



# The Appian Wayfarer

The United Methodist Church: Open hearts · Open minds · Open doors

December 2018

## Children & youth in juvenile detention

You have helped us out for years, letting our youth know you care. Your acts of kindness have reached out to them in their most troubled times. This year about 300 youth will spend the holidays in our Contra Costa County juvenile detention facilities. Your donation will help bring cheer to their surroundings.

Financial contributions gratefully accepted! Just \$10 buys a gift bag filled with all the items below and more.

### Our Wish List

- Axe Deodorant Sticks and/or Axe body wash
- Suave full-size shampoo
- Full-size toothbrush and toothpaste
- White socks 9-11 or 13-14
- Black hair ties and combs
- Feminine hygiene products

If you prefer to provide other gifts, any of the following are also welcome:

- sports balls, paperback "teen" books, comic books, 500-pc. or less, jigsaw puzzles, dominos (double 6), playing cards, UNO, chess sets, 12" or smaller stuffed animals AND... any food gift-card is very much appreciated.

-- Remember: **Do not wrap gifts!**  
Bring to ESUMC by Sunday, December 16.

## Fred Finch

ESUMC has supported the center and its programs through the years in various ways, including a library renovation and repainting job about ten years ago. Today, our chief relationship is through Christmas gifts for young adults transitioning into independent living. This year's request is simple. A \$25 gift card from Target, Best Buy, VISA or American Express, etc., would be very welcome.

*(Note: Merchant gift cards usually have no fees attached; those from credit cards usually do.)*

**Deadline:** Bring to ESUMC by Dec. 14



## Cub Scout Pack 134, Annual Pancake Breakfast



This is the Cub Scouts annual fundraiser. Please join them on **Saturday, January 12, 2018** from 8:30am to 11:30am in Keislar Hall.

## Christmas Eve, Dec. 24 Candlelight services

**7:00 PM** - for the whole family  
with the Kairos Band

**10:30 PM** - traditional service  
with chancel choir  
& handbells



## Mark's Musings

### A Tale of Two Nativities

You may have noticed that of the four Gospels, only two give an account of the birth of Jesus: Matthew and Luke. And while they had records at their disposal to tell the story of Jesus' deeds and sayings, what was known about Jesus' birth was rather sketchy. What they shared from the tradition was that Jesus had been born of the Holy Spirit in Bethlehem, to Mary who was betrothed to Joseph; and that he was raised in Nazareth. That's it.

But neither Matthew nor Luke left it at that. Each wove a narrative around this report with an eye to their approaches to the rest of the story. Throughout his account, Matthew wanted to show how Jesus was the fulfillment of the Hebrew Scriptures. His (human) father, Joseph, was a dreamer, just like the Joseph who was one of the twelve sons of Jacob and whose dreams brought him to Pharaoh's court. Matthew writes that Jesus' first 'sermon,' where he sketched out the fundamentals of being a disciple, was delivered from the 'mount,' recalling Moses who delivered to the Israelites from Mount Sinai the covenant that laid out what it meant to be God's people. Matthew also wanted to show how Jesus fulfilled the words of the prophets, and frequently punctuates his narrative with a phrase such as: 'this was to fulfill what was said by the prophet...' Perhaps most important was Matthew's emphasis on the Kingdom of Heaven, and the conflict between that kingdom and the kingdom of this world: the Kingdom of God vs. the Kingdom of Caesar, the Kingdom of Herod, the Kingdom of the status quo. Read on its own, Matthew's account of the birth and infancy of Jesus not only has its bright side, but it has a dark side as well: as soon as Herod hears of Jesus' birth in Bethlehem from the sages who had come from the east, he instantly senses a rival, and sets out to kill him – killing a great number of innocent children as a result. Joseph, warned by God in a dream, takes the child with his mother and they flee to Egypt, refugees from the slaughter. There they stay till Herod is dead, and they can safely return home to Nazareth. (I'll let you make the connections with what's going on in Central America and the southern border.)

