



Published monthly

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The Caller

First Christian Church Chico

(Disciples of Christ)

Agree to Differ • Resolve to Love • Unite to Serve



10:00 a.m. Sunday Worship Service in Sanctuary and Online

Visit fccchico.com for details

First Christian Church Chico • 295 E. Washington Ave Chico CA 95926 • 530-343-3727 • chicodisciples@gmail.com



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ChicoFCC

First Christian Church

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Mission Statement: Chico First Christian Church is an inclusive, loving community of believers in Jesus Christ who wish to explore and follow his teachings. We strive to provide opportunities to freely develop our faith through worship, Christian education, fellowship, and pastoral care. The Holy Spirit guides us in our personal and congregational outreach and mission, where we proclaim the good news and serve in Christ's name. We work for peace as embodied in the person of Jesus Christ. We help ourselves and others fulfill God's calling by discovering wholeness in our daily lives and by putting faith into action.

Staff:

- Pastor Jesse Kearns, pastorkearns@gmail.com
- Administrative Assistant: Briony Gniechwitz, chicodisciples@gmail.com
- Custodian: Connor Kearns
- Custodian: Sherrie Wells
- Custodian: Scott Hall
- Bookkeeper: Marie Grandeen

2025 Elected Church Leadership:

- **Moderator:** Maxwell Erwin
- **Vice-Moderator:** Gary Cantwell
- **Board Secretary:** Carolyn Driscoll
- **Church Treasurer:** Nancy Thompson
- **Congregational Life Ministry Leader:** Peggy Davidson
- **Outreach Ministry Leader:** Georgia Nelson
- **Administrative Ministry Leader:** Georgeanne Bennett
- **At Large Board Member:** Bill Peterson

- **Financial Secretary:** Carolyn Driscoll
- **Assistant Financial Secretary:** Georgeanne Bennett
- **Elders:** Gary Cantwell, Dave Hoppe, Nancy Morgans-Ferguson, Barbara Poetker, Joe Rogers, Mary Kearns, Georgia Nelson, Kevin Zeitler
- **Personnel:** Rich Campbell, Kathy Moran, Amber McGill
- **Endowment Trustees:** Kathy Moran, Rich Campbell, Carolyn Hicks, Nancy Thompson, Marie Grandeen, Blaine Roberts
- **Deacons (not elected):** Peggy Davidson, Carolyn Driscoll, Barbara Poetker, Georgeanne Bennett

Small Group Opportunities

- **Upbeats Music Jam** meets at 10:00 a.m. on Thursdays. It is open to musicians of all levels, and all are welcome.
- **DWM (Disciple Women's Ministry)** is a service group open to all women of the church and meets on the third Tuesday of each month from 2:00-4:00 p.m., September through May. This circle serves the church and its congregation by reaching out to homebound members at Christmas and Easter and wherever needed. The primary fundraiser is the annual bazaar (1st Saturday in November). Funds from the bazaar cover church kitchen supply expenses, and a part of the proceeds go to various outreach ministries.

- **Koinonia Krafters** meets on the second Tuesday of each month from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. in the Fireside Room. Participants work on a crafting project of their choice and spend time in fellowship.
- **Healing Circle** meets each month on the fourth Friday from 1:00 pm.-3:00 p.m. in the Bethany Room. This circle is open to all members of the church. Participants may be journeying through a chronic illness, be a caregiver, or may simply be going through a stressful period in their lives. Experiences and feelings shared in the meetings are confidential and not shared outside the group.
- **Women's Bunco Group** meets at 7:00 p.m. on the fourth Friday of each month.
- **Weekly Evening Bible Study** is offered at 6:30 p.m. on Zoom and in person in Room 6. Several 8 to 10-week sessions are offered throughout the year.
- **Sacred Grounds** is a faith-forming discussion group that meets on Sundays at 8:30 a.m.
- We offer **Sunday School** for children in 4th grade and younger. The class meets during the weekly 10:00 a.m. service.
- For more information and contact information, please contact the church office at **530-343-3727** or chicodisciples@gmail.com

Congregational Life Ministry



**"The steadfast
love of the Lord
never ceases, his
mercies never
come to an end;
they are new
every morning;
great is your
faithfulness." --
Lamentations 3:22
NRSVUE**

The Gospel of Luke begins the story of Jesus' birth with, "In the time of King Herod." King Herod the Great ruled from 37 BCE to 4 CE. Although Judea was occupied by Rome during this time, one of Augustus Caesar's most effective tools for maintaining control of a region was allowing local rulers to serve as client kings—so long as it was clear that Rome remained in charge.

