

HOPE, JOY AND LOVE RISING

Cast~A~Net

First United Methodist Church of Arroyo Grande DECEMBER 2022

Candlelight

CHRISTMAS EVE

DECEMBER 24-SATURDAY NIGHT 7:00

This is a worship service for the entire family. Join us for a service to sing carols, tell the original Christmas story and worship by candlelight. *In Excelsis Deo!* Let us come together on this special night as we, along with the Shepherds, hear about the birth of the Christ child.



**ADVENT STUDY CLASSES—
TUESDAYS NOV 29, DEC 6, 13,
AND 20 AT 1 PM CH**

**CHRISTMAS EXTRAVAGANZA—
SAT DEC 3 AT 3-5 PM CH**

**DECEMBER CHURCH SUNDAY
SERVICES—DEC 4, 11, & 18 8:30
& 10:30 AM SERVICES
DEC 25 (CHRISTMAS DAY)
AT 10:00 AM ONLY**

**COOKIE DECORATING PARTY—
SUN DEC 11 FROM 3 TO 6 PM CH**

**AGUM CHILDRENS CENTER
CHRISTMAS PROGRAM—
TH DEC 15 AT 6:30 PM**

**SUNDAY SCHOOL CRAFT MAKING—
AFTER SERVICES DEC 18 IN
CRISWELL HALL**



Join us for Advent & Christmas Worship on-line or Sunday Mornings at 8:30 a.m. or 10:30 a.m. Here is the schedule for December. There will be a CHRISTMAS EVE Service at 7:00 p.m. and ONE SERVICE on CHRISTMAS DAY at 10:00 a.m.

THE GIFTS CHRIST BRINGS:



ADVENT I

November 27 - PEACE

“Light and Peace”

Isaiah 2:1-5, Romans 13:11-14

ADVENT II

December 4 - HOPE

“Hope and Encouragement”

Isaiah 11:1-10, Romans 15:4-13



ADVENT III

December 11 - JOY

“Comfort and Joy”

Isaiah 35:1-10, Luke 1:47-55



ADVENT IV

December 18 - LOVE

“Assurance & Fulfillment”

Isaiah 7:10-16, Matthew 1:18-25



CHRISTMAS EVE 7:00 PM

Christmas Eve, Dec. 24

“Love”

Isaiah 9:2-7, Luke 2:1-20

CHRISTMAS DAY 10:00 AM`

Christmas, Dec. 25

“Light”

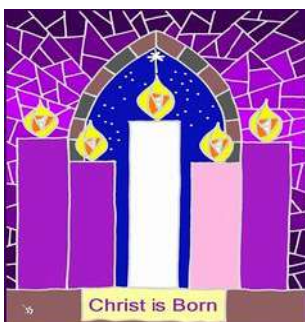
Isaiah 52:7-10, Hebrews 1:1-4, 5-12, John 1:1-14

EPIPHANY

Epiphany, January 1

Happy New Year!

Isaiah 60:1-6, Matthew 2:1-12





**WORSHIP
LITURGISTS**



DECEMBER 4

8:30 a.m.——Elwood Hyden
10:30 a.m.—Patti Melsheimer

DECEMBER 11

8:30 a.m.—— Joseph Brown
10:30 a.m.——BG Perriguey

DECEMBER 18

8:30 a.m. —————John Emery
10:30 a.m. ——Cristy Van Hook

DECEMBER 25

8:30 a.m. ——Susan Thronson
10:30 a.m. ——Robin Isakson

submitted by Jan Treat

Ushers are needed for Worship Services

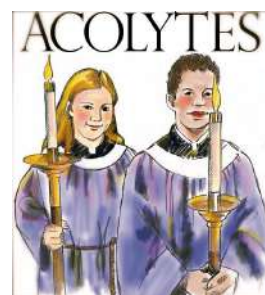


at 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.! Training is offered for new or returning ushers. This is another way to extend your discipleship and support our church.

Call or talk with Kerren Brown at church for more information. See church directory for contact information.

submitted by Kerren Brown

Hey, all you kids ages 8 to 18!



If you would like to serve your Church as an Acolyte, call Lorie Ford or see Lorie at Church.

