



A Monthly Newsletter of the United Methodist Church of Vista

We are called to be an authentic, accessible and inclusive community in Christ, celebrating and extending God's love into the world.

Pastor's Ponderings

Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for God is good! For God's mercy endures forever. –1 Chronicles 16:34

Here we are... the end of 2017. December is here. Advent is here. The paperwork of the end of the year is here. The decorations and gift-giving suggestions are out in the stores. Someone started humming Christmas music as I was walking through a store a few days ago. The calendar of the church is packed to overflowing and I'm already so tired. Maybe you are too. I want to offer you some encouragement.

The scriptures tell us that during the time Jesus was in Mary's womb, there were a cluster of angel sightings. An angel talked to Zechariah. An angel talked to Joseph. An angel spoke to Mary. An angel spoke to a Shepherd. God's messengers spoke to the people involved with encouragement and assurance. Jesus' birth was surrounded by declarations of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love by special Angels!

The story of Jesus' birth is the story of God responding to the darkness, hate and injustice of the world. Jesus is God's intervention into human sinfulness. The government and the religious leadership were failing the majority of the community. Jesus' teaching and work was on behalf of the underserved, forgotten and marginalized. Jesus came to us, to be an instrument of healing and restoration to a broken world.

God is full of surprises! From scary angels who bring messages from God to a baby born in a manger, God comes in unexpected ways and places. Our God always makes a way to come to us! Why would now be any different? Why would our world be exempt from God's surprising ways?

Even as racism, sexism, gun violence and extreme hate are powerful forces in our living, God is even more powerful! If you are troubled by the news of the day, just wait, God will show up! God always does!

Take time to rest before Advent begins. Take time to remember God's surprising ways! Take time to breathe and remember the people you love! Take time to give thanks... for whatever has been a blessing to you this year! It's almost over...

Rev. Dr. Leigh Ann Shaw

“Les Misérables” on the Lawn

Advent begins with... The movie, “**Les Misérables**”, on the Lawn, hosted by Rev. Dr. Leigh Ann and Rev. Frank on **Friday, Dec. 1 at 6 p.m.** Bring your lawn chairs and blankets for the Academy Award winning film “*Les Misérables*. ” Victor Hugo’s story of redemption, sacrificial love and forgiveness will launch us into the season of waiting for God’s Son. The film has great music, an A-list cast and a message of hope! Pastor Leigh Ann will be lifting up themes from this movie for the first sermon of Advent! All are welcomed to come and share this special story!

Intergenerational Advent Worship and Design on Sunday, Dec. 3 from 4:00 to 7:00 pm. Worship, share a meal together and prepare our church for the season of Advent! Suggested donation \$10 (family). For more information, please call Pastor Frank or Beckie Henselmeier at 760.726.0442.

Poinsettias

Beautiful poinsettias that will brighten our worship through Advent may be given in honor or memory of someone special in your life. **A list of these people will appear in our Dec. 17 bulletin.** Forms can be found in the church office or in the Narthex. Please complete the form and turn it in to the church office or put it in the offering plate along with your check made out to UMC Vista, clearly marked for "Poinsettias." Cost is \$11. Last day to order is December 10.

Christmas Eve Services – Sunday, Dec. 24

Morning

10:00 a.m. – Family Service (with childcare)

Evening

7:00 p.m. – Candlelight and Carols
(with childcare)

11:00 p.m. – Communion and Candlelight

New Year's Eve Service – Sunday, Dec. 31

One worship service at 10:00 a.m. (with childcare)

Christmas gifts for our staff

As we prepare our Christmas gift list, let us remember our staff. This is an opportunity for us to say, "thank you" for all the support they provide our church throughout the year. We invite your gifts of cash donations or checks (made out to UMC Vista; write in the memo, "Staff Gift") and kindly place your gift in the Red Magic Chimney Box at the end of each service, which will be available in the Narthex, Dec. 3, 10 and 17. We will present your gifts to the staff on Dec. 18. If you have any questions, please see Dakota Koenig, Staff-Parish Chair.

