

# Grapevine

## *A Minister's Moment*

### *"Waiting Well"*

*Wait for the Lord; Be strong and let your heart take courage;  
wait for the Lord. Psalm 27:14*



It has been interesting looking at Facebook lately. As soon as Halloween was over, I began to see posts from friends who had already put their Christmas trees up and decorated. I'm not

sure if it was typical for them but it seems that people are decorating unusually early this year. A part of me, I must admit, was kind of disturbed by it. I am a wait-until-Thanksgiving-is-over kind of person. And so I've spent some time reflecting on why I am this way and others aren't. I'm not sure if I have any answers but I do have random thoughts. I suspect some of it comes from "oldest child syndrome". Are you familiar with that? Rule follower? Tradition follower? Don't deviate from the standard follower?

All that aside, part of my hesitation in decorating early for Christmas is I like Thanksgiving. It is a holiday that is not confined to one particular religion or people. I like the idea of people all over the US celebrating with their own traditional

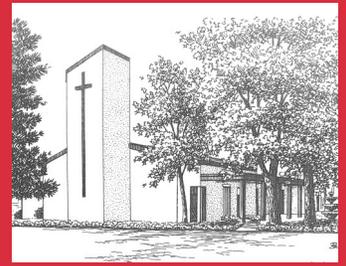
food that represents their culture. On a more simplistic level I have nice Thanksgiving decor that I want to enjoy in its own right. On a more practical level, I always get a real tree and as it's the day before Thanksgiving as I write this, if I got one now, it would be dead before Christmas. That being said, my Thanksgiving plans are a bit different this year so I may end up decorating for Christmas a bit early...for me.

Waiting is something we all have trouble with at some point or others in our lives. We are often more interested in the destination or the culmination of the journey. And yet, in the church calendar, as is with other denominations, we spend time in preparation. Just as parents wait nine months for the birth of their children, we wait along with Mary and Joseph during Advent. The word Advent means "the arrival of a notable person, thing, or event." Luckily it's only 4 weeks instead of 40 like a regular birth. Our Advent theme this year is called "Waiting Well." What does that mean? Let's find out together.

Pastor Claire



# GOING ON AROUND NORTHKIRK



## Christmas Events Coming Up

- Dec. 6, 4pm:** Arise Handbell Choir
- Dec. 13, 10:30am:** Caroling and Cookies
- Dec. 24, 4pm:** Christmas Eve Service

## Committee Nights

WE NEED YOU to come join us at committee night!!! Come out and check out our committees – see what’s going on, and join in. We need everyone’s help to make Northkirk a vibrant congregation. We meet the second Tuesday of the month, that’s December 9<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 in the sanctuary.

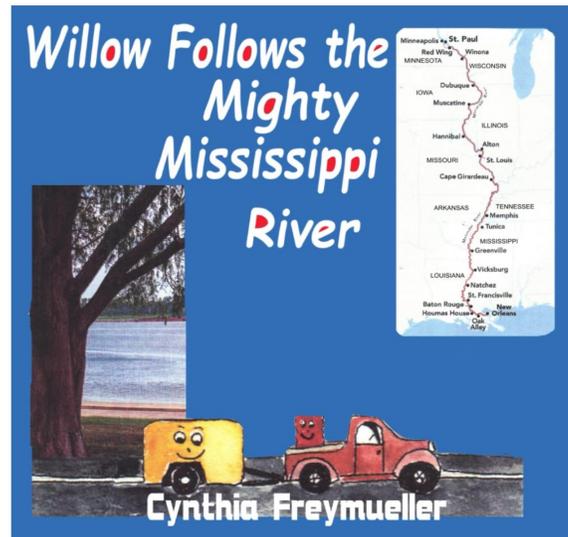
## Christmas Child Boxes

This year, Northkirk donated a total of 57 boxes to Operation Christmas Child. Thank you all for your contributions!



