



# UNIVERSITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

**November 2018**

## **One Body, Many Gifts**

*by The Reverend Renn Serna, Senior Pastor*



I once knew an elderly gentleman named Roy. Roy was an unassuming, soft spoken sort of guy who didn't like to draw attention to himself. You would never find him in front of a crowd, teaching a class, or leading a Bible Study, but he could fix anything. More days than not he could be found at the church working on something. Whether it was a plumbing fix, replacing a window, or painting a room, Roy's talents never failed to impress me. And while he didn't gravitate towards the types of roles which typically get a lot of attention, I don't know where we would have been without him!

It's easy, especially in the church, to lift one gift up higher than another. To praise people with certain kinds of gifts, and overlook things we find to be less important. But this is not how the church is supposed to work! We need gifts of all shapes and sizes in order to be our best, and none of us is more important than another. The Apostle Paul likens the church to a body, saying, a body is not made up of one part, but of many. And each and every part plays a crucial role. Just imagine how hard it would be to go through life without your ears, or missing a hand. Each of us, though different, plays a crucial role in the working of the body. And each of us has something valuable to add to the whole.

This really is the core of what we are talking about this month in worship. Each of us have been uniquely gifted with distinct personalities, talents, and gifts adding something to who we are as a church body. That's right, our church is richer because you are a part of us. And we need your particular gifts, whatever they are, in order to fully live into who God has called us to be. Because we are not whole without you.

It's a beautiful thing when these gifts come together and complement each other well. It is one of the reasons I love working with the UPC staff. Each one of us has a little different outlook on life, and brings different gifts to the table. It adds diversity, creativity, and strength to our ministry together, and we are better for it. And part of working well together means honoring those differences and empowering each other to do what we each do best. And it is the same with the church as a whole. Together we are able to work together to change the world in a way none of us could do on our own.

As we are dreaming together about what God has in store for us next, there is room for whatever unique gifts you bring to the table. Whether you love working with children, organizing and making plans, encouraging others, sharing the gift of song, advocating for those in need, helping people feel welcome in our community, teaching, cleaning, gardening, or fixing things, you have an important role to play as we seek to share God's boundless love.

I hope you will spend some time thinking about what particular gift God has given to you, and how God might be inviting you to use that gift for the furthering of the kingdom. I for one am thankful for the incredible diversity of gifts represented among our UPC family, and I am so blessed to serve alongside you!

With love and gratitude, *Pastor Renn*

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## Concluding the Christian Year on Christ the King Sunday

*by Cactus Harris, Director of Music & Arts, Resident Organist*

As leaves turn and time changes, we come to the conclusion of the liturgical calendar year. We have heard the story of Christ's coming, birth, passion, resurrection, and coming again, beginning with Advent last year, and now ending with Christ the King Sunday on November 25. On this feast day, we center ourselves on the ascension and reign of the crucified and risen Christ. Of course, it is a day we get to sing some of our favorite King Jesus hymns.



One of those standards is *All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name*. About this hymn, E.P Scott, a pioneer missionary to India, relates a story about an encounter with a combative tribe where they enclosed on him with spears. Knowing this would be the end, he pulled out his violin and played and sang this hymn. When he reached the line "let every kindred, every tribe," he saw the spears lowered and the tribesmen moved by the music. Scott spent the remaining years of his life ministering God's love to these people. As we close the Christian year, this story gives me hope in a time of divisiveness, knowing Jesus is not only our protector, but he is Lord of all!

In harmony, *Cactus*

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## Adult Education: The Most Important Thing



In Adult Education between services on Sundays through December 16, members of the University Presbyterian Church family are sharing the most important thing they have learned about the life of faith during their time at UPC. Join us on Sunday mornings at 10:15 in Majesty Theater.

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## Homeless Bags Available | Sunday, November 1

*by Denice Leslie for the Women's Retreat Committee*

On Sunday, November 1, please pick up a couple of Homeless Bags to have on hand to share a welcome gift with someone in need. The bags are available in the Narthex after first service, and on the tables in the Great Room after second service. The women at the September Women's Retreat completed 80 bags before running out of gallon slider bags! Our Youth assembled the remainder.

We had 44 women register for the retreat with 42 able to attend. Again, thank you to all who contributed to this mission project, particularly to those who gave above and beyond. In this time of thanksgiving we know it is more blessed to give than to receive.



