

"The of the Matter"

A Monthly

Source of Information for the Church

Experiencing Jesus Even More

"For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that according to the riches of His glory He may grant you to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen."

Ephesians 3:14-21

This is Paul's prayer for the Ephesians, but I would desire that this prayer be specifically for you and me as a new year begins. I pray that we might experience Jesus in a fuller and deeper relationship than we ever have before. Jesus—the very one, who created our world and everything in it. Jesus—who chose us as His people and desires to lift us up to heaven's heights. Jesus—who willingly exchanged His kingly throne for a motley stable and the companionship of the heavenly host for earthly parents and a barnyard of smelly animals. Jesus—who took our sins upon His shoulders and paid with His own life on the old rugged cross the price which was ours, giving everyone who accepts this incredible love gift the opportunity to share His glory both now and forevermore.

When we "root and ground" our hearts in Jesus, it enables us to experience the fullness of joy He wants to lavish on us. We receive His strength and power as Jesus dwells within us through our deep and abiding faith in Him. On a personal and intimate level, we know His love "that surpasses" all other "knowledge" and thus we are together with Him in every thought, hope and action. He then is "able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think!"

The Bible gives us clear instructions on how to firmly root and ground ourselves in Jesus. In the book of Colossians, we can learn five ways to be "new" in Jesus Christ.

1. Put to Death What is Earthly. Colossians 3:5-8

The ways of heaven and earth are opposed to each other.

2. Be Renewed in The Image of Our Creator. Colossians 3:11

We were "created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness." Ephesians 4:21-24

3. Let The Peace of Christ Rule in Our Hearts. Colossians 3:15

"Turn your eyes upon Jesus. Look full in His wonderful face." He is worthy of our complete trust.

4. Let the Word of Christ Richly Dwell Within You. Colossians 3:16

Reading and sharing Christ-centered themes will shift our minds from the things of this earth to things above.

5. Give Thanks to God. Colossians 3:17

It is not only a natural expression of gratitude for Christ's unfailing grace, but it energizes us to do the work He has given us to do.

So—may we set our eyes, our hearts, our minds on the things above and finish the journey He has begun in each of us! Amen! and Hallelujah!

By Donna Faye Anderson

Church News

Discipleship

We have been focusing on discipleship, a vibrant, dynamic aspect of experiencing Jesus. Many of the talks that were presented in church have been printed in the newsletter. The topics have been: "How to Become a Disciple", "How to Disciple Others", and "How to Welcome People into Community."

Readers of the newsletters have expressed appreciation for the practical inspiration that was shared. May God richly bless each of us as we continue discipling until we see His wonderful face!

Pathfinders

With the capable direction of Deb Attaway and Minerva Stirling, the Pathfinders completed an honor for Flowers.



Vision/Mission Statements

Vision Statement:

To Know Jesus
To Share Jesus
To Follow Jesus
Changing Lives Today
And For Eternity

Mission Statement, based on the Great Commission in Matthew 24, is:

Filled With The Holy Spirit,
Discipling,
Baptizing,
Teaching, With Love.
Preparing All For Jesus' Return.



Above: Pathfinders with their flower bouquets
Left: Pathfinders at the table for instruction of flower honor. Teachers Minerva Stirling, in doorway, and Deb Attaway, right. Photographer Luis Pastor

The Heart of the Matter is edited and produced by David and Donna Faye Anderson. You may contact them at 707-234-9234 or online davendonaa@icloud.com.

Church News, Cont,**Thinking About The Cantata**

The 30th. anniversary of The Glory of Christmas cantata is now a beautiful memory. This magnificent, glorious re-enactment of the birth of Jesus Christ has kept audiences in awe over these many years.

This year the Cantata was a new experience for many. However, for those who have been privileged to participate before in this marvelous tribute of adoration to our Savior, it remained a highlight of the season and lifted our hearts to embrace the incredible gift from Heaven's throne, of God's Son coming to this earth to bring us eternal love and salvation.

Thank you, Margie Rice, for being the passionate visionary and musical director all through the years. It takes many volunteers working many hours to prepare for this grand event, especially the musicians and narrators. Then there are those setting up the stage and decorating the church, copying music for the musicians, costuming the participants and those supervising the entry and exit of the various groups. Thanks to those who prepare the flyers, tickets, programs and gift cards. A big thank you to the crew directing the special-effects lighting and all that goes on in the audio-visual department—including the constant re-positioning of mikes and props on the stage. There are also volunteers who provide food for the participants and those who direct parking and then, once the big day is over, there's a clean-up crew. Each person significantly contributes to the Cantata's success and is very much appreciated. And each one plays a vital part in sharing this amazing Gift of Love.

