# SALT & LIGHT COMMUNITY CHURCH OF SEBASTOPOL DECEMBER 2019 NEWSLETTER



The Community
Church of
Sebastopol
United Church
of Christ
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Lead Minister Rev. Dr. Benjamin J. Broadbent

Associate
Minister of Faith
Formation
Rev. Lacey Hunter

Associate Minister of Congregational Care Rev. Rachel Knuth

> Minister of Music Rev. Brian Plaugher

**Pastor Emeritus** Rev. Gene Nelson

> Handbell Ensemble Director Karna Roa

Keyboardist J. Althea

Congregational Administrator Becca Emerson

> *Bookkeeper* Julie Reimer

*Custodian* Maria Mojica #

ADVENT: TIME FOR A NEW REALITY
By Rev. Dr. Benjamin J. Broadbent, Lead Minister

On a recent grocery trip to Trader Joe's I noticed a curious item in the checkout line – an Advent calendar. It was curious to me for two reasons. First of all, it was still early November, not even Thanksgiving, and there at the register, the countdown to Christmas had already begun. Secondly, the product used the distinctly liturgical word "Advent." Along with gourmet nut clusters and gluten free toaster waffles, shoppers could enjoy a daily chocolate for 25 days. I didn't buy the calendar, but I did think about chocolate for the rest of the day. This year, with Advent beginning on December 1, the church's liturgical calendar and the wider culture's countdown to Christmas are in sync. But for the Christian church, Advent is not simply a countdown to Christmas. Caught up in the December expectations of making lists, checking them twice, and buying as many gifts as we do in the other 11 months combined, we might miss that Advent is not about preparing for the expected rituals of Christmas. Advent is about preparing for the possibility of a new reality.

In the church during Advent, we hear a lot from the prophet Isaiah. I think that is because the church knows that Isaiah is a skilled poet who uses many metaphors to describe a vision for what is possible beyond the settled realities of our lives. Consider these familiar verses of Isaiah 2:4:

God shall judge between the nations,
and shall arbitrate for many peoples;
they shall beat their swords into plowshares,
and their spears into pruning hooks;
nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
neither shall they learn war any more.

Isaiah, speaking in his own time of turmoil, when an alternative to the present arrangements were scarcely imaginable, cast a vision of a world beyond war, a world where the justice of

God is allowed to flourish, a world in which the economy is redirected toward the care of the earth, the neighbor, the vulnerable. It is a world of peace which, as yet, still passes beyond our understanding.

We can mark our journey through Advent in a variety of ways – lighting candles, reading a daily devotion, or eating a chocolate. Whatever your way of passing the time may be, use the time to savor a possibility that what Advent offers is a new reality that will surely come if we can first imagine it.

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#### **WORSHIP**



#### **DECEMBER 2019 WORSHIP**

#### Sundays at 10:30 am in the Sanctuary

On December 8, 15, and 22, Children's Worship follows the Children's Message in the Chapel. Nursery Care available for newborns through Kindergarteners

#### December 1 - First Sunday of Advent: HOPE

Today the Christian liturgical calendar begins anew. On this first Sunday in the season of Advent, we gather for multi-generational worship to celebrate the sacrament of Holy Communion. We will light the first Advent candle and our Associate Minister of Congregational Care, Rev. Rachel Knuth, preaches on "Hope."

# HOPE-

#### December 8 – Second Sunday of Advent: PEACE



Today we light the second Advent candle, the candle of "Peace," and the Handbell Ensemble provides worship music. Our Lead Minister, Rev. Benjamin Broadbent, preaches a sermon on Isaiah 11: 1-10 entitled "Peace that Perplexes."

#### December 15 – Third Sunday of Advent: JOY

Traditionally known as Gaudete Sunday, today we light the pink candle, the candle of "Joy." The Chancel Choir provides worship music and Rev. Lacey Hunter, Associate Minister of Faith Formation, preaches.



#### December 21 - Longest Night Service - 4:00 p.m. in Faith Chapel

This prayerful worship service acknowledges that sorrow can be a part of the Advent journey. Led by Pastor Rachel with music by Andy DelMonte.

