



Presbeat

First Presbyterian Church of Ukiah, CA
514 West Church Street; Ukiah CA ~ Office Hours Mon-Thurs, 9am-1pm ~ 707.468.9235
Pastor David Rodriguez – *Mobilized to Africa*
Pastor Daniel Christian, 707.380.6486
www.fpcukiah.org “Like” us at www.facebook.com/firstpresbyterianchurchukiah
Editor: Denise Beckler, Office Manager/Music Director
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Dear Friends

Gracious God, Christmas will be here in 4 weeks. Help us face the question of whether or not we will be ready for Christmas. Help us consider the question not from the notion of ‘will our presents be purchased, our cards and packages mailed, our baking done.’ Rather, will we really be prepared? Will we be able to live into the deeper meaning of Christmas? Will it dawn on us anew that Christmas means that you are always with us; that in Christ you teach us how we are meant to live; that the greatest gifts we can receive through Christ are hope, peace, joy and love? Only 4 more weeks. Thank you God that we don’t have to wait. We can begin living Christmas right now!

Amen

The season of Advent is upon us. Advent is a time when we deliberately and intentionally center our lives on the inner and outer nudges from God. We draw a prayerful ear, and a receptive heart, which creates an opening for Holy Whispers to have a chance of being heard in the midst of a loud world. Advent means “coming”, or “arrival”, from the Greek, *advenio*, “to come”. The weeks before Christmas are an invitation into prayer which is centered on the themes of darkness, hope and expectation.

We have a juxtaposition in our culture. Advent calls us to look inward, while the culture of Christmas calls us outward. Our Christmas culture calls us to celebrate with extravagance and merriment. Very fun indeed, however being attentive to the Spirit asks us to be intentional toward listening and responding to God’s whispers.

We don’t have to be at odds between Christmas celebrations, holiday sentimentality and Christian spirituality. We can let both expressions be reflections of our lived faith. I know what my shopping and social calendar look like this year, but more importantly, what does my faith look like this year? How will I be different and grow in my faith during the coming year?

Four weeks of Advent is an adequate time for spiritual preparation. We see this repeated throughout the Hebrew and Greek scriptures. Jesus went into the desert for 40 days. Noah waited 40 days and 40 nights for dry land. During Lent we prepare for 40 days that lead us to Christ’s resurrection. In Advent we have 4 weeks. Four weeks to intentionally pray, and be guided by the Holy Spirit.

No matter how big or small you think your life is, God leads you through darkness, hope and expectation to the birth of a new life. It is there in the darkness a new pathway will emerge. It is the shaking and disruptions in our life that create the cracks for the light of God to enter. It is there you walk into the very arms of God.

May It Be So For You, And For Me. Have A Blessed Advent
In Christ, *Pastor Daniel*



From Pastor David in Djibouti

CAPT David Rodriguez, CHC, USN
Religious Affairs CJTF-HOA
PSC 831 Box 0015
FPO AE 09363

November 21: Dear All, My body guard (Religious Program Specialist) and I just arrived in Mogadishu, Somalia where we will be spending Thanksgiving with our military folks. I'll lead a Thanksgiving service and then have dinner here.

This base is located at the airport and it's the most dangerous place in our Area of Responsibility (AOR). There have been attacks here recently by Al Shabab that have been reported on the news. Things are a bit tense and the travel ban to this base has just been lifted. For a while there, we weren't sure if we'd be able to come.

As I lead worship on Thursday, I will be thanking God for you. Your support and encouragement mean more to me than you know. Your loving and gracious gifts to the orphans in Djibouti are truly saving lives.

I miss you all and I can't wait to get back to Ukiah.

In Christ ~ *David*
James 1:27



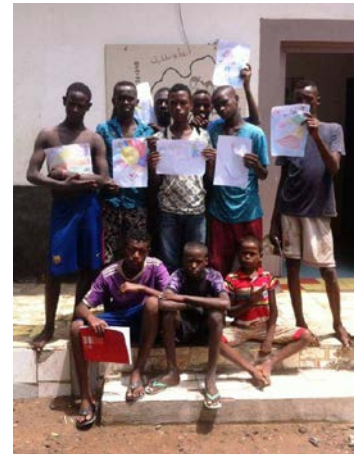
Dear FPCU,

Many thanks for your previous email and the incredible work you do for children in Djibouti. They are really in need and are very touched by the attentions of you who are so far you do to them.

