

January/February 2024

Still Speaking...

A newsletter from the Community Church of
Atascadero



**Community Church
of Atascadero,
United Church of Christ**
5850 Rosario Avenue
Atascadero, CA 93422
☎ (805) 466-9108
✉ atascaderoucc@gmail.com
www.atascaderoucc.org

Hybrid Worship
Come in person or on Zoom
10 am Sunday

Fellowship on Zoom
3 pm Wednesday

Church Office:
Carrie Portillo, Office Manager
Office Hours:
9:30-12:30 Tuesdays
9:00-12:30 Wednesdays
9:00-12:30 Thursdays
(805) 466-9108
atascaderoucc@gmail.com

As I Ponder...

As I write this we are approaching the end of 2023 and beginning a new year. As I often do around this season, I find myself think about New Year's resolutions and what I'd like to do differently in the new year.

Recently I heard a friend make some statements that I found disturbing. It was something that sat in the pit of my stomach like food that had turned, leaving me feeling queasy and uneasy. It even ate at my sense of our friendship.

About a week later I talked with a mutual friend about my discomfort. She provided some context to the statement that I did not know which changed my understanding of what was originally said. I am extremely grateful for that conversation because it reminded me that I don't always know what is behind statements that people make.

2024 will likely be challenging. There are wars, with all of the suffering, loss, and grief. The economy feels shaky. The effects of climate change are more evident. And it will be an election year, again (or still) loaded with fears and threats to our democracy. All of this takes root within us, affecting how we interact and interpret things.

In the midst of that, we often live with assumptions that we know what is going on with someone else, why they believe what they do, why they make certain statements. I am hoping to remember my experience with my friend and how I don't always have the whole picture. I'm not sure I would label that a *New Year's resolution*, but it is certainly something I will try to remember in my various relationships and interactions.

I wonder, what are you thinking about? What experiences have you had recently that opens you to seeing things a little bit differently or changes how you relate with others?

Happy New Year!

Gratefully yours... heather

Council News

NOVEMBER-Council welcomed a new council member, Eileen O'Grady, who will represent the communications ministry. Pat Cairns was in attendance representing the nominating committee. Council is still searching for 1 more member of CCA to serve on this committee. Pastor Heather announced that we will be hosting the Northern Association meeting on April 27, 2024. It was decided that we shall participate in the Parents for Joy yard sale in April 2024. Lois Ramont thanks all who been helping with fellowship time. Dick Ramont submitted a timeline for preparing the budget for the annual meeting in January.

DECEMBER-The Ad Hoc By-Law changes committee proposed by-law changes to be voted on at the January Annual Meeting. The meeting adjourned shortly after so that our Finance Committee chairman, Dick Ramont, could convene the Budget committee to work on the proposed budget for next year to be voted on at the annual meeting.

Yours in Service,

Bill

Building Our Community

Brenda May



Coats for Kids was a very successful event this year. Now held just in Paso Robles at the event center, we served more than 800 families approximately, not individuals, but families. As the volunteer coordinator, I am proud to be a part of Coats for Kids for 20 plus years. And Kent Kenny as well! David May! Thank you those that were able to volunteer this year from our church family; Lee Perkins, Sharon Whisenhunt, Ron and Martha Staib, the Kantias, were among those that offered their help this year!

Dates to remember:

March 30 is Decorating the Cross, Easter is March 31!

April 19-20 is Rummage Sale that helps support Parents for Joy, with a small donation that puts us on a map for City Wide yard Sale! Start saving those things that you want to get rid of that were replaced with Christmas gifts.

Bible Study

Most weeks we gather on Zoom to read and discuss Sunday's scripture. We delve into background and what meaning it has for us today (or not). Wednesday mornings at 9:30.

Community Church Choir.

Have you noticed how great the choir sounds? Come join us as we learn vocal techniques and have fun singing. Rehearsals are listed in the calendar.

CALL FOR ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

The Annual Congregational Meeting of Community Church of Atascadero, when we elect officers, vote on proposed amendments to the Bylaws – including our new mission statement, and support a budget for 2024, will be held on Sun, Jan 28, following worship (11:00). This will be a hybrid meeting so that all members can attend. Please join us for worship and remain afterward to participate in the business of our church.

