

SALT & LIGHT

COMMUNITY CHURCH OF SEBASTOPOL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
FEBRUARY 2025 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
Open

**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



Word of the Year: Sanctuary

Dr. Rev. Benjamin J. Broadbent, Lead Minister

Every year certain press outlets announce their word of the year. The Oxford University Press word of the year 2024 was “brain rot.” Yikes! I never heard that phrase used, but it is surprisingly apt given the fraught nature of the past year.

Looking forward to 2025, I want to propose that Community Church’s word of the year might be “Sanctuary.” Sanctuary means sacred, or sanctified, place. It can refer to a religious space, but it can mean a place of safety for people or for wildlife. When I think of our local congregation, I imagine that sanctuary might become our word of the year in three different ways:



1. Distraught by the threatened policies of the incoming federal administration, we will need to cultivate an inner sanctuary, a place where we meet God underneath the chaos. Rather than constantly allowing ourselves to be tossed to-and-fro by the churning waves of meanness and discord, we will need to find ways to drop down below the surface, into the calming deep beneath the tumult. I’d call that “sanctuary,” the place where, as Meister Eckhart said, “the eye with which I see God is the same eye with which God sees me.”
2. The physical sanctuary of our church requires repair. Following years of deferred maintenance, the roof is in dire need of replacement. Because of its unique design and dramatic pitch, the project won’t be cheap. The Leadership Council and Facilities Committee have been working for months, if not years, to determine the scope of the job, and are now beginning to plan in earnest for a Capital Campaign to raise funds from the congregation to replace the roof and renovate other aspects of our campus. This year, we will take a major step forward in renewing our sanctuary, the beautiful and sacred place where we gather to worship.
3. Sanctuary is also something we will be called to offer to others over the coming year. If the promises of the incoming administration are put into effect, many of the most marginalized people in our county will suffer.

Continued on Page 3

FEBRUARY 2025 WORSHIP

Season of Epiphany

Worship Details...

We worship in the sanctuary on Sundays at 10:00 a.m.

Services are live streamed on [YouTube](#) & [Facebook](#)

Weekly bulletin and announcements available at www.uccseb.org

FEBRUARY 2 – 4th Sunday after Epiphany

Today we celebrate Holy Communion. The Chancel Choir, directed by **Andy DelMonte**, sings a South African hymn with drums, and **Rev. Dr. Benjamin J. Broadbent**, Lead Minister, preaches a sermon on [Luke 4:21–30](#), entitled, “God’s Preference for the Poor.”

FEBRUARY 9 – 5th Sunday after Epiphany

We continue the season after Epiphany and the Handbell Ensemble, directed by **Karna Roa**, provides worship music while Pastor Benjamin preaches a sermon [Luke 5:1–11](#) entitled, “Unmarketable Skills.”

FEBRUARY 16 – 6th Sunday after Epiphany

Today the Chancel Choir offers worship music and Pastor Benjamin preaches a sermon on [Luke 6:17–26](#) entitled, “Woeitudes for the Dudes.”

FEBRUARY 23 – 7th Sunday after Epiphany

A youth ensemble provides worship music and Pastor Benjamin preaches a sermon on [Luke 6:27–38](#) entitled, “Jesus’ Third Way.”

Coming in March... Transfiguration Sunday, Ash Wednesday, season of Lent begins



Word of the Year: Sanctuary...continued from page 1

Undocumented people, in particular, most of whom work and pay taxes and contribute to our economy and culture, will fear for their lives and that of their families. Please read the article in this newsletter by **Jenny Douglas** on ways our congregation might provide sanctuary in the coming months.

We cannot offer someone something we don't have already ourselves. As we seek sanctuary within through spiritual practice, and as we tend to the physical sanctuary



FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS



February 3	Christian Roa	February 18	Sonja Larssen
February 4	Terry Beck	February 19	John Henel
February 4	Nathan Knuth	February 20	Kitty Canfield
February 5	Laura Pearsall	February 20	Nico Bagley
February 9	Monica Plisskin	February 22	Bethany Nelson
February 9	Amy Scribner	February 22	Gary Weeks
February 9	Chris Warner	February 23	Jean Boal
February 15	Joan Carter	February 23	Judy Davison
February 15	Brian Wetzel	February 26	Elliot Sanderson
February 16	Parker Warner	February 28	Erika DelMonte
February 16	Ruth Grant		

Called to Be a Sanctuary People

Jenny Douglas

When Trump was elected in November, I, like so many others, was distraught and dismayed that our country would again choose a president who sowed hate and demonized so many, including immigrants. Dismay turned to anger, and I soon decided it was time to channel that anger into action. I asked myself as a white woman of privilege and a person of faith what I could do to support the people who were going to be most at risk of harm.

