Merry Christmas

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Advent 2—December 5
“A Place at the Table”
Luke 1:68-79

Advent 3—December 12
“How Much Is Enough?”
Luke 3:10-14

Advent 4—December 19
“A Room with a View”
Luke 1:46-55

Longest Night Service
December 21
7:30 p.m. on Zoom
special registration required

Christmas Eve
December 24—7:00 p.m.
“The Christmas Path”
Luke 2:1-20

Christmas Eve
December 24—10:00 p.m.
“The Inn”
Luke 2:1-20

December 26
“Dwelling,”
Luke 2:41-52

Continues on Page 2: see “Worship Registration Information”
Worship Registration Information

To worship with us on Zoom, register once at bit.ly/reg4worship. To worship with us in person (when the in-person option is available), register for each worship service at bit.ly/inpersonsignup.

Hope For The Future Demonstrated In Pledge Campaign

While some pledges are still coming in, as of the press deadline, this fall’s pledge campaign for 2022 shows promising results. “I think the number of pledges received and the total amount pledged show that our church really does have a future with hope,” Pastor Jeff said.

As of November 30, 73 pledges have been received, totaling over $242,000. This is about in line with how we were doing at this point last year, and there are a number of additional pledges we expect to receive, according to our bookkeeper Cecilia Le.

If you would still like to make a pledge, you can contact the office to have a pledge form mailed to you or you can go to nilesdiscoverychurch.org/pledge and pledge online or download and print a paper form to mail to the church office.

Contacting The Staff

Because of the pandemic, 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 or to meet in person as you would like; their contact information is at right.

Vacations, etc.: Pastor Brenda will be taking the day off on December 15, and she will be on vacation December 25 through January 1.
Two Services Planned For Christmas Eve
One In Person And One On Zoom

Our Pastors, with the support of the Ministry of Spiritual Life Team, are planning two worship services for Christmas Eve. One will be in person only at 7:00 p.m. The other will be on Zoom only at 10:00 p.m.

The 7:00 service will be similar to Christmas Eve services held before the pandemic. Pastor Jeff’s sermon, “The Christmas Path,” will be a tale about lanterns. The service will end with a sharing of candlelight ritual. We are asking everyone who attends to pre-register at bit.ly/inpersonsignup – the same link we will use when we resume hybrid worship services on Sunday mornings. As a COVID precaution, we need to have an accurate contact list of everyone in attendance, so pre-registration is really helpful!

Everyone over 12 years old attending the 7:00 p.m. service is expected to be vaccinated. Everyone over 2 years old must wear a mask while in the building (communion will not be served at the 7:00 p.m. service). Social distancing of two empty chairs between family pod is required. Singing will be allowed.

The 10:00 p.m. service will start with a re-lighting of the Advent wreath. It will move into a liturgy of lessons and carols telling the Christmas story; we’ll sing along with recorded carols. Pastor Brenda will share some reflections on “The Inn.” We will celebrate communion at the 10:00 p.m. service, and the service will close with candle lighting.

To prepare for the 10:00 p.m. service, people should gather their Advent wreath (if they have one) to light at the beginning of the service, some food and beverage for communion, and a Christ candle – wax or battery-powered – for the candle lighting at the end of the service. “From a safety point of view, I have no problem with battery powered candles!” Pastor Jeff said.

If you are already registered for our Sunday morning worship services on Zoom, you are registered for the 10:00 p.m. Christmas Eve service. If you need to register for worship on Zoom, do so at bit.ly/reg4worship. If you would like to invite family and friends to join us on Christmas Eve (or on Sunday mornings), send them to bit.ly/reg4worship.

Announcement And Newsletter Submissions

Please send announcements and articles as you write them to Mikele at admin@nilesdiscoverychurch.org. She will post them on 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 January 2022 (can you believe it?!?) edition of The Bell is 8:00 a.m. on Thursday, December 9. 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.
Elves Wanted

The annual Tri-City Volunteers (TCV) Toy Party will be held on Monday, December 20 from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. The event will take place in the parking lot of Tree of Life Lords Harvest Christian Church (4140 Peralta Avenue, Fremont, 94536). As last year, it will be a Toys in the Trunk event with an added opportunity for families to have a picture taken with Santa from their car. We are hoping that there will also be activity kits distributed. Unfortunately, no popcorn or face painting will happen this year.