Most scholars agree that Luke's gospel was written sometime between 75 and 100 CE, roughly 80 years after Herod's death and about 40 years after Jesus was crucified by the combined efforts of Roman and Jewish rulers. The equivalent of "In the time of King Herod and Caesar Augustus" for us might be, "In the time of Presidents Roosevelt and Truman." Although some in our congregation were alive during that time, most were children. For those of us born after 1945, that period belongs

to the generation of our parents and grandparents. We have films and newsreels from that era, but to truly understand what life was like, we rely on the stories of those who lived it.

What did "in the time of King Herod" mean to Luke's readers? For them, it evoked both peace and prosperity, and also unrest and turmoil. Herod was a savvy politician who skillfully navigated between the Jewish

people and their Roman occupiers. His greatest accomplishment was the massive renovation of the Jewish Temple—a project that required enormous material and human resources. Yet he was also notoriously cruel, executing several members of his own family, including his wife Mariamne, her mother Alexandra, and three of his sons. Augustus Caesar famously remarked, "It is better to be Herod's pig than his son." The people lived in fear of what Herod might do on a whim.

It was in this setting—during what the Apostle Paul later called "the fullness of time"—that Jesus came into the world to usher in God's reign. The world he entered was filled with uncertainty, instability, oppression, and confusion. And yet, throughout the stories of Christ's birth, the whispers of angels deliver a surprising message: "Do not fear." How is it possible to be fearless in a fearful world? When Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, and the magi are each called into God's redemptive story, they do not deny their fears—they move through them. They ask questions, hold fast to courage, trust in good news, and say, "Here I am, Lord." When we find ourselves in fearful times, can we do the same? Can we acknowledge our fears while also insisting on hope?

Congregational Life Ministry

Sacred Grounds, Adult Faith Formation Class

Day: Sundays, Time: 8:30 a.m.

Where: Room 6 and on Zoom

Live Streaming Sunday Worship Service

- Zoom (Open the Zoom app. If you need to download it, go to zoom.us.)
 - Meeting ID: 3976292568.
 - Password: 5303433727
- Facebook Live: <https://www.facebook.com/fccchico/>

Meeting Dates

Tuesday, December 2nd

7:00 p.m.—Church Board Hybrid Meeting, Chapel, and on Zoom

Tuesday, December 16th

7:00 p.m.—Elders' Hybrid Meeting, Chapel and on Zoom

Pastor Jesse's Schedule

Office Hours: Monday-Thursday
8:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.



*All texts and sermons are
subject to change as the
Spirit leads*

The Church Office will be closed

**Wednesday, December 24th, through
Friday, January 2nd**

Sermons are available on the website: fccchico.com, [YouTube FCCChico](https://www.youtube.com/FCCChico), and by email by request (contact the church office, chicodisciples@gmail.com)

Sunday from the Lectionary

December 7th

Isaiah 11:1-10
Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19
Romans 15:4-13
Matthew 3:1-12
***Matthew 11:1-11**

**Second Sunday of
Advent**
"God Is at Work"

December 14th

Isaiah 35:1-10
Psalm 146:5-10 or Luke
1:46-55
James 5:7-10
Matthew 11:2-11
***Luke 1:26-39**

Third Sunday of Advent
**Christmas Special
Offering**
***"We Are Called
Forward"***

December 21st

Isaiah 7:10-16
Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19
Romans 1:1-7
***Matthew 1:18-25**

"Give Me Your Hand"
Fourth Sunday in Advent
Christmas Special Offering

December 28th

Isaiah 63:7-9
Psalm 148
Hebrews 2:10-18
***Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23**
First Sunday after Advent
"Free the Fire"