DRAFT MISSION STATEMENT

Community Church of Atascadero, United Church of Christ, seeks to be a spiritual home where all are welcome. We believe the living God empowers us to promote justice and support healing in service to others.

Black History Month

February is Black History Month. We have the opportunity to keep learning and be better informed about Black life in our society, both for celebration and working for justice. Here are a few books that might interest you. What have you read and recommend?

The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks, a non-fiction book by Rebecca Skloot

Well-Read Black Girl, a collection of essays edited by Glory Edim

Days of Hope, a non-fiction book by Patricia Sullivan

How the Word is Passed, a non-fiction book by Clint Smith

The Hate U Give, a young adult novel by Angie Thomas

The Word Collector, a children's story by Peter H. Reynolds

Max and the Tag-Along Moon, a children's story by Floyd Cooper

IRS Giving Statements

If you do not receive your contribution statement or have questions, please contact Marilyn Hamilton at mjhamilton66@charter.net or phone (805) 221-5306.

3 Ways to Give Financially

1. Send a check to the Community Church: **5850 Rosario Ave., Atascadero, CA 93422**
2. Online at www.atascaderoucc.org
3. Mobile app Tithe.ly
 - a) Search “**Tithe.ly**” in the app store (Google or Apple). Download and install the Tithe.ly app.
 - b) Click “Give Now” to start and then, in “Find a church”, enter “**Community Church of Atascadero**”
 - c) Enter the amount you would like to give
 - d) Enter a credit card or bank account to link to the app
 - e) You have the option to cover the fees: \$.30 for the transaction plus either 1.0% for a bank transfer or 2.9% for credit card.
 - f) Click “Give” and you have now successfully given to Community Church! (Oh, and you have the option to set up recurring giving.)

Thank you for the many ways you continue to help CCA be financially healthy!

Here are some of the top **2023 UCC news stories**. You can read more at <https://www.ucc.org/year-in-review-our-top-stories-of-2023/>

1. [Karen Georgia Thompson becomes first woman to lead UCC in historic vote](#). This story unfolded over much of this year, from the announcement of Thompson's recommendation by the UCC Board's search committee as the next General Minister and President in February, to the historic vote at General Synod in July, all the way to her service of installation and celebration in October.
2. [General Synod 34 elects new leadership, changes frequency, witnesses justice](#). Groundbreaking news came from this year's national gathering of the United Church of Christ, which took place in Indianapolis in July.
3. ['Just peace, human dignity': UCC joins calls for ceasefire, prayer vigil for Israel and Palestine](#). As hostilities and violence in Israel and Palestine escalated in October and have continued, the UCC has joined partners in calls for ceasefire and moral response, and issued an appeal for humanitarian aid and action alerts.
4. [Churches in Ohio, California attacked for sponsoring drag shows](#). In a year where a growing number of UCC churches experienced attacks and vandalism for their stances on LGBTQ+ inclusivity and racial justice, churches, pastors and other leaders responded with messages that "Love Is Louder" than hate and a great celebration of extravagant welcome, including glitter blessings and acts of justice and liberation during Pride month.
5. [Amid wildfires devastation, UCC makes appeal for Hawaii](#). UCC congregations and members across the country joined together to support those impacted by disasters.

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### **The Vote for Climate Hope Art Contest by Brooks Berndt**

<https://www.ucc.org/vote-for-climate-hope-2024-art-contest/>

While children and youth can't vote in elections, their well-being must be integral to how people of faith vote their values on Election Day. The decisions made by our elected officials will have an enormous impact on their lives and their future.

To give our children and youth a voice this election season (while also reminding adults of their responsibility for the next generation when they vote), the UCC will conduct a Vote for Climate Hope Art Contest in 2024. UCC children and youth are invited to draw or paint about the world and the environment they want to live in.

What are their hopes for the world? What is it that they value and want to have protected? What is it that adults should remember and take to heart when they vote this year?

We'll accept art submissions from March 1 to April 16. An online award ceremony for finalists will be held on May 4, and the winning art will be featured on "Climate Hope Voter Pledge Cards" that church members throughout the UCC will collect during the summer and fall before Election Day.

