



# CROSS CURRENTS

February, 2024

Alpine Community Church (UCC), Alpine CA

Vol. 35 No. 02

*February*

**BLESSINGS**

*Psalm 147:3*

**He heals the brokenhearted  
and binds up their wounds.**

# Women's Guild News

Our January Women's Guild meeting was an informative meeting about "Meals on Wheels" located in San Diego County. They serve over 2000 meals a day. They provide high-quality, nutritious meals. Meals are provided for seven days a week, including holidays. Dedicated volunteers deliver meals throughout San Diego County. Now onto our next informative meeting on February 8!

Our speaker will be from UPTOWN COMMUNITY SERVICE CENTER. The speaker is Patty Bender, one of the many volunteers at Uptown. She has been volunteering there for many years. She will give us an overview of the center and how they are helping the homeless and low income individuals in Mid-City San Diego.

Some information about Uptown Community Service Center: It is neighbors helping neighbors by providing mailboxes and message centers. They do food distribution and also help give out clothing and hygiene items. They also have a referral program for other services the homeless may need. We hope you will attend the meeting February 8 starting at 9:30am with a Breakfast Brunch.



## Message from the Interim Designated Term Pastor



In this second month of the year, it seems as though the year has already been very long. So much happening in our world, from climate crises to political unrest to warring factions. It can be hard to keep our minds and hearts steady, especially if we are consuming media that overwhelms us with more information than we can process. Sometimes, situations cut through all the noise and hit us close to home.

Speaking of close to home, I think of just weeks ago when I and others had to leave the library at my university after reports of a brushfire that had erupted not too far away. The news was jarring; not because we don't expect wildfires in California, but because the fire was mere minutes away. One of my colleagues left to retrieve vital belongings because their home was under a potential evacuation threat. Thankfully, the fire was contained, and the damage was not as bad as it could have been. And my colleague's home was left unharmed. Still, I was struck by the burned-out hillside as I drove to work the next day. I couldn't shake seeing the plumes of smoke from other fires as I drove down the highway days later.

It would be easy enough to live in fear of seemingly uncontrollable and unpredictable dangers. Living in this way really isn't *living*, in my opinion. It is just existing, waiting for the other shoe to drop or for something to go wrong. Such a life can feel helpless and disempowering. Sometimes we can't help feeling that way. The challenges and frustrations and losses of life make it difficult to keep hope for the future. I think of all those who were *not* so fortunate, of the neighborhoods like Altadena in the Los Angeles metro area, where the wildfires were absolutely devastating.

There are two things I think are important. First, we shouldn't rush past the real grief that comes with loss and change. The lives of many people are dramatically and swiftly changed every single day. Secondly, after we have sat with the grief, we must decide how to move forward. Life experience has taught me there are so many things we cannot prepare for in advance. What we *can* do is take courage in the God who is with us, even when life seems heaviest. May the God who comforts, leads, and encourages, give us the strength to weather even life's roughest storms

# Message from the Moderator....



I was elected moderator last week, and am already late writing this article for *Cross Currents*!! Hopefully, this will not set a pattern!!

First and foremost, I want to thank Tom Myers for his invaluable leadership these past eight years! Tom served faithfully through three pastors and several budget crises during these changing times for mainline churches. His steady, thoughtful leadership guided us at Cabinet meetings and inspired us to make changes even when we felt stuck in the past. He and Judy both have been wonderful leaders for us.

The blessing box, puzzle sales, participation in the Christmas parade and other community events, and new improved website all happened because of Tom's encouragement and support. Tom will be continuing to serve on the pastoral committee and supporting Pastor Kyle, which is greatly appreciated.

For this next year as moderator, I have a couple of goals that we briefly discussed at Cabinet. While the congregation voted overwhelmingly to continue the Rummage Sale, the age of our congregation means we need to cut back on what we can manage. To that end, the Trustees have locked the storage trailers. Rummage sale items must be monitored so we only take items that we can reasonably manage to move around and to sell. The Cabinet will be discussing that in the next couple of months as we set a date for the next Rummage sale and set up parameters that we can manage.

I am so very grateful for having Pastor Kyle in our pulpit each Sunday!! He preaches sermons that are meaningful, inspiring and give me something to think about each week. We must find ways to attract more people to our church. I think when they come, and hear Kyle preach, they will return! More on this later.

Finally, I would like to see us modernize our music selections. I think it is remarkable what our choir does each week. They are a small group, but mighty! But adding a few more youthful music selections would be great, too.

