

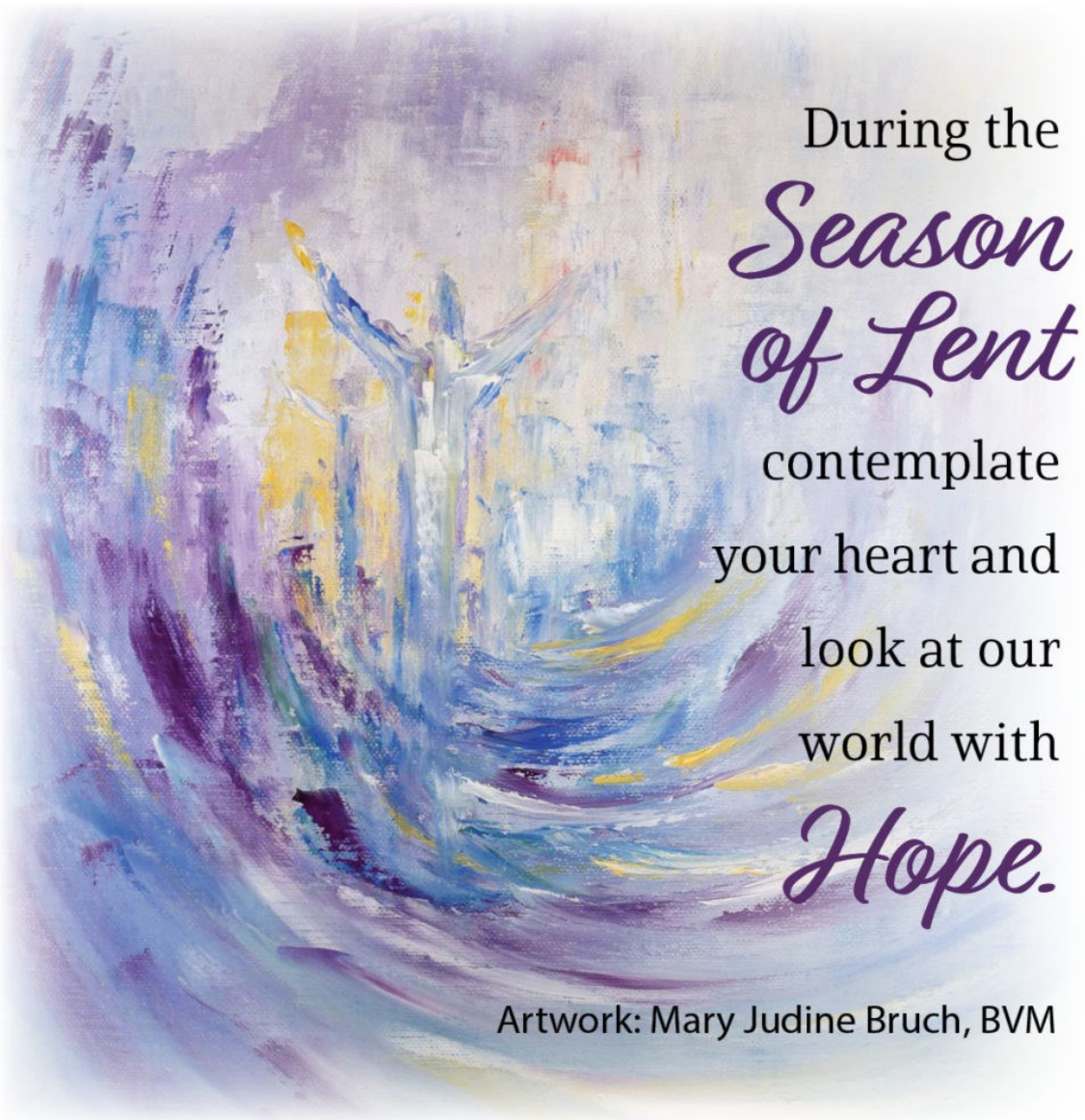


CROSS CURRENTS

March, 2025

Alpine Community Church (UCC), Alpine CA

Vol. 36 No. 03



During the
*Season
of Lent*
contemplate
your heart and
look at our
world with
Hope.

Artwork: Mary Judine Bruch, BVM

Women's Guild News

Our meeting for February was filled with laughter and plenty of love. We would like to thank DeeAnn O'Neal, Cheryl Worland, and Barbara Nelson for hosting and treating us to a delicious breakfast. We greatly appreciate how hard all our hostesses work every month.

Our guest speaker was Patty Bender from Uptown Community Service Center. She attends the UCC church in La Mesa and has been involved with the organization for many years.

Originally, the organization was right next to a post office, so they were asked to receive mail for the homeless. This provides them with an address. The center has moved a few times but is now at the Church of the Nazarene downtown. Since then, they have grown to satisfy other needs with a referral program for medical, dental, and legal services; although they still receive mail.

