



December 2008 Calendar

1		Pastor returns to town; in office Tuesday, December 2.
2	6:00 pm	Walking night on Christmas Tree Lane Hallier open house
3	6:00 pm 7:00 pm	Choir
4		<i>Pastor's day off</i>
5		Council reports due <i>Pastor's day off</i>
6	8:00 am NOON 6:00 pm	Men's Prayer Breakfast CWF/Women's Christmas Luncheon at Church Worship
7	9:15 am 10:30 am	Sunday School Worship
8	7:15 pm	Bible Study at Sumpter's
9	1:30 pm 6:30 pm	CWF Mtg. at Dorothy Shuck Council Mtg. at Moffetts'
10	7:00 pm	Choir
11		<i>Pastor's day off</i>
12		<i>Pastor's day off</i>
13	6:00 pm	<i>Worship</i>
14	9:15 am 10:30 am	Sunday School Worship & Special Offering
15	7:15 pm	Bible Study at Sumpter's
16	6:30 pm	Elders' Mtg. at Piggs'
17	7:00 pm	Choir
18		Newsletter articles due <i>Pastor's day off</i>
19		<i>Pastor's day off</i>
20	6:00 pm	Worship: No sermon – quiet time and communion
21	9:15 am 10:30 am	Christmas Sunday Sunday School Choir Cantata & Special Offering
22		NO Bible Study
23		NO Worship Committee Mtg.
24	6:00 pm	Christmas Eve – office closed Candlelight & Communion Worship; Soup Supper to follow
25	9:00 am	Christmas Day – office closed Christmas Worship
26		<i>Pastor's day off</i>

27		NO Saturday Worship
28	9:15 am 10:30 am	Sunday School Worship & Special Offering
29		NO Bible Study
30	6:30 pm	Pastor Parrish Meeting
31		NO Choir Practice
1		New Years Day – office closed



December 21

Birthdays & Anniversaries

- 1 Larry DeBenedetti
- 3 Laura Scrivner*
- 3 Marilyn Prowell* (ordination)
- 7 Tammy Michaud-Potter
- 8 Debbie Flores*
- 12 Gregg Dowdy*
- 15 Lilly Murray
- 17 Isaac James
- 18 Javier Solis*
- 19 Sharon Evans*
- 23 Barrett & Eleanor Whiteley (A)
- 23 Jennifer & Victor Verduzco (A)
- 30 Brittany Moore
- 31 Allen* & Marilyn* Prowell (A)

Welcome! Returning Member:

Sharron Cotton rejoined the congregation on Sunday, November 16.

New Name:

With her marriage, Tina Parks has a new name: Tina McCallister-Boothe.

Missions

Christmas Offering Support the Regional Church

At the heart of the "Nineteenth Century Reformation" led by Stone and the Campbells was the call to form congregations modeled after the simple essentials of the church of the apostles. State Evangelists were charged with the responsibility of forming numerous congregations and preaching points. But early Disciples soon discovered that cooperation was necessary for congregations to get their start, to survive in times of need, and to minister effectively. As mission societies developed, the position of State Secretary was created to coordinate the mission of the church. With the adoption of the Design for the Christian Church, Disciples affirmed the covenant relationship between "Regions" and the other institutional expressions of the church.

Each Region is led by a Regional Minister who not only serves as a programmatic leader and as an administrator for the many and varied ministries of the church, but gives general pastoral oversight of all members of the church in a given Region. Each Region is charged with the responsibility for working to fulfill the mission of the church and providing for the continuing renewal of the life of congregations, members, and ministers.

With the gifts they receive, Regional Ministries support congregations through:

- Planning, visioning, pastoral care and conflict management
- Empowering leaders through workshops, resources and networking
- Strengthening ministry through calling new ministers
- Licensing, ordaining and maintaining current ministers
- Growing faithful disciples through camps, conferences, youth ministries and ministries to men and women
- Providing outreach through establishing new congregations, ending racism, sharing in mission with projects and trips, and ecumenical partnerships.

