



**February 2025 Newsletter**  
**Sonora United Methodist Church**



**February is a month we focus on love. What does the love Jesus taught us look like in our world today? In times when we love our country when the elections go our way, is that really love? Can we call those who try to violently overturn the election results patriots acting out of love for their country, are we saying an angry mob's action can be remembered as a day of love? Do we only love those who are like us, and call those who are different enemies? When did asking for kindness and compassion for those who live in our country and are afraid become inappropriate and words that demand an apology? Migrants are called an invading horde and killers of Americans, and any reminders they are human beings have become offensive. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion have become the target of blame for every shortcoming in responding to crisis or failures that lead to tragedy. When we as a nation are so divided, have we lost sight of how to love one another?**

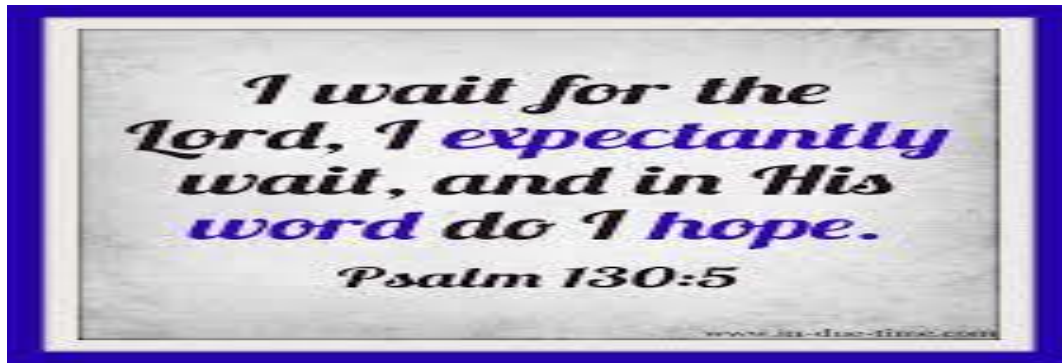
**First, as we drift into taking sides and naming those who oppose us as enemies, we lose sight of God's love. God's love unites and breaks down the barriers we erect. God's love is for all, and Jesus came as savior for all humankind. God's love is not just for those**

**who believe a certain way or have the same gender or skin color. All who follow Jesus are part of the family of God.**

**Loisi called us to pray for the leaders of our country after I shared some of Dr King's words. These are words about loving our enemies not only from one who was called all manner of vile names and faced segregation we mostly have never experienced. He was treated as an enemy. He was spat upon and burned by cigarette butts. Assaulted by fire hoses and vicious dogs. Beaten with batons and thrown in jail. His life was threatened, church bombed and then his death came by a bullet. The second lesson is more than not naming enemies, Jesus calls us to love those who treat us as enemies. With this in mind, read the words from Dr. Martin Luther King Jr's, *The Strength of Love*:**

**"Returning hate for hate multiplies hate, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars. Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that. Hate multiplies hate, violence multiplies violence, and toughness multiplies toughness in a descending spiral of destruction. So when Jesus says "Love your enemies," he is setting forth a profound and ultimately inescapable admonition. Have we not come to such an impasse in the modern world that we must love our enemies— or else? The chain reaction of evil—hate begetting hate, wars producing wars—must be broken, or we shall be plunged into the dark abyss of annihilation."**

**These words are more meaningful as I remember my mentor, Rev. Phil Lawson, who died this week. Phil marched and spent time in jail with Dr King. He later fought for the LBGTQ community, finding more enemies to love. This is our reminder that God's love can transform our world.**



Here are the scripture readings and sermon titles for February

Feb 2: "Called to What?"

Jeremiah 1: 4-10

Feb 9: "What Can We Believe?"

1 Corinthians 15: 1-11

Feb 16: "The Deceptive Heart"

Jeremiah 17: 5-10

Feb 23: "Do to Others"

Luke 6: 27-38



## Women's Fellowship

Greetings All,

January has slipped by quickly and it feels like we should have a planning meeting for the coming year, preferably when Lorraine is here. I'm hoping Saturday the 22nd would work around 11:30 after the cooking group is finished. Bring a sack lunch and your ideas.

The cooking group will now meet the Saturday of each month that falls just before the last Thursday of the month. This is when we cook for Beans and Rice and Jesus Christ. We have discussed that women's fellowship could invest in reusable 9×13 pans instead of using the disposable ones. Menu for this month will be decided.

Please think of when we could hold our spring rummage sale. Possible dates are Saturday April 26th or Saturday May 31st. At our planning meeting, I hope to discuss what service project, cleaning some area of church or something else we may do. Also how often we feel we should meet and if we would like to resume any social lunches or activities. Bring your ideas. Hope to see many there.

Blessings, Karla Wasson



## **Birthdays for February**

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2/21 Janice Samuels Johnson

## **Anniversaries for February**

2/19 John and Phyllis Poorbaugh

## **NEW FACES AT SONORA UMC**

**Any time that a church, or a company, or a classroom, etc. is vacated by one capable person, and taken over by a “capable person in the making,” there are adjustments which need to be made. Each of us, who have taken over positions that had been held by Lorraine for many, many years, are now having to find our way into our “new groups.” I know that I, as Lay Leader, have already missed attending a few meetings – because nobody told me when and where to go. We cannot read minds. Please – if you want me to be at a meeting (that I don’t know about) please send me an email and give me a heads up. This goes for any of our capable new leaders. We**

**cannot respond if we don't know what to respond to.**

**So, just so you know, there may be new faces in the church at these events, plus Sunday worship. If you see someone new, welcome them, offer to sit with them, and steer them toward coffee hour. God loves ALL of these, His children. And don't overlook inviting your friends and neighbors. With Columbia College nearby, there are many young people who are not affiliated with a church. It may take "just the right project" to bring them out. In my experiences working with college young people, they have MUCH to offer and give it willingly.**

**You may not realize this, but along with all the other things the church does, it is a business. It has responsibilities to abide by State Law, tax laws, Tuolumne County laws, Fire Marshall requirements, besides the statistical and other requirements of our connectional system with the California Nevada United Methodist Church. We have responsibilities to upkeep our church building and grounds and the Norlin House rental. We have to negotiate with Step up Property Management company that takes care of the rental and upkeep of our Parsonage.**

**The new members of the Finance Committee, Lynn Whitlach, Treasurer and Bobbie Clapham, Finance chair, have been working hard with Gail**

**Pollard and Peggy Florence our previous Treasurers and Wendy Buckman our previous Finance Chair to learn all their new duties and our Finance system. We have amazingly dedicated officers in our church.**

**It looks like our Parsonage might be rented again by the end of the February. As of this date, not everything has been agreed upon. But if you see new residents, please stop and say hello and make them feel welcome.**

**The end of 2024 Contribution statements have been mailed out. If for some reason you haven't received yours, please contact Lorraine Vogt ([lorrainev63@comcast.net](mailto:lorrainev63@comcast.net)). Also, an updated church directory is being worked on. If you have had phone number or other changes this last year, please let Lorraine know your new contact information before February 20th.**

**The next Church Council meeting will be after fellowship time on Sunday, Feb. 23rd. Be thinking about new ideas for activities, interacting with our community or just fun things you think we ought to do together. A talent show? Adult singles or couples group? Speaker series?**

**Hymn sing? Let's brainstorm.**

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