

THE BELL



JANUARY
Volume 21 Number 01

UPCOMING WORSHIP

JANUARY 3

EPIPHANY SUNDAY

"These Lives
Are Precious"
Psalm 72

JANUARY 10

"Awe and Wonder"
Psalm 29

JANUARY 17

"Where Can I Go?"
Psalm 139

JANUARY 24

"In God Alone"
Psalm 62

JANUARY 31

"Whole Heart Hallelujah"
Psalm 111

FEBRUARY 7

"We Wait, We Hope,
We Stay"
Psalm 147

FEBRUARY 14

"The One Is
Shining Forth"
Psalm 50

*Register for our Sunday
morning worship services
(and our Christmas Eve
services) at*

bit.ly/req4worship.

Happy New Year!

HOPE

ANNUAL FINANCIAL MEETING

Sunday, January 31, 2021,

And In Preparation,

A TOWN HALL MEETING

Sunday, January 17, 2021,

Both immediately following worship
in the Zoom worship "meeting."

See article on Page 3.



Niles Discovery
Church

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE REMINDER



The deadline for newsletter submissions is now the Wednesday *before* the Cabinet meeting. Please send announcements and articles as you write them to Mikele at admin@nilesdiscoverychurch.org. She will post them in our **News blog** as she receives them and will submit them for publication in the following issue of *The Bell* (if appropriate in terms of timing). The deadline for submissions for the February 2021 edition of *The Bell* is 8:00 p.m. on Wednesday, January 13. In addition to typical newsletter news, we hope to fill each issue of *The Bell* with reflections, photographs, poems, and so forth by members and friends of the congregation.

LET THE PPRC KNOW



The Pastor Parish Relations Committee (PPRC) wants to hear from you. Contact any PPRC member – Ken Rasler, Inger Svaert, Roberta McReynolds, Leonard Lloyd, and Pastor Jeff and Pastor Brenda – if you have a concern about the life of the church that you want to explore. If you have a church relationship that's hurting and want some assistance in healing it, speak to one of them.

CONTACTING THE STAFF

Because of the shelter in place orders, please do not come into the office. You can call the office 510-797-0895 to leave a message for any staff member.

Mikele Kearney's email is
admin@nilesdiscoverychurch.org

Cecilia Le's email is
cecilia@nilesdiscoverychurch.org

You are encouraged to use the pastors' Calendly apps to make an appointment for a phone call or a Zoom meeting if you would like; their contact information is below.

Pastor Brenda will be on vacation through January 2. Maggie is on vacation through January 11.

Minister in Training

Maggie Guekguezian

559-801-3937

maggie@nilesdiscoverychurch.org

Pastor Brenda's mobile

510-828-4107

calendly.com/pastorbrenda
brenda@nilesdiscoverychurch.org

Pastor Jeff's mobile

510-579-8851

calendly.com/revjss
jeff@nilesdiscoverychurch.org



Senior Pastor
Rev. Jeff
Spencer



Associate Pastor
Rev. Brenda
Loreman



Minister in Training
Maggie
Guekguezian



Admin
Mikele
Kearny



Bookkeeper
Cecilia
Le



Accompanist and
Organist
Jenny Lin

CALL TO ANNUAL FINANCIAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the 2021 Annual Financial Meeting of Niles Discovery Church will be held on Sunday, January 31, 2021, immediately following worship in the Zoom worship "meeting." If you are not registered for our Zoom worship services, do so at bit.ly/reg4worship. The meeting is called to vote on a proposed amendment to the church bylaws and to adopt a budget for 2021. Members should watch their email for directions on how to download an electronic copy of the Annual Financial Report that will be coming mid-month.



In preparation for the Annual Financial Meeting, a Town Hall Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 17, 2021, immediately following worship in the Zoom worship "meeting." At this meeting, the two Annual Financial Meeting agenda items will be explained, questions will be answered, and opinions about agenda items will be voiced.

Read the article "A Message from the Moderator" on page 5 for more details.

"GOD IS HOLDING YOUR LIFE"

New sermon series starts January 3

It is so easy and normal to swing from feelings of disappointment to helplessness to gratitude in a single day – particularly now, as we continue to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. We may find ourselves wanting to cry out, "Oh no!" in one moment, "Help!" in the next, and "Oh Yeah!" just minutes later. There are also seasons of our lives when we feel inundated with more of one than the others.