Cantata, December 2021 Photo by David Anderson

**Change Jars for ADRA**

Change jars for ADRA will be collected the first two Sabbaths in January. Your "Love Gift" donation will provide urgent help to many needy people. ADRA appreciates so much the faithful support that our church gives.

Prayerfully ask God to direct your decision about participating in this very worthwhile way to be the hands and feet of Jesus!



Snowy trees on Orr Springs Road
Photo by David Anderson

Volunteer Leaders Are Needed

The church has a ministry that happens every Sabbath afternoon from 2:00-4:30 pm. of feeding the homeless at Plowshares. More leaders are needed to keep this ministry going smoothly. A leader is responsible for finding other volunteers to help him or her make sack lunches at the Plowshares facility. All prepping and assembly of the lunches is done at Plowshares. The food is provided by Adventist Health Ukiah Valley.

If you would be willing to volunteer as a leader and take on a few Sabbath afternoons this coming year for ministering to the homeless, please contact Heidi Veness at 707-339-0668.

Family News

It is exciting to welcome another young family to our church!

“We are the Ortiz family. It’s just the three of us: Xavier, Rachel, and our baby girl, Everly. We have moved here from Bakersfield California. Our friends, the Trempers, said “Oh you should move to Ukiah.” We laughed at them, of course, and said that would never happen because we were moving to Texas with family. God had other plans. When my husband and I decided to accept the job we were worried about housing. We had heard horrible rumors about having to rent when you’re not living there to hold your spot or that the housing was very limited and expensive. God had everything taken care of and worked it all out in a single day. We couldn’t believe it. It was a miracle.

“We met each other at Loma Linda University, while Xavier was in Medical school and I was studying Speech Pathology. Of course, I just wanted to be friends but his Latin charm inched his way into my heart. We got married two years later in Puerto Rico.

“Currently, my husband works at the hospital here in town and in Willits. I’m a stay-at-home mom who continues to do some speech therapy online. Our baby girl just turned one and is keeping us very busy with walking and talking.

“We love to travel, good yummy food, and exploring the outdoors. Let us know if you ever go out on a hike or adventure. We’d love to join you!. We are happy to be here and meet all of you.

“The Ortiz Family”



Xavier, Rachel, and Everly

Photographer unknown

10 Days of Prayer

It’s a new year, family! Let’s get ready for **REVIVAL**! Let’s make 2022 the start of the most meaningful years of the rest of our lives!

January 5-15 has been set apart for our world-wide church to launch this Spirit-filled journey. There is an abundance of material to enrich our season of prayer on the Web. We may also join live at 7:00 p.m. on YouTube (nccsda) or Face-book (NorCal AdventistsinAction).

We read in the Spirit of Prophecy that “prayer and faith will do what no power on earth can accomplish.” (The Ministry of Healing, p. 509) We are also told that “for any gift He has promised, we may ask; then we are to believe that we receive, and return thanks to God that we have received.” (Education, p. 258)



Pansy

Photo by David Anderson

Family News Cont.

My Christmas Wish List

by Bob Merritt

In the first Christmas story,
Gifts were brought by wisemen three.
Let our Christmas gifts to God this year
Be the fruits of His Spirit, for you and me.

“By their fruits you shall know them. . .”
With God’s assurance, we’ve been told
Of the many truths from the Bible,
His promise of transformation never gets old.

The traits “Love, Joy and Peace”
Are those first mentioned of nine.
Oh, that these attributes were prevalent
In all lives, including mine.

“Patience and Kindness” then follow behind
Enriching those lives thus endowed;
Blessing all those we relate with,
While making our Heavenly Father so proud.

Then follows “Goodness and Faithfulness”,
Traits dispelling all suspicion and doubt.
Bringing all of God’s people together,
Such traits we should never be without.

“Gentleness and Self-Control” thus continue;
Important in times of conflict and strife.
On these two fruits of the Spirit
Many judge the substance of our life.

If “out of the abundance of the heart”,
We speak and will thus be judged.
Then let’s honor God with these fruits
And pray our faith will not be budged.

So may we continue to grow together,
Celebrating the gift of God’s only Son.
And may we remain unified as a family,
And be not divided by anything said or done.

