

“The of the Matter”

A Monthly Source of Information for the Church

The Most Amazing Gift of Love!

“But God demonstrated His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” **Romans 5:8**

Capturing the scene in our mind’s eye, we see Jesus, the Son of God, hanging on a cruel cross to declare to this world the message that God loves us!

Christ’s death on the cross completely eradicated Satan’s accusations that God’s law is impossible to keep, His promises are not trustworthy, and His words are unreliable. Once a glorious angel in heaven, he chose to rebel against and reject God’s incredible love.

On the cross, two eternal truths were revealed: how deadly sin is and how loving God is. Sin destroyed the only perfect Man to ever live. Sin destroys anyone who plays with it. If it is so bad that it killed Jesus, shouldn’t we consider that it could destroy us, too, if we enter its realm?

The cross blazoned across the universe God’s message of love—a love willing to go to any length to save us. Heaven valued you so much that Jesus Himself took on all of sin’s condemnation to save you. It is incomprehensible, but true. Jesus accepted the full penalty of your sin Himself, even if it meant eternal separation from His Father, to provide a way of salvation for you. He willingly chose to miss out on heaven rather than have you miss it. Such love is irresistible! We will be praising Him throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity!

May the lyrics of that marvelous song, “The Love of God,” ring in our hearts: “Could we with ink the ocean fill, and were the skies of parchment made; were every stalk on earth a quill, and every man a scribe by trade; to write the love of God above would drain the ocean dry; nor could the scroll contain the whole, though stretched from sky to sky. O love of God, how rich and pure! How measureless and strong! It shall forevermore endure—the saints’ and angels’ song.”

In Romans 8, Paul speaks of four things that Christ’s followers do not have:

In Christ there is no condemnation. Romans 8:1. Because of what Jesus did for us, all condemnation is gone. We are acquitted, pardoned, forgiven, and set free from sin’s debilitating guilt. Since Jesus bore our guilt on the cross, we need not bear it.

In Christ there is no bondage. Romans 8:15. As Christians we may make mistakes, but we are no longer in bondage to sin. Sin no longer dominates or controls our lives. Jesus has broken this bondage.

In Christ there is no ultimate defeat. Romans 8:28. “And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God.” As Christ’s followers, we are not in the hands of the evil one. We are not living with no purpose or direction. God is in control of our lives and will work all things together for our good.

In Christ there is no separation. Romans 8:35 asks: “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?” Paul lists tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, and sword. Christ’s love penetrates our darkest, most trying moment. We can rely on His promise that He will never leave us or forsake us.

When we place our lives in the awesome love of God, He imparts to us His strength. A life of love is a life of unshakable faith and immovable resistance against evil. It is a life of living in God’s sweet, holy presence by His love and through His power. And it is this life of love that God invites us to embrace today.

By Donna Faye Anderson

Forgiveness Seminar Weekend

Our church family had a special couple, Dr. Darold and Barbara Bigger, come from Walla Walla to spend the third weekend of January with us.

They shared their personal heart-wrenching story of how they lost their daughter by murder, how it impacted their lives, along with their families and friends. The seminar included a portrayal of how God is the perfect forgiver and how, by His grace, the Biggers were able to give the divine gift of forgiveness.

Dr. Bigger wrote a book about their experience, *A Time to Forgive*. He has also put together a DVD workshop, *Forgive Now*. Both of these can be ordered from the Adventist Book Center.

Church News

SABBATH MORNING PRAYER TIME

The Elders invite the church family to join them

at 9:00 a.m. every Sabbath morning.

Meet in the Chapel, prior to the Adult Sabbath School, to pray for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

An Evening You Won't Want To Miss

Put a big red circle around **February 25** on your calendars. Plan to come to the church that evening at **5:00 p.m.** and please bring your friends and neighbors.

