

THE IVY VINE

September & October 2023

God is Still Speaking Volume 18 Issue 6



Dear United Church Family & Friends,
I invite you to join me throughout the month of September in praying the following prayer by Pastor John van de Laar:

Determined

*We praise you, O God,
that your way is found
not by travelling an exclusive highway,
or in secrets preserved only for some,
but in the open field of love and grace,
where all who choose may come and play.*

*We praise you, O God,
that your truth is heard
not only in the words of scholars and authors,
or in brittle, inflexible ideas,
but in honest questions
and difficult conversations,
in the courageous attempts of simple people
to live lives of integrity.*

*We praise you, O God,
that your life is discovered
not just in the predictable places of beauty and
wealth
or within the confines of clearly demarcated norms,
but in the unexpected generosity and pride
of those who have nothing,
in the creativity and risk
of trying new things,
and defending the vulnerable.*

*We open ourselves again to your call,
determined to do what we promise,
to follow your way,
to embody your truth
to share your life.
And to do it all with thanksgiving and praise.
Amen.¹*

Turn to page 2 for October's Prayer.



In addition to the above prayer, may you know that I am also keeping you and your family in prayer.

With blessings & love,
Pastor Jen



Throughout the month of October, we invite you to join in praying the following prayer written by Pastor Mindi Welton-Mitchell:

God of Transformation, as the seasons change, we give you thanks that things do not stay the same. That we ourselves cannot stay static. You change the world around us and you change our hearts within. May we be open to the ways the Spirit is moving us to change. May we be open to the need to change for others, to make space and room for those who have not had places made for them. May we take notice of what is growing and what is dying, and give thanks for both, O God, for out of death comes new life. Even as we grieve what we have known, you are making all things new. Transform our hearts, O God, to be ready for what you are preparing to make new. We pray this in Jesus' name, Amen.²

<http://rev-o-lution.org/> (Rev. Mindi Welton-Mitchell, 10.14.22)

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!

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

COVID & Flu Season Updates:

- ⇒ **Masks are optional but recommended when social distancing is not possible.**
- ⇒ **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 appointment only**

United Church of Cloverdale's Legacy & Future

Dear United Church family & friends,

It is not a secret that the United Church of Cloverdale only has 2 financially viable years left. As a result, we now face the important responsibility that has been entrusted into our care to help bring the United Church to a dignified and purpose-filled ending, whenever that might ultimately be.

The eventual ending of the United Church as we know it today does not, however, mean that we stop living now! Rather, now is the time for us to unite and concentrate our energy and focus on the quality of the time remaining as we continue to focus on being our 'best God-given selves' and entrust what we still have to offer to God's care and plan.

With this in mind, we will continue to focus on living and engaging with our community and each other in ways that convey a sense of purpose and that places an emphasis on prioritizing, affirming, and supporting our spiritual needs and continued desire to be a beacon of hope for this community.

How we approach this going forward, will undoubtedly include some changes and thus it is imperative that we work together to identify needs and to provide opportunities for anyone desiring to share or feel heard as together we experience grief, change, transition, anticipatory loss, courage, and hope. We welcome and invite any questions, concerns, hopes, memories, etc. that you have. Open and ongoing communication is vital as we journey forward together.

We invite all who have been a part of and/or blessed by the United Church in some way over the years to help us honor her legacy and life. One way to do this is by joining our Food for Thought & Action Group. **[see Food for Thought & Action Group on pg 4]**

Let us continue to hold onto the hope and promise that God is already at work to help us as we journey down the path ahead, and let us trust that if God has an alternate plan for our future, God will make that abundantly clear to us!

I am humbled and honored that God has called me to serve as your pastor and spiritual leader for this time in the life of our church. I know that God will continue to guide, bless, and help us every step of the way. Please keep me in your prayers and know that you will be in mine!

With gratitude, blessings, & love,
Pastor Jen



Food for Thought and Action Group Submitted by Jean Craig

With God's inspiration and guidance this group's purpose is to focus and take action on the immediate needs that support United Church of Cloverdale current missions and ministries and explore long term considerations and actions. The focus is to take action in ways that both honor our past and also nurture the legacy we desire to leave. The group hopes that as we move forward others can team with them to do the work.

Immediate Specific Needs and Task Volunteers;

Collector/Recorder of United Church's Ideas and Feedback (ongoing) DeeAnne Thom: Folks who have ideas/feedback are invited to contact Dee Anne by email at DeeAnne@Landesign-inc.com or text: 612-670-6705.

Communication Liaison: Jean Craig and Dee Anne will take notes at each meeting, remind group members who have volunteered for specific tasks, and provide regular updates to Church members and friends.