Buck, formerly known as “Spikes” — one of our
many yard visitors. Photo by David Anderson

Take Some Time By Donna Faye Anderson

A few “time” nuggets I have learned that
you may find helpful for 2022:

1. Take time to read your Bible.
Thoughtful reading connects you with the heart of God.
2. Remember a happy, peaceful time in your past. Take a few moments to rest there and savor the richness of the memory.
3. Contemplate the rising and the setting of the sun and the moon. They are remarkable for their steady faithfulness.
4. Stop and listen to the singing of birds. Music and nature are gifts from God, but only if you are willing to receive them.
5. Be awed by the night sky. It displays an everlasting message.
6. Make time for play—to enjoy what you like to do. Whatever your age, your inner being needs re-creation.
7. Slow down; God is still in charge. You are not alone to do everything by yourself.
8. Direct your life with purposeful choices more than with speed and efficiency.
9. Talk slower—talk less—don’t talk. Communication isn’t measured by words.
10. Take nothing for granted: watch water flow, your garden grow, the leaves blow. They bring messages of yesterday and tomorrow—and NOW.
11. Wear a grateful heart. Be cognizant of your many blessings, and count them one at a time.
12. Take time to wonder. Without pondering, you miss the depth of understanding.



Family News, cont.

Church Retreat

The Social Committee has reserved dates for the church family to enjoy a special retreat at Albion, March 25-27, 2022! To reserve a space for your family, please sign up at the desk in the church foyer.

The cabins all have one queen bed and twin bunk beds and a bathroom. Guests will need to provide their own bedding or sleeping bag and towels.

RV hookups and tent sites are available.

Albion has a "No Pet Policy". Families are welcome to come as day visitors also.

The Social Committee plans to provide the food, except for the Friday evening potluck.

For more information, please contact Geoff Rice or Robert Olivera.

Another Baby Has Arrived

Randy and Krystle Maddox, our missionaries to Hawaii, have some exciting news to share!

Annabelle Luana was born on December 6 at 6:20 am., 6 lb. 11 oz. and 19 inches long.

We are so thankful for our early Christmas gift. She is so sweet and precious.

Big sister Ellie loves her little sister, and wants to hold her and kiss her as often as possible.



The Maddox girls—Ellie and Annabelle

UJA News

Ball Field Update

After weeks of smoothing and raking the two-acre ball field, it has now been hydroseeded. "What's that?" you ask. It's okay—I had to look it up. Hydro-seeding is a planting technique that evenly sprays a slurry of seed and mulch.

Come spring the field should be a green oasis ready for a game of baseball. Even now it looks so smooth and tidy.

Along the west side of the field, Chinese Pistache trees have been planted and a wide strip of wood chips really sets them off well.

Hydroseeding
the UJA ball
field.
Photo by
David
Anderson

Dates to Remember:

January 3 School Resumes

January 4 End of 2nd Quarter

January 17 Martin Luther King Day No School



UJA News, cont.



Above Left: Harry Witzel smoothing the ball field before the hydroseeding pictured on page 6.
Above right: Eight Chinese Pistache trees planted along the west fence of the ball field. Photos by David Anderson

Harvesting Fruit

by Wendi Olivera

Our kindergarten class was very excited to be able to finally pick some of the fruits we have been growing on a few of our dwarf fruit trees. As part of their parent Christmas gifts, they were able to take some mandarins home for them.

We were also delighted to taste and see for ourselves how good God is, as He gives us gifts through juicy fruit like mandarins, kumquats, grapefruits, and Meyer lemons.

It is wonderful to watch the students try something new or eat fruit we grow ourselves. They agree that the home-grown fruit is very flavorful and juicy!

The class is looking forward to spring when we can do more planting and start sprouting seeds for our gardens!

Right: Kindergarten students picking fruit from the trees in their garden.

Below: The students eating fruit in their classroom.

Photos by Wendi Olivera



A Lesson in Nature

by Dan Kuntz

The Northern Mockingbird

The mockingbird is an interesting creature. There are about 17 species of this omnivores bird worldwide. They are in the Mimidae family. The Northern mocking, *Mimus polyglottos*, is the particular species that we find in North America. The most amazing trait this bird has, and you might have guessed it from its name and family name, is that it can mimic the calls of other animals, not just birds. The mocking bird can perfectly imitate the sounds of insects and amphibians as well as the songs of birds in its habitat.

The untrained birdwatcher might be frantically looking for many birds coming from one specific tree. It takes a knowledgeable birdwatcher, one that not only knows the visual identity of the bird but knows the call of the bird. You see, the mockingbird can imitate the song but it does not know how many times a neighboring bird might sing the song. The mockingbird gives itself away because it will sing the song too many times, or not enough.

We can learn from the mocking bird and the untrained birdwatcher. We need to know the voice of God. Additionally, we also need to know His character and what He wants for our life. Often we can get fooled by the devil. We might have an impression to do something, but it might not be a Christ-like action, or it may be a selfish intent and not one of love. In that case, we are to watch out for the mockingbird, the devil, and not be tricked by its call.



Northern Mockingbird.
Taken from thoughtco.com