



PALM LEAF

Palm UMC

December 2020

First Word

Post Office Box 565 Dinuba, California 93618 559-591-0746 <https://palmumc.org> info@palmumc.org

PASTOR'S PONDERINGS—Season's Greetings to you all, Beloved!

I recently joined a team of pastors and lay people who want to provide fresh words for worship and commentaries for preachers to help people see God's Word in new ways that are true and reflect God's justice as well as realistic to what's happening in our world. As we thought about Advent this year a couple of months ago, we wondered what would be going on in our country now after the elections. And while so far, I think we are doing better than what we might have called worse-case scenario, I think it's fair to say we are far worse than best-case scenario. We discerned together that Advent 2020 would be a season to really focus on Hope.

Traditionally for Advent wreath candle-lighting, we incorporate themes of Hope, Love, Joy and Peace. While all of them are good and important, the world around us needs hope this year. Every year we need hope, but this is really a difficult and troubling time to find hope. The pandemic reels out of control. Our economy is shrinking. We need to put new safety measures in place but people rebel, and politically we remain divided as ever. We struggle to know where to put our hopes, in whom we can hope, what is even realistic to hope for.

The good news is, once again, that we don't have to come up with this reason for hope on our own. The word Advent means "coming." God is coming to us once again. Ready or not, God comes to us. This Christmas we will celebrate once again how God has already come to us in Jesus, who appeared in flesh first as a tiny and vulnerable baby. But celebrating this is not just making a memorial to that one time that God came among us. As we celebrate Advent and Christmas this year, we celebrate how that one amazing and concrete way God came to dwell among us was not the end. It was the beginning of how God continues to come among us. Into our deepest fears and anxieties, the peace of Christ comes. Into our woundedness and pain of divisions, the love of Christ comes. Even in our despair at how this pandemic is raging, infecting sickening and killing too many around us, the grace of God puts on flesh.

It is in this God who will stop at nothing to come near to us that we put our hope. Pretending things are normal will not make it better. No, the Christmas decorations will not save us, nor will festive music. Not even the gifts will be enough to transform our situation or fix our economy. It is good to find joy in the little things, yes, but we cannot put our real hope in the trimmings. Our hope is based in how God still comes to us, and it is God's promises that we put our hope. May we have eyes of faith to look for God coming near this season, to be able--yes even in 2020--to rejoice in God's power to save us.

Your partner in that Hope,

Pastor Michelle



Pastor Michelle Magee (805) 233-5796 michelle.magee@cnumc.org <https://www.facebook.com/PalmUMCDinuba>

JOYS AND CONCERNS AMONG OUR CHURCH FAMILY

Please continue to pray for cancer warriors Michael dela Montanya, Jacob dela Montanya, Gerard Laquerrier (friend of John and Pat), Irene Pasillas (Open Gate), and Chase Glosier (Steve and Kathy Botkin's nephew).

Please keep Phyllis Martzen, Lisa Delgado, John and Pat dela Montanya, Carol (Rossi) Christianson, Miyeko Cabello (Diane's mother), Elaine Borjon Konatsu Conway, Brenda Godinez, Rosalinda Vasquez and her family, Florence Brayfield, Marcia Williams, Terry and Nancy McKittrick, Katherine Rodriguez and her family, Sharlene and Kay Hayakawa, Betty Barsotti, Mel Imai (Ruth Fujinaga's cousin), Molly Osato, Cherry Cadiente, Steven Bulosan, Wilma Conner, Sandy Hansen, Antonio Saldana (father of Derek's friend Jose), Dinuba Youth for Christ, Cruising for Jesus, domestic violence ministries, first responders, health-care workers, Open Gate Ministries; teachers and students; and all those affected during the COVID-19 pandemic and lock-down in your prayers.

Deepest sympathy is extended to family and friends of Pat Kurihara, who passed away on Tuesday, November 9, at home in Orosi. Pat was a life-long member of Palm Church.

NEWS BITS FOR THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER 2020

Pastor Michelle will live-stream her Sunday sermons on Facebook at 10:30 AM (more information enclosed), and she will be leading "Grace Groups" via ZOOM. Old Testament Bible Study will gather every Wednesday at 11:00 via conference call, except November 25. Prayer Group will convene on Thursdays. Ad Council will meet via ZOOM on December 15 at 10:30 AM.

Virtual Coffee Hour will be held following Facebook live-stream and Zoom worship service every Sunday (except December 13), and following Holy Communion on Sunday, December 6 !! (Please have bread and juice ready for virtual Communion.)

