



PALM LEAF

Palm UMC
January 2025

First Word

Post Office Box 565

Dinuba, California 93618

559-591-0746

<https://palmumc.org>

PASTOR'S PONDERINGS—PROMISES OF BAPTISM

Happy 2025 !! For the beginning of January I will be on vacation and leave the preaching to our brother in Christ Buffy Ruiz, who is free to preach as God leads him!

But the liturgical year we usually follow would have us celebrate Jesus' baptism on January 12. Recalling Jesus' baptism reminds us of our own baptisms, one of the sacraments we have to experience God's grace through physical elements, in this case, water. From the United Methodist Hymnal's liturgy, we hear that "through the Sacrament of Baptism we are initiated into Christ's holy church. We are incorporated into God's mighty acts of salvation and given new birth through water and the Spirit. All this is God's gift, offered to us without price." P. 33

Take a moment to let those words sink in. What an amazing gift! It is truly wonderful to remember that God acts on our behalf. This Sacrament is a public and concrete expression of the grace of God which is available to everyone. (We will be celebrating 2 adult baptisms in February; if you or your child haven't been baptized and would like to be, talk to me!)

But along with this expression of God's amazing grace, there are also commitments that come with baptism: renouncing evil, resisting injustice, and entrusting ourselves to Jesus (see p34 of UMH). And being initiated into Christ's holy church comes with becoming a member of the local congregation. As we remember our baptism (or contemplate our future baptism!) we consider again these questions "As members of this congregation will you faithfully participate in its ministries, by your prayers, your presence, your gifts, your service and your witness?" In response to God's grace, we commit our whole being in these ways, to help that grace unfold through us for others!

So included with this newsletter is an updated version of our pledge form for 2025. Please consider carefully how you plan this year to faithfully participate with the ministries of our church. Everyone is gifted differently, has different time constraints, different financial realities. God knows that! But pray and think about how God is calling **you** as baptized beloved one, to be a part of God's mission through Palm UMC. See what options on the form might tug on your heart; make your regular giving a part of your budget. There are options listed for prayer, presence, gifts, service and witness. You can also add your own!

Many around this time make New Year's resolutions, but usually that is about the individual. You might think about these pledges as resolutions to each other and to God, a plan for faithfulness, in response to God's amazing grace. Please fill it out at your earliest convenience and return to the church office, or if you are technologically agile, you can email it.

Happy New Year and may God's blessings continue and increase for you and those you hold dear!

--Pastor Michelle

JOYS AND CONCERNS AMONG PALM CHURCH FAMILY

Please continue to pray for cancer warriors Linda Gourley (friend of Mary Esmay), Jim Bulls, Robert's co-worker Isaac, Brent Sadahiro's friend Alicia, Liz's cousin Grace Arifuku and mother Joyce Sasaki, Jennifer Washington, Judy Yoshimoto, Joe Takeda, Irene Pasillas, and Tammy Campbell.

Please keep the Ishida family; Julian Din, Sr; Phyllis Martzen, Carol Rossi-Christianson, Jamie Campbell, Rosalinda Vasquez; Liz's cousin Wayne Morimoto; Marcia Williams, Miyeko Cabello, Dianne Young's sisters Denise and Connie; Wilson School Principal Maria Lichtenwaldt; Dianne's mother-in-law MaryJane Young; Melissa Prado, Ruth Kurihara, Lupe Gonzales; firefighters; health care workers; teachers, refugees, Ukraine, Sudan, Haiti, Puerto Rico, Taiwan, Israel and Palestine, our country, and Open Gate Ministries in your prayers.

Deepest condolences are offered to family and friends of Bruce Ishida, who died November 16. Service will be held on January 25, 2025, 1:30 PM, at Myers' Funeral Home in Porterville.

Sincere sympathy is extended to family and friends of former Palm Church Pastor David Slorpe, who passed away November 22, 2024, in Santa Rosa, California.

Deepest condolences are offered to friends and family of Nancy (Hanada) Bellin, who died November 26, 2024. Her parents were early members of Palm Church.

