

**December 2002**

# **The Beacon**

**Sunnyhills United Methodist Church  
355 Dixon Road, Milpitas CA 95035**

**Pastor Shirley Macemon**

**Church Office**

**(408) 262-1486**

*Visit us on the Web!*

*[www.gbgm-umc.org/sunnyhills](http://www.gbgm-umc.org/sunnyhills)*

## **December Mission Emphasis**

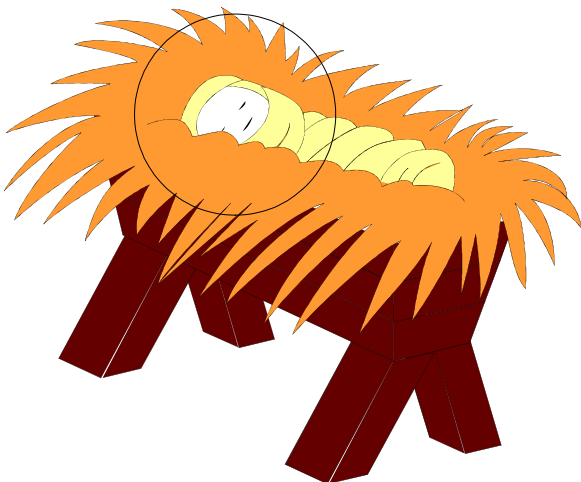
### **San Jose Family Shelter**

When we think of the San Jose Family Shelter, we most often think of the families who, for many reasons, are living there after having lost their own home. The Shelter was established in 1988 to address the problems of homeless families in Santa Clara County. Its program is committed to keeping families together during times of crisis. About 80% of the 35 families in the Shelter have at least one working parent, but still cannot afford housing in this area.

This year our December mission emphasis has two parts. First, our special Christmas offering will be sent directly to the Family Shelter to assist in their valuable work. Second, we've decided to help out a family that has "graduated" from the shelter and is back in a home of their own, celebrating their first Christmas in new surroundings. The Shelter has assigned us a home that houses two families who are pooling their resources to provide housing for their children. The two families include three adults and four children, all boys between 3 and 10 years old.

Our "homecoming" baskets for these families will include foods (some staples and some fresh foods that they have requested) and gifts for the children. Please look in our sanctuary for the Giving Tree. Each ornament on the tree suggests a food or gift for the family. Take an ornament (or two!) from the tree, sign your name on the tear-off portion of the ornament, and then return the tear-off portion to the basket under the tree so we'll know who is responsible for which items. When the tree is empty, our Homecoming baskets will be full!

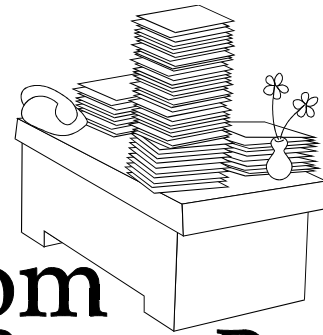
Bring the item(s) that you have signed up for to the sanctuary on December 15th (for non-perishable items) or December 22nd (if perishable). We'll pack the baskets and boxes and deliver them to the Family Shelter, who in turn will deliver them to our families.



If you are unable to shop and would like to donate money, please write your check to Sunnyhills UMC and print "Homecoming Basket" on the memo line of your check. Send your check to the office, drop it in the collection plate, or put it with an ornament in the basket at the Giving Tree.

***Remember the Babe of Bethlehem***

Advent is upon us. To me, this time of year always feels like hurry up and wait. The commercial world around us pushes us toward Christmas: decorated shops and malls (even before Halloween!), reminders of the number of shopping days left, ideas for gifts, decorations and entertaining. Our liturgical year, however, offers us a chance to take a deep breath and prepare our hearts for Christmas. Our Advent lectionary scriptures encourage us to take a step back and look through the eyes of the Hebrew Scripture prophets and share both the places of longing and of hope that are captured in writings that we Christians believe point toward Jesus the Christ. The Gospel lectionary scriptures at first glance jump around, but on closer investigation center on the same theme of preparation, with John the Baptist and Mary herself. I invite you to read the lectionary passages during these weeks of Advent. These passages are listed below. Don't let the commercial holiday get in the way of the real reason we celebrate: Jesus, Lord and Christ is born. God comes to us as a baby, in a way and with a message we can understand. Praise God!



