

Golden Nugget

A NEWSLETTER FOR OUR CHURCH FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Word from the Pastor

“Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.”

Revelation 3:20

This verse is one of the better-known verses in all of Revelation; in fact, it is one of the better-known verses in all of the Bible. However, it is also one of the most misinterpreted and misunderstood passages in the book of Revelation. You see, too often this verse is applied to non-believers and is used as a way to encourage them to accept Jesus. We Christians will say to them, “Jesus says that He is standing at the door knocking, all you have to do is open it and He will come into your life and commune with you.” And while this is certainly a true statement, that if you open the door of your life to Christ He will enter in, this is not exactly the point that Christ is trying to make in this verse.

You see, this well-known verse is included in Christ’s letter to the ancient church in Laodicea as transcribed in Revelation by the Apostle John. As such, Jesus is saying this to Christians rather than non-Christians. Therefore, this verse isn’t an encouragement to accept Jesus because the audience to whom this letter is addressed have already done that. Rather, it is an encouragement for believers to enter into a deeper, more intimate and meaningful relationship with Jesus. Jesus is calling the church at Laodicea and, indeed, all



Epiphany is January 6

What is the meaning of the Epiphany? The name Epiphany comes from the Greek *epiphaneia*, meaning “appearance” or “manifestation,” and refers to the manifestation of Jesus Christ to the world.

In particular, we celebrate the revelation of God’s promise and purpose to the nations of the world, as the magi came from the East to worship the Christ child, and God’s covenant of grace is extended to all who believe the good news of Christ Jesus. The symbolism of light is important: not only because of the star that guided the magi, but as it relates to the bright dawning of God’s self-revelation in Christ.

believers from all times and places, to constantly be striving for a deeper relationship with Him; He is calling us to not be satisfied with merely being His acquaintance, but to always strive in all that we do to draw ever closer to Him through prayer, through the reading and studying of Scripture, through quiet time with Him, through the attending of church.

January 2022

But, there’s an important note for us to make regarding the metaphor of standing at the door and knocking that Jesus is using here. This metaphor coupled with the fact that Jesus says that if anyone hears His voice and opens the door, He will come in, shows us that Jesus doesn’t force Himself upon anyone, rather He makes Himself available and waits for a response; we must respond to Christ’s call in repentance and open the door to allow Him into our lives fully and completely. This is a reminder to us that God does not compel us to accept His Son as our Lord and Savior, nor does He compel us to enter into an ever deeper relationship with Him; rather, He invites us to accept Jesus, and He invites us to grow deeper in our commitment to Him, and it is up to us to accept that invitation.

Further, the metaphor of Jesus coming in and eating dinner with us illustrates intimacy. This metaphor draws on the ancient Near Eastern custom of table fellowship; for them, to share a meal was to share a life. If two people were estranged, an invitation to a meal opened the path to reconciliation. Jesus, during His life, shared meals with outcasts and sinners to show the world that all were welcome in God’s kingdom. Thus, the metaphor of a meal serves as a promise that, if we open the door, we will find acceptance, sharing, blessing, and a deep relationship with our Savior.

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GOLDEN NUGGET

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Office Hours:
Tuesday through Friday
9:00 am—3:00 pm

Worship Services in Sanctuary:
Sundays at 10 am; masks and
social distancing required.

STAFF

Rev. Keith Reid, Pastor
Rev. Lee Warford, Assistant Pastor
Deb Johnson, Office Administrator
Karla Reid, Dir. of Children's Ministries
Carolyn Sylva, Accompanist
Steve Engle-Borda, Sound Technician

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

We are the Church of the 49ers,
where God is the gold. We serve
and worship God in spirit and in the
truth of the scriptures. We live by faith
and will be known by our love
for others and our voice of hope.