There are minors migrants non accompanied, with no family here or not at all even in their countries. They are used to take

the rests of food, to wear third or fourth hand clothes, to be ignored. So when we tell them where all these gifts and donations are from, they are very surprised.

We told about you this morning and the children immediately asked me to do drawings to give. Since I cannot send them to you right now, I took some pictures with their drawings in front of the Caritas offices. There is also a picture where I am.



One more time, many thanks and blessings!

~ **Francesco MARTIALIS**, *Directeur Caritas Djibouti*

Dear beloved friends at Ukiah 1st Pres, (November 7, 2017)

Well, we downloaded *PresBeat* last night and read it top to bottom. (Perfect bedtime reading!) What a great newsletter that is! Michele, Denise, remember when Yvonne started doing it and came up with that name? Seemed kinda corny at the time, but it worked then, and it still works, and she made improvements, and NOW! Wow, I would stack up that newsletter against any other church that I have seen, then, now, or since.

Pastor Daniel, it was so great to read your reflections on the ghastly fires and tragedies in Mendocino, Sonoma and Napa counties. We have been watching, and praying, of course, and reminding people to pray for the great losses that so many have suffered in Redwood Valley, Coffey Park, and elsewhere. It has just been unbelievable as we have heard from folks we know up there and read the accounts in the papers. I am grateful, Dan, for your reflections (which I guess were also in the *Daily Journal*?) on the community support, and mutual encouragement and neighborly connections that have been shown all over the redwood empire up there. We have reminded the folks in our little church, as well as all of our friends and neighbors here at Monte Vista Grove, of the extent that the fires affected Redwoods Presbytery and people and places that we know. You have definitely been in our prayers.



Thanks, too, for the reports from Pastor David in Djibouti, and for the way the church is supporting him. I think of you often, and pray for you, David. This Veteran's Day week, I will be playing *Taps* 4-5 times and playing in two community bands, in Burbank and Covina. It is such a great honor.

As for us, I am preaching weekly at the moment at this little congregation, Community Church of El Monte (PCUSA), which itself is just hanging on by its fingernails. They are in a very transitional and changing neighborhood in suburban LA which has been declining and seeing great demographic changes for years. For a little while longer at least (it's now been a year and a half), I have been their temporary supply pastor, and about six months ago, when our pianist and choir lady took another job, guess who took over at the piano? You got it---Judith K. Ballenger, that's who, and she always gives them a well prepared and crafted offertory, prelude and postlude, not to mention playing for the hymns and praise songs. It really is kind of the "Larry and Judy show", but it can't go on too much longer.

Monte Vista Grove is working out pretty well for us as a place to live. We did a joint 80th birthday celebration back in August, since 2017 is that year for us. Because our dates are at such inconvenient times, (graduation and Christmas), we just decided to throw ourselves our own party. We had a big room full of neighbors, all 3 kids and 4 out of 5 grandchildren. Judy and I both played, and several grands performed, and we had the obligatory cake, punch, and cookies. Then the whole family adjourned to our place (1200 sq. feet) for a full dinner and additional revelry. It was great fun. The only down side is getting used to the fact of being EIGHTY YEARS OLD. Sheesh!

Hey, whenever any of you works up your courage to come down into LA, be sure to come by to see us. We are just off the 210 freeway at San Gabriel Blvd in east Pasadena.

The other slight downer of this year (besides our beloved kitty Xi-hu being snatched by a coyote) was the seventh game of the World Series. After those three times of grudgingly pulling for the Giants in the Series', I would have thought that the baseball fortunes would have rewarded me with a championship. Especially after such a great year the Dodgers had, and their star Rookie of the Year being named Bellinger... But I guess that goes to show that pride goeth before a fall.

So, you guys, we read the *PresBeat* and we picture all of you, remembering with great love and affection the ones we worked with and look forward to someday meeting all of you new (to us) folks. We are grateful to God for the vision and outreach that you are still cranking out up there in our beloved Ukiah. We love you all, and thank God on every remembrance of you.

