

THE BURRO BULLETIN

DECEMBER 2020

YEAR-END ISSUE

Our Bishop
District Superintendent

The Rev. Grant Hagiya
Rev. Melissa Roux MacKinnon

The Church Staff is here to serve you:

Ministers
Senior Pastor
Associate Pastor
Co-Lay Leaders
Secretary

The Members of this Church
The Rev. Dr. Martin Niponi Finau
Pastor Xavier Torres
Len Johnson and Ruth Pemble
Jacqueline M. Wosczyk

Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday, 8:30 am to 3:30 pm
Wednesday 12:30 pm to 2:30 pm



Moreno Valley United Methodist Church

Moreno Valley, California
THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

10271 Heacock Street
Moreno Valley, CA 92557-2200
(951) 924-6990
morenovalleyumc@gmail.com

Change Service Requested

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Please join us for worship at
10 am each Sunday on YouTube
At Box Spring Parish - UMC



THURSDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2020:

Join us for Our Christmas Eve Candlelight Service with a very special collaboration of music from Box Springs Cooperative Parish. We invite each family to prepare your candles from home as we celebrate this special Christmas Eve with one another. The video should be available by 5 pm on December 24th.



SUNDAY, DECEMBER 27, 2020:

Join us as we celebrate the First Sunday after Christmas and worship from Highgrove with Pastor Finau

SUNDAY, JANUARY 03, 2021:

Join us for worship as we celebrate the Second Sunday after Christmas and the first Sunday in January through Drive-up Holy Communion from Moreno Valley from 10 am to 11 am with Pastor Finau



MORENO VALLEY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

10271 Heacock Street
Moreno Valley, CA 92557-2200
(951) 924-6990

Pastor's Corner



Come, Thou
Long-Expected

Jesus

December 8, 2020

Dear Beloved Church,

Christmas season serves as a remarkable reminder of the wonders of Christ's birth. Despite an ever-changing year, God our Emmanuel continues to do amazing things in our daily lives. This is a special time of the year when we partake in God's abundant blessings and respond to His amazing grace with joy and gladness. It is a time when we all celebrate the world's greatest story of a Divine baby, the Prince of Peace, who was born out of God's love for us all.

Although we will not gather in person to celebrate the Christmas nativity nor feast on the excitement of the season this year, Christmas is still present! The reason for Christmas remains steadfast -- "Love came down on Christmas day." My heart shouts with joy as we prepare this season to celebrate Christ's birth.

After decorating the Christmas tree at home, I put the star of David on top. This reminds me of the wondrous star that led the wise men to a stable in Bethlehem. Looking at the star, I pondered on all the people throughout the centuries who have looked up to the heavens for God's guidance. "Praise Him, sun and moon; Praise Him, all stars of light!" (Psalm 148:3)

That star symbolizes the light that Christ brings into our broken and dark world. It is a light of love, peace, joy and salvation that reconnects us to God and to one another. The Advent candles that we will light in our church and in our homes this Christmas will bring Christ into our midst. Isaiah 60:1 tells us, "Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you."

One of my favorite resources throughout Advent and Christmas is Howard Thurman's "The Mood of Christmas." In this book, he offers this poem:

I will light candles this Christmas,
Candles of joy despite all the sadness,
Candles of hope where despair keeps watch,
Candles of courage where fear is ever present,
Candles of peace for tempest-tossed days,
Candles of grace to ease heavy burdens,
Candles of love to inspire all my living,
Candles that will burn all the year long.

I hope you will continue to join our online services during this Advent season and join us for our candlelight service on Christmas Eve, December 24. Don't forget our drive-through communion on Sunday, December 13, when we will also pass out the children's Christmas gifts.

I am eager to see what God has in store for us in the new year. Let us all step forward in this journey together and see how our lives and ministries will be transformed in ways we could never imagine. I am grateful for all the ways you support the ministries of the Box Springs Parish and pray that you will continue to do so with your prayers, presence, service, gifts, and witness in 2021.