Office Needs:

- Jean Craig is coordinating the task of file sorting, clearing out old documents, recycling paper, shredding documents with sensitive information, and organizing files. Daniel Reid to assist as needed.
- Polly and Marilyn will send out cards and hug alerts.
- No more rentals beyond current ones, funerals and weddings for members and immediate family. This is due to the fact that the time to coordinate rentals exceeds what has been the financial benefit to the church

Thrift Store Needs

- Posting upscale items on Ebay
- More volunteers are needed to sort, price, hang clothes, and work store shifts.
- Ideas for creating/configuring possibly relocating space to accommodate growing inventory.
- Help with purchasing and assembling racks.
- Updating guidelines for volunteers and signage
- Jone is helping with Facebook/Social media posts and Google free advertising for non-profits.

Path Toward Closing the Church

- Bob Timm is working on identifying an attorney who is experienced in the legal path to closing a church and realtors who are familiar with selling church properties. Resource for church closing information www.churchlawcenter.com
- Maintenance and building upgrades such as painting, roofing on any buildings that need attention. The facility needs to be maintained in a sellable condition. Daniel will assist with this.

Quality of Life Along the Way Needs

- Phone call outreach to current and past/inactive members
- Member & Alumni gathering to socialize and share stories. Collect historical items for display to honor our past.
- Worship services with words of hymns on big screen, guest musicians
- Pot lucks and movie nights

Action Steps

- Doing better with what we have.
- Prepare to close and preserve the church's legacy.
- Create and post a Path to Closing Timeline in the Fellowship Hall
- Visions of our church beyond as we now know it

Starting September 10 the group will be meeting every 2 weeks after coffee hour.

Anyone who wants detailed copies of meeting notes please contact DeeAnne per above contact numbers.



With Gratitude and love we remember Jerry Huot and continue to hold his family in prayers. Jerry's family has shared services will be held at a later time.



Appreciation from a UCC Scholarship Winner

Our Scholarship Team wants to share this recent e-mail that we got from Anahi Ruiz, our scholarship winner in 2020.

This response is indicative of the wonderful support that our UCC scholarship program has given to these amazing young students.

Their stories are compelling, and our church has made a significant contribution to their success.

From Anahi:

I have some news....I decided to go to... Cal Poly Humboldt!!! I really feel that I will receive the one-to-one education I have been seeking there. The advisors have been great and in fact, my advisor will be my professor in a few of my Economics classes. I've had faculty call to see how I am doing in terms of getting ready for the transfer, and spoke to the in-house university realtor regarding housing. It's been a delightful experience.

Oh! and...I switched my major! As you know, I have been a Business Administration major and wanted to minor in Economics, but as it turns out, the "base" of the courses I have taken for transfer as a Business major are the same required for an Economics major. I had the option to go either way. I fell in love with economics at the JC, and it was a clear decision. I am now an Economics major with a minor in Business Administration (with a focus in marketing). It really has all come full circle. I get to study the three fields I have been most interested in from the beginning of my college career.

I am excited for this new chapter of my life and I can't thank you and the rest of the committee enough for the support you have given me. Not only financially, but also emotionally and I genuinely appreciate you all.

Let's strive to keep this program going as long as we can.

The UCC Scholarship Team

Marilyn Michelin, Jules Volper, Bev Westenberg, Richard Werner, Jim Nameny



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF SONOMA-MARIN

Dear United Church of Cloverdale,

Thank you so much for participating in our back-to-school supply challenge. Your generous gift of school supplies is greatly appreciated! With your help, we will be able to provide our members with the supplies and tools they need to be successful throughout the school year.

Donations like yours help to inspire and enable all youth, especially those who need us most, to become caring, responsible, and productive citizens. Support like yours allows us to strive toward our vision of offering Hope & Opportunity to every child in the counties we serve.

Boys & Girls Clubs of Sonoma-Marina serves 10,000 children annually at nearly 40 Clubs in the Cloverdale, Geyserville, Healdsburg, Guerneville, Monte Rio, Windsor, Santa Rosa, Rohnert Park, and Petaluma communities. We've developed hundreds of unique programs to ensure kids will grow up to achieve Academic Success, choose Healthy Lifestyles, develop Good Character, and express themselves Creatively. In addition, we serve over 500,000 meals annually to ensure that the most basic needs of the youth of our community are met.

Your contribution is tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. No goods or services were provided in exchange for your generous donation.

Thank you again for your generous support and kind donation contributing to our back-to-school supply challenge.