CHURCH FINANCIAL SUMMARY

January 1 through November 30, 2021
(exclusive of other income/expenses)

	Budget	Actual	Difference Over/(Under)
Tithes/Giving	\$192,500	\$177,455	(\$15,045)
Bequest	—	\$ 8,059	\$ 8,059
Other Receipts	\$ 2,625	\$ 8,528	\$ 5,903
Total Income	\$195,125	\$194,042	(\$ 1,083)
Expense	\$197,151	\$206,554	\$9,403
Net	(\$ 2,026)	(\$ 12,512)	(\$ 10,486)

Mortgage Balance as of November 30:	\$143,881.75
Minimum Monthly Mortgage Payment:	\$2,236.41
Addtl Principal paid through November 30:	\$925.00

CHURCH LEADERSHIP

Elders

Dean Cunningham (Personnel Chair), Judy Haughton (Missions Co-Chair), Roger Haughton (Missions Co-Chair), Tom Kimura (Welcome & Evangelism Chair, History Chair), Judy Nason (Worship Chair), Jon Whited (Finance Chair), Suzanne Williamson (Christian Education Chair, Fellowship Liaison).

Co-Clerks of Session: Diane Brandt and Leslie Davis (Buildings & Grounds Chair)

Deacons

Dana Avila, Doreen Bass, Sandy Brooks, Margie Fooshee, Deb Handy, Gwen Harris, Michelle Kidwell, Pat Lincoln, Rosie McCarthy (Moderator), Vi Morgado, Sheri Pendleton (Vice Moderator), Susie Porte

Session Highlights

Session did not have a formal meeting in December. The next Session meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 26, 2022, at 2:00 pm in Faith Hall, and guests are welcome to attend.

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Leslie Davis, Co-Clerk of Session

Interfaith News

Interfaith is closed till January 10th. Note that clients can continue to pick up groceries from Interfaith twice per month—through the month of March. After that the Interfaith board will review and make a decision. However, no one will be turned away who has a need.

We are still in need of volunteers to work in other departments—some days we can't open for clothing or household due to the lack of people to work. It isn't hard, just a small amount of training is needed and would help us tremendously. Please pray about volunteering somewhere at Interfaith. There are several places where we could use a few more hands! Call me anytime at 209-532-4358.

Vi Morgado, Interfaith Liaison

49er Family News

Grieving

Family and friends of **Elvy Peterson**, who died on December 5 at the age of 92. The date for a memorial service for Elvy in our sanctuary is still to be determined.

Family and friends of **Jewel Guhl**, who was called Home to be with her Lord on December 31 at the incredible age of 106. No public service for Jewel is planned.

Remember: As the Covid-19 virus is still active in our county and some in our congregation are immunocompromised, everyone must wear a mask while inside the sanctuary.

January Birthdays

*Happy birthday to you,
Happy birthday to you.
May the Lord bless you
And keep you,
Your whole life through.*

Jan 7	John Malaspino
Jan 12	Suzanne Williamson
Jan 13	Philip Balmet
Jan 23	Kathy Sudduth
Jan 24	Rob Clark
Jan 28	Judy Nason
Jan 29	Susan Plevancic
Jan 29	Carolyn Sylva

Men's Breakfast Fellowship

All men are invited to meet Saturday, January 8, at 8:00 a.m. for a no-host breakfast at Papa's New Roost Restaurant in East Sonora. Contact Pastor Lee Warford at 925-470-9953 for more information.

Happy Anniversary!

David and Carolyn Stearns
64 years on January 24

Tuesday Night Co-ed Bible Study

Pastor Keith is resuming his weekly "Pizza and Parousia" meetings on Tuesdays in Faith Hall. Come for pizza at 5:30 pm and participate in the Bible study on the book of Revelation beginning at 6:00 pm.

Women's Bible Study

The Women's Bible Study will resume January 6, with Judy Nason leading a study of the book of Romans—every Thursday at 2:00 pm in Faith Hall.

Men's Bible Study—on hiatus

Jon Whited has been leading a weekly Men's Bible Study in the multi-purpose room at Sonora Hills. He is currently taking a break, but looking forward to resuming the study soon.

Line Dancing

Carolyn Sylva leads a free one-hour Line Dancing class on Thursdays at 9:30 am in Faith Hall — a fun way to get your exercise.

Send your articles and Family News items for the February 2022 issue of the *Golden Nugget* by January 26 to Leslie at 209-532-6604 or davisgold@gmail.com.