#### December 22 – Fourth Sunday of Advent: LOVE



On this fourth and final Sunday in Advent, we light the candle of "Love" and Rev. Broadbent preaches a sermon on Isaiah 7: 10 – 16 entitled "God with Skin On."

#### December 24 - Christmas Eve Candlelight Services

4:00 – Child-Friendly Service with Pageant

6:00 - Family-Friendly Service of Lessons and Carols (Handbell Ensemble plays)

8:30 - Traditional Service of Lessons and Carols (Chancel Choir sings)



#### December 29 – First Sunday after Christmas



Today we gather to sing carols and hear more of the Christmas story. Rev. Brian Plaugher, Minister of Music, leads worship and preaches.

Coming in January... 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Christmas, Feast of the Epiphany, Baptism of Christ Sunday, New Members join, Annual Meeting of the Congregation





#### **BALCONY VIEW & CONGREGATIONAL CARE**





THE BALCONY VIEW...
WHISPERS IN OUR HEARTS
By Michael Ott, Moderator

At Leadership Council's November meeting, we did a "check-in" with each Council member about participants and chairpersons and job descriptions of the teams and committees they are responsible for in preparation for the annual meeting and the new year. Each Council Member supports and provides accountability for his or her Ministry Area (or Resource Area, in the case of Council Officers) in collaboration with church staff members who are also assigned to the given Area. There is a Council Officer for Facilities, for Personnel, and for Finances. There is a Council Member for Worship & Arts, for Faith Formation, for Care and Fellowship, and for Outreach. Preparation now will yield extraordinary results for the new church year.

Council's preparation for a new beginning reminded me of Advent - a season of preparation, waiting and joyful expectation. Jeannie Ewing writes that "to many, waiting implies a passive state, in which we must act as observers or stand on the sidelines while the real action story happens around us." Ewing writes about Winter as a season of latency and dormancy. "We might be inclined to equate Winter with a period of nothingness - no growth, no new life. But Advent reminds us that waiting is purposeful if we do so actively, rather than passively. Winter has its purpose of encasing the tiniest seeds under the womb of earth, nestled in its warmth. We cannot see the growth, but if we hasten spring, the seed will not germinate and sprout. We must be patient and allow God to work on us through the times of spiritual aridity and periods of desert waiting. God reminds us through the cycle of seasons that resting makes us more aware of His presence and silence allows us to hear His whispers in our hearts."

The members of the Leadership Council all look forward to greeting you during this Advent season and to celebrate with you the quiet joy of expectant preparation and waiting.

https://uccseb.org/ Newsletters/2019-December-Newsletter.pdf

#### THE LONGEST NIGHT: DECEMBER 21

A comforting worship service with Communion

The Advent Season can be a complex time— it can be for us both a time of joyful hope, and it may stir within us memories and feelings of grief. It can be a time of rushing and shopping, and a time when we long to slow down and attend to loss.

If you are looking for a quieter worship service of comfort, candle-lighting, and Communion, this is a worship service for you. All are invited to join Pastor Rachel and musician, Andy DelMonte, for a prayerful and intentional worship service on this, the longest night of the year.

The Longest Night, Saturday, December 21 at 4pm in Faith Chapel. For more information, please contact Pastor Rachel: pastorrachel@uccseb.org.

#### NINE-TO-DINE

The Nine-to-Dine Fall program concludes with the groups meeting in December:



- Monday Group: 5:30pm December 9th at the Boals' home
- Wednesday Group: 9:00am December 11th at Gina Scribner's home
- Sunday Group: January 5th at the Becks' home, time TBD
- Friday Group: (yes, meeting on a Wednesday) December 11th, place and time TBD

#### Nine-to-Dine Questions of the Month

- What is one of your favorite Advent/Christmas traditions?
- 2. How do you live out your values during Advent/ Christmas?
- 3. If you experience grief during the holidays, how do you find support?



#### KINDRED GROUPS

The Kindred Groups gathering in December to Usher:
Golden Delicious-- Usher December 8
Gravenstein--Usher December 15
Social gatherings of Kindred Groups resume in January—Advent blessings on all them apples!

