

KALOS

Congregational Church of Almaden Valley — United Church of Christ

December 2012



Moderator's Message

This will be my last message as Moderator for CCAV, UCC. It's been a great three years serving on Council. We've had many laughs, joys and shared a few good meals to boot! It's been an honor to work side by side with these wonderful people. I am especially blessed to have worked the last two sessions with Pastor Rodney. He'll be missed but I know he will find a new calling that will bless a whole new congregation. Looking forward, the new Council members will also be blessed as they now have the opportunity to work closely with Pastor Michele. I am so excited to have her join our church family! And it goes without saying; we all owe a big THANK YOU to our fabulous Search Committee for finding such a gem! Thank you all for giving me the support through these last few years and I know you will continue to provide support to your new Council as they begin their stewardship of the church business.

Shalom,
Kathryn McAbee
Moderator

Welcome Visitor!

Whether you're visiting with us because you're looking for a church, or accompanying a friend or family member, we bid you a hearty welcome!

We welcome all who would join us on our journey—for a day, a week or a lifetime—to discover who we are now and who we can become on this road of faith and inquiry.

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We embrace our diversity of thought and scriptural understanding. We respect and honor all who seek to be in covenant with us as we share in the joys and responsibilities of our church family.

We are a warm and friendly bunch, but we're not perfect! So, if in our excitement to greet our church family members, we forget our manners, please talk to us, introduce yourself and ask us lots of questions! And if you want to dig deeper and learn more about our church, please visit us at :
www.CongregationalChurchOfAlmadenValley.org.

We hope you'll return to us soon!

God Is Still Speaking

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Christian Education

Know it in your head, stow it in your heart, show it in your life and sow it in the world.

December is always a busy month in most families and that is no different with our church family and sunday school. We begin our winter curriculum with lessons that lead very nicely up to our Christmas Pageant scheduled for December 23rd and a joint service at 10 a.m.. If you are in town you will want to come see what special things our children and youth have in store for you this year. Pageant Sunday is also a great Sunday to invite other families with children. All visiting children can be in our pageant, too. We have plenty of costumes and youth very capable of leading younger children to be part of our program. Encourage your visiting families to come just a little early to get costumes that the children might like.

This year we are also providing some special Advent materials for our children, youth and their families. For sunday school age children and their families we have a daily devotions booklet entitled *Make Room for Joy*. The stable became very crowded when Jesus was born with people and animals. This booklet introduces the children to a variety of characters that may have gathered in the stable around the manger. Through these

characters the children can find ways to “make room in their hearts for the joy” of Jesus’ birth. To count the days each child also received a special Advent Calendar from their sunday school teachers.

For our youth this season we offered an opportunity to do a little “texting.” *Message in the Manger* provides daily advent texts and devotions for teens and young adults. Extra copies of all these resources are on hand in the Christian Education office if you know of a family or youth that might enjoy participating in this Advent activity.

May we all remember the “reason for this season” and not crowd out the most important message. Let God’s love abound every day and in every way as we all celebrate the miraculous birth of our Savior.

In Your Faithful Service,
Susue Ferguson

Christmas Dinner

We will be holding our annual Christmas dinner on December 8th in Fellowship Hall. Joan Okumura has generously volunteered to coordinate the party for us. There is a signup sheet on the bulletin board. Happy Holidays everyone! Let’s all get together and have some fellowship and fun at this special event.

Sue Scaff

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Thank You

Thank you, **Joan Okumura**, for donating the new refrigerator in memory of **Dick**. It's very much appreciated—no more water dripping on the food or mopping up the water on the bottom of the refrigerator. So Thank You **Joan and Dick**.

E.W. Griffith

Gifts of Gratitude

Thanks to **Susanne Moore** and **Gayle Byers** who helped get all the sunday school library, art supplies and teaching supplies into the Christian Education Office before our renovations.

Thanks to **Suzanne and Peter Mayo**, **Maryke and Robin Williams**, and **Nancy Romer** who scrubbed, sorted, and repaired Nursery and Pre-school furniture and toys.

