

The Grapevine

A Publication of First Congregational Church of Salida

FALL 2022 ISSUE
Volume 12, Issue 4

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James Frost, Pastor



Each year at Christmas we see signs of the season—winter symbols such as reindeer, snowmen, Christmas cards, Carols (not Hertle), and Christmas trees decking the halls and adorning the malls. But amidst the world's holiday celebration, we also see signs of Christmas: angels, manger scenes, and wise men worshipping the baby, Jesus.

But because the wise men worshipped Jesus and honored Him by giving Him gifts, I wanted to study on the importance of gifts, namely the Gift of Jesus, and to show you why Jesus is the perfect Gift. Let's begin by reading the passage of scripture about Jesus' birth and the wise men's journey to see Him. **"Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star in the east and have come to worship Him." When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. After hearing the king, they went their way; and the star, which they had seen in the east, went on before them until it came and stood over the place where the Child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. After coming into the house they saw the Child with Mary His mother; and they fell to the ground and worshiped Him. Then, opening their treasures, they presented to Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh" (Matt. 2:1-3, 9-11).**

At Christmastime, we often see three wise men depicted in the manger scene presenting their gifts to the baby Jesus. While there is not definite proof that there were only three of them, only three gifts were mentioned.

And the gifts given to Jesus were important. Jesus was given gold, incense (or frankincense), and myrrh. We don't know for sure what each of these gifts represented, but it is likely that these particular gifts were chosen for a reason.

According to tradition, gold was given to the infant King as a token of His royalty. Frankincense, a fragrant incense used in sacrificial offerings, was meant to represent Jesus' deity. Myrrh, a perfume or ointment, was a token of His future suffering.

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So during the Christmas season, we all think about the gifts that we want to buy for friends and family. We try to find that “perfect gift.” It’s been said that a gift must meet three criteria for it to be considered “perfect.” Number one, the gift should reflect the one who gives it. Number two, the gift should reflect knowledge of the one who receives it—in other words, knowledge of their needs, desires, tastes, and so forth. And number three, the gift should be of a nature and quality that will hold its value as time goes on.

We know God gave mankind the perfect Gift when He sent His Son Jesus. The Gift of Jesus meets all of the criteria for being a perfect gift. Number one, Jesus reflects the One Who gave Him—God the Father. Number two, God’s gift of His Son reflects knowledge of our needs. And number three, the Gift of Jesus is of a nature and quality that will hold its value as times goes on, for Jesus’ value is eternal! So God gave us the most perfect Gift when He gave to us Jesus!

But let’s briefly look at each one of these criteria individually. First, Jesus is the perfect Gift because He reflects the Father who gave Him. And going back to our study in Hebrews we read, **“The Son reflects God’s own glory, and everything about him represents God exactly”** (Heb. 1:3). The Apostle Paul wrote, **“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation”** (Col. 1:15), while Jesus Himself said, **“anyone who had seen Him had seen the Father”** (John 14:9). The Father’s words were spoken from Jesus’ lips. The Father’s mercy and compassion were seen in Jesus’ actions. The Father’s abundant provision was demonstrated through Jesus’ generosity. The Father’s great power and love were revealed to us through Jesus! Making Jesus the perfect Gift, and the perfect reflection of the One Who gave Him.

Second, Jesus is the perfect Gift because God gave Him with knowledge of our needs. God knew we needed a Savior, Deliverer, Redeemer, Healer, and a Friend. We needed someone who was fully God and fully man. Only Jesus could meet this need. Being fully God enabled Jesus to carry our sin. His Deity enabled Him to be the Sacrifice Who could bear the sin of the world along with the penalties of sickness, poverty, and spiritual death, while being fully human allowed Jesus to identify with what we go through, enabling Him to provide for all of our needs and desires and to care for us in any situation.

Jesus became our Substitute. We owed a debt we could not pay, and Jesus paid a debt He did not owe. Because of Jesus, you and I can be free. If our greatest need had been information, technology, money, or pleasure,



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economist, or an entertainer, but the truth is, our greatest need was redemption, so God sent a Redeemer! God knew exactly what we needed, and He sent the perfect Gift of His Son.

