



The Chimes

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Modesto Church of the Brethren

2301 Woodland Avenue, Modesto, CA 95358-9501 (209)523-1438

fax: 209-523-1469 ♦ e-mail: office@modcob.org ♦ web site: www.modcob.org

Pastor: Andrew Sampson Ministers: Every Member of the Congregation

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



The sermon texts will look at these prophets with Jeremiah (33:14-18) on December 1, Isaiah (40:1-11) on December 8, Ezra (1:1-4; 3:1-4, 10-13) on December 15, December 22 is Zechariah (Luke 1:5-13, 57-80), and Christmas Eve is Luke's telling of the birth in Luke 2.

Quiz Question: Which Gospels tell of Jesus' birth?

We will celebrate Advent around the theme, "Kindle a Flame," as we prepare ourselves for Jesus' birth. During worship we will have special elements added to the worship services such as celebrating the 300th anniversary of, "Joy to the World," a popular Christmas song (that is not located in the Christmas section of our *Hymnal*). Additionally, the children will sing on December 15, the handbell choir will perform, those wishing to sing Christmas carols can come fifteen minutes early, and a whole host of other specials!

In addition, on **December 8**, the worship service will begin at **10:45** for the purpose of singing some ADVENT CAROLS! So, come early so we can sing some carols we don't often sing for worship.

The Jewish prophets spoke for centuries of how one day a Messiah would come, and for Christians we celebrate that person as Jesus.



Greeters for December:

8th-Edie Ransom and Julie Coons

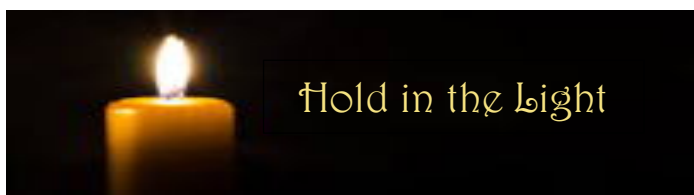
15th-Carole Greathouse and Linda Bustle

22nd-Larry and Luella Cole

29th-Akpovi Family



Hold the family of Gene Palsgrove in your prayers. Gene passed away on November 25. News about a memorial will be forthcoming.



Joys and Concerns from November 24:

Rita Matthews celebrated another year of life. She also rejoices that her nephew has recuperated enough from his head injury to go back to work.

Mary Pieczarka asked for prayers for her son Peter as he drove cross country.

Terhesa Gamboa asked for prayers for her friend Robert who is in jail again, but wants to make a change.

Shaun Gepley celebrated that Ezra is smiling.

Joys and Concerns from December 1

Jonathan Goodrich's mother's heart issues have improved

Luella Cole asked for prayers for Larry, who has an infection in his foot.

Items of Note

Serving at the 9th & D Shelter to End on December 11

Our final meal preparation and serving for the Salvation Army Shelter will occur on Wednesday, December 11. Our cooks must stop cooking due to health problems, so we have informed the Salvation Army that we will not serve meals from January to May, 2020. However, we wanted to honor our commitment for December and are able to do so. Our pastor Andrew Sampson, who has cooking experience for large groups, will be the chief cook assisted by others. Volunteers to serve are still welcome.

Faith Bites at the Church on December 11 will be a potluck.

The Shelter reports that we can still help with serving next year even if we don't bring food. Further information will be forthcoming.

The Church, our cooks and volunteers should take comfort in the fact that we were able to provide excellent meals for so many years. A big "Thank you" to Sue and David Messamer and their helpers for cooking great meals for us and the homeless!

~Jim Costello, For the Witness Commission



As we're saying goodbye to fall and Thanksgiving leftovers, it's time to say hello to winter and begin to focus on Advent. The Quiet Place has been updated to reflect the changing seasons and our theme for Advent:

"Journey into the Light".

Here you will find seasonal colors, images and music 'reflecting' this focus. You're invited to 'come, one and all & see for yourself'...



COUNCIL INCREASES SUPPORT FOR LGBT ISSUES

The last Chimes had a well-written summary of our Council Meeting on November 17th that included a brief statement about changes in the Witness Commission budget. In my opinion, those changes were significant and need more clarification and explanation.

The changes the Witness Commission made for our outreach giving was to provide better support for LGBTQ persons to be included in congregations throughout the Church of the Brethren. The changes included reducing our giving for the general work of the denomination, namely the Mission and Ministry Board, by \$4,000 a year and increasing our outreach commitment to On Earth Peace and the Supportive Community Network by \$2,000 each. Both of these organizations work to help LGBTQ persons become accepted as equals in Brethren Congregations. These changes were discussed with questions for clarity and were passed unanimously as a part of the budget recommended by the board.

The meaning behind these changes is that we are not only an Open and Affirming congregation but we are increasing our support for the work that needs to be done to help LGBTQ persons to be heard and be included in Brethren congregations throughout the denomination. I would propose that our next step would be to inform the Mission and Ministry Board and Annual Conference about the changes we have made and why we made them.

Only a few Brethren congregations are Open and Affirming. Denominational leadership is pushing hard for unity

through the Compelling Vision program to the point of ignoring the fact that most of our churches are denying membership to 4.5% of the population (namely the LGBTQ community). I think unity is not as important as having all of our churches be welcoming to all people. In my opinion it is time the denomination faces that fact and deals with it directly.

