



Simpson News

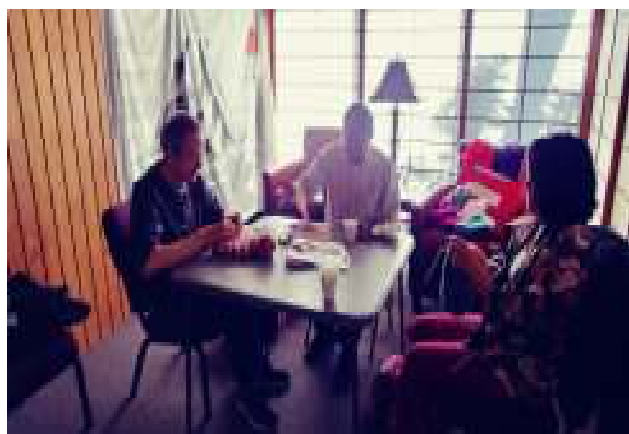
DECEMBER

Volume 49

Number 12



Ministry and Fun
at Simpson UMC



Advent means “coming” and is the name given to the four-week period before Christmas. Advent also marks the beginning of the church calendar and is part of the cycle of seasons that includes Advent, Christmas and Epiphany (celebration of the arrival of the wise men). Advent is a season rich in tradition, symbolism, scripture, art and music. It is also the season to prepare our hearts and minds for the coming Christ.

Matt Rawle highlights that Christmas is a time of change. The days leading to Christmas are darker and shorter. Rawle contends that “everything changed when God put on flesh and was born in Bethlehem.” Advent offers us an opportunity to retell the story of Christ coming into our lives. As our lives change, we experience the story of Jesus’ birth in new and exciting ways. Advent is an invitation for each of us to enter the story, experience how God is interacting in our world today, and allow our faith to grow in unexpected ways.

Advent was never intended as a time for us to simply wait for the coming of Christ. Rather, we are to RISE UP and actively participate in the building of the beloved Kingdom of God. Consider the courage of Mary who was a young girl anticipating her future wedding. She became an active participant in God’s plan and kingdom by proclaiming “I am the Lord’s servant.” She then nurtured, loved and provided a safe place for our Savior to grow and fulfill God’s plan. Consider the Magi who diligently studied the stars. They then traveled a far distance to worship Jesus after his birth. Consider Harriet Tubman who led slaves to freedom on the Underground Railroad. Consider Desmond Doss, a World War II veteran, who rescued 75 men trapped by enemy fire while refusing to carry a gun or threaten another human life. Advent is a time to RISE UP.

As a Body of Christ, our faith is actively growing as we transform lives. Through Operation Christmas Child, a child will be shown God’s love through the surprise of toys found in a shoe box. Through our Knit and Crochet Hat Ministry, strangers will be shown the grace of God through warmth on a cold winter day. Through your donations of food and household items to the Colorado Homeless Families and UMCOR, a family will experience God’s peace as one less worry is lifted from their lives. We are active disciples of Christ!

Each of us, with our unique gifts, are called to rise to action to shape and influence our beloved community. Daily during this Advent season, ask yourself this:

“God, I don’t know what you are doing today but I want to be part of it!”

May you and your family and friends have a blessed Advent and Christmas Season. May God surprise you and may you have the courage to continue to Rise Up to God’s call in your life.

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Leah

Advent
*A Season of Hope
& Expectation*

Dear Members of the Simpson United Methodist Church

We are struggling with the need for new leaders to participate in the operations of SUMC. As Co-Lay Leaders we attempt to be active and participate in all the committees and functions of the Church. We are currently reaching out to the congregation with requests by the Nominations Committee to consider serving the Church. Please consider serving Simpson and sharing the responsibilities of that position with a co-chair. Your Co-Lay Leaders have found this to be an effective way to reduce the time we each spend helping Simpson continue forward. We are stepping up to the challenge and have agreed to continue as your co-lay leaders in 2019. Many have joined us in this vision to revitalize Simpson but we need help from more of you. Please come and talk to us if you are able and willing to help.

The Arts and Crafts Showcase October 21st was a great success. We noticed many new visitors to the church from the surrounding community and the Japanese community. Thank you for supporting our artists.

The Youth chili fundraiser on Sunday November 11 after worship, despite the snowy weather was a huge success, with a surprising turn out of participants and youth. The Youth even cleaned off the snow from everyone's cars in the parking lot for a bonus! Thanks to Chen Wu for leading this effort. From Chen Wu: "A huge "thank you" to all of you who helped out with the chili luncheon yesterday! It was nice to see the number of youngsters who were there yesterday, and the food was just perfect for the kind of weather we had!"

