

# The "of the Matter"

## A Monthly Source of Information for the Church

### "Prayers God Answers"

All of our prayers should begin with our recognition that we are, from our lowly position, beginning a conversation with the Holy, Almighty God of the universe, who sits in light unapproachable in heaven. Then the fire of the Holy Spirit in our hearts must be the fountain from which our words ascend to heaven. We should never just "say a prayer" without first humbly reaching out to God with our hearts. Our words, without the Holy Spirit's power, are meaningless.

We read in Leviticus 9:24 that when, under God's direction, Moses and Aaron set up the tabernacle and began its services, "the glory of the LORD appeared to the whole community. Fire blazed forth from the LORD's presence and burned up the burnt offering and the fat on the altar. When the people saw this, they shouted with joy and fell face down on the ground." The fire from God was then kept burning in the tabernacle. It was to be used exclusively to burn all offerings, lamps, and incense in God's service. No one was to start their own fire and use it for God's service. The smoke of the incense burning with God's fire represented the prayers of God's people reaching His throne.

The record continues in Leviticus, chapter 10: "Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer, and put fire in it, and laid incense on it, and offered unholy fire before the LORD, such as He had not commanded them. And fire came forth from the presence of the LORD and devoured them, and they died before the LORD."

What was the problem here? According to God's command, the incense, representing prayer to God, must be burned by the fire of God. The same is still true of all our prayers, public and private: They must come from a heart burning with the fire of the Holy Spirit.

We read in Romans 8:26: "The Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express." Unfortunately, the word "intercedes" gives us a wrong impression of the true meaning of the Greek word, "Huper-entugchano." The first part, huper, means, "over, beyond, more than" and could be understood as "Hyper." The second part means "meet a person, for the purpose of conversation or consultation." So this is really telling us that the Holy Spirit comes upon us to meet and consult with us, to show us what God wants us to pray for. He is our Hyper Counselor, giving us the words that God wants us to use in prayer, as we open our hearts to Him.

Verse 27 continues with just the last part of the same verb, "entugchano," and can be translated: "And He who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will."

So we see that this verse is not saying that we can pray whatever we think up, and the Holy Spirit will change it to be acceptable to God. On the contrary, it says that the Holy Spirit works on our human hearts, showing our hearts words to pray that will truly be God's will. He helps us to make a difference between profane fire from our own thoughts, and holy thoughts implanted in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. Only prayer offered from Holy Spirit fire in our hearts will reach the heavenly courts.

Ellen White, under the inspiration of God, tells us that: "The Holy Spirit indites (authors) all genuine prayer." (Signs of the Times, 1892). She explains Romans 8:26 like this: "We must not only pray in Christ's name, but by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. This explains what is meant when it is said that the Spirit 'maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered.'" Such prayer God delights to answer. When with earnestness and intensity, we breathe a prayer in the name of Christ, there is in that very intensity a pledge from God that He is about to answer our prayer "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think." Ephesians 3:20; (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 147).

"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." James 5:16.

"As in ancient times, when prayer was offered, fire descended from heaven, and consumed the sacrifice upon the altar, so in answer to our prayers, the heavenly fire will come into our souls. The light and power of the Holy Spirit will be ours." (The Review and Herald, February 9, 1897).

This counsel should be our guide in all our prayers: in private prayer, at family worship, and in public prayer. Especially when leading public prayer, we should humble our hearts to be in tune with the Holy Spirit, so that our words will originate with the Holy Spirit, and God's presence will be sensed by everyone.

Contemplate this last statement: "The earnest, simple, broken, penitent prayer is acceptable always to God, and the lofty, wordy prayer is not so much as noticed of Him, for it is disgusting to the ear of the Lord, disgusting to His people." (Unpublished Letter T-1-1859).

By Pastor Mike Wilson



A Cedar Waxwing enjoying Pyracantha berries by David Anderson

"The Lord has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy." Psalm 126:3

May your Holiday Season be bright and cheery  
as you contemplate the Life and Sacrifice of Jesus!

