

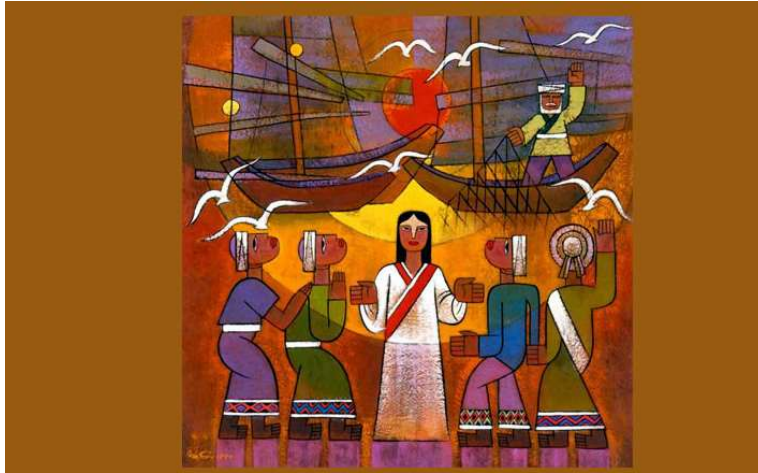
# Central United Methodist Church

3700 Pacific Avenue, Stockton, CA 95204

## ORDER OF WORSHIP

2nd Sunday after Epiphany

Sunday, January 14, 2024



\*Indicates please stand as you are able.

### GATHERING

#### PRELUDE

*Revive Us*  
Again (Mary McDonald)  
*My Lord, What a Morning*  
(Larry Shackley)

Monica Adams

#### GATHERING MOMENT

Chris Chan (8:30am), Mary Dalton (11:00am)

#### INTROIT

*Praise, Praise The Lord*  
[Traditional Cameroon Melody]  
(arr. Ralph Johnson)

Chancel Choir  
Jonathan Latta, Percussion

#### \*CALL TO WORSHIP (From Wesley's Covenant Prayer)

Chris Chan (8:30am), Mary Dalton (11:00am)

**Leader:** Pray for the towns and cities that you live in.

**All:** **We will promote the welfare of the city where we live. We will pray to the Lord for it, because our future depends on its well-being.**

**Leader:** Find ways to serve the people that you live with.

**All:** **We will find one service that we can do with joy and gladness.**

**Leader:** God will guide you and give you blessings.

**All:** **We will share all the blessings with our neighbors. Amen.**

#### \*HYMN

*Lift Every Voice and Sing*

UMH #519

#### CHILDREN'S MOMENT

Carol Willson

#### MISSION & MINISTRIES MOMENT

Chris Chan (8:30am), Mary Dalton (11:00am)

**PRAYER CARDS COLLECTED**

**RITE OF FRIENDSHIP AND A SPECIAL WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS** Chris Chan (8:30am), Mary Dalton (11:00am)

**\*PASSING THE PEACE** Chris Chan (8:30am), Mary Dalton (11:00am)  
(Stand, bow or wave, with the word "Peace be with You!")

**All Sing:** *Hymn of Promise* verse 1  
*In the bulb there is a flower; in the seed, an apple tree; in cocoons, a hidden promise: butterflies will soon be free! In the cold and snow of winter there's a spring that waits to be, unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.*

**ANTHEM** *Keep Your Lamps!* Chancel Choir  
(Spiritual arr. by Andre Thomas) Jonathan Latta, Percussion

**PROCLAMATION AND RESPONSE**

**SCRIPTURE** John 1:43-51 (Pew Bible NRSV, page 92) Chris Chan (8:30am)  
Leader: This is the word of God for the people of God. Mary Dalton (11:00am)  
**All:** **Thanks be to God.**

**\*HYMN** *Precious Lord, Take My Hand* UMH #474

**SERMON** "You Will See Great Things Happening!" Rev. Sungho Lee

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE** Chris Chan (8:30am), Mary Dalton (11:00am)

**PASTOR'S PRAYER & LORD'S PRAYER** Rev. Sungho Lee  
**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

**THANKSGIVING**

**WORSHIP WITH OUR TITHES & OFFERINGS** Chris Chan (8:30am), Mary Dalton (11:00am)

**OFFERTORY** *Steal Away* Monica Adams  
(Emma Lou Diemer)

**\*DOXOLOGY** *For the Beauty of the Earth* verse 6 UMH #92  
*For thyself, best Gift Divine, to the world so freely given,  
for that great, great love of thine, peace on earth, and joy in heaven:  
Lord of all, to thee we raise this our hymn of grateful praise.*

