



# The Chimes

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## Modesto Church of the Brethren

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Interim Pastor: Michael Fletcher Ministers: Every Member of the Congregation

*Continuing the work of Jesus. Peacefully. Simply. Together.*



### Last Words on My Time in Modesto

As I write this it has been ten days since I finished my time at Modesto. First, let me say thank you to the church for a wonderful send off. I always enjoyed the meals that the fellowship commission put on at Modesto and the luncheon that day was no exception. I appreciated the sharing that was done that day as well and thank everyone for the cards and gifts as well.

I've had some wonderful time to relax, enjoy family and do various other things that I wasn't always able to do while serving as your Interim Pastor, like going out for Sunday brunch. (I probably shouldn't admit doing that, but we are planning to attend worship at La Verne COB this Sunday.) I've also spent a little time in reflecting on my experience with the Modesto Church of the Brethren and I wanted to share a couple of thoughts with you.

Modesto was the seventh Church of the Brethren where I've been very involved with the ministry. My role has been different from church to church, but in each has in some way or another been a rewarding experience.

But Modesto may have been the most rewarding of the seven. I say that in part because of the friendships that were developed during the sixteen months I was there and in part because of the respect and appreciation that I received during my time in Modesto. But mostly I feel that way because I believe that the church is positioned for a bright future because of what we were able to accomplish during that time. I want to offer a few encouragements that I think will help secure that bright future:

1. Modesto has a number of very strong ministries (worship, senior ministries, FUN and Faith Bites quickly come to mind), make certain that these things are both maintained and utilized in reaching out to others who are not part of the church.
  2. Keep the goals from the Vital Ministry Journey in front of you. Begin each year with some sort of evaluation of them, celebrating progresses made and setting goals for the coming year.
  3. Strive to grow ministries that involve young adults, especially seeking ways to bring them into leadership positions.
  4. Add more opportunities for Bible study and other types of Spiritual growth.
- Modesto is a progressive church and one of the mistakes progressive churches sometimes make is to think that the Bible is only for conservatives.

Look for studies by progressives, but also study some evangelical studies by people like N.T. Wright to help broaden your prospective.

5. Look for ways to take the church out into the community. Traditionally churches have focused on inviting people to come to church, but Jesus sent his disciples into the world. Ask the question, what would it look like to send missionaries to Modesto?

6. Consider implementing a new operating structure. The present system of Church Board and commissions is probably a little too cumbersome for our current culture. Like businesses today, a streamlined model with more flexibility will probably make ministry more effective.

7. Lastly, but maybe most importantly, be bold and imaginative in the creation of new ministries. If everything you do is successful, you're not trying enough new things.

I believe that Modesto Church of the Brethren has all the resources necessary to accomplish all this and much more, my hope and prayers are that you'll also have the will to do so as well. If I can assist from the sidelines until a new pastor (either interim or settled) is called, I'd be happy to do so.

Again, I am so very grateful to you for making my time there so very, very meaningful and look forward to maintaining a relationship with you in whatever ways that can happen in the future, so let me know if you're heading to the Palm Springs area for Coachella, the PGA tournament, the film festival or any other reason. And if you need to rent a car while you're here, I can probably help you out with that as well.

Peace and blessings to all. ~Michael

## INVITATIONS TO WORSHIP

### December 9

#### Prepare the Way

Scripture Reading: Luke 1:68-79

Jeanine Ewert

During Advent we prepare ourselves for Jesus' birth the same as John prepared the way for Jesus and his ministry two centuries ago.

### December 16

#### The Real Definition of Joy.

Scripture Reading John 16:20-22

Sermon text: John 15:5-11

During the Advent theme of Joy, Pastor Robert Aguirre contrasts our tendency to define Joy as being happy and pursuing pleasure with Jesus' very different definition of what Joy is and how it can be experienced.



#### Greeters for December:

Dec. 9 - Russ Davis & Raeann

Dec. 16 - TBD

Dec. 23 - Terhesa Gamboa & Gayle Hernandez

Dec. 30 - Joann Ewert & Bev Jefferies

**Deacon on Call for December**

**Marye Martinez**



Be in prayer for all those who have lost everything in the Camp Fire in Paradise and other communities. The Paradise Church of the Brethren and parsonage were destroyed. Many, including friends of Margaret Johnson and Luella Cole lost their homes.

Jaimie Campbell's family's home in Paradise did not burn, but they were evacuated, and Jaimie's mother was in the hospital before that. Keep them in your prayers.

Linda Flores thanks the congregation for electing her as a delegate to Pacific Southwest District Conference.

KyeLee Stubbs' mother is ill with pneumonia, which may cause difficult decisions, since she has a DNR after previously having had a stroke.

Mary Pieczarka's thyroid surgery was postponed due to an infection, but is now scheduled for December 12.

Evan Campbell was moved by the story of an auto accident that he read, which resulted in the death of one driver and the incarceration of the other one. Prayers needed for the families of both men.

John Heisel asks for prayers for his younger brother, battling cancer.

Elaine Harty reported that Syl Bupp is grieving the loss of Jim E, the last of many corgis that were a part of Syl and Nancy's family.

Keep in prayer Peggy Hoover, serving with Children's Disaster Services in Chico, helping care for children who have been traumatized by fire as well as the loss of their homes.



