



# The Fellowship

A Publication of Crescenta Valley United Methodist Church

www.cvumc.org

Volume 64 Issue 11

Paige Eaves, Pastor

December 2012

## *Advent & Christmas @ CVUMC*

### **December 2 - Advent I**

Expect a Miracle

Isaiah 9:2-7

Luke 4:18-21

### **December 9 Advent II**

Give Up On Perfect

Luke 1:26-34

### **December 16 Advent III**

**Special Choir Presentation**

Love Scandalously

### **December 23 Advent IV**

**Children's Christmas**

**Presentation**

The Jesus Wish List

Matthew 25

1 John 3:14, 16-18

### **December 24**

**Christmas Eve**

**Family Service @ 5:30**

**Candlelight Service With**

**Hansarang @ 7:30**

### **December 30**

Inman Moore, preaching

Wisewomen & Wisemen from  
the West

Psalms 103:1-12

Matthew 2:1-12



## EXPECTING MIRACLES

I'm headed out to tie our Expectations of Miracles to the tree in the church's front yard. I love the Miracles you wrote on ribbons Sunday. That tree will be the most fruitful it's ever been— and right in the middle of winter, too. Miraculous.

I liked it that the sermon led some of you to share with me other evidence that Miracles can be Expected. Alert Congregant Janice shared with me a viral video about an NYPD officer buying boots for a homeless man, inspiring lots of people to random acts of kindness. Alert Reader Edmond sent me a link to an article on Huffpost.com by Sam Borenstein, with statistics showing that violence around the world is in steady decline. Fewer battle-related deaths, fewer genocides, fewer murders. Apparently, one of the main reasons for this drop is that humans are getting smarter and able to figure out other solutions. IQ tests show that the average teenager is smarter with each generation. (Bet you had already figured that one out, hadn't you?) Peace on earth is happening. Miraculous.

I also remembered the great Real Stories by Real People that we shared last year during Advent and Christmas. We were surrounded by Christmas miracles – Gary's turn from alcoholism; Nate and Sarah's reunion during a Christmas in Korea; Lilian's reconnection with her father; Wayne's story of finding music and beauty in his South Carolina orphanage. Just when we are about to give up, lo and behold – a Miracle.

You can expect an end of the world Catastrophe. You can expect to be Disappointed. You can expect to experience Nothing. But why would you, when Real Miracles Happen to Real People all the time?

John 3:17: For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

Advent Blessings,

## CHARGE CONFERENCE



**SATURDAY,  
JANUARY 12  
10:00 A.M.**

All church members can vote at our annual business meeting, where we elect lay leadership, approve the pastor's salary package, review the budget, etc. This year we'll also review some by-law modifications regarding the governance of the Foundation, and we'll conclude our Reconciling Conversation.

## CULTIVATING OUR SOIL UPDATE FOR DECEMBER 2012

We're pleased to announce progress on the Cultivating Our Soil campaign. Since the launch of the campaign in February of 2011, we've been working down the list of projects as funds have become available. The following list reflects some adjustments by Church Council. It also reflects a new gift from the CVUMC Foundation! With their gift of \$10,000, we will be able to complete many of our projects. Thank you!

- 1) Education Building Roof Replacement - *Finished!*
- 2) Passionate Worship – Sanctuary Audio/Visual – *Finished!*
- 3) Radical Hospitality – Outside Landscaping  
New Sign – *Finished!*  
Concrete Reduction & Lawn Replacement – *Finished!*  
Drought-Tolerant Plants – *Growing!*  
Benches & Tables – *Collecting Quotes*  
Recognition Bricks & Closing Celebration – *TBA*  
Lighted Cross Projection – *Ordered!*
- 4) Passionate Worship – Sanctuary Lighting – *Finished!*
- 5) Radical Hospitality – Narthex Upgrades  
Ceiling & Lighting – *Finished!*  
Windows - ?
- 6) Parking Lot Resurface & Repaint – *Finished!*
- 7) Children Music Staff Person –  
*World Music Academy contracted for Christmas!*
- 8) Fellowship Hall New Stage Curtain – *Ordered!*
- 9) Library & Conference Room Chairs - *Next*
- 10) Fellowship Hall Flooring - *Needs some funding*
- 11) Brides Room Upgrade - *Needs some funding*