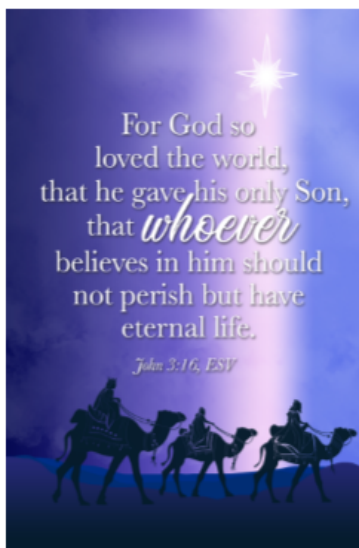
Third, the Gift of Jesus holds its value for all eternity. Can we say that Jesus is the Gift that keeps on giving? **“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life”** (John 3:16). And He gave and He gave and He gave—thousands of years later, the Gift of Jesus is still giving!

The Gift of Jesus never expires. There is no “use-by” date stamped on Jesus. He won’t go bad or spoil, and you won’t have to ever throw Him out. Neither does He ever go out of style. There is never a need to “update” Him or trade Him in for a newer model.

Some people like to give gift cards during the holiday season. But some companies have a policy that assesses penalties for non-use. In other words, if you don’t use the card within an allotted amount of time, the company begins to deduct money from the gift card and will keep doing so until the balance is zero. Jesus never has a zero balance. He is the Gift that never expires, goes out of style, or becomes outdated or obsolete! Every generation needs a Redeemer. Every generation needs a Savior to lift them out of sin and into the righteousness of God, and Jesus is that one Gift that will never lose its value or worth.

And where Jesus is the perfect Gift, it was a Gift Even that we didn’t deserve or could ever earn, but God freely gave Jesus to all who will receive Him. God’s love for us in Christ never fades, diminishes, or weakens. God’s love for us remains consistent and continually available.

So at this time of Christmas, let us not forget the most wondrous Gift of all—His perfect Gift of Jesus to you and me!





This is a time of looking forward to the coming of the Christ Child. Or preparing ourselves for His arrival.

Actually we know that the Spirit is already within us. This might be a time for us to be more aware of this Presence. The Presence of love, not only in ourselves, but in all, in each person we meet. In those we like and those that annoy us.

After all, God is everywhere.

As they say, in each of us there's some good. In the best of us there's some evil, or sin. And in the worst of us there's some good. It's up to us to look for the good in both ourselves and others. Share the good within you with others.

We are the hands and feet of god, Spirit, Love. When shared it might be called compassion, empathy, love forgiveness, etc. It might show up as listening, or tolerance, or not speaking evil of them, or finding and pointing out the good within them. After all God created them too.

My old Standby, is: "What would Jesus do?" He didn't stand around arguing, He just shared His thoughts, and if they disagreed He moved on.

One of my favorite prayers is from St. Francis of Assisi.

Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi

Lord, Make me an instrument of Your peace;

Where there is hatred, let me sow love;

Where there is injury, pardon;

Where there is doubt, faith;

Where there is despair, hope;

Where there is darkness, light;

Where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master,

*Grant that I may not so much
seek to be consoled as to console;
To be understood as to understand;*

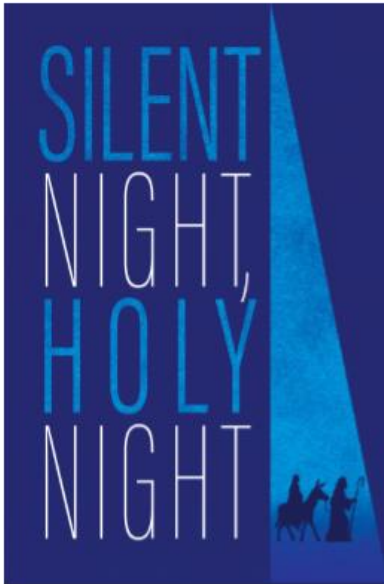
To be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive.