Christmas Blessings and a Prosperous New Year!

Rev. Dr. Martin Niponi Finau

Christmas Traditions

(<https://www.history.com/news/christmas-traditions-history>)

Christmas Trees - Decorated trees date back to Germany in the Middle Ages, with German and other European settlers popularizing Christmas trees in America by the early 19th century. A New York woodsman named Mark Carr is credited with opening the first U.S. Christmas tree lot in 1851. A 2019 survey by the American Christmas Tree Association, predicted that 77 percent of U.S. households displayed a Christmas tree in their home. Among the trees on display, an estimated 81 percent were artificial and 19 percent were real.



Ricardo Reitmeyer/Getty Images

The Rockettes - Since 1925, first known as the Missouri Rockets, this iconic dance troupe has been kicking up its heels, officially becoming the Radio City Music Hall Rockettes in 1934. From performing at movie openings to entertaining troops to making TV appearances, they're perhaps best-known for their annual *Christmas Spectacular*.



Yale Joel/The LIFE Picture Collection/Getty Images

A Charlie Brown Christmas - Decades later, it may be hard to imagine that this beloved TV special inspired by Charles Schulz's *Peanuts* comic strip was first rejected by CBS executives. But when it finally aired on December 9, 1965, almost half of all U.S. TV sets were tuned to the broadcast, and the show went on to win an Emmy, a Peabody, an enduring following and even a trend of "Charlie Brown" Christmas trees. "I never thought it was such a bad little tree," Linus says in the special. "It's not bad at all, really. Maybe it just needs a little love."



Walt Disney Television/Getty Images

Christmas Pickles - If there's a pickle among your snowman, angel and reindeer ornaments, you're likely taking part in the American tradition of hiding the green ornament on the tree, so that the first child to find it wins a gift, or gets to open the first present Christmas morning. The practice's origins are a bit murky (or should that be briny?), but, it's likely it grew from a Woolworths marketing gimmick from the late 1800s, when the retailer received imported German ornaments shaped like a pickle and needed a sales pitch.



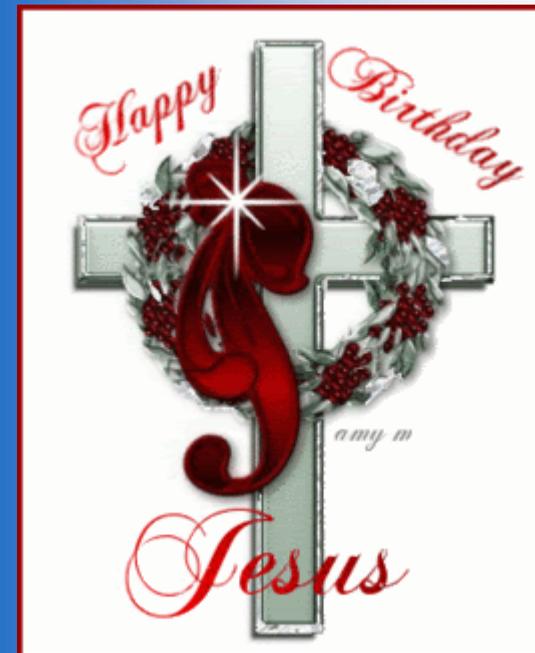
The Christmas pickle is designed to be hard to find.
Grabill Creative/Getty Images

What are your Christmas Traditions?

December Birthdays & Anniversaries

12/1	Moana Paea
12/2	Toka Paea
12/3	Pastor Finau
12/4	David Finau
12/10	Lucy Stewart
12/16	Angella Thompson-Shaw
12/17	Alma Mendoza
12/18	Rubi Ha-Hernandez
12/19	Rene Bender
12/22	Triza Samuel
12/25	Jesus Christ
12/26	Salesi Paea
12/26	Dago Garcia
12/30	Kathy Maefau
12/31	Pava Paea, Sr.