## From the Pastors Desk

When you visit the church in the coming weeks, you will see construction going on in some areas. Under the guidance of the Trustees, a contractor will be replacing and repairing portions of our badly dry-rotted roofing and some of the posts that support that roofing. I am thrilled to report that we will pay cash for this project, one sign of our return to financial as well as community health.

Each of you is important in that return to health and financial soundness as a congregation. I have been uplifted by the growing Sunday morning attendance. Our Diversity Study group is exploring our assumptions on how we "do church" and what that might mean as our ethnic mix continues to deepen and broaden. Invite friends to join us on Sunday morning. Pray about what role you would like to take as our worshipping and fellow shipping community continues to grow. Pray for your church and your pastor. This is an exciting ride God has called us on. Don't miss out!

Grace and peace to you all,  
*Shirley*

### Advent 2002 Readings

***December 1st ✠ First Sunday of Advent***

Isaiah 64:1-9; Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19;  
1 Corinthians 1:3-9; Mark 13:24-37

***December 8th ✠ Second Sunday of Advent***

Isaiah 40:1-11; Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13;  
2 Peter 3:8-15a; Mark 1:1-8

***December 15th ✠ Third Sunday of Advent***

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11; Psalm 126;  
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24; John 1:6-8, 19-28

***December 22nd ✠ Fourth Sunday of Advent***

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16; Luke 1:47-55;  
Romans 16:25-27; Luke 1:26-38



## Calendar Items

### **Christmas Eve Celebration Candles and Carols** *Tuesday, December 24th* *7:00 p.m.*

We welcome the tiny babe born in Bethlehem with carols old and new, scripture readings, candles, and prayer. Old and young, families large and small, singles, couples, and more, join together in a joyful celebration of God's miraculous birth among us. Bring your friends and neighbors to participate in one of the most beloved services of the Christian year.

*Glory to God in the highest  
And peace to all on earth!*

### **Christmas Holiday Fun** *Saturday, December 14th* *4:00-6:00 p.m.*

Calling all adults, children, and everyone in between! Take a little time out from all that frantic rushing around and savor the blessings of the season. The Sunnyhills UMC church family gathers to enjoy a little Christmas Fun together.

A Christmas craft and Make-an-Ornament for those who like to. Hot cocoa, delicious Christmas cookies, and mulled cider to warm us outside and in. A few favorite carols, sharing our memories, and a traditional game or two.

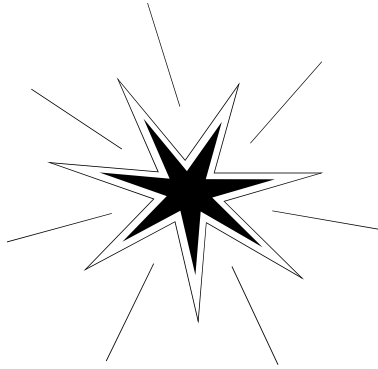
All ages are invited. Come on down!

### **Salvation Army Bell-Ringing** *Saturday, December 21st—10:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m.*

The First time The Salvation Army used a kettle to collect funds for Christmas was in San Francisco. In December 1861, Captain Joseph McFee had no money to give a Christmas dinner for the poor. Desperate, he put a huge empty soup kettle on the street in front of the Ferry Building at the foot of Market. "Keep the kettle boiling," said the sign. The coins he collected bought groceries for dinner and started a tradition that continues throughout the world.

SUMC will ring to help the Salvation Army raise funds for its work in Santa Clara County. Funds raised will aid the homeless, destitute, lonely, and needy through programs for children, families, addicts, and many others. Please sign up on the clipboard or call the church office.





