

**THE COMMUNITY CHURCH
P O BOX 579
SEBASTOPOL CA 95473**

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



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DATED MATERIAL: Please do not delay

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Are you Ready for This?

Rev. Benjamin Broadbent

Christmas can be perilously sentimental. The charming memories of Christmases past can keep us from hearing with new ears the strangeness of the Christmas story. In a world of global empires and puppet kings, of wealth disparity and marginalized people, a child is born. So what? Why should we care that a Jewish baby was born to a poor family in a backwater town over 2000 years ago? Well, we shouldn't care unless we trust, by faith, that that child's birth, life, death, and resurrection have shaken the world to its core because that child uniquely embodied God's vision of peace and justice.

Of course, faith is always just an option. Another option is sentimentality, holding onto cherished feelings of yesteryear and going through the familiar motions of too much eating, buying, and stressing. I don't know about you, but after 2016, I'm ready to hear the Christmas story afresh:

- Ready for the odd eastern magi, stooping to enter a Bethlehem hut;
- Ready for uncouth shepherds to be scared sheepless in the fields;
- Ready for full-throated angel anthems about peace;
- Ready for a poor, refugee family to deliver hope into a tired, settled, sentimental world;
- Ready for the birth of Yeshua to shake things up again.

"All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: "Look, the young woman shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." – Matthew 1:22-23

Pastor Ben

December 2016



Sunday Worship service at 10:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary

December 4

2nd Sunday in Advent: PEACE

Today all ages gather for multi-generational worship with Holy Communion. The Chancel Choir sings "Listen!" by Joel Raney, featuring Bernie Hovden on clarinet, and a Wind Ensemble shares worship music. We will light the Advent candle of "Peace" during the Children's Message, and Rev. Dr. Benjamin J. Broadbent preaches a sermon on Isaiah 11:1-10 & Matthew 3:1-12 entitled "Vision of Peace."

December 11

3rd Sunday in Advent: JOY

On this day known traditionally as "Gaudete Sunday," *gaudete* meaning "joy," we light the pink candle on our Advent wreath. The Handbell Ensemble plays "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel and other worship music. Rev. Broadbent preaches a sermon on Isaiah 35:1-10 & Mathew 11:2-11 entitled "Joy as an Act of Resistance."

December 18

4th Sunday in Advent: LOVE

Today we light the fourth candle on our Advent wreath, the candle of "Love." Divine Connection shares worship music and Rev. Rachel Knuth preaches a sermon on Isaiah 7:10-16 & Matthew 1:18-25 entitled "Jesus, the Compassion of God."

December 24 – Christmas Eve

6:00 PM – Child-Friendly Service with Christmas Pageant

The Christmas story will be read, carols will be sung, and our children will participate in a lively, even raucous, pageant. We will light the Christ candle at the center of our Advent wreath.

8:30 PM Traditional Service of Lessons & Carols with Sermon

Traditional readings of the Christmas story along with carols. Our Handbell Ensemble and Chancel Choir provide worship music. Rev. Broadbent preaches a sermon entitled "A Most Surprising Night."

(Note: Because Christmas Eve is on a Saturday, we will not be holding an 11:00 PM service this year.)

December 25 – Christmas Day – 10:30 AM

Today we gather to sing lots of carols and to light all of the candles of our Advent wreath one more time. Rev. Broadbent preaches a sermon entitled "God in the Manger."

Coming in January... Season of Epiphany, Baptism of Christ Sunday, Martin Luther King, Jr., New Members join, Annual Meeting of the Congregation



2017 ANNUAL APPEAL

Pledges (as of Nov 22)	Current	Goal	Over/(Under)
Households	124	200	(76)
Our Congregation's Ministry	\$312,958	\$308,000	\$4,958
Wider Mission	\$28,342	\$30,800	(\$2,416)
Total Pledges	\$341,342	\$338,800	\$2,542

SILENT ADVENT SPIRAL

DECEMBER 4



Come deepen your Advent practice at our 3rd annual Advent Spiral in the Chapel on December 4. There will be two seatings: 5 & 6 pm, please sign up with Karin in the church office. Children, youth, and adults are welcome at both seatings.

There will be soft guitar music as we process through the spiral one at a time. Each person will have an unlit candle in an apple holder, and will silently walk to the center of the spiral to light the candle. Then as s/he walks out of the spiral s/he will place the apple candle on an empty stump in the greenery.

This ritual calls forth in all of us the seeking of light—in going to our very center, we discover the light and take it out to share it with others. Please come ready to participate in a quiet walking meditation as we begin our Advent season.

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

Do you have a child (3 & up) who would like to be in the Christmas Pageant on Christmas Eve, during the 6:00pm child-friendly service? RSVP to Pastor Rachel by December 3, with your child's name and age. We will not be able to add to the cast after the December 4 practice.