Laura Williams is a singer, songwriter, and recording artist who has a full-time music/media ministry with her husband Ernie. Together they go anywhere the Lord leads to share the beautiful gospel story through music and testimony. They have found that a song sometimes can touch a heart when a sermon can not. It will be an evening to honor God and uplift souls.

After the concert, there will be a chance to purchase your favorite CD's or Digital Downloads.



Enjoy God's creation of multitudes of different flowers!
Photo by David E Anderson

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

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

OUR VISION STATEMENT

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

Church News, Cont.

Fellowship Potluck Luncheon Schedule

February 4 - Greeters with Beth Garibaldi

February 11 - AV Committee with Phil and Marianne Tamanaha and Team

February 18 - Pathfinders and Adventurers with Luis Pastor

February 25 - Anyone Welcome with Jodi Clay and Friends

Church members and their families and friends are welcome and encouraged to attend. Please bring large serving portions of food to share. Visitors are always welcome.

Pathfinders

Luis Pastor reports that the Pathfinders have recently been working on requirements for some fun honors: Archery and Frisbee Golf. At our last meeting, Sheldon Schultz taught the Leather-craft honor.

Upcoming Pathfinder Schedule

February 4 - Help at Plowshares

February 16 - Work on Soccer honor, weather permitting

February 18 - Potluck hosted by Pathfinders

March 18 - Help at Plowshares

April 2 - NCC Bike-a-thon

April 29 - Help at Plowshares

May 7 - NCC Pathfinder Fair

May 19-21 - Albion Retreat shared with church

August 6-13 - Camp Waianae, Hawaii



A deer drinking from the creek. Enjoy a field trip into the woods. Photo by David E. Anderson

Love is a gift you can give every day!

Today and every day Christ offers us His all—His love, His grace, His forgiveness, His mercy, His power, His courage, His comfort, His hope, His promise of eternity—the promise of His presence now and forever.

SUPER BOWL LVII PARTY

Come watch the super bowl, eat good food, and have lots of fun!

LOCATION: UKIAH JUNIOR ACADEMY GYM
TIME: FEB 12 @ 3:00PM
RSVP TO PASTOR K. BY FEB 8

UJA News

Registration is Open

Planning for the 2023-2024 school year is in full swing! You can save 40% off next year's pre-registration fees by completing the online registration and paying the fees **by the end of February**.

Just go to myuja.org and find the link for next year's registration forms. Please contact Allison in the office if you need any assistance. She will be happy to help you.

Tuition and Registration for next year are as follows:

K-4	Registration and supply fees -	\$ 450.00
5-10	Registration and supply fees -	\$ 585.00
K-10	Yearbook fee	\$30.00
K-6	Tuition	\$6210.00
7-10	Tuition	\$6535.00

If you have any friends, acquaintances or neighbors who might be interested in UJA, be sure to let them know about us. Please have them call the school office, 707-462-6350, and ask to speak with either Allison Kurtz, the Office Manager or Rick Nelson, the Principal.

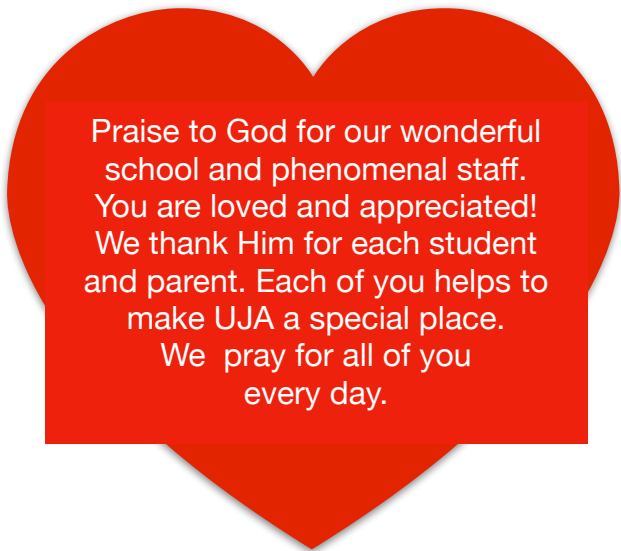
Veggie Food Store

Cheryl Witzel reports that she will be absent for a few months. Grandma Claire will be taking care of the store for her.