**PRAYER OF DEDICATION** Chris Chan (8:30am), Mary Dalton (11:00am)

**SENDING FORTH**

**\*BENEDICTION** Rev. Sungho Lee

\*RESPONSE

*Shalom to You*

UMH #666

***Shalom to you now, shalom, my friends.  
May God's full mercies bless you, my friends.  
In all your living and through your loving,  
Christ be your shalom, Christ be your shalom.***

\*POSTLUDE

*This Little Light of Mine*  
(Aaron David Miller)

Monica Adams

---

**SERVING YOU TODAY**

Rev. Dr. Sungho Lee  
Chris Chan (8:30am), Worship Leader  
Martha Dalton (11:00am), Worship Leader  
Carol Willson, Children's Moment  
Ric Campero, Choir Director  
Monica Adams, Organist/Pianist  
David Campero, Livestream  
Mark Wharff & Steven Adams, Media  
Cherie Hudson, Facilities Coordinator  
Rupert Cooper, Audio

---

**"YOU WILL SEE GREAT THINGS HAPPENING!" John 1:43-51**

Our California Nevada Annual Conference has a vision statement: Following Jesus, Thriving in Community, and Healing the world. Last week, we reflected on the meaning of following Jesus. It was not just cognitive consent but love in action that we are called to do. Our small act of kindness can show others that we follow Jesus. This week we will reflect on the meaning of thriving in a community.

**Know your community.**

If we want to thrive in our community, we have to know our community. Each community has its own reputation. For example, when Philip told Nathanael, "We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph" he replied, "Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?"

When people ask about Stockton, what good comes out of Stockton? Based on various factors like economic impact, employment opportunities, and community contribution, we can say that these are 5 strong contenders for thriving businesses in Stockton, CA

**1. Agriculture and Food Processing:**

Stockton sits in the heart of California's Central Valley, a fertile region renowned for its agricultural production. This makes agriculture and food processing major contributors to the local economy. When I visited Kathy Ratto, she told me that her late husband Michael was an almond quality controller. When I visited Margaret Dasso, they had a farm for walnuts and cherries.

**2. Healthcare:**

Stockton boasts a growing healthcare sector, providing vital services and creating numerous jobs. Hospitals like San Joaquin General Hospital, Dameron Hospital and Kaiser Permanente, along with numerous medical clinics and research facilities, drive this segment.

The healthcare industry offers stable employment, attracts skilled professionals, and improves overall community well-being. I also visit O'Connor Woods all the time and Hospice is right next to our church.

### **3. Logistics and Transportation:**

Stockton's strategic location near major highways and the Port of Stockton makes it a crucial hub for logistics and transportation. Companies like Amazon, UPS, and FedEx operate large facilities in the city, facilitating the movement of goods across the country.

This sector provides essential infrastructure, creates jobs in warehousing, trucking, and related fields, and contributes to the city's economic activity. Many of our church members are also working for this sector.

### **4. Education and Public Administration:**

The University of the Pacific, San Joaquin Delta College, and Stockton Unified School District are major employers and educational institutions in the city.

Public administration includes local government agencies, law enforcement, and public services, all crucial for a functioning community.

These sectors provide educational opportunities, contribute to a skilled workforce, and ensure public safety and essential services. Many of our UOP alumni work in these areas. Our own Alan Cook will receive an alumni award for his social services in February. We have a strong tie to the UOP> We can also add Central Methodist Nursery School as our proud contribution to the education in Stockton.

### **5. Renewable Energy:**

Stockton is increasingly turning to renewable energy sources like solar and wind power. Companies like Tesla and SunPower have invested in local projects, generating clean energy and creating jobs in installation and maintenance.

This growing sector aligns with environmental sustainability goals, attracts investments, and contributes to a cleaner future for the city. Our church is also planning to use solar energy to be a part of this growing sector.

### **Pray for your community.**

The first step to thrive in our community is to pray for it. We know what thriving businesses are and where our community members are working. We want to pray for their success and well-being.

When Jesus saw Nathanael approaching, he said of him, "Here truly is an Israelite in whom there is no deceit." "How do you know me?" Nathanael asked. Jesus answered, "I saw you while you were still under the fig tree before Philip called you."

What was Nathaniel doing under the fig tree? Jesus did not explicitly state what Nathanael was doing under the fig tree. However, we can guess a couple of things what Nathanael was doing there.