District Covenant Prayer List

from DS Rev. Melissa Mackinnon

Prayer week

Church/Ministry

Clergy Leader(s)

December 4
December 4

Camarillo Korean UMC
Bishop First UMC

Pastor Sang Yung Lee
Pastor Kate Hunter

December 11
December 11

Bethel Korean Mission Church
Atascadero UMC

Pastor Kisung Nam
Pastor Michelle Park

December 18
December 18

First UMC of Pasadena
First UMC of Reseda

Pastor Amy Aitken
Pastor Christian Jung

December 25
December 25

Thousand Oaks UMC
First UMC of Canoga Park

Pastor Anna Mulford
Pastor Elaine Shin-Paull

NOAH'S NARTHEX FLOOD FUNDRAISER UPDATE



We did it! We raised \$11,975 in just 4 weeks to pay for the costs of repairs and remediation for our flooded Narthex. Funds beyond the \$10,000 needed will be saved for the inevitable future repairs and upgrades of our aging facility. We have a wonderful and generous congregation. Thank you for joining in the fun and purchasing 2 mice, 10 cats, 2 dogs, 1 marmot, 5 aardvarks, 4 wolverines, 2 pigs, 12 sheep, 7 moose, 4 giraffes and 2 hippopotamuses for the ark that financially saved us from this storm. Well Done! The ark has now sailed and we now start our Thanksgiving and Christmas seasonal offerings.



BRING THE ADVENT ANIMALS TO BABY JESUS

We had such fun and such success with the Noah's Narthex Flood Fundraiser that we decided to put the animals to work again. We also have shepherds, wisemen and angels as well. We need your help to bring them all to the manger in Bethlehem to adore and worship the baby Jesus. Our goal for this year's Advent offering is \$5,100. The funds are an important part of our annual budget. Your contributions will help bring the animals, shepherds, wise men (and wise women) and angels to Bethlehem. Please give generously. Mark your contributions "ADVENT" or specify who you would like to sponsor.

YOUR CONTRIBUTION CAN HELP BRING ONE AND ALL TO BETHLEHEM:



\$5 brings a sparrow

\$20 for cat or a dog

\$25 for a rooster

\$50 for a pig

\$100 for a sheep

\$200 for a donkey

\$300 for a cow

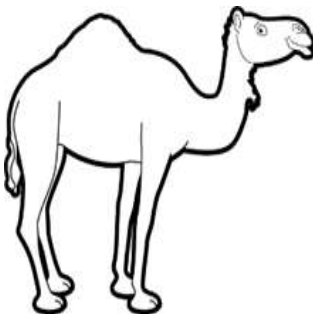
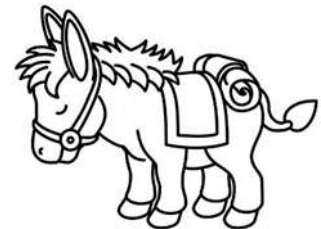
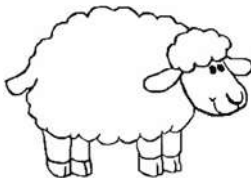
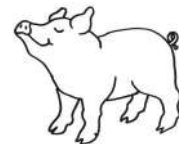
\$500 for a camel

\$600 for a lion and a lamb

\$800 for a shepherd

\$1000 for a wise man or a wise woman

\$2000 for an angel



Please mark your contribution 'ADVENT' or specify what you want to bring to the manger either on your check or offering envelope.



United Women in Faith

Castanet UWF December 2022

United Women in Faith seeks to connect and nurture women through Christian spiritual formation, leadership development, creative fellowship, and education so that they can inspire, influence and impact local and global communities.

As we leave the Boutique behind us, the money still keeps coming in, bringing us well over our goal of five thousand dollars. Again thanks to the many who helped us in so many ways. The Christmas Holidays are upon us. Advent is bringing us together.

With Christmas just a few Sundays away, the Christmas Creche and Collections on display are something we look forward to seeing. With the inclusion this year of Christmas themed collections, we hope more of you will participate. If you have a

special collection and would like to share it by displaying it during the Hospitality time during any one of the Sundays in Advent, please contact Gerry McGuire, so we can schedule your display.