Christmas Caroling

Join us on Sunday, Dec. 10 at 2:00 pm for Christmas caroling. Please plan to participate in this wonderful holiday tradition. It is heartwarming, fun-filled with Christmas spirit for the homebound we visit and for us, the carolers. We also need cookies to take these members. If you have questions, please call Kathy Johnson at 760.560.7150.

Tis the season to be jolly, or is it?

The holidays are a time of worship, giving thanks and spending time with family and friends. For most of us, it is the happiest time of the year. However, it can also be a time of loneliness. We may think of family members and friends that are no longer with us. A tragedy that occurs around this time of the year seems to hit us even harder or we can be overwhelmed with everything that the season brings. If you are experiencing any of these feelings and would like to talk with a Stephen Minister, please contact Pastor Leigh Ann or Mike Walker, 760.726.0442.

Communion Sunday, Dec. 3

Communion offering for Sunday, Dec. 3 will go to support the Fairfield Children's Home in Old Mutare Zimbabwe, Africa. Across the street from Africa University there is a cluster of buildings housing children who are vulnerable, abandoned, or orphaned. These homes are designed to simulate a family's residence. There is a "mother" and "auntie" and multi-aged children living together as a family. Our communion offering will help feed, cloth, provide school fees, salaries for the "mother" and "auntie" and administrative costs. The Fairfield Children's Home strives to raise children to be friendly, educated, spiritual adults. For more information: www.fosakids.org/about-us/our-story. Let's help these children too.

-Sue Humphrey, World Missions Committee

X-tra giving for December

X-tra Giving for December will continue to go to our Caring and Sharing Christmas program. Through this program families in need are able to celebrate Christmas with family gift cards and presents for the children. Please pick up a list of items in the Narthex.

New member class

New member class is Sunday, December 10 at 10 a.m. with Pastor Leigh Ann. This class will give you an opportunity to find out what it is to be United Methodist, learn a little of our history and who was John Wesley. This will be a get-to-know you meeting lasting only the hour between services. If you are considering joining this church and this congregation, please come. Our next New Members' Brunch, where you can make the relationship formal, will be Sunday, January 14, 12:15 p.m. Questions? Please check with Barbara Mitchell 760.724.0923 or Pastor Leigh Ann Shaw.

Flower Calendar

The 2018 Flower Calendar is on the SCRIP table. Please sign up for the date you want to furnish flowers for Sunday worship. You can also call Paula at the church office.

Flame Editors

Lenore Averell and Barbara Mitchell

Flame Production

Paula Amaro

WEB Master

Jim McGlocklin

Next deadline is Wednesday, Dec. 13, 2017

Comments or suggestions, please let us know.

The Flame (monthly newsletter)

United Methodist Church of Vista

490 S. Melrose Drive

Vista, CA 92081

Meet a member of the Praise Band

While we sit in the pews at first service and listen to the Praise Band play, do you ever wonder about these wonderful musicians? Where did they come from, how did they happen to end up being OUR band, and how do they choose the songs we listen to and sing? Staff-Parish committee members will be interviewing all band members. This month, we are going to meet guitarist Jimmy Patton in a question and answer session.

- *Where were you born?* Taipei, Taiwan, but I grew up in San Ysidro near the Tijuana border.
- *Where do you live now?* Escondido.
- *What is the type of guitar you play?* Nylon String Spanish Classical Guitar.
- *How did you happen to choose this particular guitar?* I've always been fascinated with the smooth, mellow tone of nylon strings.
- *When was the first time you played in front of an audience?* I was 19 years old. A coffeehouse called International Blends in Imperial Beach hosted an open mic every week. Soon after that, I performed every Friday night there for a couple years.
- *How did your band become our church's musicians?* Dan Mahan brought all of us in. He was the previous band leader.
- *Who chooses the type of music you play on Sundays?* I think Greg (drummer) usually chooses the music. I am pretty sure that Pastor Leigh Ann and Frank are involved as well.
- *Where else do you perform (personally and professionally)?* There are a couple dozen venues around North County and Temecula where I regularly perform, too many to list. I work six nights a week.
- *Do you have a primary job that doesn't involve music?* I do not. This is all I have been doing for a living the past eight years. Prior to that, I was a music teacher at the Bishops School in La Jolla for over 10 years.
- *What is your favorite music you like to listen to or play?* Latin Jazz.
- *Are you married? Family?* I am married and I have a four-year-old son.
- *Do you have any spare time for hobbies or other activities?* All my spare time goes to my four-year-old son. He keeps me extremely busy. I also volunteer at his school one day a week.

