

“The Grapevine”

December 2017

Flower Calendar

December 3
Olive Shang

December 10
David Lee

December 17
David Edwards

December 24
Poinsettia’s by the Congregation

December 31
Bob Weinberg

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Deacons Barrel Item:

“Diapers” (Size 4 and 5)

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Pledges for 2018

The Finance Committee and the Session are in the process of setting up our budget for 2018. If you have not already sent in your proposed pledge for the year, we would appreciate it if you could let us know what you might be considering. If you don't normally pledge but do make contributions weekly or monthly, we would appreciate an estimate of what that might be.

Events

Christmas Craft Fair
Saturday, Dec. 2 @ 8am – 3pm

TVC Luncheon (Kitchen & S. Hall in use)
Friday, Dec. 8 @ 10am – 1pm

Violin Recital (Sanctuary in use)
Friday, Dec. 15 @ 6pm

Newsletter Deadline
Dec. 15

Men’s Breakfast
Saturday, Dec. 16 @ 8am

Children’s Christmas Program
Sunday, Dec. 17

Christmas Brunch
Sunday, Dec. 17 after worship

Christmas Eve Worship Services
Sunday, Dec. 24 @ 10am & 5pm

Office Closed – Christmas

Newsletter Folding Crew
Wednesday, Dec. 27 @ 845am

T.I.M Workday
Saturday, Dec. 30 @ 10am

Happy Birthday To:

- 5- Ray Shipman
- 7- Rosemary Lara
- 9- Jennifer Warren Hauser
- 12- Bill Swenson
- 15- Gwen Wagner
Rebecca Dubie
- 18- Tiffany Cole
- 19- Mary J. Pribyl
- 20- Peyton Pardo
Jean Reed
- 23- Bill Miller
Kendyl Thomsen
- 30- Pat Kruse

Happy Anniversary To:

- 12- Paul & Linnea Senden
- 14- Terres & JeanRonneberg



2017 Per Capita

The per capita for this year will be \$21.00 per member and will be distributed in the following manner:

General Assembly.....	\$ 7.50
Synod of the Pacific.....	\$ 5.22
Presbytery of Stockton.....	\$ 8.28
Per capita total	\$21.00

If you haven't yet paid your 2017 per capita, you can still do so. Please mark your check or envelope "Per Capita 2017".

As in years past, during the Advent season we will be decorating the sanctuary for December 24 worship service with **beautiful poinsettias**.

If you would like to supply a poinsettia, please fill out the form below and return it to the church office or Sunday offering plate.

Poinsettias must be brought to the church office no later than Friday, Dec. 22.

This form is due by Sunday, Dec. 17!

This Poinsettia is given in (Please check ONE):

Memory _____ or HONOR _____

Of: _____

Your Name: _____

2017**DECEMBER****2017**

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1 8am Christmas Craft Fair 2
3 10am Worship/ Sunday School 1pm KC 5pm IC	4 7pm Evangelism	5 7pm Deacons 7pm Session	6 10am Bible Study	7	8 10am TVC Luncheon	9
10 10am Worship/ Sunday School 1130am Pastor Luncheon/ Silent Auction 1pm KC	11	12 7pm Finance	13 10am Bible Study 7pm Hand Bell Choir 630pm Worship	14 545pm Mission 7pm Choir & Quilters	15 Newsletter Deadline 6pm Violin Recital	16 8am Men's Breakfast
17 10am Children's Christmas Program 1130am Christmas Brunch 1pm KC 5pm IC	18	19 7pm Session	20 10am Bible Study 7pm Hand Bell Choir	21 7pm Choir & Quilters	22 Bring all Poinsettia's to the church!	23
24 10am Worship/ Sunday School 1pm KC 5pm Christmas Eve Service	25 Office Closed	26	27 845am Newsletter Folding Crew 10am Bible Study 7pm Hand Bell Choir	28	29	30 10am T.I.M Workday
31 10am Worship/ Sunday School 1pm KC 5pm IC						

TUTORING OPPORTUNITIES



Now that school is back in session there will be requests for tutoring by some students. We would like to get our tutoring group up and running as soon as possible in order to be able to help students here at the church with free tutoring.