12/20 Chuck & Jeanne Gahagan




December

The Christmas Story

Luke 2:4-20

4 Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. 5 He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. 6 While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. 7 And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

8 In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. 9 Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 10 But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: 11 to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. 12 This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger. 13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

14 "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

15 When the angels had left them and gone into the heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." 16 So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the child lying in the manger. 17 When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; 18 and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them, 19 But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. 20 The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.



Blessing One Another at Thanksgiving



Blessing One Another at Christmas

Drive-up Communion and Santa presenting gifts to the Children



Our Very First Zoom Box Springs Cooperative Parish Christmas Party



Treasurer's Report

Finance News

We hope that you and your family's health is good, that you are able to enjoy the love and attention of those who are dear to you (even if only remotely) and that held up by faith in our God and His mercies, you have been equal to the trials of this year and feel ready for those of the next one.

It looks as if our church will end this year down financially from where we began—but not a great deal down. This is despite needing major roof repairs and despite the monetary stress created by the virus. Holding our own has been possible through a combination of grants and loans from our Conference and District, a loan from the CARES federal relief act (which will become a grant before any payments are necessary), and—most importantly—the steady support of our members. At the start of the new year, we will be able to share more detailed information with everyone.

Those who keep track of such things know how important our church apportionments are. These are the monies we pay to the Conference to help support the structure, programs and missions of the church: apportionments are literally the “united” in “United Methodist Church.” Because of the economic stress created by the pandemic, the Conference changed the goal for each church this year. It was reset to 75% of the original goal. We are glad to report that with what was given for apportionment by our members this year, we were able to slightly more than meet that new, lower goal. The small amount that was collected above that amount was included in our gift to the Conference. Next year, however, all our churches will need to step up their support and meet their full, original goals, as we have done for years.

When we return to worship at the church, we will notice some unusual new items added to our inventory. The most conspicuous will be the hand sanitizer stations, which are likely to be with us for some time. Vaccinations are at last underway (Hallelujah!), but it will be a long process getting things back to normal, and the new normal will probably look not quite like the old one. What has always been in our church and personal inventories, however, what has been the most important item for the church, has been our faith, prayer, and hope--and the actions that spring from them. We pray that all of you are able to experience the joy and love of Christmas and the hope that is Christmas and New Year's Day. We pray, also, that we will all continue to find the patience we will need in the months to come.

Aki and Chuck



~PRAY WITHOUT CEASING~



FOR COMFORT ~

Family of **Leonard Watkins**.