## Annual Holiday Boutique

**Saturday, November 10 | 8 a.m. - 1 p.m. | Sunday, November 11 | 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.**

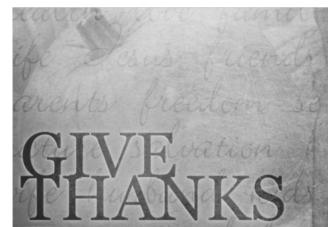


Start your Christmas shopping at the Presbyterian Women's Holiday Boutique. Homemade items, household goods, jewelry, cookies and breads, jams and jellies, as well as "White Elephant" items are for sale. Also, there are two drawings this year - one for a lovely quilt, handmade by Marian Amend, and the other for a HP Sprocket 100 photo printer. Tickets for the drawing, held at the close of the Boutique, are \$2 each or 3 tickets for \$5.

Bring friends and shop generously because all proceeds from the Boutique and drawing benefit missions designated by the University Presbyterian Women.

## "Freindsgiving" Sunday | November 18

The Sunday before Thanksgiving, November 18, we join together for worship in the morning and fellowship in the evening to celebrate our blessings together as the UPC family.



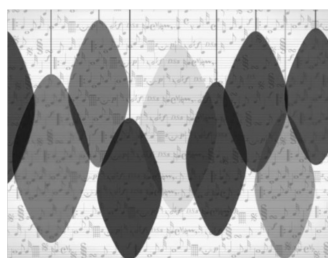
### Commitment Sunday Worship | 9 & 11 a.m.

We gather during the 9 a.m. & 11 a.m. worship services on November 18 with inspirational music, testimonies of God's faithfulness, and the opportunity to give thanks for all blessings received this past year. Also, on this day our Commitment Cards are gathered to invite you to give of your time, talent, and treasure in the coming year.

### Friendsgiving Potluck & Celebrating UPC in the 80's | 5 p.m.

Join us in the evening for the 2018 Friendsgiving Potluck in the UPC Great Room. Bring a favorite traditional or inventive Thanksgiving dish to share. Seasonal desserts are provided by the Congregational Care team. Let's share our blessings together as a church family before the turkeys, casseroles, and pies go into the oven for Thanksgiving Day! Continuing our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration, we'll hear brief stories celebrating the life of UPC in the 1980's.

## Upcoming Holiday Concerts



### Soli Deo Gloria | Joyeux Noël | Friday, December 7 at 7:30 p.m.

Enjoy "Christmas Visions," a major work written especially for the choir by E.J. Hinojosa. Adult Tickets: \$15, Students: \$10, At the Door: \$20

### Musica Viva | Advent Reflections | Monday, December 10 at 7 p.m.

A program of violin and cello music, interspersed with readings and meditations for the season. Admission is free, donations welcome.

## November Trip to Laos | Thank You for Making it Possible

*by Charlie Warnes for the Southeast Asian Ministry*

Lao Partners, and our Lao language congregation, truly appreciate your prayers and financial support for our October raffle and luncheon. We especially appreciate the dedication of our Lao friends as they worked diligently over the two previous weekends to make hundreds of egg rolls - and for their leadership and work in preparing and serving the luncheon on October 7.



The net proceeds from the raffle and luncheon exceeded \$1,200, which is enough to cover the airline travel for Pastor John Bosavanh's November trip to Laos. The trip focuses on two areas identified during our 2017 trip to Laos:

The need to establish the groundwork to support and administer 'grass roots' vocational training and apprenticeship programs to serve members of 'home churches' established by the Lao Evangelical Church in the metropolitan Vientiane area.

Further exploring means to help rural elementary schools address the basics of sanitation and hygiene. Aspects include means for toilet and hand washing facilities, and rudimentary hygiene education.

We cherish your ongoing prayer support for John's safe travels throughout November.

## A Working Partnership

*by Pastors Renn Serna & Dustin Maddox*



As pastors leading UPC, we work together to help each other and everyone at UPC be part of what God is doing in the life of our church. Recognizing each of our unique gifts and particular responsibilities allows each of us take the lead in various projects and ministries. The following provides a snapshot of how we are working together to guide the flourishing of UPC.

We often work collaboratively in some of these areas, and while there is some natural overlap, we have found it helpful to distinguish who is taking the primary lead in each ministry.