From the Pastor

Continued from Page 1

What a great reminder for all of us as we start this new year of 2022. All over the world, people are making resolutions to lose weight, exercise more, go back to school, reconnect with family and/or friends, and a whole host of other things. Wouldn't it be great if every Christian, every person who has accepted Christ as their Lord and Savior, made a resolution to strengthen and deepen their relationship with Jesus Christ? Imagine the work that God could get done in and through us, His followers, if we collectively devoted ourselves to deepening our relationship with Him this year. The reason that the church in America is declining is not because God has stopped working in the world, it's because too many American Christians have gotten wishy-washy with their faith; we have gotten more concerned with not rocking the proverbial boat than we have with boldly proclaiming the Gospel and allowing God to use us as tools to help lead people into a saving relationship with Him.

And the great news is, as one of my favorite hymns says, it only takes a spark to get a fire going. What I mean by this is, for the church universal to enter into a deeper relationship with Jesus, it really only takes a small number of individual churches to spark that fire. If we, here in the little old Church of the 49ers, make a conscious commitment to growing and deepening our relationship with Jesus



and getting about the work of serving Him, it won't be long until other churches in our area begin to take notice of our impact and follow our example. Then, as the

churches in Tuolumne County grow and deepen our relationship with Jesus and get about the work of serving Him, other churches in the region will take notice and follow our example, the other churches in the state, then other churches on the west coast, and so on and so forth.

In 2022, we have the ability and the capability of being the spark that God uses to light the fire of deeper devotion to Him throughout His church in the world, a fire that will lead to more and more people accepting Jesus as their Lord and Savior. And isn't that the ultimate goal that every Christian should have; to be part of God's plan in this world to share the Gospel with every man, woman, and child so that they might come to know and accept Him, as well?

We CAN be that spark; I can be that spark and you can be that spark, if we will just put in the time and effort to deepen and strengthen our relationship with Jesus. He is standing at the door and knocking; in 2022, are you going to open it and let Him in?

May the blessings of the Father and the peace of the Son be with you.

Pastor Keith

Sermons and Scripture

Pastor Keith is beginning a New Sermon Series January 9 Titled "The Epistle of James: The Work of Faith."

Following are scripture verses each sermon is based on, and other verses (NT = New Testament, OT = Old Testament)

To receive the link for *YouTube* videos of services, contact Pastor Keith at ktreid84@gmail.com.

January 2

OT: Malachi 3:1-6
Sermon: John 1:29-34

January 9 Communion

OT: Psalm 23
Sermon: James 1:1-18

January 16

OT: Jeremiah 11:1-8
Sermon: James 1:19-27

January 23

OT: Deuteronomy 15:7-11
Sermon: James 2:1-7

January 30

OT: Leviticus 18:1-5
Sermon: James 2:8-13

Annual Congregational Meeting is January 30

The Church of the 49ers Annual Congregational Meeting will be held Sunday, January 30th in the sanctuary, immediately following the morning worship service. This annual meeting is an important one because it gives all covenant partners an opportunity to hear a recap of last year, our goals for this new year, and the overall financial health and planning for

the church. In addition, you will be able to participate in the approval of Pastor Keith's terms of call and have an opportunity to join the nominating committee for the 2022 year to help select our next round of elders and deacons. Your participation in this meeting is an important part of the overall health of our church, so please do consider joining us.



Most of the ladies who enjoyed the 2021 Presbyterian Women Christmas Tea on December 9

Save the Date: February 13

The Lack Family Band, a family of Christian musicians who travel throughout the US and even globally, will give a free concert in Faith Hall on Sunday, February 13, in the early afternoon. They will also lead our regular 10 am worship service that morning, with a blend of traditional hymns and more contemporary worship songs.

More information will come in the February Golden Nugget about this exciting outreach, a great opportunity to invite your family, friends, neighbors to a fun event at the church.

The concert will be publicized to the public. In addition, the Fellowship Committee is planning a special Valentine-themed luncheon between worship and the concert. Reservations for the luncheon will be required — see Leslie Davis to sign up.

Suzanne Williamson
Elder Liaison to Fellowship Committee

Need a Ride?

I have been doing some research to find rides to help people in our church. Sometimes the deacons, friends or family can't give you a ride on a certain day to help with doctor appointments, physical therapy, shopping for groceries or other errands. I called around and found the following programs, recommended by Area 12 Agency on Aging. You will have to personally call them and sign up to receive assistance with rides.



