



Spire

January 2024

Pastor's Pen

A New Year brings hope and anticipation. What new and exciting things will we see in the coming year? What pains can we lay to rest? What new joys will we experience? A New Year can feel like a fresh start. In many ways it is, but it is a fragile fresh start.

Too soon the excitement wears off, and the anticipation turns to the mundane. Too often the "fresh start" feels like simply more of what we did in the year just past, tagging along into the next. The resolve with which we faced the year fades like cloth in the sun. That fabric will become brittle and fragile even. So how to enter a new year so that we don't repeat these patterns? How to start a new year so that excitement and anticipation last?

Jesus reminds us to set our hearts on treasures which are in heaven where neither rust and moth, nor thief and deceit take. The treasures of this world are fading and elusive. That's easy to say and repeat, but how to live it out? How to put that kind of faith into practice every day? That is the hard question, and the one toward which I strive but don't always succeed.

Not every day is filled with faith, I have my days where doubt and despair build, too. On those days, I often find my heart is set on something other than being a person of faith. It might be about any number of other honorable and reasonable matters, but being a person of faith wasn't among those matters upon which my heart was set. Yet, when days come for me, as they do for all of us, I find my way out not by pushing through. No, for me it is learning to be still amid whatever it is which is distracting me from being a person of faith. It is in finding stillness that I can know the presence of God's Holy Spirit and hear God's leading voice again. When my heart is set on things of this world, it's a swirling mess. When my heart is set on being a faithful person, faithful to God and the other covenants in my life – spouse, children, parents, siblings, and many other covenants of that nature in our lives, then the swirling mess around is just that – a swirling mess. We keep things in their proper perspective. Yet even this notion of faithfulness can become twisted, too.

Continued on page 2

Pastor's Pen

Continued from page 1

As I said, I strive toward being a faithful person and I don't always succeed in that goal. I believe that is true of others, too. However, there is a growing tendency which conflates faithfulness with patriotism. This is dangerous and not faithful, either. "Christian nationalism" is something we should recognize and name in ourselves, first. I know it along with racists tropes were not uncommon to my ears growing up. I had to learn to hear with understanding what was being said. I also had to learn that with both of those sets of tropes, something other than God was taking first place in the lives of those speaking. God, and being faithful, was more an ornament to what was of first importance to those folks. It took me a long time to realize that, but by my twenties I had understood what I was hearing.

I focus on hearing because it wasn't something I "saw." It was something I heard. It was in the turns of phrase and the words chosen. The way situations and or people were described. Generations before me saw some of this in the place where I grew up. The local KKK chapter burned a cross in front of the Buckeye Church, the sister congregation to my home congregation long before I was born. But the memory of that sight was still one which was strong and remembered. I didn't see those things, but I heard the words and the attitudes which were behind the sights seen a generation or two previously.

As a pastor, I encourage a thoughtful and considered faithfulness. I pray for faith to be lived passionately and joyfully. When there is misunderstanding and going down wrong paths, I urge forgiveness. Just as God makes room for each of us no matter how far we stray, so we must make room for each other no matter how bitterly we may have disagreed with one another, too. As followers of Christ, we are called to a way of life which keeps faith in God as our primary goal. All else, as the old gospel hymn says, is sinking sand.

May 2024 be filled with blessing and hope for you all. May you keep your heart fixed upon God and your hope firmly grounded in Jesus, our risen Savior.

Peace,

Daniel Diss



January Worship

LGUMC is a reconciling church, which welcomes all persons as Christ did regardless of age, race, gender, sexual orientation, cultural background, physical or mental health, family status, or financial circumstances. We welcome all persons into full participation into the life of the congregation.

Sunday, January 7
10AM
Epiphany
Communion Sunday
Isaiah 60:1-6
Matthew 2:1-12
Sermon
Returning to Hope
Daniel F. Diss, Preaching

Sunday, January 21
10AM
3rd Sunday after the Epiphany
Jonah 3:1-5, 10
Mark 1:14-20
Sermon
Answering Call
Daniel F. Diss, Preaching

Sunday, January 14
10AM
2nd Sunday after the Epiphany
1 Samuel 3:1-20
John 1:43-31
Sermon
Listening for Calling
Daniel F. Diss, Preaching

Sunday, January 28
10AM
4th Sunday after the Epiphany
Deuteronomy 18:15-20
Mark 1:21-28
Sermon
Careful Attention
Daniel F. Diss, Preaching



Online Worship
Sundays, 10AM
LGUMC Facebook page
See Worship page at LGUMC.org for online
Worship live stream information.



