

Pastor's Update 2024 – December

Pastor Brandon's E-Mail: RevBOffice@gmail.com / call or text 530-760-8858

A Word of Thanksgiving

We are in the remaining days of this Christian liturgical year; the first season of the new year, Advent, begins Sunday, December 1st. In preparation for our Advent worship series "Words for the Beginning", Rita Lundin and I met earlier this week to display the beautiful quilts some of you have loaned us for decorating our church worship space. Their colors and designs give expression to the possibilities our imaginations invite, imagining new beginnings is the signature of the Advent season and central to the ministries of the church that will be so necessary in the new calendar year.

As so many of us will enjoy the gathering of souls around our celebrated Thanksgiving meals, I hope you will express gratitude for a few of the moments of grace you recall from the year past. For my part, after recently visiting my family, I'm grateful for my health restored since my "fall" last year, my sister's wonderful early Thanksgiving meal, the joy of seeing my niece so happy as I met her fiancé, a chance to make with my mother a fresh batch of coconut, pecan balls, dipped in dark chocolate that she and my father made during Christmas for at least 50 years, sharing humorous stories and Lord of the Rings trivia with my nephew, and walking through the neighborhood of my childhood and remembering so many falls of color leaves, night stars, summer lightening bugs, winter toboggan sledding and snow cream ;oP Such memories are lovely companions. They are healing and fuel for inspiration, hope, and joy.

Also, I'm so grateful for each of you, members and leaders in my community of faith at DUMC. Your support, faithful service, generous giving, and simply being you means so much to me. Your interactions with one another are a joy to observe. And I am amazed at your integrity and beautiful, grace filled conversations in committees and works of service and justice across the year. I suspect the coming year will prove to be even more impressive faithful witness to the way of Jesus. What a privilege to be your pastor.

Last, but certainly not least, I want to offer gratitude to our church staff and resident clergy. Chris, Megan, Tracia, Jia-Min, Sophia, and Dave offer their very best each week for the areas they are skilled to resource. They meet the moment and exceed expectations. And I know you share my appreciation for my colleagues in the church: Rev. Kelly Love and Rev. Maj. Mel Brinkley, whose witnesses and messages of justice, compassion, and challenge inspire us whenever they preach.

Finally, thank each of you for your grace and expressions of generosity in the year past. An impressive number of you were present at Annual Church Conference on Tuesday, November 26th to make official our administrative decisions for leadership in 2025. And as you will notice in our weekly eNewsletter your generosity offers a great deal of confidence for supporting our ministry through the New Year. For this and so much more, thank you. Blessings as you gather and give thanks this week! – **Pastor Brandon**

In Memoriam – Robert "Bob" Medearis

May 18, 1932 – September 16, 2024

Memorial Service: December 28, 2024 @ 11:00 AM

Davis United Methodist Church

1620 Anderson Road, Davis, CA 95616 – (530) 756 - 2170

Immediately followed by a reception in the church fellowship hall

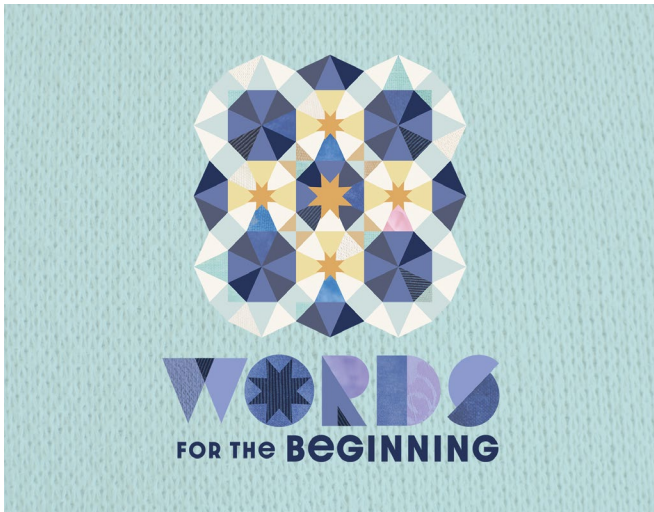
IN PERSON: If you plan to attend in person, please RSVP Dale Medearis at the email below.

