Centered in Jesus Christ, we Grow in faith, Celebrate community and Serve others with love.

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**Advent and Christmas at Asbury**

**Celebrate the Season of Advent at Asbury**

- **Sunday, December 3, 7:00 p.m.**: Christmas Concert, followed by a cookie reception.
- **Sunday, December 10, 5:30 p.m.**: Community “Pop-Up” Christmas Pageant followed by dinner in the Fellowship Hall
- **Sunday, December 17, 3:30 p.m.**: Community Christmas Caroling

**Advent and Reflection Class**

Each Sunday morning of Advent, Linda Culpepper will lead an Advent and Reflection class starting December 3 at 9:00 a.m. in Fireside Room.

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**Celebrate the Birth of Jesus**

**Sunday, December 24**

- **10:00 a.m.**: Worship, Fourth Sunday of Advent
- **7:00 p.m.**: Candlelight and Communion Service
- **11:00 p.m.**: Story and Song Service

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**Merry Christmas!**

Asbury United Methodist Church • 4743 East Avenue, Livermore, CA 94550 • 925-447-1950 • www.AsburyLive.org
The first rain of the season has come and gone. And here's what I noticed: the rain soaked the earth but it took a few days before new shoots of green grass appeared along the paths where I walk. The rain has power to renew the earth, but we couldn't see that right away. Only days later did the new grass appear, proof that it had rained.

I think there's a sermon in there somewhere! The rain might be like our prayers. We pour out our prayers, and there are times when those prayers do not immediately take root and grow. Part of faithful praying, is faithful trusting. In prayer we turn to God, and rest in the awareness of God. When we do so, we have done our work. Then we trust in the slow work of God. And we keep praying, allowing our prayers to guide us into action.

Our nation needs our persistent prayers and actions so that we stop the mass shootings. Asbury United Methodist Church is part of a circuit of Methodist churches including Lynnewood in Pleasanton, Grace in San Ramon and San Ramon Valley in Alamo. The clergy in our churches all are searching for a faith-filled way to respond to mass shootings. We are asking: how to promote gun safety?

We invite you to participate in a month-long prayer vigil this Advent season. From December 3-24 all of our churches will be praying together. Sign up for a prayer time at volunteersignup.org/ETK8K, find the date and time you would like to sign-up for, click the green arrow "signup" and enter your name, email and phone number. This information will only be used to send out an email reminder the day before your scheduled slot, it will not be shared with anyone.

How you spend that hour of prayer is up to you. You can pause and turn to God, and return to the what you are doing. You can sit and read Scripture or sing hymns. Whatever you do, please consider sharing your experience and any insights on our Facebook page, Tri Valley Circuits of the United Methodist Church. After a month of prayer, we will gather and decide how the Spirit is leading us, together, to live peacefully in a violent world.

Journeying with you towards Jerusalem to welcome the Christ among us,

Pastor Kim

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Did you know that a business’ online reputation is very important and can make or break them? People who are looking for a business very often look at the online reviews that others have left.

Just think about the online purchases that you make. You probably carefully scrutinize the reviews before making a decision to go with one product or company over another.

Our church is no different, and others are looking at our online reputation before deciding to check us out and try us on for size.

Asbury has an excellent reputation, both within the community and online, but it can always be strengthened. This is where you can help out.

**Facebook:** Go to Asbury’s Facebook page, scroll down a little, and under the photos, there’s a section called “Tell People What You Think”. You can pick how many stars and tell what you like most about Asbury.

**Google:** Go to Asbury’s business listing on Google, scroll down on the left a little and click the blue “Write a Review” button to tell what’s most important to you.