We will have four practices:

Dec 4 @ 11:45am (snack provided), script overview
Dec 11 @ 11:45am (snack provided), practicing with parts
Dec 18 @ 11:45am (snack provided), practice + costume fitting
Dec 24 @ 11:00am, dress rehearsal

Also, if you'd like to help with ritual arts/worship planning for the Christmas Eve Family Service, please contact Rachel Knuth:

rachelknuth@uccseb.org. **CHRISTMAS EVE PAGEANT**

CHOIR PRACTICE

All children participating in the Christmas Eve Pageant will be encouraged to attend a choir practice with Rev. Brian Plaughter before worship on Dec 11 and 18 from 9:30-10:15 am in the Choir Room. Parents – please make every effort to get your child(ren) to practice so they will have the opportunity to learn the words to the songs – thank you!

CHRISTMAS COLLECTIONS

Sebastopol Sunrise Rotary is collecting warm winter coats and new toys to hand out during a festive Christmas Dinner in our Memorial Hall on December 25 to help those in need. If you can contribute new or nearly new warm clothing and new toys for Santa to hand out on Christmas Day, please call 707.953.0517. Also, if you would like to volunteer your time on Christmas Day or help with preparations, please contact Kathy at 707.953.0517.

2016 PLEDGE REPORT

Just a reminder, there is still time to complete your 2016 pledge to the Community Church! In order to claim credit for 2016, all pledges must be received in the church office or postmarked by December 31.

Although we have kept expenses below budget, our income has fallen short. Please take the time now to complete your pledge, or if finances allow, remember your church with an extra gift this December.

★ THANK YOU ★ THANK YOU ★ THANK YOU ★

Thank you to Doris Rowe for spending time cleaning the pews each week and preparing the Sanctuary for worship. ★ Thank you to office elves Joanne Matson and Janet Minton for your weekly help doing all sorts of office chores. ★ Thank you to our Thanksgiving donors and volunteers! ★ Thank you to our 2nd Saturday cooks and servers for helping with our homeless lunch – there is always next month if you would also like to lend a hand.

★ THANK YOU ★ THANK YOU ★ THANK YOU ★



Memorial Poinsettias

On December 11 we will grace the church chancel with beautiful Memorial Poinsettias in 6" foil wrapped pots. Please fill out the form below and bring it to the church office or leave in the collection plate with your check. The cost is \$10 per poinsettia plant with checks made payable to the Community Church.

Deadline for ordering poinsettias is December 5th.

Given in Memory of _____

- or -

Given in Honor of _____

Given by _____

Enclosed is my check for \$ _____ for _____
 poinsettia plants. (\$10 each)

_____ I will take my plant home.

_____ Please deliver my plant to a shut-in.

Deadline for ordering poinsettias is December 5th.



- | | | | |
|----|------------------------|----|---------------------|
| 2 | Jean Polley | 15 | Colby Magster-Buman |
| 3 | Christopher Petersilge | 18 | Lange Look |
| 4 | George Drennon | 19 | Jack Dunlap |
| | Linda Good | | Patty Raney |
| 6 | Victoria Nelson | 20 | Dick Zimmer |
| 7 | Alvin Hukins | 21 | Lorilee DeSantis |
| | Pamela Downie | | Maddy Foster |
| | Emma Steyn | 24 | Suzanne Albin |
| 9 | Nathaniel Felton | | Bruce Matson |
| | Georgia Grays | 26 | Hunter McLeod |
| 10 | Ginny Embry | 27 | Paula Matzinger |
| 11 | Jim Jenkins | | Dylan Lamm |
| 12 | Rowena Kennedy | 28 | Mat Keller |
| | David Peterson | | Luke Purcell |
| 13 | Elizabeth Thomas | | Josie Malone |
| 14 | Kaelen Bright | 29 | Jenna Evans |
| | Marquesa Weigel | | Brayden Farnham |
| | Steven Kellner | 30 | Joanna Caldwell |

127TH ANNUAL MEETING.



The 127th Annual Meeting of The Community Church of Sebastopol will be on Sunday, January 22nd, immediately following worship in the Sanctuary.

