



The Vine

December 2022

United Methodist Church
1031 Iowa Ave. Los Banos, CA 93635
E-MAIL Address: umclosbanos@gmail.com
Phone (209) 826-4181
Address Service Requested

Worship Service In-person 10:00AM Sundays
Service is also online Website:www.umclb.net
Sunday School following Children's Moment in Worship Service
Pastor Office Hours: Tuesday 1:00-4:00 or call (434) 258-3922
Church Office Hours: Mon-Thurs 8:30 AM-12:00 Noon.
Please call the Secretary if you need time in the office.
Messages are checked Monday-Thursday.
Pastor: Rev. Peter Suhn
Church Secretary: Lori Winters



8	Christopher Foxworthy	17	Bud Ramsey
14	Amanda Basque	19	Beth Sloan Johnson
14	Bill Tucker	23	Julie Rice
14	Dennis Morris	30	Kristifer Hew
15	Robert Doubek	31	Lynn Martin
		31	Robert Cardenas

Happy Anniversary!

4 Bill & Debbie Tucker
31 Hans & Susan Younce

November contributions total: \$ 24,190.37
In-Person Services for November 6th (27) 13th(29) 20th (27) 27th (53)

Vine Monthly Events for December



Important dates:

Saturday, December 3rd – Charge Conference 10:30 A.m. in the fireside room

Thursday, December 15th -United Women of Faith Dinner at 4 Seasons Retirement Center off H Street 6 P.M.

Monday, December 19th - N.O.W. Meeting 7p.m. by Zoom

Thursday, December 29th – (Tentative) End of year Finance Committee meeting at 6:00 p.m. by Zoom

Monday's December-Bell practice in the fireside room at 6:15 come join in.

Friday's in December- at 6;00 p.m. Bible study in the Fireside room

Sunday's in December- at 9:00 a.m. Bible study in the Fireside room

Bud still needs pictures of you for the new directory please email

budsusanr@att.net please get them in by the 15th

We will be having our Christmas Eve Service on Saturday

December 24th at 7:00 p.m.

Annual United Women of Faith Christmas Dinner

Our annual dinner will be on December 15th at the 4 Seasons Retirement Center off of “H” Street at 6 p.m. in the Clubhouse. The gates will be open. Please bring a wrapped gift under \$10, finger food, a friend, and five dollars which will be donated to a charity decided upon at the party. It should be fun hope to see you there.

Children’s Church

Mark your calendars for the Children’s Christmas Program to be presented to the congregation during Sunday Service on December 18th. There will be no Sunday school on December 25th or January 1st . We will look forward to resuming on January 8th.



From the pastor

Christmas as a holiday was not observed until well after the biblical era. The early church of the New Testament celebrated Jesus' resurrection, but not His birth. In fact, Christmas was not given any kind of official recognition by the church until the mid-fifth century. Christians today are generally not opposed to celebrating Christmas. The holiday itself is nothing, and observing it is not a question of right or wrong. As Paul wrote, "One man regards one day above another, another regards every day alike. Each person must be fully convinced in his own mind. He who observes the day, observes it for the Lord, and he who eats, does so for the Lord, for he gives thanks to God; and he who eats not, for the Lord he does not eat, and gives thanks to God" (Romans 14:5-6). In fact everyday including Christmas is a celebration for us who know and love Him.

I think how we observe Christmas is the central issue. We observe it for the Lord's sake not for our own self-gratification. Christmas is an opportunity for us to exalt Jesus Christ. We ought to take advantage of it. We celebrate Christmas giving presents or gifts to friends and family.

Christmas is undoubtedly a good time for giving. After all, we are celebrating the greatest gift ever given God's Son, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

God's great Gift was first of all a gift of love to an unworthy world. He gave not because He had to, but because He loves us. And our giving should reflect His love. If we can keep that perspective, this can be one of the most blessed and enjoyable holiday. Christmas is about the birth of Jesus Christ. According to the New Testament, that baby is God in human flesh, voluntarily stepping down to live among humanity, as a servant, in order to take the burden of others' guilt and pay the price for it by sacrificing his life for them.

That's what Christmas is all about, and December 25th is a good day to set aside for a special celebration of it. "For today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11). The "peace on earth, goodwill toward people proclaimed by the angels is not merely about peace between nations and goodwill among people. It's about peace with God and grace from Him to us. That is the good news of great joy which will be for all the people.

