

STILL SPEAKING...

A NEWSLETTER FROM THE COMMUNITY CHURCH OF ATASCADERO



**Community Church of
Atascadero,
United Church of Christ**

5850 Rosario Avenue
Atascadero, CA 93422
(805) 466-9108
ascaderoucc@gmail.com
www.atascaderoucc.org

Hybrid Worship

Come in person or on
Zoom

10 am Sunday

Fellowship on Zoom

3 pm Wednesday

Church Office:

Carrie Portillo, Office
Manager

Office Hours:

9:30-12:30 Tuesdays
9:00-12:30 Wednesdays
9:00-12:30 Thursdays

AS I PONDER

REV. HEATHER J. BRANTON, PASTOR

Summer of 2014 was an exciting time. Jeanne retired in June. Then we came out here over July 4th weekend to do a neutral pulpit (lead worship at another UCC church so the search committee could see me in action). We came back in August for a week of jam-packed activities to meet the congregation, culminating in a congregational vote on Sunday after worship to call me as pastor. Late September we began our cross-country trek from Ann Arbor. The miles filled me with hope, anticipation, excitement, and a little trepidation as we got closer to my new life as pastor of Community Church of Atascadero. I didn't know if I was adequately prepared or what the future would hold.

What I have experienced is a group of people passionate about Community Church, people who care so much about this church they stuck together even when they had different opinions and perspectives. I discovered people who care deeply about injustice, who stood up publicly for LGBTQ folk and gender equality. People who worked together to feed those who didn't have enough to eat, to provide temporary shelter and advocate for affordable housing. People profoundly concerned about climate change, who invested in what would heal the planet. People who argued and loved each other, who displayed acceptance that belied the conflicts they had. People of faith who kept questioning and challenging, who love to learn.

Of course, no individual or group of people always get it right. Our varied life experiences produce different perspectives. It takes hard work to negotiate what is right and good. I revisit conversations and actions that I wish had gone differently, that I had responded better. But I believe we have grown in grace, in the ability to look for what is good in each other while accepting that we're not always at our best. I have learned a lot of that from you.

AS I PONDER (CON'T.) REV. HEATHER J. BRANTON, PASTOR

CCA's roots grew from the simple foundation: love God and love neighbor. Together we keep learning who "God" is, exploring different language and metaphors, expanding our openness to how Holy Other is expressed. We also keep learning who our neighbor is and how loving them becomes tangible. I am grateful to be part of this community and even more excited about what the future holds!

Gratefully yours... Heather

CCA SPECIAL OFFERINGS

We will be collecting 2 special offerings during worship on Oct 6 and 13.

We are approaching the one-year mark of rising violence and a catastrophic humanitarian crisis in Palestine and Israel. On **Oct 6**, we will receive an offering so that we might participate in the UCC Global Ministries **Aid Appeal for humanitarian relief in the Middle East**. To read more about the UCC response: <https://support.ucc.org/middleeast>

And on **Oct 13** we will collect an offering for **Neighbors in Need**, the UCC's annual offering to support ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States, including the Council for American Indian Ministries (CAIM), justice and advocacy efforts, and direct service projects funded by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries.

NORTHERN ASSOCIATION GATHERING OCT 26

The semi-annual gathering of UCC churches in the Northern Association of the Southern California Nevada Conference of the United Church of Christ will be at Church of the Foothills in Ventura. It's a great opportunity to connect with others from our association, both old and new friends. Talk with Pastor Heather about your interest in attending.

VOTE WITH LOVE

The United Church of Christ's Our Faith Our Vote Campaign is our ongoing commitment to equip you with the tools for nonpartisan faithful engagement in our democratic process. The campaign is made up of three main components; voter registration, issue education, and voter empowerment.

The 2024 Our Faith Our Vote campaign asks the church to answer the call of 1 John 3:18 to "let us not love with words or speech, but in action and in truth," by "voting with love." Vote with love for creation, for our neighbors both here and abroad, for a just peace, for repair and reconciliation of the brokenness of our nation. And encourage your family, friends, and community to do the same. <https://www.ucc.org/our-faith-our-vote/>



BUILDING OUR COMMUNITY

BRENDA MAY, BUILDING OUR COMMUNITY CHAIR

This has a been a busy time for us! Church Picnic, ECHO Walk, Rummage Sale and coming up, October 27th, Pastor Heather’s Anniversary Celebration. Please remember to RSVP for the Luncheon.