Finally, I look forward to serving as your moderator this year. I am open to ideas and suggestions and look forward to hearing from all of you. As Tom stated at the Congregational meeting, the vast majority of our church members are actively involved in the running of this church. Thanks to all of you who step up when asked, giving generously of your time and talents.

Pam Price

# Like a Phoenix Rising from the Ashes



Last time, I wrote about the possibilities of the New Year and how we can defeat evil with the love of God. We would stand up to evil and the devil would not win.

Unfortunately, the devil wasted no time trying to remind us that he is still here. As we know, 2025 has gotten off to a rather rocky start. In many cases, that's putting it mildly.

It is these times that we tend to wonder where God is. Did he simply forget about us and leave us to be destroyed by tragedy and sadness? The answer to this question is

obviously "no".

When things seem to be hopeless, that is when hope comes in. We wouldn't need God if everything was always easy. When the smoke is thick and black, that is when the light can shine through.

We are going through difficult times right now, some of us more than others. Yet, think of the Phoenix. This mythical creature rises from the ashes after death. God is the perfect example for this metaphor. He overcame death and the world. It is His wish that we become like the Phoenix in difficult times. When you feel without hope that is when God shows up. Whatever you may be going through, God is always with you. He whispers, "Rise from the ashes of misery." We must all listen to Him. We must seek His voice. For as we travel through the dark, just when we think we can't go on, Jesus takes us by the hand and encourages us to keep going. Therefore, let us trust in God's favor and mercy, and like the Phoenix, we will rise from the ashes. Do you hear him calling your name? He commands you to rise from the ashes. Remember, evil will always be tricking you. It will always be attempting to persuade you into believing that it will win. However, as long as we have love for our Lord in our hearts, evil will never win. Rise above the pain. Rise above the hurt. Do you hear him? "Rise," he says. "Rise above it all! Rise, rise, rise"!!!

# Cabinet Doings

The new cabinet had short meeting after the Congregational meeting on Sunday, January 19. The new officers met with their respective boards and elected a chair, who will be part of the cabinet. The 2025 Officers are listed below:

## **DEACONS:**

\*Sandy Lusink, Chair  
Brenda Clark  
Sandy Nelson  
Debbie Hames  
Doreen Caldwell  
DeeAnn O'Neal  
Cheryl Worland  
Debbie Keyes  
Bonnie Moffett  
Lorena Strong

## **TRUSTEES:**

\*Ray Sopfe, Chair  
Dan Hames  
Barbara Nelson  
Ed Worland  
Vern Sonksen

## **GUILD**

\*Peggy Barnum, President  
Judy Smazel, Treasurer  
Dorene Caldwell, Secretary  
Brenda Clark VP Programs  
Sarah Harrison, VP Programs  
Marcella Krantz, Corresponding Secretary

## **\*BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Betty Sopfe  
Debbie Keyes  
Suzy Broderick

## **Other Officers:**

Pam Price, Moderator  
Pam Ennis, Treasurer  
Debbie Gibson, Clerk

The Cabinet will continue to meet in the church office on the third Sunday of the month at 10:15. All church members are welcome to attend.

The only other business at this first Cabinet meeting was that Ray reported on the vote that was held regarding whether the church would continue to have a Rummage Sale. The congregation voted overwhelmingly to continue Rummage Sale. The Cabinet will discuss the Rummage sale in our next few meetings.



## A Job Well Done!

Thanks to all who put their Love into Action to make and provide PB&J sandwiches for our neighbors in need. Caryn Burrie and Cheryl Traverse have provided yummy jam. Thrivent has given us funds for other supplies. Becca has tirelessly run back and forth gathering and counting made sandwiches. And so many have put their hands to work creating our PB&Js! In our first year, 2023, we made 1,164 sandwiches. In 2024, we increased that to 1,623. That is a total of 2,787 less hungry neighbors! Indeed, a job well done!

**Isaiah 58:10** If you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry...then your light will rise in the darkness...



## California Wildfires 2025

On January 7, 2025, wildfire activity began in Los Angeles County, California. Immediate reports indicate that this fire has caused substantial damage throughout LA County, making this event the largest fire disaster in the county's history. At the time of this writing, nearly 30,000 acres have been consumed by the blazes. One hundred eighty thousand people are currently displaced from their homes due to devastation or evacuation orders, and these fires continue to spread, causing additional destruction.

Since the onset of this disaster, the [Global HOPE](#) team has communicated with the Southern California and Nevada Conference Minister. The team will coordinate with ecumenical partners and a national network of voluntary organizations active in disasters (VOAD) as it shapes our long-term response.

