



The Vine

November 2020

United Methodist Church
1031 Iowa Ave. Los Banos, CA 93635
E-MAIL Address: umclb@att.net
YouTube: Link available on our website weekly
Website: **umclb.net**
Phone (209) 826-4181
Address Service Requested

**Worship Service: In-Person in Sanctuary 9:30AM Sunday Mornings,
and On YouTube or Live on Facebook.**

Church Office Hours: Office closed but secretary can be reached by leaving a message on church phone. It will be checked daily.

Pastor: Rev. Jim Garrison

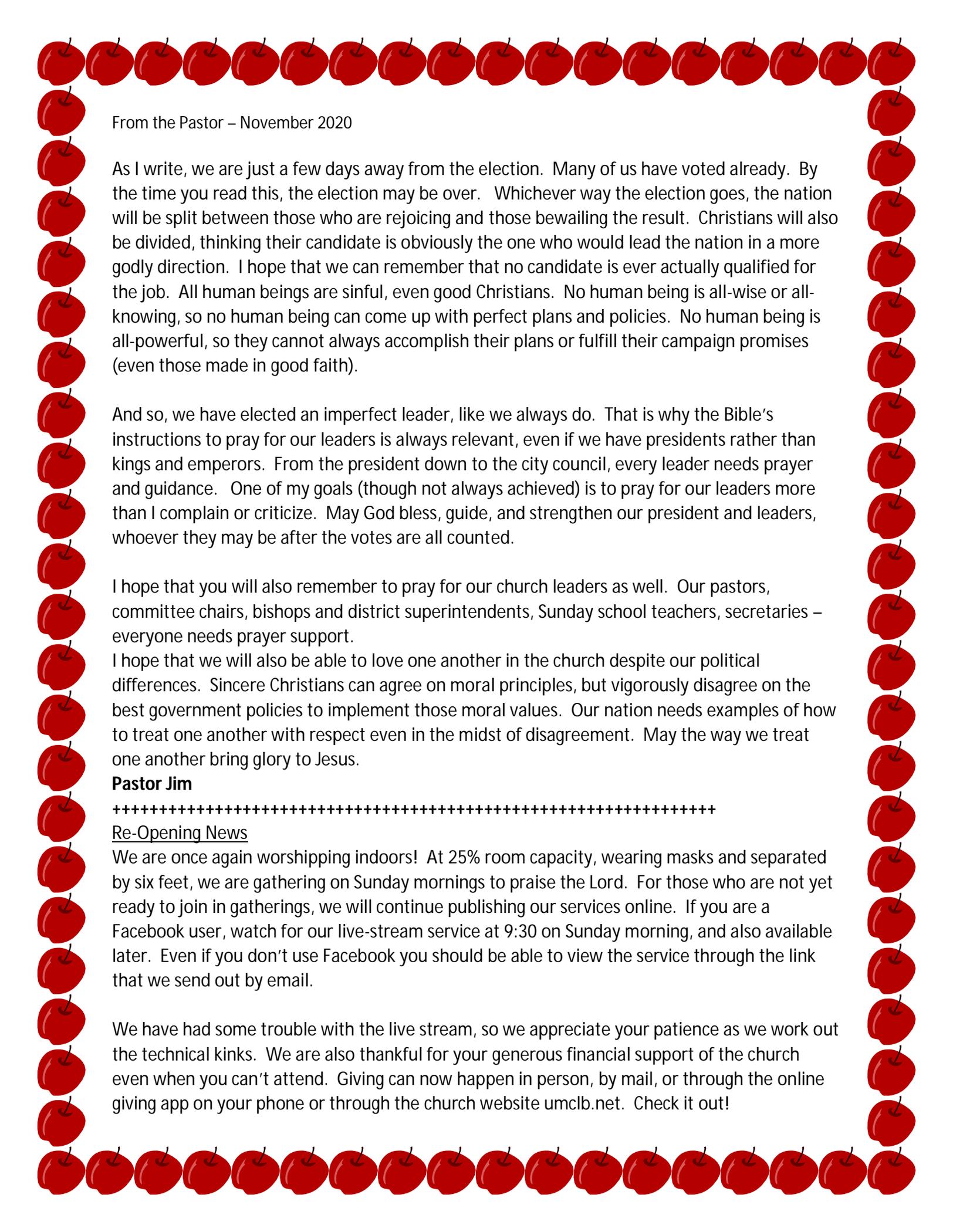
Church Secretary: Cassie Wolf-Miyamoto

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU!

3 rd Morgan Ferreira	9 th Beth Miyamoto
12 th Helen Machado	15 th Kathy Garrison
15 th Roxanne Hew	17 th Maribel Ybarra
25 th Debbie Tucker	29 th Danielle Miyamoto

October contributions total: \$ 10,293.00

Attendance online for October: 4th (47) 11th (45) 18th (17) 25th (25)
In-person: 4th (18) 11th (21) 18th (31) 25th (25)



From the Pastor – November 2020

As I write, we are just a few days away from the election. Many of us have voted already. By the time you read this, the election may be over. Whichever way the election goes, the nation will be split between those who are rejoicing and those bemoaning the result. Christians will also be divided, thinking their candidate is obviously the one who would lead the nation in a more godly direction. I hope that we can remember that no candidate is ever actually qualified for the job. All human beings are sinful, even good Christians. No human being is all-wise or all-knowing, so no human being can come up with perfect plans and policies. No human being is all-powerful, so they cannot always accomplish their plans or fulfill their campaign promises (even those made in good faith).