### It's Time For The Christmas Cantata

There will be two performances of *The Glory of Christmas—Jesus, the Gift of Love and Joy!* at 3:00 and 6:00 p.m. on December 14. Tickets will be available at the church office, UJA office, Beck's Shoes, and Mendocino Book Company.

This year come and experience the story of the baby Jesus from the perspective of an Ecuadorian family. You will be blessed!



Cantata in progress at the Seventh-day Adventist Church last year. Photo by David Anderson.

### Glory in the Highest

Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flocks by night. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid.

Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be the sign to you: You will find the Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger."

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!" Luke 2:8-14

### **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!

### **Opportunities for Prayer**

**Sundays, 7-7:30 a.m.** at UA's Library via the parking lot door by the gym stairwell.

**Wednesday, 7-8:00 p.m.** in the Young Adult Room.

**Sabbaths, 9-9:30 a.m.** in the Chapel and following the worship service, meet in the left front of the Sanctuary.

"Arise, shine; for your light has come! And the glory of the Lord is risen upon you! For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and deep darkness the people; but the Lord will arise over you, and His glory will be seen upon you."

**Isaiah 60:1, 2**

"It is the privilege of the Christian to connect with the Source of light, and through this living connection become the light of the world. Christ's true followers will walk in the light as He is in the light, and therefore they will not travel in an uncertain way, stumbling because they walk in darkness.

As the light of the sun is light and life and blessing to all that live, so should Christians, by their good works, by their cheerfulness and courage, be the light of the world. As the light of the sun chases away the shades of night and pours its glories on valleys and hills, so will the Christian reflect the Sun of Righteousness which shines on him."

***Our High Calling, p. 296***

### **Change Jars for ADRA**

Please collect your coins, bills, or checks to partner with ADRA to help the malnourished children grow up to be strong.

We will be collecting for this very special project on three Sabbaths:  
December 20  
and  
December 27,  
2025, and  
January 3, 2026.

Thank you for your compassion and generosity.  
Steve Miller



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## As Always, UJA Fall Festival Was A Highlight!

On October 26, the UJA Gym became a pulsating gathering place for the school's families and friends to enjoy each other, while eating, playing games, having your face painted, and just browsing along the various classroom booths.

The pictures to follow will give you a glimpse of the fun activities.

Radio ministry stations bringing  
Christian inspiration 24/7:

KPRA 89.5FM English / KEWG 103.9FM  
English / 104.7FM Spanish

Please share your thoughts—what you appreciate and what could be improved with the programming. Your feedback will help to strengthen this ministry to better serve our community. Please phone or text Dawna Sawatzky (707) 459-6397.



Sampling of a few  
of the fun activities  
at Fall Festival.  
Pictures were  
provided by Luis  
Pastor and Allison  
Kurtz.





**SPiRiT WEEK!** on November 3-7,  
confirmed that the school spirit  
is excellent on UJA's campus!

**Monday** was Crazy Hair and Comfy Day.

**Tuesday** was Twin Day.

**Wednesday** was Trash Bag Day.

**Thursday** was Teachers Dress as Students,  
Students Dress as Teachers Day.

**Friday** was Class Color Day.





## Awards Ceremony at UJA

During Friday Chapel, on November 14, students, with their families proudly watching, were recognized for perfect and excellent attendance and 3rd. to 10th. graders for their A and AB Honor Roll achievements.

There was one student per class who received the Code One Award for exemplifying the UJA Code of Conduct #1: "We will treat each other with Love, Respect, Dignity, and Grace."

Praise God for the phenomenal teachers who nurture these students to develop these life values and do their very best! Keep this dynamic ministry in your daily prayers!

## VEGGIE FOOD STORE

Hours: 2:30-4:30 p.m. on Thursdays

**The Worthington Dinner Roasts will be arriving in time for Christmas.**

Cheryl has announced her plans to retire from managing the store in December. She has done a beautiful job of taking care of all those details.

Harry retired earlier this year from maintaining the campus and its facilities.

