



CROSS CURRENTS

January, 2022

Alpine Community Church (UCC), Alpine CA

Vol. 33 No. 13



You decorated, traveled, ate, open gifts, and ate some more. You rang in the new year with a long list of resolutions and a plate full of collard greens and black-eyed peas. Now, what?

Epiphany: It's time to take down all the decorations.

Many people have only heard of Twelfth Night or Epiphany as the deadline for taking down Christmas decorations, but it's actually a significant part of Christian history.

What is the history behind this holiday?

The word epiphany means “*manifestation*” or “*revelation.*” When Christians talk about Epiphany, we are referring to the three wise men or the Magi’s revelation that Jesus was the Christ, the Messiah that Israel had been waiting for (Matthew 2:1-12). On this day, we recognize the wise men’s journey to see, worship, and bring gifts to “the one...born king of the Jews” (Matthew 2:2). The festival commemorating Epiphany is Jan. 6 and is also called Three Kings. Epiphany celebrates Jesus’ outward and visible expression of love for us.

Why does the Epiphany matter?

Christ’s birth was a big deal for the wise men, and it is a big deal for us. At its essence, Epiphany celebrates Jesus’ outward and visible expression of love in leaving His rightful place in heaven to live as a human and become the sacrifice for our sins. The Magi, wise men who studied the stars and were considered sinners, represent Jesus’ ability to draw all types of people to Him. He is a Savior who came for all people, including each one of us.

Should I celebrate Epiphany? And if so, how?

Epiphany traditions vary from culture to culture. It can be helpful to remember and celebrate significant events in Jesus’ life, including the Epiphany. What is important to keep in mind when celebrating any holiday is the reason for and the heart behind the celebration. Rather than acknowledging traditions or rituals because they’ve always been done, celebrate the meaning of the holiday: Jesus came to earth to save us.

- Some information in this article came from the New Spring Church, St. Louis, Missouri

ANGEL TREE 2021



Our 2021 Angel Tree Project was a success. So many of our church members contributed with gifts and with monetary donations. We gave East County Transitional Living Center (ECTLC) gifts for 37 children plus boxes of disposable diapers and baby wipes. They are so appreciative of our support of the families staying at the Center. Thrivent was very generous with the Action Team funds of \$250.00. These funds helped buy gifts, cleaning supplies, diapers and baby wipes for the families. We also gave gifts to 7 children of our own church members. We

are so blessed to be able to make Christmas a little more special for so many children.

- Brenda Clark, Coordinator

Join the Movement Toward Racial Justice



"When love is the lens through which we see the world, justice is possible." - Rev. Traci Blackmon

Can you imagine a church free of racism and a world where all people live without fear of violence or systems that harm God's human creation? The United Church of Christ invites you to Join the Movement toward racial justice as we answer God's call to be an anti-racist church. Here, we will share stories and grow together, learning from one another to build a just world for all.

A Story About Racial Justice: Marching with our Feet



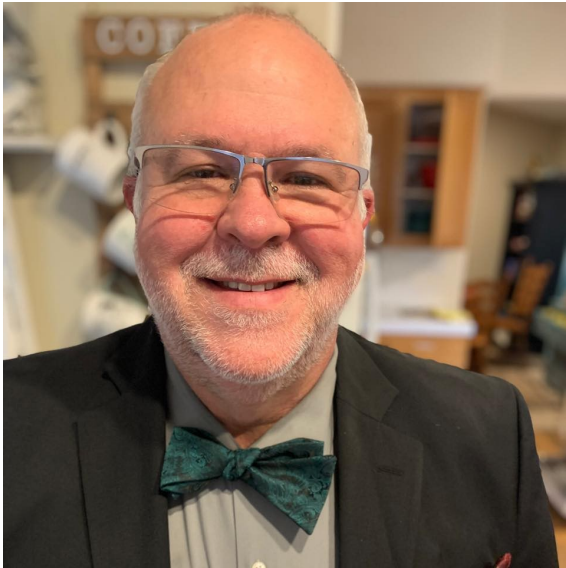
Rev. Anthony Williams, pastor of MLK Community Church, is the father of a son, Nehemiah, who died by gun violence in 2019 and he is doing all he can to stop such pain from reaching other families. Pastor Williams has been on a mission for years pushing elected officials to declare violence as a public health crisis. He accomplished that goal at the state level. Governor Pritzker signed a bill in April that directs more resources to communities impacted by violence.

Now Pastor Williams is calling on President Biden to issue an executive order declaring violence as a public health crisis. He and others started out on June 23, 2021 walking from Chicago to Washington, DC to press his point. They arrived in DC on July 4th where Pastor Williams delivered an address at the Martin Luther King, Jr. national monument.

This past summer, General Synod 32 overwhelmingly passed: *"Nehemiah's Life: A Call for Congressional Hearings on Violence in America,"* a Resolution of Witness.

Every day 316 people are shot in this country and 106 of them die from gun violence!

