

LAFAYETTE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

TOWER NOTES



Since 1855

December 2, 2007

SEEDS OF A SOWER

The Christian season of Advent began on Sunday, December 2. Advent includes the four Sundays before Christmas. *Advent* derives from the Latin *adventus*, which means “coming.” The season proclaims the comings of the Christ – the birth of Christ which we prepare to celebrate once again; the continual coming of Christ in Word and Spirit; and the coming reign of Christ which we anticipate will reach its fullness in the future.

Advent is a season to prepare ourselves anew for Christ’s coming. It is a time for quiet reflection on where we have been experiencing Christ’s presence, ways we have missed Christ’s coming, and attitudes or behaviors that block God’s advent among us. Typical admonitions of the Advent season call us to wake up, watch, pay attention, and listen for God’s stirring among us. We are encouraged to evaluate our perceptions and actions and make changes to align ourselves more with God’s will and God’s way.

Walter J. Burghardt, S.J., offers this image of Advent:

*Advent is the season to take the barnacles off my Christian bottom –
the obstacles that keep me from being enthusiastic in my faith and hope
and love,
too sophisticated to love God with all my mind and heart, all my soul
and strength,
too self-centered to love my sisters and brothers like other selves, as Jesus
has loved me.*

Advent is the season to enthusiastically open our hearts, minds, and spirits; our eyes, ears, and hands to receive the gift of God’s Love Child. An evening exercise, perhaps during dinner, might be to ask ourselves, “Where did I witness God’s presence today? How did Christ come to me in a most surprising and delightful way? Did I miss an opportunity where Christ might have been present?”

Watch with hope, for Christ indeed is coming to you and in our world.

Waiting with anticipation,

Pastor Lori



THE CHRISTMAS CRECHE AROUND THE WORLD

LUMC will host a display of nativity scenes from around the world on Saturday afternoon December 8 from 1 p.m. - 3 p.m. and Sunday December 9 from Noon - 2 p.m. The public is invited to tour this exhibit and spend a few moments in peaceful contemplation of the meaning of the Christmas season. Refreshments will be served and a free will offering taken. A supervised activity for children will be available but no children will be admitted without an adult.



THE ADVENT SEASON Preparing for the Coming of Christ

Worship

Sunday Mornings at 8:30 or 10:30
10:45 Sunday School for Children and Youth

Christmas Eve Worship

Monday, December 24
5:00 p.m. - Family Worship Service
11:00 p.m. - Candlelight Worship Service with the Choir and special music



CHILDREN'S ACTIVITY

There will be 2 tables of Christmas ornament making supplies and a helper in Fellowship Hall at Friendship Time on December 16. Have your snack first and then come and create. Parents may join in too.



POINSETTIAS



You may add to the beauty of our worship this year by donating toward our flowers. The flowers will be placed in the sanctuary on Sunday, December 9, through Christmas Eve. All gifts will be noted in the bulletin on Sunday, December 23, 2006.

Suggested amount \$10

Donated by: _____

Phone: _____

(In memory of)

(In honor of)

Enclosed is my check made payable to Lafayette United Methodist Church
for \$_____ for Christmas worship flowers.
If you wish to donate your flowers, please check here _____.



**Enjoy a Wonderful Advent Season
At Lafayette United Methodist Church
By Joining in the Following Events
United Methodist Women Christmas Luncheon**



All women of the Church are invited to join with the United Methodist Women for a Christmas Luncheon on Thursday, December 6, 2007. We will begin with some spiced cider, sing carols and enjoy a special lunch. Following lunch we will pack Christmas Baskets for those members of our congregation who are not able to get out and about. Join the fun in the Fireside Room at 11 a.m. I hope to see you there!



CELEBRATING YOUTH THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

December 16th, 6 to 7:45pm

The time is here,
The time is now.
Youth ministry needs you,
And, you are needed now.

Come for fellowship, fun and food.
Sing carols, dine, meet and greet.
All generations are called,
To join in this "Youthful Retreat."

Where: LUMC Fellowship Hall

When: December 16, 2007, 6-7:45pm

What: Fellowship, fun, food and a chance for all ages to celebrate the holiday season while learning about and finding your place in the youth ministry at LUMC.