Sincere sympathy is extended to family and friends of Ruby Takeda, who passed away on December 12 in Reedley. Service will be held at Dopkins Funeral Chapel, Dinuba, on January 2.

Average Sunday attendance for December was 40.

PALM CHURCH NEWS BITS FOR THE MONTH OF JANUARY 2025

All Palm Church Sunday 10:30 AM worship services are live-streamed via Facebook.

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

As we worship in-person at Palm Church, masks will be encouraged out of consideration for the safety of all; if you are feeling ill, please stay home. Facebook Livestream will be available; see Page Four. Following indoor, in-person services, lunch will be served in the Social Hall, donations gladly accepted. (Palm Church location—corner Tulare & "P" Streets, Dinuba)

Grace Groups meet on Thursday at 3:30 PM every other week via ZOOM, young adults on the first Wednesday of each month at 5:00 PM, and Spanish Grace Group (*Grupo de Gracia*) on alternate Tuesdays at 10:30 AM in-person and via conference call; in-person Grace Group meets on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday at 10:00 AM at 780 Harvard in Dinuba. Old Testament Bible Study convenes on Wednesdays at 11:00 via conference call. Ad Council will meet Thursday, January 23, at 5:30 PM on ZOOM.

Liz Sasaki will serve as Worship Leader on December 24 & 29. Patti Stone-Remick will serve as Worship Leader on January 5, Tina Mizuno will serve on January 12, Philip Martzen will serve on January 19, and Liz Sasaki will serve on January 26. Buffy Ruiz will be our guest speaker while Pastor Michelle is on vacation December 25—January 16.

December Tobans are Dianne Young, Diane Domingo, Stan Davis, Rosalinda Vasquez, Melanie Mizuno, Dr. Liz, and Sean and Amanda. January Tobans are Cathy Yada, Marcia Williams, Patti Remick, Kathy Bell, Taye Abe, and Norma Lozano.

Palm Methodist Church Annual Soup, Sandwich, and Dessert Lunch to benefit Open Gate Ministries will be held Wednesday, February 5, 2025, 11:00 AM—1:00 PM. Let Marian or Dianne Y. know if you can help. Set-up will be Tuesday, February 4, at 9:00 AM.

Ikebana Class will meet on Saturday, January 18, at 1:30.

Next Messy Church will be on Saturday, February 8, at 3:30 PM with the theme of "Love Your Neighbor." Join us for games crafts, celebration, and a meal !!

Please bring your donations of dried beans, fruit, rice, cereal, and pasta; and canned goods for the Little Free Pantry to Palm Church any Sunday. Thank you !!

WAYS TO COMMUNICATE WITH PASTOR MICHELLE

(805) 233-5796

michelle.magee@cnumc.org

palmumc.org

facebook.com/PalmUMCDinuba

My cell phone continues to be the best way to reach me, and please know that you can call me; I would love to hear from you !! Let me know how I can pray for you and if you would like a visit !! Mondays continue to be my Sabbath; I do not respond to non-emergency calls or messages on that day. Just a reminder, pastors are not mind-readers so if you would like to get together and chat about something please let me know !! My preferred way to be addressed is as "Pastor Michelle" and I appreciate you calling me that !!

I have received reports of text messages and emails going out in my name asking people to purchase gift cards on my behalf for others. This is a scam. Please check the cell number or email of anything suspicious to see if it lines up with my contact information.

Please check out our Website, giving portal, and Facebook page !!

--Pastor Michelle



JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 1—Carmencita Balderama 3—Peter Fern 7—Syndey Furtado
- 10—Anthony Espino 11—Janis Imoto
- 13—Jerry Yada, Nathaniel Joseph, Brent Burwell
- 16—Christine (Cadiante) Fernandez, Karen Shaver
- 20—Eileen Tashiro 23—Charlotte Burks
- 29—Iris Róvere, Sandy Hansen
- 31—Camille Joseph, Ruth Fujinaga, Marian Clifton



Palm Church donated 138 picture books and chapter books to Wilson School, which were delivered on December 3 by Dianne Young and Pastor Michelle. Pictured are Dianne Young and Acting Principal Dr. Jesse Sanchez and 1st Grade Teacher Lisa Morales.



P.4.

