

"The Heart of the Matter"

A Monthly Source of Information for the Church Family

12 YEARS

"Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure."
1 John 3:2, 3

There have been numerous sermons, allusions, and references concerning the woman, who for 12 years, suffered from a discharge. There have been stories of an army of physicians and healers who depleted her savings; how she became shunned and barely tolerated, but was never accepted. And then. . .finally. . .there was Jesus. One brief touch of His garment and she was healed!

As Jesus was on His way to Jarius's house to heal his sick daughter, the people of Capernaum crowded around Him to the point that the disciples were forced to physically clear a pathway through the human wall.

There she was, hoping to avoid detection, crawling on her hands and knees. Wedging her way through until she was, at last, within arm's length, she reaches out and barely brushes the hem of His garment. The pain is gone! The flow stopped! Her embarrassment begins to diminish.

At that moment, Jesus stops abruptly and asks, "Who touched Me?" One of the disciples looks at the crowd and responds, "With this many people about You, You ask, Who touched Me?" Jesus answers, "Someone touched Me and I felt the power leave Me." In both Mark 5 and Luke 8, it tells about the woman, who with fear and trembling confessed and acknowledged the reason for her hope in Jesus.

Interjecting my thoughts here, before continuing: For 12 years, this woman had suffered from a painful discharge. Not only was she physically exhausted, but she was also mentally, emotionally, and spiritually exhausted. Because of the stains, neighbors and unknowing strangers would point fingers and throw slurs at her. If she were wed, her husband would complain that she couldn't fulfill her marriage vows and that he couldn't afford the cost of keeping her. Her parents would accuse her of unconfessed sins, lack of repentance, and disown her. Finally, childhood friends who knew her stopped giving words of encouragement and comfort. Eventually, she was ordered to camp outside the gates of the city. She was alone, maligned, alienated.

Back to the story: The woman knew, before she confessed to Jesus, that it was His power that healed her. She knew, before she confessed to Him, that He had the power to withhold the gift—thus the fear and trembling for His mighty power and authority. She knew that He could return her to her previous condition.

But, Jesus listened and then, with one word, calmed her fears. Jesus responded to her confession with "Daughter." How much meaning for her was in that one word? Being a daughter meant that she was no longer alienated by friends and family. Being a daughter meant that she was a child of God and that she has a home waiting for her. Being a daughter meant that she was included as part of a community. Her worth was based upon her relationship with Jesus.

Jesus told her, "Your faith has made you well. Go in peace, and be healed of your affliction."

As the hymn says: "My sin, not in part, but the whole, is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more. Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul."
By Alan Jamison

Candlelight Agape Feast & Communion Service

January 3, 2025 5:30 pm Ukiah Junior Academy

There is no better way to close out the old year and bring in the new year!

What to bring:

- Your Bible
- Your praise to God for what He has done for you this last year
- A pot of your favorite soup or stew
- Your favorite rolls or bread

(If you're single just bring one or the other.)

“As you enter upon a new year, let it be with an earnest resolve to have your course onward and upward. Let your life be more elevated and exalted than it has hitherto been. Make it your aim not to seek your own interest and pleasure, but to advance the cause of your Redeemer. Remain not in a position where you ever need help yourself, and where others have to guard you to keep you in the narrow way. You may be strong to exert a sanctifying influence upon others. You may be where your soul's interest will be awakened to do good to others, to comfort the sorrowful, strengthen the weak, and to bear your testimony for Christ whenever opportunity offers. Aim to honor God in everything, always and everywhere. Carry your religion into everything.

“Prepare for eternity with such a zeal as you have not yet manifested.

“Educate your mind to love the Bible, to love the prayer meeting, to love the hour of meditation, and, above all, the hour when the soul communes with God.

“Become heavenly-minded if you would unite with the heavenly choir in the mansions above....

“A new page is turned in the book of the recording angel. . . . Let a record be stamped there which you will not be ashamed to have revealed to the gaze of men and angels.”

