



Dear Church Family,

I pray yours was a joy filled Christmas. I am glad that Christmas in the church is different than in the world. In the world, the 26th is a day of "After Christmas Sales" and more crowds rushing to get a deal on the thing they didn't find under the tree. In the church, Christmas Eve begins a season of Christmas or Christmastide. There are 12 days of Christmas which end with Epiphany on January 6.

We have 3 Christmas Sundays this year. The 19 was the first. The 26th was the second or the first Sunday after Christmas. January 2 will be our third celebration Sunday; it is Epiphany Sunday. We celebrate the proclamation to the whole world that Jesus is born.

In our house of worship, the Christmas season ends with the Magi on the chancel for Epiphany. We sing Christmas carols and make joyful noise throughout the season of Christmas. Our sacred music is no longer the background noise of the market place but it is the glad sound of God's people praising God and the gift of grace that Christmas continues to bring. In the days that follow Christmas Day, we are able to enjoy the meaning of the season without the pressure to be doing a lot preparing. We arrive at Christmas on Christmas Eve. Take time, rest at journey's end. Time is fleeting enough; don't waste the few days we have been given for our celebration.

We will celebrate Epiphany on January 2; that leaves us plenty of time to get on with the business of the new year. The plans for the year are already shaping up. We have new leadership and a new functioning structure. Hopefully, this will make it possible to get the things done that need doing without running a handful of people into the ground.

We have two really big events coming up, one in May and the other in October. The first is our Annual Block Party and most of us know what to expect. The other is Miracle Day. We have been selected to be one of the churches that gets regional focus in doing some of the things that need doing in and around our church. Painting the inside of our building is on our list.

Both events will need as many of our church people to be involved as is possible. Make sure that you plan to be present.

Continue to have a very Merry Christmas and may the coming year be one of great blessing and grace for you and your loved ones.
Blessings!

Pastor Natalie

Birthdays & Anniversaries
in January

- 2 Aretha Hurt*
- 2 Lori Ingram*
- 5 Calvin Leeds
- 5 David* & Esther* Morris (A)
- 6 Nina Hardcastle
- 7 Chan Born
- 10 Mike Edens*
- 11 Lan Bui
- 11 Virginia (Ginny) & Will Bergeron (A)
- 15 Joel Edmonds*
- 17 Herman Farnum*
- 19 Karen Kay Baker*
- 19 Cleo Hastings*
- 24 Elvera Ahlenslager*
- 25 Carlos Rosales*
- 27 Ardith Whelan*
- 30 Dan Moore
- 31 Gary* & Pam* Pigg (A)



CWF/Women's Ministries

The CWF group's January meeting will be Tuesday, January 11, at 1:30 p.m., at a location to be announced. All women welcome.

The Women's Love Luncheon will be held Saturday, February 12, at noon at the church as a salad potluck. All women are encouraged to come and share in the fellowship.

Save the Dates!

MLK Regional Celebration

January 9, 2011

Taize Prayer Weekend

January 28-29, 2011

at University Presbyterian Church
Registration forms on turnaround.

South San Joaquin Area
Geographical Meeting

Sunday, January 30, 2011
at UCC Fresno



Men's Breakfast

The Men's Prayer Breakfast for January is scheduled for January 8th, at 8 am. for breakfast and fellowship. This will be 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.

Gary Pigg, Men's Fellowship

Honored Member

Patrick McKendrick was born on March 27, in Columbus, Ohio. His father was a career military man serving 27 years in the Navy and Army in World War II, the Korean Conflict and Viet Nam. His mother was a homemaker but worked briefly in a defense plant as a "Rosie the Riveter" gal. He has two sisters, one nephew and one niece. He attended school all over the United States as a result of his father's career. He has two daughters, Colleen and Shannon and one son, Sean Coleman and one grandson, Aidan Patrick.

He enlisted in the Navy in 1965 and received training as an Aviation Electronics Technician. 1967 found him in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, aboard the USS Saratoga with a deployment to the Mediterranean for eight months. He was able to visit Spain, France, Rome, Germany, Switzerland, Crete, Malta, Greece and Turkey. When the 6 day war broke out, his ship provided aerial support for Israel. Soon after, the ship made port in Cuba and Jamaica. At other times he visited Grand Cayman, St. Thomas, St. Croix and Aruba. Of his six year contract with the Navy, he spent four years on active duty and two years as a reservist.