Round about LUMC

We sorrow, but not as those without hope, with **David** and **Julia White**, and their daughter, **Sue Flagg**, upon the death of their granddaughter and daughter, **Casey Davisson**. A memorial service will be held at LUMC on Sunday, December 16 at 2:00 p.m.

We sorrow with **Vic** and **Fran Smith**, upon the death of Vic's brother, **Alton**, following a long illness.

Robyn Roberts was awarded Methodist of the Month for November for her leadership in hosting the Winter Nights Shelter, receiving the giant bag of M & M's. Robyn enthusiastically and energetically coordinated food, volunteers, and building use. She even tended "the wee ones" when necessarily. Over 60 people from our church family supported this team effort, so everyone in worship on Nov. 18 was awarded with a mini bag of M & M's as Methodists of the Month.

TOWER NOTES DECEMBER

There will only be **one Tower Notes** in December.
The deadline will be **Thursday, Dec. 13.**



- For Advent: On the Way to Bethlehem by Hilary McDowell
Meet Him at the Manger
Let us Go Over to Bethlehem, Adult study
Our December Hearts by Anne McConnly
A Family Christmas
The 24 Days Before Christmas by Madeleine L'engle
- For Christmas: DVD Christmas Child (Max Lucado story)
A Christmas Longing by Joni Eareckson Tada
The Traditions of Christmas (Ideals)
- For Children: The Bethlehem Mouse
The Legend of the Ragged Boy
A Cup of Christmas Tea
The Littlest Tree
The Crippled Lamb
The Christmas Ark
Angel Mae
Christmas A to Z (Spanish & English)
Take Time for Christmas (Spanish & English)
One Christmas Night (Spanish & English)



HEROES FOR WINTER NIGHTS

I would like to express my gratitude to all those who helped make the October 13th "Heroes Arise" fundraiser for the Winter Nights Homeless Shelter Program a success. Pastor Lori, Lorri Sullivan, David & Julia White, Robyn Roberts, Celeste Graham and Carol Slatten deserve a special round of applause. We raised approximately \$1,100.00 for Winter Nights.

Thank you!
Laurel Hill

SUMMER IS OVER BUT OUR POOL IS STILL OPEN

That's right!!! Our Pooled Income Fund is very much open and is an "all season" opportunity for everyone to contribute to the future of LUMC. The Pooled Income Fund provides long range help for the church programs and it provides benefits to those who contribute at the same time. A contribution to the Pooled Income Fund creates for you (and your spouse) a LIFETIME INCOME AND a great INCOME TAX DEDUCTION! Plus funds are eventually paid to the church. This is a WIN WIN WIN situation!

The Pooled Income Fund recently paid out the third quarter income to the present beneficiaries of the Fund. The rate of return for the third quarter this year was a fantastic 7.3%. Join the pool and receive YOUR lifetime income and income tax deduction. To find out how you can ALSO avoid capital gains taxes through the Pooled Income Fund contact Pastor Lori, Endowment Committee Chairman Donna Partlow or Bob Hobson.

Remember, however, if you want that great income tax deduction next April 15, you must do your planning now. Contributions to the Pooled Income Fund must be made before December 31 in order to get the income tax deduction for 2007.



Garden Park Apartments Wish List

Contra Costa Interfaith Housing's first project Garden Park Apartments has a few needs currently. Due to your responses in the past, we now have a full schedule of tutors and many other needs have been met. These current needs are a little unusual but real. Items can be new or used. Please call Julie at 299-1067 if you can meet a need.

1. A **video game system**- we would like a video game system for our community room, we already have a TV. The use would be restricted to family oriented video games, and those sports oriented. We'd like the games to engage the kids, especially our teens, but we are wary of the violence in some games.
2. A **Rug Doctor Mighty Pro** carpet cleaning machine - We are encouraging tenants to be responsible for their apartments. We will be able to loan out the machine so carpets can be cleaned easily without economic hardship to the tenants.
3. A **fencing company** that would be able to either donate or give us a great deal. Or someone who has the skills to help us. Our basketball space is being transformed as part of an Eagle Scout project and we need a section of fence moved to make a larger sport space.

