

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
ascaderoucc@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

AS I PONDER

REV. HEATHER J. BRANTON, PASTOR

I am grateful. With all that is happening around us, perhaps that is a bold or even naïve statement. But I am grateful and I choose to be grateful. I am grateful for you, Community Church of Atascadero, for the many ways you show your love. You have a passion to feed those who are hungry. You care about those who don't have a safe and adequate place to live, as well as those who need clothes. You keep expanding your welcome and proclaiming delight in the rich diversity of people. You long for peace in the world and attempt to live out that peace locally. You care about students and teachers and value education that helps all children and youth thrive. You do all that with laughter, music, and prayer with honest vulnerability. I am so grateful to be your pastor!

Thank you for such an amazing celebration of 10 years together. Your generosity and the hard work it took to put it all together filled me with joy! My thanks feels so inadequate for the grace that you shared.

And now we find ourselves in a season of waiting. We wait for what is yet to come, both in Advent and with the transitions in our government. So often when I am waiting for something I have difficulty focusing on anything else. I think my dad was like that, too. I remember how, when he wanted to call someone, he would dial the phone every 5-10 minutes! He would so focus on waiting for the person to answer his call that he couldn't do anything else.

AS I PONDER (CON'T.) REV. HEATHER J. BRANTON, PASTOR

But waiting can also be active. We can actually use that time to prepare ourselves for what might be coming. Waiting offers time to remember where we came from and see how we've come. Waiting offers opportunities to reflect on what matters and what brings joy. Waiting offers space to dream and inspire us for who we want to become.

This Advent, what are you waiting for?

Gratefully yours... heather



PEACE WITH JUSTICE

The Peace with Justice Ministry shall consist of those members and friends of the Church who wish to participate in its work. The Ministry shall elect its own chairperson and representative to the Church Council. This Ministry shall be responsible for local Missions, wider Missions, Justice issues education and projects, and such other work as shall be assigned to it by the Church Council.

That's the formal description in our Bylaws. But what kinds of things does PWJ do?

- Educates – climate change, human trafficking, migration, gender & sexuality, racial justice.
- Participates – PRIDE in the Plaza (LGBTQ celebration), Coats for Kids (North County clothing distribution), Long Walk Home (ECHO), NAMI Walk (support for those with mental illness).
- Acts – supporting DACA, writing cards and letters to elected officials, Women's March, school board meetings.

Simply put, PWJ enables us to channel our energies so that, as Community Church of Atascadero, we can be informed and engaged in justice work within our community and world.



BUILDING OUR COMMUNITY

BRENDA MAY, BUILDING OUR COMMUNITY CHAIR

Pastor Heather's
10 YEAR
ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION!



Our celebration was amazing in so many ways. Everyone helped in some way.

Special thanks to our Planning Committee. The planning and organizing of all the different parts of the celebration made Worship Service and Luncheon very special!

We are truly blessed!

· 12/14/24: Coats for Kids

Coats for kids is Dec. 14th for distribution. The previous days 11-13 are sorting, hanging jackets and organizing any other warm clothing donated.

If anyone has gently used jackets, sweaters, or sweatshirts, they can take them to either cleaners in Atascadero and tell them they are for Coats for Kids. They clean and deliver to us.

Our church has always been an important part of Coats for kids now for several years, since I have been Volunteer Coordinator for almost 20 years.

The location is at the Paso Robles Event Center (Fairgrounds), 2198 Riverside Avenue. Spanish speaking volunteers are needed.

For more info and to sign up, contact Brenda May (805.466.8610 / dbmjmay@aol.com). There is a sign-up sheet in the church Narthex and will be at Fellowship time in December.

· 12/15/24: Go Tell It on the Mountain: Community Christmas Sing-along

Community Church of Atascadero, located at 5850 Rosario, will host a Christmas carol sing-along on Sunday, December 15, at 3 p.m. After the sing-along, punch and cookies will be served in the Fellowship Hall, the building north of the church.

There is no cost to attend, and everyone is invited. For more information, log onto www.atascaderoucc.org.

THE MESS IN THE MESSIAH | 2024 ADVENT DEVOTIONAL

The Christmas message is messy!

Silent night. But the news shouts at us.

Holy night. Why are we so tired?

All is calm. Who's calm?? How is anyone calm?!

All is bright. Our hopes are too weary to shine.