Patrick enlisted in the California Air National Guard in 1977 and served for one year. In 1986 he enlisted in the California Army National Guard. He was a surface-to-surface missile gunner in this unit. He was deployed for a short time to a camp south of Seoul, South Korea. In 1989 he transferred to a unit in Fresno based at the Armory at the Fresno Fairgrounds. When Sadaam Hussein invaded Kuwait in 1990, his company was put on alert and shipped to Damaan, Saudi Arabia, in support of Operation Desert Shield which ultimately became Operation Desert Storm. While there, his base camp was Al Narijah. They could see the smoke from the oil wells fires. When the air assault began his unit moved to Rafha. They were less than 700 meters south of the Iraq border. They endured heavy rain, mud, wind and severe sand storms and, all the while, they could hear the weapons explosions. His unit stayed in Saudi several months.

Upon return to the USA, he received training and became a Chemical NCO learning various forms of recognition and defense from nerve, chemical and biological agents. He also was a Recruiting NCO providing aid during disasters within our country.

On 9/11, 2001, his National Guard unit was activated and sent back to Kuwait and eventually to Taji, Iraq, about 12 miles north of Baghdad. They were involved in supporting several of the major offensives in Fallujah and Najaf. One of the biggest firefights they were in occurred on Good Friday, April 04, 2004, in the small town of Abu Ghraib (about three miles east of the prison). The insurgents used many types of weapons such as mortars, rockets, small arms, I.E.D.'s and blockades. Many of our troops were wounded and their vehicles and equipment were severely damaged. The most seriously wounded were brought by Marine escort

back to Abu Ghraib Prison as there were doctors there and it was a safe haven. His unit was able to back up the prison guards and there was a riot and storming of the gates and walls. Most of the unit remained there for six days (including Easter Sunday) patching up both troops and equipment. At the end of January, 2005, the bulk of his unit flew back to the USA but Patrick and another soldier remained in Kuwait to return later on a ship which carried the unit's equipment. While waiting he went to Kirkuk and Mosul with a side trip to Babylon and the town of Ur where Abraham was born. Back on board ship, they spent 31 days at sea sailing through the Persian Gulf, Strait of Hormuz, Indian Ocean into South Atlantic, Caribbean Sea and ultimately into Beaumont, Texas. In March 2007, he retired from military service with a total of 28 years. Between his father, uncles, cousins and himself, they have in excess of 100 years of dedicated service.

During the times he was not in the service, he worked as a policeman for 6 years in Bakersfield, drove a truck for an oil company, worked for Midas Mufflers, worked at Foster Farms and retired from Orchard Supply Distributing in Tracy, CA.

While in the military he was able to meet the actor, Robin Williams who was performing in Kuwait. He also met General Petraeus. Another time he met General Myers who was the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Patrick's hobbies include riding his 2003 Yamaha Road Star, gourmet cooking, reading, visiting with family working on family history. Twice he spent a week doing research at the Latter Day Saint's Genealogy Library in Salt Lake City, Utah.

He attended church as a child and was baptized in the American River in Sacramento. His uncle is a minister. Patrick tells of the time when he was in the Mediterranean asleep on his bunk. He had a dream that he was in heaven and at the throne of God being judged. The next night he dreamed that he was in hell. He did not sleep for the next two days and nights. This had a great impact on him and he felt it was a message to him to change his life. He started by cleaning up his "sailor's language".

He met Beth through mutual friends and she invited him to church. He feels that God brought him here. He joined our church a few months ago and had been actively involved since then. He is on the Building and Grounds Committee and is a greeter. He helps in any area where there is a need. He is impressed with our church's neighborhood outreach and our friendliness. His daughter, Colleen and grandson, Aidan frequently attend with him.

Please welcome this distinguished veteran and friend.

Submitted by Dorothy Shuck



Missions

Taizé Prayer Weekend 2011, an ecumenical Christian prayer event, will be held January 28-29, 2010 at University Presbyterian Church in Fresno (1776 E. Roberts, corner of Cedar and Roberts between Bullard and Barstow). It starts Friday evening at 6:00 with registration, coffee, and "Living "In Christ" according to Ephesians?" led by Pastor Roger Thompson, Hope Lutheran Church. A Taizé worship service begins at 8 p.m.

Saturday starts with a gathering at 8:00 a.m. and includes three Taizé prayer services—morning, midday, and afternoon. There will be two general sessions and the opportunity to choose two workshop sessions. The morning general session, led by Rev. Dr. Norman Broadbent, First Congregational Church, is "Icons: Seeking the Face of Christ." The afternoon general session is "Worship, Work, and Witness: Foundations for Unity" led by Dr. Delores Friesen, Biblical Seminary of Fresno Pacific University. The prayer-experience sessions include walking the Labyrinth, "Spiritual Drumming and the Circle of Life," "Praying in Color," "Eucharist as Prayer," and "Praying the Psalms."

