



Good News

Morgan Hill United Methodist Church

The Season of Advent

By Rev. Dr. Linda A. Holbrook, Pastor

November and December always seem festive. In the United States we celebrate Thanksgiving in November and almost immediately move to the season of Advent. In our secular world stores start selling Christmas immediately after Halloween. In the church we have a season of Advent to prepare before the day of Christmas.

Advent is a season observed in many Western Christian churches as a time of expectant waiting and preparation for the celebration of the Nativity of Jesus at Christmas. The term is an anglicized version of the Latin word *adventus*, meaning "coming".

Latin *adventus* is the translation of the Greek word *parousia*, commonly used to refer to the Second Coming of Christ. For Christians, the season of Advent anticipates the coming of Christ from two different perspectives. The season offers the opportunity to share in the ancient longing for the coming of the Messiah, and to be alert for his Second Coming.

Advent is the beginning of the Western liturgical year and commences on Advent Sunday. This year Advent begins on November 30th. Our theme this year is "The Songs of Christmas." During Advent we light the Advent candle, sing hymns appropriate to the season and prepare ourselves for the coming of our Lord and Savior.

This year let's pause and reflect on our preparation for the significance of the birth of Jesus. Here are a few things you can do:

- Attend a Christmas Eve service.
- Make a trip with the family to see the lights.
- Make a coupon book as a gift. Make it things you will do for the recipient when they want to cash in.

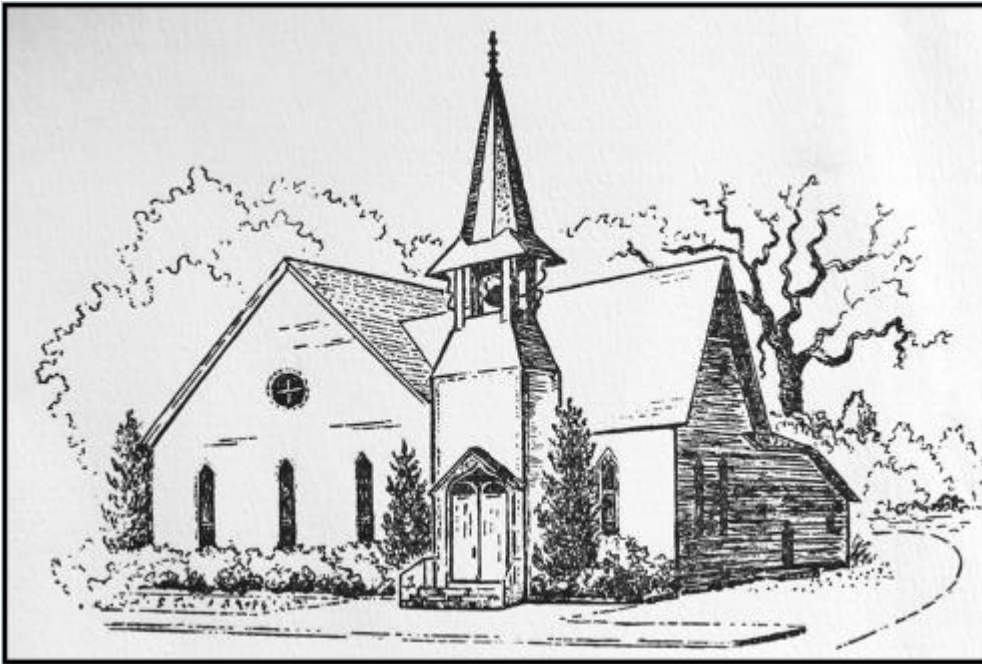
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Wesley
Wisdom

Wesley and his followers used Advent to focus on "the means of grace" and the spiritual work of preparing one's soul.

Rather than getting swept up in commercialism, Wesley and his followers used Advent to focus on "the means of grace" and the spiritual work of preparing one's soul. This emphasis on personal holiness and devotion is what differentiates the Wesleyan Advent experience. For John Wesley and his followers, Advent is a time of active, watchful waiting—not just for the birth of Jesus, but for his continued arrival in believers' lives and his final return to make all things right.