*Your gifts and energy make it all happen. Thank you!*

**RETHINK  
SPENDING  
GIVING  
CHRISTMAS  
CHURCH**



### *A Children's Christmas Musical*

*Sunday, December 23  
In Worship*

*Followed by A  
Christmas Brunch  
in Fellowship Hall  
Celebrate Christmas  
with CVUMC!*



# FOUNDATION PLACE

Christmas is a time of giving, and the Foundation is overjoyed to celebrate the season by contributing funds to the Cultivating our Soil and SSP projects. In addition to the \$25,500 already contributed to Cultivating our Soil, we have given another \$10,000 -- \$5000 as seed money for the Children's Music Program and \$5000 earmarked for the Fellowship Hall flooring when that project gets under way.

That's an overall total of \$35,500 to Cultivating our Soil. How were we able to do that? We invested and shepherded monies contributed over the years by those past and present who purchased leaves and stones for the Tree of Life and took spendable amounts (interest and income) from those investments and were able to give the \$5000 necessary for the Children's Music Program. We took another \$5000 of spendable amounts from the Scott MacDonald Maintenance Fund, which was set up specifically for Church maintenance, and consisting of contributions specifically earmarked for, or, if not earmarked, determined by the

Foundation Board to go into that account.

But wait...there's the SSP money! The Foundation voted to create out of the Tree of Life spendable money a one-time \$1200 scholarship fund for SSP participants. This will help defray personal costs of the youth participating, and we hope that it will inspire further commitments from our youth, their families and the congregation as a whole to continue this invaluable beyond-our-community outreach.

All this talk of contributions and spendable amounts is dry, I know, but the Foundation wants you to know what we are doing and to join with us in thanking those who have had the foresight and resources and a belief in the future of CVUMC to trust the Foundation with investing and giving back. If you are one of those people, thank you is too small a phrase to express our gratitude. If you would like to be, it's not too late for end of year contributions. Please consider this prayerfully as we still our hearts and remember the birth of our Savior.

## Opportunities for Service

### • Family Promise Week December 9-15

We'll prepare and deliver meals for families in transition. Lisa Perry-Castaneda is coordinating. [lperry@beverlyhills.org](mailto:lperry@beverlyhills.org).

### • Learning Works Christmas Gifts

The United Methodist Women invite you to join them in giving gifts to the babies of teen moms finishing high school at the Learning Works Charter School. Select an ornament from the gift tree in Fellowship Hall. Please deliver gifts to Fellowship Hall by **Mon. December 17**.

• **An Intergenerational Day of Service:** MLK Weekend, Saturday, January 19: Olivia, Molly, and Pastor Paige invite you to join them for a day of service in Los Angeles, organized by Sierra Service Project. \$25 covers materials, etc. Register by emailing [pastorpaige@cvumc.org](mailto:pastorpaige@cvumc.org)

• **Bad Weather Shelter Date**  
**Sunday evening January 27**  
Save the date if you'd like to be part of the team that sets out cots and prepares/serves dinner to our homeless neighbors. Jenn Burke is coordinating.

## All Good Gifts

Thank you for your 2013 pledges! With 35 households pledging to date, we are at \$80,600, about 3/4s of the way toward our goal. If your household has not yet pledged, please let us hear from you. Every gift is vital for the mission and ministry of our church!

Email our Treasurer Dan Griffin: [griffin3104@att.net](mailto:griffin3104@att.net)





# SEASON'S GREETINGS FROM THE CVUMC YOUTH

By Amanda Sargenti, Director of Youth Ministries

Thank you for making my transition into your congregation a smooth one, as everyone has been very welcoming, hospitable and accepting!