We already have a list started of those who are interested in tutoring different subjects but would like to increase those available to help and the subjects offered. You do not have to be an educator to fulfill this requirement.

High school students receive community service points for tutoring so we would encourage any high school student to apply. We will do the required fingerprinting on all who participate.

One of our first priorities to finalize is to have someone, possibly a retired teacher or principal, to step up to be the coordinator of the program. Although having been associated with a school is not a prerequisite, it might make it easier to understand the school system and to know what subjects would be the best to offer.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN SIGNING UP EITHER AS A TUTOR OR AS THE COORDINATOR,
PLEASE CONTACT SHIRLEY GAHM @
jacobgahm@msn.com



Pastor Nominating Committee Update

Your Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) has been meeting weekly. Meetings began on October 29 and the PNC has now completed three meetings. As the committee will continue to meet weekly, it is the goal of the committee to have what is called a Ministry Information Form (MIF) submitted to the PCUSA Church Leadership Connection that matches Pastor Information Forms with Ministry Information Forms. Our hope is to have our MIF finished by Christmas. The committee members are excited about sharing your vision for the future of our church through the MIF and are diligently working on the form. The committee has been eagerly reviewing the mission study and other materials that you, the congregation, have been contributing over the past two years in your effort to identify our church's vision. The committee is taking your information and summarizing it for prospective pastors to consider before applying for the position.

It is our hope that beginning around January 1, 2018 the committee will have resumes to begin evaluating as we search to find the pastor that God intends to place among us.

If you have any questions about the process please don't hesitate to talk to any of the committee members.

This update is respectfully submitted by David Weisenberger on behalf of committee members Kathleen Buffleben, Dale Brandes, Mike Little, Paul McCormick, Harold Reich, Nancy Rusch, and David Weisenberger.

Recent Mission Committee Activities

After church and a quick meal of Nachos and fruit on October 29, several congregants participated in a Help thy Neighbor event. Some congregants helped with general yard maintenance for four individual households in the Tracy area that needed some assistance. Other congregants from the church participated by visiting or by writing and sending cards to those unable to attend church regularly. Those who participated in the event were; David Weisenberger, Roger and Connor Winkler, Ina Danforth, Pat and Dale Brandes, Cathie Reich, Ray and Jean Shipman, Rosemary Lara, Sandi Clarke, Don and Char Bisbee, Lem and Micaela Vergara, and Colleen Colenso. The Mission Committee hopes to run this event annually. This event followed the Justserve.org event of painting fire hydrants through-out Tracy on October 14. In addition, the Peacemaking Offering on World Communion Sunday, October 1, amounted to \$1,588.92, with \$392.06 being used for local mission projects and the remainder sent to Synod for regional and international projects. The Mission Committee also held a Community Garden Work Party on October 21. A rototiller was rented for gardeners to use to prepare their plots for winter crops. In addition, gardeners tilled plots not yet being used preparing the plots for future use. General weeding of paths and vacant plots was conducted. Congregants participating were Roger Winkler, Connor Winkler, Alex Pineda, Jeanne Weisenberger, and David Weisenberger. In between work parties gardeners have been working on general weeding of the area, in particular gardener Heike Quinn has spearheaded work in the general areas of the garden. There are garden plots available for anyone interested in vegetable gardening (or flowers) at the Community Garden on the corner of 3rd Street and Mt Diablo Street just off of south MacArthur Blvd.



Flu season is here. Time for a shot

We all want to stay healthy. A flu shot is the best protection against getting sick with the flu. Though people who are vaccinated can also get sick, studies have shown that symptoms tend to be less severe. The shot also helps protect against dying of the flu; in a bad season, 56,000 people across the country may die.

Flu season has arrived in California, so don't wait any longer to get your flu shot.

Who should get the flu shot?

Everyone at least 6 months old get vaccinated against the flu.

People at the highest risk of severe illness and/or death include children, seniors, pregnant women and those with chronic medical conditions or weak immune systems. Getting the flu shot is especially important for these people.

A few options for shots are available. Some protect against three flu viruses and some protect against four. Both are fine for those at least 6 months old. For seniors, who are more susceptible to suffering severe symptoms, there are high-potency shots designed to better stimulate their immune system. Ask your doctor which is best for you and your family.