## Income and Expenses

October 2002

### INCOME:

Offerings	\$2,611
Bldg. Use & Others	2,716
Special Giving	195
Total	\$5,521

### EXPENSES:

Mission & Outreach	\$1,277
Operating Expenses	2,495
Pastor & Staff Support	3,166
Total	\$6,939

### Fund Balances:

San Jose Family Shelter	\$0
'363' Fund	\$10

Cash on Hand	\$9,571
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## San Jose Dist. Training

### Building the Body of Christ

### Training Our Leaders

### Learning Our Roles

February 22nd will be an exciting day on the campus of the Los Altos UMC. United Methodists from all over the District will convene for workshops, presentations, and worship designed to nurture each of us in our Christian walks, lead us into new ministries, and challenge us to take seriously the work of Jesus in our churches and communities.

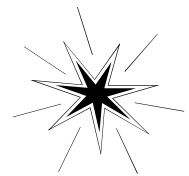
Our own Pastor Shirley is part of the planning team. Many varied and interesting workshops will be held, with something useful for everyone.

All are welcome to attend the workshops and worship. Brochures are available in the sanctuary and the office. To register with early bird rates, call the church before December 10th to let us know your interest. The cost of the day is \$16, including a continental breakfast and tasty lunch. After December 15 the cost is \$25.

Questions? Call Pastor Shirley at the church office, 408/262-1486.

## Looking Ahead

- January 5th Community Breakfast, SUMC hosting
- January 11th WRAP potluck & business meeting
- January 12th Trustees Walk-Through of church property
- January 19th The Lunch Bunch meets at Fresh Choice
- January 25th SUMC Fun Night



The UMW retreat at Mission Springs is a wonderful, joyful, restful, challenging time of fellowship and fun. This year the retreat is February 28-March 2. Even though we don't have a UMW unit currently active, we women can go to Mission Springs! Let's send a group! Women who have never been to a Mission Springs Retreat are eligible for District scholarships. For more information, call Pastor Shirley. (Sorry men, this one is for women only.)



## Postal Card Enclosed!

Last month you found a postcard tucked into the pages of your Beacon. Many of you have returned these cards. THANK YOU!! Many of you may have returned them only to have them “eaten” by the Post Office or returned to you as undersized. OOPS!

Postal regulations require a larger card than we used, so we’re trying again, just to make sure your wishes and information are current in the office. If you have a new card with this *Beacon*, it means that, for whatever reason, we haven’t received your information yet. Please update the card and send it back to us. Our new Member Directory will be published after the first of the New Year.

## Children’s Choir Sings For Christmas

Children of all ages are invited to join our Sunnyhills UMC Children’s Choir for the Advent and Christmas season. Gwen Freeman will lead the singing. Pastor Shirley has offered to drive for anyone who needs help transporting their children to and from rehearsals.



Our own little band of angels and cherubim will share their Christmas Joy during Sunday Celebrations on December 8th, December 15th, December 22nd, and the Christmas Eve Service on December 24th.

<b>Rehearsals:</b>	Sunday	December 1st	11:00 a.m.-12:00 noon
	Thursday	December 5th	6:00-7:00 p.m.
	Thursday	December 12th	6:00-7:00 p.m.
	Saturday	December 14th	3:00-4:00 p.m.
	Sunday	December 15th	11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

For further information, please call Gwen Freeman at 408/263-8942 (h) or 408/499-1921 (cell). If you need help with transportation, please contact Pastor Shirley at the church office, 408/262-1486.

## Thanksgiving Food Collection a Huge Success

**140+ Boxes of Jell-O Collected**

The Milpitas Food Pantry gratefully received the more than 140 boxes of Jell-O collected by SUMC members in November. The Food Pantry packed over 300 Thanksgiving boxes for needy persons in Milpitas and Alviso. Our gifts added cheer to many holiday tables!