### Thanksgiving Celebration

The 22<sup>nd</sup> SCIC Thanksgiving Celebration, held this year in the Modesto Centre Plaza, brought together Christians of different denominations, members of Congregation Beth Shalom, persons from the Hindu Temple, the Buddhist Temple, the Sikh Temple, the Modesto Islamic Center, to celebrate gratitude and thankfulness. And these were just the persons who participated in the program! We estimated that the audience numbered at least 300. The free-will offering for Interfaith Ministries took in \$2,323 in cash, plus the food offerings that were donated. The request for refreshments from the faith communities represented on the SCIC Board resulted in a surplus of cookies, in addition to delicious fried rice brought by one group. Thanks to all of you who donated cookies, as well as to Stephen Reddy, who organized a combined choir of MCOB and UCC choristers to sing enthusiastically! ~MCOB Representative to SCIC, Luella Cole

### Advent Book Study

#### "The First Christmas" by Marcus Borg

The first meeting, covering chapters 1 and 2 of "The First Christmas," was on November 29, but it's not too late! The next meeting, on December 6, will cover chapters 3 and 4. Join us for interesting conversation! Questions? Contact Stephen Reddy





Here is the youth schedule for December in brief:



**2nd:** Bells 9:30am (for those that are already doing it). Our only regular youth meeting for December will be after church from 12:05pm-2pm. We will be discussing and finalizing either 'service' and/or 'donation' ideas I have (Hutton House will not be happening this year).



**9th:** Bells 9:30am

YOUTH  
LOCK-IN



**14-15:** More details to come very soon. \*\*Also, for those of you in the Mentoring Program, you will be meeting for the first time around 6pm during FUN on the 14th. Kim Boardman will be contacting you with more info.

**16th:** Christmas Dinner after church. Mandatory for youth as we are hosting it with Sue.



**30th:** 5th Sunday youth ushering.

From Joshua (Gilstrap) Katen

## Seniors to Enjoy STEEL MAGNOLIAS

On **Saturday, Feb. 2**, we'll gather at the **Gallo Center for the Arts** to see the Gallo Center Rep. Company's 2 PM matinee production of **STEEL MAGNOLIAS**, a play about 6 Southern belles whose tight bond of friendship helps them to deal with life's challenges. Filled with humor and heart-break, this comedy-drama will have us laughing and crying. Set in Truvy's beauty salon in Chinquapin, Louisiana, where all the ladies who are "anybody" come to have their hair done, *Steel Magnolias* is filled with hilarious repartee and humorously revealing verbal collisions. The play moves toward tragedy when the realization of their mortality not only affects the women profoundly, but also draws on their underlying strength—and love—which make them truly touching, funny and marvelously amiable company in good times and bad. Play by Robert Harling. Directed by John Mayer. **Tickets are \$15.** A limited number of seats have been reserved and **must be purchased from Linda Owen (529-5659) by DECEMBER 30.** Payment can be made in cash or by check made out to Linda Owen



After the show we'll move to Perko's on Carpenter Road for continued fellowship.



Fellowship Meal



### Young Adult Gathering

If you consider yourself a young adult, join the group at Thai House on Tully Road at 6 PM on Friday, December 7. Child care is available at the church by request.



The next F.U.N. Night will be Friday, December 14. Family Unity Night (F.U.N.) is for families with children from kindergarten to sixth grade. Come for food, fellowship and FUN!



### ANNUAL LADIES CHRISTMAS TEA

Saturday, December 8  
2:00 PM

RSVP BY DECEMBER 3  
[karleenfelton@gmail.com](mailto:karleenfelton@gmail.com)

**Do you have an  
announcement you would  
like the congregation to see  
on the big screen, before  
Sunday worship begins?  
Please send any  
announcements to the  
church office at  
[office@modcob.org](mailto:office@modcob.org) by  
Wednesday evenings.  
Thank you!**



### Calling All Knitters!

Knitters are welcome to join a group that began by knitting prayer shawls, and has diversified into other items, some for charity, some for family members. We meet at Pat Royer's, Casa De Modesto, Apt 1004.



*Articles and photos for  
the next issue of Chimes  
are due by Saturday,  
December 15. Email to:  
[chimes@modcob.org](mailto:chimes@modcob.org)  
The Editor thanks you.*

# The Condensed Calendar



Monday

Tuesday

1:30 pm Knitting Group Casa De, Apt 1004

Wednesday

6 pm Faith Bites

7 pm Choir

Thursday

6 pm Advent Book Study

Friday

6 pm Young Adult Gathering Thai House-Tully Road

Saturday

2 pm Ladies' Christmas Tea-Daniels' Home

Next Sunday-December 9

9:30 am Sunday Morning Study

11 am Worship



First Sunday in Advent



2nd SUNDAY of Advent



December 10 6 pm Board Meeting

December 13 6 pm Advent Book Study

December 14 6 pm FUN Event

December 16 12:30 pm Holiday Luncheon

December 20 6 pm Advent Book Study

December 21 6 pm Prospectors Christmas Party—Williams' home

December 24-25 Christmas--Office closed

December 26 NO FAITH BITES



January 1 New Year's Day - Office Closed

January 5 Board/Commission Retreat

January 15 6 PM John McCutcheon Concert

January 19 Sr. Ministry - Heart of the Valley Quilt & Textile Arts Show Modesto Centre Plaza

January 21 Martin Luther King Jr. Day - Office Closed



February 2 Sr. Ministries - *Steel Magnolias* at Gallo Center

## Welcome Statement



Believing that God's unbounded love and grace, as taught by Jesus, are offered to all and meant to be shared and celebrated by all, we embrace persons of every age, race, sexual orientation, ethnic and religious background, physical and mental ability, and economic means as vital and integral members of God's family. As an Open and Affirming congregation we welcome everyone to participate in the life and worship of our church.