You've probably seen *Silver Streak* around town, operated by Common Grounds Senior Services. They provide rides in both Tuolumne and Calaveras Counties. Call them at 209-223-3015, ext. 101.

Southside Community Connections, called *Wheels*, provides rides for Tuolumne County residents who are at least age 55. Their number is 209-962-6952.

Also, one of our deacons was told by her doctor to use Next Step for rides to medical appointments. The number is 209-206-3407 or 209-352-9139.

If you have any questions please call me at 209-770-5822. **Margie Fooshee, Deacon**

Missions Committee

While the Missions Committee didn't formally meet in December, we remained in contact to determine if there were any needs that we could address. We all became aware of the terrible tornadoes that struck Kentucky and surrounding states. So many people and families were affected that as a committee we thought we should reach out and support the efforts of an organization that ECO works with when disaster strikes. That organization is World Renew. Our committee, via email and through personal contact, decided to contribute the remainder of our annual budget dollars and other non-designated funds, totaling \$1,000, to World Renew to help those people. Through Roger's direct contact with a World Renew spokesperson, he learned that the organization already had people "on the ground" in the devastated area and what was even more impressive, they expressed a commitment to stay there for the long term to provide continued assistance.

For the year, then, our total contributions to others amounted to almost \$11,000, which represents our congregation's willingness to share God's love for others.

In addition, the church's Christmas Eve offering yielded \$1,000 for the Grace Fund, administered by the director of Interfaith Community Social Services to provide monies to their clients who may have a special need for emergency assistance.

God bless you all as we start a new year. May you all be healthy and receive much happiness in the New Year. May God continue to shine His light on our wonderful congregation.

Judy and Roger Haughton, Co-chairs Missions Committee

Finance Committee 2020 Annual Report

The effect of Covid over the last two years has been significant in regard to our church impact and well-being. We modified our services and had to change or eliminate some of our community outreach.

These changes also impacted our financial confidence in how the church membership would support pledges and giving activities. Much to our relief the financial situation has remained much as was planned in total giving. The Church of the 49ers is continuing on track with pledges and financial commitments as planned. We also spent less during this period, and all responsible financial areas have been responsive to the challenges. Basically, the church has met its financial goals and stayed within budget.

There have been many changes during this time too. We have a new pastor and family on our payroll, and that brought new commitments on our part. Those new commitments have been honored and again our planning is challenged by new or changing demands. We have also benefited from our new

loan from supporting church members that has helped our church benefit from badly needed repairs and maintenance. From our loan we have made nearly \$100,000 in improvements in such things as the Christian Ed building repairs, painting and roof replacement, improvements in the church office, repairs in the entrance to the sanctuary, Faith Hall roof replacement and ceiling repairs now under bid and expected to be completed along with cost saving new ceiling lights, repair of the badly weathered siding to the sanctuary, and repaving the parking lot entrance to the sanctuary all taking place. There are more repairs and some safety related improvements still planned as part of the Church Improvement funds. There is approximately \$20,000 in Capital Improvement funding remaining to do this necessary work. Overall, much has been accomplished, and all within the Capital Improvement budget.

And included in this active period, we have kept up on reducing our loan in a responsible way. Having started with a \$175,000 total loan, we now have paid down the balance of principal to approximately \$144,000. This is ahead of the amortizing schedule for the loan.

Our church planning emphasis now is focused on bringing in more community members to our church. Community outreach is being supported by planning financial support for the Session supported community outreach.