All committee chairs need to turn in their annual report to the church office by January 2, 2017. Please call the church office – 823-2484 – if you have any questions or would like to see copies of previous reports to help you get started.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Godly Play and Sunday School



Children's Ministry

- Dec 4** Multi-Generational Worship Service
- Dec 11** Pre-School & Kindergarten - Advent III in Room 5
1-3 Grade Story of Mary in Room 6
- Dec 18** Pre-School & Kindergarten Advent IV in Room 5
1-3 Grade Mystery of Christmas in Room 6
- Dec 25** Multi-Generational Worship Service
- Jan 1** Multi-Generational Worship Service

Many thanks to our Godly Play Storytellers and Door Helpers in December: Paula Berndt, Laurie Kellner, Kristen DelMonte, Olivia Foster and Ann Butterfield

Advent Program

"All the Lonely People"

Monday December 5, 7pm,

Sponsored by The Community Church of Sebastopol, UCC

led by Suzanne and Jeffrey Jubenville
and includes musician from our congregation

You are invited to an alternative Advent program, "All the Lonely People," December 5 at 7 p.m. at the Community Church of Sebastopol. The contemplative interactive program features music by John Lennon, Paul McCartney, and George Harrison, for audience as well as jazz choir. The songs will be paired with poems and readings that address or grapple with the themes of the season.

This creative way of expressing the sacred in a secular way is also an attractive alternative program to those for whom the holidays or current events are a struggle. It's also for people who just like the Beatles! We hope to see you there. Free will offering. – no one will be turned away due to lack of funds.

CHRISTMAS CAROLING!



Join us on Sunday, Sunday, December 18, for caroling with the choir, right here in our neighborhood. Everyone – all ages – are invited to meet at church at 4 PM on December 18. Bring a holiday goodie to share and we will meet at the Boal's for more Christmas cheer. Please contact our Minister of Music, Brian Plaughter at 869-9120 if you have any questions.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

Our evening Christmas Eve services are always special, with two different, distinctive and very beautiful worship services. Both services conclude with a candlelight recessional to the courtyard.



6:00 – Child-Friendly Service with Christmas Pageant

A candlelight service for all ages! The Christmas story will be read, carols will be sung, and our children will participate in a lively, even raucous, pageant. We will light the Christ candle at the center of our Advent wreath and conclude with a candlelight recessional to the courtyard.

8:30 – Traditional Service of Lessons & Carols with Sermon

A Christmas Eve service with traditional readings of the Christmas story along with carols. Our Handbell Ensemble and Chancel Choir provide worship music and Rev. Broadbent preaches a sermon entitled "A Most Surprising Night." The service will conclude with a candlelight recessional to the courtyard.

Note: Because Christmas Eve falls on Saturday, we will not be holding an 11:00 PM service this year. Services on Christmas Day will be at 10:30 AM.

UKULELE GROUP MEETS ON FRIDAYS



The UkeStars will continue to meet on Fridays in the Fellowship Hall for their jam sessions and weekly practice from 10-11:30 AM. For information please call Vicki Reno at 827-3668 or email at vreno@comcast.net.



MARRIAGE

Alex Wilson married Ari Kinnear on Saturday October 22, 2016 in a private ceremony officiated by his aunt, Lizann Bassham. A family lunch was held at Woodfour to celebrate the newlyweds. Alex is the son of Diana and Edwin Wilson, brother of Danelle Wilson and the first grandson of Barbara Wilson and Ralph Schram. Blessings!

DEATHS

Darryl Fenley died in his sleep at home in Santa Rosa on Monday, October 24. Although Darryl was fighting cancer, he lived his life to the fullest and was present in his usual spot at the piano, serving as our keyboardist the day prior to his death. He leaves behind his husband and partner of 35 years, Alvin Hukins and a host of family and friends. Services were held on October 29, officiated by Rev. Benjamin Broadbent. Please remember Alvin in your prayer.

Fran Begun, age 88, passed away on November 10. Fran, a long-time church member, was very involved in Women's Fellowship and the Committee for Mission & Outreach as well as other aspects of church life in her younger years. Please keep the family of Fran Begun in your prayers. Plans for a memorial service are pending.

PRAYERS

Prayers for... Donna Tappan as she continues her recovery at home. Communication with Donna is best by email: 2dtappan@comcast.net. Please watch for an email where you will be able sign up to help with meal preparation.

Prayers for... Joyce Cox as she recovers from a broken shoulder.

Prayers for ... Michael Jenkins, grandson of Chris and Jim Jenkins as he continues to improve and will be going home soon.

Prayers for... Carole Hudlow, continuing her recovery and welcomes visitors – please call first: 707.235.3350.



MISSION & OUTREACH



The Mission & Outreach Board is once again sponsoring the Christmas Tree as well as the Shoebox Ministry – with the shoeboxes filled for men only (women and children are covered by a great many other services while the need to help homeless men remains strong).

Shoeboxes will be available for you to pick up on November 27 following worship. The shoeboxes can be filled with necessities for a homeless man (see list below). The box should be wrapped in Christmas paper and placed under the Christmas tree in the narthex. On December 19 members of the Mission & Outreach Board will deliver the gifts to the Homeless Services Center in Santa Rosa.

