



Asbury Articles: July 19, 2023



It can be frightening or scary or uncomfortable to walk into a church to worship for the first time. Maybe this is the first time a person has walked into worship; maybe they have done it hundreds of times but it's still difficult the first time in a new place. This is a pastoral message to people who feel at home at Asbury. For the last few months, we've had many new people visit. Have you introduced yourself to them? Have you sat with them at Fellowship Time and learned their names? Asked how they got to Asbury? Asked what they like to do when they aren't at Asbury? Asked what they do for fun? Asked what brings them meaning in life? Asked if they have a big project they are working on? if they are new to Livermore what they might like to know about Livermore,? What is their favorite flavor of ice cream is? what they are hoping to find at Asbury? who their favorite musician is? The last few weeks I've noticed that new people are sitting by themselves.

I want to encourage us to practice the rule of 3 and the rule of 10. The rule of 3 is to talk to 3 people you don't know before talking to people you do know at the end of worship and in the Fellowship Hall. The rule of 10 is to meet everyone within 10 feet of you that you don't know. The people you do know will still be there. Bring the new people over to meet the people you usually sit with. We can get a bit more daring and invite them out to lunch with us. Some things we can do when we see new people come in, is scoot over and invite them to sit by us in the sanctuary or in the Fellowship Hall, grab a couple of chairs and bring them over to your table so a new person or family can sit with you.

I asked a couple of folks in our church who are really good at welcoming what's going on in their head when they welcome people. I was told that they focus on trying to get to know a bit of the visitor's story, if they are new to the community find out where they came from, find out something about their family, their hobbies and their interests, and then to share something about oneself and then

try to connect the visitors with others who have something in common. New people are coming our way, let's be warm and welcoming.

Blessings,
Pastor Kathy



• FRIDAY, July 21, 2023

• THURSDAY, July 27, 2023

11:00 AM to 5:00 PM

Use Sponsor Code ASBURY925 to Sign Up!



What: You're invited to a dinner, conversation, and play

Who: Parents and children

When: Sunday, July 30 at 4 p.m. – 5 p.m.

Where: Asbury's Courtyard
(If it is really hot we will be in fellowship hall)

More details: We will have a simple dinner, an opportunity for parents to get to know each other better and a brief conversation with Pastor Kathy and Lori, our Children's Ministry Director, about possible family ministries you would like at Asbury and how Asbury can support you as families and parents.

Even More details: We will have water tables for the children to play and some of our nursery workers will be on hand to supervise. We will have some activities for older kids as well.

RSVP: Please let us know by July 27 if you can attend or not. Thanks!

Scan the QR code or please call the office - (925) 447-1950.



summer fest

August 5 - 6

Register by Monday, July 31!

Sew In

Thursday, July 24 | 1:30 - 3pm

Remember to bring your sewing machine,
cords, and pedal, if you can!

There will be other jobs if you don't want to sew.
Any questions call Lorraine (925-989-6923)

Velveteen Rabbit Worship

Sunday, August 6



Velveteen Rabbit worship comes to Asbury!

Sunday, August 6

Our Summer Fest celebration worship on Sunday, August 6 will feature a re-telling of the Velveteen Rabbit Story and how it connects with the Gospel. We need your help in putting on this drama/play/worship! We're looking for children (5 and older), youth, and adults to be a part of the production (with just a few rehearsals). There are speaking and non-speaking parts, memorized and non-memorized parts.

If you would like to be a part of this special Summer Fest worship or help with the production, please contact [Martie Muldoon](#), who is directing the project, or [Pastor Kathy](#). We hope you will join us in this fun and unique opportunity to look at the Gospel through the lens of the Velveteen Rabbit.



Backpack Project 2023

Backpack Project: How the Process Works

If you haven't done so already, mark Sunday July 30 on your calendar for helping to fill backpacks with school supplies after worship. The Serving Others with Love Committee will have the backpacks and supplies on a row of tables. There'll be signs showing how much of each supply you should put in a backpack. After you fill a backpack, go around again and fill another backpack. Last year we had you going down one side of the row of tables while the SOWL committee kept replenishing supplies from the other side. This year we'll see if we can refill the supplies while allowing you to go down both sides of the row of tables. If it works, it'll allow us to finish sooner.

The Serving Others with Love Committee invites your monetary contributions via the "Give" button at [our website](#), the "Giving" button on the Asbury app, by check, or in cash. Be sure to indicate "Backpack Project" as the purpose.