November commenced with the very successful *Empty Bowl* event.

## Sunday School News

You certainly know that our children will be hearing the stories leading up to the birth of Jesus all this month. The 3 and 4 year olds have started making advent wreaths, which is a 5 week process. December 3 we learned of Isaiah's prophecy..."And a little child will lead them..." It's an exciting time for children, and we hope yours don't miss out. It's an exciting time for Christians everywhere.... let's all close our eyes and open our hearts to imagine the first time we realized what these stories meant. To help bring these stories to life for us all, Hermine has created a Christmas program that the children have been rehearsing for 3 weeks with 3 more rehearsals to go before their performance in service on December 23. We hope you can be there!

The Youth collaborated with the adults to help decorate the hall and to make everything run smoothly. What a great cause and creative event that was!

My first informal meeting with the Youth consisted of planning for our yearly SSP mission trip: Navajo Nation - week 3 (July 14-20<sup>th</sup>) it is!

In getting inspiration for our float design, Christine and Christopher joined me in visiting LACMA's exhibition on surrealism. November = *FLOAT* in my mind. Though seemingly a "simple" task, I was humbled by the amount of planning and problem solving that went into this project. The Youth did not only exhibit stellar architectural design capabilities (Olivia and Laura), but also kept "stating the obvious" (Christopher) when my "surreal" ideas seemed to have serious real-time constraints: "Don't worry, we got this!" (Christine). Whereas Katie J was instrumental in helping me create "glue/paste," Katie S enjoyed playing with color. Stephen kept informing me about all the countries I left out on the huge globe as he carefully snuck them in.

A special *thank you* goes out to Olivia's father John and her

older sister who created a perfect wooden mail box. Thank you Allen and Catherin D.C. for spray-painting our world blue! *Mille*

*Grazie* to Pastor Paige, Marv, Ed and Ed's English crew, for your guidance and assistance in putting everything together and for making it happen.

What's next? I am planning to take



the Youth to read to individuals in our congregation who might be in need of some company during this time of year. On the evening of the 29<sup>th</sup>, the Youth will have the opportunity to ceremoniously say good bye to 2012 and welcome 2013 while sitting around a bonfire.

Unfortunately I will not be able to celebrate Christmas with you, as I will be visiting my parents in Mexico from Dec 17-27. I wish you all a wonderful Christmas season! Stay warm and healthy, and may the light of the candles match the light in your hearts and eyes! Merry Christmas!

# WRAPPING UP THE RECONCILING CONVERSATION

by Kim Mawhinney

As our reconciling process wraps up, the time is coming for us to decide how radically hospitable we really are. Are our doors open to all? Will we live into the commandment to love the Lord our God with all our hearts, minds, souls and strengths and love our neighbors as ourselves?

It takes courage to take a stand, to follow your heart when asked 'What do you stand for.' This faith family has that opportunity to boldly proclaim God's love for all by adopting a statement of welcome, which includes gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people. We teach our children that God's love has no bounds, that grace is extended to all, to do onto others as you would have them do onto you. We have the opportunity to put our words into action. It is time to embrace and celebrate God's redeeming love for all.

While it's my sincere hope that we will adopt a statement of welcome next month, it is also my hope that the conversation of love and reconciliation continues within our faith family. That those who may not agree are still willing to walk this journey with us, for while we may not all agree, we all share the foundational core of love for God and for each other.

Church Council decided at its November meeting to bring the Reconciling Conversation to a close

at our Charge Conference, already scheduled for **Saturday, January 12 @ 10:00 a.m.** At that time, we will decide specifically whether or not to adopt a Welcoming Statement. All church members can participate in a Charge Conference. Decisions are made by those who are present.

The Welcoming Statement would be considered a first step toward GLBT openness. Our church would then live into its openness over the next couple of years, taking additional steps in mission and ministry as the congregation feels led. For now, we are only deciding on the presence and content of a statement.