And so, we have elected an imperfect leader, like we always do. That is why the Bible's instructions to pray for our leaders is always relevant, even if we have presidents rather than kings and emperors. From the president down to the city council, every leader needs prayer and guidance. One of my goals (though not always achieved) is to pray for our leaders more than I complain or criticize. May God bless, guide, and strengthen our president and leaders, whoever they may be after the votes are all counted.

I hope that you will also remember to pray for our church leaders as well. Our pastors, committee chairs, bishops and district superintendents, Sunday school teachers, secretaries – everyone needs prayer support.

I hope that we will also be able to love one another in the church despite our political differences. Sincere Christians can agree on moral principles, but vigorously disagree on the best government policies to implement those moral values. Our nation needs examples of how to treat one another with respect even in the midst of disagreement. May the way we treat one another bring glory to Jesus.

Pastor Jim

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Re-Opening News

We are once again worshipping indoors! At 25% room capacity, wearing masks and separated by six feet, we are gathering on Sunday mornings to praise the Lord. For those who are not yet ready to join in gatherings, we will continue publishing our services online. If you are a Facebook user, watch for our live-stream service at 9:30 on Sunday morning, and also available later. Even if you don't use Facebook you should be able to view the service through the link that we send out by email.

We have had some trouble with the live stream, so we appreciate your patience as we work out the technical kinks. We are also thankful for your generous financial support of the church even when you can't attend. Giving can now happen in person, by mail, or through the online giving app on your phone or through the church website umclb.net. Check it out!



Administrative Council Highlights – October 13, 2020

The Ad Council met by Zoom conference on Tuesday, October 13, 2020 with six people present. The following items were discussed:

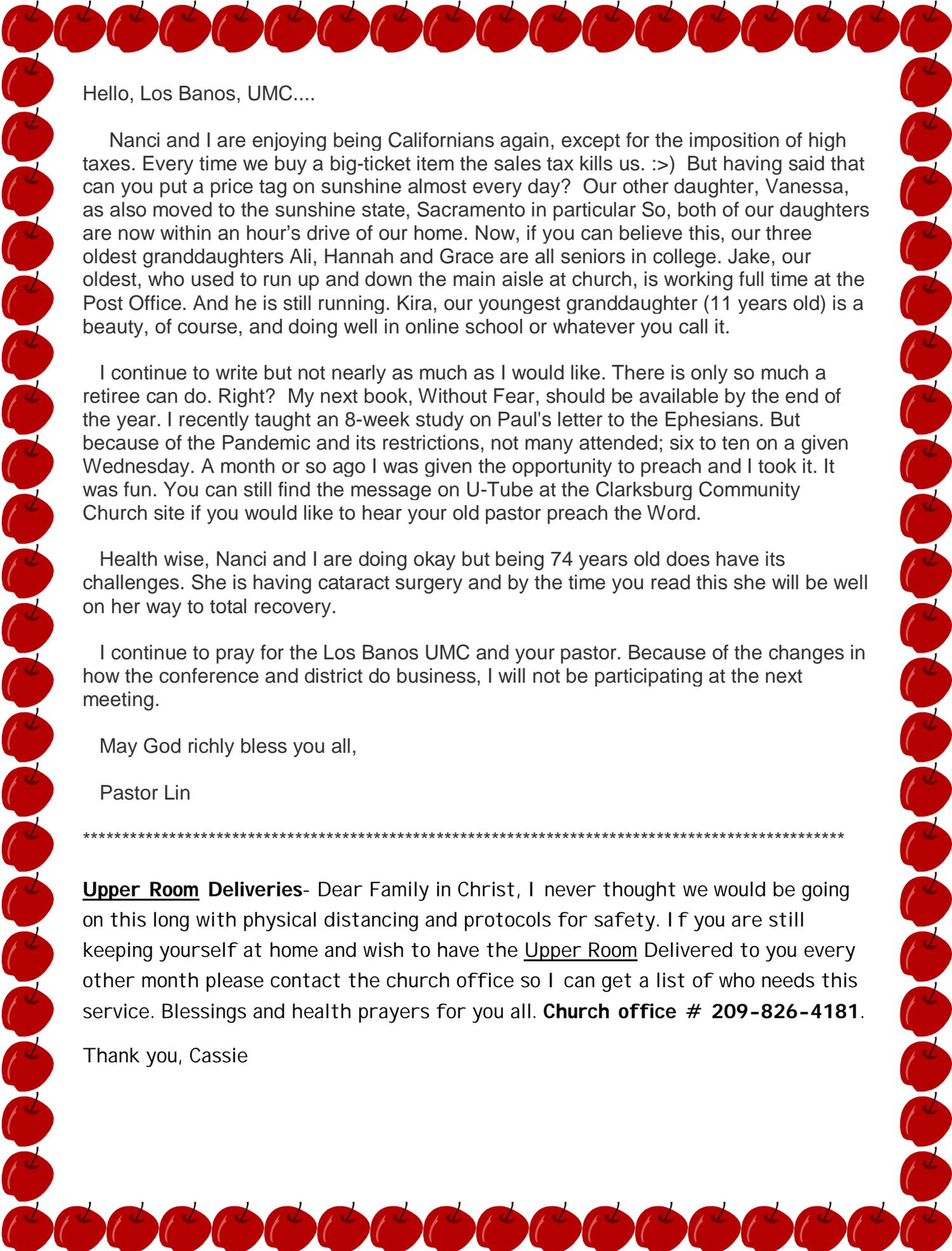
- **Church Re-Opening.** We have been approved to resume indoor worship, in line with State and County restrictions. Merced County is now in the Red category, allowing 25% occupancy for churches, restaurants, and some other enterprises, with masks required. Our first indoor service will be October 18, at 9:30 a.m. The NA group and the Anglican Church have also been approved to resume meeting by the District Superintendent. This week, Cassie will make sure all of our facilities are in compliance and ready to go.
- **Nurture, Outreach and Witness (NOW).** Manna is still serving its clientele with takeout meals. The Nazarene Church is interested in becoming part of the Manna rotation. We received more in donations for the new Fellowship Hall refrigerator than we had actually paid, so we have returned \$550 of the \$1,000 Manna had fronted.