Far from a pristine porcelain creche or an immaculate Hallmark story, the Christmas message of "God with us" is messy. The amniotic sac that bursts open, angels interrupt a good night's sleep, crusty shepherds and foreign stargazers intermingle, a family flees political persecution ... and there is God, in the flesh.

This Advent, sort through the mess to find the message! Join the Stillspeaking Writers' Group and contributors in the daily readings of **The Mess in the Messiah**. Each day includes a scripture reading, reflection and prayer, beginning with the first Sunday of Advent (Dec 1) through the celebration of Epiphany (Jan 6).

Order your PDF: <https://thepilgrimpress.com/products/the-mess-in-the-messiah-2024-advent-devotional>

NEWS FROM THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA NEVADA CONFERENCE JEANNE MILLER

Did you know that the structure of the United Church of Christ (UCC) is based on covenantal relationships between churches, associations, conferences, and synod (representing the whole of the church)? Our constitution says that these are free and voluntary relationships which the Local Churches, Associations, Conferences and ministers sustain with the General Synod and with each other. In other words, there is not a hierarchy of responsibility with bishops or similar positions.

Conferences are the combined churches within a geographic area (thus our name). A Conference, in the interest of the Local Churches, provides support to local churches, whether in the search and call process, or in crisis situations. The conference also conducts annual gatherings, workshops, retreats and similar educational offerings. Our Conference Minister basically serves as the CEO of the conference – leading the conference and managing the people and offices that serve the churches of the conference. Our Conference Board works with the Conference Minister in establishing the direction of the Conference.

Our new Conference Minister, Rev. Rachael Pryor, will be installed on January 11 at Montebello Plymouth Congregational Church. Although she has been working for us since July, this is the official act of assigning her to this position. As a Board Member, Pastor Heather will be attending the Installation. As Chair of the Search Committee that recommended Rev. Pryor, I will also be attending the Installation. The Installation is open to all, should you be interested.

You'll have the opportunity to hear from and meet Rachael in March 2025 when she visits Community Church.

COMMUNICATIONS MINISTRY: SHARING INFORMATION, CREATING BEAUTY

EILEEN O'GRADY, COMMUNICATIONS MINISTRY CHAIR



BOOKS THAT INSPIRE US: A BOOK REVIEW FROM CCA READERS

I purchased *Yes, And . . . Daily Meditations* several months ago when I was looking for daily spiritual readings. It's a collection of brief essays—usually less than a page—written on a variety of spiritual topics. The author is Richard Rohr, a Franciscan priest with an inclusive, ecumenical spirit. Years ago Rohr founded the Center for Action and Contemplation (CAC) in New Mexico. CAC publishes a variety of spiritual resources, including daily meditations online.

The writings in this collection range from “God Is Not Santa Claus” to “The Feminine Face of God” and a wide variety of other topics. In the “Feminine Face” selection, Rohr writes, “The world is tired of Pentagons and pyramids, prelates and princes, empires and corporations that only abort God’s Child.” Powerful stuff here! During this challenging time, Rohr’s meditations help me to feel connected to the eternal and its many manifestations in my life.

If you’re looking for something focused on the season of Advent, CAC also publishes Rohr’s *Preparing for Christmas: Daily Meditations for Advent*. This little book contains Scriptural references, a brief meditation, and a reflection for each day of Advent.

Please consider writing a review of a book that has inspired you to live a more spiritual life or to practice social justice. Contact Eileen O’Grady at emogrady9@gmail.com for more information.

Eileen O’Grady, Communications Ministry Leader

CCA is a small group of people who I feel comfortable with. The service starts with a welcome that recognizes that we each have our own personal struggles. But we are welcomed because God welcomes us.

With such a welcome I can relax, breathe easily, and prepare for worship and service. Others in the congregation are role models for me to begin my own mending, and repair of important relationships in my life. Pastor Heather stays upbeat, and Sunday fills me to return to my life and relationships.

Jim Carlisle, CCA member

“Why I Belong” begins a series of short articles about the role of CCA membership in our lives. If you would like to contribute, please send your ideas to Eileen O’Grady at emogradey9@gmail.com.

KEEP ON YOUR HEARTS & IN YOUR PRAYERS....