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Morgan Hill United Methodist Church

17175 Monterey Hwy
 Morgan Hill, CA 95037

669.888.3880

office@mhumc.com

www.mhumc.com

Leadership Team

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Linda A. Holbrook
Administrative Asst.: Bettie Anderson
Minister of Young Generations: Haley Feuerbacher
Children's Education: Jeannie Clayton
Finance Team Leads: Marilyn Pifer, Wendy Ringo
Lay Leaders: Denise Melroy, Megan Richardson
Annual Conf. Rep: Trish Catalano
Prayer Team: Megan Richardson
Membership Secy: Jeannie Clayton
Mission/Outreach Co-Chairs: Cathy Coates, John McCotter
Newsletter Editor: Bettie Anderson
Website Editor: Denise Melroy
Nominations & Leadership Dev. Chair: Rev. Dr. Linda A. Holbrook
Staff-Parish Relations Chair: Carol Frazer
Treasurer: Wendy Ringo
Trustees President: Darcy Foster
Worship Team Lead: Denise Melroy

We are a Reconciling Church.
 All are welcome!



Next Good News deadline:
 December 25, 2025
 For January/February Issue

The Season of Advent (continued from page 1)

By Rev. Dr. Linda A. Holbrook, Pastor

- Make a donation in someone's honor to a charity in which they have an interest.
- Make some popcorn, light the fire, and gather together to watch a classic Christmas movie.
- Show someone special that you love them by giving them your undivided attention.
- Offer to shop for someone who can't get out.
- Clean out a closet and give old clothes to an agency who can use them.
- Visit neighbors who had a death in their family this year.
- Bake Christmas treats.
- Take time to enjoy all the decorations in your home.
- Finally, celebrate the birth of the Christ child by making a manger in your heart.

May your Advent be meaningful and have a Merry Christmas.



By Denise Melroy, Worship Team

The choir has been singing some lovely songs these last few weeks. We resumed our summer break in September and are working on Advent and Christmas music currently. One of our favorite songs, "Have You Heard God's Voice" speaks to all of us who are concerned for our country and for social justice. Thank you, choir, for blessing me with your talents. We welcome anyone who would like to sing in the choir. Please contact Denise (408-396-7582) for more information.

Have you heard God's voice; has your heart been stirred?
Are you still prepared to follow?
Have you made a choice to remain and serve,
though the way be rough and narrow?



Advent begins Sunday, November 30. And, most of you know what that means - Yes! The hanging of the greens! We will bring bins and decoration boxes down from the cottage on Friday, November 28, at 10:30am. Then, decorating will begin on Saturday, November 29 at 10:30am. No talent is necessary - just bring yourself and a happy heart!



On November 2nd, we warmly invite you to join us at Morgan Hill United Methodist Church for a heartfelt celebration of All Saints Day. This occasion provides us with the beautiful opportunity to light a candle in remembrance of our beloved ones who have passed, honoring their cherished memories and the profound love that continues to connect us.

Pastor's Prose: Hope in Making Memories

By Rev. Dr. Linda A. Holbrook, Pastor



Many of you know that when I was in college, I joined a sorority, and that I am still involved with volunteering in that sorority. I was part of the founding group of the chapter at the University of South Florida. We were a local sorority and we met with a couple

of national groups to decide whether we would join one of the national groups. We did join Delta Gamma and it was a very good decision.

When the chapter was 25 years old, we had a grand celebration. I have a picture of 4 of us that came to the celebration. Fast forward to this year, and I was invited to deliver the speech at our Founders Day (We honor the three women who founded the sorority back in 1873.) The day before Founders Day, there was a get together and the same 4 women again took a picture. We sat in the same order. We had a wonderful time.

One of the 4 people in that picture, Judi, was diagnosed with ovarian cancer in August of 2024. Over the past year, she has undergone various treatments. I was so glad she was able to come to Tampa in March.