Registration is \$25 (includes lunch) per person if received before Jan 21--\$30 after. Scholarships are available.

Please make checks payable to: St. Paul Newman Center and note: "Taizé Prayer Weekend"

Mail registration and check to:
Taizé Prayer Weekend
St. Paul Newman Center
1572 E. Barstow,
Fresno, CA 93710

For more information, contact Elizabeth Nelson elizn@csufresno.edu 431-2630

Pen-Pals

Just a reminder to all of you who are participating in the pen-pal program at Roeding Elementary, school resumes on January 10, 2011. Please have your pen-pal letter to the office by Tuesday, January 11th.

Thank you!
Pastor Natalie

Miracle Day

United Christian Church as been chosen to receive the award of Miracle Day, from the Regional office.

We are honored and excited for this privilege! On October 8, 2011, we will be having work done around the church and the church office. While the exact work to be done is not yet known, we are looking forward to getting some much needed improvements!

ACTS 2011 Winter Course

January 21-22, 2011

Fruitridge Christian Church, Sacramento

Cost is \$40.00 and includes Friday lunch, dinner, and breakfast and lunch on Saturday, as well as the program.

The program, "Who Is My Neighbor" will offer background on what "Missional Church" is and how to help lift up missional leaders. The goal is for as many congregations as possible in the Region to launch the "Who Is My Neighbor" Lenten study.

More information and the application are available on the turnaround at the back of the church.



November 2010

General Funds	\$258,960
Designated Gifts	4,924
Memorial & Honor Funds	7,452
Designated Outreach Funds	<u>2,922</u>
Total Checking & Savings	\$274,258

Monthly Offerings (*includes 12% for Missions*)

Total Nov. 2010	\$ 5,796
Total Nov 2009	<u>8,003</u>
Below Prior Year	(\$ 2,207)

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

To Nov. 30 2010	\$ 103,267
To Nov. 30 2009	<u>71,890</u>
Above Prior Year	\$ 31,377

Income & Expense Jan .1-Nov. 30, 2010

Receipts	\$118,464
Expenses	<u>131,277</u>
11/30/2010	(\$ 12,813)

Young Adults Group

A new study group has formed. It is for young adults, post high school to whatever. This group will be meeting once a month. The next meeting is set for Sunday, January 9, at 12:15. We will meet in the Sunday school room. Lunch will be provided. If you need child care, let us know.

We will be looking at chapters one and two of Luke.

Group leaders: Beckysue Duran and Pastor Natalie.

CWF – Service Project

The service project for the Christian Women's Fellowship for the next few months will be gathering small bottles and containers of shampoo, hair conditioner, lotion, bars of soap, deodorant, toothpaste and toothbrushes. These will be donated to the St. Agnes Holy Cross Center for Women which is in need of these items. There is a basket in back of the sanctuary.

We are still collecting Campbell's soup labels, and also labels from Pepperidge Farm, Goldfish Snacks, Spaghettios, Swanson Broth, Prego and V8 products. Please cut out only the UPC bar code as they will not take a full label. These will be sent to our church affiliated home for the developmentally disabled at Woodhaven in Missouri. Please place these labels in the jar on the turn-around. Thank you.

Dorothy Shuck
Service Project Chair

Youth

Do you know *how many books* there are in the whole Bible??? How many in the *Old Testament*?? In the *New Testament*??

No, No, No – you need to answer without looking for the answer or asking anyone else! If you do need to ask, **ask one of our youth**, they'll tell you! They know the answer!

This is just a bit of what we did while in the Lock-In... It is great to be in the house of the Lord! - especially ALL NIGHT! We continue to ask for teens between 8 and 17 years old to come join us. During the school year, we meet every Sunday for Sunday School and at least once a month for special activities.

Come join us, you will not regret it!

Pastor Yolanda

Ministry Council **Snippets**

The Ministry Council wrapped up the 2010 fiscal year with its last meeting on Tuesday, December 14, 2010.

- CCNC-N Per Capita Contribution. \$1.50 per participating member (114) plus \$0.50 designated towards Youth Ministry. Approved \$228 for Per-Capita contribution to CCNC-N
- CCNC-N Annual Meeting. Selected Pastor Natalie and Mary Ann Eden as Delegates with Pam & Gary Alternates. Church to pay for the Delegates.
- Parking Lot work bid was \$23,000. Recommended against the parking lot maintenance.
- Plumbing /leaking in men's rest room. Patrick McKendrick is obtaining bids to replace/repair leak.