Our annual Church picnic was an amazing time for all!! Beautiful Fellowship Time and awesome food! Thank you, Chuck, for BBQing. Thank you all who attended.

ECHO’S Long Walk Home went well. Nice to have the opportunity to meet with others in the community and a chance to give back. Great to visit with new friends to the church. Thank you Kato for being our lead walker!

Rummage Sale – September 27-28 was a great fundraiser for the church but also a time to give to those in the community! We raised almost 1700 dollars. One of our best and really felt we were reaching out to the community as well. Nice having new faces helping out!

There is no way to list all the names of those that helped from our Church family. I like to remind everyone it takes a village to prepare and put on the Rummage Sale twice a year.

Everyone helps in some way! Big thank you too all!! Special thank you to Sharon Whisenhunt!!



Upcoming Events & Volunteers Needed:

· Colony Days Oct 5

Atascadero Colony Days is a great opportunity to publicize Community Church. Would you like to help build and/or ride on a church float? Contact Dave May (805.466.8610). Or perhaps you’d like to help out with the CCA booth, telling people about who we are? Contact Brenda May (805.466.8610 / dbmjmay@aol.com).



· Pastor Heather’s Anniversary Celebration Oct 27th

October marks 10 years that Rev. Heather Branton has shared in the ministry of Atascadero Community Church as pastor. Celebration will include worship, with a catered lunch and entertainment following the service. RSVPs needed by Oct 15 for the luncheon (805) 466-9108 / atascaderoucc@gmail.com).

UCC NEWS

HURRICANE HELENE RELIEF EFFORTS

The United Church of Christ has launched an appeal and opportunities to support recovery efforts following the devastating path Hurricane Helene has left across the Southeast United States. People in affected areas across six states have faced communications blackouts, washed-out roads, mudslides, and a lack of drinkable water.

“Our hearts break for those who are suffering from the devastation Hurricane Helene left behind,” said the Rev. Shari Prestemon, Acting Associate General Minister and Co-Executive of Global Ministries. “The shock and loss so many are now experiencing is immense, and recovery will be agonizingly slow. Our prayers, our giving, and our service will be needed for the long term as we accompany communities on their journey toward healing and hope.”

Andrew Long-Higgins, team leader of UCC Global H.O.P.E., described the importance of meeting the immediate needs of communities most impacted by Helene with shelter, food, debris removal and clean up services, hygiene kits, and – in some cases – drinking water.

As we continue to pray for and support those who have experienced unimaginable loss this past week, **we invite you** to support the UCC’s recovery efforts in the following ways:

Hurricane Helene Recovery Appeal: The National Ministries of the United Church of Christ has a long history of supporting communities as they recover from disaster and their plight fades from the headlines. Your support of this appeal will ensure that communities are supported and accompanied for years as they rebuild.

Crisis Cleanup phone banking: One of the greatest needs in the aftermath of a catastrophic disaster is situational awareness and information gathering. Crisis Cleanup is looking for volunteers to help input cases into their dashboard. This dashboard is used by response organizations to efficiently coordinate and deploy immediate resources. If you are interested in this remote volunteer opportunity, please sign up [here](#).

Hygiene and Cleanup Bucket assembly: One of the biggest requests is the need for cleanup buckets. UCC congregations interested in assembling cleanup buckets are eligible for a [matching grant through the Global HOPE office](#).

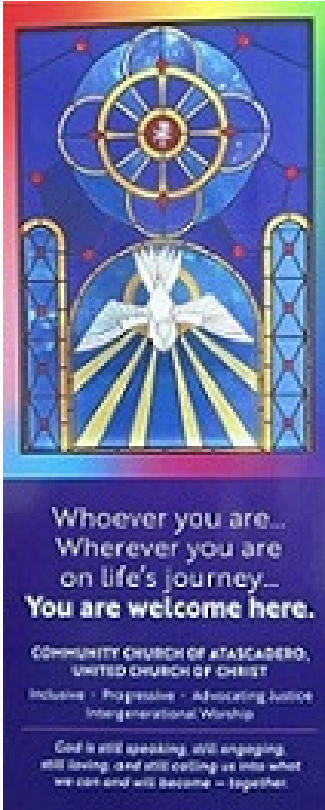
Thank you for your assistance in helping families and communities who are in great need in the aftermath of Helene. Your heartfelt support will make a difference

COMMUNICATIONS MINISTRY

EILEEN O'GRADY,
COMMUNICATIONS MINISTRY CHAIR



Communications Ministry: Sharing Information, Creating Beauty



A few weeks ago I placed my copies of the new flyer about Community Church that John Lawrence and his graphic designer created—the ones we received in church last spring—to a table in my entry hall where visitors could see them. After no one noticed them, I decided on a more direct approach.