As we enter the new year, we had hoped we would be past the "O No!" of the last several months. Instead, we find ourselves with ongoing prayers for "Help!" The Book of Psalms knows all about this. That is why, from Epiphany Sunday (January 3) until the Sunday before Lent begins (February 14), our pastors and Minister In Training will be preaching a sermon series based on the Psalms.

"The Psalms were written over a long span of time," Pastor Jeff explained. "Some were written during the

Babylonian Exile. Some were written during the rebuilding of the community after the Exile. That's why they include lament and celebration, cries for help and hymns of praise."



Special music by Richard Bruxvoort Colligan, based on the Psalms selected for each week and the poetry of the Psalms themselves, will accompany the congregation through this series, reminding us that through it all, we can trust and even give our thankful "Oh Yeah!" because God is, indeed, holding our lives.

Pastor Jeff and Pastor Brenda always encourage us to create a sense of sacred space when we worship on Zoom, such as lighting a candle or creating other visual reminders of worship. For this series, you are encouraged to add a bowl or vessel to your worship space, as a tangible reminder that "God is holding your life." We'll be using the bowl during our prayer time throughout these seven weeks.

WELCOME, MARTY WILLIAMS!

The Rev. Dr. Martha (Marty) A. Williams joined our church on Sunday, December 6, during our worship service. Marty is currently serving as an interim pastor at the Congregational Church of Almaden Valley in San Jose. Marty and her spouse of 23½ years, Sue, live in Pleasanton with Lulu the beagle and April the terrier/chihuahua.

Marty grew up in Texas and her faith journey started in the Roman Catholic Church. As a young adult she was drawn to the Disciples of Christ and was baptized in 1974. Within a few years, Marty experienced a call to ministry and moved to California to attend seminary at the School of Theology in Claremont. Marty graduated with her MDiv and DMin degrees from

Claremont and was ordained in the Disciples of Christ in 1983.

Marty has served in local churches and in Conference/Regional ministries in both of our congregation's denominations, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ. Two of her local church pastorates were with partnership congregations – the United Christian Parish in Lakeport, which was a church of three denominations (United Methodists, United Presbyterians, and Disciples of Christ) and the United Christian Church in Livermore, which was a partnership church of DOC and UCC (like our congregation).

In her spare time Marty loves to read, cook, and get outdoors. She



and Sue are campers, hikers, and cross-country skiers. They are looking forward to exploring retirement in 2021.



ARE YOU ON FACEBOOK?

If you are on Facebook, please “like” the Niles Discovery Church page. You can find it at www.facebook.com/NilesDiscoveryChurch. Once you’ve clicked the “Like” button, it will change to “Liked.” Then hover your mouse over the “Following” button and click the pencil image to the right of the word “Notifications.” Select “All” under the “Posts” options then click “Done.” You’ll get notified when we post something on the Page, which you can then share to help promote your church.

You can also join our closed Facebook “group” at www.facebook.com/groups/nilesdiscoverychurch/ to share ideas, joke, concerns, prayers, and just about anything else among your church family.

And if you want to “friend” our pastors, they are at www.facebook.com/brenda.loreman and www.facebook.com/RevJSS. Learn more about healthy social media boundaries in the church at <http://bit.ly/ndcsocmedia>.

YOUR CANS SUPPORT EDUCATION

Ministry of Social Concerns Team is supporting a boy in El Salvador and a girl in Jamaica, helping make sure they get an education. The Jamaican girl attends a school for girls removed from their family. If you have cans or bottles, call or text Rick Gallegos (510-861-4847) or Judy Zlatnik (510-509-8165) to arrange pick-up or for more information.



A MESSAGE FROM THE MODERATOR

As we welcome 2021 with great expectations of the pandemic ending, I hope you will join us in January for two very important meetings. There will be a Town Hall Meeting after worship on January 17, to discuss a proposed amendment to our by-laws and the Niles Discovery Church's proposed annual budget for 2021. We will follow up on January 31 after services, with a Congregational meeting to vote on the amendments to our by-laws and to approve the Niles Discovery Church's budget for 2021. We will need a quorum on January 31; please be there.

You will soon receive an email from Jim Thomas that will have a link to the Annual Financial Report. Please review this report prior to the meetings. If you should have any questions, please contact me by email jsmith1152@aol.com or phone 510-207-9057

I Look forward to seeing you in service, particularly before the meetings on January 17 and 31.

Peace,
John R. Smith

INVITE PEOPLE TO WORSHIP

If you have friends you want to invite to worship, ask them to register at bit.ly/reg4worship. They will get their own link to join us on Sunday mornings.