Updates from the Conference Floor: Week 2

Asbury was represented by three lay members, two retired clergy and two active clergy at the Annual Conference Session in June in Sacramento this year. Today we hear a report from our Lay Member, Cal Wood.

In addition to the many 'bookkeeping' matters that a conference must address, this conference was focused on spiritual uplift for all participants. Bishop Dyck began by introducing the following conference Mission statement:

1. Following Jesus
2. Thriving in Ministry
3. Healing the World.

Using the mission statement as an outline guide, the following good, spiritual directions were presented by a motivational speaker, Ms. Rebekah Simon-Peter, under the first item in the statement.

1. **Following.** Jesus sent his followers out and shared his power with them. Since spiritual growth must be sought by the seeker, we need to approach Jesus for healing of our defects so we can also have his power for our calling and witness. Guidance of the spirit is best approached when we are able to suppress or own self-centered egos and develop our personal relationship with Jesus himself. It is stressed that it not enough to believe IN Jesus, we need also to BELIEVE Jesus (obey his words). She also gave us guidance for remaining calm when confronted and when remaining rational is important.
2. **Thriving.** Our own Steve Elliott received the bishop Brown award for his extensive humanitarian work; we accepted the disaffiliation of six churches (small, rural congregations over the 'gay' issue) and prepared for the coming world-wide conference with 7 lay delegates and 7 clergy delegates; we got the report that this conference has met its tithing obligations 100% for the past six years and we are solvent financially; the youth were emphatic to point out that they are not the future, but are the present, here with us now and contributing; lay ministers are being trained to supplement the work of the ordained clergy in smaller congregations and wherever needed as there is a shortage of clergy in the conference. The conference is also addressing the problem of shrinking membership numbers, which is a problem for all churches, not just our own.
3. **Healing.** The conference is seeking ways to heal the extensive harm done by our government by its (USA govt) Indian boarding schools that were tasked with eliminating culture, language and 'primitive' society. The BSA abuse settlement was almost \$600,000 for the UMC. Since loneliness is a serious threat to mental health, the conference is working to broaden our outreach to members so that no one feels isolated or abandoned by the church. People don't remember well what someone says or does, but they will always remember how that someone made them feel.

The spiritual uplift was much appreciated by the delegates. There were a great many housekeeping items that were considered by the conference. I will be glad to meet with anyone who is interested in more details, for I have only just touched a few high points from the conference.



[Give through CHEF website](#)

[Give through Asbury website](#)



Update on Asbury's Finances

Asbury continues to remain healthy financially, although in earlier years we tended to run a significant surplus in our general fund (excluding restricted and the endowment funds). In 2022 we also ended up slightly positive, although as you can see by the chart below we dipped negative for some months. The chart shows the monthly income in blue, expenses in orange and the accumulated difference (our “bottom line”) in gray. The variability is caused by the difference in

congregational giving trends – where peak giving maximizes around December when people make substantial gifts for the current or coming year – and expenses which are usually rather steady except for our insurance bill in December. Total income in 2022 was \$662,047 with expenses of \$654,491.

2023 is off to a reasonable start, although a bit less favorably than this time last year. Since the summer months tend to have income falling below expenses, it's important for Asbury folk to keep up their giving so that keep a positive ledger for the year.

In other financial news, the Church Council has asked the Finance Committee, in concert with other groups at the church, to explore a capital campaign to fund a new play structure and other facility needs. This campaign will be considerably smaller than previous campaigns but will still run into the few hundred thousand dollar range. Expect more details this fall!

Meet our Missionary: Katherine Parker

Wednesday, August 23 | 7:30 - 9:00pm

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Fellowship Hall

Here is a unique opportunity to meet with our missionary in Nepal, Katherine Parker. Katherine is from Marin County, so we call her “ours.”

You will learn from slides and video what her mission work entails and what life is like in Nepal. A big part of a missionary's work is to “mission” to folks on the home front. We want to be involved in the work of bringing love and justice to places as far away as rural Nepal.

We will invite you to contribute toward a freewill offering to support Katherine's mission. Bring your checkbook! We want to be a sponsoring church so that Katherine knows she can count on our support.

All ages are welcome, and if you need childcare for small children, please call the church to register in advance. There will be time for questions and conversation and then light refreshments.

SSP Mailing Address

On Sunday, July 23rd the following six people will be leaving after worship for a week of service in Sacramento with Sierra Service Project.