When my friend Sarah was visiting, I showed her the flyer and told her we are using it to share information about CCA with the wider community. She looked carefully at both sides and commented on its beauty. Then she asked if she could keep it. She has attended CCA before—but not recently. I don't know whether Sarah will return to CCA, but the flyer reminds her that a sacred beauty resides in our church.

A retired English teacher, I recall the famous lines from John Keats: “Beauty is truth; truth beauty. That is all ye know on earth—and all ye need to know.” Keats was writing about a Grecian urn, but we celebrate and share our faith by creating beautiful music, beautiful art, and even beautiful flyers.

Recently, our communications team has also revised and enhanced our existing methods of communication. Jeanne Miller, our website manager, redesigned our CCA website (www.atascaderoucc.org) to showcase our efforts to fulfill our mission and “be the church.” Lisa Kania is assisting our efforts on Facebook. Every week she posts a prayer, member profile, or information about church activities. We also appreciate our church secretary, Carrie Portillo, for recreating our CCA newsletter in this attractive new format.

What can you, our CCA members, do to spread the good news about Community Church? If you need more flyers to share with friends, you'll find them in the church foyer. If you're on Facebook, “like” our CCA posts. And if you have other suggestions to improve CCA communications or talents to share, please let us know. We'll discuss any suggestions we receive at our next Communications Ministry Team meeting on November 6.

Eileen O'Grady, Communications Ministry Leader

I look forward to Sunday mornings when I set aside the mundane details of my life and contemplate some of life's big questions. At CCA my persistent questions are encouraged rather than stifled, and I can join others in service. The music inspires me, and, with the help of Pastor Heather and my fellow congregants, "I lift up my eyes to the hills," and gain a sense of perspective in the often overwhelming onslaught of our world.

Celia Bewley, CCA member

"Why I Belong" begins a series of short articles about the role of CCA membership in our lives. If you would like to contribute, please send your ideas to Eileen O'Grady at emogradey9@gmail.com.

KEEP ON YOUR HEARTS & IN YOUR PRAYERS....

Election Prayers

"40 Days of Prayer Before the Election: For People Who Hunger for a World that is Open, Inclusive, Just, and Compassionate" As we move closer to yet another of the most consequential elections in our lifetimes, we join with Christians who see our faith in radically different ways than those who often speak the loudest. This is not advocacy for any particular candidate but a vision: not of power over others but power with – hands joined together in cooperation to love and serve the most vulnerable of our neighbors. We seek to follow Jesus who models a life of sacrifice and the Kindom of God, of which Jesus spoke so often, as a world that is open, inclusive, just and compassionate....

These prayers and poems are presented with the hope – and belief – that prayer changes things: the people for whom we pray and the world. But especially, prayer changes us. So, along with organizing and voting, pray like the fate of the world depends on it. – Rev. David Bahr, Pastor of Mission Hills UCC, San Diego, California

Here is a link to download this timely collection of prayers:

<https://missionhillsucc.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/MHUCC-40-days-of-prayer-before-the-election-2024.pdf>

BECKY, CHERIE W,
CHRISTINE C, LISA K,
LIVIA K, JOSEPH P, UNCLE
GEORGE,
A NATION FACING
ELECTIONS, A WORLD AT
WAR, A WORLD OF
STORMS
AND ALL OF THOSE WHO
PROVIDE CARE



CONTINUED FROM AUGUST 2024

“On Sundays and one evening a week, this building belonged exclusively to the church, but all the rest of the week, it was a Community Center, used as a meeting place for all local groups with play rooms for the children. Here was even roller skating for the young people in the auditorium, and an occasional, well-chaperoned and supervised dance. Concerts and entertainments of all kinds and district conventions of the various organizations were held in the auditorium”...

But by the end of that nine years, Hier Hall had been built upstairs in the Hier Johnson building on the highway, adjoining the post office, and the organizations began moving out over to that more central location, and the loss of their rents cut down the income from the building while the expense of its maintenance continued.