BRINGING JOY TO THE SURFACE

©Cindy Sojourner, December 17, 2020

Bringing joy to the
surface

Can be work when
pain,

When sorrow, covers all.

Working up to joy is worth

Looking like crazy, drunk
and naïve.

Worth forgiving,
extending grace.

Worth letting grudges,

Everything not possible, slip away.

Worth praying for enemies as friends.

Worth setting healthy boundaries

To prevent more injuries.

Bringing joy to the surface

Requires our finding beauty somewhere.

In the sky, tree branches arching, rain.

In a song, aroma, sweetness on the tongue.



In a pet's tail wag, a simple task done.

In oneself, in someone else,

Sharing generosity, a hug.

Bringing joy to the surface

Requires accepting it is not possible

To have joy rise into ecstasy

Every moment, every day,
everywhere,

For everyone.

Bringing joy needs us to share

Both joys and sorrows.

Needs us to reassure healing comes,

Marriages thrive, children learn, widows smile.

There are always reasons to celebrate.

To sing, "Joy to the World."

"He rules the world with truth and grace."

"Wonders of His Love."

JANUARY SPECIAL OFFERING



This month's special offering is for Tri-City Volunteers. Tri-City Volunteers runs the largest client-direct food bank in southern Alameda County. This group provides emergency grocery assistance to almost 6,000 families and serves up to 16,000 individuals through their marketplace and bag lunch programs every month. Tri-City Volunteers began in 1970—started by Mary Hewitt and Grace Draper, members of our predecessor congregations. It has grown from the work of community members that believe in the need for food security in the tri-city area.

This offering will be received all month. As with all our special offerings, you are welcome to give at any time

(always make checks payable to Niles Discovery Church). You can also give online: go to nilesdiscoverychurch.org/ and click the “donate” button at the top of the page.

Niles Discovery Church receives a special offering each month. With so many opportunities for special giving, you may need to choose which ones are most important to you, to view the entire list visit bit.ly/2021SpecialOffering. Thanks to all your generosity in donating \$2,232.50 to our December Special Offering for Homeless Ministries.

JANUARY'S DOCUMENTARY FILM: ALWAYS IN SEASON



When 17-year-old Lennon Lacy was found hanging from a swing set in rural North Carolina in 2014, his mother's search for justice and reconciliation began—while the trauma of more than a century of lynching African Americans bled into the present.

The documentary *Always in Season*, examining this case and the wider issues of racial injustice, will be streamed and discussed Saturday, January 9, at 1:30 p.m., as part of the Second Saturday Documentary Series. To register for the discussion please go to bit.ly/SSDSZoom.

Always in Season follows Lennon's mother, Claudia, as she moves from paralyzing grief to leading the fight for

justice for her son. As the film unfolds, the case, and the suspicions surrounding it, intersect with stories of other communities committed to breaking the silence of their own recent histories and moving toward justice.

Winner of the 2019 U.S. Documentary Special Jury Award at the Sundance Film Festival, *Always in Season* explores the lingering impact of more than a century of lynching history and connects this form of racial terrorism with racial violence today. Produced, directed, and written by Jaqueline Olive, this documentary looks at the systems that have ensured the power dynamics of racism and hatred survive and begins to tackle the beginnings of regional and national dialogues about racial justice.

The film includes the annual reenactment, done by a diverse group of residents (including the daughter of a former Ku Klux Klan leader), of a 1946 quadruple lynching to make sure that the victims are never forgotten. According to the director, this type of reenactment helps people feel the scope of the terror in their gut and feeling these emotions can help lead to conversations about the issues.

Always in Season asks: What will it take for Americans to build a national movement for racial justice and reconciliation?



FELLOWSHIP NEWS



REGISTRATION NOW REQUIRED

To enhance the safety of your Zoom experience, we are now requiring advanced registration for Zoom meetings held on the church's Zoom account. You only need to register once for a repeating event. Find the registration links in the descriptions of the scheduled events.



SHHHH! SECRET VALENTINE

The Ministry of Hospitality and Fellowship team is sponsoring another fun event – Secret Valentines!

This social activity is for all ages, children and adults. You may sign up as a family unit or as individuals. Secret Valentines have one responsibility – to make or buy a Valentine and send or deliver it in secret to your given recipient by February 13. All Secret Valentines will also receive a valentine from a Secret Valentine.

The Way to Play: Step one is signing up before February 4 at <https://bit.ly/SecretValentine2021>.