They are open Monday through Friday, from 10 to 1 at which time they hand out clothing and hygiene items. The only thing they do not offer is shelter. Though most who receive care are 80% men, services are open to all. At a previous location, the organization provided showers, but now only has mobile showers and is working on building permanent showers. Two days a week they offer a food bank.

They are considered a nonprofit and the organization accepts no federal or local funds and relies entirely on donations and fundraisers. The Guild decided that they might want to help them further in the future.

Our next meeting will be held on Saturday, March 8, and will feature a speaker from Habitat for Humanity. The meeting begins with breakfast at 9:30. We hope you will join us again. All are welcome!



Message from the Interim Designated Term Pastor



It seems the signs of life are appearing all around us. The days are growing longer, the temperatures are just a bit warmer, and people are out and about. As a native Midwesterner, the milder winters in San Diego have been a nice change of pace. Regardless of climate differences, what is clear is just how much people *everywhere* respond and react to the changing of seasons. We come alive and are more energized. We emerge from old habits and enter into a new rhythm.

With the cycle of seasons also comes the rhythms of the Christian calendar. The season of Lent approaches and offers us an invitation to renewed life and restored focus as we process towards Easter. Frequently, we are called upon to spend this season in a time of intentional fasting – redirecting our attention from usual wants or distractions and devoting that energy to more conscientious living. I can attest to the benefits – spiritual and physical – that can result from being more mindful of how we live day to day. But I can also say that over time, I have come to view our Lenten practices a bit differently.

For one thing, I do not think there is an inherent virtue to merely *giving up* things. We can give up junk food, or television, or shopping, or any other practice. But quite often, we return to the old habits when Lent ends. Giving up those habits can seem like just another chore to fulfill, and only for a limited time. I also think of what this means for people whose lives are already marked by the things they have had to give up. One person's guilty pleasure is another person's rare luxury. Some have already trimmed the fat from their daily lives in an effort to simply survive. Deprivation often feels like an appropriate measure to people who already have so much.

We might ask, instead, what it would mean to view the season of Lent not through a lens of deprivation, but through the view of renewal. What practices or pursuits bring us into bloom like spring flowers? What commitments open our hearts and our minds to the beauty and fragility of life? How might God empower our living in the midst of our Lenten devotion? As Ash Wednesday approaches, I pray that we are energized by the changing of this Christian season, and that we seek not the mere death of old habits, but the resurrection of a zeal for abundant living.

Message from the Moderator....



Some of you remember that I was moderator here about 20 years ago (Yes, I think it's been that long ago!) I remember then that I constantly worried as I watched the church shrink in size and we stumbled and worried that one day, we would have to shut our doors. It could keep me up nights! We watched evangelical churches growing – and mainline churches shrinking. It was scary.

The UCC lost 551 churches and a whopping 286,000 member in the last 20 years! And that has been the case with all mainline churches during this same time span. In fact, the Presbyterian church has lost 50% of its members, the largest denomination in decline.

And now, the evangelical churches are losing members. What's going on? Is it the church itself? Is it faith itself?? I've been doing some reading, and it appears that people just don't make time for it any more. Reasons appear to be very mundane, like "I moved", "I'm caring for parents", "I'm taking kids to athletic events on Sunday morning," 40 million Americans have left churches in the last 25 years.

So we are not alone in worrying about the future of the church. A lot of people left the UCC when it became so politically liberal, and a lot of people are leaving evangelical churches for becoming so politically conservative.

But what about Alpine Community Church? I feel like we can hold ourselves up as a "melting pot" of churches. Look around you at the background of our members --- we come from all over the country, from every political persuasion, and every religious background, and It's amazing! We have made ourselves a community and I hope, are accepting of everyone who comes through our doors. The vast majority of our members actively participate in the life of the church, and care for our faith community as well as the community at large.

And, I am now so thankful for Pastor Kyle. I look forward to his sermons every Sunday. I hear Sarah, who sits in front of me in the pews, saying "Amen!" during his sermons! Yes! He touches our hearts and gives us messages to keep alive during the week. This past week, He talked about his grandfather who taught him that "the way we do anything is the way we do everything". I hope as a congregation we continue to build community and use our collective wisdom to serve for many years to come.

A Place of Hope



*Faith goes up the stairs
That love has made
And looks out of the windows
Which hope has opened.
Charles H. Spurgeon*

I thought I would try to express my feelings about this quote with words of my own...

I was hurt and discouraged by toils and snares!

I searched for light in the dark,

But found no relief.

Then I heard the voice of Faith saying,

"Take my hand, and I will show you where the light hides."