Let us celebrate the joy of Christmas!

submitted by Gerry McGuire



Dates to Remember

- ✓ November 27 through December 18, Sundays in Advent, Christmas Collections

PHOTOS FROM OCTOBER FIRST'S **BIRTHDAY GALA** CELEBRATING THOSE 90 YEARS AND OVER WITH A SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO TWO OF OUR PARISHHONERS

Event sponsored by Program Ministry and United Women in Faith



**Nov. 29, Dec 6, 13, 20 (4 sessions)
1:00 PM in Criswell Hall**



Prepare to receive Christ this Advent with the message of John the Baptist and best-selling author and pastor Adam

Hamilton in ***Prepare The Way for the Lord.***

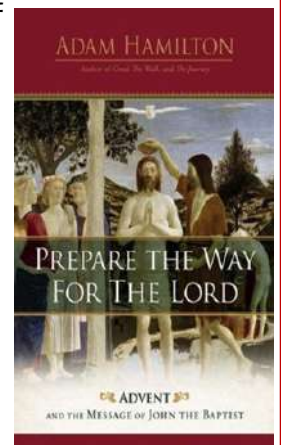
For two thousand years, Christians have turned to the story and message of John the Baptist in the weeks leading up to Christmas. In *Prepare the Way for the Lord Advent and the Message of John the Baptist*, best-selling author and pastor Adam Hamilton explores the Advent themes of John's life and ministry, and how John calls followers of Jesus to prepare their hearts for his coming.

In each of the Gospels, the story of Jesus is intertwined with that of his cousin John, the one whom the prophets foretold would come to "prepare the way of the Lord." When we hear the message of John the Baptist, it encourages us to be ready to receive Christ at Christmas.

Chapter topics include:

1. A People Prepared for the Lord
2. God Is Gracious
3. The Fruit of Repentance
4. Witnesses Testifying to the Light

If you haven't participated before, please know you are welcome to join us in this study. If you want a book to read on your own, let Judy Atwood know.



NEWS OF OUR MEMBERS--KENT UNSWORTH

The Friends of the Arroyo Grande Library recently announced that our very own **Kent Unsworth** has been recognized for his many years working on the library book sale. Kent was presented with a special plaque in appreciation for his 24 years of service volunteering at the library. Kent will be in charge of the December 10th book sale. See Kent if you have any questions about the book sale or want to donate books to the sale.

Submitted by Patti Melsheimer, Lay Leader

The Angel Tree

The Department of Social Services contacted me in October to ask if our church would again provide gifts for needy children for Christmas. They also told me that there was a change in the time line for the delivery of the gifts. **All gifts are to be delivered no later than Friday, December 16, 2022.** So, our Angel Tree will go up earlier this year.

The Angel Tree will be set up in Criswell Hall on **November 19**. The gift tags will be available starting **Sunday, November 20** before or after the church services. I will be picking up the gifts each week after the church services. You may also bring your gift(s) to the church office after contacting the church secretary.

There will be two tags for each gift. The original tag is the one you take and **return attached** to the gift that you purchase. **The duplicate tag stays attached on the**



tree, and please write your name on the duplicate tag. The duplicate tag is used in case your original tag is lost, and it also helps me to contact persons who may not have turned in their gift for the child.

All gifts must be turned into the church office or left under the Angel Tree in Criswell Hall **no later than Monday, December 12, 2022 by noon.**

Thank you for your continued support to help needy children in our county. Your gifts do make a difference in these children's lives.

If you have any questions you may contact me. My phone number is listed in the church directory.

Thank you and blessings to all.

submitted by Jan Treat

ALL CHURCH SUNDAY HOSPITALITY

Because Christmas and New Year's fall on Sundays, we are having ALL CHURCH HOSPITALITY TIME on December 25 and January 1.

Everyone is invited to bring snacks for Hospitality on those days. Healthy snacks encouraged. This is a chance to get rid of those excess Christmas cookies and fruitcakes. Items can be dropped off in the kitchen and labeled HOSPITALITY in advance.

In the future, the **4th Sunday of each month will be ALL CHURCH HOSPITALITY SUNDAY.** Everyone is

invited to bring snacks for Hospitality time. Snacks can include cookies, berries, grapes, cheese, veggie trays, salami trays, pastries, fruit, etc.

Bring a decorated cake if you have a special event to celebrate that month, such as a birthday or anniversary. Of course, you are always welcome to bring goodies ANY Sunday of the month. No sign ups necessary.

*submitted by Joel Anderson
Chair, Church Council*

From Your Lay Leader, Patti Melsheimer

I recently received this message from the 5 Cities Homeless Coalition and thought your might be interested in helping out. The Coalition is very active and is doing a very good job serving the homeless in our Arroyo Grande area. I will have a basket in Criswell Hall for any donations you would like to provide.

WARMING CENTER ALERT!

