletter for the month of January
December 17	3rd Sunday in Advent - Joy , Worship Service, 10:00 am, Sanctuary Kinship Time, 11:00 am, Bell Tower Courtyard Faith Formation Hour, 11:15 am, Various Locations Middle School Youth Group, 4 pm Sanctuary High School Youth Group, 4 pm, Sanctuary Joyful Noise Benefit Concert, 4 pm, Sanctuary
December 18	Prayer Shawl Ministry, 10 am, Fireside Room
December 19	Grounds Team, 9 am, Church Campus Shower Program, 9 am, Memorial Hall Finance Committee, 3 pm, Fireside Room
December 20	Staff Team, 10 am, Fireside Room Women's Bible Study, 10 am, Room 6 Handbell Ensemble, 4 pm, Sanctuary Leadership Council, 6:30 pm, Media Room

Events Continued on page 17

December 2023 Events at Community Church cont...

December 21	Advent Labyrinth, 9 am, Chapel Longest Night Worship Service, 5 pm, Chapel Chancel Choir, 6:30 pm, Choir Room
Christmas Eve	4th Sunday in Advent - Love Worship Service, 10:00 am, Sanctuary Kinship Time, 11:00 am, Bell Tower Courtyard Family Friendly Service, 4:30 pm, Sanctuary Traditional Serve of Lessons & Carols, 7 pm, Sanctuary
December 26	Shower Program, 9 am, Memorial Hall Grounds Team, 9 am, Campus
December 27	Staff Team, 10 am, Fireside Room Women's Bible Study, 10 am, Room 6 Handbell Ensemble, 4 pm, Sanctuary
December 28	Chancel Choir
December 31	1st Sunday after Christmas , Worship Service, 10 am, Sanctuary Kinship Time, 11 am, Bell Tower Courtyard

High School Youth SALT Trip Fundraiser: Craft Faire at Sebastopol Grange

In November, our High School SALT Trip participants sold their wares at the Sebastopol Grange. They made over \$780 in sales and had a chance to tell lots of people about their trip to Tijuana!



Community Church of Sebastopol
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SALT & LIGHT

COMMUNITY CHURCH OF SEBASTOPOL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

DECEMBER 2023 NEWSLETTER

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