Asbury also has a Yelp page, and maybe you’re a Yelper! But before leaving a review, please contact Tom Petty at home first. Yelp gets pretty persnickety if several reviews are left at once, and they could even take down the listing. We want to space them out quite a bit, and Tom will help you get on the schedule.
Celebrate Community

Asbury’s Christmas Concert
Sunday, December 3, 7:00 p.m.
Come enjoy some love, peace, joy and laughter at the 21st Annual Asbury Christmas Concert, Sunday evening, December 3 at 7:00 p.m. You will be treated to both traditional and contemporary Christmas music. It will be performed by Asbury’s children, youth and adult singers, as well as our wonderful instrumentalists, playing handbells, pipe organ, piano, brass, guitars, and drums.

There will be childcare available in the nursery. The concert is free and open to the public. A free-will offering can be made at the door, which will benefit people in need in the Livermore area.
If driving at night is not something you like to do, there are drivers willing to take additional riders to this concert and back home again. Please contact the church office at 925-447-1950, and let Terri Gamble or Karen Bauman know!

Of course, what good Methodist event can happen without food? There will be a reception after the concert featuring homemade cookies! Please join your Asbury family for inspiring music, good company and tasty treats. Bring a friend – or two!

Ladies’ Night Out
Tuesday, December 5, 6:00 p.m. (NEW TIME!)
This month we will be going to Melo’s Pizza and Pasta (www.melospizzapasta.com) located at 4433 1st Street in the Safeway Shopping center by the freeway. All ladies of Asbury are invited. Please let Nancy Grover at home and let her know if you plan to attend so we can let the restaurant know how many to expect.

Senior/Retiree Luncheon Returns!
Thursday, December 7, 12:00 p.m.
All Seniors and Retirees are invited to the December Senior lunch on Thursday, December 7 in the Fellowship Hall. This month we will have our annual ornament exchange where you can steal from your friends! Please bring a wrapped ornament (valued at no more than $15) and prepare to have a lot of fun. Sign up in the Fellowship Hall after worship or contact the Church office at 925-447-1950.

"Here We Come A Caroling"
Sunday, December 17, 3:30 p.m.
This year, the Community Annual Christmas Caroling will happen on Sunday, December 17. We’ll meet in the Fellowship Hall at 3:30 p.m. to arrange carpooling and to divide into three different groups. Singers will leave at 3:45 p.m. to begin the first “gigs” at 4:00 p.m.

We will be serenading folks who reside in single residencies and in senior complexes. At 5:30 p.m., all groups will meet in the lobby of Building 900 of Heritage Estates. We’ll move into the dining room to perform a grand finale with ALL singers, while the residents enjoy their dinner. At 6:00 p.m., carolers return to Asbury’s Fellowship Hall to hand-in their music, their jingle bells, and to feast on Togo’s Sandwiches, fruit, and Christmas cookies.

This is a wonderful event for families to attend together, and for friends to do as a group. We will provide cookie packages to be left at each place carolers sing, so the memory of the visit will linger on. Bring any jingle bells you may have, or car keys to jingle for our rousing rendition of “Jingle Bells”. Call Jean Braun at home for more information.

White Elephant and Potluck Dinner
Saturday, January 27, 2018
When you unwrap that not-quite-perfect Christmas gift this year, don’t throw it out the window or give it to the mail carrier! Save it for the Post-Holiday Potluck Dinner and White Elephant Gift Exchange on January 27, 2018. Mark your calendar now — PHPDWEGE! Look for the sign-up sheet in the Fellowship Hall after worship on Sunday.
(And watch for more details in January.)
Holiday Bus Ticket Drive

This season we kick off the second annual Bus Ticket drive to help provide much needed transportation for members of our community who have no other form of transportation, and cannot afford to purchase tickets. Last year's drive resulted in almost 4,000 bus tickets! Many thanks to all who donated! The tickets were given to local organizations that provide direct services to help these folks: Livermore Homeless Refuge, Tri-Valley Haven, Open Heart Kitchen, Partners for Change, and Asbury United Methodist Church. They in turn distributed the tickets to those most in need. Though 4,000 tickets seems like a lot, it actually only averages about five round trips daily throughout the year. Unfortunately the need is far, far greater. So this year we are striving for even more!