With much love, *Larry & Judy Ballenger*,
(former pastor and wife at FPCU, new email revbal637@gmail.com)

~ ~ ~ CHILDREN/YOUTH MINISTRIES ~ ~ ~

Thank you so much for your continuous support of children's ministries! This year has been pretty unpredictable and your encouragement has helped the kids remain connected to our church. Although you may not see them all on Sunday mornings, we have twenty to thirty children who attend our Wednesday and Sunday night programs on a consistent basis! With your patience, acceptance, and welcoming demeanor toward the children when you are volunteering at VBS, Hangout, Sunday School, #SWAG, the Easter egg hunt, in the nursery, and especially when you see them at Sunday morning worship services, this is a wonderful way for them to experience God's love. When a parent sees their child treated with such kindness, the parent gets to see this side of God as well. Please keep it up!

We recognize that our volunteers are being overused in all areas of the church, so we want to do our part in giving some time to refresh. Hangout is taking a break for Advent, and will resume in the spring for a March through May term. In the meantime, we have some special events planned!



Christmas Caroling!

December 10th, at 5:30pm, EVERYONE in the congregation (plus your friends)
 Join us for soup, singing around the neighborhood (bring warm clothes & flashlights), cookies, hot cocoa, and warm apple cider. Children must be accompanied by an adult.
 RSVP to Dory or MaryAnn to give us an idea of how much food to prepare.
 Speaking of food do you want to help by preparing crockpots of soup & cider, or dropping off some cookies or soup in the morning, or simply being there to keep an eye on things while we are out singing?



#SWAG Christmas Party!

Kids grades 5th-12th: Bring a “white elephant” gift, a friend and a cheerful spirit, 6pm-7:30pm, Dec. 17th.

(No SWAG on December 31st)



Father-Daughter Dance!

Date TBA (aiming for February)
 Check in with Caroline, Shirley, and MaryAnn to find out more about this adorable event and how you can contribute to making it a special night! We will need help decorating, preparing, and serving food.



Easter Egg Hunt!

Easter will be on April 1st in 2018, so we will likely have the egg hunt March 24th.

~ ~ ~ MISSION Opportunities ~ ~ ~

Cents-Ability Reminder ~ Don't forget to bring your Cents-Ability offering to church on Sunday, December 3rd. The collection is taken during communion, baskets are in the front for your convenience. If you need a collection container to keep at home, you can pick one up in the narthex.



Remember all your money is used to help feed the hungry in our area. Thank you for helping with your prayers and donations.

CHRISTMAS CHARITY FAIRE CANCELLED



Your Missions Committee has decided to cancel the Charity Christmas Faire this year. Instead we decided that we would like to focus our efforts to help Kevin and Shelly Mack with their upcoming Mission trip to Uganda. They plan to leave January 8th with a couple days of travel to arrive in Zambia on the 11th. They will spend one week in Zambia and then on to Uganda where they have a couple of days to recover before meeting with pastor John and working with him to determine and meet the needs of the village there. They will then fly to Amsterdam where they will give a report to the European Alkare Foundation, finally returning home January 30th! Whew – what a trip!

We are hoping that you too will consider making a love offering on December 3rd as we commission the Mack's to the mission field in Africa. God Bless them on this journey of discovery, good will and love.

“MEALS TO GO” FUNDRAISER REPORT



Thank you to all for another great and successful fundraiser. We were able to raise over \$6000 to go to the Community Foundation for fire relief victims in Mendocino County. We are so inspired and grateful for the outpouring of support and love that has come out of this tragedy. May we continue to be mindful of those who lost everything and pray, give what we can and share the love of Christ to our community as we begin to rebuild together.



CARE PACKAGES FOR OUR MILITARY AND ORPHANAGE IN DJOBUTI

Hope you can join us at our next packing party on Wednesday, December 27th.

Thank you for all the donations that we have received every month. Protein items such as dry beans, peanut butter, protein bars, jerky etc. are always needed as well as snack items, dental/hygiene items, books and DVD's.