It's that time of the year when weather gets inclement and when much need warming center open their doors to our most vulnerable neighbors. You can help out by donating food and goods or your time. Any and all support is greatly appreciated! In the next column is a list of items we are currently in need of for our warming centers this winter season:



- Large trash bags
- Coffee, tea, hot chocolate, creamer, sugar
- SOFT breakfast bars, cereal
- Individually packed juice, crackers, cookies, chips
- Instant Noodle/Cup of Noodles (camping meals as well)
- NEW sweatshirts, socks, and underwear
- Rain gear/ponchos/warm gloves
- Large backpacks
- Cards (for gas, clothing, and food)

If you'd like to volunteer, **please call (805)295-1501.**

*submitted by Patti Melsheimer,
Lay Leader*



SHARING FAVORITE CHRISTMAS BOOKS



On Friday, December 16th the UWF Book Club members will meet at 10:30 AM in the church library to share their favorite Christmas books. These books can be either adult or children's books that speak to the meaning of the Christmas season - a time of loving, giving, and believing. Since this is such a busy time of year, everyone can come and relax as they share their favorite books.

submitted by Judy Leonard

Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank
assigned to the California-Pacific Conference
effective January 1, 2023

Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank will start her term as bishop of the California-Pacific Conference on Jan. 1, 2023. She has served as both a rural and big-city church pastor in the Desert Southwest Conference, supervised churches as a district superintendent and helped advance immigration initiatives throughout her ministry.

“I’ve always worked from the ground,” said Escobedo-Frank. “I won’t be a bishop who sits in Zoom meetings all the time – I hope.”

Escobedo-Frank’s family has a rich history in the Methodist tradition, with her mother’s grandfather serving as a circuit rider in the early church in Oklahoma and Kansas. Her grandmother crossed the Rio Grande while in labor with her father to find religious freedom.

She was raised along the border in Nogales, both on the U.S. and Mexican sides. She believes The United Methodist Church, especially in the Western Jurisdiction, is poised to be an example of what it means to be the church right now in the world – through relationships, community engagement and what she described as John Wesley’s “perfecting love” by including those who live on the margins of society and don’t have a seat at the table.

“I think growing in love is what can change us,” she said. “Those are the places we need to grow. We’re working on it. We’ve made some steps. But we have a way to go still.”



Bishop Cedrick Bridgeforth
assigned to Greater Northwest Area

Clergy member of Cal-Pac Annual Conference and our former District Superintendent of our North District has been elected as a Bishop to serve the Greater Northwest Area. Many of you will remember Cedrick who was with us on the District from 2008 to 2015. Bridgeforth currently serves as the Director of Communications and innovation for the California-Pacific Conference. He has been a local church pastor, district superintendent, professor and is an established author. *“My leadership style is about connecting with people,” he said. “My leadership style is very personal.” We congratulate Cedrick on this important step in his journey in ministry. You will find more information about these two bishops and other newly elected bishops on the Conference website at calpacumc.org.*

News from the Mission Team

by Judy Atwood, chair

MISSION TEAM: December 2022

Judy Atwood

MISSION HIGHLIGHTS:

GOD'S STEADFAST LOVE...IN ACTION

Reflections this month come from Natalie Marionneaus. She works at Grove Avenue UMC in Johnstown, Pennsylvania as a Church and Community Worker. She writes, "Free Store volunteers passed out gift cards from the church parking lot. The cards helped more than 100 people fill the gap for some of their needs."

GREETINGS FROM OUR MISSIONARY

"We send you greetings from Zimbabwe in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We do hope that you are all doing well with your families. We thank God for his mercies and favor on all of us and for seeing us through this last quarter of 2022.

We say goodbye to the cold winter season of the year and welcome the rains and the planting season. People are making all necessary efforts to complete cultivation and planting this time around. For us in Mutambara Mission Hospital, we are not left out. We continue to work towards sustainability and hope to achieve food sufficiency and animal production both for the feeding of the pregnant women in our Waiting Mothers Shelter and for other admitted patients on.

We thank you for your prayers. God's mercies and favor have been speaking for us and we are much better health wise than previously. We had scheduled to be on vacation from December 1, 2022 but our scheduled Wellness program will commence ten days earlier than anticipated. We will depart Zimbabwe for the Wellness in the USA. We pray everything goes well.

We will use that opportunity to visit our children and grandchildren during Christmas before returning to Zimbabwe via Nigeria in January 2023."

