



# The Vine

## December 2020



United Methodist Church  
1031 Iowa Ave. Los Banos, CA 93635  
E-MAIL Address: [umclb@att.net](mailto:umclb@att.net)  
YouTube: Link available on our website weekly  
Website: [umclb.net](http://umclb.net)  
Phone (209) 826-4181  
*Address Service Requested*

### Worship Service:

**On YouTube or Live on Facebook.**

**Church Office Hours:** Office closed but secretary can be reached by leaving a message on church phone. It will be checked daily.

**Pastor: Rev. Jim Garrison**

**Church Secretary: Cassie Wolf-Miyamoto**

### HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU!

8 <sup>th</sup> Christopher Foxworthy	13 <sup>th</sup> Ann Simmons
14 <sup>th</sup> Amanda Basque	14 <sup>th</sup> Bill Tucker
14 <sup>th</sup> Dennis Morris	15 <sup>th</sup> Robert Doubek
17 <sup>th</sup> Bud Ramsey	19 <sup>th</sup> Beth Sloan Johnson
23 <sup>rd</sup> Juli Rice	30 <sup>th</sup> Kristofer Hew
31 <sup>st</sup> Lynn Martin	31 <sup>st</sup> Robert Cardenas

### Anniversaries 2020

December 4 <sup>th</sup>	Bill & Debbie Tucker
December 31 <sup>st</sup>	Hans & Susan Younce

**November** contributions total: \$ 5,903.75

**Attendance online for November:** 1<sup>st</sup> (20) 8<sup>th</sup> (30) 15<sup>th</sup> (30) 22<sup>nd</sup> (51) 29<sup>th</sup> (61)  
In-person: 1<sup>st</sup> (29) 8<sup>th</sup> (22) 15<sup>th</sup> (19)

From the Pastor -

**Dreaming in 2020**

I'm dreaming of a right Christmas  
Just like the ones from long ago  
Where we all could gather  
With those that matter  
Like family, church, and folks you know

I'm dreaming of a safe Christmas  
Where restaurants serve the food inside  
Where hugs aren't scary  
And we wear nary  
A mask, our cheerful smiles to hide

I'm dreaming of a just Christmas  
No matter the color of our skin  
Where all are treated fairly  
And hate's seen rarely  
And love shall overpower sin

I'm dreaming of bounteous Christmas  
With no one sleeping in the street  
Where the kids have coats warm  
Staying safe from all harm  
And everyone has enough to eat

I'm dreaming of a holy Christmas  
In wonder worshipping the Lord  
Where the whole world sees us  
Sharing love like Jesus  
And follows him in one accord

I'm dreaming of a glorious Christmas  
'Cuz that's what Christ is dreaming too  
I pray that you can hear it  
And let His Spirit  
Make His dreams come true in you

Peace of Our Lord be with you,

*Jim*

**Christmas Giving Projects**

\* Done by Amanda Bascue

\* **Christmas Dinner** for anyone who \*

\* would like a warm meal will be

\* served December 12<sup>th</sup> @ 5pm.

\* Please wear a mask, meal will be

\* served to go.

\*\*\*\*\* \*

\* **Amanda is collecting:** coats,

\* gloves, socks for the homeless.

\* Please bring to her or the office by \*

\* **December 17<sup>th</sup>**. She would also like \*gift

\* cards for the children (no \*presents this

\* year) due to COVID-19 \*but she is allowed

\* to hand out gift \*cards. If you are bringing

\* them to \*the office please call first and

\* leave \*a time on the machine and your

\* name so I can call you back and \*make

\* sure I am in the office.

\*\*\*\*\*

\* **Christmas Family in need**- Amanda \*is

\* collecting money for gift cards or \*gift

\* cards this year for a family in \*need. With

\* COVID-19 restrictions \*she feels this is

\* better so that the \*children and children's

\* parents are \*the only ones to handle the

\* gifts. \*Please have the money or gift cards

\* to her by December 17<sup>th</sup>. Please see

\* attached flyer for script ideas (two \*sided

\* flyer).

\* If you want further information \*contact

\* Amanda Bascue at

\* [email4amandaB@gmail.com](mailto:email4amandaB@gmail.com) or call

\* her : (209) 704-3304. Thank you!

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## Administrative Council Highlights – November 17, 2020

The Ad Council met by Zoom conference on Tuesday, November 17, 2020 with seven people present. The following items were discussed:

- **Church Re-Opening.** With Merced County now in the Purple tier, indoor worship services are again prohibited. An option is outdoor services, but with upcoming cold weather, we will go back to recorded services. The NA and AA groups want to keep meeting indoors in small numbers, which the District Superintendent has okayed if they get an exemption letter from the County Health Department. We have been assured that there will be only 10 to 13 at their meetings, and they have been trained on proper cleaning of the sites, using their own cleaning supplies.