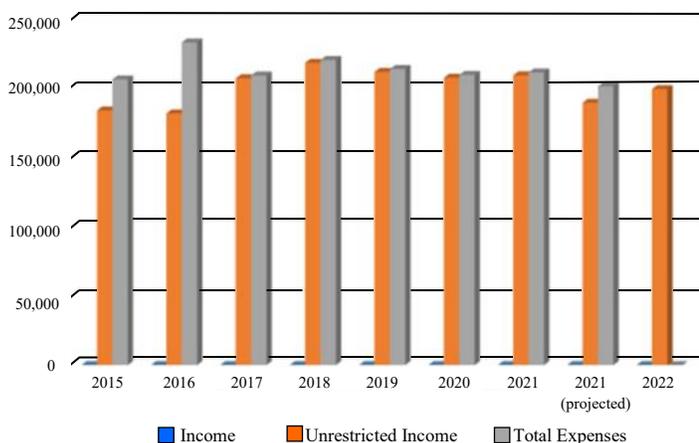
Much has been accomplished with the generous giving by our members. Included below with this report is a summary of the last eight years of financial activity to show how we are doing over a long time period. This also is the way the Finance Committee members determine what our budget goals should be for the coming year.

Our budget for this year is \$200,000 and in line with the last two years of giving.

Thank you for your stewardship which supports our church with financial gifts, your time to support the needed and planned activities, and your talents which are so important to the well-being of our church mission to support God's work.

Jon Whited
Finance Committee Chair

Finance Trends



The 49er Chancel Ringers provided special music for the Christmas Eve service under the direction of Doreen Bass, head "ding-a-ling." Handbell ringers from left: Denella Kimura, Betty Sagaser, Hailey Reid, Sandy Brooks, Leslie Davis, Sharon Poff, Jim Brandt and Gary Davis.

Homeless Care Package Update

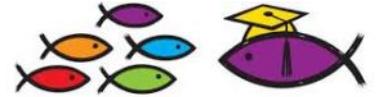
Thank you again to everyone who donated items and/or made monetary contributions and continued to ask if we needed anything during this project. It was another huge success! 30 care packages were gifted to InterFaith! A special thank you to Suzanne Williamson, Janet Russell, and Vi Morgado, and all our other devoted volunteers for leading and organizing the assembly and delivery of the packages as I was not able to attend that day. I feel these care packages make an impact for those who receive them. Thank you again to everyone involved and for all the prayers and well wishes that always make this project a success.

Karla Reid
Director of Children's Ministries



Sunday School Teachers Appreciation Lunch is on Friday, January 14th at Columbia Kate's Tea House at 11:00 a.m. You know who you are!

Suzanne Williamson, Christian Education Chair



Allen Graham, Missionary

Happy New Year! I can't wait to see what the Lord has in store for 2022. Will this year mark the beginning of a "post-COVID" era? Or is that hopeful thinking? After all, that's what I was thinking at the start of 2021. However, through the pandemic, God has allowed us to serve and minister in new and special ways.

THANK YOU for praying for our annual sharathons at HCJB2 (Guayaquil) and HCJB (Quito). Here at HCJB2, we had our best sharathon in history. To God be the glory! We hit our goal a day early and ended the event with a health-related open house, which of course required careful vigilance to maintain biosafety protocols because of the pandemic. The medical professionals who gave of their time were very grateful for the opportunity to serve our audience. It was also a chance to learn what preventative information we can provide in our programs so our listeners and their families can be safer and healthier.

For me, the most exciting part of our sharathon is to hear how God has used the station to impact the lives of our listeners. Here is one story from María

who lives in the City of Machala, El Oro Province, about three hours south of Guayaquil.

I started listening to your station several months ago. I had surgery on my eyes, so I couldn't watch television or use my cell phone. Your radio has kept me entertained, comforted and informed. Listening to the messages has helped me through the difficult days. God has been good to me. Please pray that God would touch my husband's heart, for my son who is out of work, and for my niece in Spain, Cinthia, who is fighting cancer. May God help her and console her. May God bless you.

Last month, I told you about the 90th Anniversary celebrations held in Quito to mark the beginning of HCJB's ministry. I would encourage you to read the fall edition of Reach Beyond's *Voice and Hands* magazine for a detailed picture of the faithfulness of God these first 90 years. Here is the link <https://reachbeyond.org/content/magazine/read/vh-magazine-fall-2021>

In mid-November, I had retinal laser therapy on my right eye as a measure to prevent possible problems in the future. I am very thankful for a doctor who takes the time to explain the procedure and what to expect in the years ahead.

With thanks for your partnership in Christ,

Allen



Our team and volunteers at the conclusion of Sharathon 2021. Tired, yet very thankful for God's provision through our listeners.

