



WINTER 2018

THE ELK GROVE PRES PRESS

VOLUME 6

BLESSINGS FROM DEXTER

“The light shines in the darkness...and the darkness has not overcome it.”

Those words from the opening of John’s Gospel give us an image of what Advent and Christmas declare:

--That into the darkness of a world so often caught up in tribal divisions and national conflicts and brutal violence and warfare...

--And into the darkness that can so often surround and invade our own lives...

Into that darkness God brings the light of hope and love and reconciliation through a baby born in Bethlehem.

And there are times when that light may seem like the sun, blazing with such brightness that the whole world is flooded with illumination, allowing us to see with clarity and allowing us to feel God’s warmth and comfort shining on us.

Yet even on the brightest of days, shadows still exist,

And even on the brightest of days, the darkness of night will return.

And it is in the shadows of our lives, and in the dark times in our lives, that those words from John may speak most powerfully to us:

--Of a God who does not promise to eliminate the darkness, but does promise to be with us in the darkness, leading us along the way with the light of the Christ candle;

--Of that baby of Bethlehem who will become the Jesus who will reach out in love to the lonely and deserted, the despised and forgotten, to outsiders and aliens;

--Of the Christ who will stretch out his arms to embrace all people;

--And who will stretch out his arms on the cross, showing that God’s love and forgiveness goes into the very darkest places ...

--And even the darkest of dark cannot extinguish that light.

In this Advent and Christmas season ...

--May each of us allow God’s light to enter us anew.

--And may each of us allow God’s light to shine through us to others.

EGPC reaches out to those who are “not yet followers” of Jesus as well as believers.

We are an open and accepting congregation.

ALL ARE WELCOME!

PERSPECTIVES – LESSONS FROM A HORSE NAMED TWO -- LES DAVIES

On Sunday, September 30th, Les shared his experience with his horse, named Two, to his experience with God and the Bible. Just as Two had to learn to trust him when things are scary or difficult, we need to learn to trust in the Lord at those times. Les used his saddle to demonstrate the different features that are there to keep him safe and give him comfort and compared those to his favorite verses in the Bible.



Les showed pictures of various steps in training Two, revealing the progress Two has made, and correlated it to our journey through the Bible and our relationship with God and our life as Christians.

For example, the more he works with Two, the better they become as a team. And, the more we read the Bible, the better we walk with God.



Les and a trainer working to teach Two to trust Les when a scary “horse-eating” bag gets close. Two was afraid of everything

Two is now very comfortable being ridden and allows Les to put him anywhere, including placing his front feet up on a rock. Two is able to stand there comfortably.



COMPLIMENTS TO THE CHEF(s)

Thank you Bob and Terri Bacon for hosting an entertaining and delicious cooking demonstration for the September Women's Ministry gathering. Chef Bob's knife skill tutorial and light menu fare along with sous chef Terri's organizational skills, kitchen assistance and devotional made for a most enjoyable afternoon.

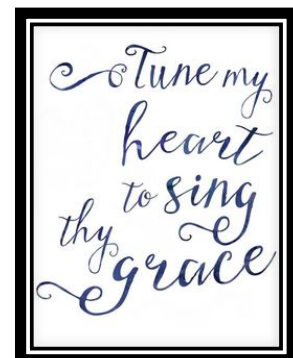


WELCOME TO OUR NEW MUSIC WORSHIP LEADERS



A heartfelt "welcome" is extended to Virginia Ayers Dawson and Jacqui Butler Hairston. Virginia, our new music worship leader, is a talented jazz and Christian musician who shares her beautiful voice with us each Sunday.

Jacqui is now serving as our musical accompanist. She previously taught at Merritt and Laney colleges and has served at churches in the Bay Area and North Carolina. We are so blessed to have these two gifted musicians lead us as we make a joyful noise to the Lord each week. WELCOME and THANK YOU!



WE GATHER TOGETHER

PSALM 9:1

*I will give thanks to you, Lord, with all my heart;
I will tell of all your wonderful deeds.*



We are thankful for Phoebe and Mac and to all the cooks and helping hands who made the November 9th potluck another successful event. Twenty-one folks shared a meal, recipes and a very pleasant evening of thanksgiving.

CHRISTMAS IS COMING – Diane Lowe

The Advent season is here and our Elk Grove Presbyterian Church family is totally engaged. Resident artist Dale Chilcoat is transforming our sanctuary into a holiday wonderland to the glory of God.

Beautiful music of *Holden's Evening Prayer* on November 28th inspired our hearts and minds in anticipation of Advent. Our gifted music leader Virginia Ayers Dawson coordinated the incredible musical prayer service with special guest musicians -- Sheryl Counter (soprano), Leslie Sandifer (soprano) and Dave Chan (pianist). Lyrics told of an angel coming to Mary saying she is chosen to be the mother of the Savior.