Knowing that in Sonoma County our immigrant neighbors are especially vulnerable, I found that action through a coalition started by NBOP's Immigrant Defense Task Force and other organizations to develop a network of resources and services to protect and support our immigrant community. This group has been meeting since November, and I have been representing Community Church to explore the role faith communities can play in mobilizing for immigration defense.

Congregations in Sonoma County and across the country are being called upon to be in solidarity with immigrants who are threatened with deportation. **Sanctuary is about putting our faith into action and standing with the most vulnerable members of our community, our neighbors who are facing persecution.**

Here are some ways we can be called to work individually and together as a faith community to provide sanctuary ministries that serve and protect immigrants in Sonoma County.

1. Advocacy and Public Witness

We can advocate for policies that end detention and deportation and promote the full dignity and integration of immigrants in our communities. We can engage in local public actions, such as public testimony at board of supervisor's meetings, public support for or against legislation, meetings with elected officials, and letters to the editor.

2. Rapid Response

The Rapid Response Network dispatches legal observers to locations in Sonoma County where ICE or Border Patrol activity is reported. Legal observers record, photograph, and document interactions for use in court. Interested church members can get trained as legal observers.

3. Providing a Welcoming Space

Community Church can provide space for trainings, legal clinics for immigrants, coalition meetings, and publicly demonstrate that we are a welcoming space for all regardless of race, ethnicity, and immigration status.

4. Housing

This is what many people think of when they think of sanctuary, providing a safe refuge and respite housing for an individual or family at immediate risk of deportation. As a faith community we are taking the time to explore and discern if this is a sanctuary ministry, we can offer.

Called to Be a Sanctuary People...continued from Page 4

5. Accompaniment

We have already been providing some of this support to refugee families, which can include courtroom accompaniment, access to services, translation, rides, and food and clothing to help those in a period of crisis.

6. Creative Direct Action and Freedom Campaigns

We can join individually or as a congregation with NBOP and other groups to participate in non-violent protests if there are mass deportation events.

I hope some of you will feel called to participate in one or more of these sanctuary ministries. For those of you interested in becoming legal observers, there will be a **Legal Observer Training held at Community Church on Saturday, February 22, at 10 a.m., in the Fellowship Hall.** Please contact me at (239) 440-0717 or adouglas35@comcast.net if you are interested or have other questions or ideas.



GOD & DONUTS

Emily Bell

It has been a very fun fall and we are so grateful for this community. We hope that you are as excited as we are for the 2025 youth group to keep growing, changing, and laughing together! We have some exciting plans for youth group 2025. We will be continuing weekly God and Donuts during faith formation hour. I will be sending out a more detailed schedule for the near future, but, for now, let's take a look back at an incredible fall of community building, silliness, and faith!



GOD & DONUTS



Sanctuary Roof Update

Rachel Allen

“The sky’s the limit- if you have a roof over your head.” – Sol Hurok

At Sunday worship you may pause to admire the tall, unique shape of the sanctuary’s wooden, tongue and groove ceiling. The ceiling can recall the inside of a ship’s keel - a fitting symbol for the spiritual journey we all embark on. Outdoors, we see the outside of the keel-like roof: a flat roof towards the base, rising vertically to the top. As you look, you may also notice signs of wear – slipping shingles which appear to sag in places.

Tom Terry and Gary Leucht (of the Facilities Committee) have provided more background information about our sanctuary roof. The first keel-roof was installed in the late 1960’s and the second (current) roof went up sometime in the aught’s. Like all structures, the roof has aged over time and is beginning to show signs of wear. The past roofer used an unfortunate shingle material comprised of 2-layers. The dual layers are beginning to “de-laminate” and fail due to our vertical roof shape. In addition, signs of dry rot were recently discovered on the north side of the building.

These multiple issues have created a need to assess the remaining life of the roof, and the most cost-efficient plan for addressing the dry rot and sagging shingles as one project ... in other words, it may be time for a new roof. Because of the unique, steep roof design, scaffolding will be required for any roof project, and this makes for an expensive roof (most likely, over \$150,000). The Leadership Council is currently considering next steps, including inspections, bids, and various funding sources, including a capital campaign.

More updates will be forthcoming, with a goal of preventing potential water damage from an aging roof (to date, no substantial water damage has been discovered). Stay tuned...



Thank You Community Church!!

Joyce Cox and Kathy Matthies

The Outreach Committee would like to thank everyone for participating in the Christmas Outreach Projects this year!