With your Christmas Offering, you support the ministries offered by the Region that serve *your* church.

Star Tree 2008

We are again doing the Star Tree to provide Christmas gift for neighbors and church family who otherwise might not have a gift. The tags will be on the tree in the sanctuary starting November 30. Take a Star Tag if you want to contribute. Be sure you sign the list so the pastor will know where the tags have gone. The instructions are on the back of the tag. Gifts should be about \$20. The tags give sizes for clothing items. There will be toys available through Toys for Tots for children under 12.

Thank you for your help in bringing joy to someone this season. Jesus said it was more joyful to give than receive and that is especially true at Christmas time.

At this time, there is no need for special food contributions for the holiday. We have a source for holiday boxes.

Questions? Call Pastor Natalie 227-2050.

Food Pantry

Bring food on Sunday, December 7.
Make checks to the church, marked "for food pantry".



Donations

Help us make this a warm and toasty Christmas for everyone!

The Missions Committee will be collecting socks, mittens, gloves, scarves or hats and distributing them to local people in need. There will be a box for donations at the church starting the first Sunday of December.

Thanks, and Merry Christmas!

Mary-Ann Edens, Missions Chair

Christian Education



LOOKING FOR SOMETHING TO DO?

SEEN WHAT'S NEW FOR SUNDAY MORNINGS?

Lots of new things and classes going on at church. There are several new classes starting. With the new year approaching, there will be even more to do. Come join us! Watch your newsletter for the different things happening in our church. There'll be a test and you don't want to miss out!!

Geni Dowdy, Christian Education Chair



United Christian Church Christmas Post Office Christmas Postage Donation

This worked well last year so we will try it again this year! If you would like to participate, we are going to have a Community Christmas Card Posting Board.

Instead of mailing a card to everyone in the congregation - bring one card signed by your family and post it on the turn-around. Then donate the money you save in postage and card supplies; we will give that money to the Love Inc. Food Bank. There will be a jar on the turn-around for you to put your donations into.

If you would still like to send out cards please do! Remember our shut-ins and singles. There will be bins on the turn around for you to use to deliver cards to members of the UCC congregation.

Don't forget to check for MAIL each week!!

Have a Merry Christmas!
Pastor Natalie

CWF/ Women's Ministries

The **WOMEN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY** and luncheon will be December 6, Noon, at the church. Bring finger food to share and an inexpensive gift (less than \$10.00) to exchange. This year's Secret Sisters will be revealed and new ones drawn. All women are encouraged to come and share in the fun.

The next **CWF group meeting** will be December 9, 1:30 p.m., at the home of Dorothy Shuck.

The **REGIONAL WOMEN'S WINTER RETREAT** will be January 30 to February 1, in Burlingame. The Rev. Patty Evans, former minister of the Selma church, is the keynote presenter. The discount registration deadline is December 10 (not January, as earlier announced). See Natalie Hodgson for forms and more information.



Men's Fellowship & Prayer Breakfast

Come to the Men's Prayer Breakfast on Saturday, December 6, for breakfast and fellowship, followed by helping with some small chores around the church. This invitation is for the young, as well the other than young men of the church. Breakfast is served at 8:00 am.

All men and boys are invited to attend. If you need a ride, please contact Gary at 438-7040, or garypigg@yahoo.com, or one of the other men from the fellowship group.

Council Gleanings

Tuesday, November 11, 2008

Council Training: will be on Wednesday, December 3, 2008, at 6:00 PM, at the church.

Pastor: The Council voted to increase the Pastor's salary by 3%, effective January 1, 2009.

Church Secretary: The Council voted to increase the Church Secretary's salary by 3%, effective November 1, 2008, and to change the name of the position to Administrative Assistant.

Missions: Four of our members participated in the CROP Walk and raised \$365.00.