We have tried to livestream Sunday services a few times, but only succeeded once, due to Internet issues. Jim and Cassie have checked into two other Internet service providers, to improve on our 25 Mbps current DSL service through AT&T, which costs about \$160 per month and also includes two telephone lines. Xfinity has many options, and the package that seems most applicable to us would cost about \$200 per month with a download speed of 300 Mbps, but just one phone line. One other provider was contacted, but it would include no telephone service and uses radio waves, requiring us to erect one or two antennas. There was some question as to whether 300 Mbps would be fast enough for our needs, and after some discussion, staff was authorized to deal with Xfinity and commit to up to \$250 per month for the best package available to meet the church's needs.

- **Nurture, Outreach and Witness (NOW).** The NOW team met by Zoom, talking first about our return to the Purple tier, prohibiting indoor worship. All agreed we should not meet outside, but again videotape weekly services. Tawny and Shannan are planning a taped Christmas pageant featuring our Sunday school children, hopefully along with the kids from Dos Palos. The Dos Palos church is making Christmas baskets, including Christian books, for their children.

The Nazarene Church is now helping with Manna. NOW will not meet in December. Christmas Eve services were discussed. Cassie is to canvas the congregation to see how many might go to an outdoor candlelight service if we are still in the Purple tier. Regardless, a livestream and/or taped service should be produced and posted. We will also give people a chance to “purchase” virtual poinsettias, like we did for the Easter lilies, to raise money for our Conference obligations.

- **Trustees.** The Sloan family has agreed to finance almost the whole cost to refurbish the pews in Bill's memory. The Council talked about maybe buying 200 chairs instead, for about the same cost, to provide more flexibility in the use of the sanctuary. There was no consensus as to which way to proceed, but it was agreed to pursue the chair concept only if the Sloan family was in support.
- **UMW.** There was no news to report, and it is uncertain about the annual UMW Christmas party. Jim offered to help set up Zoom meetings, if so desired.
- **Financial Report.** October collections were \$10,712.82; paid expenses were \$10,641.47. The October 31 checkbook balance was \$8,668.25, and all of the church's October bills were paid up to date, except for a \$1,000.00 tithe payment to the Conference.
- **Staff-Parish Relations Committee.** The SPRC met by Zoom in November to work on some end-of-year reporting that needs to be submitted to the Conference.
- **2020 Charge Conference.** Our combined Charge Conference with the Dos Palos church was held as a Zoom meeting on October 31. Jim has discovered that the membership report needs to be corrected, so the minutes will be revised before they are forwarded on.
- **Next Meeting of Administrative Council.** The December meeting was cancelled, so the next meeting will be January 5, 2021.
- **People in Need; Parish Care.** Prayers were requested for Cathie Lopez, Tom Shepherd, Kathy Garrison and Dan Bonillas.



## Vine Monthly Events December

All meetings and events are suspended or are being done on Zoom conferencing until we are out of the Purple tier in COVID-19 restriction levels. Thank you for your patience and communication during this time.

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**Note: Boy Scouts** - Still working together online and meeting when safe at the scout hut. We are currently selling popcorn to raise money for scouts who need help with annual dues. If you are interested in the yummy popcorn (it makes great Christmas gifts!) Please contact Mackenzie Ferreira @ [bigreddogfan@yahoo.com](mailto:bigreddogfan@yahoo.com) and she will give you the link to make an order. This is a great way to support our local boy scouts. Boy Scouts did a canned goods drive November 21<sup>st</sup> and got over 200 cans for Manna Ministries' pantry, way to help boys!! Thanks!

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Important dates:

**December 1<sup>st</sup>** - No Admin. Council meeting- Next one will be Jan. 5, 2021

**December 7<sup>th</sup>** - Remembering Peral Harbor Day

**December 9<sup>th</sup>** - No SPRC Meeting - Will resume in January

**December 21<sup>st</sup>** - No NOW Meeting - Will resume in January

**December 24<sup>th</sup>** - **Christmas Eve Service - 7PM** Outside w/candles

**December 25<sup>th</sup>** - **Merry Christmas ! Glory, Glory, Christmas Day!**

**December 31<sup>st</sup>** - New Year's Eve

**E-Giving** – Did you know? There are now 8 families in our church using Vanco Give Plus to donate to the church securely and conveniently online! Accounts and payments can easily be set up and initiated on a laptop or desktop computer, or by using a mobile phone, using the free Give Plus app.

The other easy way is to go to our website: [www.umclb.net](http://www.umclb.net) , there is a link for this purpose there. If you have questions, please see Gregg Rice or Bud Ramsey. Thank you!