It is in pardoning that we are pardoned.

It is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

In other words, don't be always thinking of yourself, but instead how you can help others, or express the Spirit of Love to others. And what better time than during these holidays.



My Favorite Hymn

Dan Beynon

This is indeed everyone's favorite Hymn.

Originally written as a 6 verse poem by Joseph Mohr in 1816 while he serving as a priest in Austria, he wrote it at the end of the Napoleonic war while looking over his village that was finally at peace. It wasn't until 1818 that the poem was set to music. While preparing for Christmas mass, Mohr took the poem to his choirmaster, Franz Gruber. They composed the tune on a guitar since the church organ was broken and unusable while being repaired.

So on Christmas Eve 1818, in the town of Oberndorf at the Saint Nicholas church, the hymn was first played.

The man (Karl Mauracher) who was there to repair the organ was so taken by the song, he asked for a copy. He passed the song along to two families, the Strassers and the Rainers. They were both folk singing troupes who traveled throughout Europe. The Rainers widely performed the hymn, even for European royalty, and eventually traveled to America, performing it in the Trinity Church in New York City in 1839.

The original manuscripts were lost, so the author was unknown, although Gruber was noted as the composer. It was not until 1994 when a copy of the poem, in Mohr's own handwriting, was discovered and he was finally recognized as the author. There is no record of him writing additional hymns.

The hymn has been translated into 130 or more languages and is known worldwide. It is interesting to note that the English version we all know so well is actually the original verses 1, 6, and 2, sung in that order.

There is a famous story of a spontaneous "Christmas Truce" during 1914. On Christmas Eve, with German and English forces within hearing distance in their trenches, the Germans began to sing "Silent Night". Soon, the English responded with their own version of the hymn. Under a white flag, the two armies met in "no man's land" to exchange greetings. Soon they were giving each other small gifts of tobacco, pastries, food, alcohol, and souvenirs. The next morning the truce continued with soccer games and continued comradery. Once the generals heard of this, they put an immediate stop to this fraternization. So while the soldiers enjoyed a bit of peace, they soon returned to the fighting. Even this hymn could not promote a lasting peace.



ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

Sunday, 27 November - First Sunday in Advent. Lighting of the Candle of Love.

Sunday, 4 December - Second Sunday in Advent. Lighting of the Candle of Peace.

Sunday, 11 December - Third Sunday in Advent. Lighting of the Candle of Hope.

Sunday, 18 December - Second Sunday in Advent. Lighting of the Candle of Joy.



All in preparation of the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ...

Sunday, 25 December - CHRISTMAS DAY



***THERE WILL BE NO
CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE THIS YEAR.***



'Tis the Season...



POINSETTIAS IN THE SANCTUARY

You may bring your own or have Linda Kendall purchase one for you. Either way, let Linda know what you will be doing.

Poinsettias displayed in the sanctuary will be acknowledged in the bulletin - to honor someone, in memory of someone, etc.

See Linda by 11 December to have her purchase one for you.

CALENDARS FOR SALE

2023 calendar are available for purchase, \$10.00 each.
See a Deacon.



GIVING TREE

The time for our church to play Santa for a family in need.

Our Christmas Giving Tree will be located in the Narthex. Names, ages, and type of gift will be on tags hung on the tree.

This will benefit a family in need in our Salida community.

Deadline to put your wrapped present under the tree is Sunday, 18 December. We appreciate you helping to make this family have a joyous Christmas!



OUR TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS CHURCH POTLUCK

Sunday, 18 December, following Sunday Service. Please bring a dish to share. Dessert will be provided.

Last Sunday of the Month Potluck

There will be NO POTLUCK this month as Christmas falls on the last Sunday.





This year the Irelands will host the party at their house.

Friday, 16 December * Time: 5:00-8:00 PM

All Church Christmas Party





MEN'S BIBLE STUDY AT FCC

SATURDAY, January 7, 2023

at 9:00 a.m.

Please join us for the next Informative Study. Breakfast will be provided. Hope to see you there!

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY AT FCC

SATURDAY, February 4, 2023

at 9:00 a.m.