“Colman Contemplations”



It is the last Sunday of Advent as I write this today. In five days, we will be entering the Christmas Season that last for twelve days. On January sixth we enter the Epiphany Season. As we welcome the Christ child in Christmas we move quickly to Epiphany. Epiphany means to reveal, to have an aha moment. This Epiphany season we all need to open our minds and hearts to the wonder of what God is doing on this earth.

January sixth represents the day the Magi came to worship and bring gifts to the baby Jesus. It is the day that the church recognizes that God’s love is not just for Jews but for the whole world, even these gentile wisemen. The good news of God’s love and wonder is not just for a select few, but for the whole world.

As we begin to look at how we do church into future we have to look not just at Alpine but the whole world. Our *YouTube* and *Facebook* channels for taking the Good News of Jesus Christ to the whole world. This is but one opportunity, may this Epiphany Season open our hearts and minds that we move outside the box to be a light for the whole world.

See you all in church and stay safe during this holiday season!

- Pastor Ken



We need an **AUDIO-VISUAL TEAM**. We have a few but we need some more. As we go hybrid in our worship, Bible Studies, Book Groups, and meetings we need to a team of volunteers to help make it work. Please let Tom Myers or Pastor Ken know if you are interested. Thank you for hearing God’s call for your life.

Andrew Poindexter Becomes An Eagle Scout



Andrew Poindexter has earned his **Eagle Scout** rank which is the highest rank in scouting. Andrew has been in scouts since 1st grade. He enjoys camping, bouldering, caving and kayaking the most. He is also a level 1 instructor in a scouting program called COPE (challenge outdoor personal experience) where he helps other scouts learn teamwork and facing obstacles. Andrew 18 has been a member of this congregation since he was born. He helps with the sound system and where he is needed. His Eagle scout project was the canopy between the church and fuller hall. Andrew will be heading to the Marines once he graduates in June.

Operation Christmas Child



Your gift shoe boxes full of necessities, toys, and other fun items are on the way and will bring great joy and the Good News of Jesus Christ to boys and girls in need! Thousands of volunteers at eight processing centers across the US are now preparing millions of shoebox gifts for international shipment in order to reach children in over 100 countries.

Yuri Lopez was one such child. Yuri spent her childhood in an orphanage in Honduras. Yuri said that she experienced hope for the very first time when she received her gift shoebox. She said that the most important thing in her box was a note from a little girl that read, "Jesus loves you and I love you, too." Now Yuri, a young adult living in the US, wants to help other children. She headed up OCC in her community to pack almost 1,500 shoeboxes!

A little box filled with love can make a big difference in the life of a child! Operation Christmas Child reminds us that *"every box is important because every box is an opportunity to tell a child that God loves them."* Again, thank you sending Good News and great joy to the needy children of the world!

Message from the Moderator....



As I write this month's message the world is bracing for the next wave of COVID-19, fueled by the Omicron variant. As you may know this is a rapidly spreading variant that can cause hospitalization and possibly death in unvaccinated persons. There is still much to learn about Omicron, but in this early stage it also appears to infect vaccinated persons, although with milder symptoms. To slow transmission of the disease, California has re-instituted the requirement to wear masks indoors in public places. Although this requirement does not apply to churches, the Deacons recommended and the Cabinet agreed that the ACC will continue to require masks for everyone at all indoor gatherings, regardless of vaccination status.

Although we all look forward to the day COVID-19 is tamed, we need to recognize that this disease may be around for a long time. ***What does that mean for the future of our congregation?*** This will be the primary topic of discussion at our Annual Meeting on January 30, 2022. In a departure from previous years, we will not read annual reports from the various boards, they will only be printed in the hand-out. Instead, we invite you to participate in an interactive discussion aimed at visualizing how the church will adapt to life with COVID and the changing needs of our community. How will we approach our mission to *"minister to the needs of our congregation and community"* in 2022 and beyond? We hope you will join us to help chart our future course through these uncertain times. **The Annual Meeting will be on Sunday, January 30, 2022, following the 9:00 AM Worship Service.**

Blessings to you all,

- Tom Myers, Moderator

ANNUAL MEETING



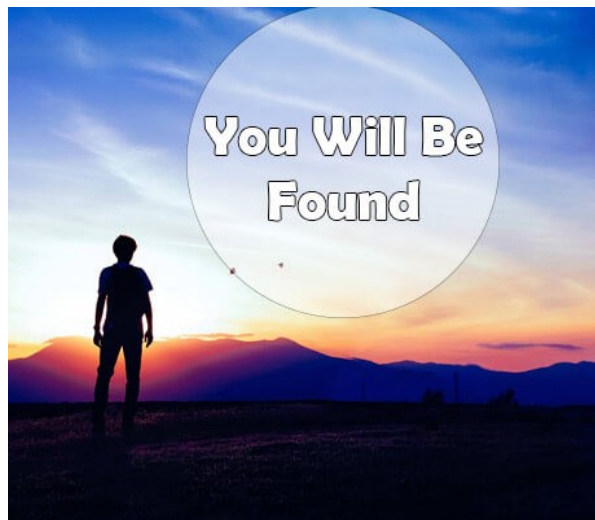
You Will Be Found



Every time a new year rolls around, I try to think of an extra special way to prepare us for what is to come. This is never easy because no one knows what is around the corner. When this year began everyone waited with baited breath for it to arrive. We needed to wash off the awful stain that 2020 had left. Yet, I think that this year has only been mildly better. We still hear that the pandemic is not over and we wonder sometimes if it ever will be. We have lost so much, and we may lose more. All we have to protect us from the darkness is the Lord.