Our first in-person outdoor worship October 8 was attended by 29 people, including nine on Zoom and Facebook Livestream; and our second in-person service on November 15 was attended by 43 people !! Our next in-person outdoor worship will be at 2:00 PM on Sunday, December 13, (or December 20, depending on the weather) at Norma and Romeo Lozano's back yard (844 West Nebraska Avenue, SE corner Viscaya Parkway)—please try to arrive by 1:50 PM. Wear a mask that covers your mouth and nose, and bring a chair, if possible ! (Some chairs and disposable masks will be available.) RSVP Marian Clifton, 834-5135 or marianclifton@verizon.net Facebook livestream and Zoom service will also be offered. There will be no Coffee Hour, no singing, and no audible responses.

PLEASE REFRAIN FROM ANY FORM OF PHYSICAL GREETING !! THIS MEANS NO HUGS, NO HANDSHAKES, NO PATS, NO FIST-BUMPS, AND NO ELBOW-BUMPS !!

Open Gate Virtual Decorated Christmas Tree Auction and Silent Auction will be held Thursday—Sunday, December 4-6 via app.galabid.com/opengatetreeauction .

Nancy McKittrick reports that the Dinuba Kiwanis is now selling See's candy online—[https://www.yumraising.com/secure/kiwaniscod kiwanis club of dinuba100/candy?h=GinRam6643](https://www.yumraising.com/secure/kiwaniscod%20kiwanis%20club%20of%20dinuba100/candy?h=GinRam6643)

Our Ad Council during the meeting on May 20 decided to invite our entire congregation to spend a moment in prayer every day at 11:24 am, relating to Mark 11:24 where Jesus told his disciples, "Whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours." Let us join together and ask for: God's healing and protection for our church family and our neighbors; for us to take good care of one another; for our governmental authorities to have wisdom in providing for wellbeing of all people; for healthcare workers and other essential workers; and for help in finding a vaccine and ending this time of pandemic, as soon as God's will allows. So set your phone alarms or alarm clocks to remind you, and we will join together in prayer every day at 11:24 AM !

--Pastor Michelle, and Susan Yoshimura, Ad Board Chairman

WAYS TO COMMUNICATE WITH PASTOR MICHELLE

I pray that you are all staying safe and well! These times of pandemic can bring extra pastoral care concerns. Please, if you would like a phone call or visit, let me know! Reaching me on my cell phone is probably the best way, 805- 233- 5796. We can also set up a Zoom to "see" one another if you like. (I just ask that unless it's urgent, to not call on Monday, my day off.) For now according to the Conference protocol, if you would like a visit I can stand outside of your house and talk to you from 10 feet away, looking at you through a window, and talking "live" or on the phone if we can't hear each other. If you are on Facebook and would like to be "friends" there please send a friend request to Pastor Michelle Magee. Out of respect for your privacy I won't request you, but I would be pleased to be friends on that account if you like! Please also like our church Facebook page to see updates there, and you can see the livestreamed worship most Sundays at 10:30am: <https://www.facebook.com/pg/PalmUMCDinuba/videos/> .

Email is great too: michelle.magee@cnumc.org . You should also be getting a weekly guide to an at-home devotional to do, and you can catch the sermon in print form on my blog on the website too: palmumc.org under the worship tab. Blessings!

--Pastor Michelle

Sunday, December 13 (or 20, depending on the weather), in-person worship will be held at 2:00 PM at Norma & Romeo Lozano's back yard, 844 West Nebraska Avenue, Dinuba . Christmas Eve Candlelight Service will be held via Zoom at 5:30 PM on Thursday, December 24.

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS :

1—Jackie Muzzy 4—Junior Bulosan, Jose Erenas 10—Taye Abe
12—Katsumi Noji, Kristen (Yoshimura) Floresca 13—Brent Sadahiro
14--Jackie Hernandez 16—Wilma Conner (101 !!)
17—Katherine Rodriguez 18—Marie Tribble (110 !!)
19—Michelle Magee, Lance Fujinaga 21—Eduardo Espino

Our church council has decided to bless some families again that we met last year through Cruising for Jesus, with grocery and Wal-Mart gift cards for Christmas. If you would like to contribute towards our goal of \$625, please give an extra offering designated for our Local Benevolence Fund by December 6. Thank you for your generosity!

God continues to call us to thankfully be good stewards of all we have received.

Please remember, even though we aren't presently using our facility, we still have expenses: utilities, insurance, salaries, outreach, etc. Your tithes and offerings are VERY important !! Snail-mail (USPS) still works, and now we have the convenient option of online giving through our website or Facebook !! Thank you !!