## Willow Follows the Mighty Mississippi River

Cynthia Freymueller, a member of Northkirk, has released her fourth book in the Willow the Pillow and Buddy the Utility Trailer book series, titled *Willow Follows the Mighty Mississippi River*. This is the perfect Christmas gift for the little ones. It is currently \$12.95 on Amazon.

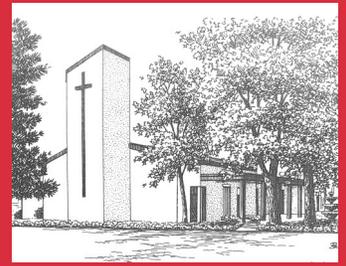


### Average Attendance for Online & In-Person Worship Services For November:

|                |              |
|----------------|--------------|
| Facebook live: | 3 viewers    |
| YouTube live:  | 3 viewers    |
| In-Person:     | 71 attendees |



# GOING ON AROUND NORTHKIRK



## Session Highlights

Session discussed the pros and cons of having a full-time pastor vs. a part-time pastor. A part-time pastor would be more affordable than a full-time pastor. However, the decision is to search for a **full-time pastor** so he/she will truly have time to address all of our pastoral and administrative needs. Session also discussed upcoming parking lot resurfacing and the development of a new church directory with photographs. Last but not least, session finished developing a 2026 budget for presentation to the congregation in January.

## Church Nominating Committee

For the next month or so, the Nominating Committee is focusing on finding nominees for the Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC). The PNC will create a profile for Northkirk to post on a pastor website (like a vacancy announcement), review profiles of prospective candidates, and eventually recommend a specific candidate for congregational approval.

After finding nominees for the PNC, the Nominating Committee will turn to the job of finding nominees for Deacon and Elder positions. Announcements will be made later about that process.

## Christmas Dinner

For those of you not travelling on Christmas (or even if you are), we are having a Christmas Dinner Potluck here at Northkirk at 3pm, Christmas Day, in Baird Hall. All are invited to join and you don't have to bring food. Turkey (or ham) will be provided. So, if you are free on Christmas Day, please feel free to come spend it with your church family. Please RSVP to Daniel Beauvais so we can plan the meal and we know that you're coming. Merry Christmas!

## Hanging of the Greens

We had a successful Hanging of the Greens and Potluck on November 29th. Volunteers filled the sanctuary with Christmas Spirit. Thank you all for helping us decorate the sanctuary for the Advent 2025 season.



Northkirk Presbyterian Church  
presents



THE ARISE JOY RINGERS & SINGERS

*Ring in the Joy  
of Christmas*

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6<sup>TH</sup> @ 4PM

9101 19<sup>th</sup> St., Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91701

Directed by E. Martene Craig

The ARISE Joy Ringers

bring a delightful repertoire of holiday music  
to usher in the Christmas season.

They feature a variety of special ringing  
techniques and other instruments.

# MOMCO OF NORTHKIRK

## “A MOM COMMUNITY”



Our MomCo group meets the first and third Wednesdays of each month September through May. Our meetings for November were productive and heartwarming as we counted our blessings. We are a very small group this year but the moms attending love the intimacy and close ties that allow us to carry each other's joys and burdens. MomCo headquarters philanthropy happens to be Operation Christmas Child so our group was able to add

boxes to those collected by Northkirk. Our first meeting of the month was spent collecting items for 10 boxes. The moms thoughtfully packed each box with carefully selected items and even had to get creative to place everything in as there was so much! They also spent time writing personal letters to include in each box. The group prayed over the boxes that they would richly bless the recipients.

At our following meeting, Pastor Claire joined us for breakfast and a Thanksgiving devotional. Motherhood is rewarding but hard and she reminded us to be thankful and count our blessings. After, each mom and mentor mom had a time of sharing what is on our hearts and in our lives. We had lots of laughs and tears. This meeting was also craft day. We were invited to bring our craft projects to work on them as we never have time at home. Ironically, we enjoyed our morning so much we ran out of time to get to our crafts! To be continued next month is what was decided.

Our group is small but the moms look forward to every meeting. We all leave feeling blessed and thankful. Thank you Northkirk for your support.