FOR GOOD HEALTH ~

Mickie Pecoraro (friend of the Wagners), **Lucas Cameron** (friend of Debbie Abry), **Vincent Siale Po'oi** (Siosaia & Eneio's nephew), **Makatapu Paea** (father of Salesi), **Sam Walker**, **Kinsley Hunt** (friend of Debbie Abry), **Sue Jones** (sister of Debbie Abry), **Ron Meeter** (friend of Debbie Abry), **Perry Wahe** (father of Amy Fish), **Dago Garcia**, **Mike Williamson** (grandfather of Charlie Williamson), **Ron Stewart** (son of Earl & Lucy Stewart), **Madelyn Tuckerman** (granddaughter of Sandy Young), **Carlos Melendez**, **Aley Wallace** (friend of Alissa Abry), **Mildred** (mother of Kathy Brewer), **Manuel Mendoza** (son of Alma Mendoza), **Jack Dandurand**, **Michelle Quillen** (friend of Debbie Abry), **Marcia Carpenter**, **Charity Njopera**, **Bruce Crabtree**, **Sharon Richards** (sister-in-law of John Richards), **Deborah Blake**, **Brad Avooske**, **Amelia Ellis**, **Wilbur Mallett**, **Billy Lytle** (friend of Christina Williamson), **Barbara Tippery** (grandmother of Christina Williamson), **Deanna Fifita**, **Gabriel Mora** (friend of Claudia Garcia), **Marlene Wells** (Net Allen's mother), **Ivon** (friend of Amy Fish), **Jeff Fields** (friend of Vic DeLeeuw), **Doug Peterson** (nephew of Karin Richards), **Bob Sparks** (grandfather of Christina & Charles Williamson), **Jessica Bourgoin** (daughter of Jan Hill), **Sara Santacruz** (sister of Alma Mendoza), **Dorothy Whittington**, **Karin Richards**, **Isabel Harper** (Sandy Young's daughter-in-law's mom), **Janet Shoff** (mother in law of Alma Mendoza's daughter), **Virginia** (Mother of Zeny Clark), **Estella Cox**, **Andy Young** (Sandy's husband), **Noah Barberina** (friend of Al and Mindy Wagner), **Andrew Stephano** (requested by John Vaiaku), **William Jones**, **Nolan Niebla**, **Robine Smith** (friend of Eneio Vaiaku), **Edith Jones** (sister of Martha Bayne), **Grace Galam** (friend of Alisa Castro), **George Lisalda** (husband of Dana Lisalda), **Patti** (sister of Sandy Young), **Wendy Baltazar**, **Dr. Ellen Smith** (friend of Debbie Abry), **Doug**, **Alycia Davis & Sydney**, **Mila Maefau**, **Lindsey Brown** (friend of Martha Bayne), **Pat Gates** (sister of Martha Bayne), **Gloria Keeney** (sister of Karin Richards), **Jacqueline Williams** (boss of Eneio Vaiaku), **Marge Johnson** (mother of Lenny Johnson), **Mike & Georgia Brown**, **James Mateaki**, **Jonathan Garcia**, **Zaveth Cortez** (sister of Elizabeth Garcia), **Allison Sager**, **Lawson Hill** (brother of Alicia Lowe), **Net Allen**, **Makatapu Paea** (oldest son of Tangikina & Salesi Paea), **Robert Woszyk** (husband of Jackie Woszyk), **Henry** (oldest brother of Ruth Van Hala), **Sophia** (niece of Marcus Van Hala), **Gary** (brother-in-law of John Bender), **Jan** (mother of Gary), **Yesenia Newman**, **Samantha Lopez** (granddaughter of Claudia and Dago Garcia), **Troy Anderson** (cousin's son of Mindy Wagner), **Family of Michael Martin** (friend of Alisa Castro), **Brent Clark** (colleague of Martha Bayne's daughter), **"G"** (student of Carol Howk), **Carol** (sister of Tammy Simmons, friend of Ruth Pemble), Lorraine's brother), **Michael and Mae Bender** (John & Rene Bender's son & daughter-in-law), **Laura & Hugh Mcquitty** (Martha Bayne's niece and her husband), **Sharon & Todd Billman** (Good friends of Tim & Miki Lawler), **Carmen & Antonio** (Grandparents of Desiree Wagner), **Maria De La Luz Sanchez** (Co-worker's mom of Claudia Garcia), **Kevin Feliciano** (son of Gloria Feliciano)

FOR STRENGTH & DIRECTION ~

Pastor Finau, **Avery & Merlin Villareal** (friends of Elizabeth Garcia), **Rafael Cortez Jr.** (brother of Elizabeth Garcia), **Victor Leyva** (friend of Vera), **Christina Williamson**, **Dr. Ellen Smith & Leigh** (friends of Debbie Abry), **Alofa Paea**, **Cindi Hunter's family** (friends of Debbie Abry), **Astrid Cervantes** (granddaughter of the Van Halas), **Mary Aultfather** (sister of Ruth Van Hala), **Shoff family**, **Alma Mendoza**, **Jennifer Martini** (friend of Amy Fish), **Scherf Family**, **Wallace Family**, **Gloria Keeney** (sister of Karin Richards)

FOR OUR SERVICEMEN AND SERVICEWOMEN ~

Matthew Muller, **Anthony Muller**, **Scott Snodgrass**, **David Olson**, **Sgt. John Vuki**, **Luke Hamann**, **Edna Folau**, **Justin Grimm**, **Adam Bleau**, **Sgt. Jeremiah Scott Villareal**