Morning Star Farms Veggie Chik'N Strips are now 50% off.

Get your Bill's Best Beef and Chiknish seasonings before they are gone. Production of these products have been discontinued.


Thank you for supporting the store, because when you do, you support the school as well.



Praise to God for our wonderful school and phenomenal staff. You are loved and appreciated! We thank Him for each student and parent. Each of you helps to make UJA a special place. We pray for all of you every day.

Important Dates to Remember

- Jan. 30-Feb. 3 - Week of Worship
Jennifer Rich, VP of Enrollment, Marketing, and Recruitment, at Rio Lindo Adventist Academy is the speaker for the week.
- February 20 - President's Day - NO SCHOOL
- February 23 - School-wide Learning Fair



School's out forever!

PLEASE JOIN US FOR A
RETIREMENT CELEBRATION
HONORING
Beth Garibaldi
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 10 - NOON
OPEN HOUSE BRUNCH
UJA GYM

UJA News, cont.

Basketball

By Dan Kuntz; Photos by Allison Kurtz

Last school year UJA had a great team! Unfortunately, Covid made another appearance with Omicron, and we had trouble scheduling games. In 2021/22 we had a co-ed basketball team and played one game against Pleasant Hill.

This year, 2022/23, things have turned around. This year we have a girl's team and a boy's team! Through Martin Luther King Jr. Day, the boys have played four games, and the girls have played three. The boys beat Potter Valley in a scrimmage game and went 1-2 at the middle school tournament at Rio Lindo. The girls lost to Potter Valley and went 0-2 in the same tournament. The boys played Rio Lindo's boy's junior varsity team on January 27th. After that, both teams have one more game with Potter Valley. Currently, we are working on scheduling games with Redwood Academy.

The growth in skill and athleticism certainly is visible. We started practices at the end of October, and we will finish the season at the end of February or the beginning of March. When practice started in October, we had a wide range of skills, from those on the team last year to others who had never played basketball outside of PE class. It has been wonderful to see the players come together as a team and encourage each other as they gain new skills.

We have several people coaching and helping out this year, and we couldn't have done it without them; it takes a village. Louis Pastor, Jeff Casuga, Liz Oliver, and Heidi Tollini have been so generous with their time and talents to help players and myself have a successful season learning new skills and growing as a team.

Boys Team: Logan Kurtz 32, Caleb Williams 15, Ethan Harper 11, Kyler King 30, Sami Casuga 22, Nathan Kuntz 14, Klayten Zinn 27, Seth Boyl 10, Ollie Harper 00, Hunter Tollini 40, Sam Kuntz 20, Brayden King 34

Girls Team: Emily Henabury 5, Sami Casuga 22, Samantha Ahumada-Garcia 25, Kira Cardenas 1, Liah Tollini 2, Rachel Williams 3, Gazelle Gonzalez 12



Family News

“How Did You Meet Your Sweetheart?” Since February has a “sweetheart day” right in the middle of the month, we found a delightful, young couple who was willing to share their love story.



“When did I begin to love you?”— Jeremy and Jodi Clay

For some, it's love at first sight. For others, it takes time. For us, it's a story of friendship turned to love.

I met Jeremy through some mutual friends our freshman year at Walla Walla University. Didn't think much of him and went about life as usual for a freshman enjoying college. That summer, we both worked at Sunset Lake Camp in Washington and a good friendship began.

Relationships came & went for the next 3 years, but our friendship held strong. Two of those years, we went out as student missionaries - first, I went to Kosrae, Micronesia and the following year Jeremy went to Palau. Although we didn't see each other much for those 2 years, we stayed in touch. We each experienced our own rewards & challenges while away and it was a blessing to have a good friend to pray and be a source of support during the hard times.