On Sunday November 11 we also had a baptism during worship. We need more of these!

The coffee hour on November 4th with the waffle mochi and sampling of different toppings was a fun time. Thank you for joining us in fellowship and tasting some new mochi flavors.

Thank you for supporting the Operation Christmas Child with your Shoebox donations. Thank you for your knitted, crocheted and other donations to the Stocking Project for low income seniors and adults with disabilities. 50% of the seniors in nursing homes never receive a visitor so filling Christmas Stockings for these lonely people is a true joy.

Again we would like to invite you to attend the Administrative Council meetings currently held on the last Wednesday evening each month. The Ad Council needs your help in planning for Simpson's future. To facilitate more attendance by the congregation please let us know your thoughts on moving the meeting to one Sunday after service. Even if you are not a voting member, we always appreciate your input.

As always, please continue to reach out to us. We love the faith and trust you have placed in us and want to continue to be there if you need us. Please contact us at any time with any questions, concerns, and your ideas for the future.

May grace and blessings be in your path,

Owen FitzSimons 303-910-2664

Paula Matsumoto 303-908-8456

Ephesians 3:2-6

By referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; if indeed you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace which was given to me for you;



Time flies this time of year. Fall has come and gone. We are into the Christmas season, and believe it or not, we are almost half way through the school year. So first off Sheri and I would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas, and a Happy New year.



So far this year we have been living up to our new theme of Hands, Hearts, and Heaps O' fun. We kicked off the school year with a fantastic lock in and movie night, followed by a very successful Rally Sunday. We also had a lot of fun with the lock in and the corn maze.

We have continued to look at the Old Testament of the Bible and learn Christian history. For instance, what the heck is a Nephilim? Don't know? Take a look in Genesis chapter 6. We still don't know for sure but guess it is some kind of angel and human cross.

We will continue to find new and exciting ways to explore our Hands, Hearts, and Heaps O' fun theme. If you have any ideas that would fit our theme, please email me at simpsonyouth16@gmail.com or join us after church on the first Sunday of every month for the parent and youth council. Also, if you would like to volunteer for a project or event, let me know. It is a great way to get to know our young people.

Finally I would like to thank everyone for their support of our fundraisers for Asian camp, especially the ONE committee. Keep supporting our future fundraisers and help send a youth to camp, and support our other events and projects.

Yours in Christ,
Scott Pelletier

December 2nd—11:15 a.m. — Parent and Youth Council to plan for 1st quarter of 2019

December 9th—10:00 a.m.—Children's and Youth Christmas Play during the Worship Service



Love Came Down at Christmas

I would like to Thank everyone who was able to donate to the "Cantata Instruments" Fund. Because of you, we will be able to have a small Consort of Instrumentalists for that special day.

I also want to thank all of you for praying for our choir and Cantata musicians. Your support and good wishes are very important. The Spirit of Christmas seems to fill everyone's heart.

Be sure to bring a friend or neighbor on December 16th. Reaching out to others is ALWAYS a good idea!

If you have any questions at all, please feel free to contact me at wdl12@comcast.net or call me at 303.550.5066.

Debbie Willeford



We are grateful for the many ways people support our church with generous gifts. It is part of our tradition to publicly thank those who give special gifts. However, as some prefer to donate anonymously, this is not a complete list of donors.



<u>Given By</u>	<i>In Loving Memory</i>	<u>In Memory Of</u>
Paula Matsumoto		Kristine Motoyoshi
Mary K. Ida		Tom Ida

Gifts to the Church

Calvin Yukihiro	Boiler
Cindy & Tay Kondo	Utilities
Friday Bridge	Utilities
Paula Matsumoto	Music
Masako Furuiye	Newsletter
World Communion Sunday — Marva Britton, Mary Everett, Ken & Noelle Maynell, Ruth Shinto and Grace Tochiara	

The Asian Pacific Development Center—will not meet in December. The lunch and fellowship will resume in January, 2019 the fourth Wednesday of the month at 11:00 a.m.

A big **THANK YOU** to our faithful volunteers Esther Hashiba, Ruthe Terada and Grace Tochiara for assembling the November Newsletter for mailing on October 30, 2018

We would NOT be able to do this without your help.

You are very much appreciated!