On February 5 you will receive the name and address of your Secret Valentine. Remember to sign the card, “Your Secret Valentine,” not your name. Don’t include a return address on your envelope either. The fun is in the secret!

All Valentines will be revealed after worship (during coffee hour) on Sunday, February 14, Valentine’s Day. We recommend having a Valentine treat to enjoy during the event.

****Special Note:** If you wish to do a little more than a card for your Valentine, that is fine. But please no homemade food due to COVID-19 concerns.



WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY

Monday Morning Bible study continues to Zoom from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The scripture studied is typically the scripture for the coming Sunday’s worship service. Everyone is welcome. Register at bit.ly/mmbbsreg.



DAYTIME FELLOWSHIP GROUP

The Daytime Fellowship meets on the third Monday of the month (which is January 18, this month), Bring your lunch to this monthly Zoom gathering. We share the same meeting link as the Monday Morning Bible Study, so join by registering for the Bible Study (bit.ly/mmbbsreg).



Grief & Loss Support Group

This will be a closed group meeting weekly for 12 sessions online beginning January 27.

TUESDAYS, 4:30-5:30 PM

Everyone experiences grief differently. This grief support group provides space for individuals experiencing loss to be with their feelings.

If you are interested in joining, please contact our referral line at 1-800-260-0094 or jwolfinger@crisissupport.org by Friday, January 15.

**PRAYERS FOR THESE PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES
BECAUSE OF THEIR HEALTH CONCERNS:**

**John Hollowell;
Bonnie Rankin;
Cindy Corey;
Krissy, Jacob, Jim, and Sandy
Thomas and all the rest in the
Thomas household;
Helen Boyer;
Karen McCready;
JoAn Parker;
Charlie Smith;
Bill Cutler;
Judi Eaton;
John Zlatnik;
Ginny August;
Grace Rankin;
Becky Moreno;
Isabel Moreno;
Nancy Attinger;
Diana Roeding;
Charlotte O'Donnell;
Penn Boyer;
Dean Hunter;
Isaiah Espinoza-Carter;
Diane Kindle;
Sandra Frisbey;**

**Doug Swint's mother, Geraldine;
Priscilla Taylor's father-in-law, Steve
Taylor, and mother-in-law, Angie
Taylor;
Priscilla Taylor's friend, John Lehrack;
Rich Gallegos' mother, Esther;
Joy Barnitz's dear friend Rev. Jeffrey
Cheifetz;
Helen Boyer's sister-in-law, Marjorie
Boyer;
Marjorie Fremont's daughter, Lisa;
Bob Monkman's mom, Patricia
Hanadel;
Barbara P. King's son, Jason King;
Cindy Sojourner's friend Saemi's
brother Don Ladue;
Priscilla Taylor's friend, Lana Artemoff;
Associate Conference Minister Rev.
Davena Jones;
Karen and Keith Moody's friend, Jerry
Miller;
Sandra Wong's friend, Nichelle;
the sister of a CleanStart client;
Joy Barnitz's friend, Polly Baxter;
Susie Claxton's sister, Caroline;**

**Becky Moreno's
brother-in-law,
Vince;
Bee Newell's
nephew, Matt
Hovland;
the mother of Bridget Lucey-Cose's co-
worker, Will;
Sharon Yool's daughter;
Michael Thomson's sister, Mary
Thomson;
Alison Kieft's friend, Judy Huff;
Alison Kieft's sister-in-law, Debbie
Thompson;
Alison Kieft's friend undergoing
cancer treatment;
Grace Rankin's brother, Jim Carstairs;
Katy Wharton's mother;
Janet Butcher;
William "Butch" Butcher;
Carol Easter's daughter, Allison;
Carol Easter's mother, Barbara;
Maria Garnica's brother, Victor
Garnica;
Suzy Mahusay's sister, Jo Carroll.**



PRAYERS FOR ALL WHO ARE GRIEVING, ESPECIALLY:

John Zlatnik and his family as they grieve the death of his brother-in-law on December 15;

Rich Gallegos and his family as they grieve the death of his aunt

Nena, who died on Thanksgiving evening from COVID-19;

Randy Fewel and her family as they grieve the death of her mother, Patricia Fewel, on September 30;

The family of Cecile Litherland, who died on August 20;

Riki Twist and her family as they grieve the death of Riki's father on June 9;

ALL WHO ARE CARING FOR SICK, FRAIL, AND/OR ELDERLY FAMILY MEMBERS.