We received confirmation that the fires destroyed the Altadena Community Church, United Church of Christ. They posted an update on their [Facebook page](#).

The [Global HOPE](#) team is helping to connect Southern California and Nevada Conference staff, churches, and others affected by the wildfires with immediate resources while also preparing to support long-term recovery efforts.

As we continue to pray for and support those who experienced unimaginable loss, we invite you to support the UCC's recovery efforts in the following ways:

**Donate** to the UCC's California Wildfires 2025 Appeal below. Your gifts will support the community's immediate needs and long-term recovery efforts as we work with local communities to ensure an equitable approach to their long-term recovery. **You can also mail a check payable to the United Church of Christ, PO Box 71957, Cleveland, OH 44194. Please be sure to note "California Wildfires 2025" in the memo section of your check. Our EIN: 34-1927041**

Pray for those who have been impacted.



# Care and Prayer List

## **Alpine Community Church Care & Prayer List**

*Please call or send a greeting card to someone on the list, your thoughtfulness will be appreciated. Names will be removed when it is unknown if the need for prayer still exists. If you have family or friends in need of prayer,*

George & Judy Doble

Family of Eva McCoy

Tatty Fenton

J. J. Jacoby

Helen Harvey & Roy Jr.

Mary Francois

Heriberto Lopez

Brandi Moreland

Robert Placencia

Rick Sitter

Saron Stone/Mike & Sandy Smidt

Sue Truscott

Wayne Christopher

Ed Worland

OUR Nation & new Leaders

Military

Police Officers

Firefighters

# Birthdays and Anniversaries

## FEBRUARY BIRTHDAY WISHES:

WEIL, Hilda	02/10
O'NEAL, Misty	02/12
TODD, Jr., Damien	02/12
SMAZEL, Judy	02/13
POINDEXTER, Rob	02/15
BOYER, Donna	02/17
FENTON, Tatty	02/17
KEYES, Debbie	02/24

## FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES:

None

## Church Office Hours

We can be reached by telephone at (619) 445-2110, or by e-mail at [acc1894@acc.sdcoxmail.com](mailto:acc1894@acc.sdcoxmail.com). Office hours are Monday – Friday from 9am until noon. 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. *Thank You, Denise*

***Please send articles and pictures for the Cross Currents to:***

**Cross Currents Editor:**  
**Email: [pamelaennis@cox.net](mailto:pamelaennis@cox.net)**

**Pamela Ennis**  
**Cell Phone: (619) 249-3739**

# February 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p><b>Pastor Ben &amp; PPC</b>  <b>11am &amp; 6pm services</b></p>	B.S. TROOP 105	CHOIR 6:30-8pm	5:30p – AA, FH	ACSL Book Study 10:30-11:30 FH  PPC Bible Study 6-8pm		<b>1</b>  7:00 PM AA
<b>2</b> 9:00a ACC Worship PPC 10:45am ACSL 11-1 (Fuller Hall)  PPC 6:00pm	B.S. TROOP 105	CHOIR 6:30-8pm	5:30p – AA, FH	ACSL Book Study 10:30-11:30 FH  PPC Bible Study 6-8pm	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> GUILD MTG 9:30am  7:00 PM AA
<b>9</b> 9:00a ACC Worship PPC 10:45am ACSL 11-1 (Fuller Hall) <b>DEACON'S Mtg</b>  PPC 6:00pm	<b>10</b> <b>TRUSTEE'S Mtg</b> B.S. TROOP 105	CHOIR 6:30-8pm	5:30p – AA Fuller Hall	ACSL Book Study 10:30-11:30 FH  PPC Bible Study 6-8pm	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>  7:00 PM AA
<b>16</b> 9:00a ACC PPC 10:45am ACSL 11-1 (FH) ACSL Ann. Mtg & potluck  <b>CABINET Mtg</b>	<b>17</b> <b>PRESIDENT'S DAY</b> B.S. TROOP 105	CHOIR 6:30-8pm	5:30p – AA Fuller Hall	ACSL Book Study 10:30-11:30 FH  PPC Bible Study 6-8pm	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>  7:00 PM AA
<b>23</b> 9:00 AM ACC Worship PPC 10:45am ACSL 11-1 (FH) PPC 6:00pm	B.S. TROOP 105	CHOIR 6:30-8pm	5:30p – AA Fuller Hall	ACSL Book Study 10:30-11:30 FH	<b>28</b>	7:00 PM AA

## **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

Also on **Facebook** and **Youtube** (*links found on [alpineucc.org](http://alpineucc.org)*)

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## **CROSS CURRENTS**

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