Steve Wilson
Dave Schlientz
Tony Gnecco
Rebecca Bernstein
Justin Byers (from San Ramon Valley UMC)
Alex Lobao

We LOVE getting mail (because we get to sing for it)! If you'd like to send us a note, a card, a care package (no food, please), or whatever, our address for the week is shown below

(Volunteer Name)
c/o Sierra Service Project
General Delivery
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670

Prayers for a safe and fun trip are welcome, too. No postage required!

Volunteers Needed for Pajaro Flooding Recovery

The first part of 2023 was one of the wettest periods on record in California. The result was widespread flooding in many parts of Northern California. The California-Nevada Conference responded with volunteers and financial assistance to survivors in several areas, one of which was the town of Pajaro, in Monterey County. Pajaro is home to many low-income farmworkers.

We are now gearing up to return to assist with repairs to flooded homes. This effort will take several months of focused effort. We are one of several non-profits planning to assist with this recovery.

Bob Lee, from Los Altos UMC, will be leading weekend teams to assist with repairs. Would you consider signing up as a participant for one or more weekends?

The dates are June 22-25, July 20-23, July 27-30, August 10-13, August 24-27, September 7-10, and September 21-24. You would travel on Thursday evening, work two and a half days and return on Sunday evening.

There is work for everyone. All levels of experience are welcome. We think you will find this to be a rewarding mission experience.

Contact Bob via [email](#) or 650-468-1612 for more information. He will provide you with the project description and registration forms.

Palestinian Fundraiser Dinner to benefit the village of Wadi Foquin

Saturday, August 19 | 5:30pm

Saturday, August 19 | 5:30 pm
Twin Towers UMC | 1411 Oak Street, Alameda, CA

The program will include dinner and speakers from the West Bank village of Wadi Foquin. Ata Manasra and his 25-year-old son Adam will tell about the challenges Palestinians face today where settlements on the West Bank are being built by the Israeli government. Through the strife, we will learn of the abiding hope our brothers and sisters in Palestine hold. Bob Johnson recently visited Wadi Foquin,

and Rev. Michael Yoshii preached in church in September about our Conference work of mission and advocacy there.

Asbury has committed to a table for 8 for \$400 for this event. Please contact Heather via [email](#) or phone (925 321-4298) if you want to participate either by donating or attending. No one will be turned away for lack of funds. You may donate directly on the Asbury [website](#) (Palestinian Fund Raiser by Friends of Wadi Foquin) or see Heather. Let's carpool together.

Email Communications

We have been made aware that numerous Asbury members are currently not receiving subscribed email communications.

We are working on fixing this technical issue but in the meantime, please contact the church office and let us know what emails you are missing (Prayer Chains, E-Articles...) and we will make sure to email them to you individually or we can provide you with a printed copy during the office hours (Monday-Thursday, 10am-4pm) or before Sunday worship.

We apologize for the inconvenience and appreciate your patience!

Asbury Masking Policy

Alameda County is following the CDC guidelines for masking. When community transmission is low, masking indoors may be optional. When community transmission is medium or high, masking indoors is strongly recommended.

Asbury will follow the CDC guidelines, and we support and encourage mask wearing indoors, especially for those with underlying health conditions or who are not fully vaccinated and boosted.





EVENTS AT A GLANCE

RECURRING EVENTS

- **Sundays; 10am:** Asbury worship service
- **Note:** All musical groups will resume after Labor Day!

OPEN SMALL GROUPS

- **Every Sunday; 8:15am:** Meditation Circle on Zoom (Contact [the office](#))
- **1st and 3rd Monday; 6pm:** Monday Night Small Group (Contact [Ruth](#))
- **Thursdays; 7:45am:** Men's Bible Study on Zoom (Contact [Art](#))
- **Saturdays; 10am:** Craft and Chat [Zoom](#) gathering
- **3rd Saturdays; 10:30am:** Caregivers' Support Group on [Zoom](#)

JULY

- **Thurs, July 24; 1:30pm:** Sew In
- **Sun, July 30; after worship:** Backpack Project
- **Sun, July 30; 4pm:** Asbury Families with Young Children Afternoon

AUGUST

- **Sat, Aug 5 - Sun, Aug 6:** Summerfest
- **Sun, Aug 6:** Velveteen Rabbit worship

HOW CAN WE HELP?

Have questions?

Contact the church office via [email](#) or phone, 925-447-1950.

Have an article, announcement, or event to submit?

Send them to the [Alaina Harrison](#), our Communications Specialist, **by 3pm on Tuesdays**.

Miss a newsletter or need to go back and re-read?

Check out the [newsletter archive](#)!

Asbury United Methodist Church

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