PEACE THROUGHOUT THE EARTH, OFFERING THANKS FOR ALL WHO THROUGH NON-VIOLENT METHODS ARE BRINGING GOD'S COMPASSION AND JUSTICE TO THE WORLD.

FOR TEACHERS WHO ARE FACING ALL KINDS OF PROFESSIONAL UNCERTAINTIES, TEACHING STRESSES, AND A DANGEROUS VIRUS, AND FOR ALL THEIR STUDENTS.

PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD COPING WITH THE AFTERMATH OF NATURAL DISASTERS, MANY OF WHICH WERE MADE WORSE BY CLIMATE CHANGE.

THE LEADERS OF OUR CONGREGATION.

A reminder about this prayer list:

If you have a prayer request that you'd like added to this list (or removed) please let Pastor Jeff know.

January 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
					◀ From Dec 25	Maggie on Vacation
					◀ From Dec 25	Pastor Brenda on Vacation
					New Year's Day (office closed)	4p-6p Facilities Cleaning
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
◀ From Dec 25 Maggie on Vacation						
9a-9:50a Adult Sunday School	11:30a-12:30p Bible Study		12p-5p CleanStart Mobile Hygiene Unit (Parking Lot)	7:15p-8:15p Thursday Evening Community Drop-in		1:30p-3p Second Saturday Documentary Series
10a-11a Worship	12p-5p CleanStart Mobile Hygiene Unit		3p-3:30p Zoom with the Kids			4p-6p Facilities Cleaning
	7:30p-9:30p Ministry Team Meetings		3:30p-4:30p Green Team			
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
◀ From Dec 25 Maggie on Vacation						
9a-9:50a Adult Sunday School	11:30a-12:30p Bible Study	10a-12p GNV-Board of Directors Meeting	11:15a-12:15p START meeting	7:15p-8:15p Thursday Evening Community Drop-in		4p-6p Facilities Cleaning
10a-11a Worship	12p-5p CleanStart Mobile Hygiene Unit		12p-5p CleanStart Mobile Hygiene Unit			
	7p-8:30p Ministry of Evangelism Team		1p-2p GNV: Online Gathering			
	7:30p-9p Finance Committee		3p-3:30p Zoom with the Kids			
			5:30p-6:30p SSDS Producers Meeting			
			8p-8:30p Bell Deadline			
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
9a-9:50a Adult Sunday School	Martin Luther King Day (office closed)		12p-5p CleanStart Mobile Hygiene Unit (Parking Lot)	7:15p-8:15p Thursday Evening Community Drop-in		4p-6p Facilities Cleaning
10a-11a Worship	11:30a-12:30p Bible Study		3p-3:30p Zoom with the Kids			
11a-12p Town Hall Meeting (FH)	12p-5p CleanStart Mobile Hygiene Unit		3:30p-4:30p Green Team			
	12:30p-2p Daytime Fellowship					
	7:15p-9:15p Cabinet					
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
9a-9:50a Adult Sunday School	11:30a-12:30p Bible Study	10a-12p GNV-Board of Directors Meeting	12p-5p CleanStart Mobile Hygiene Unit (Parking Lot)	7:15p-8:15p Thursday Evening Community Drop-in		4p-6p Facilities Cleaning
10a-11a Worship	12p-5p CleanStart Mobile Hygiene Unit	1p-2:30p Cyber Geezers	3p-3:30p Zoom with the Kids			
		7:30p-9p Book Group	7p-8:30p GNV: Online Gathering			
31	Notes:					
9a-9:50a Adult Sunday School						
10a-11a Worship						
11a-12p Annual Budget Meeting						



Niles Discovery Church

Rev. Jeffrey Spencer,
Senior Pastor
Rev. Brenda Loreman,
Associate Pastor
36600 Niles Blvd.,
Fremont 94536

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nilesdiscoverychurch.org



Niles Discovery
Church



a just
world
for all
ucc.org

THE BELL IS FIRST CLASS

This edition of *The Bell* was graciously edited by Priscilla Taylor. If you received this issue of *The Bell* through the US Mail, then you received it first class mail. You can help reduce our costs (roughly \$1.50 per issue you receive in the mail) by receiving *The Bell* via email. Simply go to bit.ly/NDCemailsignup and start filling out the forms. You can select what email lists you want to join – for the newsletter, the weekly prayer requests, the weekly announcements, and more. Then, please leave a phone message or email the church office (510-797-0895; admin@nilesdiscoverychurch.org) so we can note in our database that you don't need *The Bell* via the US Mail any more.

CALL TO ANNUAL FINANCIAL MEETING

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