[Register](#) to receive:

1. A printable "Vote for Climate Hope" art template.
2. Regular updates and resources about the "Vote for Climate Hope" campaign.

*'For surely I know the plans I have for you,' says the Lord, 'plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.'* – Jeremiah 29:11

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Save the Date!

JUNE 23 - 27, 2024

Western Regional Youth Event

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Join hundreds of UCC Middle and High Schoolers from the 8 UCC Conferences of the western half of the United States. We're gathering at California State University – Long Beach for a few days of workshops, service projects, music, worship, an adventure day at Disney and more!

Where: California State University, Long Beach

Ages of Youth: This event is open to youth currently in 6th grade through currently in 12th grade (2023-24 school year).

Costs: We are still working out the registration costs, but are guessing it might be around \$600 to include housing, meals, and admission for one day at Disneyland. More info coming soon.

Questions? Want to volunteer? Rev. Wally Hoeger | whoeger@firstchurchlb.org

Historian's Corner

The following is a sermon given by Reverend Loken for Christmas of 1950

"I am the light of the world, he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness but have the light of life."

Why all of this fuss about Christmas, the birthday of Jesus? Some folks ask? We make no such efforts to commemorate other benefactors of the race. We accept gratefully the thoughts of Plato, the insights of Copernicus and we make grateful use of the inventions of Edison. But we feel under no special obligation to remember the incidents of his life or birth/ Why this special concern about the birth and life of Jesus? The answer is simple. These benefactors all point to some light of truth beyond themselves. One may rethink the thoughts of Plato without ever having heard of Plato himself, and a person may reconstruct the Copernican system of astronomy without reference to Copernicus. The truth is there, independent of the man who first pointed it out.

With Jesus, it is quite different. "I am the truth, I am the light of the world he said. It was not only that he pointed to the truth that he spoke the truth, he was the truth.

It is this fact which sets him apart from all other prophets and teachers. Other teachers have approximated many of his thoughts and sayings in the moral realm. It is true that none of them has given us such high moral precepts; but that is not the most important contribution of Jesus. The point that makes his teaching unique and authoritative is the fact that he was the embodiment of it. When he said, "blessed are the poor in spirit", it seems at first sight an impossible paradox, until we gaze at this life and realize that here is a person who lives it, who is it, humble, unpretentious, yet gloriously happy. It is the colossal authority of his life and character that lends authority to his ethical teachings. When he told John the Baptist "see what I am doing, the lame walk, the blind see, and the poor have the gospel preached to them" He was telling John the obvious fact that here was a life victorious over sin and disease, life incarnate.

When he told his disciples at the last parting: "In my father's house are many rooms, I go to prepare one for you" He was not merely discouraging on immortality, not merely theorizing of its possibility; not merely uttering a hope. He was stating a fact he was prepared to demonstrate out of his own experience. He was the pioneer of our faith, who had covered the way before. He is the way. This is the uniqueness of Jesus. He is not only the founder of our religion, He is our religion! Christ is Christianity.

The difference between him and other benefactors is the difference between moonlight and sunlight, between the warmth of the sun and the cold glitter of the stars. One is a source of light, the other is but a reflected light.

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In my third reader at school, there was story of a little girl who was asked what light she would extinguish, if she had the power, that of the sun or the moon? Without hesitation, she said the sun. For in the daytime, it's light enough anyhow. That girl had never learned to recognize that daylight depends for its existence on the sun except for an occasional eclipse, it shines so steadily that we are unaware of its presence, we take it for granted in our waking hours. Whereas the moon comes and goes and we are keenly aware of its absence. Even so is the case of Jesus Christ. His influence in the world has become so universal, the warmth of his spirit has so penetrated our world that we are not aware of it, we take it for granted, like the air we breathe. Only when men began to remove that influence in an organized effort and to substitute concentration camps and the Jewish murders, only as we see it exhibited in the pagan work camps, do we begin to realize what the whole meaning of Christ is the significance of Christmas. That this life was no mere myth, that this religion is no mere system of doctrines someone has invented, is the crucial difference between our religion and every other. It is a religion with a Christmas, with an historic person at its center.