Thanks to **Anne Tysanner** who set up a new filing and organizational system for sunday school storytelling materials.

Thanks to **Gwen Hacker**, **Sandie Mueller**, **Wendy Martin**, and **Phyllis Chai** who taught sunday school in November....in the tent.

Thanks to **Ann Mayers**, **Kelly Yamanishi**, and **Alex Alvarado** who shepherded with our **sunday school teachers** in November.

Thanks to **Ron Howie**, **Arnold Moore**, **Mary McPherson**, **Todd Lukanc**, **Nancy Romer**, **Marianne and Mike Schmidt**, and **Jerry Ferguson** for helping with putting up and taking down of our tent for sunday school.

Thanks to **Inge and Bonnie** for all they do for our youth and for their encouragement of the youth participation in our upcoming Christmas Pageant.

Special thanks to **Kelly Yamanishi** who has laminated "Moses, Pharaoh, and Joshua" for posterity.

Susie Ferguson

Christmas Fund Offering

For Veterans of the Cross and Emergency Fund

For 110 years, the Christmas Fund has been a way in which we—as members of the U.C.C. and the predecessor denominations—bring hope to those who have so faithfully and selflessly served. The Christmas Fund is one of our four Special Mission Offerings received annually, and is a way in which we share with others from the fullness that we have received. The lives of clergy, lay employees, and families are greatly touched each year by our giving. This year our offering will be received on Sunday, December 16th, however our gifts may be given at other times, also. Please write checks to: CCAV, UCC and in the memo section "Christmas Fund". Our generosity and compassion is profoundly appreciated.

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A Special Post-Thanksgiving Message

From Kristal Kim, JV Music Director

Kristal's hope is that you find this a meaningful and just-as-timely post-Thanksgiving message now or any time!

Occupied vs. Unoccupied Cup

Someone asked this question, presenting a cup with water poured to the mid-point: "Do you see the cup half full or half empty?" The question's purpose, perhaps, was to define the optimists and the pessimists.

Then it occurred to me: how would Jesus answer that question? I think he would have retorted with another question. This, of course, is just the opinion I've formed after reading in the gospels of his tendency to do this.

Me: Do you see the cup half full or half empty?

Jesus: Can you ask the question again without the word half?

Me: That would be an inappropriate question, since it is neither full nor empty.

Jesus: Exactly. Now, then, can you ask the question without the word half and with substituting the words occupied and unoccupied in place of full and empty?

Me: Yes, that would be a more workable question without the word half, as the question simply becomes "Do you see the cup occupied or unoccupied?"

Jesus: A workable question indeed. And more accurate. For the intention to measure the water quantity in the question itself is fallible for the essence of the question; despite the effort to define the pessimists and the optimists, it is already pessimistic with the word half which is not a whole. For saying half full is just the same as half empty. The most accurate question, for such a purpose, is to ask "Is the cup occupied or unoccupied?" If one answers "occupied," good for him. If he answers "unoccupied," because he is crippled with the eyes that see the lack all too well, may God be with him that he may see the unseen.

Of course, this conversation never occurred in reality—only in my mind. But it seemed to answer the question for me. That I should see and live my life in this way: as the occupied cup I am called to be, and thankful for its contents regardless of the quantity of success, recognition, satisfaction, etc., of worldly concerns and desires. Such things are insatiable due to the limitless nature of human greed.

Now, I ask about the quality of the occupation. But with the word thankful, the inquiry has already been answered; goodness comes with thankfulness.

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Kalos appears on the CCAVUCC website and in a few printed copies for those who request a mailing. If you would like *Kalos* to be sent to your home, please contact Sue Scaff (sscaff@sbcglobal.net or 960-4452).

We encourage you to share stories and inspirations in our newsletter! Tell us about your experiences, your reflections, your hopes for the church, anything of interest to the community that you would like to share. Send us images, poems, links for our Inspiration section. We want to hear from you!

To submit an article, send it by the 15th of the month to kalos@ccavucc.org. *Kalos* editors are **Sue Scaff**, **Kathryn McAbee** and **Risa Feely**.

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