While I was on my grand trip, I received a text that she had been to the doctor and the news was not good. The doctor found cancer everywhere. Judi was able to go home and was put on hospice. She was not given long to live. This last Sunday, October 26th, I received a text that Judi had gone to be with the Lord. Even though I was expecting that text, it still took me a little by surprise. I feel the loss a lot. Judi was vibrant and beautiful and creative and a leader. I have many memories of Judi.

These days almost all of us are experiencing loss of one sort or another. It might be the loss of a loved one. It might be the loss of good health. It might be the loss of a career or seeing that our path of options is closing.

I think there are two things we need to remember. First, for every loss there is a period of grieving. No matter how small the loss is, we need to grieve the loss. I call it good grieving. We have to acknowledge our loss and then deal with all the emotions we are experiencing. And grieving can last weeks or months or years. How we deal with loss and how long we grieve is specific to each of us. If you aren't familiar with grief, come talk to me.

The second thing to remember is hope. You may remember that Jane Goodall said that hope is not passive wishful thinking, "I hope this or that happens and then doing nothing." Hope requires action and engagement. We can never replace the loss we have had, but there will be good things in the future. God has said, "I know the plans I have for you. Plans for good and not for harm. Giving you a future with hope."

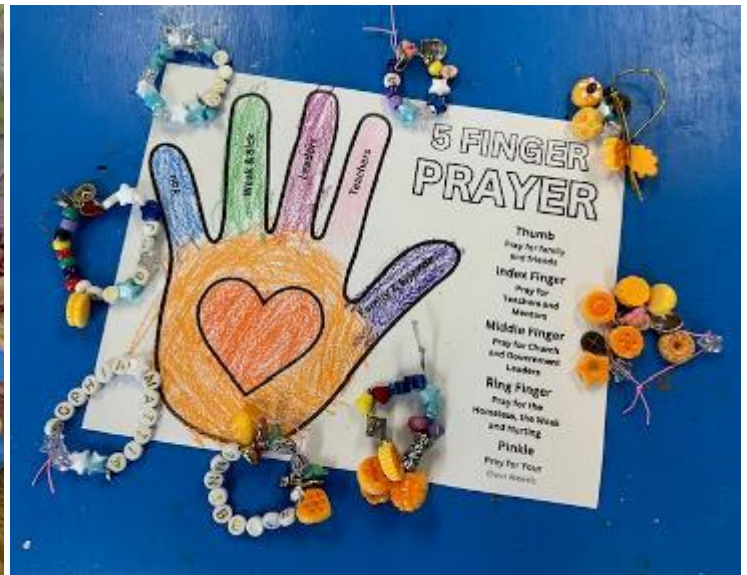
I am grieving the loss of my friend and I am remembering the memories of the times we had together. I am certain that there will be other losses in my future. But I also have hope. Hope that I can engage with many others in currently in my life to keep making memories.

For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

Jeremiah 29:11 NIV

Lessons From Our Sunday School Children

By Megan Richardson, Sunday School Teacher



We continued our conversation on the topic of prayer by making prayer bracelets as a method to establish a practice. The kids loved choosing beads and colored elastic cord to personalize their own. We discussed types of prayer and that “breath” is the first and often best prayer.

Glimmers and Upcoming Events

By Haley Feuerbacher, Minister of Young Generations

In the Young Generations Ministry, we talk about “glimmers”- glimpses and glorious bursts of goodness and “God-ness” in and around us. Glimmers are the opposite of “triggers.” And our students have been the embodiment of glimmers this fall! We danced in their glimmers as they lit up the darkness at Glow Night - an evening of spooky and rowdy games, roasting marshmallows, ghost stories, and friendship, cast vision as members of our youth Dream Team who are creating Studio Youth Collective (a survivor-centered sacred space for young people in Morgan Hill to practice the brave art of coming alive together and changing the story of trauma in our world), and learned from our Sunday School students about how wild and powerful prayer can be. And we can’t wait to carry this spark into November and December, remembering that in the midst of all the everything, God is with us, every one of us is sacred, and together, we are an unstoppable force for love.