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This Photo by Unknown Author

We are doing our poinsettia donation again, where you can purchase a real or virtual poinsettia and have it be in memory or honor of a person of your choice. Please see the poinsettia insert in this Newsletter. Please specify if you are giving in memory or honor of a person or persons and if you want a real poinsettia to be picked up by you after the Christmas Eve service or if you just want the virtual. Both mean that a list of persons who are being remembered and/or honored will be in the next Newsletter. Thank you for all who participate. Please include your phone number on the flyer so if I need help spelling your person's name correctly, I can call you. Thank you, Cassie

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If you need help or wish to have prayers, please contact the church office at 209-826-4181, phone line is checked daily, or call the secretary or Pastor using the numbers provided in your church directory. Thank you.



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The Peace of the Lord Be with You All!

UMCLB Church Staff

# Christmas Poinsettias



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If you would like to purchase a Poinsettia to decorate our Christmas Eve Service, Please fill out the information below.

**Cost is \$10.00**

In Honor of

---

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In Memory of

---

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Your Name:

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Your Phone #:

**Please take your Poinsettias home after the Christmas Eve Service.**

Thank you!

Virtual Please mark one:

Real

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If you would like to purchase a Poinsettia to decorate our Christmas Eve Service, Please fill out the information below.

**Cost is \$10.00**

In Honor of

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**Please take your Poinsettias home after the Christmas Eve Service.**

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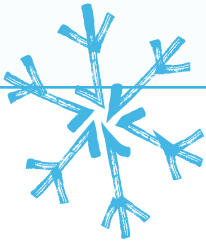
### ***SCRIP TIP OF THE MONTH***

Are you looking for Christmas gifts that are easy to buy and easy to ship? Or maybe last-minute stocking stuffers? We aren't Santa's elves, but we are here to help make your shopping easier, while at the same time benefitting our church.

Please contact us to check out the wide variety of gift cards we have on hand for immediate purchase, good for food, gas or merchandise at most local stores and eateries. We can also print paper certificates and electronic gift "cards" almost immediately for items that we do not have on hand, or that can't wait for more traditional means of delivery, such as UPS or Santa's sleigh.

In this newsletter is a partial listing of available gift cards that we can secure, along with an indication of how much the scrip program earns from each of them. Please take a look at the listing for some gift ideas. We encourage you to also visit [www.ShopWithScrip.com/shop](http://www.ShopWithScrip.com/shop) for the full list of the hundreds of participating retailers that are available. Please contact Gregg or Juli Rice by phone at (209) 826-1027 or (209) 761-2737, or by e-mail at [grice@inreach.com](mailto:grice@inreach.com) if you have any questions, would like to see what we have on hand, or would like to place an order. Any orders that we receive by December 20 will get to Los Banos in time for Christmas.





## Your holiday gifting list

More potential with every purchase

### Adventure seeker

EARNINGS %

#### Gear

Bass Pro Shops	10%
Cabela's	10%
Dick's Sporting Goods	8%
Land's End	15%
L.L. Bean	16%
The North Face	8%

#### Travel

Airbnb	5%
Delta	4%
Hilton	2%
Speedway	4%
Uber	2.5%

### Foodie

Applebee's	8%
Arby's	8%
Buffalo Wing Wings®	8%
Chili's Grill & Bar	11%
Chipotle Mexican Grill	10%
Domino's	8%
Happy Dining	8%
Home Chef	7.5%
Outback Steakhouse	10%
Panda Express	8%
Panera Bread	8%
Subway Restaurants	6%

### People who have everything

Visa	1.25%
Amex	1.25%
Discover	1.25%

### DIY-er

EARNINGS %

Container Store	9%
Lowe's	4%
Menards	3%
Sears	4%
The Home Depot®	4%

### Caffeine aficionado

Caribou Coffee	6%
Dunkin' Donuts	3%
Peet's Coffee & Tea	8%
Starbucks	7%

### Pet parent

Petco	5%
PetSmart	5%

### Techie

Apple Store/Apple.com	5%
Amazon.com	2.25%
Barnes & Noble	8%
Best Buy®	4%
Office Depot/Office Max	5%
Shutterfly	9%
Staples	5%
Walmart	2.5%



### Trendsetter

EARNINGS %

#### Clothes

Abercrombie & Fitch	5%
Aéropostale	10%
American Eagle®	10%
Athleta	14%
Banana Republic	14%
Carter's	10%
Children's Place	12%
Express	10%
Forever 21	5%
Gap	14%
H&M	7%
Macy's	10%
Maurices	7%
Nordstrom	4%
Old Navy	14%
OshKosh	10%
Sephora	5%
Target	2.5%
T.J. Maxx	7%

#### Shoes

DSW	8%
Famous Footwear	8%
Foot Locker	8%
Shoe Carnival	5%
SHOE DEPT.	8%
Zappos.com	8%

### Limited-time \$5 and \$10 gift cards

Cold Stone Creamery	11%
Panera Bread	8%
Starbucks	7%
Walmart	2.5%