Please join us for the next informative **WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY**. We will be providing a lite breakfast followed by a study on the life of a woman from the scripture. Hope to see you there. Bring a friend, or two!



If you have a change for the Church Directory, such as a new address, phone number, or email update, please submit your changes to the office at fccofsalida@yahoo.com. We will include this information in the future issue of The Grapevine. Thank you!

Please update your directory with these changes:

DIANNE GILLETTE - Email: woosiebear@yahoo.com & remove landline.

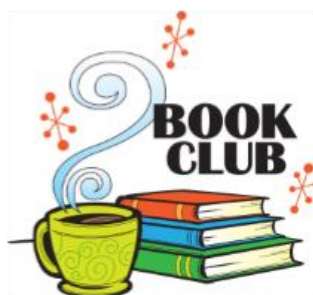
CHRIS & DEBORAH GELETICH - New Address: 29598 Catherine Way,
P. O. Box 338, Escalon 95320



CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH MEETING

NOTICE

Calling all members to attend a
CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH MEETING
 on Sunday, 4 December 2022, at 11:30 AM.



1:00 P.M.

2nd Wednesday of each month

See Phyllis Agers for book. Check with the office for meeting location.

The Soldier's Wife	December 2022
Mennonite in a Little Black Dress	January 2023
Those Who Save Us	February 2023
The Storyteller	March 2023
Sea Glass	April 2023
The Glass Castle: a Memory	May 2023
Shanghai Girls	June 2023



Sept 2022

Only fear the LORD, and serve him in truth with all your heart: for consider how great things he hath done for you.

1 Samuel 12:24

Dear Pastors, Families, and Friends,

It is good to stop and consider all the great things God has done for us. As the world around us grows increasingly dissatisfied with the things of this life, we can look to a God that has provided every thing that we need for life and godliness.

Recently we had a young woman attending the service creating disruptions and talking in the back row. She was becoming enough of a distraction that I was planning on speaking with her about it, but she stopped coming for a few weeks. When she returned she approached the podium to talk to me. She apologized for her behavior and began to weep as she told me what God has been doing in her life. Since then she has been sitting on the front row taking notes, asking questions from the Bible, and fully engaging in the service. Truly the preaching of the Cross is the power of God to transform lives.

We are very excited that volunteers are beginning to receive clearance access to return to the prison service. Columbia River reopened this month for church services and we are back to meeting there every Sunday afternoon. We are also greatly encouraged that masks are now optional in most of the facilities! I am overjoyed that things are beginning to return to normal inside the prisons. We were able to pray with 8 individuals in our varying facilities to receive Christ as Savior this month.

We received 864 beautiful hand made stockings this month, and are beginning the process of gathering the materials needed to fill them. The price increases at the Dollar Tree have a huge impact on the costs of each stocking, and has raised our budget requirement by 25%. I was contacted by a church that has a truck load of "leftover" things that are Christmas stocking related, so I am excited to see what that entails. If you or your church would like to be directly involved in the Christmas Stocking project, please let me know. We are thankful for all of the help with this endeavor.

On a personal note, I had my cancer scans this month, and they all came back negative! Praise the Lord for the great things He has done.

Your partner in the prisons,

Brother Stone

Rock of Ages Missionary

Send Correspondence To:

Timberline Baptist Church
24645 SW Old Hwy 99 W
Sherwood, OR 97140

Send Support To:

ROA Missionary #191
Sidney & Gayla Stone
PO Box 2308
Cleveland TN 37320

2 Corinthians 4:5 For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.

Dr. Terry R. Ellis, President
Dr. Ricky Dunsford, Exec. Vice-President



PO Box 2308, Cleveland, TN 37320
(423) 479-3243 www.roapm.org



8 - Ralph Patterson
21 - Deborah McDonald
24 - Wade Meier
25 - Vicki Pelucca
26 - Phillip Lopez
30 - Anna Coffey
30 - Diana McKechnie



1 - Lu Frost
3 - Geno Marino
9 - Mariah Leach
11 - Roberta Steen
14 - Chris Geletich
18 - Jackie Zuniga
19 - Diane Suzuki
22 - Phyllis Nelson