Wow! Are we ever fortunate to have so dedicated and talented a musician as Jimmy!

-Nancy Montgomery, SPRC member

Family Ministries (Beckie Henselmeier)

- **"A Star is Born" Student Christmas Play:** Rehearsal begins on Saturday, Dec. 9 from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Students will gather Sunday, Dec. 10 at 9 a.m. with their performance at 12:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary. This year's play shares the message that Jesus is the light of the world. His birth was marked by a brilliant star in the sky and all who encountered Jesus know he is someone special! Come and hear the story anew with the support of our students this season of Advent.
- **Youth News:** Overnight Bowling and Lock-in with the District from Thursday – Friday, Dec. 28-29, cost is \$25/ student including bowling, rides, games, pizza, and soft drinks. See Beckie to sign-up.

Church Consultant Rev. Mary Scifres

Late this summer, after a great deal of wonderful clarity about who we are and where we are going over the next year or two, your leadership team realized we would be encouraged by an outside perspective and additional guidance to guide us to a longer-term vision and plan. Church Consultant Rev. Mary Scifres is already working with our pastors, our staff, and our leaders to help us get to that longer-term clarity. Mary will lead us in a congregational discernment and decision-making process through early 2018 about whether and what to build, guided by the God-given vision we discern for our church and the ministry plans and goals to live out that vision. But first, Mary wants to meet us. Look for her in worship, and before and after services on Sunday, Dec. 3. Mary will be happy to answer questions, listen to your ideas, and tell you a bit more about herself before we all have the chance to work directly with her during an all-congregational retreat on Saturday, Jan. 20.

Annual Christmas Concert, Sunday, Dec. 17

The Music Ministry of UMC Vista will present its annual Christmas season concert on Sunday, Dec. 17 at 4 p.m. in the Sanctuary. This year's concert is entitled "Rejoice, Rejoice Creation Sings", and will feature the Chancel Choir, the Anderson Handbell Choir, and Chamber Orchestra, as well as organist Adam Ferrara, and beloved musicians Jimmy Patton and Enrique Platas.

Highlights of the concert will include lovely and meaningful arrangements of well-known carols that celebrate the birth of the Christ Child, such as "O Little Town of Bethlehem" and "I Saw Three Ships Come Sailing In". The concert will also include an organ solo played by our new organist Adam Ferrara, as well as an original arrangement of a carol by Jimmy Patton and Enrique Platas, and the title piece "Rejoice, Rejoice Creation Sings", which is a new original work by Rev. Frank Hallock for choir and orchestra. There will be an opportunity for the congregation to sing with the orchestra and chorus as well. Enhance your concert pleasure by planning to come early to hear Rev. Hallock's pre-concert conversation about the music you are going to hear. The lecture will begin about 3:15 p.m. before the concert. Light refreshments will be available at that time.

Plan to come and bring family and friends as the music of the season prepares us for the arrival of Christmas in music and song. There is no charge for admission; however, a free-will donation will be taken to help support the Music Ministry. Come and celebrate the season with us!

Happy “December” Birthdays

Chris Amaro (1)
Dax Handy (2)
Donna Richard (2)
Merry Nickerson (4)
Joe Baird (5)
Elijah Casey (5)
Janet Green (5)
Jackson Swetland (5)
Susan Hernandez (7)
Robert Myers (8)
Alan Mathias (10)
Bob Graham (11)
Janet Hughes (13)
Katie Pierce (14)
Keira Pierce (14)
Sandra Hendron (15)
Shelley Palone (16)
Carl Treutle (16)
Lucas Choque-Jimenez (17)
Delores Hunt (18)
Beverly Thomason (19)
Michael Trail (19)
Martha Treutle (20)
Jeff Montgomery (21)
Kent Richard (21)
Jake Henselmeier (22)
Jeannie Jackson (22)
Juna Spitz (24)
Beth Brainerd Hallock (28)
Andrea Maniti (28)
Gavin Keiser (30)

Note: If your birthday is not listed, please call Paula at the church office.