The Tree in the entryway collected 45 warm clothing items such as hats, gloves, and scarves. They are being offered to the people who come to our 2nd Saturday Lunch and other local people in need of some warm items for the wintry weather.

Alternative Gifts collected \$868 this year for specific projects around the world. Last year, our Interchurch food pantry received a grant from Alternative Gifts International for \$1,500! That is a wonderful help to the food pantry.

176 Gift Bags were given to the residents of Sam Jones Hall, a shelter for the homeless in Santa Rosa. This is a huge undertaking, and we appreciate everyone who filled a bag or donated money for us to shop! We are the only group that does anything for the residents of this shelter at Christmas. We received a nice note from the staff saying: *"The gift bags were a success. The participants had a wonderful time! We had volunteers hand out gift bags. I cannot tell you how much they look forward to the one gift that you all have been constantly providing over the years. We are truly grateful!"*

Our committee did several huge shopping trips to Dollar Tree. Shopping for 50 bags at once is a challenging, fun and funny experience. At one of the stores, the manager told us how important receiving a gift bag was to her years ago when she was homeless.

This project is a lot of work at a busy time of the year but everyone on the committee realizes it is an important outreach and gets into the spirit of getting it done with joy. Special thanks to the members of the Outreach Committee for shopping, the Youth Group for packing the bags, the other helpful elves who pitched in and the delivery crew!



We have a few wonderful partners for this project. A big thanks to:

- Sequoia School for filling 30 bags.
- First Congregational Church, Santa Rosa for donating 71 towels.
- Stone Creek Zen Center for filling bags and donating money.
- Bomba's for donating socks.
- Trader Joes (Cleveland) for donating 60 bags for us to use.

BIG thanks to you and to everyone who pitched in to make all these projects a success!



St. Patrick's Day Dinner Fundraiser



Our sister church, the Altadena Community Church, United Church of Christ, lost its building to the Eaton Fire in LA, and needs our support. The Outreach Committee will hold a dinner to raise funds for their rebuilding. Come together and show our support at a dinner cooked by caterer **Kathy Matthies**.

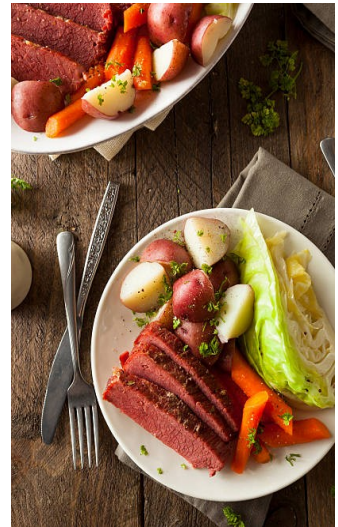
Monday, March 17, 5-8 p.m., Fellowship Hall

\$30.00 per person \$15.00 per child

Sing along to your favorite Irish songs!

Opportunity Drawing gift baskets to win

To attend, please see the link below to reserve your space and pay.



Click [Here](#) to pay on Realm or scan the QR code below.



Below are pictures of The Altadena Community Church UCC. So sad. Let's help them rebuild!



February 2025 Events at Community Church

- February 1** 8/9 OWL Retreat II, 9 am, Media Room
- February 2** **4TH Sunday After Epiphany**, Worship Service, 10 am, Sanctuary
Kinship Time, 11 am, Bell Tower Courtyard
Faith Formation Hour, 11:15 am, Various Locations
- February 3** Prayer Shawl Group, 10 am, Fireside Room
- February 4** Grounds Team, 9 am, Church Campus
Shower Program, 9 am, Memorial Hall
Handbell Ensemble, 4 pm, Sanctuary
Men's Discussion Group, 6 pm, Fireside Room
- February 5** Staff Team, 10 am, Fireside Room
Women's Bible Study, 10 am, Room 6
- February 6** Meditation Group, Noon, Room 6
Women's Fellowship Card Writing, 2 pm, WF Room
Chancel Choir, 6:30 pm, Choir Room
- February 8** Second Saturday Luncheon, Noon, Fellowship Hall
Women's Discussion Group, 2 pm, Fireside Room
- February 9** **5TH Sunday After Epiphany**, Worship Service, 10 am, Sanctuary
Kinship Time, 11 am, Bell Tower Courtyard
Faith Formation Hour, 11:15 am, Various Location
8/9 OWL Class, 1 pm, Media Room
- February 11** Grounds Team, 9 am, Campus
Shower Program, 9 am, Memorial Hall
Facilities Committee, 10 am, Fireside Room
Personnel Committee, 10 am, Chapel
Handbell Ensemble, 4 pm, Sanctuary
Lead Minister Pastor-Parish Relations Team, 5 pm, Fireside Room
Outreach Committee, 7 pm, Fireside Room
- February 12** Staff Team, 10 am, Fireside Room
Women's Bible Study, 10 am, Room 6
- February 13** Meditation Group, Noon, Room 6
Chancel Choir, 6:30 pm, Choir Room
- February 15** February Salt & Light Newsletter Deadline
- February 16** **6TH Sunday After Epiphany**, Worship Service, 10 am, Sanctuary
Kinship Time, 11 am, Bell Tower Courtyard
Faith Formation Hour, 11:15 am, Various Location
8/9 OWL Class, 1 pm, Media Room