Ciao...kent

KEEPING CONNECTED

Some within our congregation do not use email or have access to online communication. Please give them a call or send a card to keep them in the loop. Thank you.

Keep on your hearts & in your prayers...

Lisa K, Livia K, Mary Jane M, Joseph P

And all of the caregivers



ZOOM LINKS

To join via the internet (computer or smartphone), simply click on the internet link. To join with your telephone (*audio only*), dial **(1) 669 900 9128**. When asked, enter the Meeting ID and Password.

Sunday Worship and Midweek Fellowship	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/937257009?pwd=UGZVRHdoNVRYS09TWEIGcWIXQkJvdz09	MEETING ID: 937 257 009 PASSCODE: 528041
Church Council	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81215310853?pwd=YldsNTUzdKx0NzJkcHZvamIYRjJodz09	MEETING ID: 812 1531 0853 PASSCODE: 481994

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November/December Birthdays & Anniversaries

January

5 – Marilyn Hamilton
 12 – Nancy Bacon
 14 – Keith Kania
 28 – Justin Marchand

February

3 – Carmen Baker
 8 – Airden Maxwell
 9 – Wilma Sparling
 10 – Pat Cairns
 12 – Denis Snow

13 – Lois Ramont
 17 – Chuck Kania
 18 – Myra Douglas
 26 – Christine Carlo

JANUARY/FEBRUARY CALENDAR

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
	January 1 <i>New Year's Day</i>	2 Office closed Pastor's day off	3 3pm Zoom Fellowship	4	5	6
7 9 am Choir 10 am Hybrid worship with Communion 11 am Fellowship	8 Pastor's day off	9	10 9:30 Zoom Bible study 3pm Zoom Fellowship 4pm Echo Meal	11 3pm Meeting of Communications ministry	12	13
14 9 am Choir 10 am Hybrid worship	15 <i>MLK Day</i>	16 Pastor's day off	17 9:30 Zoom Bible study 3pm Zoom Fellowship	18	19	20
21 9 am Choir 10 am Hybrid worship 12 pm Church Council	22 Pastor's day off	23	24 9:30 Zoom Bible study 3pm Zoom Fellowship	25	26	27
28 10 am Hybrid worship 11 am Annual Meeting	29 Pastor's day off	30	31 3pm Zoom Fellowship	February 1	2	3
←————— Pastor Heather on family leave —————→						
4 9 am Choir 10 am Hybrid worship with Communion ←————— Family leave —————→	5	6	7 9:30 Zoom Bible study 3pm Zoom Fellowship	8	9	10
11 9 am Choir 10 am Hybrid worship	12 Pastor's day off	13	14 Ash Wednesday 9:30 Zoom Bible study 3pm Zoom Fellowship 4pm Echo Meal	15	16	17
18 10 am Hybrid worship 12 pm Church Council	19 Pastor's day off	20	21 9:30 Zoom Bible study 3pm Zoom Fellowship	22	23	24
25 9 am Choir 10 am Hybrid worship	26 Pastor's day off	27	28 9:30 Zoom Bible study 3pm Zoom Fellowship	29		

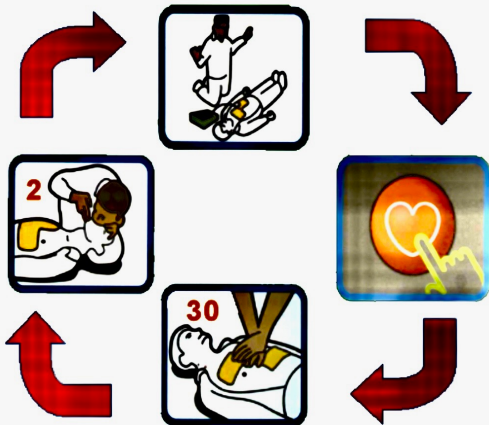


UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST

Community Church of Atascadero
5850 Rosario Ave
Atascadero, CA 93422

A Breath Away

Community CPR and First Aid Training



To get on the schedule for training Contact
Instructor Cell: 805-859-4430
Admin Cell: 757-651-7187
charles.kania@gmail.com
ljsalkania@gmail.com

Body Motion

A fitness class geared toward seniors

Led by Brenda May



9-10 am MWF

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5850 Rosario Ave