Installation Service for New Bayview District Superintendent

Sunday, January 27, 3:00 p.m.

Community United Methodist Church

1875 Fairfield Avenue, Fairfield, CA 94533

A carpool will go from LUMC.



LUMC Church Council Meeting - November 20, 2007

Attendees: Pat Hershey, Joe Darrell, Dean Coons, Robyn Roberts, Tom Henderson, Carol Slatten, David White, Pastor Lori Sawdon, Ginny Cowden, and Mary Hobson.

Joys and Concerns were shared. Chairperson Pat Hershey led us in prayer. Pat asked if there were any corrections to the minutes. Hearing none, minutes from Oct. 16 were approved as submitted.

REPORTS

Finance - David White, our treasurer, reported that we are going to meet our expenses for this year, and are having a very good year financially, primarily due to non-pledged income.

- Stewardship Update- Seventy –seven pledges have come in so far for 2008.

- Pastor Lori reported for Ginny Leavitt who was absent. She said that since Workman's Comp is tied to salaries, the Finance Committee recommends that Joyful Beginnings be responsible for their portion of the Workman's Comp. Bill. Since the bill is paid for 2007, Joyful Beginnings will write off the amount (\$3,500) from the outstanding loan, leaving a balance owed by the church to Joyful of \$3,500. Starting with the 2008 calendar year, Joyful Beginnings will pay for their portion of the Workman's Comp. Bill. In the past, Joyful Beginnings has on their own, raised their monthly contribution to the church for Facilities Use by \$100. The Finance Committee, in appreciation for what Joyful brings to this church, recommends that Joyful's contribution remain at \$1,900 a month. This seems in line with our other revenue. This recommendation was approved by all.

Lay Leadership - Pastor Lori reported that the committee was unable to find a volunteer to be treasurer, and the Staff Parish committee is now looking for a bookkeeper.

Staff Parish - Staff Parish recommended that we create a new position of bookkeeper who will work 3-5 hours a week and \$800 a month be budgeted for this. Discussion was held. The Treasurer would ideally oversee this bookkeeper. If there is no Treasurer, then the Finance Chr. will do so. Quickbooks will be used to prepare the monthly reports. Joe Darrell seconded, and it was approved. The Staff Parish Committee recommended the use of unbudgeted wages (141 acct.) as a start up in the first month, amounting to \$1,009. Carol Slatten seconded, and all approved.

•Ginny Cowden reported for Staff Parish that the Director of Youth Ministry resigned. We are in the process of forming a Youth Ministry Team. There will also be a transition period before any Youth Ministry person is hired.

Trustees - Joe Darrell reported that the Trustees are discussing a repaving project at the Parsonage. They are looking at about \$13,500, and it may cost more. Accounts 505 and 506 along with 2006 carryover cash were suggested to be used to pay for the project.

Program Council - no report

OLD BUSINESS— During the week that our church hosted Winter Nights, there were 38 people (21 were children). Robyn reported that they felt safe and happy here, and everything went smoothly. Help from many members, especially Cheen Chow and Judy Stillman was appreciated. We all thanked Robyn for all she did for the program.

NEW BUSINESS- none

Pat Hershey moved we adjourn the meeting at 8:40. The next meeting will be a joint meeting with the Finance Committee on Dec. 11 at 7:00. Annual Church Conference will be at 4:00 on Dec. 2nd.

Respectfully Submitted, Mary Hobson, Church Council Secretary



CHURCH STAFF

Pastor.....	The Reverend Lori Sawdon
Pastor e-mail.....	Sawdon2@pacbell.net
Director of Music Ministry.....	Ronald Sutherland
Organist & Keyboard/Pianist.....	Royetta Rule
Joyful Beginnings Preschool Director.....	Dot Feist
Custodian.....	Jason Cano

TOWER NOTES

Editor.....	Ginny Cowden
Computer Formatting.....	Tom & Mary Henderson
Mailing.....	Fran Smith and Evelyn Clark

TOWER NOTES DEADLINE

2nd & 4th Thursday by Noon – Next Deadline **Thursday, December 13, 2007**

LUMC CONTACT INFORMATION

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