He would like to adequately prepare for those attending the reception.

d.medearis@comcast.net

LIVE STREAM: If you expect not to attend, the link below will allow you to view the service.

<https://streamyard.com/watch/4yYvnmb8UCy4>



In Advent, just as expectant parents prepare their house for the soon to arrive “guest” infant, we will prepare our church sanctuary to welcome the Christ child born anew in our hearts this Christmas. We will be using quilts of various designs to adorn the walls and spaces of our church sanctuary as symbols of the way God has mended the world and our lives across time. Perhaps you are making, have made, or have been gifted by others with quilts that you cherish and might lovingly share them with us for this purpose for the weeks of Advent and Christmas. If so, please bring your quilt to worship over the next two weeks and our team will work with you to suitably display them in our sanctuary and lobby to give expression to the work of the Spirit, the wise seamstress and quilt maker of creation!

Our Advent/Christmas/Epiphany Sermon Series!

All Services begin at 10:00 AM and are Live Streamed unless stated otherwise.

Advent is a season of endings and beginnings. As the calendar year comes to a close, a new church year rushes in. Christ’s birth ushers us into new ways of living and loving—and yet, we feel the weight of many things coming to an end. The world as we know it spins madly on. And another election season in the US has ended. What are the reminders we will need to move faithfully through this threshold?

This Advent series is filled with blessings, with the words we need to hear again and again as we begin a new season. We imagine the words Mary would speak to her newborn son. What scriptures and stories would she impart to him? What lessons would she teach him as he grew? And so, our weekly themes may feel like the lessons we teach to children, but these are lessons we continue to learn and relearn as adults. They may sound like the messages we impart to loved ones during special ceremonies or sacred rituals. The selected scriptures may be frequently used in weddings, ordination services, or baptisms. So, let us all enter this Advent season as if we are entering a sacred new chapter, holding fast to the reminders that will bolster us for the journey ahead.

In many ways, pregnant Mary was surrounded by endings—large and small, personal and political. And yet, Mary proclaimed hope in a God who was and is making all things new. As we also move through new personal and political chapters, may these words for the beginning renew us and remind us of the ways we are called to live out our faith. No matter what we are facing, no matter what this new day brings, let love be our beginning.

December 1st Advent 1 (Hope) “You Are a Blessing” (COMMUNION)

Scripture Readings - Luke 1. 26 – 38 & Isaiah 43. 1 – 7

Mary is described as “blessed among women” (Luke 1:28). She is neither wealthy nor powerful, and yet she is chosen to bear God’s child. Her story begins with blessedness, and so does ours, for the prophet Isaiah declares that we are claimed by a God who calls our name. We are a blessing because we belong to God. When blessedness is our beginning, we begin to see the world—and others—through the eyes of a God who says: “You are precious in my sight” (Isaiah 43:4).

December 7th (Saturday) 1:00 PM Christmas Play - “Bah, Humbug!” (Davis UMC – No Live Stream)

December 8th Advent 2 (Peace) “We Can’t Go Alone”

Scripture Readings - Ruth 1 & Ecclesiastes 4. 9 - 12

One of life's most essential lessons is that we are never meant to go alone. And yet, modern culture pushes us more and more into lonely silos. If Ruth had followed her culture's norms, she would have gone home to her family of origin after her husband died, but instead, she commits herself to her mother-in-law, Naomi. Together they form a new family and covenant. Ruth and Naomi travel together to Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest, foreshadowing the journey Mary and Joseph will one day take to be counted in the census. Both Ruth and Naomi, as well as Mary and Joseph, are unconventional pairs, but if God can bring unlikely people together, God can form us into a covenant community too.

1:00 PM Children's Christmas Play - "Bah, Humbug!" (DCC – No Live Stream)

4:00 PM The Table "Pop-Up" Worship Service (Davis UMC – No Live Stream)

December 15th Advent 3 (Joy) "Do the Good That is Yours To Do"

Scripture Readings - Luke 3. 7 – 16 & Isaiah 58. 9b - 12

As John the Baptist is teaching about bearing good fruit, the crowds, tax collectors, and soldiers ask him, "What, then, should we do?" His answer to each group is slightly different, but ultimately the same: "Do the good that is yours to do." We can each bear good fruit through acts of justice and righteousness. We can all be what Isaiah calls "repairers of the breach" by satisfying the needs of the afflicted.