Florence Mefor, Advance # 13991Z,

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

We received a letter from the 5Cities Homeless Coalition. It was a thank you for the donation of \$500.00 which we sent them this fall:

"Your gift, added to the support we receive from your neighbors, friends, family members and local businesses, helps strengthen our community. We are grateful that you share our mission to mobilize resources, to foster hope, and to advocate for the homeless and those facing homelessness in southern San Luis Obispo County."

FOOD DRIVE RESPONSE

Thank you for your response to our fall food drive for the 5Cities Christian Women's Pantry. We will be forwarding the cash given, and the food collected before Thanksgiving. If at any time you wish to make a cash donation for food, we will be glad to see that it is taken to the pantry.



My challenge to myself and others who wish to join me, is to continue to be who you are and be willing to take time to help make a change in the life of others.

**A THOUGHT FOR MEDITATION.
DON'T ASK GOD TO GUIDE YOUR FOOTSTEPS,
IF YOU'RE NOT WILLING TO MOVE YOUR FEET.**



DECEMBER



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>Abbreviation Legend</p> <p>CH—Criswell Hall S—Sanctuary K—Kitchen L—Library Room #123 MMR—McMillen Room #113 PL—Parking Lot PS—Pastor’s Study HR—Handbell Room #115</p>				<p>1</p> <p>9:00 AM Senior Exercise--CH</p> <p>5 PM Bell Practice--HR</p> <p>6:30 PM-Choir Practice-S</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p> <p>3 PM - 5 PM Criswell Hall</p> <p><i>Christmas Extravaganza</i></p>
<p>4</p> <p>Second Sunday Of Advent</p> <p>8:30 AM Contemporary Service</p> <p>10:30 AM Traditional Service</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Quilt class on hiatus until January</p>	<p>6</p> <p>9:00 AM Senior Exercise—CH</p> <p>11:00 AM UMW Chair Yoga—CH</p> <p>1 PM Bible Study--CH</p> <p>5 PM Bell Practice--HR</p>	<p>7</p> <p>9:00 AM Senior Exercise—CH</p> <p>9:00 AM Trustees Workday—CH</p>	<p>8</p> <p>9:00 AM Senior Exercise—CH</p> <p>10:30 AM SPRC Meeting—CH</p> <p>5 PM Bell Practice - HR</p> <p>6:30 PM-Choir Practice-S</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p>
<p>11</p> <p>Third Sunday Of Advent</p> <p>8:30 AM Contemporary Service</p> <p>10:30 AM Traditional Service</p> <p>3-6 PM Cookie Decorating Party-CH</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>13</p> <p>9:00 AM Senior Exercise—CH</p> <p>11 AM Chair Yoga-CH</p> <p>1 PM Bible Study--CH</p> <p>5 PM Bell Practice--HR</p>	<p>14</p> <p>9:00 AM Senior Exercise—CH</p> <p>9:00 AM Trustees Workday—CH</p> <p>10:00 AM UWF Steering Comm-L</p>	<p>15</p> <p>9:00 AM Senior Exercise—CH</p> <p>2:00 PM Church Council--CH</p> <p>4:30 PM AGUMCC Board Mtg—MMR</p> <p>5 PM Bell Practice--HR</p> <p>6:30 PM Choir Practice-S</p> <p>6:30 PM AGUMCC Christmas Program</p>	<p>16</p> <p>10:30 AM UWF Book Club--L</p>	<p>17</p>
<p>18</p> <p>Fourth Sunday Of Advent</p> <p>8:30 AM Contemporary Service</p> <p>10:30 AM Traditional Service</p> <p>Craft making-CH</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>20</p> <p>9:00 AM Senior Exercise-CH</p> <p>11:00 AM UMW Chair Yoga—CH</p> <p>1 PM Bible Study CH</p> <p>5 PM Bell Practice--HR</p> <p>7 PM Board of Trustees--CH</p>	<p>21</p> <p>9:00 AM Senior Exercise—CH</p> <p>9:00 AM Trustees Workday—CH</p> <p>10:00 AM UWF Steering Comm-L</p>	<p>22</p> <p>9:00 AM Senior Exercise—CH</p> <p>5 PM Bell Practice--HR</p> <p>6:30 PM-Choir Practice-S</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p> <p><i>Christmas Eve</i></p> <p>7:00 PM Candlelight Service</p>
<p>25</p> <p>Christmas Day</p> <p>10:00 AM Christmas Worship Service</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p> <p>9 AM Sr Exercise-CH</p> <p>11 AM Chair Yoga—CH</p> <p>5 PM Bell Practice--HR</p>	<p>28</p> <p>9:00 AM Senior Exercise—CH</p> <p>9:00 AM Trustees Workday—CH</p>	<p>29</p> <p>9:00 AM Senior Exercise—CH</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p> <p>New Years Eve</p>