In my mind, the changes the Witness Commission made in our budget were positive and significant in our congregation's support of the denomination as a whole and speak very clearly and faithfully to my understanding of Christ's message. ~Felton Daniels

A TIME TO GIVE

We are near to meeting our budget for 2109; however, the Stewards are asking our church family to give a little extra this last month of the year to ensure that we meet our budget. Last year the giving for December was a little over \$30,000, which indeed enabled us to meet our budget. We ask at this time that you consider a little extra giving this month. We are covering the monthly operating expenses, but could use some help meeting our outreach goals. We are a church that believes in putting our faith into action. One way we do this is through helping others locally and around the world through local organizations such as Interfaith Ministries and Family Promise, and Church of the Brethren denominational ministries, such as Brethren Disaster Ministry and Global Food Initiative. We thank you for your generosity. Prayerfully, Your Stewards



A special Christmas piano recital will be presented by Linda Bustle featuring her piano students on Sunday, December 8th, at 3:00 in the Sanctuary at Modesto Church of the Brethren. Also included in the program is an organ & piano duet with Linda Williams and Linda Bustle

We look forward to seeing you there to begin a celebration of secular & sacred Christmas music for this season. Following the recital will be a reception with the opportunity for getting to visit with each other.



There's still time to sign up for the **Senior Ministries' Tour of the House of Nativities on Dec. 6**. All the displays are in Toni Conway's home or garage, so this is an **indoor** tour. To sign up, just let Linda Owen know at 529-5659 or dlo2@sbcglobal.net



Our Annual Prospector Christmas Party is coming soon!

6 p.m. December 14, 2019

At the home of Eldon and Linda Williams
3200 Barbera Ln.

Please bring a **"finger-food"** dish to share.
(Appetizer or sweet items)

It's very important to look in your closets, garage or storage shed for that once-treasured **white elephant gift**. Wrap up your chosen gift and bring it to the party.

See you soon!



Ladies - Celebrate the Season

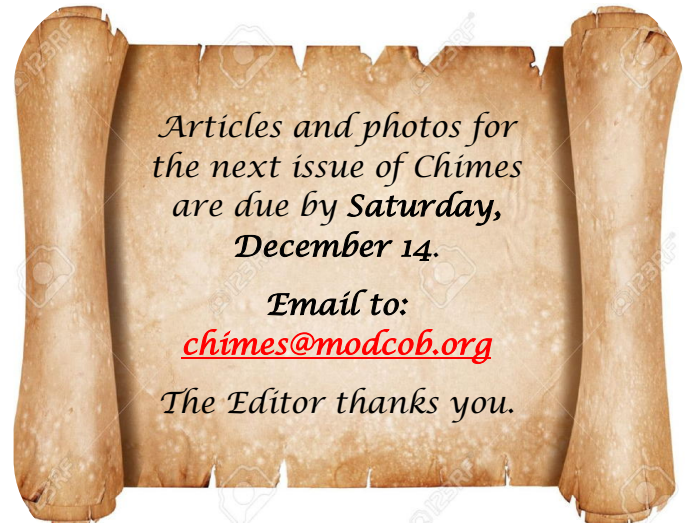
At the home of Annaliese Hausler-Akpovi ,
401 East Fairmont Ave., Modesto

Thursday, Dec. 19 at 5:00

Bring a sweet or savory finger-food and your \$5 gift for the fun-filled exchange



Seniors, get ready for another tour through Europe. Your guide this time will be Peggy Hoover as she shows pictures and tells tales of her 4 week trip through Germany (Viking River Cruise on the Elbe), The Czech Republic (Prague), Poland (Krakow, and Warsaw), England (London), and France (Evian, Versailles, Normandy, Le Mont Saint Michel and Paris). The tour will take place **Thursday, January 9th, 2020**, at the church. Come at 12 noon for a \$7 lunch.



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.



The Condensed Calendar



Monday, December 2

5:30 pm Bldg. & Grounds meeting
7 pm Personnel Meeting

Tuesday, December 3

11 am Young at Heart exercise group
1 pm Bible Study

Wednesday, December 4

1 pm Caffeinated Church-Commonwealth
5 pm Stewardship meeting
6 pm Faith Bites
7 pm Choir rehearsal

Thursday, December 5

11 am Young at Heart exercise group
6 pm Book study

Friday, December 6

10am Sr. Ministry-Tour of Nativities

Saturday, December 7

Next Sunday, December 8

9:30 am Sunday School
11 am Worship
12:15 pm Witness meeting
3



December 9 6:30pm Board Meeting

December 11 12pm Caffeinated Church-
Fuzio's

December 11 Serving at 9th & D

December 11 6pm Faith Bites **POTLUCK**

December 12 6pm Book study

December 14 6pm Prospector Christmas Party
Williams' home

December 15 5pm Candles & Carols

December 18 6pm Christmas Caroling

December 19 6pm Book Study

December 20 6pm FUN Night

December 22 6pm Young Adult Christmas
Party-Boardman's home

December 24 Office Closed

December 24 7:30pm Christmas Eve Service

December 25 Christmas-Office Closed

December 25 NO FAITH BITES

December 31 New Year's Eve



January 1 New Year's Day-Office closed

January 7 10:30 Sr. Ministries Meeting

January 9 12 noon Sr. Ministries Lunch-
Tour of Europe program

January 14 7pm John McCutcheon Concert

January 18 8:30am Board Retreat

January 20 Martin Luther King Jr. Day-
Office Closed