UPCOMING EVENTS

November Sunday School Series: *Eating as a Spiritual Art* - This month, we are learning that every meal can be prayer, gratitude, and justice in action. Through stories, creativity, games, and service, we’re discovering how eating reconnects us with God, one another, and the earth that nourishes us. As our country faces heartbreaking cuts to food assistance programs like SNAP, we’re helping our kids understand that God’s dream has always been a table where everyone is fed, wanted, and celebrated. When we eat with love and share what we have, we participate in that dream and turn every bite into an act of care for our neighbors and our planet. *“When we eat with love, we taste God’s dream.”*

December Young Generations Crafty Christmas Maker Space and Christmas Party - Come make cool Christmas presents for friends and family! Then stick around for a magically-fun Christmas party! Date and Time TBA.

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Glimmers and Upcoming Events (continued from page 6)

By Haley Feuerbacher, Minister of Young Generations

Let's Build Our Dream! Join the Dream Team - a planning team of youth and young adults who want to dream Studio Youth Collective to life together! Studio Youth Collective is a sacred, survivor-centered space where young people practice the brave art of coming alive together so that we can change the story of trauma for our world.

Contact Haley at feuerbacherh@gmail.com to get involved!



Christmas Gifts—Adopting Families

By the Mission Team



Once again this Christmas, MHUMC is adopting families from Community Solutions. We have 5 families this year to adopt. These families' Christmas wishes are on a board in the Fellowship Hall. Please take one or more tags and

bring back the wrapped gifts with the tag from the board attached, **no later than December 1**. Collection bins will be in the Fellowship Hall. Please do not wrap any gift cards that are requested but please do include the activation receipt with the gift card in an unsealed envelope.



Thank you very much for participating and for making a difference in so many lives.



Morgan Hill UMC will worship together on Christmas Eve at 5:30 pm. The service will be a festival of Lessons and Carols. The Lessons are readings from the Old and New Testaments that tell the story of the prophecy of the Messiah and the birth of the Jesus. The Carols are songs that show us the beauty of the season. In addition to

the hymns the congregation will sing, the choir will sing three special songs. The offering on Christmas Eve will be divided and half will be used for the meals we serve on Wednesday nights and half will be put in our endowment. Please give generously. The service will end with the lighting of our own candles as we sing Silent Night. Come and celebrate the Eve of the birth of our Savior.

Upcoming Community Events



Let's celebrate and give thanks together. Join us for an

Interfaith Thanksgiving Service

Gratitude Rooted In Faith

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 23, 2025. 3PM
THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS
7999 MILLER AVE
GILROY, CA. 95020

Bring canned food donations of Proteins Fruits and Veggies.

Impromptu choir practice at 2:00 pm
Light refreshments

Interfaith Community of South County Interfaith Clergy Alliance

Website - ICSCfaith.org



Morgan Hill Holiday Parade
SAT, 06 DEC, 2025
05:30 PM–08:00 PM
Downtown, Morgan Hill



Find more information and tickets at svct.org

Tickets are available for adult musical, Fun Home!

Tony Award winning musical opens November 7 at the MH Playhouse. 3 weekends only!

Bread for the World Offering of Letters Coming November 30

By Susan Armstrong, Mission Team

The Mission and Outreach Team invites you to join in an Offering of Letters through Bread for the World. Bread is a Christian advocacy organization urging our national legislators to do all they can to pursue a world without hunger.

At this time of cuts to federal programs, we will be writing to our national legislators in support of HR 1464, The Modern WIC Act. WIC stands for Women, Infants and Children and this program means food for families during this difficult time. Almost half of all infants born in the U.S. are born to families on WIC, which serves nearly 7 million women and small children each month.