December				
	7	14	21	28
Elder	Georgia Nelson	Kevin Zeitler	Mary Kearns	Joe Rogers
Musician	Josh Hegg	Nancy Thompson	Josh Hegg	Nancy Thompson
Worship Leader	Lori Terrell-Adrian	Georgia Nelson	Dave Hoppe	Georgeanne Bennett
Deacon	Barbara Poetker	Peggy Davidson	Georgeanne Bennett	Carolyn Driscoll

Congregational Life Ministry

(Pastor Jesse's article continued from page 3)

This year's Advent theme is "*What Do You Fear: Insisting on Hope.*" This series looks closely at the fear and terror looming in the background of the time of King Herod and invites us to consider the fears we hold today. Fear can divide and paralyze us—or even be used as a tool to keep us quiet. But what if we formed a different relationship with fear? Can we acknowledge it without letting it rule us? Might we transform our fears into love and action? What if naming our fears helps us see more clearly how God is breaking in and where God is at work? This series gently invites us to identify where fear is present—both in the Advent story and in our lives—while also finding our way toward hope, with the angels' words still ringing in our ears: *Do not be afraid.*

We'll be holding our annual Candlelight Christmas Eve service with First Baptist Church in our sanctuary on December 24th. We hope you'll join us as Pastor Gail and I prepare something inspiring and meaningful for the season. As we journey through Advent together, may we choose hope—not as wishful thinking, but as a brave and steady response to fear. Come, worship with us each Sunday, light the candles of hope, peace, joy, and love, and join in our mission to bring light into the shadows of our community. Together, we can embody the good news that still breaks into fearful times: "*Do not be afraid, for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all people.*"

See you in church,



Congregational Life Ministries

The Annual Bazaar on November 1st was a huge success. Raffle prizes were won by the following:

1. Fall Basket was won by Lorraine Cole
2. Vintage quilt made by Corky LeTellier was won by Ann Nelson
3. Bliss Nail Salon gift certificate was won by Kelly S.
4. Sohnrey's box of nuts was won by Jesse Kearns
5. Massage by Sandra Severson was won by Kevin Zeitler
6. Crane wall hanging made by Judy Brillhart was won by Molly Meade
7. Christmas ornaments carved by Kay Brown were won by Judy Brillhart

We welcome our newest member Jean McKay, who came forward on October 12th.

The Guess Who's Coming to Brunch event was held on November 15th. There were 3 hosts and 22 guests. The hosts were Nancy Thompson, Blaine and Edy Roberts and the other was Peggy Davidson. However, due to a sudden health situation, Peggy's had to be canceled--hoping to reschedule that one at a future date.

Connor Story was baptized on November 23rd.

The sanctuary was decorated for Advent the afternoon of November 23. November 30 is the beginning of Advent. The Elders provided food for fellowship and the children had a candy cane hunt and cookie decorating at that time.

Congregational Life Ministry

December Birthdays

12/07	Kathy Moran
12/09	Rich Mounkes
12/11	Alicia Stolp
12/16	Marie Henry
12/17	Jan Campbell
12/24	Kyle Terrell
12/24	Megan Sylvester
12/25	Eric Campbell
12/31	Bill Gebhardt



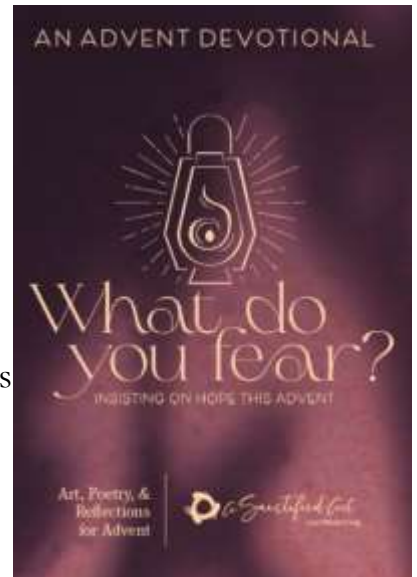
Looking Ahead

- **November 30th— First Sunday in Advent.** Hanging of the Greens; Candy cane hunt and cookie decorating for children during a Special Fellowship time hosted by the Elders.
- December 7th—Second Sunday in Advent
- December 14th—Third Sunday in Advent
- December 21st—Fourth Sunday in Advent; Christmas Sunday
- December 24th—7 pm Joint Candlelight Service with First Baptist Church at First Christian Church
- January 11th – Joint First Baptist/First Christian Epiphany worship and potluck at 10:30 a.m. at Chico First Baptist Church.