February 2025 Events at Community Church cont.

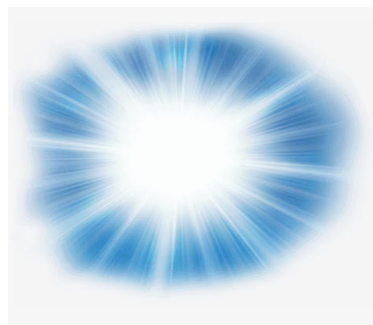
February 17	President's Day, Staff Holiday Prayer Shawls, 10 am, Fireside Room
February 18	Grounds Team, 9 am, Church Campus Shower Program, 9 am, Memorial Hall Finance Committee, 3 pm, Fireside Room Handbell Ensemble, 4 pm, Sanctuary
February 19	Staff Meeting, 10 am, Fireside Room Women's Bible Study, 10 am, Room 6 Leadership Council, 6:30 pm, Media Room
February 20	Meditation Group, 12 pm, Room 6 Chancel Choir, 6:30 pm, Choir Room
February 22	Legal Observer Training, 10 am, Fellowship Hall
February 23	7TH Sunday After Epiphany , Worship Service, 10am, Sanctuary Kinship Time, 11am, Bell Tower Courtyard Faith Formation Hour, 11:15 am, Various Locations 8/9 OWL Class, 1 pm, Media Room
February 25	Grounds Team, 9 am, Church Campus Shower Program, 9 am, Memorial Hall Handbell Ensemble, 4 pm, Sanctuary
February 26	Staff Meeting, 10 am, Fireside Room Women's Bible Study, 10 am, Room 6
February 27	Meditation Group, Noon, Room 6 Chancel Choir, 6:30 pm, Choir Room



GRAINS OF SALT



SPECS OF LIGHT



MEN'S DISCUSSION GROUP meets the first Tuesday of the month, February 4, at 6 p.m., in the Fireside Room.

WOMEN'S DISCUSSION group will take place Saturday, February 8th, in the Fireside Room at 2:00 p.m. Sandy Rosen will lead the discussion on Nancy Pelosi's book, The Art of Power. It is not necessary to have read the book to join in this time of fellowship.

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP CARE CARD MINISTRY will meet on Thurs., February 6, at 2 p.m., in the Women's Fellowship Office.

NURSERY ATTENDANT position now open. Provide care to our littlest community members on Sunday mornings, 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Contact **Pastor Benjamin** at 707.861.8099 / pastorbenjamin@uccseb.org for an application.

INTER-CHURCH FOOD PANTRY item for February: **Canned and/or Dry Beans**. Put items in the shopping cart in the sanctuary entrance. To donate or volunteer, contact **Mark Albin** at 707.829.1492 or malbin@sonic.net.

SANCTUARY FLOWERS beautify our worship space every Sunday. To sponsor flowers in honor of a person or special event in 2025, sign up on the new poster available in the Narthex.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

- **Grounds Team** – Meets every Tuesday, 9 a.m., to clean up and beautify our campus. Just show up!
- **Liturgists** – Contact **Maria Culberson**, at 707.696.6908 / culbersonm@gmail.com to lead portions of worship on an upcoming Sunday.
- **Ushers** – Contact **Terri Harper**, Usher Coordinator, at 707.236.2448 / beelady69@gmail.com.
- **2nd Saturday Lunch** needs Volunteers and monthly donations of food. Contact **Peggy Porter** at pporter501@gmail.com.
- **Acolyte Coordinator** – Contact **Pastor Benjamin** at 707.861.8099 / pastorbenjamin@uccseb.org to schedule children to light worship candles.
- **Health & Safety Team** – Contact **Stuart Mitchell** at 707.328.0228 / stuartmit@gmail.com to craft procedures to keep our congregation safe.



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