-Teri Smits



MOMCO



# HEALTHY LIVING

**FAITH**

**FELLOWSHIP**

**FITNESS**

**FOOD**

## Do You have a Sense of Purpose?

Source: Successful Aging, Helen Dennis, Southern California News Group,  
Section C, Sunday, November 23, 2025

A reader wrote in to Helen Dennis, a columnist on issues of aging and retirement, asking her how essential is it to have a sense of purpose in our lives as we age. Many studies on aging say people live longer and thrive if they have a purpose and reason for living. The reader felt she didn't have a strong sense of purpose and was wondering if this concept is overrated.

Helen writes we are often called to find our calling but 91% of people questioned say they feel pressured at some points in their lives to find purpose. As a result, something new has developed called purpose anxiety. It's the stress, fatigue, insecurity, and frustration that comes from trying to find one's purpose. Some people think of purpose with a capital P-something that has to be big. Dr. Jordan Grundy, author of "The Purpose Code" , says it's the little p's that can count such as hobbies, gardening, singing, volunteering.

So, is purpose important? The National Institutes of Health reports that folks with purpose are less likely to have heart attacks, strokes and dementia. They engage in exercise and healthy habits. They manage stress and better sleep. They have better cognitive function and overall well-being. And they live longer.

It is easy to find a sense of purpose here at Northkirk. Our music program can always use singers, bell ringers and musicians. Deacons can use help serving our church family and our community. Come to our monthly committee meetings to hear about all the options about where you can help. We have monthly work parties. And Northkirk is always open to new suggestions if you have an idea for something to fulfill a purpose for you and our church.

May you enjoy a life of joy, love, purpose and good health.

-Teri Smits



# HEALTHY LIVING

FAITH

FELLOWSHIP

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FOOD

## Keto Pumpkin Cheesecake



Photo & Recipe: [www.tasteofhome.com](http://www.tasteofhome.com)

### Ingredients

- 2 cups almond flour
- 1/2 cup butter, melted
- 3 tablespoons granulated stevia sugar
- 1-1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- FILLING:
- 2 packages (8 oz each) cream cheese, softened
- 1/2 cup granulated stevia sugar
- 1 can (15 oz) canned pumpkin
- 1-1/2 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream

### Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350°. In a large bowl, mix together almond flour, melted butter, sugar substitute, cinnamon and vanilla extract. Press mixture into the bottom of a 9-in. springform pan and about 1 inch up the sides. Bake until slightly puffed and browned, 18-20 minutes; Let completely cool.
2. In a large bowl, beat cream cheese at medium speed until fluffy. Beat in sugar substitute, canned pumpkin, pie spice, vanilla and salt until well combined.
3. In a separate large bowl, beat heavy cream on medium-high speed until stiff peaks form. Fold into pumpkin batter. Transfer filling into cooled pie crust; spread into an even layer. Cover; refrigerate at least 6 hours or overnight.
4. Loosen sides from pan with a knife. Remove rim from pan; serve.

### Nutrition Facts

1 slice: 390 calories, 35g fat (17g saturated fat), 81mg cholesterol, 236mg sodium, 21g carbohydrate (5g sugars, 3g fiber), 9g protein.

**Diabetic exchanges:** 1 starch

Makes 12 slices



# Treasurer's Report

Treasurer's Report as of October 31, 2025  
Emily Scholz, Church Treasurer

# DEACON'S CORNER

| Operational Budget            | October Budget | October Actual | Year to Date Budget | Year to Date Actual |
|-------------------------------|----------------|----------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Giving/Receipts               | 18,768.00      | 11,956.10      | 187,680.00          | 170,201.79          |
| Expenses                      | 22,215.60      | 27,111.52      | 222,264.00          | 211,722.29          |
| Net Operating Surplus/Deficit | -3,447.60      | -15,155.42     | -34,584.00          | -41,520.50          |

## Twelve Days of Christmas

(by: Gary B. Putnam)

Trying to find one's spiritual bearings amidst the commercial season and the flurry of social occasions before Christmas can be difficult. Some persons concede the time before December 25 and observe the 12 days of Christmas.