Our Shoebox Ministry gifts can be an important part in the life of a homeless man. Please fill your shoebox generously using “regular” size products (not “sample” sizes). It is important to stick to the list and include all the items as these gifts are opened in a group setting

SHOEBOX MINISTRY FOR MEN

Toothpaste	Toothbrush	Pocket comb
Deodorant	Washcloth	Shampoo/conditioner
2 granola bars	Hand towel	Package of tissues
Disposable razors	Chapstick	Large bar of soap
1 Pair of warm socks		Pen and notepad
Shaving cream		Box of band aides

Our tree will be decorated with “Warm Socks, Warm Hats & Underwear.” There is always a tremendous need for men’s, women’s and children’s socks and new packaged underwear in all sizes. Warm socks, packages of underwear, hats and gloves can be brought in to decorate the Christmas tree that will be placed in the narthex on the first Sunday of Advent, November 27. All the items collected will be delivered to agencies serving the needy on December 19 by members of the Mission & Outreach Board.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Nominating Committee will be calling you soon to ask you to volunteer for committees and boards at The Community Church. Please give prayerful consideration as to where you would like to serve in the year 2017.

- ✕ **Adult Education Committee:** Plans classes, workshops, Bible studies for adults
- ✕ **Board of Christian Education:** Responsible to guide and support Sunday Children's Ministries. Also works on special events, such as the Advent Event.
- ✕ **Memorial & Endowment:** Manages funds given as endowments and memorials; plans educational events for the congregation and community.
- ✕ **Mission & Outreach:** Concerned with meeting human needs in the local community, the nation and the world; presents educational programs and projects.
- ✕ **Nominating Committee:** Responsible for obtaining persons to serve the church on boards and committees.
- ✕ **Personnel Committee:** Establishes and maintains personnel policies; meets with church staff; addresses personnel issues.
- ✕ **Board of Trustees:** Responsible for care and custody of the property and financial affairs of the church.
- ✕ **Youth Committee:** Support group for the youth groups and their advisors. Responsible for finding and training youth leaders
- ✕ **Diaconate:** Help coordinate Sunday morning volunteers and act as church liaison during memorial services.

✂-----

Please consider me for the following Board or Committee:

Name _____

Phone Number _____

Please complete and return to the church office. Thank you.

Women's Bible Study

Women's Bible Study will meet on Wednesdays in December on the December 7 and 14 in the Fireside Room at 10 AM. We will continue our study on Practicing Peace with Romans 12:14-21 and Isaiah 43:1-4. All women are invited to join the group. We will break for Christmas and meet up again in the New Year. Questions? Please contact Joanne Matson at 823-5249.



Visit us at: <https://www.facebook.com/uccseb> and give us a thumbs up! Pastor Ben keeps our FaceBook page fresh and up-to-date with something new almost every day. Check us out!

MISSION & OUTREACH SEEKING NEW MEMBERS

At least 6 new members are needed to begin serving on the Mission & Outreach Committee beginning in February 2017. Four of the current members will complete 4 years of service next January and under church bylaws, must step down for at least one year. Two others have notified me they are unable to continue serving due to personal circumstances.

Thus, I am looking for church members interested in participating in our congregations Outreach efforts to the world beyond our doors. Persons who have never served on Mission & Outreach as well as former members are welcome. We anticipate a larger Outreach budget in 2017 enabling us to do more than in recent years. If you are curious, have questions, or know you want to be part of our action, contact me at rottenappleranch@aol.com or leave a message in the M & O mail slot in the church office.

Steve Beck, Chair

Women's Fellowship

DECEMBER 16 CHRISTMAS TEA/COFFEE & COOKIES!

Please join us for our only gathering in December when we celebrate the Christmas season with tea/coffee, cookies and fellowship. We will meet in Fellowship Hall Thursday December 15 at 10:30, and begin with a short business meeting followed by tea/coffee, cookies and Nativity sets! Please bring a favorite Nativity set to display and share with us. If you would like to participate in a Christmas Cookie Exchange, please bring 2 dozen of your favorite home baked cookies and you will get to take home 2 dozen cookies of your choosing!



All women are invited to this final meeting and program of Women's Fellowship for 2016. Please join us.



ADULT EDUCATION SUNDAY MORNING CLASS CONTINUES

Please join us Sundays at 9:30 in the Fireside Room for coffee and to discuss the scripture chosen for the sermon. We will begin the discussion with a brief insight into the pastor's view of the passage and pose questions for the group. We will read the passage, discuss it, and then listen to the Sunday sermon with a little more insight and hear what the pastor has to say.

You don't need to be a Bible scholar, just have the desire to delve into the Bible, one scripture at a time. We hope you will join us.

YEAR END FINANCIAL REQUESTS

The last day to request a reimbursement check for 2016 is December 13. Checks will be distributed on December 14. Check requests made after December 13 will not be available until after the first of the year.