With all the other expenses they had to meet and interest they had paid on their debt, the members had managed to cut it down, by 1930, from over \$100,000 to \$30,000. But then the bank grew impatient and insisted upon having the entire sum cleared up with no further delay. The amount required was more than the members could possibly raise at that time, and the church was therefore evicted from its building. The furnishings and equipment, for which they had fully paid, were stored in the homes of members, and services were held temporarily in the theatre building which was not in use on Sunday mornings. Evening meetings of all kinds were held in the church manse. Poor Mr. Bliss never knew when his bell might ring to announce the arrival of a group of people to hold a committee or board meeting.

For by this time, Mr. Loken's resignation had been accepted, and Rev. Leon D. Bliss of the Plymouth Congregational Church of Paso Robles had succeeded him in July of 1925. Mr. Loken had gone to a Christian church in the northern part of the state.

This time, the church members decided they would build a church home that would be just a place of worship and not a community center, which was no longer needed, with all the other halls and meeting places. And they were resolved, also, to build nothing larger than they could raise the money to pay for at the time. They had had enough of paying off a church debt. But in order to do this, it was necessary to reorganize through legal procedure and adopt a new name.

The necessary steps were taken by their attorney, Louis Cohen; the Federated Church became the Community Church of Atascadero, with a new board of trustees and other officers.

When this procedure was completed, a small group of people who preferred what they termed “the old-fashioned gospel” to the more modern preaching of both Mr. Loken and Mr. Bliss, and were dissatisfied with the new set-up, thought this the right time to withdraw from the Community Church and start a separate, Fundamentalist church of their own, leaving the parent organization to go on in its building campaign without their aid.

Three of the more well-to-do of the seceding group pooled their resources and purchased the former church building from the bank for half the sum, it was stated, that the Federated Church had owed the bank. There they organized as the Church of the Living Word, afterward changed to Memorial Church, and engaged the Rev. LeRoy St. John as pastor.

In the meantime, Mr. Bliss, because of ill health and advanced years, feeling that he was unequal to the strenuous task of directing a building campaign, with the necessary raising of funds, offered his resignation at the end of five years of splendid, inspiring service as leader, pastor, advisor and friend, feeling, he said, that it would be selfish of him to deprive a younger man of the privilege and joy of the fine opportunity awaiting him here.

Before he resigned, however, he was instrumental in bringing about the reception of the Atascadero church into the membership and fellowship of the Southern California Conference of Congregational and Christian Churches, which has been of much aid and benefit to the local church. They were enrolled in the Los Angeles Association of that body.

They were received into this organization on Oct. 21, 1930, and a letter of welcome was sent them by the L.A. Association scribe, L. Potter Hitchcock.

The minutes of the first meeting of the reorganized church on Dec. 8, 1929, follow, together with Mr. Bliss' letter of resignation, presented to the church on Nov. 2, 1930. The resolution of appreciation of Mr. Bliss is also appended.



Let Your Voice
Be Heard!

Join the Sanctuary Choir

Community Church Choir

Have you been appreciating the choir? Or perhaps wondering if you can join? Well, you can!

Come join us as we have fun making music together.

Rehearsals are most Sundays at 9 am. Follow the announcements for updated .

3 Ways to Give Financially

1. Send a check to the Community Church: **5850 Rosario Ave., Atascadero, CA 93422**
2. Online at **www.atascaderoucc.org**
3. Mobile app Tithe.ly
 - a) Search “**Tithe.ly**” in the app store (Google or Apple). Download and install the Tithe.ly app.
 - b) Click “Give Now” to start and then, in “Find a church”, enter “**Community Church of Atascadero**”
 - c) Enter the amount you would like to give
 - d) Enter a credit card or bank account to link to the app
 - e) You have the option to cover the fees: \$.30 for the transaction plus either 1.0% for a bank transfer or 2.9% for credit card.
 - f) Click “Give” and you have now successfully given to Community Church! (Oh, and you have the option to set up recurring giving.)

Thank you for the many ways you continue to help CCA be financially healthy!

October/November Birthdays & Anniversaries



October

- 7 – Livia Kellerman
- 8 – Martha Staib
- 9 – Anniversary – John & Kate Lawrence
- 14 – Izak Kania
- 14 – Eileen O’Grady
- 16 – Ron Staib
- 20 – Anniversary – Heather Branton & Jeanne Miller
- 21 – Belinda Blacketer

November

- 1 – Dan O’Grady
- 10 – Jeanne Miller
- 10 – Anniversary – Larry & Dean Young
- 12 – Anniversary – Tom Comar & Lee Perkins
- 14 – Keith Kania



To join via the internet (computer or smartphone), simply click on the internet link. To join with your telephone (*audio only*), dial **(1) 669 900 9128**. When asked, enter the Meeting ID and Password.