About the time the American Revolution was brewing, in England Roman Catholics were prohibited from openly practicing their faith. In order that children would be educated in the faith, special meanings were planted in a song they sang. It was a reminder of the great teaching of the Christian faith. As sort of a musical rosary, instead of beads, the verses highlighted church teachings to remind children of special prayers.

"On the first day of Christmas, my true love gave to me, a partridge in a pear tree." The mother partridge will feign injury to decoy predators or danger away from her young. Suffering on behalf of

those whom you love, the partridge is a symbol for Jesus, born on the first day of Christmas.

"On the second day of Christmas, my true love gave to me, two turtle doves, the Old and New Testaments.

"On the third day... three French hens." The great theme of Christian response is summarized in 1 Corinthians 13: faith, hope, and love.

"On the fourth day... four calling birds," the four gospels: Mark, Matthew, Luke, and John.

"Five... five golden rings." The Pentateuch, the first five books of the Old Testament attributed to Moses, i.e., Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.



# DEACON'S CORNER



## Twelve Days of Christmas (Continued)

“Six...six geese a-laying,” remember the six days of creation.

“Seven...seven swans a’swimming,” i.e., the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, listed in Romans 12:6. The gifts of the Spirit are prophecy, ministry, Teaching, exhortation or encouragement, generosity, diligence, and cheerfulness.

“Eight maids a’milking” reminds of the eight Beatitudes, the teaching of Jesus that began the Sermon on the Mount, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are...” (Matthew 5)

“Nine ladies dancing” represent the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22). These are the ways we can see God’s power in the lives of others. God’s presence is revealed through: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

“Ten lords a-leaping” are a reminder of the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20).

“Eleven pipers piping” symbolize the eleven faithful disciples.

And Twelve Drummers drumming” reveal the twelve points of belief in the Apostles’ Creed. This is the basic statement of faith of the Christian faith which begins, “I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord...”





YOU ARE INVITED TO

# Christmas

EVE SERVICE

DECEMBER

24

AT 4:00 PM

NORTHKIRK PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH  
9101 19TH ST.,  
RANCHO CUCAMONGA, CA 91701

*Let's celebrate together!*



# DECEMBER EVENT CALENDAR

| SUNDAY  | MONDAY  | TUESDAY  | WEDNESDAY   | THURSDAY   | FRIDAY                       | SATURDAY   |
|---|---|--|---|--|------------------------------|--|
| 30<br>Worship Service<br>9:30 am<br><br>Advent Begins | 1   | 2<br>Prayer Part. 9 am   | 3<br>Bible Study<br>(Coco's) 7:30 am<br><br>MomCo 9 am              | 4  | 5<br>Youth Group<br>7:30 pm  | 6<br>Campus Work<br>Day 8 am<br><br>Arise Handbells<br>4pm |
| 7<br>Worship Service<br>9:30 am                       | 8   | 9<br>Prayer Part. 9 am<br><br>Committee<br>Night 6:30 pm   | 10<br>Bible Study<br>(Pastor's Office)<br>7:30 am                   | 11<br>Caring Crafters<br>10 am<br>(Emily's Home)<br><br>Handbells 5:30 pm<br>Choir 6:30 pm<br>Praise Band<br>7:30 pm | 12<br>Youth Group<br>7:30 pm | 13<br>Caroling and<br>Cookies<br>10:30 am                  |
| 14<br>Communion<br>Worship Service<br>9:30 am         | 15<br>NK Parking Lot<br>Repairs<br><br>NK Office Closed | 16<br>Prayer Part. 9 am<br><br>NK Parking Lot<br>Repairs<br><br>NK Office Closed<br><br>Deacons Mtg.<br>6:15 pm<br><br>Session Mtg.<br>7:00 pm | 17<br>Bible Study<br>(Pastor's Office)<br>7:30 am<br><br>MomCo 9 am | 18<br>Handbells 5:30 pm<br>Choir 6:30 pm<br>Praise Band<br>7:30 pm   | 19<br>Youth Group<br>7:30 pm | 20   |
| 21<br>Worship Service<br>9:30 am                      | 22  | 23<br>Prayer Part. 9 am  | 24<br>Christmas Eve<br>Service 4:00 pm                              | 25<br>NK Office Closed<br><br><i>Merry<br/>Christmas</i>   | 26<br>Youth Group<br>7:30 pm | 27   |
| 28<br>Worship Service<br>9:30 am                      | 29  | 30<br>Prayer Part. 9 am  | 31  | 1<br>NK Office Closed<br><br><b>2026</b>   | 2<br>Youth Group<br>7:30 pm  | 3  |