Church News

As a United Methodist, you may have heard discussions on the topic of human sexuality. Human sexuality has been a topic of discussion in the United Methodist Church for many, many years. In the 1970s and 1980, several General Conferences of the United Methodist Church added language to the Book of Discipline which excludes self-avowed, practicing homosexuals from being in leadership roles and identified marriage as between a man and a woman (please see the Traditionalist Plan listed below). This discussion and debate has continued over the years and will be discussed again at a Special Session of the General Conference on February 23-26, 2019, in St. Louis, Missouri. The primary purpose of this session is to receive and act upon a report by a group called the Commission on a Way Forward. This important work will help shape the future of The United Methodist Church.

At the 2016 General Conference in Portland, there were an overwhelming number of proposals dealing with issues surrounding same-sex marriage, the ordination of LGBTQ clergy, and related topics. During a discussion about how to proceed, a clergy delegate addressed the bishops, "We are asking for your leadership." Another added, "We are in a stuck place... I'm pleading with you. Please help us." The bishops returned later in the General Conference with a plan. They would create a group to research and advise them of ways to help us get unstuck and to move the church forward. The group they later brought together is called the Commission on a Way Forward.

The Commission on a Way Forward is charged to do a complete examination and possible revision of every paragraph of the Book of Discipline concerning human sexuality and to explore options to help to maintain and strengthen the unity of the church. The 32-member Commission has been meeting since January 2017 to evaluate potential ways to lead the church forward amid the present impasse related to LGBTQ inclusion and resulting questions about the potential division of the church. The Commission recently proposed three plans (One Church Plan, Connectional Plan and Traditionalist Plan) as ways to help the church move forward.

The One Church Plan would have the denomination recognize that marriage is between two adults, not explicitly between one man and one woman. It would allow pastors to decide whether or not to preside at same-sex weddings, and it would give local churches the right to decide whether or not same-sex weddings could take place on church properties. Finally, it would allow annual conferences (clergy session and Board of Ordained Ministry) to decide whether or not to ordain self-avowed, practicing homosexuals.

The Connectional Plan would create three branches of the church, referred to as Connectional Conferences. While the three branches would share responsibility and receive support from a number of general church boards and agencies and operate under a unified Council of Bishops, each branch would have a significant degree of autonomy when it comes to sexual ethics, teachings on marriage, and ordination standards. This plan will require that each of the three conferences make a significant number of Constitutional Amendments. Each church would also select which branch they would like to be part of because conference boundaries would no longer be based upon geography.

The Traditional Plan would reaffirm The United Methodist Church's present standard on human sexuality and call for enhanced accountability standards for clergy, bishops, and annual conferences. United Methodist clergy would not be allowed to preside at same-sex weddings, and same-sex weddings would not be allowed on United Methodist property. Self-avowed, practicing homosexuals would not be eligible for ordination in The United Methodist Church. In addition, self-avowed, practicing homosexuals and performing a same-sex wedding would be chargeable offenses.

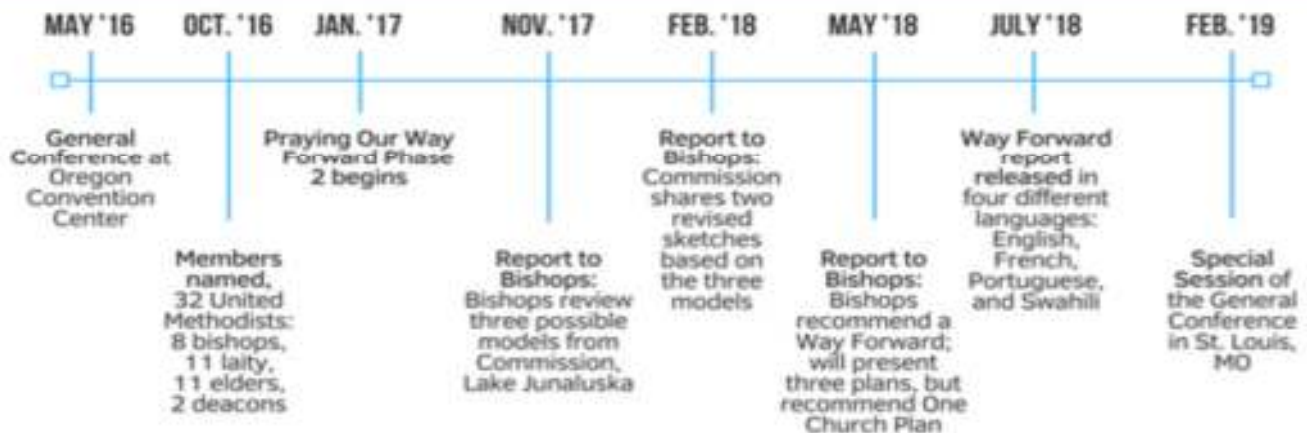
I recognize that this may be the first time some are reading about this topic and the three plans. I also recognize that there are a variety of beliefs and understandings about sexuality and how the church can move forward. Most importantly, I believe that it is important to create a safe place for open and honest discussions on difficult topics such as this. If you have any questions, comments or concerns, please know that I am here for you and will create a safe place to allow vulnerable discussions.