Operation Christmas Child – 2017 Collection Week Results

God has truly blessed this ministry again this year – see below

	<u>2017</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2015</u>
Total shoeboxes	566*	1206	1158
Number of volunteers	14	16	23
Total volunteer hours	70	88	99.5



*We have collected boxes from the Mendocino Coast in 2015 and 2016. This year they took their boxes directly to Santa Rosa. Of the 566 boxes collected, 72 were from our church. We received boxes from churches as far as Covelo, Philo and Boonville.



Another special thanks go to all the volunteers and especially to Jerry and Nancie Garcia, who not only worked during collection week, but also drove their truck pulling the trailer containing all the cartons of boxes to the Santa Rosa regional collection center. From there, the cartons are shipped to Irvine where each box is inspected before distributing to children throughout the world.

Many thanks go out to this congregation, participating churches, families, and individuals. Every gift-filled shoebox is a powerful tool for evangelism and discipleship – transforming the lives of children and their families through the Good News of Jesus Christ.

ADVENT is December 3rd ~ 24th



“Advent” means “coming” or “arrival”. During the season of Advent, we celebrate Christ’s coming into the world and watch with expectant hope for his coming again. In its historical origins, the season of Advent was patterned after the season of Lent, a six-week period of penitence and preparation for Easter. Similarly, the four weeks of Advent, starting this year on December 3rd, presents an opportunity for communal discernment and personal examination, as the church prepares to celebrate the Nativity of the Lord and looks with hope for Christ’s return.

The cross is draped in royal blue which is the color of royalty to welcome the coming of a King. It can also symbolize the night sky in which the star appeared to announce the birth of Jesus.

Please contact Shirley Lewis 391-9942 or Denise Beckler 468-9235, if you and/or yours (biological or church family members) would like to join in this celebration in the lighting of the candles of the Advent wreath and reading scripture. Dates are December 3rd, 10th, 17th, and Christmas Eve 12/24 during Sunday morning worship service at 10:00 AM. The passages and prayer will be provided to you. This is a wonderful opportunity to join in the celebration of Christ’s birth and in anticipation of when he comes again. Christ has come! Christ is risen! Christ will come again!



Christmas Eve Service
5:00 PM Sunday,
December 24th

DO YOU KNOW SIGN LANGUAGE?? We are looking for someone to teach us hand motions to some songs. If you know sign language, please contact Denise, denise@fpcukiah.org or 468-9235



DECORATE THE CHRISTMAS TREE

The Christmas Tree in the sanctuary is just waiting to be decorated with hats, scarves, gloves, socks and other small clothing items. Please bring items to decorate the tree. After Christmas the items will be given to those in need in our community.



As we've done in the past, we are combining two months to have one holiday luncheon in December.

Come and enjoy turkey with all the fixin's and great company!
No need to RSVP, just come as you are!
Call if you need a ride, 468-9235

Yes, this is our 10th year!!

Once again, we welcome *Anna Maria Mendieta*, harpist. And we are introducing *4 Euphs 4 Him*, a delightful euphonium quartet directed by Marshall Merklin.

The choir is already rehearsing and we invite you to come join in to sing. (If you can carry a tune, you can sing!) Please bring along your friends who might also like to sing in the choir.

Mark your calendars for Sunday, December 17th, 3:30pm, for an afternoon of carol singing, followed by a time of fellowship with hot cider and cookies. You won't want to miss it!

Want an event postcard to give to a friend? They are available on the narthex table and in the church office. Feel free to pick some up.

Rehearsals Sundays 12:30:
November 5, 19 & 26,
December 3 & 10

(No rehearsal November 12)

Friday, December 15 – 5:30pm:
dress rehearsal on the risers

Sunday, December 17:
Call 2:00pm – Event begins at 3:30

THE MUSIC OF CHRISTMAS
10th Annual Sing-Along
An Ecumenical Musical Gathering
Sponsored by First Presbyterian-Ukiah
Sunday, December 17, 2017
3:30 p.m. - Free
First Presbyterian Church – Ukiah
Corner of Perkins & Dora

Celebrate the fellowship of Christmas that we share together
Followed by Hot Cider & Cookies...Something for the whole family

Featuring the music of ...
Combined Choirs from Area Churches and Community Members - Directed by Les Pfitzenreuter
World-renown harpist
Anna Maria Mendieta
ORGANIST: Lori Shafer
PIANIST: Denise Beckler
Various Soloists
Marshall Merklin -
Directing a Euphonium
Quartet: *Euphs 4 Him*
(The euphonium is a large,
conical-bore, baritone-
voiced brass instrument.)