Please remember that your 2016 contributions to the church must be postmarked on or before December 31

Youth News

December 2016

Sr. High School PF Grades 9-12
Middle School PF Grades 6-8



December 4 – Youth Lounge

Vision of Peace: Isaiah 11:1-10

4 PM Middle School Hang Out ★ 4:30 -6 PM Meeting

6 PM High School Hang Out ★ 6:30 -8 PM Meeting

Both groups will participate in the Advent Spiral in Faith Chapel

December 11 – Youth Lounge

Heartbeat of Justice: Luke 1:47-55

Tonight we will come together in prayer and hope, reflect on the past year and prepare to enter the new.

4 PM Middle School Hang Out ★ 4:30 -6 PM Meeting

6 PM High School Hang Out ★ 6:30 -8 PM Meeting

December 18 – Youth Lounge – Christmas Party!

God With Us: Matthew 1:18-25

Our annual ugly Christmas sweater party!

Come dressed to impress, or not! Bring a snack to share and join our night of celebration and community!

4 PM Middle School Hang Out ★ 4:30 -6 PM Meeting

6 PM High School Hang Out ★ 6:30 -8 PM Meeting

December 24 Christmas Eve Services

Hope to see you there – 6 pm or 8:30pm



December 25 – Merry Christmas!

Enjoy the day with your loved ones, and keep our community of friendship in prayer.

Coming in 2017. . .

Watch for registration information on **Mid-Winter Camp** for Middle School Youth



MISSION & OUTREACH

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be next year, on Monday, January 9 at 7 PM in the Fireside Room. In December the group will meet at 10 AM on December 19 to collect and distribute gifts from our Shoebox Ministry and the Sock & Underwear Tree.

SATURDAY TABLE

On the second Saturday of each month, Mission & Outreach serves lunch in Fellowship Hall to our local homeless population. In addition to offering a hot meal, we also offer showers, laundry vouchers and bus passes. If you would like to contribute to this effort, there are several ways to help:



- ❖ *Cash and check can be made out to the Community Church and designated for the homeless lunch*
- ❖ *Soaps, shampoos and conditioner in sample or motel sizes*
- ❖ *Thick tube socks, sweat shirts, jackets, etc.*
- ❖ *Men's walking/athletic shoes or boots*
- ❖ *Tarps, rain ponchos, back packs*
- ❖ *Disposable razors and shaving cream*
- ❖ *Packaged toothbrushes & toothpaste*
- ❖ *Hand sanitizer, Chapstick, insect repellent and Sun screen*

Clothing items to do not have to be new, but they must be usable and clean. Look for the collection bin in the church entry to drop off your donations. Monetary donations should be left in the church office. For more information or to volunteer, contact Joanne Matson at 823-5249 or the church office at 823-2484.

SLEEPING BAGS

Winter is on its way and we have already had a number of requests for sleeping bags. If you have a clean, useable sleeping bag to donate, please bring it to the church office and we will see that it



gets put to good use. Thank you!

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE:

YOUR COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES

Irma Bachelor (707-829-5485), Mary Coleman (707-861-9444), Marian McDonald (707-338-5156) and Marna McKenzie (505-660-1725) are the Members-at-Large to the Church Council for this year. If you have any issues you would like brought to the Council's attention, one of the Members-at-Large can help you out. Look for their bright red "Member at Large" name badge on Sunday mornings.

BAKED GOODS FOR SUNDAY COFFEE HOUR

We need to stock up with goodies to share during our Coffee Hour! If you have cookies, cake or some kind of treat we can serve after church, please bring it by the church wrapped for the freezer and we can save it for next Sunday. Thanks!



NAME TAGS?

If your name tag has come up missing, or you don't have a name tag, we'd like to get one for you! And if you already have your name tag, please make a habit of clipping it on to help all of us remember your name!

To get a new or replacement name tag, print C L E A R L Y the first and last name you would like to see on your church name tag. Leave this request in the church office or collection plate:

First Name _____

Last Name _____



Minister of Music, Brian Plaugher requests that you take a few moments and jot down the titles of your favorite hymns to help with future worship planning. Please leave this in the collection plate or in the church office.