Here is a note written by Donna McKenzie of Livermore Homeless Refuge, after receiving the bus tickets. The references to "you" are to all the wonderful people who donated to last year's ticket drive.

"As I watched our homeless friends leave the shelter this morning, with bus pass clutched in their hand, I thought of YOU! It was raining and they must carry all their belongings with them. Had it not been for you and your very generous gift of bus passes, these folks would have been soaked. Once wet, they are wet all day.

Today is a holiday and many go to the library which is closed today. Life is difficult for them and especially on a day like today. You, my friend, made life a little easier for them.

I hope you know how much it means to them – and to me! I am so very grateful to you.

Thank you, thank you, and thank you again."

This year again, Livermore Amador Valley Transit Authority (LAVTA) is generously matching 50% of donations up to a total of $1500. That will enable us to purchase an additional 937 tickets!

Donations can be made in the following ways:


Send a check, made out to Asbury United Methodist Church, with "BUS TICKETS" on the memo line. Mail to: Asbury United Methodist Church, 4743 East Avenue, Livermore, CA 94550.

If you prefer to donate actual tickets, they can be sent to the above address as well. Just please note that any purchased tickets will not be eligible for LAVTA's matching offer.

Please include an email address so we can acknowledge your donation and attach a tax receipt.

Donations of any amount are welcome and very much appreciated! 100% of all donations will be used to directly buy bus tickets for this drive. The cost is $16 for a packet of 10 tickets (5 round trips). Note that using the online credit card form has a small courtesy fee added to cover the credit card fees so 100% of your donation goes to support the program.

Tri-Valley Haven Holiday Gift Program

Many families in our community will be challenged to do much gift giving at the holidays. We can help. Asbury will be hosting the annual Tri-Valley Haven Holiday Gift Event at which low income families have a place to "shop" for presents. Hundreds of families will be served.

Any NEW gift, for any age, is welcome. Here are some suggestions:

- **Adults:** Any new clothes (larger sizes are best), gift cards to Target, Kohls, etc., small household appliances, bath or personal care items, home décor gifts.
- **Teens:** Sports equipment, sports team merchandise, gift cards, electronic games, casual clothing, cosmetic sets.
- **Children:** Dolls, learning toys, arts and craft supplies, cars/trucks, electronic games, sport gear, clothing – Spanish gifts are welcome.
- **Infants:** Stimulating toys, musical toys, clothing, bath or body care.

If you would like to help, bring your unwrapped gifts to the Sanctuary or the church office by no later than Tuesday, December 12.
Alternative Gift Catalog
Asbury is again offering a special way to give beyond the ordinary this holiday season. It is the Alternative Gifts Catalog. It is a way to donate to a mission or outreach of our church and if you wish, do it in honor of family or friends. You have several organizations and ministries to choose from. We also provide you with gift cards that you may send to those whom you honor. Download the catalog or get one in the church office.

Download the Alternative Gift Catalog
You can donate to any of these groups on Asbury’s secure donation page with a credit card or debit card (as long as it has a Visa or MasterCard logo). If you want to set up recurring monthly donations, you can do that here.

Volunteering for the Holiday Gift Program
Asbury is providing volunteers to help sort gifts and to staff the gift shopping day. We need your help! Sorting workdays: Monday-Wednesday, December 11, 12 and 13 (shift choices: 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. or 1-4:00 p.m.).

Gift shopping days for registered families are Thursday, Dec. 14 (shift times: 8:45 a.m.-Noon, 11:45 a.m-3:00 p.m., 2:45-6:00 p.m.) and Saturday, December 16 (9:45 a.m.-1:00 p.m. and 11:45 a.m.-3:00 p.m.). Stop by the Serve Others with Love Table in the Fellowship Hall to sign up. Location is at our church. We have a lot of shifts to fill if you have time.

Interfaith Build Day – Habitat for Humanity
Saturday, December 16
On Saturday, December 16, Asbury will join other faith communities at the Habitat construction in Martinez. Everyone is welcome, regardless of skills or experience. We often work with the families who will own the homes.