STORYBOOK 49ers

By Dick Dyer, Church Historian

During these troubled times, I take refuge in the past—His words, my memories. As we know, the importance of a continuous Good News Life requires a remembrance of the past—companions, church, communities, country. Admittedly, I am assured righteousness will prevail. After 30 years with the Church History Committee, I am encouraged to recall conscientious members who have described events and provided services honoring our 1854 church—the only active church in Columbia today. During past committee meetings, members through the years have provided displays of historic photographs and relics, anniversary reminders, recordings of church elders, newsletter articles, pulpit talks and a few social events. Recently I examined several archival records of informative History Committee activities; unfortunately some, once uppermost in my memory, are no longer available.

I believe all church ministers must agree that “once upon a time” there was an emerging church in the hills of the Sierra with messages, part history, part folklore. Through the years some FACTS changed while some STORIES endured. During those challenging early times Americans read about the adventurers who traveled with the westward-moving pioneers seeking the “pleasure of going to see the elephant” (old expression). They were in search of a fertile land with valuable resources. It was America’s Great Vision: “They will live as free people in a Promised Land from sea to sea” in peace and fulfillment. Also, the mission of Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Methodists and Baptists was to extend His Good News to the frontier, bringing civility to Columbia and other mining camps in the Gold Rush Country.

Following a History Committee meeting, I recall chatting with the Rev. Arch Marston after he had introduced clarity and provided levity during a lengthy discussion. At the meetings he frequently reflected, “That reminds me of a similar situation at my old church.” (His personal recollections usually led to eruptions of laughter.)

After considerable committee discussions, the chairperson asked Pastor to occasionally schedule a Sabbatical Service moment for a member to describe a particular church activity. Again, I revisited the church archives to examine available information for a member’s pulpit talk. Those concise messages were usually popular human interest experiences involving pioneer preachers and ministers during bygone years. Additional library research disclosed examples of colorful good-humored residents in America’s Appalachian area occasionally “swapping yarns” when a change in the discussion was desirable. Another writer described the Old American West: It was the “Texican” who was the “Tall, Tale, Teller” and contributed words and whoppers to stimulate a conversation. (Example: Did you hear about the miner who was so drunk he couldn’t hit the ground with his hat in three throws?) In recent years we have been enriched to have had local storytellers who described legends and traditions: Grizzly Adams, Sheriff Miller Sardella, Barber Bill, BZ Smith, Hard Luck Lin. Yes, we understand that myth-makers might stretch an event here and there. We are reminded Old Tolumne has been important in the recorded history of our State. In the Sierra Nevada foothills, the Church of the 49ers is using its website to share locally and abroad an awareness of a devout rural congregation with majestic messages.

Now, I shall provide some edited FACTS and STORIES involving the church during those eventful years in the picturesque Mother Lode.

INTRO... Some suspect the History Committee members are reincarnated Killiloo Birds, uncommon creatures who always flew BACKWARDS. They were not interested in WHERE they were going, but mightily interested in WHERE they had been.

1854... The official name of our church is The First Presbyterian Church of Columbia (considered by some to be a church in “a little story-book town.”).

1856... A few residents consider the “mother” of the church to be Ellen Augusta Sears Brodt, wife of the first pastor (John Henry Brodt).

1860s... During the Civil War, the Tolumne Rangers served as guardians of outposts in northern California. Their confrontations were without casualties involving some “leadership dissatisfaction.”

1917... Pastor Hugh Furneaux renamed the church St. Andrews Church. It returned to its original name after the Great Fire of 1950. Today many elders call it “The Church of the 49ers.”

1932... Rev. Philip Payne, a visiting cleric, impressed the church congregation by proclaiming, “This is the oldest surviving Presbyterian Church in California.” (Thank you, Rev. Philip; it is also common in early publications, but is UNTRUE.)

1950... Near the church a resident screamed, “FIRE!” Her neighbor reminisced, “...I opened my eyes and it was DAYLIGHT. I couldn’t believe it! The church fire was so big it was daylight... I jumped out of bed... and I remember looking at the melted bell.” (The bell has been honorably retired in Faith Hall.)