1. Studying Torah: In Jewish tradition, studying the Torah (the first five books of the Hebrew Bible) under a fig tree was an ideal activity. A fig tree created an ideal environment for contemplation and learning. This interpretation suggests Nathanael was engaged in religious study or prayer when Jesus noticed him. In Judges, Deborah held court under the Palm of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim, and the Israelites went up to her to have their disputes decided. (Judges 4:5) Nathanael was not a judge but he could study and meditate on Torah there.

2. Reflecting on Messianic Prophecies: Nathanael might have been meditating on prophecies concerning the coming Messiah. Fig trees were sometimes associated with Messianic expectations in Jewish literature. This interpretation aligns with Nathanael's later reaction to Jesus' claim as the Messiah.
3. Seeking Solitude and Peace: The fig tree could simply signify a place of solitude and quiet reflection for Nathanael. Jesus' statement, "I saw you under the fig tree," might suggest Jesus saw Nathanael taking time of personal prayer.

Then Nathanael declared, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the king of Israel." Nathanael was surprised to know that his personal private prayer was known to Jesus. It gave him the conviction that Jesus was the Messiah. He prays to God and God revealed it to God's messenger, Messiah!

SO Jesus said, "You believe[h] because I told you I saw you under the fig tree. You will see greater things than that." He then added, "Very truly I tell you, you will see 'heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on' the Son of Man."

Are you familiar with this phrase? We will explore the meaning of this further.

### **Find ways to contribute to the well-being of the community.**

The image of angels ascending and descending from heaven appears in several passages throughout the Bible. The first one is found in Genesis 28:12-13. "While fleeing his brother Esau, Jacob has a dream at Bethel where he sees a ladder reaching from earth to heaven, with angels ascending and descending upon it. God appears at the top of the ladder and makes promises to Jacob and his descendants."

From this vision, Jacob found God's vision for God's people and his role in it. He decided to worship God and work with God, giving his tithe to God. Jacob made a solemn promise: "This stone that I've set up as a sacred pillar will be God's house, and of everything you give me I will give a tenth back to you." (Genesis 28:23)

Also, in Revelation 4-5 we see God seated on a throne surrounded by angels constantly ascending and descending, singing praises, and offering worship. They are bringing people's prayer up and bringing down God's answer to people. It symbolizes the ongoing connection between God and humanity, with angels acting as messengers and intermediaries.

For believers, the image can offer hope and comfort, knowing that God is actively involved in human affairs and has messengers working on their behalf. When we do our parts, God will do God's parts. We know that all our thoughts and actions are interconnected. We know the butterfly effect.

The butterfly effect is a concept from chaos theory that states that a small change in the initial conditions of a system can have large and unpredictable effects on the long-term outcome. It's often metaphorically described as a butterfly flapping its wings in Brazil causing a tornado in Texas.

While the butterfly itself might not be strong enough to directly cause a tornado, its wingbeats could. The idea of the butterfly effect inspires us to think about the importance and potential impact of our individual behavior. Every choice we make, no matter how small, has a ripple effect that ultimately affects the people and environment around us.

Angels are ascending and descending to bring our prayers to God and our thoughts and actions will bring greater impact on the community. When we give one free meal to a senior, it helps with the larger issue of loneliness. When we sleep one night at church for the Family Promise, it helps us to solve the homelessness

issue in our community. When we have a prayer vigil for the Cleveland School Shooting Victims, it helps us to solve the issue of gun violence in our community. That is our belief and that is why we do our actions.

**Find your own priority and focus on it.**

However, our time, talent, treasure are limited. We have to prioritize our resources to thrive in our community. Fish can swim in a river, but a bird cannot. A bird can fly in the sky, but a tiger cannot. When we do something that we can do well, we can thrive. From our church history and tradition, we have identified three things that we have done well: education, music, and community work. I want us to focus on these three things to thrive in Stockton. With the CMNS, we can add Central Youth Ministry Institute while we continually work with UOP for higher education. We can support our music ministry by giving treasure to the Gary Putnam Fund, which invites many musicians from the community to share their talents with us. We can continue our community ministries like Family Promise, St. Mary, Angel Tree, Showered with love, AA, NA, FA, SA, NAMI, and Senior Ministry.

Honor each other ministries and pick one of yours. Do as much as you can, but do not overdo it and burn out. Keep your prayer and worship life alive so that we can have continuous source of strength. Use Nathanael's example. He prayed and got noted by God and used by God. May God bless our 2024 ministry to thrive in community. Amen!