Prayer Partners Tuesday, 9 am, Mary Lee's home. Call Mary Lee with prayer requests or to be part of the group.

Bible Study at 7:30 am Pastor's Office, Contact Terry Switzer. First Wednesday of the month meets at CoCo's on Baseline and Haven.

3D Study - Sunday, 11 am contact Claire Schlegel 909-240-8049 \*On Break\*

*Happy Birthday!*

|                 |       |
|-----------------|-------|
| James Beagle    | 12/02 |
| Kathy McElvany  | 12/06 |
| Megan McQuerrey | 12/06 |
| Claire Schlegel | 12/07 |
| Harold Willome  | 12/07 |
| Sharon Hayden   | 12/11 |
| Yoko Sweede     | 12/14 |
| David Van Curen | 12/29 |
| Cathy Moody     | 12/30 |

*Happy Anniversary!*

Ronn & Thelma Campbell 12/29



During the month of **December** Northkirk is collecting **Nonperishable Goods** for Inland Valley Hope Partners and to The Home of Neighborly Service in San Bernardino.

Hope Partners has a warehouse where low-income and homeless people of the Inland Valley can receive nonperishable food items.

**You can also drop off grocery gift cards in the Northkirk office.**

## Northkirk Presbyterian Church

9101 19th Street  
 Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91701  
 (909)989-4919  
 Www.northkirk.org  
 northkirkoffice@northkirk.org

### Transitional Pastor

Rev. Claire Schlegel  
 cschlegel@northkirk.org

### Office Manager & Grapevine Editor Custodian

Abby Thomas  
 northkirkoffice@northkirk.org  
 Pilar Yarur

*“Living out God’s Love as we gather together and reach out.”*

# December Prayer Calendar

|                            |                              |                               |                              |                               |                          |                               |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 30<br>Wisdom               | 1<br>Sue Sharra              | 2<br>Simmons Family           | 3<br>Malcolm & Nancy Slack   | 4<br>Liza Slaughter           | 5<br>Teri Smits          | 6<br>Spread of the Gospel     |
| 7<br>God’s Glory           | 8<br>Marty & Terri Sortillon | 9<br>Tom & Jodie Stahl        | 10<br>Corky Stephens         | 11<br>Laura & Phil Stephenson | 12<br>Stewart Family     | 13<br>Hope & Courage          |
| 14<br>Peace & Comfort      | 15<br>Yoko & David Sweede    | 16<br>Terry & Marilyn Switzer | 17<br>Josephine & Paul Syiem | 18<br>Holly Teixeira          | 19<br>Lovie Thomas       | 20<br>Love & Compassion       |
| 21<br>Guidance & Direction | 22<br>Sheri Tracy            | 23<br>David Van Curen         | 24<br>Janice & Sarah Vance   | 25<br>Joan Vanecek            | 26<br>Gary & Kim Wallace | 27<br>Growth & Transformation |
| 28<br>Discipleship         | 29<br>Wallin Family          | 30<br>Jun Wang                | 31<br>Harold Willome         | 1<br>Beverly Wiltse           | 2<br>Wong Family         | 3<br>Holiness & Protection    |

**Deacon of the Month:**  
 Marilyn Switzer