I pray for you and the entire United Methodist Church.

I would love to hear your feedback.

Pastor Leah

MOUNTAIN SKY CONFERENCE ON THE WAY FORWARD: A TIMELINE



Advent Bible Study

Our Advent Bible Study continues weekly on Tuesdays, at 9:30 a.m. at SUMC (November 27 through December 18th). We will continue our journey with Charles Dickens's *A Christmas Carol*. We will explore the world of Ebenezer Scrooge, Tiny Tim, and the Cratchits with an eye to Christian faith. Along the way you will meet the Ghosts of Christmas Past, Present, and Yet to Come and learn about living with and for others in a world blessed by Jesus. Please sign up for the bible study as we prepare our hearts for the arrival of Jesus.

Shopping for gifts?

Here are a couple ideas that can benefit Simpson!

AmazonSmile is a website operated by Amazon with the same products, prices, and shopping features as Amazon.com. The difference is that when you shop on AmazonSmile, the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products to the charitable organization such as SUMC.

To help raise funds for SUMC use the following website to do your shopping:

<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/84-0507792>

Also, consider using Simpson's reloadable gifts cards!





**Music Committee
Simpson United Methodist Church
6001 Wolff Street.
Arvada, CO 80003-6833**

Worship

Blue Christmas Service

December 12th, 6:30 p.m.

We recognize that Christmas is not always a cheerful and happy time for everyone. Many have experienced losses and pain during the Christmas Season. Some may have lost a loved one, a job or a friend. Join us at the Blue Christmas Service for a time of prayer, remembrance and healing.



Worship during the Season of Advent



Dec. 2	Luke 21:26-36
Dec. 9	Children and Youth Christmas Play
Dec. 12	Blue Christmas 6:30 p.m.
Dec. 16	Christmas Cantata
Dec. 23	Luke 1:39-55
Dec. 24	Candlelight Christmas Eve Service 6:30 p.m.
Dec. 30	Colossians 3:12-17

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
2 9:00 am Hina Matsuri Committee Meeting 10:00 WORSHIP SERVICE Communion SS/Youth 11:00 am Youth/Parent Mtg. 11:15 am Choir Rehearsal	3 10:00 am Staff Meeting	4 9:30 am Advent Bible Study	5	6	7	1 9:00 am – Taiko, Japanese Language Class 2:30 pm—Pick up Mochi
9 10:00 WORSHIP SERVICE SS/Youth Children's Program	10 10:00 am Staff Meeting 10:00 am Ukulele	11 9:30 am Advent Bible Study Newsletter Articles due to Office today	12 2:00 pm set up Early College Arvada 4:30-9:00 pm ECA Event 6:30 pm Blue Christmas	13 5:15-6:15pm Orchestra Rehearsal 6:15-6:55pm Meal in Memorial Lng. 6:30-8:30 pm—Choir	14 10:00 am Bridge Game Day.	15 9:00 am – Taiko 9:00 am – Japanese Language Class
16 8:15 Choir Rehearsal 10:00 WORSHIP SERVICE Cantata	17 10:00 am Staff Meeting	18 9:30 am Advent Bible Study	19	20	21	22 9:00 am – Taiko 9:00 am – Japanese Language Class
23 10:00 WORSHIP SERVICE SS/Youth 30 Worship Service 11:15 am Possible SPRC meeting	24 6:30 pm 31 HAPPY NEW YEAR	25	26	27	28	29

LITURGISTS

December 02 Terry Hall
December 09 Jane Nakama
December 16 Cantata—No Liturgist
December 23 Ruby Hada
December 30 TBD

GROCERY CERTIFICATES

Bob Fujioka

USHERS

Dan Goto
Owen FitzSimons
Hondo Swanberg
TBD

AV Tech

John Hall
David Powell
TBD
TBD

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