

THE IVY VINE

March & April 2023

God is Still Speaking Volume 18 Issue 3



1



Dear church family & friends,

As the first day of Spring is fast approaching and sunlight is filling our days more-and-more, we are also journeying together as a church through the 40 days of Lent as we make our way toward Easter (April 9). “The word ‘Lent’ comes from an old English word for ‘lengthen,’ and refers to the lengthening days of spring.”¹ This year we are utilizing the Lenten devotional entitled ‘Wendell Berry and the Sabbath Poetry of Lent’ as we make our way toward Easter (April 9). This devotional was purchased for our use from SaltProject.org. Our Lenten devotional shares in its introduction that “the word ‘sabbath’ comes from an old Hebrew word for ‘to stop,’ and refers to pausing secondary activities (like work) to clear space for the primary ones (like relationships, delight, study, freedom, beauty, restoration – and resurrection).”²

This devotional’s focus on the Sabbath poems of Wendell Berry was chosen specifically by our worship team with each one of us in mind and the various and ongoing ways we each show up and extend ourselves... Lending a hand to each other...and helping others...while still having responsibilities at home, at work, and elsewhere...all while also navigating various health and aging issues...and also burdened by happenings in the world around us....The theme of this devotional reminds us that this world’s frenetic pace is not the intended pace God has in mind for our well-being and that God modeled and offers a different rhythm and pace that prioritizes finding rest in God’s presence.

In addition to the availability of sabbath rest, as we navigate through this world that is saturated with distractions and unrest, Jesus offers a different way to traverse through life that isn’t dependent on our level of endurance or having all the answers or know how. Let us take to heart Jesus’ personal invitation: ²⁸ “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.” (Matthew 11:28-29)

(Continues page 2)

(continued from page 1)

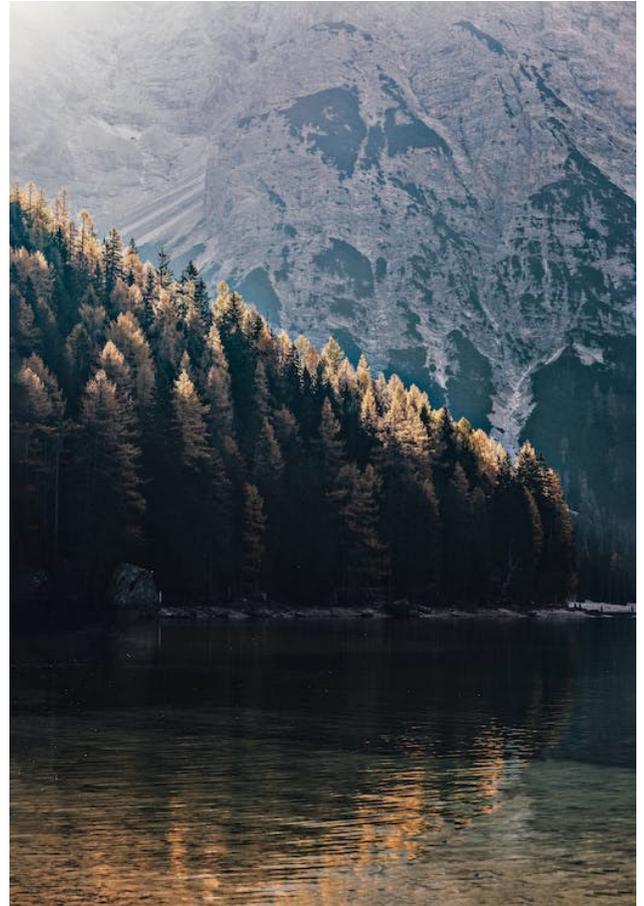
I understand that hearing any of this does not in and of itself make it easy to put into practice. With this in mind, I invite you to pray the following, albeit vulnerable prayer with me:

It's a familiar call, Jesus
 a whisper almost unheard
 but persistent and unfailing
 "Come," it says.
 "Come to me, and I will give you rest."

We long for what you offer, Jesus;
 we yearn for the still calm of wholeness
 And yet we fear...
 What if we are disappointed?
 What if we never find what we so desperately desire?
 But the call remains – "Come to me..."