Where to get a flu shot?

There are lots of options for getting a shot. Many health care providers have flu shots as do many pharmacies. If you have to pay out of pocket, Costco has flu shots for the best price I have been able to find. It is \$19.99 for the flu shot; \$43.52 for the high-potency shot for seniors. Medicare, Medi-Cal, and most insurances do cover the flu shot. If you're wondering, you do not have to be a Costco member for pharmacy services.

Protect yourself!

Even after you get your flu shot, you should protect yourself and others by:

- Washing your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Staying home and limiting contact with others when you are sick.
- Covering your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue out when you are done.
- Not touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Avoiding close contact with sick people.
- Cleaning and disinfecting surfaces.

Introducing...

Don & Char Bisbee

Don and his identical twin brother, Doug were born November 4, 1935 in Jackson, Michigan. They attended Bloomfield Elementary School until 6th grade. The Bisbee family moved to the country, where they attended Harrington School. It was there he met Charlotte Ward.

Char was born March 30, 1935 in Paducah, Kentucky. In 1937, there was a big flood of the Ohio River. Char and her parents left, but Char's Dad returned to help evacuate people by rowboat. Eventually they went to Cincinnati, Ohio where Char's dad worked for AMI (Automatic Music Incorporated), a company that serviced jukeboxes. After Cincinnati, the family, along with Char's grandmother moved to Jackson, Michigan.

Char and Don began dating. They attended East Intermediate School, then Jackson High School. After high school, they both attended Jackson Junior College. Halfway through the 2nd year, Don and Doug joined the U.S. Navy. Char continued her sophomore year at Western Michigan. In 1955, Don and Char were married. Char joined Don at Hunter's Point, San Francisco, Navy base. In the fall, Char returned to Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, Michigan to achieve her goal of becoming a teacher. Don and Doug were stationed aboard the USS Hancock. During their two years in the Navy they went to Hawaii, Manila, Japan, Okinawa, and Hong Kong.

After his stay in the Navy, Don moved to Kalamazoo to be with his wife, Char. After she graduated, Char taught kindergarten in Battle Creek, Michigan. After graduation, Don taught one year at Blue Creek Consolidated School in Paulding, Ohio.

With a big U-Haul containing everything we owned, and our teaching credentials, we came across country and moved to Tracy, CA in 1961. Don and Char with their new born daughter, Cindy, moved to Tracy, CA, where Don had a teaching position at Tracy Joint Union High School. Don taught Drama, English, and occasionally Art. He retired in 1991 to act in movies (75 movies) and television. He became a member of Tracy Community Theater, Tracy Breakfast Lions, and First Presbyterian Church.

Char was an elementary school teacher at Central School, retiring in 2001. Beside membership in the First Presbyterian Church, Char is a former President of Tracy Jr. Women's Club, member of Tracy Woman's Club, and Tracy Newcomer' club in the 60's. Both Don and Char are long time members of First Presbyterian Church choir.

We have truly enjoyed living in Tracy and raising our 3 children here. Cindy, as we already mentioned was not Tracy born, but Derek born in 1962, and Christa, born in 1972 are both "Tracy" kids! Our church and many friends have truly enhanced our lives.

"Budget Report"

General Fund:

Balance Fwd: \$65,409.71

Income:	<u>Month</u>	<u>Year to date</u>
October:	\$ 9,941.00	\$ 123,840.15

Expenses:

October :\$ <13,308.81> <164,042.96>

Balance: <\$3,367.91> \$25,206.90

New Site Mortgage Fund:

Balance Fwd: \$ 8,776.11

2017 Income to date: \$ 18,627.00

Total Income: \$ 27,403.11

Expenses – 2017:

Synod Loan \$8481.60

Synod Principal \$3214.72

Presbytery Loan \$2810.00

S.J. County taxes \$4887.02

Total Expenses \$<19,393.34>

Total on Hand: \$8,009.77

Synod of the Pacific Loan:

Principal balance owed Synod: \$57,838.72
(12/31/16)

Principal paid 2017: \$ 9,581.19

Interest paid 2017: \$ 2,115.13

Current balance owed Synod: \$48,257.53
(10/31/17)

Presbytery of Stockton Loan

Balance owed 1/1/17: \$30,240.00

Principal paid 2017: \$ 3,600.00

Balance owed 10/31/17: \$ 26,640.00

Pastor's Page:

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ! Grace and Peace to you!