**Continued on Page 9
See “Storybook 49ers”**

First Presbyterian Church of Columbia † “Church of the 49ers”

STORYBOOK 49ERS

Continued from Page 8

1954... On the 100th anniversary of the church, Gov. Goodwin J. Knight wrote, "The works and faith of the pioneer men and women were responsible for a great many of the blessings which we enjoy today as Californians...."

1960... A friend of church pastor Joseph N. Hillhouse who was the first Director of the Presbyterian Camp at Calvin Crest wrote, as he returned to his camp residence, "He died instantly. What a special way to go; walking, a son at each side after a joyous holiday, without pain or suffering."

1960s... The church stained glass windows have attracted visitors touring the Mother Lode for many years. An unusual window depicts the casting of dice (by Roman soldiers gambling for Jesus' garments); another that is seldom seen in the belfry is of a burning bush honoring a beloved church member of 64 years who was also the popular Sunday School Superintendent. (Vada Carpenter)

1968... The church's recently established Thrift Shop received "Laddie," a friendly pony as a fund raiser. He sold for \$25.

2004... A respected church family and volunteers organized the weekly Community Dinners to provide neighbors with food, friendship and counseling. (Helen Johnson)

2014... Mr. Grace, an uncommon alley cat, decided to join the church staff; he remains a permanent presence on the campus, the official "watch cat" — vigilant and curious around friends, strangers and visiting felines (and canines).

Also... To many, Columbia, including the Church of the 49ers, is considered "The loveliest of all yesterday's Mother Lode villages."

Now you have read excerpts from the Church History Committee's selection concerning the church objectives and proceedings in the spectacular Mother Lode Country. Are you aware these events have provided a message of the church's spiritual and public community services for almost 170 years? There remains a need to document and preserve the remaining unrecorded memories and affairs of our forebearers—saints, servants, sinners—who have helped with the recording of the California Story. There is considerable evidence that the public continues to indicate an interest in the bountiful land's Westward Movement, 1849 Gold Rush and Franciscan Missions as publicized in books, radio, TV, movies and websites.

By the late 19th century the image of California featuring a "wild and woolly" Far West had become ancient history; newcomers no longer considered the Mother Lode merely a Golden Haze.

Several writers of the American West, past and present, have provided information for this article. Initially diarists recorded the Sabbath Days were a time of "boisterous relaxation," a thrill of merrymaking, a dream of "gold, gambling and rum" for the spirited boys. An English travel writer warned her readers that there is "no God west of Missouri;" expect to find "dull villages with no place in the future." An eastern American skeptic reflected, "The mines were overcrowded, overpriced and over-advertised." However, contrary observations by English travelers reported that genuine hospitality and civility were more common in the new West than the old East. In California's Mother Lode after the early hardships by the late eighties there emerged a peaceful and respectful NEW COLUM-

BIA. Most of the youthful towns made an effort to "look respectable" as miners and merchants pursued "Ethics of Works." The lure of the West featured God and Man—both being well-suited to American capitalism and the frontier; an echo of its frontier past.

Historian John W. Caughey in his memorable university textbook California wrote, the challenge is "...to pick up where the past has left off and build a still better California...more satisfying to the mind and spirit." I resume by including James J. Rawls' last sentence in his interpretative history: "Californians found that their own resolve and imagination were two resources in UNLIMITED SUPPLY." And finally, in my history classes at Columbia College, the required textbook was David Laven-der's CALIFORNIA: LAND OF NEW BEGINNINGS—a popular and informative study with a prediction about a "beautiful state's reckless rise to giganticism." (Really?)

It must be apparent that what is ahead continues to be beyond the imagination for most individuals. However, despite lingering frustrations in an increasingly "elbow to elbow" homeland, Respectful Californians and Godly Church 49ers PERSEVERED. However, the pioneer preachers "had to adapt to a series of drastically new environments, and under emergency pressure"—a change of the old to the new institutions. The outcome was a gradual "Americanization of both men and their customs."

Also, from the early pulpits resounded a common message: Pastors continued to urge "urban congregations to move from man-made cities to the God-created Countryside" with a message that it was to the Promised Land.

An optimistic conclusion by Methodist John Wesley is, "The best is yet to be."