CHERIE W, LISA K, JOSEPH P.
MARILYN H, UNCLE GEORGE

THOSE WHO PROVIDE CARE
THOSE WHO ARE ANXIOUS
AND WORRIED
AND ALL THOSE WHO WAIT



HISTORIAN'S CORNER

KENT KENNY, HISTORIAN

Dr. E. A. Berry was the first pastor of the Federated church. He was instrumental and organizing the men's Bible class late in 1915. The men of this class took a very active part in the church life of the community and were instrumental in organizing the Boy Scouts for the first time in Atascadero, many members of the church were instrumental in other ways of benefiting the new community through the newly organized booster club beginning July 13, 1915 with Dr. JE Littlefield as president. Between the official roster of the church and booster club. Most of the names of community leaders were listed in one or both and all were kept busy with planning and activities of a new community.

When the weather became too cool for services in the stadium park, Mr. Lewis, founder of Atascadero, extended the use of a large tent which had been a part of tent city during the previous two years, 1913 and 14. When first construction was going on. Soon the tent, too, proved uncomfortable, and Mr. Lewis contributed two of the former "mess halls" (a type of portable building) to use in the construction of a place of worship. These were placed together in the form of a T and so came into being the first church structure in Atascadero, January 1916. It was located beyond the present golf clubhouse, back of the chapel of roses near the end of present Day Sombrillo Avenue. The men of the community worked hard and persistently to prepare this place for worship, and the women worked along with them to clean paint and furnish as well as possible, the interior of that building.

On March 4, 1916, the community celebrated the birthday of EG Lewis, which was to continue throughout the years. Mr. EL Vail conducted regular vesper services, Mr. Harry Clark Was choir Director of the Federated church and also was manager and Director for the Atascadero band and orchestra as well as the first choir.

The Sunday school had first been organized July 4, 1915 with Mr. Willard F Fowler superintendent Miss Alice Robertson assistant superintendent, Miss Eunice Simonds, Secretary, Marion, Long Sunday school music Director and Mr. Kent Watson treasurer. March 18, 1916 a note in the Atascadero news states the children's zoo of Atascadero continues to grow and Mr. Menges hung the lantern in the coyote cage to discourage their "orchestral" tendencies. On July 11, 1916 the Church Council met with FA Cole as chairman of the Diaconate board with Mr. Shotwell, Mrs. AB Cody, Mrs. EA Berry, Mrs. CS Cornelius and Mr. JB Hunter with Dr. Charles love as secretary and JH Armstrong as treasurer. The board of trustees was headed by EL Vale with JH Armstrong, Mrs. King, Mrs. Hunter, Mrs. Irwin, Mrs. Petersen and Mrs W.B. Ewalt and EG Lewis.

The first church anniversary celebration July 13, 1916 was held back under the oak in the stadium park with 280 adults and 60 children present.

The first Atascadero Thanksgiving worship service and dinner was conducted in the above-mentioned building in November 20, 1916. It was during this year that the Charles Lindsay home was built on Palma Avenue and destined later to become the Church Manse September 1919 (and remains the manse still, 1965). Mrs. Carrie Love was elected president of the first ladies guild organized August 24, 1915 with Mrs. Ella F Cornelius, treasurer. , Mr. Bell Cole, recording Secretary, Mr. Harry Clarke continued as choir director. Another first for 1916 was the opening of Morro road, permitting many church members and others to go to the beach on Sundays.

Mr. Lewis was instrumental in the building of this road. The Atascadero Mercantile center (later called the Inn) opened this year in October. Atascadero was divided into four sections at this time for purposes of voting precincts as well as for the church convenience in contacting the sick and assist in services for shut ins and other functions, number one division contained all Headquarters area, number two, the flower seed valley Skirting Morro Rd., three, the Civic center, which then contained the new Mercantile center, the Printery, the administration building and the elementary school and Number four, the old Henry residential area out the north Highway This year of 1916 marked the first birth in Atascadero of a baby girl, Carolyn Pearl, born to Mr. Mrs. Dean Walters, who came from British Columbia, also the first death of natural causes Mrs. Mary Eastman, mother of Mrs. LO Barker.

The first memorial day program was given May 30, 1916 with Mrs. Charles S Cornelius as chairman, with the Atascadero orchestra contributing. The first baptism in the federated church was young Earl Ferdinand Travis in 1916 and the second Community Thanksgiving dinner was given at the church this year also.



Let Your Voice
Be Heard!

Join the Sanctuary Choir

Community Church Choir

Have you been appreciating the choir? Or perhaps wondering if you can join? Well, you can!

Come join us as we have fun making music together.

Rehearsals are most Sundays at 9 am. Follow the announcements for updated schedule.

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!