In Christ,

Pastor Peter Suhm



Administrative Council Highlights – November 1, 2022

The Ad Council met by Zoom conference on Tuesday, November 1, 2022 with 11 people present. The following items were discussed:

- **Nurture, Outreach and Witness (NOW).** NOW will now meet the third Monday each month, next on November 21. The handbell choir will not practice on those nights. Amanda has been told that the hospital plans to make its annual contribution to support Manna Ministries, even though Manna is currently inactive. The hospital will be informed of the situation before they send any funds to us. It was reported that Laree Rogers, one of the original founders of Manna, passed away the previous week.
- **Trustees.** The white wood trim on the front windows of the sanctuary has been repainted. All of the security cameras are presently working properly. Tom Kaljian and a few others check the images online every day, and we feel that they have been quite effective in controlling our overnight camping problems. The Trustees met in October and made updates to the facilities use agreement form and the fee structure.
- **United Women in Faith.** The group will meet on November 10, for a presentation by Jennifer Barcellos about her work with the Jardin de Amor school in Guatemala.
- **Staff-Parish Relations Committee.** SPRC is preparing for our annual Charge Conference on December 3. The Charge Conference begins at 10:30 a.m., but SPRC will meet first at 10:00 a.m. with District Superintendent David Niu.
- **Financial Report.** The October General Fund income was \$12,260.53, including \$1,420.03 received as the church's 50% share of the rummage sale proceeds. Paid expenses for the month were \$11,287.67. The October 31 checkbook balance was \$3,658.59; all current bills were paid, but

we have still made no payments toward 2022 apportionments. Gregg hoped to get with Peter about a stewardship campaign and pledge drive in November, and said that pastoral appeals for special donations for Thanksgiving and Christmas have historically brought in a significant part of the funds needed for apportionments.

- **Boy Scouts.** Mackenzie Ferreira advised that our church's long sponsorship of the Scouts will end on December 31. They are exploring options for different arrangements that would let the pack continue to operate.
- **Potential Disaffiliation from UMC.** After reviewing information on the disaffiliation issue, and hearing about the procedures to be followed by any church wanting to pursue disaffiliation, the Ad Council voted 9-0 (with one abstention) to remain with the United Methodist Church, and cease further consideration of disaffiliation.
- **Parish Care.** Prayers were requested for Bud's brother, Melissa's mother, Amanda; Guadalupe Martinez; Gregg's mother, Jean Bright, and Roxanne Hew's mother.
- **Pastor's Report.** Peter reported that the Nominations Committee met on October 30 in preparation for the Charge Conference. He had a good visit with Jean Bright. The Friday evening Bible study is going well, and a new study group, from 9:00 to 9:30 a.m. on Sunday mornings, will begin the first Sunday in December.

Following the vote taken earlier, we will no longer discuss disaffiliation. He will report the vote to the District Superintendent. The UMC Conference leadership has pledged to support all churches, including those with a traditional view, and Peter's goals are still for us to serve God with one mind and one heart and to praise God and love each other.

Advent begins the Sunday after Thanksgiving this year. We will have a Christmas Eve service at 7:00 p.m.

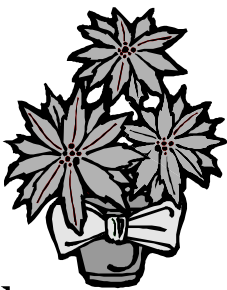
SCRIP TIP OF THE MONTH

This is a reminder that the scrip team is anxious to help you with your gift giving for Christmas this year, while also helping provide financial support to our church in its worldwide mission outreach.

Each Sunday after church, we display between \$4,000 and \$5,000 worth of gift cards that are available for immediate purchase. We also encourage you to check out the hundreds of other vendors shown in the Retailer List on the scrip company's website (www.RaiseRight.com). We can order anything that you find on the list, and usually have it here within a couple of days.

For your convenience, we can accept payments by Venmo or Zelle, in addition to cash or checks.

If you have any questions, want to purchase any of our on-hand inventory, or wish to place an order, please contact Gregg or Juli Rice at (209) 826-1027, or e-mail us at grice@inreach.com.



CHRISTMAS
POINSETTIAS

If you would like to purchase a Poinsettia to decorate our Sanctuary for Advent, please fill out the information below.

COST IS \$ 12.00

IN HONOR OF

IN MEMORY OF

NAME: _____

Your Poinsettias may be taken home after the Christmas Eve Service.

EASY CHRISTMAS TRUFFLES



Ready In:

1hr 10mins

Ingredients:

4

Serves:

50

Nutrition information

INGREDIENTS

UNITS: **us**

- 1lb milk chocolate chips
- 1(12 ounce) can pillsbury or betty crocker supreme milk chocolate frosting
- 1tablespoon any flavoring extract ie rum, brandy, lemon, almond, etc
- 1lb white chocolate bark (for dipping, to coat truffles)

DIRECTIONS

1. Melt 1 Lb milk chocoate in top of double boiler over hot water (or in Microwave).
2. Stir until evenly melted.
3. Add the can of frosting and the flavoring/extract.
4. Blend well, mixture may start to thicken.
5. Chill in refrigerator for several hours or overnight.
6. Use spoon or melon baller to scoop mixture in to hand.
7. For dipping chocolate, I buy white chocolate bark but you can use white chocolate chips, candy melts, or just roll them in coconut, cocoa powder, mini choc chips, sprinkles, etc.
8. Melt the bark or white chocolate according to pkg instructions.
9. Dip each ball in white chocolate to coat.
10. We drizzle a tiny "design" of dark chocolate over the top of the truffles to make them pretty.