The first Sunday in Advent, **December 2nd**, will offer **Holy Communion** and with it comes preparation for Christmas. Each Sunday in December is marked with the lighting of the traditional Advent Candle Wreath and reading of scripture.

Christmas Eve, December 24th, at 7 PM will be a candlelight worship service. The entire Advent Wreath with the Christ candle in the center will be lit. The congregation's singing of *Silent Night* as each worshipper lifts a hand-held candle will bring a stirring glow to this meaningful time.

We join Christians around the world on Advent Sundays at 10 AM and Christmas Eve at 7 PM worship services. All are welcome. Bring family and friends.

EGPC will have no service on Christmas Day, December 25th.

KUDOS TO OUR PHOTOGRAPHER EXTRAORDINAIRE



Most of the photos that are included in this newsletter are courtesy of Simon Engel. Simon manages to capture just the right expression or activity that memorializes a special moment for our church. Simon graciously shares his photos for inclusion in this newsletter and is currently working on a 2018 EGPC photo and movie project. He has provided the following information about that project.

2018 IN PICTURES AND MOVIES AT THE EGPC – SIMON ENGEL

I have collected a number of photos and videos during the year 2018 and I am in the process of copying the best of them on an HDD (Hard Disc Drive) to present it as a “gift” to EGPC.

The purpose of this gift is to provide information for the EGPC website and to show portions of it to new members and/or visitors.

Some of you have also taken pictures and videos during the year. This request is posted to encourage you to add the best of your material to this project. File formats accepted are .JPG, .PG, MP4, .PDF, etc.

You can forward this information to me via the internet or on a USB Data Storage device. Credit will be posted to all contributors.

What material will be considered: photos and videos taken at EGPC, events that were open to the members and visitors of EGPC. No material from ‘private’ events.

At a special occasion in January we will have a ‘show time’ presentation for the members of EGPC.

Simon Engel: 916-714-4944 or cell: 209-471-4847

MAKING A DIFFERENCE – TERRI BACON

Sometimes I think about what it would be like to be a small child walking thousands of miles to the United States. What does a child think about, trudging along until her little legs give out? Does she understand why her parents left everything behind? Is she afraid?

My heart breaks for the children and their parents who are making the difficult decision to try to give their family some kind of future. I don't know how to help most of them, but I do know we have helped some of the children in Honduras with our support of Villa Soleada. They are safe at school. There, and at the two other schools we have helped, the children are learning skills that will help them stay in the country they love. They won't be making that long treacherous journey north. They will be able to earn a living wage. And some of them will grow up to be the leaders of Honduras.

None of this will happen overnight, but I truly believe the children we help today will be the ones who will be helping Honduras in just a few years. Together we are making a difference!

This year we have supported children with:
The Honduras Project
The Armenian Village School
School supplies for Elk Grove students
Share A Sole – Shoes for Kids
Food for families at the Elk Grove Food Bank
Diapers for Chicks in Crisis

In December we will also be supporting mothers and children in Africa through Presbyterian Missions and we will be adopting a local family, helping provide special gifts for Christmas.

WOMEN'S MINISTRY – Sharon Chilcoat

After many years of leading the Women's Ministry, Sue Bristow has decided to step down and I volunteered to carry the torch. Our first meeting will be in January – date and place to be determined. We will have a light lunch and then plan together what we would like to do in 2019. Come with ideas and enthusiasm! Let's make this a great year.

IT'S BEGINNING TO LOOK A LOT LIKE CHRISTMAS

Our sanctuary has been transformed into a beautiful winter forest thanks to Dale Chilcoat and his decorating helper elves. Donuts, Christmas carols and camaraderie made this a fun task for a rainy December morning.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR:
EGPC Christmas party
Saturday, December 15th – 6:00 PM
ERIC AND SUSIC LAPACHET'S HOME
5904 Whalers Cove Court
Bring appetizer (finger food) or dessert

ABOUT OUR CHURCH:

Elk Grove Presbyterian Church is a faith community striving to follow Christ by:

- ***Supporting each person on their own unique journey with God.***
- ***Joining together for joyful and meaningful worship, education and fellowship.***
- ***Working together to help build a better community and world.***

CONTACT INFORMATION:

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*******LEADERSHIP TEAM*******

ELDERS:

Bob Huggett -- Property
Liz Irons --Admin/Clerk of Session
Mike Van De Pol -- Outreach
Terri Bacon--Mission & Evangelism
Judy Lewis-- Education
Sharon Chilcoat--Communication
Phoebe Hsu--Nurture
Diane Lowe--Worship
Richard Bristow--Budget

DEACONS:

Cheri Bowermaster
Larry Bowermaster
Patty Huggett
Kathy Wong
Marie Galustian
Marlene Laufer