We take this opportunity to praise God for the Witzels and their dedication to many years of faithful service. May they enjoy retirement as they plan to spend more time with family.



The Anderson's yard has become a mushroom garden: Does anyone know the names of these mushrooms?





## **Adventure Club Update**

by Leslie Anne Kline-Udarbe

We were blessed to hold our Adventurer Club Induction Service on October 25! It was a beautiful and well-attended evening, and a meaningful moment for our children as they recited the Adventurer Pledge and Law and received a special prayer of dedication. Afterwards, families enjoyed a fun “breakfast-for-dinner” meal together, making the evening even more memorable.

The following week, our November meeting kicked off with a creative nature activity. The children learned about different types of leaves and made their own handmade leaf bookmarks to take home.

Looking ahead, our Adventurers will be helping deliver Thanksgiving baskets to families in need—a wonderful opportunity to serve our community. In December, we’re excited to have the kids create holiday cards and personally deliver them to residents at a local skilled nursing home. It will be a joyful way to share kindness and brighten someone’s day. Thank you, families, for your continued support and participation!





## Wonders of Creation

by Sheldon Schultz

I needed to get away from Albion to give my mind a break. In preparation for my trip, I searched iNaturalist for Nudibranch (also known as Sea Slugs) species I had never seen in the wild or had not seen in a long time. As I looked up each species, I noted on Google Maps where its hotspots were and saved them on my phone. Over time, I saw a distinct pattern: about 10 hot spots where I would be likely to find some of the dozens of species I have never found in California, and that are either native to our coastal waters or considered established. I chose four primary spots as a start to my trip and had a few others I would visit if I still had enough energy to do more after hitting those primary spots. They were in driving order: Duxbury Reef near Bolinas—a large exposed reef north of the Golden Gate, Pleasure Point Beach in Pleasure Point, Elkhorn Slough at Moss Landing and The Great Tide Pool in Pacific Grove on the Monterey Peninsula.

On Oct 7, I left Albion with my camera equipment, my camping cot, my sleeping bag, loads of optimism, and some of my favorite CDs. Duxbury Reef was the first stop with a 7 p.m. low tide. On the way, I put in Neal Young's "Comes a Time" in the CD player—a country CD that always feels right when traveling. I first listened to the album on an 8-track tape in our new Chrysler Newport as I drove with my family from Alberta to Yellowstone National Park in the summer of 1979. It was my first big trip after getting my learner's permit. I always think of my father when I play that CD, as it was one of his favorites. With lots of warm, nostalgic feelings, I rolled down the road to Duxbury Reef, thinking about my father and mother and feeling lots of happy family feelings. I had high hopes of finding several new Nudibranchs there. Along the way, I stopped at one of my favorite trees along D Street, south of Petaluma. This old oak is sculpted by many years of wind, but is also influenced by a unique rock that stands like a tombstone beside the tree.



## Wonders of Creation, cont.

After shooting some pictures in color and infrared, I drove on to Duxbury Reef. I arrived at the Agate Beach parking lot, which is the closest to the reef, since the original parking lot to reach the reef had fallen into the ocean. Once at the parking lot, I dressed in my wetsuit and hiked the half-mile down to the reef. As I walked through the tide pools, I quickly realized the incoming tide was quite rough, making the water very murky and leaving no visibility. During an hour at the tide pools, I only saw one Nudibranch of a common species. As I walked back to the truck, I hiked close to the cliffs rather than through the tidepools because it was faster. As I walked along, I found dozens of exoskeletons from California Spiny Lobsters that had molted. The lobsters live here on Duxbury Reef, but it is too cold for them to reproduce here. Research shows that they arrive here in larval form during el nino years and stay and grow to adults. As the ocean is warming, I expect them to start reproducing here. I then hiked back to my truck and headed off to Monterey Bay, arriving at Moss Landing about 11:30p.m. where I slept on my cot in the back of the truck, with a lovely view of the harbor and the Moss Landing smokestacks. (This Monterey trip will be continued. Keep Watch!)