Eddie Lou Kester, Ministry Council Chair



Sermons on the Web

There is now an archive of Pastor Natalie's sermons, in audio, on our website. Go to disciplesfresno.org then click on sermons. The list is short, but we will add to it as the sermons are available.

Nation's Christmas Tree Trek

The 83rd annual trek to the Nation's Christmas tree (the General Grant tree) will be **December 14**, leaving by bus from Sanger at Noon. (See Gary Pigg for information.)

CCNC-N'S Martin Luther King Regionwide Worship Service

On January 11, 2009, at 4:00 pm, you are invited to the greater Sacramento geographical area to be a part of the Martin Luther King Worship Service. (See posted flier for details.)

FINANCIAL UPDATE

Month End: October 31, 2008

General Funds	\$333,559
Designated Other	3,490
Memorial & Honor Funds	5,640
Designated Outreach Funds	<u>1,629</u>
Total Checking & Savings	\$344,318

Monthly Offerings (includes 12% for Missions)

Total October 2008	\$6,322
Total October 2007	<u>5,108</u>
Above Prior Year	\$1,214

Year-to-Date Offerings (includes 12% for Missions)

To October 31, 2008	\$69,760
To October 31, 2007	<u>66,813</u>
Above Prior Year	\$ 2,947

Final Receipts Bill Bliss Request \$16,063.22

Income & Expense Jan .1-Oct. 31, 2008

Receipts	\$104,209
Expenses	<u>\$117,100</u>
Net Decrease to 10/31/08	(\$ 12,891)

Advent Devotionals

Daily devotional materials for the Advent season (beginning November 30) are available on the table in the back of the sanctuary. There will also be resources for children.

Invitations Available

There are invitations to Advent and Christmas events. These are on the back table, along with envelopes. Use them to invite friends and family to these special events.



Honored Friend

Frances Pena was born on August 24, 1941, in Donna, Texas. This is near McAllen, Texas. Her father was a farmer and her mother was a homemaker. She had two sisters and one brother. After her father died, her mother took over the farm and the family raised cattle, chickens, pigs and vegetables. Her mother made homemade jerky, cottage cheese, bread and pastries. Frances loved the ranch, gathering chicken eggs and picking wild flowers.

When she was still a child, the family moved to Sanger, California where her uncle was the mayor. Then they moved to Corcoran for a short time before returning to Sanger. After she married, she moved in Fresno. She has five children. Her daughter, Irma, has spent 20 years in the Army. The other children are business professionals. She has 11 grandchildren and 4 great-grandchildren.

Frances attended Westland College and Fresno City College. She became a paralegal and obtained her notary's license. She then worked as an instructional aide and as an ESL tutor as well as translator. She worked for Fresno Unified School District for 22 years before retiring.

She has volunteered with the jail and prison ministries and the Spanish chapel. During this time, she met Bill Glass, founder of some of the prison ministries. Over the years she has enjoyed traveling to Mexico and many of the states. Her hobbies have included bowling, dancing, sewing, reading, and singing. She especially enjoys helping others.

Frances was raised in the Catholic faith. She has visited other churches over the past few years. Her friend, Elaine Delgado, invited her to attend here and she has joined our choir. She says she enjoys our small church and its fellowship. Please say hello to Frances.

Submitted by Dorothy Shuck

JOYS & CONCERNS

Melba Jordahl: Ongoing health issues.
Barbara Edens: Chemotherapy.
Yvonne Hix: Regain strength.
Cleo Hastings: Hip and knee pain.
Hazel Calderwood: Pray for strength.
Roxie Calderwood: Ongoing health issues.
Geni Dowdy: Prayers for healing & strength.
John Graham: Hospitalized; pray for healing.
Emily Grace: Pray for her and her family during her continuing health difficulties.
Diana Aznavoorian: Health issues.
Carlos Rosales: Finished treatment.
Debbie Flores & family: Prayers for good family relations.
Mona White/Sally Salt: Quick healing after accident.
Thomas Lewis: Successful drug treatment program.
Laurene Sandell: Ongoing health concerns.