Celebrate Wonder All Ages is a curriculum that honors the spiritual life of children. Celebrate Wonder All Ages will engage children in open-ended exploration and inquiry of the Bible. Through experiential activities, spiritual practices, and reflection, Celebrate Wonder All Ages serves as a biblical guide to help children make meaning for their lives. This curriculum seeks to deepen children's faith formation and to create a safe space for children to ask big questions and claim their spiritual identity as children of God.

Unit 2: The Lord is good to everyone and everything; God's compassion extends to all his handiwork!
(Psalm 145:9)

Unit 2: Faith word: INCLUDE

January 7

Jesus's baptism
Matthew 3:13-17

We will explore the story of Jesus's baptism in this passage immediately before the ones we are studying today. John the Baptist was baptizing people at the Jordan river. One would imagine that people from all walks of life were being baptized. Jesus came from Galilee and asked John to baptize him. John, at first said that Jesus was the one who should be baptizing him. Jesus said that he must be baptized by John.

January 14

Calling the Disciples
Matthew 4:18-22

Jesus was walking along the shore of the Galilee Sea when he saw two brothers, Peter and Andrew, fishing with nets. Jesus called to them, "Come, follow me! I will teach you how to fish for people." They dropped everything and followed Jesus. Further along the shore, Jesus saw two brothers, James and John, fishing with their father. He called out the same invitation, and they left their father to follow Jesus.

January 21

Showing Love
Matthew 5:43-48

Jesus taught his disciples everywhere he went. One of the places was a mountain, and what he taught there is often referred to as the Sermon on the Mount. He talked about many things while he was on the mountain with his disciples. Jesus referred to Leviticus 19:18, "You must love your neighbor as yourself," and then added, "But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who harass you" (Matthew 5:44)

Jesus used the words from the Hebrew Bible about loving your neighbors, but added the words to love your enemies. Jesus was making clear that God loved all people.

The Lord is good to everyone and everything; God's compassion extends to all his handiwork!
(Psalms 145:9)

Continued on page 5

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY continued

January 28

God's Kingdom

Luke 13:18-21

Jesus told many stories when he was teaching his disciples. Many times the stories were parallels, a simple story told to teach a lesson. Jesus used the parallel form of teaching to teach spiritual lessons. The story this week is a parable told by Jesus about how God's kingdom grows. He compares God's kingdom to two very tiny things—one is a very tiny mustard seed, and the other is a fungus called yeast. The mustard seed can grow into a plant eight to nine feet tall and wide enough to look like a bush. A small amount of yeast when placed in flour, under the right circumstances, will multiply and change the entire makeup of the flour.



Registration is now open for Summer Camp!

Camp is for kids and youth who will be in **3rd-12th grade** next Fall. All 10th-12th graders are placed in the Leaders in Training program at Camp, where they develop leadership skills.

Camp Toyon: July 7-13, 2024

Aptos, CA

Camp Lodestar: July 14-20, 2024

Wilseyville, CA

REGISTER FOR CAMP HERE

- **NEW** Early Bird pricing! We're opening registration earlier and offering **\$30 off for those who register by February 1st**. Plus, get a reduced deposit rate of \$75 with Early Bird registration.
- **NEW** family portal! We've made registration easier, with everything in one place. **NEW!** Our website has moved to the conference website. Find us at cnumc.org/camp



Contact Information

Jonnye Cartmill
Children & Youth Ministry
kids@lgumc.org

belong

grow

serve

Lenten Study Fast Approaching

Yes, even though it's only January we are already planning for Lent! Ash Wednesday is Wednesday, February 14 this year. There will be a service that day at 7PM. There will be more on that in the February edition of "The Spire."

Our Lenten Study this year is a book entitled "Three Simple Rules" by Ruben Job. Ruben Job was elected Bishop of The United Methodist Church in 1984. In this small book, Bishop Job explores the three general rules of the Methodist societies which John Wesley gave to them. We continue to have them as part of our Book of Discipline to this day. In fact, you'll have heard them in one form during the Wesley Covenant Service Pastor Daniel led on Dec 31, 2023. They are a key part of what it means to be a Methodist.

This year during Lent, we'll gather on Tuesday evenings at 7PM in the Fireside Room to explore these three simple rules ourselves: Do no harm. Do good. Stay in love with God. You've heard them since Pastor Daniel arrived, now come join him in exploring and understanding them at a deeper level.

The church is ordering 30 copies of the book in regular print. It will be available in the Church Office for \$5.50 (our cost). We are ordering five large print copies. They will be available in the Church Office for \$6.50, again at our cost. This class will begin on Tuesday, February 20.