Niles Discovery Church will be providing most of the volunteers to staff this event. The volunteers will be needed to help set up and break down, gather age-appropriate toys for each car, put toys and food in the trunk, direct traffic, assist Santa, take pictures with family phones, and many other tasks. Only volunteers of high-school age and over this year.

If you are interested in spreading some Holiday cheer and would like a chance to wear your ugliest holiday sweater, please contact Beth Armstrong baarmstrong1@aol.com.

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.

Adventures In The Bay Area

By Priscilla Taylor

Dorothy Kusumoto who received her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Chamberlain University last month.

Alcatraz in Fog

A Tree In Alamo

Sea Gulls in Newark
For many, Christmas time is a bittersweet time of year. For people who are dealing with grief, significant life changes, sobriety, family dysfunction, and other challenges, this time of year can be especially difficult. Add to this reality the fact that this will be the second Christmas when we’re dealing with the pandemic, and you have the elements that can lead to all kinds of heavy, lonely, sad feelings.

“This is also the time of year with the longest nights,” Pastor Jeff noted, “so on the longest night of the year our congregation offers a special meditative worship service that makes time for remembering, sharing our hurting places with God, and preparing our hearts for the coming of Christ.”

Because of the pandemic, this service will be held on Zoom again this year. It requires a special registration, which you can do at bit.ly/longnite2021.

Traditionally, this service has been very interactive, with people coming forward to light candles in quiet. While trying to keep the service interactive, modifications had to be made for the online environment. “They seemed to work well last year, so again I’m hoping people will create a worship space at home by their computers,” Pastor Jeff explained. “Ideally, people will have a central candle (wax or electric) that we will light at the beginning of the service. In addition, I hope they have seven additional candles or seven stones (they don’t have to be big) nearby to gather around that central candle as the service progresses.”

“Even though we can’t gather in person, I hope this service will provide a space for people to release their anger, face their emptiness, have a good cry (if that’s what they need), and know that God cares,” he said.

“Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the LORD, and he will repay him for his deed.”
- Proverbs 19:17

The December Special Offering is in support of the Niles Discovery Church Homelessness Ministries, with oversight by the Homelessness Taskforce. This money is used primarily to support the Abode Services Home Warming and Rapid Rehousing program, helping families to move out of homelessness and into a home. The money is used to purchase much-needed household items, as well as first month rent and security deposit that can pose an initial barrier to moving in. In addition, the funds are used to support projects approved by the Homelessness Study Group to help mitigate homelessness. For more information about the Homelessness Study Group, please send an email to homelesshelp@nilesdiscoverychurch.org.

Niles Discovery Church receives a special offering each month. With so many possibilities for special giving, you may need to choose which ones are most important to you. To see the complete schedule of special offerings, please visit bit.ly/SpecialOffering2021.

Many thanks to all that participated in our November special offering to Puente de la Costa Sur, at the time of the press deadline we had raised $535.
REGISTRATION NOW REQUIRED
To enhance the safety of your Zoom experience, we require 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.

WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY
Monday Morning Bible study continues to Zoom from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. The scripture studied is typically the scripture for the coming Sunday’s worship service. Everyone is welcome. Register at bit.ly/mmbsreg.

DAYTIME FELLOWSHIP GROUP
The Daytime Fellowship meets on the third Monday of the month (which is December 20, 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/mmbsreg).

Not So Frightful Fellowship At The 2021 Halloween Party
More Fellowship

**CYBER GEEZERS**
This is a gathering of retirees who are interested in learning more about computers, the Internet, etc. They meet on the first Tuesday following the third Wednesday (we’re serious) which is December 23, from 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. this month. The group gathers on Zoom; click here to register. Please contact Jerry Sabo ([jlsabo3@comcast.net](mailto:jlsabo3@comcast.net)) for more information.

**LAP ROBE TYING GROUP**
This group is back to meeting regularly, on the fourth Wednesday of the month (with a special combined November - December meeting date), with COVID protocols in mind. The combined November/December meeting will be Wednesday, December 1, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in the church’s Fellowship Hall; wear a mask and bring your own lunch. Please contact Judy Molander ([jumolander@aol.com](mailto:jumolander@aol.com)) to be added to the group’s email list or if you have suggestions for organizations that might want some donated lap robes.

**START MEETING**
The Strategic Taskforce to Assess Returning Team meets on the second Wednesday of the month beginning at 11:15 a.m. This month’s meeting will be December 8. If you are interested in attending, just click here.