And so, in relief that our doubts do not silence your invitation;
 in faith that all who answer are filled
 – even though your gift may surprise us
 may be other than we expected;
 in honest admission of our reticence and uncertainty
 We come.
 Amen.³

With blessings and love,
 Pastor Jen



1 Saltproject.org Lenten Devotional: Wendell Berry and the Sabbath Poetry of Lent, p. 2.

2 Saltproject.org Lenten Devotional: Wendell Berry and the Sabbath Poetry of Lent, p. 2.

3 <https://sacredise.com/the-offer-the-longing-and-the-fear/> (Rev. John van de Laar)

Let Us Continue to Unite in Prayer!

Although our recent sermon series on the power of prayer has come to an end (sermon series is available on our YouTube channel www.youtube.com/@unitedchurchofcloverdale1435), the need for our continued prayers on behalf of the life and ministries of the United Church is **ongoing!** As we bring our prayers to God, let us continue to be **specific, bold, and honest!** **And may we pray with persistence** for God to fill our ministries and our lives with God's presence to help us BE all that God has created us to be.

When we rely on God and demonstrate our determination to trust God with the details and timetable of our future, we can, with confidence, put into practice NOW being good and faithful stewards of the United Church. There isn't another time, this is the time we have to step into how God will equip and utilize us to help those in need within our community and beyond. It is my hope and belief that God has longer range plans for us, but that has to begin now with all-hands-on-deck. God is capable of and will provide what we physically cannot achieve, however, God's plan includes utilizing what we each DO have to offer at this point in our lives. But it is up to each individual whether-or-not to be involved!

I invite you to prayerfully consider where God is encouraging you to utilize the God-given gifts that you have to offer to the United Church in this season of your life. For some this might be a continuation of what you are already participating in or collaborating on. And for some this might be an awareness of the Holy Spirit stirring within you a new or yet to be acted upon passion.

- For some of us this might include participating from home or primarily using a skill set that utilizes social media or the internet.
- For others this might include networking with individuals and/or organizations that will partner with us in service to others.
- For others this may include hands-on involvement in on-going or new ways.
- For some this might include utilizing writing or photography skills to help articulate our vision, missions, and to maintain ongoing communication with each other and our community.
- For some this might include being a part of strategic planning to help connect the dots for growing ministry opportunities.
- For some this might include helping with the growth and development of our growing thrift store ('Heaven's Closet').
- For some this might include help with grant writing or helping to connect with financial partners who have a shared vision for service.
- For some this might include helping to infuse music, arts and crafts, building, and sewing/knitting/crocheting/quilting.



(continued from Page 3)

- For still others this might include hospitality and coordinating or the making of various foods and goodies for mission and/or church related activities (coffee hour and otherwise).
- For some this might include being a lay reader, usher, greeter, bell ringer, offering counter, musician, or bringing flowers for the alter.
- For some this might include volunteering in the church office and/or with maintenance needs around the church campus.
- For others this will include listening and watching for where God is at work answering our prayers and where there is a need for us to address needs in the body of the church or in ministries God has called us to.
- For others this will include helping to move forward and/or bring to completion necessary steps to help our vision and outreach continue to move forward in meaningful, impactful, and sustainable ways.
- And for still others this will include being a persistent pray-er and encourager on behalf of all of us.

The above list is not exhaustive!

God knows how to utilize and blend together what we each have to offer at this point in our lives. What is required of us is to be persistent in asking God to be the ongoing source of our energy, vision, hope, and resources!

As we continue to prayerfully journey forward together, let us also continue to watch for how God is answering our prayers and encourage each other by sharing these answers with each other. I am holding each of you in prayer!

Pastor Jen





5th Sunday Service

April 30th is the fifth Sunday of the month and will be our second 5th Sunday Service in 2023. We invite you to come to church at 10:00 am for a time of prayer, quiet reflection, music and contemplation on the gifts of our earth. Please bring your friends and family to share this spiritual time. The service will be open ended, you may stay in silence for as long as you wish. There will be the usual coffee hour in the fellowship hall where you can visit with friends as you enjoy the snacks.