2 - Kaw Kaw Hparaw
9 - Peggy Velthoen
14 - Jim Waterman
16 - Sue Richison
21 - Florence Velthoen
24 - JoAnne Warner
29 - Deborah Geletich



1 - Ginny Byrum
16 - Sandy Tuggle
16 - Christine Hutchison



2 - Elaine Tindle
5 - Jim Leach
7 - Mike Kiernan
9 - Vikki Huckell
11 - Janna Lou Baker
16 - Joanne Woodbridge
17 - Lena Wyeth
17 - Kevin Hutcheson
21 - Dave Pelucca

NOVEMBER, DECEMBER, JANUARY FEBRUARY & MARCH

11/16 - Dave & Janna Lou Baker
11/28 - Jim & Georgette Leach
12/12 - James & Lu Frost
12/22 - Kevin & Christine Hutichison
12/29 - Rick & Linda Kendall
02/14 - Lee & JoAnne Unruh





WHAT'S HAPPENING AT FCC

TUESDAY BIBLE STUDY

Fellowship time 1:00 - 1:30 p.m.
Every Tuesday, 1:30 - 2:30 p.m.

BOOK CLUB

Second Wednesday of the month, 1:00 p.m.
See page 11 for list of books to be read.

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Every other month. Held first Saturday of month at 9:00 a.m., beginning October 8, 2022.

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Every other month. Held first Saturday of month at 9:00 a.m., beginning November 5, 2022.

PRAYER GROUP

Every Wednesday morning, 9:00 a.m.

SALVATION ARMY COMMODITIES

Second Monday of the month, 7:30 a.m.
Help assemble grocery bags for community distribution

FELLOWSHIP LUNCH

Every 2nd Tuesday of the month, 12:00 p.m. We do not meet June, July & August.

SUPPER CLUB

Every 3rd or 4th Friday of the month, 6:00 p.m. We do not meet June, July & August.

THE GRAPEVINE ONLINE



You can read *The Grapevine* on our website at FCCofSalida.org. Choose "Publications" from the top row menu and scroll down to view the current issue.

Our website is updated weekly to include a video of our current and past worship services. You can also find the current issue and all past issues of *The Grapevine*. Our homepage includes our upcoming scripture and message for those wishing to read the passages before Sunday service.

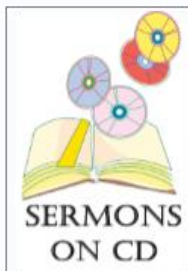


If you need assistance from the Church Office please contact Elizabeth our Church Secretary at:

209-545-1156

Email:
fccofsalida@yahoo.com

Office Hours:
Monday thru Thursday
8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Friday 8 a.m. - 12 p.m.



CD's are available for each Sunday service. Please contact the Church Office to request a copy. You may also listen to sermons on our website at FCCofSalida.org.

PASTOR'S CONTACT INFO

Pastor James Frost is available in the Church Office Sunday through Thursday. For emergencies he is available 7 days a week. He may be reached at:

Office: 209-545-1156

Cell: 626-320-2361

Email: jtfrost61@yahoo.com



GRAPEVINE DEADLINE

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT 2023 ISSUE

To Be Announced

Keep submitting articles & photos so we'll be ready for the next issue

If at all possible, please e-mail your submissions to fccofsalida@yahoo.com. By e-mailing, it makes it easier for Elizabeth to format your article into the newsletter. We are always up against the time factor, and e-mailing expedites the process as she can cut and paste rather than retype the entire article.

Keep the articles coming in... We appreciate everyone's efforts. Remember... Without your articles, there would be no Grapevine.

ARTICLE SUBMISSIONS

All articles submitted should be publication ready: How you submit it, is how it will appear. You may:

- E-mail to fccofsalida@yahoo.com
- Mail to : First Congregational Church of Salida
P.O. Box 1039
Salida, CA 95368
- Hand deliver to the Church Office, "Newsletter" slot behind Elizabeth's desk.