Luke's account, by contrast, is much brighter and more joyful, and written for an audience that was much less familiar with Jesus' Jewish heritage. Gone, for example, are many of the references to the Hebrew Scriptures. But Jesus' parables come to the fore. Perhaps the best known parables, those of the Good Samaritan and of the Prodigal Son are found only in Luke. And one of the threads that connects these two is a key part of Luke's perspective throughout his Gospel: it's not what you say or who you are, but what you do that counts with God. The Samaritans were despised by the Jews, yet in the parable, a Samaritan is the one who without hesitation takes up the wounded Jew and provides for his care and healing – not the Jewish priest or levite. The Prodigal had renounced his father, but when he bottomed out, he repented and returned to his father, who without hesitation or recrimination, rushed to embrace with joy his son who was lost. These "portraits of piety" show by their example what following Jesus, what loving your neighbor, and repenting and forgiving, are all about. Luke gives us such portraits of nearly all the characters in his account of Jesus' birth. The priest Zechariah, father of John the Baptist, Elizabeth his wife (even John in her womb!), Joseph who obeys the command of the occupying Roman Empire to pay his taxes, the shepherds in the fields, the blind man Simeon, the widow Anna, and most of all Jesus' mother Mary to whom the angel Gabriel appears, each responds with rejoicing at the news of what God is about to do: to end the suffering of God's people, to cast down the mighty and lift up those of low degree, to usher in the God's kingdom of love and justice that the righteous had been yearning for their whole lives. Even the ox and the ass get into the picture!

You could say that the two evangelists sing the same song, but in different keys. The good news of God's love can be sung in many different keys, but the tune's the same: God so loved the world that God gave himself to us in Jesus, so that anyone who follows Jesus will know the healing, reconciling love that draws us into God's presence. May the upcoming holiday season slow down enough for us to ponder and make our own this incredible good news!

See you in church!

Pastor Mark

### ESUMC Treasurer's Report

Income	\$222,215.75
Expense	\$226,121.50
Shortfall	3,905.75

## Birthdays of the Month

- Dec. 3 - Irma Common, Don James
- Dec. 6 - Alyssa Mainini
- Dec. 7 - Carl Just
- Dec. 10 - Joshua Garcia
- Dec. 11 - Scott Loopstra, Mort Weishahn
- Dec. 15 - Sean Kille, Sharon Bullock
- Dec. 17 - Tina Ballagh
- Dec. 18 - Emmy Steiner
- Dec. 19 - Vickie Resso
- Dec. 21 - Suzy Harnois, Janine Moulton
- Dec. 24 - Carolyn Ulrich, Angeli Button
- Dec. 25 - Steve Ulrich
- Dec. 27 - Joan Holzinger
- Dec. 29 - James Renk (Shattock)
- Dec. 30 - Ray Lussier, Eldonna Cooley
- Dec. 31 - Donny Kinyon



### Christmas Poinsettia

Please sign-up to bring Poinsettia, the signing-sheet will be in the Narthex. Make sure to bring the Poinsettia by Dec. 23rd.



## Monthly Meetings

### for December:

- **Worship Com.** - Sun., 9, 7:00 PM, OR
- **Ad Council** - Sun., 16, 12:30 PM, KH

### Baby gifts!

#### Christmas Eve or Christmas Sunday

Celebrate the birth of the baby Jesus with a baby gift! **Bring a gift to one of the Christmas services** and we will deliver it to the Contra Costa County Women, Infants and Children's program offices.

Think **PRACTICAL!** Think **BASIC!** Diapers are well appreciated, as are simple clothing items for children up to age two.



## Squirrels Problems at Church

Three buildings in town were overrun by squirrels—the town hall, the hardware store, and the church. The town hall brought in some cats. But after they tore up all the files, the mayor got rid of the predators, and soon the squirrels were back.

The hardware store humanely trapped the squirrels and set them free outside town. But three days mlater, the squirrels climbed back in.