If you would like to participate, in the future, by reading or helping with the technology, please speak with Pastor Jen, Holly Werner, or Marilyn Michelin.

Alter flowers guide/request: Those who bring altar flowers are greatly appreciated. The arrangements always add a lovely touch to the altar decoration. With this in mind, the church has had a recent request regarding flowers brought in for the altar.

When choosing flowers for the altar please avoid choosing strong-smelling flowers such as lilies, lilacs, Narcissus, and the like. Some church members are scent-sensitive and strong-smelling flowers can bring on migraines, asthma, or other reactions. Again, thank you for your floral contributions to the look of the altar and sanctuary.

If you haven't brought in flowers for the altar in a while, please consider signing up on the chart in Fellowship Hall.

COVID & Flu Season Updates:

- ⇒ **Masks are optional with the exception of the office. Please wear a mask in the office!**
- ⇒ **Please continue to be mindful of social distancing and hand washing and/or sanitizing.**
- ⇒ **If you are feeling sick or experiencing any symptoms, Covid, flu, etc. please refrain from coming to the church campus.**
- ⇒ **If you or a household member test positive for Covid please quarantine for 10 days from onset of symptoms and do not return to church campus until you and other household members all test negative.**
- ⇒ **Please notify the church office, Pastor Jen and/or one of the moderator team if you learn you have or might have exposed others, or you have been exposed to covid yourself while on church campus or when off campus at a church related activity.**
- ⇒ **Office will remain by appt. only**



*Thank you for helping us maintain our commitment
to provide a safe place for all!*

Thank you!

Thrift shop: We are needing assistance from as many individuals as possible with our expanding Heaven's Closet Thrift Store ministry. Please contact Jilloni and/or Pastor Jen if you and/or others you know are able to help in any way whether in person and/or from home. Additionally, we ask that you keep this vital ministry in your prayers.

Thank you Tech Team! Submitted by Pastor Jen

We are so blessed by all those who have stepped into the unfamiliar role of being on our Tech Team which was created in the midst of Covid-19. I am grateful for your willingness to learn, your teamwork, your helping to make our ongoing on-line ministry possible, and for helping to troubleshoot when issues arise.

Our current team includes:

Primary Team for YouTube: Jean Craig & Polly Lile

Primary Team for Zoom: Louise Graddy, Polly Lile, & John Phillips

Support Team for miscellaneous tech needs: Rich Craig, Jilloni Hopkins, Madelyn Ketchum, Bob Timm, Holly Werner, & Pastor Jen

We need more volunteers on the primary teams and for behind the scenes support!

Please contact the church office to for more information!

New Council Members

Moderator Team : John Phillips (new)
Marilyn Michelon (new)
Richard Werner

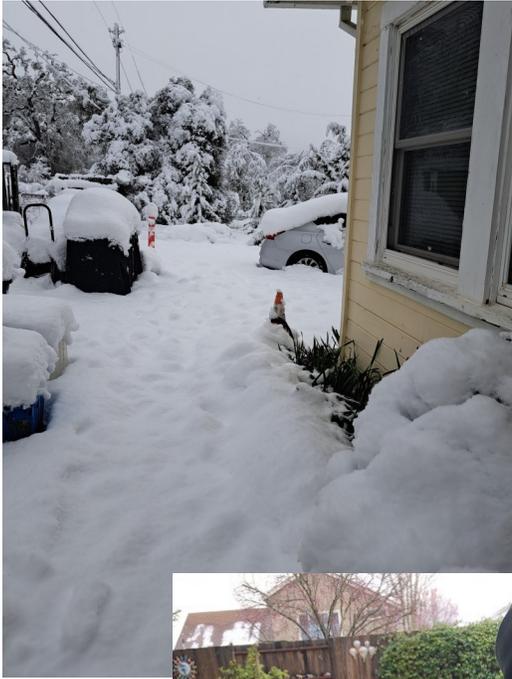
Members at Large: DeeAnne Thom (new)
Nikki Lane (new)
Conny Welch
Jone Wesele

Clerk: Holly Werner
Treasurer: Linda Clapp

Thank you to all our council members!

Snow Pictures from Feb 24, 2023

Photos from Hwy 128
outside Cloverdale



Left: Photo by Lavonne Blucher-Nameny of a family friends 1st time experience making snowmen!