When we started our senior year at WWU, something had changed. Neither of us were dating, so there was no buffer as there had been before. I was actually worried it was going to become awkward and ruin our friendship.

But it didn't take long for me to realize there was an unexpected attraction on my part. Yes, I was the one that ended up pursuing him!

The transition towards dating was a bit awkward. We had to find the new normal and Jeremy wasn't yet sure he wanted to risk the friendship, if dating didn't work out. But I convinced him! Just kidding. It was through prayer and the guidance of friends and family, we decided to give dating a try. Not a year later, he asked me to marry him and I, of course, said yes!!

Here we are almost 10 years into marriage, as happy as ever with an amazing son and a wonderful life that neither of us would change. I think we both agree it was worth the risk!

Photos provided by
Jodi Clay
Photographer:
Unknown



Family News, cont.

Botswana Orphan Project

by Sandy Wirth



Steve and I were missionaries in Kenya and Botswana from 1988-1994 and last November, we traveled with our children, Peter and Sharon, to revisit some of the former locations.

Since we left Botswana, the AIDS epidemic swept through and caused many children to be orphaned. Today there is still a high prevalence of HIV/AIDS and many children are being raised by grandparents. In 2004, a friend of ours in Botswana was impressed to start the orphan centers to care for these children. There are currently six centers in the Botswana Orphan Project that provide food, clothing, and schooling for these needy children.

Because of the generous donations of the Ukiah church family, we were able to bring several large boxes of clothing, books and toys, as well as cash to purchase food to distribute to the centers. We visited two of the centers: Manyana, "Place of Hope", and Thamaga, "Place of Blessings". We were welcomed with songs by the children and much gratitude by the staff, especially the cooks, who received the food with big smiles and who also broke into songs of thanks. It was rewarding to bring such joy to at least a small corner of the world.



The Wirth family, Steve, Sandy, Peter and Sharon serving the people in Botswana. Photos supplied by Sandy Wirth. Photographer unknown.



Blue Zones Project, LLC

by Ryan Veness

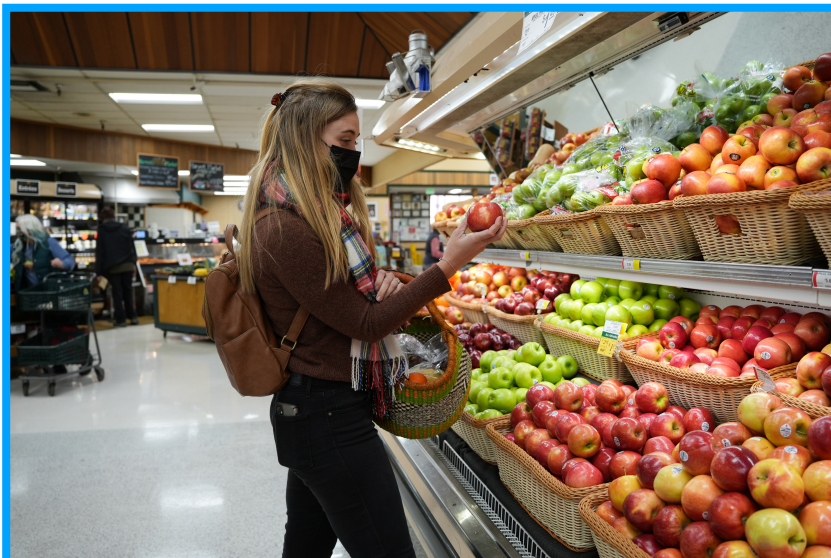
The Mendocino County Food Policy Council

The Mendocino County Food Policy Council (MCFPC) was formed in 2010 by a group of grassroots-community leaders passionate about building equitable systems for food access. Since then, MCFPC has been recognized nationally as a model for its impact and structure. The MCFPC's mission is to promote a fair and sustainable local food system through research, collaboration and collective advocacy.