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#### ALL AGES ADVENT WORKSHOP & POTLUCK SUNDAY, DECEMBER 1

Memorial Hall immediately following worship

December 1 marks the first day of Advent and with that a time for the whole community to gather together and intentionally prepare the way for the in-breaking of Emmanuel - God with us. The Advent Workshop will begin with a blessing and a common meal.

Please bring food to share and your own dishes and utensils to eat with.

Potluck Guide (by last name)

A-H: Finger foods I-P: Salad P-Z: Dessert

Following our meal, every household (households of one and households of many) is invited to move about the Hall and create an Advent wreath. There will be a designated table for each week of Advent (Hope, Peace, Joy, Love and the Light of Christ). At the tables will be mason jars and candles to serve as the foundation for your wreath. There will also be prayers to help guide you each week and instructions for weekly spiritual practices to deepen your Advent journey.



#### CHRISTMAS EVE PICK-UP PAGEANT TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24

A pick-up pageant is a tradition that invites anyone present to join in the telling of the Christmas story. This year's pageant will tell the story through brief meditations on key characters and the unique roles they each played in the birth of Jesus. Who are you in the story of God's unfolding presence among us? Through narration and song, infants to elders are encouraged to participate on Christmas Eve. Pageant rehearsals will be held in the sanctuary on Sundays December 8, 15, 22, from 11:45-12:45 for all children and youth. Each week we will share stories about the different characters, learn the carols and make simple costume pieces for all participants to wear during the pageant. Children and youth present at rehearsals will lead the way on Christmas Eve and invite others to join them.





#### CHILDREN'S WORSHIP -SUNDAYS DECEMBER 8, 15 & 22

Faith Chapel immediately following the Children's Message

Children's worship is starting back up for the season of Advent. Following the Children's Message in the sanctuary, all children who wish to are invited to process to Faith Chapel for a special time of worship just for them. Children will rejoin their families in the sanctuary for the Closing Hymn. This Advent we will be exploring, through movement, song, meditation and art, the meaning of the carol "Joy to the World." Children's Worship leaders include Rev. Blythe Osner, Jon and Jonah Gonzales, Chloe Madden and Pastor Lacey.

#### ADVENT SPIRAL — SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8

5:30pm in Faith Chapel, All Ages Welcome

The Advent Spiral is a simple, candle-lit service, a quiet time of observation and preparation as we enter into the darkest days of the year. All are invited to come, to hold silence and witness to the darkness and promise of new light.

Plan to attend? A sign-up sheet will be available at the Advent Workshop.



#### **PRAYERS**





### DRAWING NEAR: "PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE" ADVENT-EXPERIMENTS

By Rachel Knuth, Associate Minister of Congregational Care



What's new with our intercessory prayer practice during the Season of Advent?

For the past year or so, we have been sending yellow cards forward, to offer intercessory prayers to God in community during worship. The cards have been carried in the offering plates, and the Pastors have read them aloud, with the prayer response, "Hear our Prayer." Although this is a meaningful part of our worship together, this model is only one of many ways we might offer prayers together as a worshiping community.

During the Season of Advent, we will be observing various forms of prayer during the "Prayers of the People" in worship. The idea is that we might use this dedicated season to expand our "repertoire" and learn some new ways to pray together. There are many ways for prayers to be lifted in community-- and we will be trying out some new-to-us practices for intercessory prayer in December.

So what is happening with the yellow cards during Advent?

- The yellow prayer request cards will still be found in the pews, and on the Welcome Table in the Narthex. You may still send a prayer request card forward in the offering plate, and it will be shared with the Pastors after the worship service.
- Another option will be for you to pin your prayer request card to the Prayers of the People bulletin board. Typically, this bulletin board has been on the back wall of the Sanctuary-- but it will be placed on an easel in the Narthex, with additional cards nearby, and you may pin your prayer there. You can also read the prayers that have been placed on the board.

Will my prayer still be read by the Pastors, and shared with our community?

• Yes! The Pastors will still pray alongside the prayers that are written on the yellow prayer request cards, both the cards collected in the offering plate, and the cards pinned to the Prayers of the People bulletin board. The private Prayer Concern Box will still be available for more fragile prayer requests.