December/January Birthdays & Anniversaries



December 2024

- 1 – Celia Bewley
- 3 – Heather Branton
- 4 – Anniversary – Jennifer Thorne
- 23 – Doris Souza

January 2025

- 5 – Marilyn Hamilton
- 13 – Nancy Bacon
- 28 – Justin Marchand
- 31 – Merle Fry



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=UGZVRHdoNVRYS09TWElGcWlXQkVvdz09>
MEETING ID: 937 257 009 → PASSCODE: 528041

Church Council:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81215310853?pwd=YldsNTUzdkx0NzJkcHZvamlyRjJodz09>
MEETING ID: 812 1531 0853 → PASSCODE: 481994

RECIPE CORNER - CUCUMBER BITES APPETIZERS

This impressive little Cucumber Bites Appetizers Recipe is fantastic for a number of reasons. They come together quickly, making them perfect for entertaining.

Beautifully colored, taste great, and still have essential nutrients. A standout dish for a party, placed strategically next to a meat side dish, it is quite refreshing.

Ingredients

- 2 – Cucumbers
- 12 – cherry tomatoes
- 4 oz. – cream cheese softened
- 1 tbsp. – mayonnaise
- 3 tbsp. – light ranch
- 1 tbsp. – frozen or fresh dill
- ¼ tsp. – garlic salt
- Black pepper for garnish



Instructions

- Rinse, peel and slice each cucumber into half inch slices.
- Remove little of insides of the cucumber with a half tea spoon measurement.
- Combine softened cream cheese, mayo, and ranch. Mix it well until smooth in texture.
- Add dill and garlic salt and mix just until combined.
- Place all the topping into a piping bag with a star attachment and pipe out about a ¾ of a tbsp. into each prepared cucumber.
- If the topping has hard time to stick to cucumber pat dry the cucumber juice with paper towel before piping.
- Cut cherry tomatoes in half and insert into each cucumber topping.
- Sprinkle with black pepper over the cucumber bites, serve and enjoy.

Notes

- This appetizers can be prepared several hour before serving, make sure to refrigerate until ready to serve.

Courtesy of Valya's Taste of Home: <https://easylowcarb.com/stuffed-cherry-tomatoes>

CALENDAR

December 2024 / January 2025

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
1-DEC 9 am Choir 10 am Communion Worship 11 am * Fellowship	2 Pastor's day off	3	4 9:30 am * Bible study 3 pm* Fellowship	5	6	7
8 9 am Choir 10 am Hybrid Worship	9 Pastor's day off	10	11 3 pm * Fellowship 4 pm Echo Meal 7 pm * Moderators	12	13	14
15 9 am Band 10 am Hybrid Worship 12 pm * Church Council 3 pm Community Sing-along	16 Pastor's day off	17	18 9:30 am * Bible study 3 pm * Fellowship	19 7 pm * Blue Christmas	20	21
22 10 am Hybrid Worship	23 Pastor's day off	24 5 pm Christmas Eve Service	25 Christmas Day	26	27	28
29 10 Hybrid worship	30 Pastor's day off	31	1-JAN 2025 New Years Day	2	3	4
5 9 am Choir 10 am Communion Worship 11 am * Fellowship	6 Pastor's day off	7	8 9:30 am * Bible study 3 pm * Fellowship 4 pm Echo Meal	9	10	11
12 9 am Choir 10 am Hybrid worship 11 am Congregational Budget Mtg.	13 Pastor's day off	14	15 9:30 am * Bible study 3 pm* Fellowship 7 pm * Moderators	16	17	18
19 9 am Band 10 am Hybrid worship 12 pm Church Council Mtg.	20 Martin Luther King Jr. Day Pastor's day off	21	22 9:30 am * Bible study 3 pm * Fellowship	23	24	25
26 9 am Choir 10 am Hybrid worship 11 am Annual Mtg.	27 Pastor's day off	28	29 3 pm * Fellowship	29	30	31

* These are Zoom-only events

POEM

BY REV. HEATHER J. BRANTON, PASTOR

I give thanks for this day.

For sunshine and warmth
For blues and greens, yellows and browns
For dogs and deer, herons and hawks

For clarity of air, and clarity of mind
For surprising moments of hope in the midst of worry
For the grounding of life and love

I give thanks for this day.



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
lisalkania@gmail.com

Body Motion

A fitness class geared toward seniors
Led by Brenda May

9-10 am MWF
Community Church of Atascadero
5850 Rosario Ave