Over the last few years, MCFPC has undergone a comprehensive, strategic-planning process, including a series of regional summits held through 2020 and 2021, and by a discovery process completed by Blue Zones Project LLC in early 2022. Lucy Bartholomew, the Public Policy Advocate for Blue Zones Project Mendocino County, collaborates with the Mendocino County Food Policy Council.

The scope of work of a Food Policy Council spans advocating for specific legislation, educating the public and decision makers, providing a venue for networking between food security programs, improving coordination within a food system, and implementing projects. The work of MCFPC is dynamic and flexes to input from the community, opportunities presented, and committee member assets. Some identified priority projects include: 1) establishing a food-insecurity screening, as a part of patient intake with healthcare providers that do not already do so; 2) share necessary referrals and resources to meet patient needs; 3) updating institutional wellness policies to reduce or eliminate sugar-sweetened beverages; 4) adopt good food-purchasing programs that support farm-to-cafeteria purchasing from local producers; 5) enhancing infrastructure that supports urban agriculture, and more.

Please email Lucy.bartholomew@sharecare.com if you would like to be included on a distribution list to learn about MCFPC happenings, or to request to be a council member, or to nominate someone to sit on the council.



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

A Lesson from Nature, God's Second Book

by Dan Kuntz

The Wild Turkey, *Meleageris gallopavo*, is a beautiful bird that lives across most of America. In fact, Benjamin Franklin would have preferred the Wild Turkey to the Bald Eagle as the National Bird and symbol of the United States. Wild Turkeys usually walk or run as they go about the day. You might not know it, but they are strong fliers! When startled, they may take flight to escape the threat. Interestingly they roost high in trees overnight to keep clear of predators.

Turkeys have a wide range of habitats: woods, mountain forests, and wooded swamps. The one thing these habitats have in common is trees. It is the oak tree that the turkey is fond of because acorns are their favorite food. We sure have an abundance of acorns around Ukiah! In addition to acorns, turkeys scratch around seeds, grains, roots, and bulbs. They also eat insects, spiders, and snails. Occasionally they have been known to eat frogs, lizards, snakes, salamanders, and crabs. The turkey is most actively foraging in the early morning and evening. Turkeys are a great animal to have around for pest control.

Turkeys are in the same family as pheasants and grouse. People are surprised that they aren't related to chickens. Maybe that is due to chicken and turkey products being near each other in the grocery store. Comparatively, the barnyard variety of turkeys is not as intelligent. This lack of smarts is where the insult of calling someone a turkey has arisen. Furthermore, farm-yard turkeys are so selectively bred for meat that they are unable to reproduce on their own and need to be artificially inseminated.

The differences between farm yard turkeys and Wild Turkeys draw a comparison to being in the world but not of the world. If we are to be like the Wild Turkey we will be wary of the one who prowls around like a lion looking for someone to devour. (1 Peter 5:8) We will search out and find good food to eat, and flee when danger approaches. But, as we scratch out and search for God, we will not become lazy and unintelligent like the farm-yard turkey.

Look for the beauty that is around us here in Ukiah and I am sure you will stumble upon and perhaps startle the beautiful Wild Turkey.



The Greatest Gift——I Corinthians 13

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels,
but have not love,
I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.
And though I have the gift of prophecy,
and understand all mysteries and all knowledge,
and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains,
but have not love,
I am nothing.
And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor,
and though I give my body to be burned,
but have not love,
it profits me nothing.
Love suffers long and is kind;
love does not envy;
love does not parade itself, is not puffed up;
does not behave rudely;
does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil;
does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth;
bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.
Love never fails.
But whether there are prophecies, they will fail;
whether there are tongues, they will cease;
whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away.
For we know in part and we prophesy in part.
But when that which is perfect has come,
then that which is in part will be done away.
When I was a child, I spoke as a child,
I understood as a child, I thought as a child;
but when I became a man, I put away childish things.
For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face.
Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.
And now abide
faith, hope, love, these three;
but the greatest of these is love.