Advent Devotional

Advent Devotionals! Limited paper copies are now in the Sanctuary!

We will be using Sanctified Art's Advent Devotional "What do you fear? Insisting on hope this advent." This devotional contains art, poems, hymns, commentary, and reflection prompts which have art, poetry, and reflections for Advent. If you would like one and there aren't any left, please let the church office know (<mailto:chicodisciples@gmail.com> or 530-343-3727) and I'll print one just for you!



Our friends at A Sanctified Art have provided a special e-reader version of this year's Advent devotional, which you can access on your computer and mobile devices: online.flippingbook.com/view/361593675/ In order to protect their work, please refrain from sharing this link or posting it on social media.



Christmas Flowers

Once again, we will be decorating the Sanctuary and chapel with poinsettias and holiday flowers. Envelopes are in the pew racks. Due to increased prices, **the cost is \$14 this year. The last day to order is December 14th.**

Congregational Life Ministries & Administrative Ministry



2025 Annual Bazaar

A great big Thank You to everyone who helped to make this year's Bazaar such a success.

Here is a breakdown of the booths:

- Sewing Fantasy \$2,332.50
- Country Kitchen \$1,057.00
- Farmer's Market \$780.00
- Vintage Collectibles \$610.00
- Pie Slices \$208.00
- Opportunity Drawing \$502.00

Total Sales: \$5,490.50

Total Donations: \$307.15

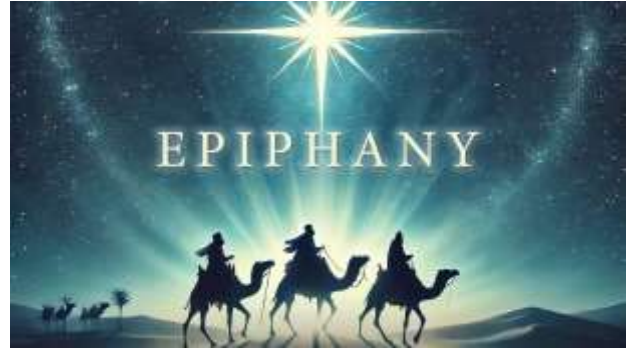
Total Receipts: \$5,797.65*

We couldn't have done it without each of you!

—Judy Brillhart and Barbara Poetker

*Total receipts from the Bazaar continue to grow as generous donations and purchases continue to come in.

Epiphany



We will be celebrating Epiphany on January 11th at Chico First Baptist, 850 Palmetto Ave, Chico. Worship starts at 10:30 a.m., followed by a potluck.

Administrative Ministries



Annual Report

It's getting to be that time of year again. All Annual Reports are due January 15th. Who needs to turn in a report? The Ministry Circle Coordinators, Moderator, Vice-Moderator, and Treasurer. Please turn in your one-page summary report on paper or by email (chicodisciples@gmail.com) to the church office. Call Briony at 343-3727 if you have any questions. Don't forget to turn in your keys if appropriate (if you are no longer a church leader, for example)!



Administrative Ministry & Outreach Ministry

Annual Congregational Business Meeting



Church Leaders for 2026!

Our Annual Business Meeting took place on Sunday, November 16th. The congregation voted to approve the slate of leaders presented by Board Chair Max Erwin. A total of 38 ballots were cast, with 35 voting yes to all. Six ballots were cast electronically, and 32 in person.

- **Moderator**-Maxwell Erwin
- **Vice-Moderator**-Cynthia Cantwell
- **Secretary**-Carolyn Driscoll
- **Treasurer**-Nancy Thompson
- **Congregational Life Ministry Leader**-Peggy Davidson
- **Outreach Ministry Leader**-Georgia Nelson
- **Administrative Ministry Leader**-Georgeanne Bennett
- **Member At Large**-Leslie Moore
- **Financial Secretary**-Georgeanne Bennett
- **Assistant Financial Secretary**-Carolyn Driscoll
- **Personnel Committee**- (3-year term, ending 12/31/28)-Lori Terrell-Adrian
- **Endowment Trustees** (3-year term, ending 12/31/28)-Carolyn Hicks
- **Elders** (2-year term, ending 12/31/27)-Barbara Poetker, Nancy Morgans-Ferguson, Jean McKay, Georgeanne Bennett, Bill Peterson

Outreach Ministries

Merry Christmas to all from Missions and Outreach!