Work at the site starts at 8:30 a.m. and ends by 4:00 p.m. We carpool from Asbury, leaving at 7:40 from the parking lot by the office building. To sign up, come by the Serve Others with Love Table after worship.

Partners for Change
Partners for Change is hiring a Bi-lingual (Spanish) Part-Time Facilitator to assist the director for 5-10 hours per week. Those interested should apply by November 30. For more information, find the job posting on Indeed.com or contact Shana at www.pfctv.org. We have created a mentee waiting list for our next session. Please encourage motivated potential mentees to contact us for more information and to be included on the list.

Livermore Community Blood Drive
Friday, December 15, 1-7:00 p.m.
This month is the fifteenth anniversary of the blood drive! Joanne and Tom Petty started it on December 30, 2002. The drive on December 15 will be number 119, and we’ve collected roughly 6000 units of blood, which has helped 18,000 sick and injured people in the Bay Area, including Joanne herself. Without blood donations, many people could not survive.

Blood is separated into three components:
- Red blood cells
- Platelets
- Plasma

So one unit of blood may actually go to three separate patients. But because we don’t have enough donors in the Bay Area (we need over 300 units every day of the year or about 110,000 every year), the American Red Cross has to import blood from other parts of the country.

During this season of giving, please sign up at red-crossblood.org and use ASBURY925 as the sponsor code. With each donation, you may be helping save up to three lives, and there’s no better gift than life.

You must be 17 years old (16 with parental consent) and in good health to donate. Please contact Tom at home if you have any questions about the process.
Christmas Pageant

Sunday, December 10, 5:30 p.m.

You are cordially invited to attend Asbury UMC’s No-Rehearsal “Community Pop-Up Christmas Pageant” on Sunday, December 10 at 5:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary. You can bring a friend or two or a few to join in this special intergenerational experience of “The Nativity Story”. Please join us for a community soup and sandwich potluck dinner in the Fellowship Hall following the Pageant Program.

Please sign up in the Fellowship Hall or email Jackie to bring a soup and/or sandwiches. Dessert will be provided.

December Sunday School

Pre-K through fifth grade Sunday school for the month of December will be exploring God as light, joy, and love during this advent season using our ‘Joyful Path' curriculum series.

Our Sunday school classes have set a goal to work together to collect at least $150 by the end of May 2018 through their Sunday school offerings to earn a pizza party. The $150+ will go to Fertile Groundworks, a garden behind our church which provides produce to feed those in need through the Open Heart Kitchen program, offered on our campus three days a week, and teaches others to garden as well.

More information about Fertile Groundworks is available at fertilegroundworks.org and in brochures located in each classroom. We have raised $23.60 so far.

Summer 2018 Opportunities

United Methodist Summer Camps

These camps are for third grade and up.

Monte Toyon in Aptos, CA (near Santa Cruz): July 8-14. Many Asbury children and youth have attended this camp and loved it.

More information and camp registration can be found at: calnevypm.org.

Vacation Bible School

Asbury UMC’s 2018 Vacation Bible School will be Monday, July 16 to Friday, July 20.

Merry Christmas with love,
Jackie Bennett
Children’s Ministry Director
Youth Ministries

Youth Happenings for December 2017

- December 1: Movie and Discussion Night 6-9 p.m.
- December 3: No youth groups, Christmas Concert 7:00 p.m.
- December 10: No youth groups, Christmas Pageant 5:30 p.m.
- December 17: No youth groups, Christmas caroling at 3:30 p.m.
- December 22: Youth Christmas Service Project 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
- December 24: No youth groups, Christmas Eve services:
  - 7:00 p.m. Communion
  - 11:00 p.m. Story and Carols
- December 27: Youth Christmas Party 6-8:30 p.m.
- December 31: No youth groups, New Year’s Eve

Youth Christmas Service Project

Friday, December 22, 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Let’s bring some Christmas love and cheer to folks in our community! We will meet at Asbury at 10:00 a.m. and return around 1:00 p.m.. Please RSVP to Chelsea by December 17.