Your Name: _____

Favorite Hymns: _____

December 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27 1st t Sunday of Advent Advent Event & Lunch in Memorial Hall 9:15 AM Adult Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship & Children's Ministry	28	29	30 4:45 PM Handbell Choir	1 7:00 PM Grief Group 7:15 PM Chancel Choir	2 10:00 AM UkeStars	3
4 2nd Sunday of Advent 9:15 AM Adult Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship & Children's Ministry 11:45 AM Children's Pageant Practice 4:00 PM Middle School Youth 5 & 6 PM Advent Spiral 6:00 PM Sr. High Youth	5 7 PM "All the Lonely People" Advent Concert & Program	6	7 10:00 AM Women's Bible Study 4:45 PM Handbell Choir	8 7:00 PM Grief Group 7:15 PM Chancel Choir	9 10:00 AM UkeStars	10 11:00 AM Memorial Service & Reception for Evelyn Moore 11:30 AM 2nd Saturday Lunch
11 3rd Sunday of Advent 9:15 AM Adult Sunday School 9:30 AM Pageant Choir Rehearsal 10:30 AM Worship & Children's Ministry 11:45 AM Children's Pageant Practice 2 PM Rachel's Pastoral Care Comm. 4:00 PM Middle School Youth 6:00 PM Sr. High Youth	12	13	14 10:00 AM Women's Bible Study 4:45 PM Handbell Choir 7:00 PM Board of Trustees Meeting	15 10:30 AM Women's Fellowship Christmas Tea/Coffee 7:00 PM Christian Education Committee 7:00 PM Grief Group 7:15 PM Chancel Choir	16 10:00 AM UkeStars 1	17
18 4th Sunday of Advent 9:15 AM Adult Sunday School 9:30 AM Pageant Choir Rehearsal 10:30 AM Worship & Children's Ministry 11:45 AM Children's Pageant Practice 4:00 PM Caroling 4:00 PM Middle School Youth 6:00 PM Sr. High Youth	19 10:00 AM Mission & Outreach	20	21 4:45 PM Handbell Choir	22 7:00 PM Grief Group 7:15 PM Chancel Choir	23 10:00 AM UkeStars	24 CHRISTMAS EVE 11:45 AM Children's Pageant Dress Rehearsal 6:00 PM Family Christmas Eve Service 8:30 PM Traditional Christmas Eve Service
25 CHRISTMAS DAY 10:30 AM Worship & Children's Ministry	26	27	28 7:00 PM Church Council	29 7:00 PM Grief Group	30 10:00 AM UkeStars	31

**CIRCLE OF TRUST
A RETREAT FOR ALL WOMEN**

FRIDAY, JANUARY 13-15, 2017 ANGELA CENTER IN SANTA ROSA



You are invited and encouraged to join us for a wonderful weekend beginning with Friday dinner until after worship on Sunday morning at 10. There are a few openings for Saturday only.

THEME: A Circle of Trust based on work by Parker Palmer. We will be lead in creative conversations with ourselves and each other to discover our inner wisdom and plumb the depths of our own faith well.

FACILITATOR: Reverend Curran Reichert

Curran grew up in Santa Rosa and is the new minister at the Sonoma UCC church. She previously served as the pastor of the Tiburon UCC church. Curran has led retreats with Bethany Nelson and has a background in musical theatre. She blends music, arts, spirituality and social justice and is described as "lots of fun". Her wife is a school teacher and they have a 6 yr. old daughter.

The time at retreat is yours to do as you wish. Nothing is mandatory! Sessions are no longer than 2 hours, with breaks and lots of interaction with others or alone time. There is free time to walk, sleep, chat, and there are always table games with lots of fun and laughter.

FACILITY: We will be at **Angela Center**, Santa Rosa, off Old Redwood Highway near Cardinal Newman High School. There are 12 rooms with a single bed and 12 with two twin beds. Each room has a sink; bathrooms are down the hall. Meals, meetings and sleeping are all in one building which is handicap accessible.

Fees are non-refundable after December 31st.

Fees are non-refundable after December 31st.

SCHOLARSHIPS are available for **ANYONE** who wishes to attend (you don't have to be a part of the church family). Scholarships will be limited to a maximum of \$125-\$135 depending on accommodations. Payment of your portion can be made monthly so long as it is paid prior to the next retreat. Those who receive a scholarship will be asked to participate in one or more fundraising events. Scholarship information is kept confidential. Contact either Jane Huneke or Joyce Cox.



**Women's Retreat Registration Form
January 13-15, 2017**

Name _____

Phone _____

Email address _____

Address _____

Any special needs: _____

FEES:

____ \$185 **Double Room**; Full retreat Fri.-Sun. includes meals.

Preferred roommate: _____

____ \$200 **Single Room**; Full Retreat Fri-Sun. includes meals.

____ \$70 **Saturday Only**: includes meals

\$_____ = Total Registration Fee – Fees are not refundable after Dec. 31

____ Enclosed is the total registration fee

____ Enclosed is the total fee + \$____ to supplement the retreat fund

____ Enclosed is a deposit of \$_____ (no less than \$50)

NOTE: The remaining balance to be paid no later than Jan 7th.

Transportation: I am interested in carpooling: Yes No
Carpooling will be arranged by Joyce Cox b-j-cox@att.net 829-0750

____ I will be driving my car and have room for ____ more people.

____ I would like to have a ride.

Please make checks payable to **The Community Church** with a notation in the memo line: Women's Retreat.