Missionary Adevu from Ghana here Dec. 13

Join us on Wednesday, Dec. 13 at 10:00 a.m. in Fellowship Hall as our missionary, Mozart Adevu from Ghana, will be sharing with us his work with UMCOR’s Sustainable Agriculture and Development Program in Africa. His ministry has been in Ghana, Liberia, Sierra Leone, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Malawi, Zimbabwe and Sudan. He gets around. He has introduced the Moringa tree and its amazing ability to improve the health of communities. Come and get to know Mozart, his son Toni, and the many projects he has initiated to improve the lives of others.

-Sue Humphrey, World Missions Committee

Cable Foundation

I’m writing this article to make the Congregation aware of the 10-month effort that the Cable Foundation undertook from July 2016 to April 2017. The 2016 Board with Harold MacDermot, Brenda Foss, Brenda Walker, Sue Humphrey, Bonnie Berumen, Emily Hansen and I began the indepth look at the performance of our investment agencies. The 2017 Board with Vic Johnston, Brenda Foss, Brenda Walker, Sue Humphrey, Susan Lenker, Suzanne McMurchie and I completed the task.

At the July 2016 Quarterly Meeting the Cable Foundation Board evaluated both of the wealth management agencies and determined that they were under performing. The Board had both wealth management agencies come in for a meeting to discuss our concerns and what corrective action they would recommend. After a second meeting, the Board decided to drop one of the agencies and place the other on a “90-day watch list”. This required the Board to seek three new wealth management agencies to compete for the one open position. They interviewed U.S. Bank, Atlantic Trust and LUCIA Capital. The Board had 19 meetings during this 10-month period to terminate one wealth manager, hire a new one, get all the accounts set up, investment policy and signature cards signed, transfer funds from the terminated agency to the new agency, and review the wealth manager on the “watch list”. In April 2017, the Board decided to retain that wealth management agency as this agency was brought under new management by the parent company, making a significant turnaround.

As you know, every member of the Board is a volunteer and has lives outside of Cable Foundation. Our Bylaws only require four meetings per year with special meetings authorized. This project took 19 unscheduled meetings and we always had our quorum. At our last quarterly meeting in October, the financial report was the best since inception in 2012. These 2016 and 2017 Boards of Directors of the Cable Foundation went above and beyond expectations and should be applauded for this effort. It goes without saying the Board takes its fiduciary responsibilities seriously and is steadfast about investing your \$8,000,000 plus to the best of their ability. From me, the Board is simply awesome. Thanks!

-Warren Elsasser, President, Cable Foundation

Family Game Night dark in December

There will be no game night in December. The next game night is Friday, January 12, 6:30 pm in Fellowship Hall. For questions or for more information, please see Suzanne McMurchie.

United Methodist Women's Corner

- The UMW Circles meet December 5: Kenworthy Circle will meet at the church at 11:30 am to carpool to JaDene Dugas' Brookdale complex for lunch. Ruth Circle will meet at the home of Linda Grider at 4226 Lindos Way in Oceanside at 9:30 am. Esther Circle will meet at the home of Karen Canfield at 4972 Lerkas Way in Oceanside at 10:30 am.
- The UMW Organizational meeting is Dec. 12 at 10 am in Fellowship Hall.
- The UMW leadership meeting is Dec. 19 at 1:00 pm in Fellowship Hall.

Pray together for...

Family of Maggie Graziano, Family of Audrey Ayers, Beverly Wright (Hospice), Family of Andeen Ford (former member), Richard Trawick, JaDene Dugas, Chico Treutle, Harold MacDermot, Beverly Hopkins, Larry Averell, Tom Johnston, Bob Hickman, Joan Lindegren, Ron Bradshaw, Joan Brainerd, Nancy Koski, Carol Yunt, Alice Leclair

Stay connected

E-mail: umcvista@umcvista.org

Website: www.umcvista.org

Facebook: United Methodist Church of Vista

Be sure to check us out on Yelp!

Update your emergency information!

Have you remembered to update your emergency contact info? The sheet is on the Badge table outside the Sanctuary doors. This information is held confidentially, and is used only in case of an emergency. Thanks to those who have already done so.