Giving Tree!

The First Christian Church, DWM (Disciple Women's Ministries) is sponsoring the Giving Tree to support families in our community that need some extra help during the holidays. The Giving Tree project will provide gifts for children at local schools, support Lisa Currier and other families in our community with holiday meals and gifts. These gifts will help to let them know the joy that the season brings.



Thank you for your generosity!

—Carolyn Driscoll and Georgia Nelson

Uplift Boutique—A Year in Review

In February 2025, Jenny Hildenbrand came to First Christian Church and gave a presentation on The Forgotten Initiative (helping support the foster care community and experience Jesus together). During her presentation, she expressed her dream to open a permanent resource store to provide clothing for foster care children. After working with Pastor Jesse and members of First Christian Church, a proposal was made to the church board to house the store in Room 10. The board approved the proposal, and in April of 2025, work began on preparing the resource store.

With the support of Pastor Jesse, members of First Christian Church, and other community churches, Room 10 was cleaned out, repaired, painted, and organized to become the store's location. Donated and purchased clothing racks, along with clothing donations, helped set up the space. In June 2025, the store opened to the foster care community in Butte County. The boutique operates two days a week and is staffed by volunteers from First Christian Church and other community members. Besides physical donations, monetary contributions assist in providing clothing, coats, quilts, blankets, sheets, towels, shoes, cleaning supplies, stuffed animals, and books.

This past August, the boutique held a Back to School Day, offering school clothes, backpacks, and school supplies. In September and October, cookies were taken to Butte County Social Workers in

appreciation for all the work they do for foster care children and their families. In December, there will be two Christmas parties at First Christian Church for foster care families, sponsored by Butte County and ILP.

The Uplift Boutique is still working on getting more help to foster care, kinship, and reunified families in our community. We continue to work with Butte County Social Services and other family services to get the word out about the boutique.

This resource boutique could never have opened without the support of First Christian Church, Chico First Baptist Church, Bidwell Presbyterian Church, other faith churches, and community support. Along with monetary donations from the community, there have been several donations from family members in other states.

The Uplift Boutique will continue with several new ideas about what else can be done to reach out to foster families in our community. This mission brings faith, hope, and love to Butte County families in need.

--The Uplift Boutique Team and The Forgotten Initiative

Christmas Special Offering

Our gifts support the work of regional ministries this Christmas. Your regional ministry works to:

- Connect congregations to each other
- Foster faith development

Outreach Ministry

- Gather Disciples in camps, conferences, and assemblies
- Nurture the development of a new generation of pastors
- Assist churches in calling new ministers
- Interpret the global mission of the Church
- Represent the Church in ecumenical gatherings
- Counsel and pray with those who are troubled of spirit
- Lead the Church to address racism
- Inspire leaders to experiment and create
- Witness to the power of God to make things new

The Christmas Special Day offering supports all of these and many other ministries of our regions.

FCC Chico
Donation QR
Code:



Special Offering Totals

- **Week of Compassion** (supports the alleviation of the suffering of others through disaster response, humanitarian aid, sustainable development, and the promotion of mission opportunities) \$1,661
- **Easter Special Offering** (supports general ministries) \$875
- **Pentecost Special Offering** (supports new church ministries) \$400
- **Reconciliation Special Offering** (supports the Church's effort to become a pro-reconciling and anti-racist church advancing the Church's identity as "a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world": \$150

Giving

Your Support Matters: Your support through giving is crucial for sustaining the ministry and outreach efforts of our church. We are grateful for your generosity and commitment to First Christian Church. You can donate either online at fccchico.com or by mail. You don't need any special envelopes. If you want to designate your funds for a Special Offering, Pastor's Discretionary Fund, or anything else, just put that on the memo line of your check.

Thank you for supporting the church in time, talents, and tithes!

Monthly *The Caller* deadline:
15th of the month

Sunday Bulletin deadline:
Wednesdays, 10 a.m.

Weekly *The Callerito* deadline:
Thursdays, 10 a.m.