Jerry Munson, Finance Secretary

**HOW TO LISTEN TO PALM CHURCH 10:30 am SUNDAY SERVICES
WITH PASTOR MICHELLE (and virtual Communion on December 6)
“LIVE” through Zoom using a phone for audio only**

1. Dial **1-669-900-6833** **OR** **1-346-248-7799**
2. After prompt, enter **Meeting I.D.** 901-220-3185, and hit **#**
3. After prompt, hit **#** again
Option—Try Speaker Phone

**LISTEN AND VIEW PASTOR MICHELLE’S
PALM CHURCH 10:30 A.M. SUNDAY SERMON every week (2:00 on December 13)
on FACEBOOK LIVESTREAM (and VIRTUAL COMMUNION on SUNDAY, December 6)
(even if you aren’t a member of Facebook !!) **or you can watch a previous Sunday service.****

<https://www.facebook.com/PalmUMCDinuba/videos/>

If you get the Log-in Window, Click on “Not Now.”

- ▶ When the Live Video appears, click on the red **LIVE** button.

Please leave a Facebook comment (If using a computer, click on video to open the Comments field) or click on an "Emoji Bubble," or send Pastor Michelle a text (805-233-5796), OR send Marian an email (marianclifton@verizon.net) for the purpose of attendance record .Thank you !

Please have juice and bread ready for virtual Communion on December 6.

**TO PARTICIPATE IN VIRTUAL COFFEE HOUR FOLLOWING THE SUNDAY SERVICE
“LIVE” through Zoom using computer or smart phone
(or audio only—see instructions above for dial-in, hit *** 6** to un-mute yourself)**

Join Zoom Meeting—

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/9012203185?pwd=ZEVhOFUrVjZTZlhGVUkzWTI5d3JCQT09>



OPEN GATE MINISTRIES
ON-GOING NEEDS
(511 North "K" Street, Dinuba)
591-1241

Bathroom and Facial Tissue
Paper Towels
Feminine Products and Diapers
Toothbrushes and Toothpaste
Lotion, Shampoo, and Hairbrushes
Coffee and Creamer
Cooking Oil and Sugar
Juice and Children's Snacks
Ziplock Bags (quart and gallon size)
Aluminum Foil / Plastic Grocery Bags
Fresh Fruits and Vegetables
Socks and Pajamas—all sizes



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Worship Bulletin Editor: Kathy Lamb
Webmaster: Sandy Hansen
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Thursday 10:30–4:00
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Listen to Pastor Michelle's sermons at--
Website: <https://palmumc.org>
Church Location:
Palm UMC—Tulare and "P" Streets
Sunday Service:
Palm UMC—10:00 AM—Facebook
Livestream and Zoom Worship

DECEMBER
WORSHIP TASKS

Worship Leader

Communion Steward

Greeters / Ushers

2

9

16

23

30

December Tobans

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December Birthdays

Dear Members and Friends of Palm UMC--

It has been good to be with you for outdoor worship. Thanks to everyone for maintaining distance, wearing masks, and observing all the health and safety protocols so we can care well for one another !! We are scheduling our next outdoor in-person worship service on December 13 at 2:00 PM, with a rain date of December 20.

It is important to RSVP so we can let you know if the date is changed !! If you plan to attend the next in-person outdoor service, please RSVP Marian Clifton at 843-5135 or marianclifton@verizon.net

Please continue to consider your own health and safety before attending an outdoor in-person worship service.

We will continue with online worship via Facebook Livestream and Zoom at the regular time 10:30 AM in the meantime every Sunday, and the Zoom coffee hour. Thank you for your continued faithfulness in sharing Christ wherever you are.

In Christ's Love and Peace,
Pastor Michelle



2021
Palm Church Ad Council

Nancy McKittrick--Ad Board Chair, Assistant Treasurer
Susan Yoshimura--Education Chair, SPRC co-Chair
Jerry Munson—Finance Chair, Financial Secretary
Janice Serios—UMW President, Youth co-Chair, SPRC co-Chair
Arthur Anderson—Treasurer
Marian Clifton—Missions co-Chair, co-Recording Secretary
Aiko Takeda—Missions co-Chair
Katherine Rodriguez—Missions (Outreach), Youth co-Chair
Cathy Yada—co-Recording Secretary
Derek Fujinaga—Lay Leader, Annual Conference Delegate,
Interim Trustee Chair
Sandy Hansen—Webmaster
Pastor Michelle Magee—Nominations Chair
Aiko Takeda—Missions co-Chair
Norma Lozano—Worship Tasks Coordinator



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