The Connecting Bible Studies are continuing, thanks largely to the efforts of Susan and Bud Ramsey. The young family communications class that Robert and Rhonda Cardenas had offered to lead was cancelled due to lack of signups. We are looking into improvements to our Internet service, and the telephone line to the Fellowship Hall still needs replacing. The NOW Committee is scheduled to meet by Zoom on October 19.

- **Trustees.** The Johnson & Johnson stock that the Trustees received long ago has now grown to about \$21,000, providing a great cushion in case of emergency. The UMC Endowment Board has recently decided to close out its loan program, so the funds that we have invested there (roughly \$3,200) will be returned to us at some time in the future.

The Sloan family has expressed interest in funding a project for the church in Bill's memory. A few possible projects were discussed, with a range of costs, and we will present some options to the family.

- **Financial Report.** September collections were very low: just \$8,191.02, while paid expenses were \$13,190.37. The checkbook balance went from \$13,505.17 on September 1 to \$8,696.90 on September 30. On the plus side, all bills were up to date, and we made a \$1,000 tithe payment to the Conference.
- **Staff-Parish Relations Committee.** The SPRC was to meet on October 14, and again on November 11. The group also met on September 28 to review the proposed 2021 Pastor's Compensation Package. It included a minimal COLA as set by the Conference, plus an increase of \$400 to offset half of the 2021 increase in the maximum out-of-pocket cost by the Pastor's health plan. The package was accepted by the SPRC, and will be brought up for approval at the Charge Conference.
- **2020 Charge Conference.** Our Charge Conference will be combined with the Dos Palos church as a Zoom meeting, on Saturday, October 31. District Superintendent Debra Brady will preside, meeting with the SPRCs of both churches at 8:30 a.m. At 9:00 a.m., the joint Charge Conference will begin, with a 20-minute discussion of a set of five questions provided by the Bishop, mainly about the events of 2020. Then the usual business items will be conducted, with the whole virtual meeting expected to take 60 to 90 minutes.
- **Next Meeting of Administrative Council.** Due to the timing of the Charge Conference and Election Day, the next Ad Council meeting was delayed until November 17.
- **People in Need; Parish Care.** Prayers were requested for Tom Shepherd, Dan Bonillas, Cassie Wolf-Miyamoto, Cathie Lopez, Belinda Sabetta, Pastor Jim's sister, and the victims and first responders affected by California's wildfires.
- **Pastor's Report:** Jim and Kathy went to Roseville for a couple of days to visit with daughter Amy and granddaughter Caitlin, and they hosted daughter Cindy and her husband State from Southern California during the past weekend. He expressed appreciation for Shannan's work in taping and editing the Sunday morning worship services.



Hello, Los Banos, UMC....

Nanci and I are enjoying being Californians again, except for the imposition of high taxes. Every time we buy a big-ticket item the sales tax kills us. :>) But having said that can you put a price tag on sunshine almost every day? Our other daughter, Vanessa, as also moved to the sunshine state, Sacramento in particular So, both of our daughters are now within an hour's drive of our home. Now, if you can believe this, our three oldest granddaughters Ali, Hannah and Grace are all seniors in college. Jake, our oldest, who used to run up and down the main aisle at church, is working full time at the Post Office. And he is still running. Kira, our youngest granddaughter (11 years old) is a beauty, of course, and doing well in online school or whatever you call it.

I continue to write but not nearly as much as I would like. There is only so much a retiree can do. Right? My next book, Without Fear, should be available by the end of the year. I recently taught an 8-week study on Paul's letter to the Ephesians. But because of the Pandemic and its restrictions, not many attended; six to ten on a given Wednesday. A month or so ago I was given the opportunity to preach and I took it. It was fun. You can still find the message on U-Tube at the Clarksburg Community Church site if you would like to hear your old pastor preach the Word.