Regardless of who is leading what, we work together to ensure our underlying goals and vision are the same, and work to contribute to the advancement of God's call to UPC. We find our gifts and passions complement each other well, and we are deeply committed to working together to enable our congregation to thrive.

| Senior Pastor                      | Associate Pastor                    | Shared Responsibilities                           |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Vision &amp; Administration</b> | <b>Community Life</b>               | Ministry of the Word & Sacrament                  |
| Moderator of Session               | Hospitality & Visitor Integration   | Pastoral Care                                     |
| Worship & Preaching                | Children & Youth                    | Engagement with Presbytery & other PC(USA) bodies |
| Head of Staff                      | Congregational Care                 |   |
| Long Term Vision & Planning        | Missions (Local & Global)           |   |
| Ministry of Human Resources        | Spiritual Life                      |   |
| Board of Property & Finance        | Adult Education                     |   |
| Stewardship                        | Primary Pastoral Support to Deacons |   |
| South East Asian Ministries        |                                     |   |
| Nominating Committee               |                                     |   |

## Update from the Boards & Ministries

What a beautiful fall it has been! With a wonderful kickoff to our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration and church program year we have been blessed with many new faces in worship in the past few months. Our leadership boards and committees have been hard at work planning for the coming season, and there is joyful energy in the air.

**Session** is blessed to welcome Cordie Qualle as the new Clerk. Elders are thankful for Ceci Johnson's year of faithful service and dedication to this role as she gifted us with direction, focus,

and stability during a pivotal time. These past few months Session has been diligently planning for our upcoming Membership Class and Annual Stewardship Campaign as well as putting the final plans in place for maternity leave coming up later this month.

**The Deacons** have spent the last few months undergoing training and imagining together how they can most faithfully serve our congregation. The Rev. Ruth Clayton held a training session during one of the meetings on Hospice Care and visitations. Discussions have been ongoing about how to most faithfully distribute the Deacon's Funds you so generously provide. In recent months, gifts from the Deacon's Fund have gone to help with unexpected medical bills, one time bill assistance, emergency housing needs, and scholarships for the Women's Retreat. What a blessing!

**The Board of Property and Finance** had a busy summer helping to work out a few remaining details with our new bookkeeping services through the Synod, and planning for routine maintenance including getting bids for some larger upcoming maintenance needs.

### **Committees have started the year off in a big way.**

*The Southeast Asian Ministry Team* hosted a wonderful Lao Lunch and Raffle to raise funds for the upcoming Lao Mission Trip (See article).

*Congregational Care and the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee* hosted a wonderful potluck in September to kickoff the year. Plans are underway for our "Friendsgiving" potluck on November 18. (See article).

*The Worship Committee* is planning for Christmas – always a time for special music and worship experiences inviting each of us and the community to come together in celebration.

*Children and Youth Ministry* led our annual fun-filled Halloween Block Party for the neighborhood.

Thank you to everybody who has helped out these past few months. It is amazing to see how God is moving in and through us, and none of this would be possible without you.

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## **Results of the Feasibility Study**

*By Mel Enns, for the Stewardship Committee*

A special thank you to all who took part in the recent Feasibility Study. Congregational support is essential in forming the future of UPC. By participating in the Study's interviews and surveys, 106 UPC households offered direct input in determining if UPC should embark on a Capital Campaign.

Our consultant group, Horizons Stewardship, has analyzed your responses and presented the results to Session, the Board of Property and Finance, and the Stewardship Committee. Highlights of your responses include:

- Compared to other congregations, UPC had a high rate of participation.
- 83% of households responding supported the proposed Capital Campaign.
- Items with strongest support were new roofs, air-conditioners, and parking lot.
- 80 households suggested we lower the financial goal of the Campaign.
- 53 households will consider volunteering in a Campaign.



The next step? Using the information you provided, Session is determining if we move forward with a more 'focused' Campaign and 'lower' financial goal. Please know we will keep you informed as decisions unfold.

## Thank you on Behalf of Baby Serna

Thank you to everybody who planned and participated in Baby Serna's shower, and for all of you who have been so supportive the last few months. Your words of encouragement, prayers, and generosity have been such a blessing, and Aaron and I are looking forward to welcoming our little one into the UPC family. It is a joy to share this special time with you all!

With gratitude, *Pastor Renn*

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## Money, Money, Money: Understanding Coins of the New Testament, Part One

by Rus Stolling



In the late 90's, I became interested in numismatics – the study of money, its origins and evolution. One evening reading in the gospels, I came to a parable using a coin for illustration. I wondered if the generically mentioned coin could be identified specifically. To my pleasure I learned it had been identified, was described in several numismatic studies, and entire books had been written on Jewish coinage. A leather and cloth bound, gilt-edged 1864 imprint of *Madden's History of Jewish Coinage and of Money of the Bible in the Old and New Testaments* became one of my prized possessions (also, David Hendin's 1987 *Guide to Biblical Coins*). Both describe and illustrate coins referred to in the New Testament Gospel stories and parables.