My Life Today, p. 369

“All About Jesus” Seminar

Pastor Gary and Marilyn Venden are scheduled to present their “All About Jesus” seminar in January,

The dates are Friday evening, January 17 through Sabbath afternoon, January 25.

There will be a presentation each evening at **6:30 p.m.**, except for Sabbaths, when there will be three: **9:30 a.m., 11:00 a.m., and at 2:30 p.m.**, following a potluck lunch.

Pastor Venden's topics will include:

1. How to deepen a meaningful friendship with Jesus.
2. How to become victorious over sin.
3. How to be a contagious Christian in your service and witnessing.
4. How to receive the latter-rain power of the Holy Spirit.

Invite your friends and family to come to this seminar. They will love it and deepen their friendship with Jesus along with you!

Christian Radio Ministry

Have you tuned in to KPRA, FM 89.5? You can be blessed with Adventist messages and health talks 24/7. Spread the good news! Share this with your friends in the community!

Pastor Mike Wilson reports that a number of the church family are listening and have expressed their appreciation of the station.

However, there were a couple members who were not in favor of it. They didn't think anyone listens to the radio anymore.

Then they happened to tune in on their car radio and their minds were changed. Now they believe this is a wonderful ministry!

Cantata Reflections

by Vicky and Jeff Lauritzen

Christmas is often thought of as a time of traditions. This year's 33rd annual Christmas Cantata at the Ukiah SDA Church was no exception. Blending familiar carols with newer arrangements, the centuries-old story of the birth of Jesus Christ came alive once again.

Led by Margie Salcedo-Rice: the choirs, orchestra, herald trumpets, piano, organ, narrators, costumed actors, and sheep all combined to portray the mystery and majesty of that event. The program, like the story it told, included participants from the entire community and surrounding area. Many of our own church members filled the choir and orchestra, as well as costumed roles. So many worked behind the scenes, or as greeters, ushers, in food preparation and so much more. UJA students were all involved, adding a youthful and adorable element. Some individuals drove from as far away as Sacramento, Fairfield, and Napa to fill important musical positions.

The annual Christmas Cantata, an impressive, immersive experience, becomes even more impressive considering the size of the Ukiah SDA Church. We have been involved in programs of this scope before and all have been produced by churches with memberships of a thousand or more.

For many in the community, the Cantata is their yearly traditional not-to-be-missed event. This makes the Cantata perhaps the greatest outreach of our church. So to all those who gave countless hours to the production, know that your work is a blessing.





Adventurers Club Activities

In December, our Adventurers enjoyed learning more about the story of Jesus and making some fun Christmas crafts. We went on a special outing to Mountain View Nursing Home where we sang Christmas carols, talked about the histories of some of our favorites, and shared the Christmas cheer to those living there.

We have been blessed with the leadership of Jodi Clay and are so grateful for all the hard work and dedication she has given to make this Adventurers Club happen. We will miss her leadership SO much!

By Liz Oliver



Therefore let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father. And this is the promise that He has promised us—eternal life.

1 John 2:24, 25

"I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I've committed unto Him, against that day."

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Filled With The Holy Spirit,
Discipling,
Baptizing,
Teaching, With Love,
Preparing All For Jesus' Return

OUR VISION STATEMENT

To Know Jesus
To Share Jesus
To Follow Jesus
Changing Lives Today
And For Eternity

A Night Under the Stars

On the evening of October 24, two teachers and 20 students braved the cloudless night to study the heavens.

Every two years, the 7th. and 8th. grade class studies astronomy. We study the planets of our solar system, constellations, and nebulas. The culminating event is a night under the stars.

Ryan and Heidi Veness were our gracious hosts. The students spread out tarps for a boys area and a girls area, laid out sleeping pads and sleeping bags, and then the fun began.

Dr. Geoff Rice always brings his telescope and this year, one of the UJA parents, Dr. Mike Baldwin, brought a night-vision scope to view the heavenly objects.

During the evening, we spotted Jupiter and its Galilean moons, Saturn and its rings. Next we turned the telescope towards the Pleiades and the ring nebula. When students weren't looking through the telescope, they were pointing out the constellations that were in the sky before we went to bed.

