



Christmas is Real – Our Christmas Concert on December 17



Please join us for a very exciting concert on Sunday, December 17th at 7:30 PM, right here in our FPCC sanctuary! It will feature our own church choir combined with St. Andrew's church choir, our praise band, Grateful Heart, guest vocal soloists, a chamber orchestra, and assorted percussionists! St. Andrew's choir director, David Chavez, and Andrew Cardiasmenos will be co-directing this year's program. Our own accompanist Adrienne Johnson and St. Andrew's accompanist Mark McMillan will share

the stage in this wonderful collaborative event. You don't want to miss all of this amazing talent!

The concert program showcases music from a variety of styles, ranging from Mozart's Laudate Dominum featuring esteemed soprano Natalie Ter Agapova, to the jazzy, theatrical sounds of Travis Cottrell's Christmas is Real. Christmas is Real serves as the centerpiece of the program, a contemporary cantata that tells the story of Jesus's birth and combines the full choir with a chamber orchestra and praise band! Andrew's wife Jessie will also bring a little soul into the mix with Whitney Houston's "Who Can Imagine a King," while five guest singers will perform Joseph M. Martin's lively medley, "A Celebration of Spirituals."

Christmas Giving Tree



Please consider participating in our Christmas Giving Tree this year by providing wrapped Christmas presents and/or grocery gift cards for two needy families. The families were selected by Humanity Way. The Giving Tree process will begin this Sunday, December 10th. Look for the Christmas tree on the stage until December 10th. The paper ornaments on the tree identify the various items needed. Select your item by taking one or more ornaments of your choice and signing the sheet. Susan Lawson will be there to help you and answer your questions. Bring your wrapped gifts and/or \$25 gift cards to the Fellowship Hall on Sunday, December 17th.

Humanity Way – Helping Others



Humanity Way, Inc. is a ministry established by DeVonn Powers with its stated mission: **“To restore humanity by providing for people's basic needs - whether disadvantaged, in a crisis, or need of emotional or psychological healing”**. It is supported by FPCC and has its offices on the church campus, as well as in Pinole and Antioch. Church member Ron Potts serves as a member of the board of directors, and Astrid Stancszak is a member of the staff. The staff

includes two career specialists who contact businesses to arrange temporary employment for clients. This provides work experience and opens the door for the client to find permanent work.

Humanity Way partners with Contra Costa County Employment Services and works with it to find work for the unemployed. Humanity Way also works with 59 other agencies and businesses to connect clients to meet their many needs. It has been recently awarded a grant from the Presbytery of San Francisco to help 60 unhoused families find homes. Humanity Way also works cooperatively with the Breast Cancer Navigation Program.

The FPCC quilters donate quilts for Humanity Way client families. Seven quilts were donated this past year.

During the Holiday Season and the cold weather, there is an increased demand for services, which in turn creates a need to hire additional staff. Financial donations and prayers will be greatly appreciated,

Those who need services offered by Humanity Way can call 911 or email hwinfo@humanityway.org. For more information contact DeVonn Powers.

Christmas Offering – Teen Bibles for Juvenile Hall



This year's Christmas offering will go to provide Bibles for teen inmates at Juvenile Hall. Rev. Julius Van Hook, Interfaith Juvenile Chaplain, whom our church supports, has given us this wonderful idea and is willing to use these Bibles in his ministry with the youth. Special envelopes may be found in the pew racks, the narthex, and in the choir loft for your donations. Please give above and beyond your regular pledge. You may contribute by cash, check, or Zelle. Indicate “Christmas Offering” on the envelope or check or in the comment space on your Zelle submission. The deadline for giving is Sunday, December 31. Contact: Susan Lawson.

Holiday Calendar at FPCC



Dec 17	7:30	PM	Christmas Concert
Dec 24	10:00	AM	Regular Sunday Service
Dec 24	7:00	PM	Christmas Eve Service
Dec 25			No Service
Dec 30	11:00	AM	Holiday Tea Fundraiser – 2024 Raise the Roof Academy Mission Team
Dec 31			Regular Sunday Service - Last Day for Christmas Offering



The following new Elders and Deacons were elected at the Congregational Meeting on December 3. **New Elders:** Phyllis Graser, Judith Snider (3-year terms); David Dowell (2-year term) **New Deacons:** Margaret Bachman, Charlotte DeWitt, Ann Johnson, Carrie Smith (3-year terms); John Young (2-year term).



Major actions by the Session during October and November were as follows:

October 17 Meeting

New Members Approved: Yaa Dubanks, Anthony Delnero, Dawn Fiacco, Duwana LeFaver, Angela Salinas, Maria Salinas, Paula Wilkins, and Paul Roberds.

Budget: The 2024 budget was approved with a deficit to be resolved during 2024.

November 28 Meeting

Announcement of Rev. Carol's new vision for the organizational structure of church leadership.

Motion approved to fund scholarships for 2 students at Beginnings and Beyond

Motion approved to permit Holiday Tea fundraiser in support of Robin Stearns, Chandra Collins going to Uganda-based Raise the Roof Academy school in late June or July 2024.

Motion approved to use funds from the FPCC Christmas Offering to purchase Teen Bibles and study guides for Juvenile Hall residents.

Motion approved to designate funds for the Easter 2024 offering to help fund travel arrangements for the June or July 2024 mission trip for work at the Raise the Roof Academy in Uganda.

Motion to approve the 2024 Housing Allowance designation for Rev. Carol Antablin Miles.



*May God grant you the light in Christmas, which is faith;
the warmth of Christmas, which is love;
the radiance of Christmas, which is purity;
the righteousness of Christmas, which is justice;
the belief in Christmas, which is truth;
the all of Christmas, which is Christ.*

~ by Wilda English



Almost 100 people attended the Holiday Dinner on Thursday, November 30 in the Fellowship Hall, including many residents of the Heritage/Towers apartment community. Many thanks are due to the church members and others who worked very hard to make this event a huge success, including Connection Team co-leaders Ann Johnson and Jim Whitfield, their team members, and volunteers. Some of the workers are included in the photos below. Not shown are key volunteers Judith Snider and Matt Chapman, who contributed greatly to the outstanding attendance.



FPCC Staff

Rev. Dr. Carol Antablin Miles
 Rebecca Chase, CLP
 Lisa Justice, Student Pastor
 Administrator
 Darryl McCollum, CLP
 DeVonn Powers, CLP
 Andrew Cardiasmenos
 Robin Stearns
 Linde Weber
 Harold Lund

Senior Pastor
 Commissioned Pastor for Community Care
 Seminarian in Residence & Church

 Commissioned Pastor for Outreach
 Commissioned Pastor for Urban Ministries
 Director, Music & Worship
 Preschool Director
 Financial and Human Resources Specialist
 Custodian & Night Watchman

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