Dick Dyer, 49er Church Historian

January 2022 Calendar

We are conducting one weekly Sunday worship service in the sanctuary, beginning at 10:00 am—**with masks required** due to the risks of Covid-19. Other listings on the church calendar include:

January 2, 11:30 am: Fellowship Committee in Lower Sanctuary

January 3, 10:00 am: History Committee in Lower Sanctuary

January 4, 8:30 am: Prayer Group in Lower Sanctuary

January 6, 9:30 am: Line Dancing in Faith Hall

January 9, 11:30 am: Deacons in CE Room 2

January 10, 2:00 pm: Buildings & Grounds in Faith Hall

January 11, 8:30 am: Prayer Group in Lower Sanctuary

January 13, 9:30 am: Line Dancing in Faith Hall

January 14, 11:00 am: SS Teachers Luncheon, Columbia Kate's

January 16, 11:30 am: Welcome & Evangelism Cmte in CE3

January 18, 8:30 am: Prayer Group in Lower Sanctuary

January 18, 1:00 pm: Finance Committee in Office

January 18, 2:00 pm: Missions Committee in Faith Hall

January 20, 9:30 am: Line Dancing in Faith Hall

January 23, 11:30 am: Worship Committee in CE Room 2

January 25, 8:30 am: Prayer Group in Lower Sanctuary

January 26, 2:00 pm: Session Meeting in Faith Hall

January 27, 9:30 am: Line Dancing in Faith Hall

January 30, 11:00 am: Annual Congregational Mtg in sanctuary

First Presbyterian Church

"Church of the 49ers"

11155 Jackson Street

Columbia, CA 95310



TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL

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BOOK REVIEW

by Denella Kimura

PLAN B: Further Thoughts on Faith

By Anne Lamott

I found it in the Church of the 49ers library! It was turned facing me, calling my name. Anne's voice peeled through the cover, "Denella. You've read my books! Remember buying "Bird by Bird" at a writer's conference and reading it after you got home? It was the recommended book of the year, and it was belly-laugh funny, remember?"

And as I sat by our church librarian, I said, "Michelle, I want that one," pointing my finger at Plan B. Michelle didn't hesitate. The next moment I had Anne Lamott's book in my hand and could hardly wait to get home and read it.

Then there were a series of shocks. First, she hated George Bush. Then she amends her position to, "I don't hate GW, but have questioned some of his positions of late." And later in her story she changes her position again. George Bush is a running theme that gets Anne's stomach in knots, stirs up feel-

ings of hatred, and leads her to the Christian solution for her anxiety that hate needed to be replaced with forgiveness.

Second, Anne claims to be a "Left wing Christian Activist." But then she turned out to be a normal single mom who shouts at her son, Sam, and goes "nuts" once in a while, which gives her "permission" to use a curse word now and then. (Only three in "Plan B"). Anne's response to this? "One secret of life is that the reason life works at all is that not everyone in your tribe is nuts on the same day." (p. 66). On days like this, she cherishes her Mary medallion, which she wears on a chain around her neck, and when things go south, and they often do, she prays.

Anne's second secret is that laughter is carbonated holiness, which is why her books carry a lot of humor. (p. 66) She began a Sunday school for a multicultural group of kids from preschool through eight-years-old, at first. It grew to include teenagers. I identified with her struggles because I also taught Sunday school for over 20 years.

After a lesson on how Jesus suffered: "If you want to feel close to Jesus, find the people who were suffering or whom the

world doesn't value. The kids made cards for kids in Juvenile hall, and Israel and Palestine; one boy made a card for George Bush." The rest of the story is priceless.

Anne Lamott lives in Marin County, my home stomping ground for 25 years. For me, her geography grounded the story. I'd been to every place she named or described, and revisited it all in my imagination.

Her theme is that when the life you thought you were meant to live turns sour, when things don't turn out like you want them to, or your New Year's resolution fails on January 2nd, accept the changes and try to find God's Plan B for your life. You might find that it becomes God's second chance that leads to an area of growth and ministry meant to bring you closer to the Lord.

As *Plan B* comes to an end, I find myself cheering her on, even in the last chapter when she does what I'd never do, for similar reasons . . . she marches.

A fun read.

Denella Kimura