Does my prayer still "count" even if it's not spoken aloud by one of the Pastors?

• Our faith teaches us that God is already at work, through the dynamic movement of the Holy Spirit, to bring forth new life and signs of resurrection, comfort, and mercy-- even before we have an inkling about praying for those things. God goes before us, always. We also trust in the power of personal prayer, and that any person of any age and background may offer a prayer-- spoken or unspoken-- and that God will hear it.

#### PRAYER CIRCLE

We Hold in Prayer...

All people struggling with addiction, as they may be especially challenged during the holiday season.

All those heading into or recovering from surgery, including Larry Stallings and Genia Thorhaug.

All people traumatized by navigating our country's immigration system, including the Honduran Family our church accompanies.

All of our homebound members, including Carmen & Lowell Yeager, Martha Rowlands, Nancy Mathews, Doris Rowe, Jack Curtis, Charles Williams, and Wynneth Longfellow. And we bless and release Prue Manley, one of our elderly homebound members, as she moves to New York to be close to family.

May the Spirit bring comforting care to these beloveds. Amen.









TOY







PEACE









Transgender Day of Remembrance Service



#### **ADVENT MISSION & OUTREACH NEWS**

#### SHOEBOX MINISTRY

The Mission & Outreach Committee is once again sponsoring the Shoebox Ministry – shoeboxes filled with necessities suitable for both men and women of our homeless community.

Shoeboxes will be available for you to pick up on the 1st Sunday of Advent, December 1st, following worship.

Our Shoebox Ministry gifts can be an important part in the life of a homeless person. Please fill your shoebox generously using "regular" size products (not "sample" sizes). It is important to stick to the list below and include all the items as these gifts are opened in a group setting. The box should be wrapped in Christmas paper and placed under the Christmas tree in the Narthex. After Sunday December 15th members of the Mission & Outreach Committee will deliver the gifts to the Homeless Services Center in Santa Rosa.

#### Shoebox Ministry Box Items

Toothpaste	Toothbrush	Pocket Comb
Deodorant	Washcloth	Shampoo/conditioner
2 Granola Bars (soft)	Hand Towel	Package of Tissues
Disposable Razors	Hand Sanitizer	Large Bar of Soap
1 Pair of Warm Socks	Pen and notepad	Shaving cream
Chapstick	Box of Band Aids	* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

#### CHRISTMAS TREE MINISTRY

The Mission and Outreach Committee is also sponsoring the opportunity to decorate our Narthex Christmas Tree with cold weather wear including hats, scarves, neck gators and gloves. These items can be hung or draped on the tree. Unwrapped packages of underwear, long underwear and warm socks may be placed under the tree. The receivers of these items, to be delivered to the Homeless Services Center, are mostly men so buy your gifts towards an appropriate size and style.

#### GIVE ALTERNATIVE GIFTS THIS YEAR!

Here is a great idea for your holiday shopping!

An Alternative Gift is a nontraditional way of giving. It's a meaningful gift that will help someone in need. You pick a project from the catalog and give your friend a card and description of the project. Alternative Gifts International carefully chooses ongoing projects that will help lift people out of poverty. They choose established organizations and make the commitment that 90% of each donated dollar is directed to the cause you choose.

Here are a few examples from this year' catalog. Think of what might be meaningful to your friends and family;

- ♦ \$14 send 30 books to Ethiopian children
- \$1 provides 40 doses of medicine to children in refugee camps in Burma.
- \$6 provides care for an unemployed timber elephant.
- ♦ \$3 provides 2 baby chicks for women in need along the Nile River.
- \$31 provides dental care for a needy child in the U.S.

We will be handing out Alternative Gift Catalogs starting on November 24. You can select your gifts, turn in your order to the church office and pick up your cards, with inserts describing your gift, the following Sunday on the counter in the office. Please pick up a catalog and prayerfully consider how your gift giving could impact the lives of people in need.