**GREEN TEAM MEETING**
You’re welcome to join the Green Team, a group leading our congregation to address the climate crisis. They meet the first and third Wednesdays of the month from 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. This month they are meeting December 1 and 15. Join the meeting by clicking here.

**RETIREMENT REINVENTION GROUP**
This group meets on the first and fourth Thursdays of the month which are December 2 and 16 this month. Contact John Zlatnik for information about joining this Zoom gathering of retirees who are supporting one another during this time of physical distancing and as they explore new ways of being retired people.

**ZOOM WITH THE KIDS RETURNS**
The kids of our church are invited to join Pastor Jeff (or Pastor Brenda when Pastor Jeff is away) on Zoom for conversation and sharing, every other Wednesday from 3:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. The dates for December are the first and fifteenth. To register, just go to [bit.ly/zwtk](http://bit.ly/zwtk); once you’re registered, you don’t need to register again. Parents, grandparents, and other interested adults are welcome to listen to what the kids share, too.
Marian Wolfe;  
Cindy Corey;  
Bruce Roeding;  
Grace Rankin;  
Veronica Riggs;  
Keith Moody;  
Ginny August;  
Martha LeRoy;  
Barbara P. King;  
Judy Zlatnik;  
John Zlatnik;  
Helen Boyer;  
JoAn Parker;  
Charlie Smith;  
Becky Moreno;  
Isabel Moreno;  
Nancy Attinger;  
Diana Roeding;  
Charlotte O’Donnell;  
Penn Boyer;  
Isaiah Espinoza-Carter;  
Diane Kindle;  
Steve Rosellini;  
Sandra Frisbey;  
Ron Adamson’s sister Joanne Orput;  
Diane Harvey’s sister, Linda;  
Judy Smith’s friend, Diane Sanchez;  
Pastor Jeff’s step-mother, Pat Hadley;  
Priscilla Taylor’s father-in-law and mother-in-law, Steve and Angie Taylor;  
Priscilla Taylor’s friend, Kathy Cavalli;  
Rich Gallegos’ mother, Esther;  
Joy Barnitz’s dear friend Rev. Jeffrey Cheifetz;  
Helen Boyer’s sister-in-law, Marjorie Boyer;  
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;  
Sandra Wong’s friend, Nichelle;  
the sister of a CleanStart client;  
Joy Barnitz’s friend, Polly Baxter;  
Joy Barnitz’s friend Rachel;  
Joy Barnitz’s friend Alison;  
Susie Claxton’s sister, Caroline;  
Becky Moreno’s brother-in-law Vince;  
Bee Newell’s nephew Matt Holvand;  
the mother of Bridget Lucey-Cose’s co-worker Will;  
Sharon Yool’s daughter;  
Michael Thomson’s sister, Mary Thomson;  
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;  
Carol Easter’s daughter, Allison;  
Carol Easter’s mother, Barbara;  
Maria Garnica’s brother, Victor Garnica;  
Suzy Mahusay’s sister, Jo Carroll.

Prayers for These People and Their Families Because of Their Health Concerns:

Marian Wolfe;  
Cindy Corey;  
Bruce Roeding;  
Grace Rankin;  
Veronica Riggs;  
Keith Moody;  
Ginny August;  
Martha LeRoy;  
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Katy Wharton’s mother;  
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:

Jesse Church and his family as they grieve the death of his father, Jim Church on September 29;  
John Smith and his family as they grieve the death of his sister, Joyce, on September 28;  
Bee Newell and her family as they grieve the death of her sister on September 2;  
the family of Marjorie Fremont who died on July 29;  
John Zlatnik and his family as they grieve the death of John’s sister, Helen Metropoulos on July 13;  
Roberta Boyd and her family as they grieve the death of Roberta’s sister, Judy on June 25;  
the family of Dorletta Larsen, who died on June 24;  
Cindy Sojourner and her family as they grieve the death of Cindy’s brother-in-law Frank on June 16.

All Who Are Caring for Sick, Frail, and/or Elderly Family Members.

All those who are suddenly caring for nieces and nephews and grandchildren because the children’s parents died in the pandemic, including Joy’s sister-in-law, Harriet.

Peace throughout the earth, offering thanks for all who through non-violent methods are bringing God’s compassion and justice to the world.

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.
## December 2021

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<th>Sunday</th>
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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 via the US Mail anymore.