Reading Bible passages where Jesus uses coins as a vehicle to illustrate the value of God's love or the extent of His disdain, I found modern translators tended to interpret archaic words in more readily understood terms, sometimes sacrificing detail. Coins and measures specifically named in the Greek text were rendered simply "a silver coin" or "a penny" or "a pound." I set out to discover if an understanding of the specific coins would add to the appreciation of the parables.

**First, a necessary bit of history:** In their past the Jews had been conquered, enslaved, or politically dominated by the Persians, Babylonians, and Egyptians with short periods of freedom between, and were under Roman subjugation at the time of the gospels. They had seldom been sovereign, and never been allowed to coin money other than low value copper tokens, so never had their own silver or gold coinage. Their culture was heavily affected by their captors and by a pervasive Greek influence in the eastern Mediterranean in the centuries before the rise of Rome.

Money circulating in Jewish lands in New Testament times was a potpourri of Roman, Greek, and Phoenician coinage, with a smattering of Persian and Egyptian currencies finding their way in by the trade routes. Jews did not make their own silver coins until the revolt against Rome of 70 AD, when they softened Roman coins by heating and struck Jewish motifs over the Roman designs. Another attempt at coinage during the second revolt of 132 AD was short lived.

The coins in circulation in Christ's day were the Roman *dinarius*, the Greek *drachma* and its multiples -- *didrachma* (2 drachma) and *tetradrachm* (4 drachma), and the Phoenician *tetradrachm* minted in Tyre. The dinarius and drachm were equivalent. A tetradrachm, shown in the photo, was about equal to the Jewish *shekel*, not existent then as a coin but as a weight of silver.

While any coin could pass for currency in the markets, money used in the temple was required to be of acceptable alloy purity, value, and imagery. Greek and Phoenician coins met the standards. Roman coins bearing the forbidden "graven images" of emperors or Roman deities were unacceptable and had to be exchanged. In the market and at exchange tables, coins were weighed to assure their value.

**Cleansing the Temple:** Lack of an official national coinage necessitated the presence of “moneychangers” in courtyards of the temple. During the Passover week when Jesus visited, exchange operators were charging as much as 8% to trade for proper coinage. Merchants were selling doves, sheep and cattle for sacrifice. John 2:14-16 most dramatically tells the story: “He found in the temple those who were selling oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers seated *at their tables*. And He made a scourge of cords, and drove *them* all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen; and He poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables.” Imagine the chaos as coins of all nations and denominations – drachma, denarii, shekels, copper, silver and gold -- dumped from the overturned tables fell, rolled, and mixed on the stones of the temple pavement.

**A Coin in the Fishes Mouth – one of Jesus’s earliest miracles:** In Matthew 17: 24-27 temple officials ask Peter, “Does your teacher not pay the *two-drachma tax*?” The tax was one-half shekel levied on every Jewish male age twenty or over, an annual assessment rather like our per-capita. As the shekel was not a coin, but a measure of weight, the coin meeting the standard of weight and purity was the Greek *didrachma* for one person, or a *tetra drachma* – the shekel equivalent – for two. Jesus instructed Peter, “Go to the sea and throw in a hook, and take the first fish that comes up; and when you open its mouth, you will find a *shekel*. Take that and give it to them for you and Me.” Three coins, all of equivalent value appear in this story, the *didrachma*, the *shekel*, and add one more, which Greek texts name a “*stater*,” meaning a non-specific standard coin.

*Watch for Part 2 coming soon where we'll look at monetary devices Jesus uses in parables.*

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## UPC Groups

**2019 Men’s Retreat NEW Date:** Men of UPC, save the weekend of **January 11-13, 2019** for the annual UPC Men’s Retreat at Calvin Crest. More information coming soon.

### WEEKLY

- **Contemplative Prayer:** Come **Mondays at 6:30 p.m.** to the Godly Play Room (Rooms 3-4) for Christ-centered meditation. No previous experience is necessary, just a desire to spend quiet, still time with the Divine.
- **Women's Bible Study:** The group which meets **Wednesdays from 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.** are studying Isaiah. They welcome you to join them. For more information, call Laura Lindegren at 299-1838.
- **Thursday Evening Bible Study:** The group meets for study **Thursdays at 6:30 p.m.** in the Fireside Room. They invite you to join them in studying the Gospel of Luke.