#### HISTORY: COMMUNITY CHURCH OUTREACH



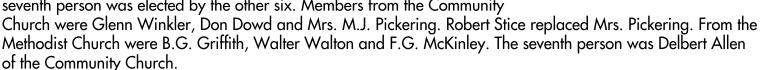
Burbank Heights & Orchards

## BURBANK HEIGHTS- THE VISION By Judy Peterson

In the late 1960's the City of Sebastopol obtained a 15 acre site which was part of Luther Burbank's experimental farm. Melvin K. Davis was the City of Sebastopol's City Manager at the time, as well as a long time member of the Sebastopol Community Church, and Mel had a vision.

Mel Davis began talking to members of the Community Church about his vision for a reasonable rent housing facility for older citizens with minimal incomes. A letter from Philip Anderson stated that "Melvin Davis brought the matter to the attention of Peter Jansen and Elmer Podall and in turn to the Sebastopol Community Church Council, as did the Methodists. Subsequently on April 9, 1970 the non-profit Sebastopol Area Housing Corporation was officially formed."

The Sebastopol Area Housing Corporation board was formed with three members of the Community Church, and three members of the Methodist Church. A seventh person was elected by the other six. Members from the Community



The Corporation began working to make "BURBANK HEIGHTS" a reality. The Sebastopol General Plan had to be amended and rezoning of the area would clear the way for an annexation of the land to the City. This was a \$2,200,000 federally-funded project which would contain 138 units scattered in clusters plus a central social hall.

Finally, building funds were obtained from HUD and construction began in 1974. A piece of the property was set aside for the experimental farm and the original cottage was preserved. In 1987 an additional 60 units, known as Burbank Orchards were built on the southerly part of the property.

Through the years, the Community Church and the Methodist Church have appointed members of their congregation to serve on the Board of Burbank Heights and Orchards. Melvin Davis was a member of that board for many years as was Elise Mingle, Gene Nelson and Nancy Matthews.

Presently Patty Raney, Lisa Dawson and Judy Peterson represent the Community Church. Dee Shilling, Paul Schoch and Charlie Fisher represent the Methodist Church and a member at large is Linda Pellasini.

Over the years many members of both churches have lived and many still live at the Heights and Orchards. The need for low cost senior housing is probably more relevant now then it was in the 1970's. We are truly blessed that Melvin K. Davis had a vision.







#### WHO'S WHO & BIRTHDAYS

#### WHO'S WHO IN THE PEW: BOBBIE JOHANSON

Bobbie has been here in Sonoma County for 43 years and has been a part of the Community Church for the past 36 years. She was born in Lafayette, a 5th generation Northern Californian. After school at UCDavis and living in San Francisco she moved with her family to Santa Rosa.



Currently you might see Bobbie in a number of different roles at Community Church as she is on the Leadership Council, is a Kindred Group leader, has played in the handbell ensemble for almost 30 year, is involved with Women's Retreet, Prayer Shawl ministry, Family Camp, Apple Pies, Gratitude and Generosity, sings in the choir and ushers frequently. Bobbie has been a crucial part of the fundraising campaigns that have helped build Memorial Hall and Pilgrim Center. She says she has always been on some committees since joining the church and knows that her involvement has deepened her connections to the church and developed so many friendships.

Bobbie's family includes her son, Jeff who lives in San Carlos with his wife Ashley and children, Elise, Avery and Jase,. She also has a daughter, Holly and her husband Josh who recently moved to Santa Rosa with their son, Henry and will have a new baby boy in March. Bobbie says she enjoys being Grandma BB and is blessed to babysit her fabulous and fun grandkids. At home Bobbie has an adorable rescue dog, Buddy who is making his pictorial debut in our new directory.

Before retiring, Bobbie enjoyed teaching first grade in Cotati for 29 years, part of it part-time. When she was teaching each year she dressed up as Mother Goose and stayed in character in the classroom for 2 hours. She made up a rhyme for each child and spoke with a British accent.

Now she spends her time golfing, quilting, playing bridge and games, volunteering at Canine Companions for Independence walking dogs, delivering meals for Ceres Project, and volunteering at church. She has been fortunate to travel abroad while in retirement which has taken her to 6 continents, though Antarctica isn't going to make the list because of the rough sea crossing.