Meet Our CHURCH STAFF

Church Office: (805) 481-2692
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www.facebook.com/fumcag
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E-mail: mbirgelaitis@gmail.com
Missionary (retired): Judy Atwood
Lay Leader: Patti Melsheimer
Office Administrator:
 Frances Robertson
Website Manager: Jamie Foster
Children's Education Director:
 Carolyn Russell
Music Director: Julia Burns
Praise Team Director: Mike Clark
Choral Pianist: Dennis Eiler
Handbell Choir Director:
 Leonard Lutz
Bishop: Grant J. Hagiya
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 Office Angels

PLEASE NOTE:

Layout Editor reserves the right to cut and edit articles to meet space limitations.

PROGRAM MINISTRIES AND MEMBERSHIP CARE

FORUM IN JANUARY 2023

Membership Care and Program Ministry are partnering to provide our congregation a lecture series "Preparing for Life's Crisis" When crisis' happen it's comforting to know you are prepared. Sign up at the Program Ministry table for any or all of the following lectures offered by a professional in their field. There will be handouts for you to take home. This is not a promotion for any of the agencies providing information.

Levels of Care – January 19, 2023 at 1 – 2:30 pm. What's the difference between **palliative care** and **hospice**? What is **POLST** and how or if I need **Home Health**?

Wills, Trusts (is there a difference) and Fiduciary. January 26, 2023, 1-2:30 Fiduciary is a person who holds a legal or ethical relationship of trust with one or more other parties. Typically, a fiduciary prudently takes care of money or other assets for another person.

Funeral planning – January 30, 2023, 1--2:30 What are the options for myself or a deceased loved one.

Please sign up for any or all of the lectures at the Program Ministry table.

submitted by Sandy Underwood

BIRTHDAYS IN



Judy Heiney.....12/01
 David Beaman.....12/03
 Stephen Wise.....12/05
 Adeline Bottorff.....12/08
 Jamie Foster.....12/09
 Eva McClure.....12/09
 William Russell.....12/09
 Michael Clark.....12/10
 Nancy Sperling.....12/10
 Deborah Lewis.....12/13
 Susan Thronson.....12/13
 Karen Brown.....12/16
 Julie Burns.....12/16
 Kent Unsworth.....12/20
 Cyndee Rohla.....12/24
 Harry Egan.....12/30

WOULD YOU LIKE TO ORDER FLOWERS FOR WORSHIP?

There are dates available for Sunday morning flower dedications in upcoming months. Contact the church office.

Your floral tribute will be placed on the altar for both services on Sunday and recorded in the video for that week. After the services you can pick up the arrangement or we will get it to you.

Please note that due to the higher cost of fresh flowers, the new cost for altar flowers is \$30.

Orders can be made from the Grand Bouquet which we will do upon your request. Orders can also be placed to have Brad Bettencourt create an arrangement using Trader Joe flowers. Please contact Frances in the Church Office. She is the liaison with both Grand Bouquet and Brad.



Have we missed
your
 birthday? If so, it is not listed in our data base. Please contact the church office and we will

First United Methodist Church of Arroyo Grande

Hope, Joy & Love Rising



275 North Halcyon Road
Arroyo Grande, CA 93420

Visit us on the web at worshipweekly.com

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www.facebook.com/fumcag

December

2022



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& December Events*

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Children's Center Chronicle

PROGRAM **MINISTRY**

The **Christmas Extravaganza** is a celebration of Jesus' Birthday using poems, skits, music and desserts. Please join us in Criswell Hall on **December 3rd 3-5 pm** to celebrate. If you are not able to drive please contact Sandy Underwood. Her contact information is in the church directory--please leave a voice mail. She will try to arrange transportation for those unable to drive who want to attend.

Sunday, December 11, 2022 from 3-6 pm we have a Cookie Decorating party in Criswell Hall. Bring your own cookies and there will be some cutout cookies for you to decorate and take home. Program Ministry will supply frostings and fun decorating things. Please sign up and pay your fee so we can guarantee your spot.

Stay tuned for more things in 2023. If you have ideas, suggestions please place them in the payment box on Program Ministry table.

submitted by Sandy Underwood