Youth Christmas Party

Wednesday, December 27, 6-8:30 p.m.

Come celebrate Christmas with the youth groups on December 27 from 6-8:30 p.m.. The Smiths will host the youth Christmas party, there will be dinner, games, fun, and of course a White Elephant Gift Exchange! Please bring a wrapped gift (worth no more than $10) for the gift exchange.

Youth Group Movie and Discussion Night

Friday, December 1, 6:00 p.m.

For our second movie and discussion night we will watch Apollo 13! Based on the true story of the 1970 Apollo 13 mission to land on the moon, this movie was nominated for 9 academy awards. It tells the story of courage and working together in the face of adversity. Apollo 13 is rated PG for language and emotional intensity. Our movie night will be on December 1 from 6-9 p.m.. We will have dinner, popcorn, and hot chocolate! Bring a friend!
Saturday, December 30, 2:00 p.m.
The congregation of Asbury UMC is cordially invited by Tony and Keri Gnecco and BSA Troop 900 to honor Austin Gnecco at his Eagle Scout Court of Honor.
It will be held at Asbury United Methodist Church. Dessert will follow.
All are welcome to help us celebrate this accomplishment.

Boy Scout Tree Lot Is Open!
Asbury's Boy Scout Troop 900 opened its annual Christmas Tree Lot on Saturday, November 25. The tree lot is located on the corner of Hillcrest Avenue and East Avenue in Livermore — just down the street from the church
(map is here).

Hours of Operation
• Monday-Friday, 5-9:00 p.m.
• Saturday, Sunday 9:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m.

Tree selection 6-7' (tax included in price)
• Noble Fir $72
• Grand Fir $60
• Douglas Fir $54

Other items for sale (tax included)
• Tree stand $7 (a great deal!)
• Mistletoe $3
• Tree preservative $3
• Tree bags $3

Payment can be made by cash, check, or credit/debit cards. (A $2 charge per tree is added for using a credit/debit card).
Please come out this Christmas season to support Troop 900 in their only fundraiser of the year.
Hey Asbury Grocery Shoppers!

If you buy groceries at Lucky Supermarket, FoodMaxx or Save Mart, there is a painless way to help Asbury financially. These stores (there are others too!) donate 3% of the grocery bill amount to Asbury. That’s 30 cents for every $10 you spend, that they donate to Asbury! Easy, right?

To participate, all you have to do is sign up for e-scrip online. Then, enter your phone number BEFORE you pay for your groceries. That’s it, it’s that easy!

You can sign up here: www.escrip.com

You will be asked for your zip code, name, e-mail, phone number and to make up a password for yourself. Then, you will be asked to choose a non-profit to support. Choose Asbury!

If you have questions or problems, please contact Jean Braun at home. She’s not all THAT tech savvy, but she knows people who are!

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Growing In Faith

**Stewardship Update**

Thank you for your pledges of financial support at Asbury. Your giving makes our ministries possible.

As our financial team draws up a budget for 2018, your pledged amounts help them make wise choices for the year ahead.

Please turn in your pledges to the church office or put in the offering plate on Sunday. If you have any questions, please contact Gail Bryan, our financial secretary. Thank you for all the ways you give at Asbury!

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**The Gospel Truth**

This is an occasional column exploring a Bible passage. "Lord when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink?" Matthew 25:37

In the Gospels, Matthew 25 is the only description we have of judgment following our deaths. (All other references to living in the Kingdom of God, the Presence of God, are of feasts and parties and banquets.) Matthew 25 makes it clear: what does it mean to be a "saved" people? The test and the answers are plainly listed right here! When you see someone in hunger, feed them! When you see someone in prison, don’t let them suffer in isolation – visit them, for God's sake!
Anniversaries and Birthdays