Kindred Spirits

Happy New Year! We hope you can join us on January 17, 1PM, in the Art Gallery for our discussion of *Booth* by Karen Joy Fowler. This novel's focus is on the family behind the infamous John Wilkes Booth rather than the man himself. Set in the prelude to the Civil War, it is a portrait of both 19th Century America in the throes of change and an exploration of the ties that make or break a family. What happens in a family when the person you love is a monster?



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Thank you so much to all who made this year's **Alternative Christmas Faire** possible: Dixie Fisher, who contacted the various charities; Mary Lou Abrahamson, who edited; Shannon Albert, who made endless copies of inserts and flyers; Jean Mundell, who gave her expertise advice and helped with the setup and cleaning; Ruth Oveland and Bud Baker, for dealing with the business transactions; Carmen Garcia, for doing all the calculations; Lynn Hermoso, for helping with the decorations, set-up and food; Jonnye Cartmill, who found all the boxes of years past in the "dungeon;" all the people who brought food, helped with the clean up and, of course, those who donated generously. So far we collected **\$10,555.00!!** to be distributed among the various organizations.

Thanks again,
your OUTREACH COMMITTEE



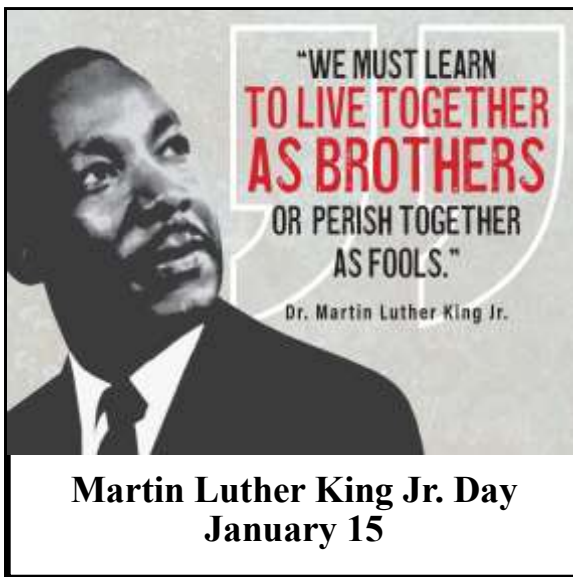
Thank you to all, including LGUMC UWF members, who signed the petition for a direct line to TRUST...the county mental health crisis field team...and to SURJ, members Debbie Ow, Lani Ballard, and Christina Capps for advocating for easier non-police access for help.

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From Trustees: LGUMC friends, if you want to use the church facilities or meeting for anything besides support of Church Ministries, starting January 1, there will be a charge for such usage. Church members will receive a discount on the standard fees. Contact Mary Lou for a copy of the fee schedule which lists the costs and clean-up fees for each room.



TECHNICIANS STILL NEEDED!

We are in need of people willing to learn and join our team of Sunday technicians. We will train you! (Community hours also available.)

Contact Leon Johnson, tech@lgumc.org

In observance of the holidays, the Church Office will be closed until Tuesday, January 2.

Become a Member

Interested in Becoming a Member of LGUMC?

We will be receiving new members at a date to be determined. If you are interested in deepening your connection with LGUMC and becoming a member, email Pastor Daniel, daniel.diss@lgumc.org.

IN OUR PRAYERS

~ Please keep the following persons and their families in your prayers for continued recovery, care and support ~

Aki Okuno, Celia Palm, Pat Salem, Anne-Marie Wiggers, Eleanor Blumenthal, Becky Schmitt, Peggy Rose, Ada Sutton, Kay Thoresen, Joy Palmer, Carol Baker, Eric Muller, Ruth Marie Wolf, Pat Patterson, The Unhoused, Our First Responders, Prayers of Peace for all people and all countries.

Belong thru Worship

Grow in Christ

Serve with Love

Join a Small Group

Our Small Group Ministry is designed to help us grow as followers of Jesus Christ and support each other along the way.