Please return this form with your deposit to:

Marge Holland; 8949 Barnett Valley Road, Sebastopol 95472,
or drop in the collection plate, or leave at the church office.

For more information please contact;

Jane Huneke

jhunek1@att.net

795-5451

Joyce Cox

b-j-cox@att.net

829-0750



GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP



Join Grief Counselors Harry & Susanna Simms in the Fireside Room on Thursday evenings at 7PM as they facilitate a support group dealing with the pain of grief. Losing a loved one, whether it be a recent loss, or from years past, can be difficult to process. Please call Harry or Susanna at 829-7769 if you have any questions. The group meets each Thursday at 7PM in the Fireside Room. There is no charge and the group is open to all.

RECEIVE YOUR NEWSLETTERS ONLINE

To receive the monthly newsletter online, visit <http://www.uccseb.org/Newsletters.php>. **Go Green** and sign up for the online newsletter. Save paper, save postage and save money!

Alternative Gifts

GIVE THE GIFT OF HOPE

Mission & Outreach will be passing out the Alternative Gift Catalogs and they will also be available in the entryway and in the church office.

The Alternative Gifts International is a collection of products or services that allows you to donate in honor of your gift recipient. When you make a purchase from the Alternative Gifts catalog, you receive a gift card to present, explaining about the alternative gift you have purchased in their name. Through your Alternative Gifts purchase you can honor your gift recipient by giving someone in desperate need a flock of chickens, eye surgery, a month of care for an orphan or clean water, all given in their name. Choose from a multitude of other wonderful and helpful gifts that will be truly appreciated. Pick up a catalog and let your imagination go!



This Christmas, give the gift of hope – a gift that can change a life! Shop from home and save gas - give from the Church World Service Best Gifts Catalogue.

Volunteer Opportunities & Activities at the Community Church

Want to feel more connected to the Community Church, develop friendships and grow spiritually? Here is a list of activities and volunteer opportunities to help facilitate that. Not sure what the job entails, just sign up and we'll fill you in.

Please place this form in the church office or offering plate.

Worship

- Help w/ coffee hour
- Provide cookies for coffee hour
- Donate floral arrangements for worship
- Help arrange chancel flowers
- Provide a ride to church
- Read Scripture
- Assist w/ acolytes
- Greet
- Usher
- Work on banners
- Decorate sanctuary for Christmas
- Chancel Choir
- Help w/ Children's Choir
- Handbell Choir

Congregational Life

- Women's fellowship
- Kindred Groups
- Assist w/ receptions
- Gardening
- Women's Retreat

Outreach

- Community Christmas Dinner
- Inter-Church Food Pantry
- 2nd Saturday Lunches

Religious Education

- Preschool- 3rd grade (6 wk. commitment)
- Grades 4-5 (6 wk. commitment)
- Adult Bible Study Sunday a.m.
- Women's Bible Study Wed. a.m.
- Middle School Youth
- High School Youth

Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone _____

A d v e n t D e v o t i o n a l

The following is an excerpt from the 2016 UCC Advent Devotional, *Wolves and Lambs*. The introduction begins with Isaiah 11:6-9 and goes on to say how the name *Wolves and Lambs* was selected for the Advent Devotional: “because we think that the image of a wolf and a lamb lying down together should be comforting, yes, even sweet. But it should also be deeply unnerving. As the first Christmas was. As this one will be, if Isaiah and God – and we – have anything to say about it.”

The 2016 UCC Advent Devotional is available in its entirety via download as a pdf or on kindle at www.uccresources.com. A limited number of copies in print are available in the narthex.

S u n d a y , N o v e m b e r 2 7

WOLVES ARE COMING

Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep.

Romans 13:11

The wolves are coming.

Assess your life.

Do you feel like a wolf? Or like a lamb? Are you the predator? Or do you feel like prey?

It could be that you most align with the prey. Someone else has the power, and you sense that they want more – maybe even some of yours. Or, it could be that you align with the predator. You see opportunity, and you feel empowered – as if it is your destiny – to conquer.

A life of faith requires us to see both/and. To know that there is something in you that is vulnerable. And something in you that needs to be aggressive.

In Advent, we are called to awaken to these senses, to know that we are both wolves and lambs, both at once, and that both are beloved in God’s sight. Beloved and challenged to remember both at once.

Waken from your sleep to know yourself to be part of a family that includes people who seem quite different, quite distant, even oppositional. Awake and wonder where God might step in to soften the blows of your aggression, to strengthen you in your exposure. It is time

to wake up. A world is at stake as we align in oppositional corners. What if people in each corner knew themselves to be fighter for both sides? What would it mean to know yourself to be more complex, more empowered, more fierce? What would it mean to acknowledge yourself to be fully open? At risk? In need of protection?