Sunday Worship and Midweek Fellowship:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/937257009?pwd=UGZVRHdoNVRYS09TWElGcWlXQkVvdz09>
MEETING ID: 937 257 009 → PASSCODE: 528041

Church Council:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81215310853?pwd=YldsNTUzdKx0NzJkcHZvamlYRjJodz09>
MEETING ID: 812 1531 0853 → PASSCODE: 481994

RECIPE CORNER - STUFFED CHERRY TOMATOES

With the holidays approaching there will be many social gatherings. This recipe is simple, savory and creamy and will brighten up any appetizer table.

Ingredients

- 24 cherry tomatoes
- 1 block feta cheese
- 3 ounces cream cheese softened
- ¼ teaspoon garlic powder
- ⅛ teaspoon onion powder
- 2 teaspoons fresh dill finely chopped, for garnish
- 1 teaspoon fresh parsley finely chopped, for garnish
- salt and pepper



Instructions

1. Rinse cherry tomatoes and slice off a small piece of the bottom of each.
2. Using a small spoon or tomato corer, scoop out the insides of each tomato and discard. Place tomatoes upside down on paper towel while preparing the filling
3. Very finely crumble the feta cheese. Combine feta, cream cheese, and all seasonings and herbs. Mix with a hand mixer until fluffy.
4. Using a small spoon or piping bag, fill each tomato with the cheese mixture.
5. Garnish with fresh herbs if desired.

Notes

- Keep leftover stuffed cherry tomatoes refrigerated in a covered container for up to 3 days.
- Make a tray or two in advance and keep them covered in plastic wrap until ready to serve.

Courtesy of Easy Low Carb Good Food Made Simple: <https://easylowcarb.com/stuffed-cherry-tomatoes>

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER CALENDAR

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
		1-Oct	2	3	4	5 Colony Days
6 9 am Choir 10 am Communion Worship 11 am * Fellowship	7 Pastor's day off	8	9 9:30 am * Bible study 3 pm * Fellowship 4 pm Echo Meal	10	11	12
13 9 am Choir 10 am Hybrid Worship	14 Pastor's day off	15	16 9:30 am * Bible study 3 pm * Fellowship 7 pm * Moderators	17	18	19
20 9 am Band 10 am Hybrid Worship 12 pm * Church Council	21 Pastor's day off	22	223 9:30 am * Bible study 3 pm * Fellowship	24	25	26 Northern Association Gathering
27 9 am Choir 10 Hybrid worship Pastor 10 Year Anniversary Celebration	28 Pastor's day off	29	30 9:30 am * Bible study 3 pm * Fellowship	31	1-NOV	2
3 9 am Choir 10 am Communion Worship 11 am * Fellowship <i>Daylight Savings Time ends</i>	4 Pastor's day off	5 Election Day polls are open 7:00 am to 8:00 pm	6 9:30 am * Bible study 3 pm * Fellowship	7	8	9
10 9 am Choir 10 am Hybrid worship	11 Pastor's day off	12	13 9:30 am * Bible study 3 pm* Fellowship 4 pm Echo Meal 7 pm * Moderators	14	15	16
17 9am Band 10 am Hybrid worship 12 pm Church Council	18 Pastor's day off	19	20 9:30 am * Bible study 3 pm * Fellowship Trans Day of Remembrance	21	22	23
24 No Choir 10 am Hybrid worship	25 Pastor's day off	26	27 9:30 am * Bible study 3 pm * Fellowship	28 Thanks giving Day	29	30

* These are Zoom-only events

POEM

BY REV. HEATHER J. BRANTON, PASTOR

Holy One

I long to make the world a better place
We long to make the world a better place
To be peacemaker and justice bringer
To be peacemakers and justice bringers

Yet I find my own reactions facilitate othering
Yet we find our own reactions facilitate othering
And my version of justice centers my wants
And our versions of justice center our wants

May I be present, listening, learning
May we be present, listening, learning

So that your peace might lead to real justice


Amen.

A Breath Away
Community CPR and First Aid Training



To get on the schedule for training Contact
Instructor Cell: 805-859-4430
Admin Cell: 757-651-7187
charles.kania@gmail.com
lisalkania@gmail.com

Body Motion
A fitness class geared toward seniors
Led by Brenda May



9-10 am MWF
Community Church of Atascadero
5850 Rosario Ave