Did you know that Bobbie after years of collecting, she now has over 500 Christmas books and folks in the congregation are welcome to borrow them.



#### **DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS**

- 2 Jean Polley
- 3 Jen Bredesen
- 4 George Drennon
- 5 Deanna Euritt
- 6 Victoria Nelson
- 7 Alvin Hukins
  - Emma Steyn
- 10 Ginny Embry
- 11 Jim JenkinsKendall Tripathi-Clark
- 12 David Peterson
- 14 Marquesa WeigelRuby Wood
- 16 Sawyer Melone Josephine Hole
- 19 Jack Dunlap Patty Raney Shawn Nichols
- 20 Dick Zimmer
- 21 Lorilee DeSantis
- 24 Suzanne Albin
  Maryjane Grotting
- 27 Paula Matzinger Nicole Whitehorn Dylan Lamm
- 28 Matt Keller Josie Malone
- 31 Sonia Cuppova





#### **EVENTS IN DECEMBER AT COMMUNITY CHURCH**



4	EVENTS IN DECEMBER AT COMMUNIT	<u>Y CH</u>
Dec 1	1st Sunday of Advent	
	Advent Workshop, 11:45 pm, Memorial Hall	
Dec 4	Budget Committee, 1:30 pm, Media Room	
	Men's Discussion Group, 7:00 pm, Faith Chapel	
Dec 8	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent	
	Faith in Action Team, 9:30 am, Women's Fellowship Office	
	Children's Worship, 10:45 am, Faith Chapel	
	Christmas Pageant Rehearsal, 11:45 am, Sanctuary	
	Advent Spiral, 5:30 pm, Faith Chapel	<b>*</b>
Dec 9	Mission & Outreach, 7:00 pm, Fireside Room	
Dec 10	Lead Minister Pastor-Parish Relations Team, 4:00 pm, Fireside Room	
Dec 11	Women's Bible Study, 10:00 am, Fireside Room	
Dec 12	Card Writing Ministry, 11:00 am, Women's Fellowship Office	
Dec 14	Second Saturday Lunch, 12:00 pm, Fellowship Hall	
Dec 15	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent	
	Children's Worship, 10:45 am, Faith Chapel	
	Christmas Pageant Rehearsal, 11:45 pm, Sanctuary	
	Christmas Caroling, 4:30 pm, Meet at Community Church	
	High School Youth Group, 4:30 pm, Youth Lounge	
Dec 16	Prayer Shawl Group, 10:00 am, Fireside Room	
Dec 17	Health & Safety Team, 1:00 pm, Fireside Room	
Dec 18	Leadership Council, 6:30 pm	
Dec 21	Longest Night Worship Service, 4:00 pm, Faith Chapel	
	Leadership Council, 6:30 pm, Media Room	
Dec 22	4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent	Sunday
	Children's Worship, 10:45 am, Faith Chapel	Formati
	Christmas Pageant Rehearsal, 11:45 pm, Sanctuary	♦ God
Dec 24	Christmas Eve	Gra
	Child-Friendly Service, 4:00 pm, Sanctuary	♦ Mide
	Family-Friendly Lessons & Carols, 6:00 pm, Sanctuary	Gra

Traditional Lessons & Carols, 8:30 pm, Sanctuary

#### December Office Hours

Dec 29

Monday-Friday, 9:00 am — 2:30 pm

Office will be closed December 26-January 1

#### Coming Up in January

NCNC Mid-Winter Middle School Camp



1<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Christmas



### Sundays at 9:00 am—Faith Formation Hour

- ♦ Godly Play, Preschool-5th Grade in Classroom 5
- Middle School Youth, 6th-8thGrade in the Youth Lounge
- Advent Bible Study, Adults in Faith Chapel

Sundays at 10:30 am—Worship in the Sanctuary

Tuesdays at 4:00 pm—Handbell Ensemble rehearses in the Sanctuary (Dec 3 & 10 only)

Thursdays at 7:15 pm—Chancel Choir rehearses in the Choir Room (Dec 5, 12 & 19 only)

Fridays at 10:00 am—Uke Stars meet in Fellowship Hall

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