Health wise, Nanci and I are doing okay but being 74 years old does have its challenges. She is having cataract surgery and by the time you read this she will be well on her way to total recovery.

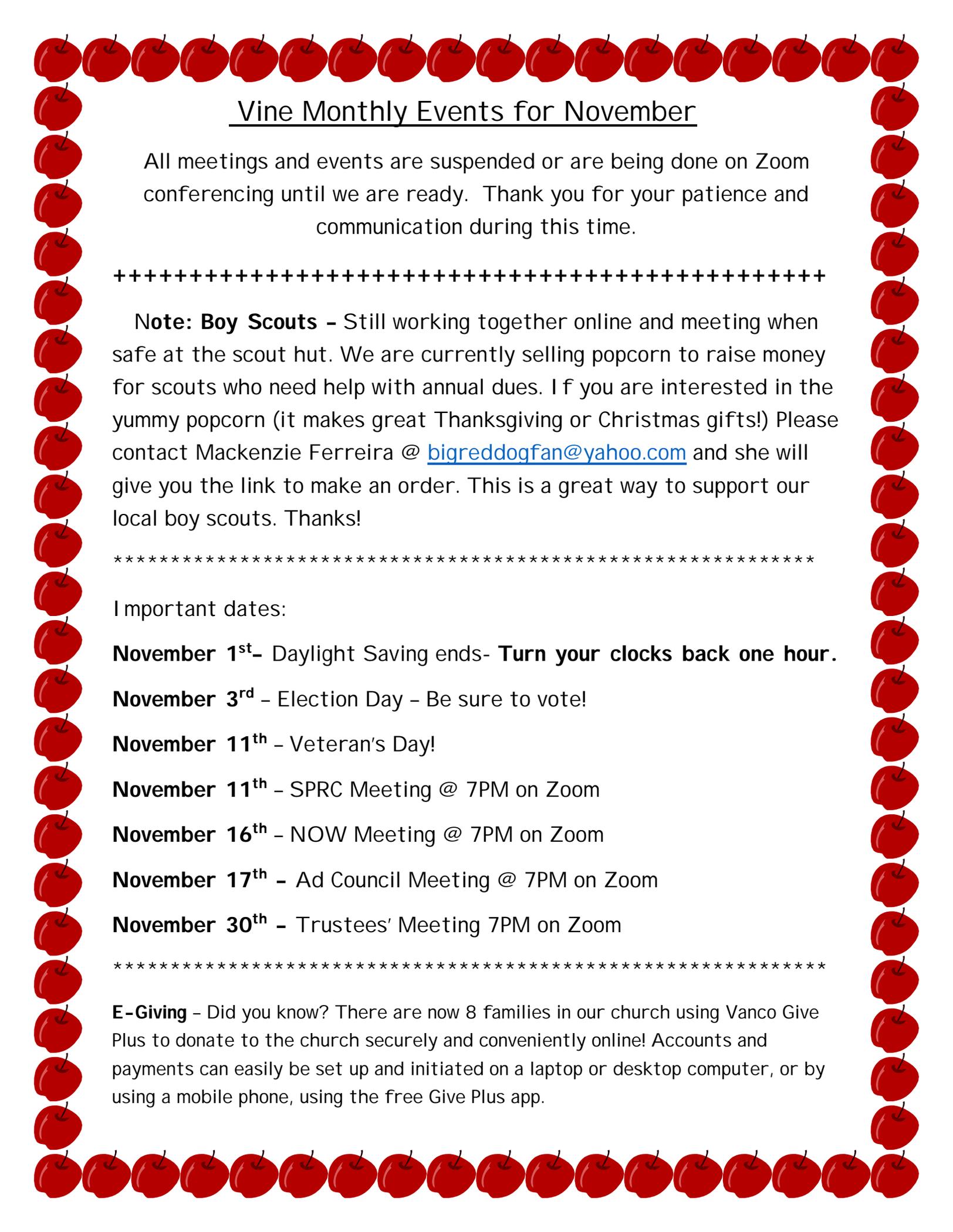
I continue to pray for the Los Banos UMC and your pastor. Because of the changes in how the conference and district do business, I will not be participating at the next meeting.