We have asked our District Superintendent Cedrick Bridgeforth to be our presiding elder, and he has agreed to assist us in our discernment. With 87 churches in his District, Rev. Bridgeforth is not attending every Charge Conference. We are pleased that he can facilitate ours. You will find helpful his knowledge and perception on how a reconciling decision positions CVUMC within the UMC.

Several samples from other Reconciling churches have been compiled here for your review and inspiration.

## *Samples:*

### ***Church of the Reconciler (Birmingham, Alabama):***

Our life together affirms that "God shows no partiality" (Acts 10:34). Our congregation is diverse, and we celebrate that diversity. We challenge members to follow Jesus in multicultural, interracial community; maintain a commitment to be inclusive, welcoming all people regardless of age, gender, race, economic status, ethnic background, mental or physical ability, sexual orientation, or gender identity. God's work is the work of removing the injustices of the past that divide and limit all of us. Church of the Reconciler's special task is equipping laity for the ministry of reconciliation so that we may be "sent into the world as Jesus was sent" (John 20:21).

### ***Glenview United Methodist Church (Glenview, Illinois):***

Following the loving example of Jesus Christ, we affirm the inherent worth and dignity of every person as a beloved child of God. We welcome into the life and ministry of Glenview United Methodist

*Continued on following page*



Church all persons of every age, ability, race, gender identity, ethnicity, nationality, marital status, sexual orientation, family configuration, or socioeconomic or employment status.

***Asbury United Methodist Church  
(Charleston, West Virginia)***

The people of Asbury are called to share God's love as we minister with and to all persons in the community where the church is located and beyond, providing worship, nurture, fellowship, and service. Our welcome knows no boundaries of age, race, ethnicity,

culture, gender, sexual orientation, economic condition, physical or mental ability. We embrace and seek to preserve the beautiful, amazing diversity of God's creation. We cooperate in ministry with other local churches and groups of God's people as we participate in the worldwide mission of Christ.

***Prince of Peace Lutheran  
(Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)***

Who is welcome here?  
If you are Asian, Hispanic, Black, or White...  
If you are male or female or

transgender...

If you are three days old, 30 years old, or 103 years old...

If you've never stepped foot in a church; or if you are Buddhist, Roman Catholic, agnostic or are a life-long Lutheran...

If you are single, married, divorced, separated, or partnered...

If you are straight, gay, lesbian, or bisexual...

If you are a Republican, Democrat, Independent, Socialist, or not registered to vote...

If you have, or had, addictions, phobias, abortions, or a criminal record....

If you own your home, rent, live with your parents, or are homeless....

If you are fully-abled, disabled, or a person of differing abilities...  
You are welcome here!

## AN EMPTY BOWLS THANK YOU

Thank you again for bringing your gifts of time, service, talent, love, prayer, and hospitality to this year's Empty Bowls. Our guests received heaping helpings of your compassion and generosity along with their soup. Our neighbors in Tujunga, Pasadena, and Burma will feel a bit more comfort in their lives because of our efforts. I am deeply grateful and blessed to be a part of this congregation which has for the fifth year shown that we are willing to do this work that follows Jesus' expectation that we feed the hungry.

*With Love and Gratitude,  
Jeanne Lavieri*



***Current  
total:  
around  
\$6000!***

### ***December Birthdays***

03 Sandy Saltsman  
10 Olivia Castaneda  
11 Frances Stupakis  
18 Carol Ruygrok  
18 Angie Linderholm  
18 Peggy Griffin  
20 Ray Catan  
21 Loman & Tori Dunning  
23 Pam Kummer  
25 Christine Ruygrok  
25 Sona Chung  
28 Chris Schmutzer  
29 Riley Jucksch  
30 Laveta Hill