LISTEN AND VIEW PALM CHURCH SUNDAY SERVICES
AT 10:30 am ON FACEBOOK LIVESTREAM
or you can watch a previously recorded 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 or an "Emoji," or a "Like," for attendance purposes.
marianclifton@verizon.net 834-5135 **THIS IS IMPORTANT !!**

GOD AT WORK IN COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

Our church is supplying scholarship funds for books for students at Wilson School for a fourth school year !! Your generous giving has made it possible; the students, staff and teachers greatly appreciate it. Every grade level receives \$250 for books for students to have (Fifth and Sixth Grades receive \$300), at the teacher's discretion. If you would like to give for the next school year to be able to continue, donations should be designated as Wilson School support.

We would like to re-start the Wilson Reading Partners program next semester, offering extra reading support to selected first graders one hour a week. We would love to have more volunteers join !! We want to bless our neighborhood by partnering with the school, and we ask that you continue to pray for Wilson's staff, students and families.

We recently donated books from the overflow of donations to our Little Free Library to Wilson School; see photos on Page Three.

2025 DINUBA PALM CHURCH ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL**

- **Susan Yoshimura---Education Chair, Ad Board Chair, Lay Leader
- **Jerry Munson---Financial Secretary
- **Dianne Young---Missions co-Chair
- **Kathy Glover Bell--- Treasurer
- **Marian Clifton---Missions co-Chair; Recording & Membership Secretary; History & Archives
- **Philip Martzen---Trustees Chair, Annual Conference Lay Representative
- **Pastor Michelle Magee---Nominations Chair
- **Diana Bulls---Worship Committee Chair, Finance Chair
- **Dianne Young and Melanie Mizuno---Messy Church co-Leaders
- **Sean Stephens---Webmaster
- **Patti Stone-Remick---SPRC Chair
- **Sean Stephens---Trustees Chair
- ** Amanda Bulls-Stephens---Annual Conference Lay Representative, Certified Lay Speaker
- **Steven Bulosan---UM Young Adult, Church & Society





PALM UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

<http://www.palmumc.org>

In gratitude to God abundantly blessing me, I pledge to
Palm United Methodist Church for 2025: Please check

- My Prayers**
- Praying daily for Palm United Methodist Church and its mission of Sharing Christ
 - Praying daily/regularly for God's work of transformation in my life and in the world.
 - Praying daily/regularly for my family and church family
- My Presence**
- Attending worship regularly (on-line or in-person)
 - Regularly connecting with my Grace Group and/or other small group
 - I wish to join a Grace Group
- My Gifts**
- God has given me the gifts (skills, talents, spiritual, etc) of...
 - I am not really sure what my gifts are, please help me find out
 - By faith, I plan to financially support Palm UMC by giving:
\$ _____ each (week, month, or year) _____ to the General/Operating Fund
 - \$ _____ each (week, month, or year) _____ to (circle appropriate one/s) Wilson School Support - Library/Pantry Supplies -Local Benevolence -Open Gate -UMCOR Fund
- My Service**
- Helping in worship leadership: (circle) Greeter/Usher, Worship Leader, Communion Host, Music, Refreshments (~~Tobacco~~)
 - Volunteering with Messy Church: (circle) Welcoming, Craft Teacher, Celebration Leader, Kitchen Helper or Photographer
 - Assisting with electronic ministry in worship (Audio/Visual)
 - I am open to being trained as a small group leader
 - Volunteering at Wilson School
 - Volunteer at Christian Café in Selma
 - Volunteer at the Food Distribution
 - Helping with our advertising (word of mouth)
 - Helping with content on our social media accounts
- My Witness**
- Thoughtful consideration in answering: *How have I experienced God recently in my life? What are some of my recent blessings?*
 - Visiting or calling church family as needed
 - Developing caring relationships with those whom God loves (whether they know it or not).
 - Going on Neighborhood Walks to get to know our neighbors
 - Inviting family, friends to online/in-person worship, Messy Church, Grace Groups and other ministries
 - Sharing a testimony during worship

In faith and by the grace of God,

Name: _____ Date: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

MESSY CHURCH PHOTOS