**Bible Study will continue thru Lent
after worship from 11:30-12:15
and is available via Zoom
All are welcome!**

Pennies From Heaven

On the 3rd Sunday of each month during our worship service we collect an offering we call "Pennies From Heaven." Many of our church family save up their loose change each month to bring to church, all the monies collected are then used to support Heifer International. With our donations we help families all over the world!

World Relief Pedal to Resettle – 2023 is coming up June 17th.

We have teamed up again this year with the Good Shepherds Episcopal Church. Last year, our team was the top fundraiser thanks to many of you. We hope you will help us again this year. Get started by logging on to this page. <https://fundraise.worldrelief.org/event/pedal-to-resettle-2023/e443766>

Scroll down until you see *Support a Cyclist*. Click on our team – United Shepherds. (If our team isn't listed, click on *View All* to the right of Top Teams.)

You will then see a list of team members. From this page, you will have several options:

1. *join* the team (you will be guided how to register and to set up your own fundraising page - write your story about why you support refugees and set up your own fundraising challenge if you aren't a cyclist),
2. *donate* to the team,
3. *donate* to a specific team member. When you click on the name of a team member, you will be taken to their individual fundraising page where you can read about the challenge they are taking, and make your donation.

In addition to undertaking our individual challenges, United Shepherds will also be serving a lunch stop in the UCC parking lot for the Century Riders – those who are cycling 100 miles on June 17.

Thanks for your support. If you run into any difficulties, call Lavonne Blucher-Nameny at (707) 894-7540 or (707) 477-8373

March & April CALENDAR (ALL ARE WELCOME)

- 3/17 Thrift Shop Volunteer training 10am
- 3/19 Council Meeting, After worship
- 4/1 8:00am Saturday Breakfast, Zini's Diner
- 4/9 Easter Sunday (Last Bible Study in Lent Series)
- 4/16 11:30am Council Meeting
- 4/19 8:30am Wednesday Breakfast , Zini's Diner
- 4/30 5th Sunday Service



- 3/12 Robbyn Turner
- 4/7 Gene Lile
- 4/17 Catalina Nash
- 4/19 Norma Reilly
- 4/23 Rich Craig
- 4/26 Alice Sheperla

Pastor Jen's Norway Presentation, during coffee hour

Weekly Activities

- Mondays Tai Chi 9:45am Fellowship Hall
- AA Book study 7:30pm Education Building
- Tuesdays & Fridays NA Meeting 7:30pm Education Building
- Wednesday- Silent Prayer 10am (all are welcome to join in-person or in spirit)
- Thursdays & Saturdays Thrift Shop Open 10-3
- Sundays In-person Church Services 10am Sanctuary
(also available on Zoom and our YouTube Channel)



3/26 Roy & Mimi Domke

If you have a story you want to share and/or any photos
please submit to uccoffice@sbcglobal.net
We would love to share it in the next newsletter!



Subscribe

Hold In Prayers

*We continue to hold in prayer Mary Dixon; Carolyn Crandall; Kathy Truelsen & family;
Sylvia, Marilyn Michelons Sister; The Wolter family; Lynn Gertenbach & Family;
Jilloni & her sister Becky; Norma Reilly; Ukraine and all those impacted;
United Church of Cloverdale and all members & friends of our church*

Cloverdale Food Pantry Fridays 11am to 1pm

**202 Commercial Street
(Commercial at Second)
Cloverdale , CA**

**Everyone is welcome to access the food Pantry
No ID or income verifications required!**

Ivy Vine Contact Information
 The United Church of Cloverdale
 439 N. Cloverdale Blvd., Cloverdale, CA 95425
 Phone: 707-894-2039 Fax: 707-894-4015;
 Website www.uccloverdale.org
 YouTube Channel United Church of Cloverdale
 Church Administrator: Jilloni Hopkins, uccoffice@sbcglobal.net
 Articles for The Ivy Vine? submit to the uccoffice@sbcglobal.net
 by the 20th of the month preceding the publication date. Articles
 submitted after the deadline without prior approval will be pub-
 lished the following month.