With Gratitude,

EIN#: 68-0309534 (501) (c) (3)



Jennifer
Jennifer Weiss
Chief Executive Officer

Heaven's Closet Thrift Shop

Things are continuing to change and grow in the Thrift Shop. We have lowered our prices across the board to move some of the overstock of items more quickly as our donated items continue to come in! The colored coded tag system is working to track how long things have been in the store and we discount them using that system.

On Sept 21st & 23rd we will be holding a "bin sale". We will be taking clothing and holiday items from storage and letting customers go thru the bins and buy items for \$2.00 each. These are items that have never been in the shop! We will need a few additional volunteers to provide presence in the fellowship hall during the bin sale. Please reach out if you can help!

We are open to your ideas/suggestions. If you wish to share with the committee you can email Jilloni, Pastor Jen, Linda or Holly.

We have specific needs for teams to sort items and volunteers to handle the schedule. If you can help please reach out to one of the team members! You can pair up with a friend and work as a team on so many of the things we do in the thrift shop! **Even if you have never volunteered in the Thrift Shop before you are welcome and we would love to have your support!**

Moving to a Bigger Space

There will be Q+A time during coffee hour on Sunday 9/24 about an upcoming move into a bigger space on site!



Thrift shop Donation Requests for items for use in the store:

- storage bins
- felt hangers (thin)
- Feather Flag



Additionally, we ask that you keep this vital ministry in your prayers—Thrift Store Guiding Committee-Jilloni Hopkins, Holly Werner, Linda Clapp, and Pastor Jen Collins.

Income January 1 to August 25, 2022 \$13,065.50

Income January 1 to August 25, 2023 \$22,552.71

heaven's closet
thrift shop at the united church of cloverdale

September & October CALENDAR (ALL ARE WELCOME)

10/7 8:00am Breakfast, Zini's Diner
 9/17 & 10/15 Council Meeting, After worship
 10/12 6:30pm Ukelele Group, Fellowship Hall
 9/20 & 10/18 8:30am Wednesday Breakfast , Zini's Diner
 9/24 Q & A During Coffee Hour (Thrift store move and Church Closing timeline)
 10/29 5th Sunday Worship

Weekly Activities

Mondays Tai Chi 9:45am at City Park
 AA Book study 7:30pm Education Building
Tuesdays & Fridays NA Meeting 7:30pm Education Building
Thursdays & Saturdays Thrift Shop Open 10-3
Thursdays Silent Prayer 10am (all are welcome to join in-person or in spirit)
Sundays In-person Church Services 10am Sanctuary
 (also available on Zoom and our YouTube Channel)
2nd and 4th Sundays after coffee hour Food for Thought & Action Meetings



Laura Hall 9/2
 Steve Ellis 9/3
 Conny Welch 9/19
 Susan Cooper-Munger 9/20
 Cary Fraser 9/20
 Jone Wesele 9/21
 Carol Romero 9/26
 Lori Serrano 9/27
 Carolyn Crandall 9/28
 David Romero 9/30
 Hillary Jones 10/5
 Robert Timm 10/7
 Roy Domke Jr. 10/22
 Jordan Hopkins 10/22
 Shelby Kennedy 10/24
 Linda Clapp 10/29

Pastor Jen's Updated Schedule:

On August 6 it was voted during a special congregational meeting that we would like Pastor Jen to remain at fulltime status. Please note that although Pastor Jen's days "off" will now be Friday and Saturday, she remains available at all times for urgent pastoral care needs. For any time-sensitive pastoral care needs please call or text Pastor Jen directly as she only checks her email one time per day (Sunday – Thursday).

♥ happy ♥
 anniversary

Bob & Cary Fraser 9/7

Hold In Prayers

We continue to hold in prayer

*Gus & Cindy Wolter; Jone Wesele; Kathy Truelsen; The Huot Family; The Westenberg Family
 Marion (Bob Morgan's Sister); Holly Werner; Mary Dixon; Melissa, Madelyn's granddaughter; Jilloni Hopkins
 Lia, Madelyn's Daughter In-Law; Keefer Kane, Pastor Jen's Brother
 Connie & Dave Parsell, Polly Lile's sister & Brother –in-law,
 All Those impacted by recent wildfires, hurricanes , Earthquakes and floods*

Cloverdale Food Pantry

Fridays 11am to 1pm

October is our month to run the food pantry!

To volunteer contact Polly Lile!

**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.ucclloverdale.org

YouTube Channel United Church of Cloverdale

Church Administrator: Jilloni Hopkins, uoffice@sbcglobal.net

Articles for The Ivy Vine? submit to the uoffice@sbcglobal.net

by the 20th of the month preceding the publication date. Articles submitted after the deadline without prior approval will be published the following month.