Happy New Year! The season of Advent marks the *beginning* of the church year, rather than the conclusion of the secular calendar. Advent is a season of anticipation and tenacious hope, on two levels: as we wait to commemorate receiving the Christ child at Christmas, and as we wait to receive Jesus' return.

Advent is, therefore, an in-between-time. We are caught "betwixt and between" Jesus' ministry life here on earth and his promised second coming. Waiting is hard. We hate waiting. With our Black Friday deals that start online a week before Thanksgiving, our Amazon Prime accounts that make us pay shipping costs up front ("membership") for our potential 2-day rush orders, our two-hour flash sales with push notifications to our cell phones—we don't *do* waiting.

How did those first followers of Jesus feel when he didn't come back in their lifetimes? Did they feel like someone after a great first date, wondering if the other person is going to call back?: at first giddy, then questioning, then hopeful, then doubtful, then bitter, then indifferent; trying to ignore the time passing, yet stealing glances at the clock. Paul addresses this question in our most recent epistle readings, 1 Thessalonians. We get a clue in 1:8-10, when he says, "in every place your faith in God has become known...how you turned to God from idols, to serve a living and true God, and to **wait** for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead...."

Paul goes on to praise the faith of the Thessalonians and tell them they are his "hope," his "joy," his "crown of boasting" at the Lord Jesus at his coming; indeed, they are his "glory" (2:19). The Thessalonians' continuance in the faith is what inspires Paul to keep going in his ministry and he can't thank God enough for them (3:8). Paul exhorts them to continue to "increase and abound in love for one another and for all," even as much as Paul loves them; he implores God to strengthen their hearts in holiness so that they will be blameless before God the Father at Jesus' coming with all his saints (3:12-13).

Paul then turns to what must be a pressing question for the community: what happens to those who have died before Jesus has returned, still waiting for their hope to be fulfilled? We can consider what he says as a word of encouragement to us, as we continue to wait for Jesus' return, this and every Advent. In chapter 4, beginning with verse 13, Paul says that those who are alive at Jesus' return will see the Lord return with unquestionable declaration; those who have died will rise again and all the saints will be with the Lord forever. Paul, over and over again, talks about Jesus' return as words of encouragement, and he tells the Thessalonians to continue in encouraging one another and building one another up (5:11).

As I've been considering my time with you coming to a conclusion, I've been reflecting on this letter of Paul's and his closing words to the Thessalonians in chapter 5, verses 12-24:

“But we appeal to you, brothers and sisters, to respect those who labor among you, and have charge of you in the Lord and admonish you; esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves. And we urge you, beloved, to admonish the idlers, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with all of them.

See that none of you repays evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to all.

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil.

May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.”

I can't really improve on Paul, but I can make it more concrete. Your elders, deacons, Pastor Nominating Committee, and all those who “labor among you” are continuing to seek to discern and follow God's call faithfully. Hold fast to one another, because God's love for you is the glue that holds you all together in Christ's Body, the church. When you disagree, remember God's grace for you and be gentle with one another. Knowing that God's love is poured out for you in Jesus Christ, share that love within your congregation and to all those you encounter.

Continue in a spirit of thanksgiving throughout the Advent season and beyond, looking for the good that God is doing among and through you. Try new things when done to honor God, hold onto the things that truly matter: hope, love, peace, and joy in the Lord. Remember that God is faithful to us, and works in and through us. God's future is one of glory and peace, and that future is yours!

I cherish the time that I have had with you; the ways that you have instructed me, challenged me to grow, and been gracious with me as I have begun my vocation as a Pastor. I cherish each one of you and your friendship and caring; I cherish this community. I continue to pray for you, even as we separate. May God continually bless and guide you, may Christ's light fill your hearts and minds, and may the Holy Spirit sustain you as you wait this Advent and await a called pastor.

I leave you with Paul's words to the Philippian church (Philippians 1:3-6):

³ I thank my God every time I remember you, ⁴ constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, ⁵ because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. ⁶ I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ.”

Peace of Christ,
Pastor Jennifer