Receptacles for cash donations will be available for Nor Cal Christian Ministries,
Serving the homeless in our community.
For more information about event, contact:
Denise Beckler 707/468-9235 or Carole Hester 707/463-1231

PW offers a bi-monthly Bible study to all women.

You are welcome to come and join in at any time. We are using the 7th Edition Serendipity Bible. You do not have to purchase one if you do not wish. A copy is available of the suggested discussion questions which we use as we read through each chapter. We are currently meeting the 2nd and 4th Wednesday afternoons (1:30) in the Library. Hope to see you soon!

Questions? Please call Jaunita Coddington @ 263-5534.





All Church Work Day Saturday, December 9th.

Do you see any needed repairs or
maintenance work to be done
around the church?
Please let Randy Beckler know.

Finance Report:

*Thank you for all who participated
in our Harvest Celebration Feast recently,
where we received our pledges for
2018 and enjoyed wonderful tri-tip cooked
by Kevin DeVries and Joe Luiz,
and also savoring special dishes
from each of you.*

*Thank you to those that have turned
in their pledges.*

*To date, we have received 39 pledges.
Last year, we received a total of 52.*

*It is not too late to fill out your
pledge card, so if you please pick one up
(on the back table in the sanctuary, or
from the office).*

*You can complete it and drop in the
offering plate or at the church office.*

*Pledge results are used by Session to
prayerfully develop the budget for 2018.*

As of October 31, 2017		Total \$\$
Income	\$	215,523
Expenses	\$	222,585
Difference	\$	(7,062)
Balance in Checking Account		Total \$\$
Non-Designated Funds	\$	74,647
Designated Funds (detail below)	\$	44,789
Total Balance in Checking	\$	119,436
Balance in Savings		Total \$\$
CD's	\$	44,271
Mutual Funds	\$	24,693
Other Savings	\$	54,411
Total Balance in Savings	\$	123,375
Detail of Designated Funds in Checking Account		
Missions	\$	251
Hispanic Ministries	\$	494
Hispanic MicroLoans	\$	1,010
Mission Trip	\$	3,043
Missions Fundraiser	\$	6,281
Centsability	\$	70
Per Capita	\$	-
Deacons	\$	224
Flowers	\$	-
General Memorial	\$	25,534
Camperships	\$	-
Buildings and Grounds	\$	200
Compassionate Ministries	\$	850
Singalong	\$	315
Senior Ministries	\$	-
Adult Ministries	\$	3
Youth Ministries	\$	62
Children's Ministries	\$	35
Childrens Playground	\$	4,346
Vacation Bible School	\$	-
Special Grants	\$	1,933
Fellowship Meals	\$	137
Total	\$	44,789



Pastor Report: Pastor Daniel reported that he had been in close contact with Sammie Davies and Saturday, September 30 will be a memorial service for her husband Bill. Deacons will help Sammie with the service and reception.

COUNCIL-COMMITTEE REPORTS

- **Family Council: Christian Education:** MaryAnn and Dory are doing an excellent job. Hangout is functioning, however, the need for volunteers is acute, so much so that the scheduling for Hangout might change from weekly to monthly. The congregation needs to recognize that Hangout brings not only kids but parents to FPCU, and the more members that can participate, even if just for 1 hr. per month, the more solid a Hangout and outreach program FPCU will have.
- **Worship and Music:** A Service of Remembrance is planned for Sunday morning worship service, 10-29-17. Individuals will come to the front of the sanctuary to light a candle for someone who has passed away. On Sunday, 1-7-18, the end of the Christmas Season, as part of the worship service, there will be a baptismal reaffirmation. There will be two services on Christmas Eve Sunday, 12-24-17.
- **Missions:** MSA NOR CAL CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES use of FPCU facilities. MSA church fund raising effort for Mendocino County affected by the October 2017 wild fires.
- **Congregational Life:** The committee will assist the finance committee in planning/coordinating (setup- cleanup) the Stewardship Dinner, 11-12-17.