Please plan to stay after worship on November 30 to write a letter to your US Representative, Zoe Lofgren. A sample letter and all the materials you need will be provided. Alternatively, you can take home information that day, and write your letter at home. It is imperative that we do all we can to help our neighbors in need. We hope you will join us on November 30 to advocate for this bill.

Learn more here: [Bread.org/OL](https://bread.org/OL)

Sharing the Bounty

By Nancy Domnauer, Mission Team



It's incredible that we have served over 1,000 meals with our Sharing the Bounty since it began in April. This program, in collaboration with Loaves and Fishes Family Kitchen of San Jose, serves free, hot, take-out meals on Wednesday evenings at Morgan Hill United Methodist Church.

Please take a moment to imagine the families, children and individuals in our community who receive these meals. This vital program continues to served those in our town. Autumn has arrived and with it the comfort of warm meals.

Many of you have volunteered with a 2 hour giving of your time on a Wednesday evening. We are grateful for your continued support of this ministry.



If you have not yet volunteered, we encourage you to do so. This is a good way to meet our neighbors and have a positive impact in the community. We serve meals via take-out format from 5:00 to 6:00 pm from our Fellowship Hall.

Each week we serve approximately 35-40 meals to people in our community. If you're available to volunteer on any Wednesday from 4:30 to 6:30 pm, please contact Nancy Domnauer at: bonjour2nancy@gmail.com or the church office at (669) 888-3800.

If you can't physically volunteer, but would like to make a financial donation, please send your gift to the church office or place in the offering plate on Sunday.

To learn more about Loaves and Fishes Family Kitchen, visit <https://www.loavesfishes.org/>

Finance Update

By Marilyn Pifer, Finance Team Co-Chair

Our Endowment Fund with the California-Nevada United Methodist Foundation has grown through gifts and investment income to reach over \$34,000. Thank you to every member of our church community that has donated over the past two years.

As we did last fall, the Endowment Committee has authorized making a portion of the income on the Endowment Principal available for projects to benefit the church or the community. Application forms are available here [MHUMC Endowment Fund – MHUMC](#) and are due to the church office by November 30. There will be up to a total of \$2,000 available.



We will soon be installing a plaque to celebrate and thank those who contribute any amount to the Endowment. I will be contacting all who have donated to make sure their names are inscribed as they wish, and that any who prefer to remain anonymous have that wish respected.

We are just starting to build this fund as a resource for the future. Gifts and bequests should not replace your tithes and pledges for the coming year, but if the Spirit moves you to contribute also to the church's long-term well-being, please make a gift or bequest at any time designated for the MHUMC Endowment.

Trustee Update

By Darcy Foster, Trustee

Wrapping up the year with all we have accomplished:

- Parsonage repairs to rent out.
- Cleanup youth rooms.
- Spruced up Carriage House.
- Spruced up Nursery.
- Regular landscape and sprinkler repair.
- Added AA groups.
- Replaced burned out bulbs.
- Refinished side door.
- Had junk hauled away.
- New Dishwasher.
- New Faucet.
- New furnace.
- Repaired vent in cottage.
- Repaired garden sprinklers.
- Floor in community room.
- Put up cameras.
- Repaired fence.
- Painted church and lead abatement.
- Replaced garden valves.
- Added new flowers.
- New refrigerator.
- Repaired and put up spire.



If you would like to contribute to preserving and repairing the church, you can help cover the cost of the work by giving to the Building fund at www.mhumc.com/giving/.

In Memory of Eileen Mary Woods

March 20, 1943—September 25, 2025

Eileen Marie Woods, 82, of Oceanside, California, formerly of Toledo, Ohio, passed away on September 25, 2025.

Born on March 20, 1943, in Toledo, Eileen built a life defined by compassion, curiosity and devotion to family. She dedicated her career to nursing, serving in nearly every area of the field with wisdom and care, from the emergency room to medical insurance companies. She earned her bachelor's degree in criminology from Bowling Green State University and briefly worked as a private investigator after moving to California, where she enjoyed living for more than 30 years.