Faith, Reason & Community

Carole Mateer, 408.353.2357
gcmateer@aol.com

Men's Spirituality Group

Ed Burling, edburling@gmail.com
Glen Stansbury, glennsmaill@yahoo.com

Social Justice

Dan & Wendy Hendry
wenhendry@comcast.net

Saturday Morning Men's Group

Elwin Stocking
l.e.stocking@comcast.net

Great Decisions Discussion Group

Dan & Wendy Hendry
wenhendry@comcast.net

Chancel Choir

David Herberg
music@lgumc.org

Circle of Support

Christina Capps, 408.531.9193
kl_capps@yahoo.com

Kindred Spirits Book Group

Sharon Armstrong, 408.857.7669
ssarmstrong@gmail.com

United Women in Faith (formerly UMW)

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Gift Stitchers

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Judy Petrokas, 408.930.2162

Outreach

Ursula Young, 408.354.7739
ursulayoung@gmail.com

Divine Design

Lani Ballard
lanib@att.net

Shower Ministry

Contact Marna Taylor
marnalee59@gmail.com

If you have an interest in any of our ministries mentioned here, please contact the person responsible for that group.



Los Gatos UMC
ESTIMATE OF GIVING
January 1 to December 31, 2024

With gratitude to God for the wonder of life and the vision of this church, I/we will give a portion of my/our income to LGUMC general fund.

\$ _____ every week month quarter year



I would like to continue or add e-giving this year.

Print Name

Signature

Date

Stock donations

are a great way to support your church.
If you are interested in making such a contribution, please contact
Shannon Albert,
408.354.4730 X104 or
shannon.albert@lgumc.org.
for information.

~ NEW YEAR BLESSINGS
TO YOU AND YOURS ~



Monday—Closed

Tuesday & Thursday—9AM-2PM

Wednesday & Friday—8AM-1PM

Church Council Members

- Chair of the Church Board
Ray Owen, ray.owen@comcast.net
- Chair of the Board of Trustees
Glenn Stansbury, glenn.stansbury@lgumc.org
- Chair of Staff Parish Relations
Dixie Fisher, dixiejfisher@gmail.com
- Chair of Finance Committee
Doug Evans, eldoug1@msn.com
- Chair of Health Ministries
TBD
- Chair of Grace Preschool Board
Rita Matthews, fourwinn156@hotmail.com
Ann Reynolds, reynolds_reese@yahoo.com
- Chair of LOSNSC Board
Trudy Burling, trudyburling@hotmail.com
- Team Rep. of Social Justice Team
Jean Mundell, jmundell@earthlink.net
- Lay Member of Annual Conference
Judy Petrokas, quiltqueen@ix.netcom.com
408.930.2162
Gail Hybarger, ca.unicorn@pacbell.net
- Chair of Endowment
TBD
- Chair Outreach Team
Ursula Young, ursulayoung@gmail.com
- Chair Congregational Care Ministry
Lois & Elwin Stocking,
l.e.stocking@comcast.net
- Chair United Women in Faith (formerly UMW)
Christina Capps, kl_capps@yahoo.com
Ruth Oveland, roveland@sbcglobal.net

Our Ministry & Office Staff

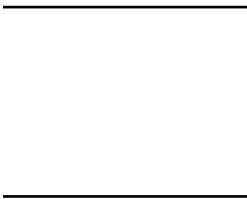
- Reverend Daniel F. Diss, Sr. Pastor
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408.354.4730 X102
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- Jonnye Cartmill, Director of Children's Ministry
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- David Herberg, Music Director
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408.348.1736
- Joyce Rhodes, Organist
joyce.rhodes@lgumc.org
- Mary Lou Abrahamson, Ad. Min. / Communications
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- Shannon Albert, Accountant (A/P)
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408.354.4730 X104
- Carmen Garcia, Financial Secretary (A/R)
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408.354.4730 X101
- Leon Johnson, Technical Director
tech@lgumc.org
- Kristy Currie, Director, Grace Preschool
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408.354.7163,
- Kathy Mlinarich, Director, Live Oak Senior Nutrition
kathy.mlinarich@lgumc.org
408.354.0707
- Richard Garcia, Facilities Engineer
408.627.3345

Please check the church calendar to make sure your room reservations are accurate. We reserve only one year in advance, so your reservation may expire at the end of the year.

The Spire

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To be removed from mail or email list, contact
marylou.abrahamson@lgumc.org.
Editor: Mary Lou Abrahamson

If you no longer wish to receive this mailing,
please mail or email to the address shown at left.
Thank You.



Our Mission

Growing as followers of Jesus Christ
who live God's love in the world.

*"Serving Christ in this Community
since 1866."*



Sr. Pastor
Pastor Daniel F. Diss

Please join us for in-person
Sunday Worship
10AM
or online at
lgumc.org, Facebook or YouTube



Find out more about our Ministries!
Go to www.LGUMC.org



All Welcome!
We are a Reconciling Congregation
No one will be excluded from participating in the body of the church because of age, race, ethnicity, culture, religious origins, sexual orientation or challenging conditions.