May God richly bless you all,

Pastor Lin

Upper Room Deliveries- Dear Family in Christ, I never thought we would be going on this long with physical distancing and protocols for safety. If you are still keeping yourself at home and wish to have the Upper Room Delivered to you every other month please contact the church office so I can get a list of who needs this service. Blessings and health prayers for you all. **Church office # 209-826-4181.**

Thank you, Cassie



Vine Monthly Events for November

All meetings and events are suspended or are being done on Zoom conferencing until we are ready. Thank you for your patience and communication during this time.

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Note: Boy Scouts - Still working together online and meeting when safe at the scout hut. We are currently selling popcorn to raise money for scouts who need help with annual dues. If you are interested in the yummy popcorn (it makes great Thanksgiving or Christmas gifts!) Please contact Mackenzie Ferreira @ bigreddogfan@yahoo.com and she will give you the link to make an order. This is a great way to support our local boy scouts. Thanks!

Important dates:

November 1st- Daylight Saving ends- **Turn your clocks back one hour.**

November 3rd - Election Day - Be sure to vote!

November 11th - Veteran's Day!

November 11th - SPRC Meeting @ 7PM on Zoom

November 16th - NOW Meeting @ 7PM on Zoom

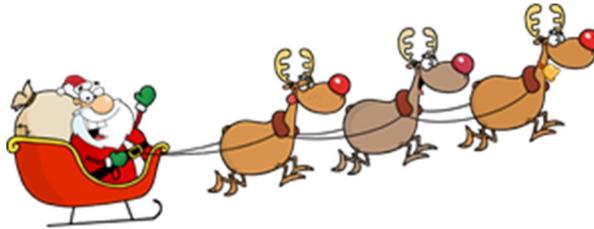
November 17th - Ad Council Meeting @ 7PM on Zoom

November 30th - Trustees' Meeting 7PM on Zoom

E-Giving - Did you know? There are now 8 families in our church using Vanco Give Plus to donate to the church securely and conveniently online! Accounts and payments can easily be set up and initiated on a laptop or desktop computer, or by using a mobile phone, using the free Give Plus app.

The other easy way is to go to our website: www.umclb.net , there is a link for this purpose there. If you have questions, please see Gregg Rice or Bud Ramsey. Thank you!

SCRIP TIP OF THE MONTH



Ready or not – and COVID or not – Christmas will soon be upon us. We would love to help make your shopping easier, while at the same time benefitting our church.

Please contact us to check out the wide variety of gift cards we have on hand for immediate purchase, good for food, gas or merchandise at most local stores and eateries. We can also print paper certificates and electronic gift “cards” almost immediately for items that we do not have on hand, or that can’t wait for more traditional means of delivery, such as UPS or Santa’s sleigh.

The full list of the hundreds of participating retailers can be viewed by visiting www.ShopWithScrip.com. Please contact Gregg or Juli Rice by phone at (209) 826-1027 or (209) 761-2737, or by e-mail at grice@inreach.com.

Please keep praying for our leaders, pastors, first responders, hospital staff and all families affected by this pandemic. We are wanting to be warriors for Christ and show his love during these trying times. Keep in mind God is with us through it all.



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If you need help or wish to have prayers, please contact the church office at 209-826-4181, phone line is checked daily, or call the secretary or Pastor using the numbers provided in your church directory. Thank you.

P. S. - Still working on the new church directory. If you have changes, please email the church - umclb@att.net or call the office. I plan to have the new directory done by the end of November.

Thank you all! Cassie



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