She was a gifted gardener, a world traveler, a committed volunteer with senior citizens and a lifelong supporter of the arts. She was also a gracious hostess and talented cook, passing down family recipes that continue to be cherished. Eileen never knew a stranger and had a gift for connection, making friends and bringing people together wherever she went. She delighted in the ocean and spent many years enjoying daily walks on the beach. Her family was her greatest source of pride and joy, and she was a devoted wife, mother and Busia (Polish for grandmother).



Eileen spent her final years at Bayshire Carlsbad in the memory care unit, where she was lovingly cared for and visited by her family as she lived with Alzheimer's disease. Her family takes comfort knowing she is now whole and healed in heaven with God.

A Gift to Morgan Hill UMC

By Rev. Dr. Linda A. Holbrook, Pastor

Before I left on my amazing trip, I realized it had been some years since I had looked at my will. I decided it was time to review what I had written and to make some changes. I wanted to make sure that if something happened to me on this trip that the money I have in my IRA would go where I wanted it to go.



Every month I send money from my IRA to several charitable organizations. Those organizations are now named as beneficiaries for my IRA. One of the organizations that I support is this church. Since we started the endowment, several months during the year, I send money to be placed in the endowment. And now if something should happen to me, Morgan Hill UMC would receive a check to be put in the endowment.

During the stewardship campaign we talked about how our giving has an impact on our future. The endowment is something like an insurance policy that this church can remain a church.

One of the ways endowments in churches grow is by people remembering the church in their will or trust. Even a gift of \$50 or \$100 is beneficial. (If you know anything about compounded interest you know money left in savings or interest account and left alone grows a lot over time. The longer you can leave it, the better.)

I invite all of you to give now to help our endowment grow and also to think about your plans for a gift after you are gone.

Something New

By Rev. Dr. Linda A. Holbrook, Pastor

As we begin the new year, 2026, we are going to try something new. As you probably remember the first Sunday after the new year, we celebrate the visit of the wise men. They recognized that this baby was the Christ. The second Sunday we celebrate Jesus' baptism and we remember our own baptism. The next Sundays until Ash Wednesday we are doing reviews of what it means to be a disciple of Jesus.

This will require us to look at our own spirituality. One way to examine our spirituality is to pick a watchword for the year. A watchword is intended to help us focus on one way we want to notice what we are saying and doing. A watchword can be any word, but usually a watchword is a verb and/or linked to action.

Spirituality and watchwords are deeply connected through the spiritual discipline of "watching," which involves being spiritually vigilant, prayerful, and mindful of one's words and actions. This concept is often linked to biblical teachings about being prepared for spiritual challenges, and also emphasizes the power of words as spiritual containers.

Examples of watchwords are Hope, Change, Prayer, Aware, Joy, Love, or Kind. I picked my watchword for next year a few weeks ago. This year has felt like such a serious year for me that I picked the word laughter. I wanted to remind myself to lighten up. I wanted to remind myself that no matter how serious things are, laughter is always waiting in the wings to add another dimension to the situation.

I invite all of you to pick a watchword for next year. On the first Sunday, you will be invited to write your watchword down and bring it forward. We will list all the watchwords (without names) so we can see the multiple of different words picked.

Examples of watchwords are Hope, Change, Prayer, Aware, Joy, Love, or Kind

Upcoming Birthdays



November 2	Laura Melroy
November 3	Helen Davis
November 4	Charles Paratore
November 5	Owen Melroy
November 6	Susan Cole
November 10	Jackson Clayton
November 28	Megan Richardson



December 2	Nancy Domnauer
December 10	Margaret Hazen
December 23	Adrianna Saffell
December 24	Jacob Ringo
December 25	Mary Richardson

See all holidays and special days at nationaltoday.com/

You are welcome here!

As a Reconciling Congregation, we celebrate God's welcome to us and to all people, including any who are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender and their families. At Morgan Hill UMC, your friendship is valued and safeguarded. You are accepted for who you are. You have a home! *Reconciling Ministries Network* www.rmnetwork.org