I felt my strength grow, as we went up the stairs of love.

We reached the top,

And Faith said,

"Look out the windows of hope. Feel the sun shine on your face. Fear no more, for you are in a blessed place. Jesus created it just for you. He will always love and care for you, no matter what you say or do.

You are in a place of Hope."

May you be safe in His love, walk carefully up the stairs of faith, and always look out the windows which hope has opened. has opened

Cabinet Doings

The Cabinet met on February 16 to discuss church business. We were able to transfer \$75,000 to reserve funds at the end of 2024 and income far exceeded our expenses this past month. Good news! Thanks to our Board of Trustees and the rental income we receive from the Presbyterian Church and the Church of spiritual Living. The Guild continues to do well. Their speaker next month will be from Habitat for Humanity, which is always well received.

A date has been set for Rummage Sale! It will be held on October 24-25 (the week before Halloween) Set up begins on October 19. We are asking for donations be held aside until after May 1. The Trustees will then be re-organizing the storage shed. Please hold off from bringing in donations until that time. And then, the Trustees are the only people who have keys to the storage shed and will be monitoring what we keep more carefully. So if you want to donate, after May 1, you will need to speak to a Trustee. Denise will not have access. We look forward to a successful Rummage Sale, but hope to monitor more carefully what we take in.

Easter is just around the corner and plans were discussed. The Deacons already appear to have that well organized.

The Board of Education is doing well. While we have fewer kids at Sunday school, the Suzy and parent volunteers are bringing in crafts, which the kids are enjoying. Look around the church grounds, you will see some rocks they recently painted!!



Lent is a 40-day period of reflection and preparation leading up to Easter. It's a time of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving that begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Thursday.

Purpose

- To remember the events leading up to Jesus' crucifixion
- To replicate Jesus' sacrifice and withdrawal into the desert
- To prepare to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus
- To practice self-control and self-discipline
- To grow spiritually and renew one's relationship with God

Practices

- Fasting from food or certain types of food
- Giving to charity
- Praying

Practices cont.

Reading Scripture
Abstaining from luxuries
Practicing self-discipline
Giving alms

Symbolism

The color purple is associated with Lent
The 40 days of Lent represent the 40 days that Jesus spent in the desert

Why do Christians celebrate Lent?

- Remember the 40 days of Jesus in the wilderness
- Think of others
- Prepare for the Easter celebration
- Develop their relationship with God



Lent

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

Tatty Fenton

Helen Harvey & Roy Jr.

Jessica (Chris Noble niece)

Brandi Moreland

Andrew Patrick

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

MARCH BIRTHDAY WISHES:

WORLAND, Cheryl	03/02
HORAN, Denise	03/10
CARPENTER, Virginia	03/14
POWDERLY, Aubrey	03/18
STACKS, Kelly	03/23
O'NEAL, Jordan	03/26
HARVEY, Helen	03/27
NUNNALLY, Rev Sandra	03/27

MARCH ANNIVERSARIES:

NELSON, Barbara & Bruce	03/15
NUNNALLY, Jim & Sandra	03/27
GIBSON, Ken & Debbie	03/31

Church Office Hours

We can be reached by telephone at (619) 445-2110, or by e-mail at 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

Pamela Ennis
Cell Phone: (619) 249-3739

March 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Pastor Ben & PPC 11am & 6pm ser- VICES	B.S. TROOP 105	CHOIR 7-8:30p	5:30p – AA, FH	PPC Bible Study 6-8pm		1 7:00 PM AA
2 9:00a ACC Worship PPC 10:45am ACSL 11-1 (Fuller Hall)	B.S. TROOP 105	CHOIR 7-8:30p	ACC Bible Study ACSL Book Study 10:30-11:30 FH	PPC Bible Study 6-8pm	7	8 GUILD MTG 9:30am
9 9:00aACC Worship PPC 10:45am ACSL 11-1 (Fuller Hall) DEACON'S Mtg	B.S. TROOP 105	CHOIR 7-8:30p	ACC Bible Study ACSL Book Study 10:30-11:30 FH	PPC Bible Study 6-8pm	14	15 7:00 PM AA
16 9:00a ACC PPC 10:45am ACSL 11-1 (FH)	B.S. TROOP 105	CHOIR 7-8:30p	ACC Bible Study ACSL Book Study 10:30-11:30 FH 5:30p – AA Fuller	PPC Bible Study 6-8pm	21	22 7:00 PM AA
23 9:00 AM ACC Worship PPC 10:45am ACSL 11-1 (FH) PPC 6:00pm	B.S. TROOP 105	CHOIR 7-8:30p	ACC Bible Study ACSL Book Study 10:30-11:30 FH 5:30p – AA FH	PPC Bible Study 6-8pm	28	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*)

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