Earlier this year, I saw the movie *Dear Evan Hansen* - a musical based on a Broadway play. I especially connected with the song, *"You Will Be Found."* It has the perfect message for tough times. It is about looking for comfort when the world feels hopeless. That's why the song is powerful. It says that, in the end, you will be found. The song wasn't specifically talking about God, but I believe that the message can be related to the Lord. He loves us and He wants to shield us from evil. We have been immersed in terrible times for nearly two years now and we are searching for His love and comfort. It is in Him that we find justice for all. Whatever may come, I find a hopeful message for the New Year in the song: *"When the darkness comes crashing through, when you need the Lord to carry you, when you're broken on the ground, you will be found"*.

Happy Holidays! Jordan O Neal



Women's Guild News



The Guild Christmas Party on Dec 11 was a real success with twenty-seven members and guests attending. Sarah Harrison gave the opening prayer followed by a wonderful brunch. Cheryl Worland assisted by daughter , Chrissy did the devotion explaining the meaning of each Advent candle.

We did our usual *"The Wright Family"* gift exchange which everyone enjoys. Then the ladies had a chance to shop at the Christmas Boutique which they were all anxious to do.

On Sunday we had our annual **Christmas Bake Sale and Boutique** open to the congregation after the church service. So far proceeds from the Bake Sale were \$387. The Boutique will be open for shopping again on Sunday the 19th.

The program for our January 8th meeting will be presented by Fire Marshall Jason Mc Broom . He will speak on Fire Safety especially for seniors. All members of the congregation are invited to hear this informative and important talk. Meeting will be at 9:30 in Fuller Hall.

- Donna Boyer, President

Birthdays and Anniversaries

JANUARY BIRTHDAY WISHES:

BRODERICK, Suzy	01/01
ENNIS, Pam	01/02
TERRY, Elma	01/03
STEWART, Christine	01/07
GIBSON, Ken	01/14
SONKSEN, Vern	01/22
WORLAND, Ed	01/27
O'NEAL, Galen	01/28
BARNUM, Peggy	01/29
GIBSON, Debbie	01/30

JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES:

SHAW, Norine	01/08
HABERLE, Marina & Russ	01/19
BARNUM, Richard & Peggy	01/27

Church Office Hours

We can be reached at by telephone (619) 445-2110, or by e-mail at acc1894@acc.sdcoxmail.com. Even if we are not here in the office after noon, you can slip envelopes, messages & requests through the mail slot in the office's front door. Many Blessings to you all as we continue to stay safe and well in this *new normal*.

Please send articles and pictures for the Cross Currents to:

Cross Currents Editor:
Email: rdfreeman@outlook.com

Rev. Dr. Richard D. Freeman
Cell Phone: (619) 701-0517

January 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				KC Book Study – ZOOM @ 1pm		1 7:00 PM AA Meeting
2 9:00a ACC Worship ACSL 11-1 (FH)	3	4 CHOIR 7-8:30p	5 5:30p – AA Fuller Hall	6 KC Book Study – ZOOM @ 1pm	7	8 GUILD Meeting 9:30am 7:00 PM AA
9 9:00aACC Worship 10:30a DEACON's <u>ACSL 11-1 (FH)</u>	10 LUNCH BUNCH 6:30p TRUSTEES	11 CHOIR 7-8:30p	12 5:30p – AA Fuller Hall	13 KC Book Study – ZOOM @ 1pm	14	15 7:00 PM AA
16 9:00aACCWorship 10:30AM CABINET ACSL 11-1 (FH)	17 ALPINE Chorale 6:30-9:30 (every 3 rd Monday)	18 CHOIR 7-8:30p	19 5:30p – AA Fuller Hall	20 KC Book Study – ZOOM @ 1pm	21	22 7:00 PM AA
23 9:00 AM ACC Worship ACSL 11-1 (FH)	24	25 Choir 7-8:30	26 5:30p – AA Fuller Hall	27 KC Book Study – ZOOM @ 1pm	28	29 7:00 PM AA
30	31					

Mission Statement

Our Mission as the Alpine Community Church is to serve God by creating an environment of fellowship following the teachings of Jesus Christ. We minister to the needs of our congregation and community, motivating ourselves with love, faith and hope.

Join us for Worship

In person in our sanctuary at 9:00 AM Sunday Mornings

(FACE MACK AND SOCIAL DISTANCING REQUIRED)

Also on **Facebook** and **Youtube** (*links found on alpineucc.org*)

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Published Monthly
Editor Rev. Dr. Richard Freeman
Production Manager Denise Horan

The editor welcomes contributions
But they must be received
by the third Sunday of each month.