Only the church came up with an effective solution. They baptized the squirrels and made them members. Now they see them only on Christmas and Easter.

Ha Ha Ha!




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*A Special*  
**THANK YOU**

From Lee Hunt, who would like to thank Pastor Mark & the congregation for all the support and loving help that has been helping him get through these hard times after the death of his wife, Helen Hunt. Nov. 21st marked the second anniversary since she passed away and it has been a struggle but he is almost making it back to normal.



Tell everyone about the Blessings Closet at the El Sobrante United Methodist Church. If you know of someone who is in need of new or slightly used clothing...

We have clothing for most everyone. No questions asked, EVER!  
 The Blessings Closet is open the 2nd Saturday of each month from 10 AM - 1 PM.  
 The Closet is located in Room 2. Questions? Call (510) 921-4969.

## The Crafty Ladies Lunch

All Crafty Ladies and Plant room folks are invited to our annual luncheon **Jan. 23, 1:00pm**, location to be announced. If you have any questions please contact Marilyn Lomelino 510-417-5332.



## Save the Date

Women's Retreat **April 26-28, 2019.**  
 More information to come.  
 Contact Marilyn Lomelino at 510-417-5332.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>December 2018 Calendar</b>						<b>1</b> <b>7 PM</b> <b>Christmas Miracle Rehearsal</b>
<b>2</b>  10 AM <b>Worship, S</b> 11:30AM <b>Fellowship</b> 11:30 AM <b>Christmas M. Rehearsal, KH</b> 4 PM <b>Christmas Caroling, C</b>	<b>3</b>  1 PM B&G Club, KH & FR 7 PM <b>Handbells, S</b> 7:30 PM <b>Christmas M. Rehearsal, KH</b>	<b>4</b> 10 AM Painting Group, R1 1 PM B&G Club, KH & FR 4 PM <b>Faith Exploration</b> 6 PM Yoga, R1 7 PM Boy Scouts, KH 7:30 PM <b>Kairos R., S</b> 7:30 PM <b>Christmas M. Rehearsal, KH</b>	<b>5</b> 10 AM <b>Bible Study, R1</b> 11:30 AM <b>Motion Class, KH</b> 1 PM B&G Club, KH & FR 1 PM <b>Crafty Ladies, R1</b> 7 PM AI Anon, FR 7 PM Alateen, R1 7:30 PM <b>Choir Rehearsal, C</b> 7:30 PM <b>Christmas M. Rehearsal, KH</b>	<b>6</b>  1 PM B&G Club, FR & KH 6 PM Yoga, R1 7:30 PM <b>Christmas M. Rehearsal, KH</b> 7:30 PM <b>Photo Club, R1</b>	<b>7</b>  10 AM <b>Motion Class, KH</b> 1 PM B&G Club, FR & KH 6:15 PM <b>Christmas M. Rehearsal, KH</b> 6:30 PM <b>EBARC, R1</b>	<b>8</b>  10 AM <b>Blessing Closet, R2</b> 6:15 PM <b>Christmas M. Rehearsal, KH</b>
<b>9</b>  10 AM <b>Worship, S</b> 11:30AM <b>Fellowship</b> 12:45 PM <b>Christmas M. Rehearsal, KH</b> 7 PM <b>Worship Committee, OR</b>	<b>10</b>  1 PM B&G Club, KH & FR 7 PM <b>Handbells, S</b>	<b>11</b> 10 AM Painting Group, R1 1 PM B&G Club, KH & FR 4 PM <b>Faith Exploration</b> 6:30 PM Yoga, R1 7 PM Boy Scouts, KH 7:30 PM <b>Kairos R., S</b>	<b>12</b> 10 AM <b>Bible Study, R1</b> 11:30 AM <b>Motion Class, KH</b> 1 PM B&G Club, KH & FR 1 PM <b>Crafty Ladies, R1</b> 7 PM AI Anon, FR 7 PM Alateen, R1 7:30 PM <b>Choir Rehearsal, C</b>	<b>13</b>  1 PM B&G Club, FR & KH 6 PM Yoga, R1	<b>14</b>  10 AM <b>Motion Class, KH</b> 1 PM B&G Club, FR & KH 6:30 PM <b>EBARC, R1</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>16</b>  10 AM <b>Worship, S</b> 11:30AM <b>Fellowship</b> 1 PM <b>Plenary Ad. Council, FR</b>	<b>17</b>  1 PM B&G Club, KH & FR 7 PM <b>Handbells, S</b>	<b>18</b> 10 AM Painting Group, R1 1 PM B&G Club, KH & FR 4 PM <b>Faith Exploration</b> 6:30 PM Yoga, R1 7 PM Boy Scouts, KH 7:30 PM <b>Kairos R., S</b>	<b>19</b> 10 AM <b>Bible Study, R1</b> 11:30 AM <b>Motion Class, KH</b> 1 PM B&G Club, KH & FR 1 PM <b>Crafty Ladies, R1</b> 7 PM AI Anon, FR 7 PM Alateen, R1 7:30 PM <b>Choir Rehearsal, C</b>	<b>20</b>  1 PM B&G Club, FR & KH 6 PM Yoga, R1 7:30 PM <b>Photo Club, R1</b>	<b>21</b>  10 AM <b>Motion Class, KH</b> 10:30 AM <b>GRIP (off site)</b> 1 PM B&G Club, FR & KH	<b>22</b>
<b>23</b>  10 AM <b>Worship, S</b> 11:30AM <b>Fellowship</b>	<b>24</b>  <b>Christmas Eve</b> <b>7 PM</b>	<b>25</b>  <b>Christmas Day</b>	<b>26</b> 10 AM <b>Bible Study, R1</b> 11:30 AM <b>Motion Class, KH</b> 1 PM <b>Crafty Ladies, R1</b> 7 PM AI Anon, FR 7 PM Alateen, R1 7:30 PM <b>Choir Rehearsal, C</b>	<b>27</b>  6 PM Yoga, R1	<b>28</b>  10 AM <b>Motion Class, KH</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>30</b> 10 AM <b>Worship, S</b> 11:30AM <b>Fellowship</b>	<b>31</b>  <b>New Years Eve</b>					