To be included in any mailing, contact the church office at 530-343-3727, or chicodisciples@gmail.com.
Donations of \$13/yr. appreciated but not necessary.

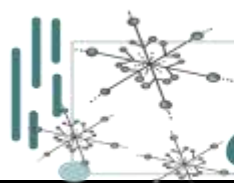
- ♦ **Prayer Chain:** Be sure to have permission to share names and any specifics with the prayer chain.
- ♦ **Sermons:** Have last Sunday's sermon and YouTube video emailed to you.
- ♦ ***The Caller*:** Monthly newsletter, available and by email and/or mail by request
- ♦ ***The Callerito*:** Weekly (mostly) email. This is also the list we use for the bulletin and meeting reminders.

Christmas, Puzzle 1

WORD LIST






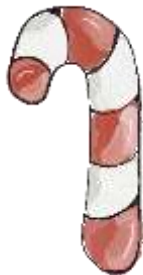




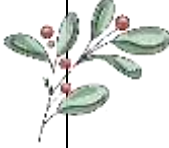

afraid	home	see
angel	Immanuel	shepherd
appeared	in	shepherds
be	inn	sign
Bethlehem	Judea	swaddling
betrothed	kept	us
boon	king	worship
child	kingdom	
consider	let	
day	Lord	
disgrace	manger	
divorce	men	
dream	name	
end	name	
exile	Nazareth	
expecting	night	
favor	no	
Galilee	not	
glorifying	people	
God	pledged	
gone	pondered	
heavenly	righteous	
his	said	
Holy	save	

g l h i
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t p e k g n i g u s
j h m
n o t



December



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 	2 10:45 am Music Practice, 4 7 pm Church Board Meeting, Chapel, Zoom	3 10 am-Uplift Boutique, 10 6 pm BSA Troop 2, Koinonia Hall (Khall), Fireside (FS)	4 8:30 am Worship Team Breakfast, Cozy Diner 5:30 am BSA Pack 2, Khall, FS	5 	6 8 am Church Workday 10 am Uplift Boutique, 10 5 pm Chico Dance Group, Khall, FS
7 10 am Worship, Sanctuary, Zoom/FB 1 pm Agua Viva, Sanctuary 	8	9 9:30 am Koinonia Krafters, FS 10:45 am Music Practice, 4	10 10 am-Uplift Boutique, 10 11:30 am Chico Area Interfaith Council, FS 6 pm BSA Troop 2, Khall, FS	11 8:30 am Worship Team Breakfast, Cozy Diner 5:30 am BSA Pack 2, Khall, FS 	12	13 10 am Uplift Boutique, 10 Evening-Ann Nelson Koinonia Hall and Fireside Use
14 10 am Worship, Sanctuary, Zoom/FB 1 pm Agua Viva, Sanctuary	15 <i>The Caller Deadline</i> 	16 10:45 am Music Practice, 4 2 pm Disciple Women's Ministry, Bethany 3 pm Butte Co Children Services Winter Wonderland, Khall 7 pm Elders, Zoom, Chapel	17 10 am Uplift Boutique, 10 6 pm BSA Troop 2, Khall, FS 	18 8:30 am Worship Team Breakfast, Cozy Diner 5:30 am BSA Pack 2, Khall, FS	19 3:30 IPL/The Forgotten Initiative Event, FS 	20 10 am Uplift Boutique, 10
21 10 am Worship, Sanctuary, Zoom/FB 1 pm Agua Viva, Sanctuary Christmas Sunday	22 	23 10:45 am Music Practice, 4	24 10 am-Uplift Boutique, 10 6 pm BSA Troop 2, Khall, FS 7 pm Joint Candlelight Service with CFBC, Sanctuary Church Office Closed	25  CHRISTMAS DAY Church Office Closed	26 1 pm Healing Circle, Bethany Church Office Closed 	27 10 am Uplift Boutique, 10
28 10 am Worship, Sanctuary, Zoom/FB 1 pm Agua Viva, Sanctuary	29  Church Office Closed	30 10:45 am Music Practice, 4 Church Office Closed	31 10 am-Uplift Boutique, 10 6 pm BSA Troop 2, Khall, FS NVIG New Year's Eve Party, Khall, FS Church Office Closed	