Resource Council:

- **Building and Grounds:** Discussions have been ongoing with S.P.A.C.E. regarding: 1) reconstructing the parking lot (slurry coat vs. rebuilding from the base up); 2) ADA requirements they must meet regarding our handicap parking spaces at the south end of the parking lot. The committee has also been discussing/ reviewing near term roofing/air conditioning needs and the means to pay for them (capital improvement drive?).
- **Personnel:** The church will need to advertise for a nursery manager, first in house and community-wide. The assistant nursery position can be filled in house, from our youth.
- **Nominating:** Shared lists of individuals presently serving, or have been asked and declined for Elders and Deacons. The committee requested that Session submit any names of individuals they recommend. A list of corporate officers (ruling elders) was also shared.

MSA ~ called congregational meeting, 11-5-17, to dissolve the Associate Pastor position.

NEW BUSINESS: In light of the recent destructive fires the ravaged Redwood Valley and Sonoma and Napa Counties, Session held an initial discussion on the possibility of developing some simple emergency plan to help congregational members stay connected and informed (phone tree). The Clerk reminded the Session that the church bylaws state that a Congregational meeting needs to be scheduled by the first Sunday in December, at which church officers are to be elected. Additionally, no later than the last Sunday of January, 2018, information on the 2018 budget will be presented to the congregation along with the annual reports from Session Councils and Committees.

The next Session meeting is December 21st, 6:00pm.

Session Members: Randy Beckler, Daniel Christian, Kevin DeVries, Karen Golden, Chris Gordon, Dory Haselswerdt, Randy Huffman, Shirley Lewis, Roe Sandelin, Michele Young

Did we miss your birthday last month???



Please contact the church office or email Denise, denise@fpcukiah.org
so we can send you a card and celebrate with you!

Happy Birthday!

12/3 Richard Ruddick	12/9 Melody Ostovar	12/20 Judy Ballenger
12/4 Perry Crowley	12/15 Ray Carlson	12/24 David Edgar
12/5 Fritz Gordon	12/17 Sandra Applegate	12/28 David Head
12/6 Kevin Mack	Ethan Johnston	12/31 Phil Moynahan
12/8 Selina Luis	12/20 Betty Ashoff	

Event Calendar ~ December



Sun weekly	6:00pm	#SWAG Youth Group
Mon weekly	5:30pm	Cub Scouts
Tue. weekly	6:30am	NorCal Christian Ministries
	7:00am	Men's Bible Study
	8:30am	Serendipity Bible Study
	5:00pm	SIPS Bible Study
	6:00pm	Spanish AA; NAHOP
Wed. weekly	6:30am	NorCal Christian Ministries
	5:30pm	Worship Team rehearsal
Thurs. weekly	6:30am	NorCal Christian Ministries
	1:00pm	ABC Program
	6:00pm	Spanish AA
	6:30pm	Webelos

...additional events for the month

12/3	12:30pm	Singalong rehearsal	12/19	12:00pm	Family/Outreach Council
12/6	10:30am	Worship Committee	12/21	6:00pm	Session
	11:30am	VIP Luncheon	12/24	10:00am	Christmas Eve morning worship service
12/7	5:30pm	Buildings/Grounds dinner		5:00pm	Christmas Eve evening worship service
12/9	8:30am	All-church Work Day			
	9:00am	Stitches from the Heart			
12/10	Daniel off	Tony Huerta Preaching	12/25		Office Closed for Christmas Holiday
	11:15am	Missions Committee	12/27	1:30pm	PW Bible Study
	12:30pm	Singalong rehearsal		6:00pm	Care Packages
	5:00pm	Caroling / Soup Dinner	12/28	12:30pm	ABC program
12/12	6:00pm	Resource Council		5:30pm	Deacons
12/13	1:30pm	PW Bible Study	12/31	Daniel off	Kevin Mack preaching
12/14	12:30pm	ABC program			
	6:00pm	Boy Scouts District meeting			
12/15	5:30pm	Singalong rehearsal			
12/17	3:30pm	Christmas Carol Singalong			

Upcoming:

January 1-9: Daniel on Vacation

Our Calendar is also available online @ <http://fpcukiah.org/calendar/calendar/>
(Note: if using a phone, you may need to turn it to landscape orientation)