Finally, around 10 p.m., with temperatures dropping, everyone bundled up for the night. Some kids had sleeping bags inside of sleeping bags. It got down to 39 that night.

Around 3 a.m., Mr. Kuntz woke the students up, so they could see how the constellations shifted during the night and new constellations had risen. Students named the recently-risen constellations and quickly went back to sleep.

In the morning, Ryan and Heidi had a fire going and were making pancakes for everyone. As we regrouped back at the school, most were tired, but there were many comments about how cool (not cold, but awesome) the night had been. Many memories were made that night and that's what makes little sleep and a chilly evening worth it.

About half the students had never looked through a telescope. Even those who had looked through telescopes had only looked at the moon and never had seen other planets. The students who were able to name the constellations will be receiving their Pathfinder honor at the end of the school year.

by Dan Kuntz



“ Oh Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth, who have set Your glory above the heavens! When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained, what is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit him? For You have made him a little lower than the angels, and You have crowned him with glory and honor. O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth!”

Psalm 8:1, 3-5, 9

Youth Corner

Pathfinders has been very active this year with many fun activities and trips. I'll share about a particular one this month.

In November, the teen Pathfinders went on a caving trip to Lava Beds National Monument in the northeast corner of California. This was an incredible trip! We had nine teens and three adults on the trip, and everyone had a great time. We explored many caves, from ones so small you had to wiggle on your belly to get through sections, to ones so big that a small airplane could fly through them.

One of the bigger caves we went through wasn't very long, but had a few hidden Native American petroglyphs. The longest cave we explored was over a mile long to the very end and had many sections that required us to crawl. It took us over two hours to make it to the other side of the road and out an unmarked exit. That was one of our favorites because it felt like we were discovering something new.

Other than caving, one of the best parts of the trip was sitting by the campfire in the evenings, roasting marshmallows, and playing games, while trying to stay warm. Overall, it was a great trip where many good memories were made.

By Pastor K.



Verses of Hope and Renewal for a New Year

“May the God of HOPE fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with HOPE by the power of the Holy Spirit.” Romans 15:13

“The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; His mercies never come to an end; they are NEW every morning; great is His faithfulness.” Lamentations 3: 22, 23

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a NEW creation. The old has passed away; behold, the NEW has come.” 2 Corinthians 5:17

“Those who wait for the Lord will gain NEW strength. They will mount up with wings like eagles; they will run and not get tired; they will walk and not become weary.” Isaiah 40:31

A Prayer for the New Year

Our Heavenly Father, Thank You that You are in the business of making all things new. Thank You for Your promise that You who have begun a good work in us will complete it. Thank You for all that You have allowed into our lives this past year—the good along with the hard things —which have reminded us how much we need to ask for Your grace and mercy to cover us every day.

We pray for Your Spirit to lead us moment by moment in this new year. We ask that You will guide our decisions and transform our hearts to deeply desire You above everything else. We ask that You will open doors needing to be opened and close the ones needing to be shut tight.

We ask for Your wisdom, Your strength, and Your power to be constantly present with us. We pray You would make us strong and courageous for the road ahead. Give us abilities beyond what we feel able.

Let Your gifts flow freely through us, so that You would be honored by our lives and others would be drawn to You. We pray for Your protection over our families and friends. We ask for Your hands to cover us and keep us away from the evil intent of the enemy; that You will be a barrier surrounding us, so we will stay peaceful in Your arms. We pray for discernment and insight beyond our years to understand Your will, to hear Your voice, and to know Your ways.

Forgive us for the times we have worked so hard to be self-sufficient, forgetting our need of You. Forgive us for letting fear and worry control our minds and pride and selfishness control our lives. Help us to be known as reflectors of Your love. Help us to look for the needs of others and not be consumed only by our own.

Shine Your light in us, through us, and over us. May we make a difference in this world for Your glory and purpose. May we share Your peace and hope to those who so desperately need Your presence and healing. May this singleness of purpose pervade our thinking and actions.

To You be glory and honor in this new year, and forever! In Jesus’ name and for His sake.
Amen! By Donna Faye Anderson