**Anniversaries**
- Tim and Patti Arnold
- Bob and Jackie Hoffman
- Frank and Kris Raskauskas
- Jim and Pam Wilson

**Birthdays**
- Tim Ackerman
- Cordelia Bate
- Litza Bayless
- Cassie Canfield
- Jack Canfield
- Judy Chagnon
- Kirsten Cummings
- Dave David
- Jean Farmer
- Kathy Faul
- Peter Frumenti III
- Maureen Gandara-Swinbank
- Ashley Gibson
- Christy Gibson
- Stephanie Goodman
- Steve Goodman
- Betty Griswold
- Jim Haugen
- Regina Juan
- Becky Kasyanov

**Anniversaries**
- Athena McPeake
- Laura Mercier
- John Muldoon
- Tim Muldoon
- Bertha Ng
- Mary Ouellette
- Joanne Petty
- Kathryn Piscotty
- Glynice Pomykal
- Brianna Prine
- Natalia Pyle
- Rob Rudd
- Susannah Rudd
- Mariah Siebers
- Colleen Sorem
- Pam Tegge
- Kami Teruya
- Lynn Tripp
- Suzanna Whiteside
- Leroy Williams
Please visit the Asbury website calendar for the latest updates: https://www.asburylive.org/events

Weekly Recurring Events

Sundays
- 10:00 a.m. Worship, Sunday School, Sanctuary
- 11:15 a.m. Butterfly Gardens is open
- 11:30 a.m. Coffee Fellowship, Fellowship Hall
- 11:30 a.m. Children’s and Youth Choir rehearsals
- 11:30 a.m. Small Group, Room 13 (first and third Sundays only)
- 5:00 p.m. Stephen Ministry, Fireside Room (first and third Sundays only)
- 7:00 p.m. Bible Study, Room 10
- 7:00 p.m. Asbury Ringers rehearsal, Sanctuary

Mondays
- 3:30-5:30 p.m. Open Heart Kitchen, Fellowship Hall
- 7:00 p.m. Fertile Groundworks, Conference Room (second and fourth Mondays only)

Tuesdays
- 11:00 a.m. Loose Canons
- 11:00 a.m. The Long Good-bye, Fireside Room (second and fourth Tuesdays only)
- 12:00 p.m. Open Heart Kitchen, Fellowship Hall
- 7:00 p.m. Small Group, Fireside Room (second and fourth Tuesdays only)
- 7:00 p.m. Alanon/Alateen, Rooms 13-15
- 7:00 p.m. Band Rehearsal, Sanctuary

Wednesdays
- 12:00 p.m. Open Heart Kitchen, Fellowship Hall
- 5:30 p.m. Partners for Change, Fireside Room
- 7:30 p.m. Faith Choir rehearsal, Sanctuary

Thursdays
- 10:30 a.m. Women of the Spirit, Fireside Room
- 7:00 p.m. Small Group, Room 10
- 7:00 p.m. AA, Rooms 11-12

Saturdays
- 8:00 a.m. Lawn Crew
- 9:00 a.m. AA, Rooms 11-12

Other Events and Meetings

December 3, 2017 (Sunday)
- 7:00 p.m. Christmas Concert, Sanctuary

December 5, 2017 (Tuesday)
- 6:00 p.m. Ladies’ Night Out, Melo’s Pizza & Pasta

December 7, 2017 (Thursday)
- 12:00 p.m. Senior/Retiree Luncheon, Fellowship Hall

December 10, 2017 (Sunday)
- 8:30 a.m. SPRC, Room 10
- 11:30 a.m. Finance, Conference Room
- 5:30 p.m. Christmas Pop-Up Pageant, Sanctuary

December 15, 2017 (Friday)
- 1-7:00 p.m. Livermore Community Blood Drive, Fellowship Hall

December 17, 2017 (Sunday)
- 3:30 p.m. Christmas Caroling

December 24, 2017 (Sunday)
- 11:30 a.m. Church Council, Conference Room
Church office hours are:
Monday-Thursday, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon
Closed for lunch.

The deadline for the next Asbury Articles is
Friday, December 22, 2017