**Prayer Concerns** Bob & Ruth Parker, Family of Sam Emmanuel, Family of Noreen Tipton, Flor Sancez & her mother (Karen Jarrell's colleague), Wendy Allen, Bill Slessinger, family of Dorothy Williams, Walt Hamner, Charlene Kafer, Betty Staley, Rachael Keltch (second cousin of Suzie Arnhart, a friend of Kafers ), Lee Hunt, Edna Luffey, Marge Dean, Leota Merrithew, Karin Shuttlesworth, Gina Ledesma and her family (colleague of Karen Jarrell), Gary Stearns, family of Teresa Morin Stanton (friend of Lee Hunt), Sherry Banks, Venetta Saint Clare (former caregiver for Loopstras and Pauline Webber), Victor Nozzolillo, the Fleming family (Steve, Darlene, Denise (Roby) & Michael), Laureen Kelly and Linda Goodman (nieces of Darlene), Gary Spearie (Paula Hammond's brother), those who continue to be impacted by natural disasters.

# Wayfarer

December 2018 issue

**El Sobrante United Methodist Church**  
670 Appian Way, El Sobrante, CA 94803



## ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Resident Bishop, Minerva Carcaño  
District Superintendent, Schuyler Rhodes  
Pastor, Mark A. Zier  
Director of Music, Eileen M. Johnson  
Lay Minister, Jacqueline Corl-Seidel  
Lay Minister, Charlene Kafer  
Treasurer, Marilyn Lomelino  
Office, Erika Cortez

### Find ESUMC online

[www.esumconline.org](http://www.esumconline.org)

Facebook, search for "El Sobrante United Methodist Church"