### MONTHLY

- **Presbyterian Women (PW):** Presbyterian Women meet **Tuesday, November 13, at 9:30 a.m.** in the Great Room. Elizabeth Prasad reports on her recent trip to India and we review our Boutique. Join us and bring a friend!
- **UPC Food Pantry:** The monthly food distribution will take place on **Saturday, November 17 at 8 a.m.** Come and help by texting Dustin at 288-0083 to volunteer. If you would like to donate to the food of the month item for the distribution, **the food item for November is Thanksgiving fixings.**
- **Pub Theology:** Join the discussion on **Tuesday, November 20 from 6:30-8:30 p.m.** at Sequoia Brewing Company. Add your voice to the discussion of a variety of topics concerning faith, religion, and God. Seating is limited so come early to ensure a spot. We meet monthly on the third Tuesday.
- **Taizé Contemplative Worship:** A Taizé contemplative, musical prayer service is held the third Sunday of the month in the Sanctuary. Worship in the Taizé style this month on **November 18 at 6 p.m.**
- **Clippers:** Mystery Movie Night is **Friday November 16 at 6:30 p.m.** in the Fireside Room. Bring a small dessert to share. We'll also plan for 2019. No need to RSVP – just come and enjoy!

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Non-profit Organization  
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PERMIT No. 34  
Clovis, CA 93612

### Sunday Worship Schedule for October

9 a.m. Classic Worship | 11 a.m. Contemporary Service

11 a.m. Lao Language Service | except the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday

#### Pastors

The Reverend Renn Serna, Senior Pastor

The Reverend Dustin Maddox, Associate Pastor

### Return Service Requested

Mailing Label Here

Joyfully Sharing God's Boundless Love with All in Our Community  
without limitation, exception, or condition

#### November Birthdays

**3** Edith Barnette  
Melissa Berend  
Dave Gromis  
Maurine Ricky  
Dave Youngs  
**6** Norm Christiansen  
**7** Melvin Enns  
Laura Jones  
Sharon King  
**8** Sue Christiansen  
Vanhta Pathommaseng  
Cordie Qualle  
**10** Cindy Correia  
**11** Florence Alexander  
Phimala Chouanmasay  
Renn Serna  
**13** Bridget Rossi  
**15** Adrian Martinez  
**16** Joy Manion  
Louis Volpp  
**17** Justin Klapste  
**20** Jacob Warnes  
**23** Roxanne Braswell  
Dean Hodgson  
**24** Jim Brannan  
Harell Gabel  
Pam Higgins  
**26** Melissa Manion  
Paul Masquelier

#### November Anniversaries

**5** Al & Cheryl Pulcifer  
**8** Jim & Jeanne Ayars  
**9** Roland & Becky  
Bergthold David &  
Barbara Foster  
**15** Mone & Kom  
Thammavongsa  
**20** Colin & Wendy Warnes  
**24** Chet & Doris Hansen  
**25** Ken & Julie Scott

#### November Calendar

**1** Bell Choir Rehearsal  
6:30 p.m.  
Thursday Bible Study  
6:30 p.m.

#### 4 Daylight Saving Time Ends

**5** Intercessory Prayer  
4 p.m.  
Contemplative Prayer  
6:30 p.m.

#### 6 Election Day

**7** Women's Bible Study  
9:30 a.m.  
Choir Practice 6:30 p.m.  
**8** Bell Choir Practice  
6:30 p.m.  
Thursday Bible Study  
6:30 p.m.

#### November Calendar cont.

**10** Holiday Boutique  
8 a.m.  
**11** Holiday Boutique  
10 a.m.  
**12 Veterans Day Observed - Office Closed**  
Contemplative Prayer  
6:30 p.m.  
**13** Presbyterian Women  
9:30 a.m.  
Joint Session & Deacons  
Meeting 6:30 p.m.  
**14** Women's Bible Study  
9:30 a.m.  
Choir Practice 6:30 p.m.  
**15** Bell Choir Practice  
6:30 p.m.  
Thursday Bible Study  
6:30 p.m.  
**16** Clippers 6 p.m.  
**17** Food Distribution  
8 a.m.  
Fresno State Football  
Parking 4:30 p.m.  
**18 Commitment Sunday**  
"Friendsgiving" Potluck  
5 p.m.  
Taize Service 6 p.m.

#### November Calendar cont.

**19** Contemplative Prayer  
6:30 p.m.  
**20** Pub Theology  
6:30 p.m.  
**21** Women's Bible Study  
9:30 a.m.  
**22 - 23 Thanksgiving  
Holiday - office closed**  
24 Fresno State Football  
Parking - 7:30 p.m.  
**25 Annual  
Congregational Meeting  
10:15 a.m.**  
**26** Contemplative Prayer  
6:30 p.m.  
**27** Ministry Meetings  
(times vary)  
**28** Women's Bible Study  
9:30 a.m.  
Choir Practice 6:30 p.m.  
**28** Women's Bible Study  
9:30 a.m.  
**29** Bell Choir Practice  
6:30 p.m.  
Thursday Bible Study  
6:30 p.m.