**WELCOME CENTER**

**If you are a visitor, please use this information for your convenience!**

**Sunday Schedule**

- 8:30 am Worship Service at the Fireside Room in the Knoles Building in English
- 9:30 am Chancel Choir Rehearsal 9:30 am behind the Sanctuary choir room
- 10:15 am Worship Service at the Fireside Room in the Knoles Building in Cambodian language.
- 11:00 am Worship Service in the Sanctuary in English.  
Childcare (under age 5) is available in the Knoles building. A friendly caregiver welcomes you!  
Godly Play (leave 11 am service Following Children's Moment)

**SAVE THE DATE! FEBRUARY 4**

Sunday, February 4<sup>th</sup>, Jeffrey Hall, former Minister of Central (2013-2019) will be preaching at both the 8:30am and 11:00am services.

**OFFERING ENVELOPES**

If you turned in a pledge card, you can pick up your offering envelopes in the Fellowship Hall on Sundays.

**35<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE CLEVELAND SCHOOL PLAYGROUND SHOOTING**

Members of our congregation and the community are invited to attend the 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Vigil and Commemoration of the Cleveland School Shooting, Wednesday January 17 at 5.00pm in our Fellowship Hall.

On January 17, 1989, a former student opened fire on the playground of our Fulton Street neighbor Cleveland School.

The gunman killed 5 students injuring 31 students and staff within a 3-minute time period. Years later a group of teachers who survived the Cleveland Elementary School shooting formed the group Cleveland School Remembers. This group is now known as Cleveland School Remembers/Brady works to reduce violence and to bring about awareness of the impact of gun violence on the community.

The Central Missions Committee hopes that you will attend the vigil to remember those who died, those injured and the many who live with emotional wounds. This event is the second our Missions Committee has supported in regards, to reducing gun violence in our community.

### **LEADERSHIP TRAINING**

When: **Jan. 20 Saturday 9 AM to Noon**

Where: **Via zoom**

Who: **All the Committee Chairs and members. Please register at the Conference Website, 2024 Church Leadership Virtual Training Event.**

### **SNAP JACKSON AND THE KNOCK ON WOOD PLAYERS**

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 28** ~ Snap Jackson & the Knock On Wood Players return to Central Sunday, January 28. They will be performing during the 11.00am service. In addition, they will perform during the Chili Cook-Off. Jackson will be joined by Shae Kalbach and Brian Clark.

*“Snap’s original songs have a liveliness that zips across the sound barrier, and if your feet aren’t dancing after a song or two you must be tied down.” ~ The Bluegrass Breakdown.*

This would be a great Sunday to invite a friend to worship with you.

### **CHILI COOK OFF**

#### **Reservations on Sale Now.**

The 2024 Chili Cook-Off returns to the Fellowship Hall, January 28 at 12.15pm. Pre-event reservations are \$10 and \$29.99 for a family of four. Admission to the cook-off on the day of the event will be \$15 and \$35 for a family of four.

Sponsorships are also available for \$125.00. Donor will receive an opportunity to have their picture taken with Snap and a reserved table for 8 to 10 people.

Consider inviting friends to join you at the Chili Cook-Off.

Purchasing tickets in advance gives you the privilege of knowing that you will be able to vote for the best chili in each category. There will be a variety of raffle and auction items for you to bid on. The proceeds benefit the Chancel Choir and the Summer Youth Experiences.

#### **Chili Chefs Needed**

Do you think you have a winning chili recipe? Enter your chili in the 2024 Chili Cook Off. The chili chefs will have the opportunity to select which division to enter their chili: regular, hot, vegetarian and kids’ chili (ages 5-15). Each winner will receive a prize. Sign up this Sunday.

#### **Raffle Items Ideas**

Do you have a cabin, or a time share in Hawaii or Mexico? Would you donate baking a cake, pie, or a dozen cookies once a month for six months? Get a couple of friends to donate 12 books and wrap them in paper. We are looking for 12 gift cards to restaurants as a prize. Did you get a Christmas gift that you are unsure about ever using it. Donate it this coming Sunday. Do you and your friends like to cook? Donate a lunch for six at the winners home? Do you have a talent to share? Prepare breakfast for 10-15 people in our Fireside Room. Maybe each church group could donate an item. Maybe you are in a musical group, and you could

donate playing at someone's home. Maybe you are a singer and could surprise someone with songs. Sign up at the Chili Cook Off Table.

**SAVE THE DATE FEB. 15, 2024**

71st annual interfaith tea at the Buddhist church. Sponsored by Community of Faith of San Joaquin County (Church Women United has reorganized to be more local and inclusive of all faiths.)

**SAVE THE DATE: FEBRUARY 29<sup>TH</sup> 2024!**

Rotary Read-In, 10:00 am - Cleveland and Team Charter Schools - Sign-ups will start in January.