### ***Anniversaries***

06 Marv & Cathy Wacker  
19 Steve & Joan Raber  
20 Lucille & Ray Catan  
30 Anthony & Lilian Lai

# UMW DECEMBER HAPPENINGS

- Tues. Dec. 4<sup>th</sup>: **CVUMC Tree Trimming Potluck** to be hosted by Women at the Well @ 6:30PM. Don't forget to RSVP.
- Sun. Dec. 9<sup>th</sup>: **Mini-Boutique**- Please bring your left-over items.
- Thurs. Dec. 13<sup>th</sup>: **UMW Executive Board Meeting** in Thee Room @ 9:00 AM.
- Sat. Dec 22: **Set up** for Sunday. Sign up to decorate a table.
- **Sun. Dec. 23:** UMW sponsored All Church Luncheon. Set up Sat. Time to be determined.

November 25<sup>th</sup>: We had an "Ornament Making Workshop for Everyone" after service. Many different ornaments were made for the sanctuary tree and a great time was had by all.

The Learning Works Christmas Tree will be up in Fellowship Hall till the 9<sup>th</sup>. Take an ornament, put your name on the list with the child's name and fill a wish. Gifts should be no more than \$20.00 and wrapped with the ornament as the name tag. Return your gift by Dec. 17<sup>th</sup>, so we may deliver it in time for their Christmas Party.

Wishing you all a Blessed Christmas,  
Kathy Garrett

## PRAYERS & REMEMBRANCES

Remember those who are ill, recovering from an illness, accident, surgery, or those who are preparing for surgery. Prayers are appreciated.

- Sandy Saltsman • Andy Marrero
- Dave Bois • Steve Raber
- Kathy Meinke
- Mary Ann Nowzari, Cathy Marrero, Barb Catlin, Jeanne Lavieri, Janice Burke and others who are caring for aging parents.

• We keep our grieving friends in prayer. *We mourn, but not without hope, for we are a people of the resurrection.*

At Home – in our prayers:

- Joan Martins • Violet Heggland
- Toni Beutler • George Haney
- Eugenie Hamlin • Marj Mitchell
- Dolores Campbell
- Angie Linderholm

- We pray for all of our friends looking for meaningful work.
- We keep in prayer the young people and mentors of the Learning Works Charter School.

Remember those who are in retirement residences, the hospital, or convalescent homes. Prayer, visits, cards and phone calls appreciated.

- **Vincent Bell**, in hospice care at Mt. View, Montrose
- **Dorothy Beck**, Atria Rancho Park, San Dimas
- **Kathy Franks**, Mt. View, Montrose
- **Carol Ruygrok**, The Fair Oaks in Pasadena
- **Lucille & Ray Catan**, Mt. View, Montrose

If your prayer requests have been answered and you wish to be removed from the prayer list, please call the office at 249-6173.





## CULTIVATING OUR SOIL FOR THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

- *Radical Hospitality*
- *Passionate Worship*
- *Extravagant Generosity*
- *Risk-Taking Mission  
& Service*
- *Intentional Discipleship*

## CVUMC CHILD CARE CENTER EXISTS TO

1. Provide the quality of nurturing that is critical to a child's well being.
2. Focus on the whole child: intellectually, socially, emotionally, culturally and spiritually.
3. Create an age-appropriate environment for children to achieve their optimum development.

The Preschool and Infant Care Center have openings for half-day (Preschool) or full-day (Preschool & Infant) program registration. Now is the time to get your preschooler settled in a quality child-care program. Discounted fees are available for members of CVUMC. Contact Director Lin Otnisky for more information at (818) 249-4048.

10:00 a.m. Every Sunday: Worship Celebration, Children's Sunday School

Church Staff: The Rev. Paige Eaves, Pastor • Barb Catlin, Music Director • Amanda Sargenti, Director of Youth Ministries  
Bob Pech, Financial Secretary • Mandy Troxel, Fellowship • Denise Cotellessee, Public Relations



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CVUMC Child Care Center

Director: Lin Otnisky

Open Mon. thru Fri.

7:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Telephone: (818) 249-4048

E-mail: [ccc@cvumc.org](mailto:ccc@cvumc.org)