Awaken lamb. Stand down, wolf. More forward as protector, not predator. Stand tall with and as the vulnerable. You have God-with-us, Emmanuel, with you.

O Come, Infinite One, and lift me to a place of new awakening. I am ready for more.

S u n d a y , D e c e m b e r 4

THE INVASIVE REIGN OF GOD

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall come out of his roots... The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. Isaiah 11:1,6 13:11

The air potato is an invasive vine that came to America in 1909. Sometime after that it ended up in my yard, and after seven years of fighting it, I’ve waived the white flag.

As its name suggests, the air potato produces lots of tiny tubers, each one capable of sprouting another plant. So even as you pull it down from your trees and hedges, you are sowing hundreds more.

The master gardeners in my life will be horrified to hear it, but Isaiah’s vision of that stubborn shoot reminds me of *Dioscorea bulbifera*. If a harmful invasive doesn’t fit the ecology of God’s reign, it does say something about its tenacity.

God’s advent is not a feeble stalk but a powerful and prolific plant bent on reshaping the entire ecosystem. It appears destructive to those that cultivate poverty and inequality. It bends the proud below its weight and sucks up the resources of the greedy.

It is a plant not to be trifled with.

And if it is the docility of the wolf that plays nice with the flock, it is also the audacity of the lamb unafraid to run with the pack. The reign of God

is a lamb with teeth and a tenacious tuber, prepared to blanket the earth in peace.

**All who sow war and nurture injustice, surrender!
Every wolf within me, bow to the Lamb of God!**

S u n d a y , D e c e m b e r 1 1

I AND THOU

... filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich empty away.
Luke 1:53

Are the rich an I or a Thou? Or is that Martin Buber concept dated? I think it is. The rich are too much I and too much Thou. Plus I and Thou is too anthropomorphic.

Buber argues that we should treat each other as subjects, not objects. In our Advent theme there is no difference to the lion when seen by the lamb. They are both subjects to each other.

Theologian Paul Santimire recommends a more ecological approach than Buber, one beyond anthropocentric dominion, where the phony on-toppers assume everyone and everything is here to feed them. Santimire prefers what he calls an "I-it" relationship, in which we regard ourselves as part of a whole. From Buber's anthropocentrism, where it is all about humans, it is a small step to get to rich people and poor people, rich people deserve more than poor people. Or so they say.

If we learn to think differently about lions and lambs, it is a small step to think differently about rich and poor. If rich and poor and animals and humans are part of a larger whole, instead of wearing the layered look, the world looks different. Mary glimpsed a greater justice than most of us have. Her justice is a mutual subjectivity, a sense of the I in the Thou and the I in the poor and I in the animal. Animals and the poor are no longer understood as property, food or labor.

We are all part of each other.

God of animals and humans, I and thou, us and it, when we imagine ourselves the greatest, surprise us and let us hear Mary's song in our rabbit ears.

S u n d a y , D e c e m b e r 1 8

SWEAT, MESS & PREP COOKS

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way.

Matthew 1:18

Our dentist is next to Alinia, the sixth best restaurant in the world. Dinner for two can cost more than \$2000. Guests dress accordingly. The place is equal parts laboratory and cathedral. There is a dish designed to disappear before you can eat it. Burnt leaves and apple vapor mix and linger in your nose as you inhale the autumns of your childhood. Up front, the restaurant gleams. It is perfect.

But you enter the dentist from the alley. A sweaty purveyor hurries in the back door with a wet cardboard box, wild greens bulge from the leaking seams. Two dishwashers in stained aprons break down the recycling. A line cook sneaks a cigarette, the specter of the next rush in his eyes.

Restaurant professionals call this "the heart of the house." If the heart doesn't beat, the whole place stops. The heart heaves the garbage bag and the heart chops onions, the heart speaks Spanish. The heart works hard at humble tasks, the heart is messy, but the gleam needs it. The gleam lives on sweat, mess and prep cooks.

What about the gleaming works of God? The sunset. The distance of the stars, the depth of oceans, the elegant way your blood carries oxygen to your brain. We assume that perfection itself must have made such perfects things.

Then at Christmas we peer into the heart of God's house. What is the manger if not the alley behind the height of mountains? In it we find an exhausted mother, an unkempt father and the word made flesh, helpless. All our gleaming beauty lives on the beating heart of God. And the beating heat of God is not perfect. It rests on straw and inhales the smell of cattle. As Rowan Williams says, "The whole system of the universe turns on the sort of love we find in a helpless child."

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Wolves and Lambs was prepared by the Still Speaking Writers' Group comprises of United Church of Christ ministers and authors who collaborate on a variety of resources for people in the church, outside the church, and not so sure about the church.