Thank you for the opportunity to work with the Ministry Council this year. Gary Pigg.

The Last **SSJ Geographic Area Meeting**

Under the new regional bylaws, this will be the last time we will meet as an area under our current configuration. United Christian Church is the host this year. The meeting will be Sunday, January 30, at 3pm. Mark your calendars now and plan to attend.

Tina is organizing the meal. The usual furniture moving will be needed. We are hoping that members from all 7 Disciples churches will be here. Each church will bring a musical offering and let us know what is happening in their local congregation.

Come share in food, fellowship and communion with the wider Disciples church.

Ministry Council

Here's the staff & Ministry Council for 2011 at United Christian Church.

Staff:

Sr. Pastor	Rev. Natalie Chamberlain
Music Minister	Deaconess, Mona White
Youth Minister	Pastor Yolanda Márquez-Lúcar
Admin. Asst.	Beth Jackson

Ministry Council:

Chair	Mary-Ann Edens
Vice Chair	Tasha Wynn
Council Secretary	Mona White
Buildings & Grounds	Mike Edens and Patrick McKendrick
Elders Chair	Vacant
Christian Education	Vacant
Congregational Life	Tina McCallister-Boothe
Evangelism	Vacant
Missions	Eddie Lou Kester
Worship	Beth Jackson
Financial	
Resources	Jane Sumpter

Elders:

Sharon Hughes
Natalie Hodgson
Eddie Lou Kester
Everett Johnston
Gary Pigg
Pam Pigg

Financial Officers:

Treasurer	Earlene Hodgson
Assistant Treasurer	Clyvene Deppe
Financial Secretary	Dorothy Shuck
Other Officers:	
Church Clerk	Everett Johnston
Church Historian	Natalie Chamberlain
Servants Chair	Mona White

January 2011

* Every Friday morning custodial service is being done in the Church and the Church office.

☺ Deadline for Bulletin material is noon, each Wednesday.

All meetings are at the church unless otherwise stated.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday*	Saturday	
						1 9:00 am O.A. 10:30 am O.A. 7:00 pm A.A. <u>NEW YEARS DAY!</u>	
2 †9:15 am Sunday School †10:30 am Worship Service	3 NO Bible Study at the Hodgson's	4 10:00 am O.A.	5☺ 7 pm Choir	6 <i>Pastor's day off</i> 10:00 am O.A. 6:00 pm Epiphany Party (Ministry Council)	7* <i>Pastor's day off</i> PIC 6:00 pm Spanish Service <u>Ministry Council Reports Due</u>	8 8:00 am Men's Prayer Breakfast 10:30 am O.A. 7:00 pm A.A.	
9 †9:15 am Sunday School †10:30 am Worship Service 12:15 pm Young Adult Bible Study	10 7:15 Bible Study at the Hodgson's.	11 10:00 am O.A. 1:30 pm CWF Meeting 6:30 pm Ministry Council Meeting	12☺ 6:00 pm Missions Meeting 7 pm Choir	13 <i>Pastor's day off</i> 10:00 am O.A.	14* <i>Pastor's day off</i> PIC 6:00 pm Spanish Service	15 10:30 am O.A. 7:00 pm A.A.	
16 †9:15 am Sunday School †10:30 am Worship Service	17 7:15 Bible Study at the Hodgson's. 6:00 pm MHACV Meeting	18 10:00 am O.A. 6:30 pm Elders Meeting	19☺ <u>Newsletter Articles Due</u> 7 pm Choir	20 <i>Pastor's day off</i> 10:00 am O.A.	21* <i>Pastor's day off</i> PIC 6:00 pm Spanish Service <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> ACTS Winter Course </div>	22 10:30 am O.A. 7:00 pm A.A.	
23 †9:15 am Sunday School †10:30 am Worship Service	24 7:15 Bible Study at the Hodgson's.	35 10:00 am O.A.	26☺ 7 pm Choir	27 <i>Pastor's day off</i> 10:00 am O.A.	28* <i>Pastor's day off</i> PIC 6:00 pm Spanish Service <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> Taizé Prayer Weekend </div>	29 10:30 am O.A. 7:00 pm A.A.	
30 †9:15 am Sunday School †10:30 am Worship Service <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> 3:00 pm SSJ Geographic Area Meeting </div>	31 7:15 Bible Study at the Hodgson's.	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; display: inline-block;"> Elder on call: Gary Pigg </div>					