December 21st "Longest Night" Interfaith Service Location: TBD

December 22nd Advent 4 (Love) "Hope Is Worth the Risk"

Scripture Readings - Matthew 1. 18 – 25 & Luke 1. 46 - 55

Hope is vulnerable and can feel like a tremendous risk, especially if you've experienced loss or trauma. But Mary shows us a resilient hope that takes risks—she risks her body to bear a son who will become the hope of her people. Similarly, Joseph makes a risky choice to stay with Mary; dismissing her quietly would have kept him safe. But instead, he chooses hope. He chooses to trust the angel, and it makes all the difference. It can feel safer and easier to be a cynic, but the world doesn't need more cynics. It needs people who say, "It can be better" and make it so.

December 24th 4:00 PM Christmas Eve - (No Live Stream Available for this service only)

7:00 PM Christmas Eve "Love Knows Your Name" Christmas Band

Scripture Readings - Luke 2. 1 – 20 & and Isaiah 9. 6

Christ's birth makes the vastness of God personal. The God who made the seas and the stars is also the God who made your beautiful hair and striking eyes. The God of creation takes on flesh, which means you are fully known. When the angels visit the shepherds in the fields, their message is global but also personal: "To you . . . a savior is born." This birth is good news for everyone, especially those who are ignored or disenfranchised. On this night, God is born, and this God of love knows your name.

December 29th Christmas Sunday Contemplative Service

January 5th Epiphany Sunday "The Road Isn't Straight" (COMMUNION)

Scripture Readings - Matthew 2. 1 – 12 & Isaiah 43. 16 - 21

Too often, we've been told that a successful life is a linear one. But in reality, our lives unfold with many unexpected twists and turns. The Magi follow a star, embarking on a long journey in a foreign land in order to honor the newborn Christ. Instead of returning to Herod as commanded, they trust their dreams and go home by another way. Their road isn't straight, but God "makes a way in the wilderness" (Isaiah 43:19) as they follow their intuition and diverge from the expected path

Congregational Care

If you believe the information below to be incorrect or needs updating, please contact Pastor Brandon or our Davis UMC office with the correct/updated information. Let us continually pray, send cards and notes, emails, make calls, and remain in connection with one another.

Prayer Chain – (send prayer requests to this email address: (prayerchain@davisumc.org))

Hospital Care

Home Care - see church directory for contact information.

Joe Archer
Jerry Beaman
Chuck and Blanche Shannon

Atria Covell Gardens - 1111 Alvarado Avenue, Davis California 95616

Betsy Marchand – *Memory Care*
Melody Moore
Jan Tackett

Calmia Place - 4220 Calmia Place, Davis, California 95618

Kay Singleton – *Memory Care*

Carlton Senior Living - 2726 5th St, Davis, CA 95618

Ted Dill
Carol Holmes

The Farmstead at Dixon - 350 Gateway Dr., Dixon, CA 95620

Philip Kurien

University Retirement Community - 1515 Shasta Dr, Davis, CA 95616

Dotty Dixon
Joe Harper – *Memory Care* (Dotty's friend)
Brian and Louanne Horsfield
Jan Smyth
Ken and Diane Wagstaff – *Memory Care* (Diane)

RESOURCES

Stephen's Ministry – contacts: *Caroline Chantry, Mary Ann Ingenthron* (Leaders) or
Pastor Brandon -- RevBOffice@gmail.com

CaringBridge - <https://www.caringbridge.org/how-it-works>

A free, easy online tool for sharing health news with family and friends—all in one place.

Yolo Cares - <https://yolocares.org>

Dedicated to improving the quality of, and expanding access to, end-of-life services for persons/families of all backgrounds.

BOOK - "Caregiving 101" - https://www.thepilgrimpress.com/products/caregiving-101-cannon?mc_cid=0a2580904b&mc_eid=c5d37d56e9