

# Grapevine

## *From the Pastor's Desk*

*"I'm sure about this: the one who started a good work in you will stay with you to complete the job..."*

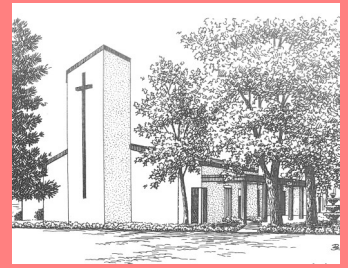
*Philippians 6:1*

It is hard to believe it has been three months since I began this call to be with you as your Bridge Pastor. It has been a very positive experience for me, as I hope it has been for all of you. I began my time here talking about grief, loss, change and uncertainty, and how each of those things can cause anxiousness, conflict, and sometimes fear for the future. What I have discovered about Northkirk Pres is that you are a committed, giving congregation that loves your church and the people in it. You have an amazing Board of Deacons that are dedicated to caring for the congregation and the community. Your Elders love this church and use their gifts wisely and seek to use its resources to further the Kingdom of God. That is something to be thankful for!

Of course, as you move forward, assessing where things could and should improve is also part of the interim time between Pastors along with looking at the past history of the church and where some healing may still need to happen. The Mission Assessment Team will begin this process by conducting a survey to get your opinions on many different ministries and aspects of life here at Northkirk. They will then be leading small group discussions regarding not only the results of the survey but going deeper in conversation so that you may more fully share your thoughts. All of this will help cast a vision for the future as you discern who you want to be and who you might call as a new Pastor to help bring that vision to fruition. May God continue to bless you on this journey.

Peace,  
Pastor Claire  
See you in March!

# GOING ON AROUND NORTHKIRK



## Welcome (Back) Pastor Claire

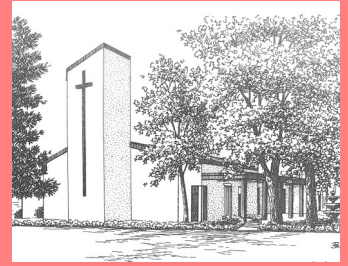
Pastor Claire's original contract with Northkirk was for November 1st to February 2nd. Pastor has graciously agreed to another (about) 3-month term running up to her European River Cruise in May. Her next term will start February 24 and will continue to May 11. Pastor requested a three week break between contracts in order to take care of personal business. We are very fortunate to have Pastor Claire. Currently, about half the churches in our presbytery are missing their Pastor and interims are in very high demand. Thank you, Pastor Claire, for the wonderful ministry you have performed at Northkirk.



## Nursery Volunteers Needed

Do you enjoy taking care of children? Northkirk needs extra Sunday School teachers due to a new state law that requires a minimum of two teachers per room. Please see Nona Cabral for more information. Thanks!

# GOING ON AROUND NORTHKIRK



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

Sound familiar? That’s Northkirk’s mission statement. It’s been our mission statement for many years, but we seemed to have lost focus on it. Please take a moment and think about it. We Gather. We Reach out. And we do this as we Live out God’s Love. Do we do this in the life of Northkirk? Are there things we can do better to make this true? Do you do this in your personal life? Let’s put a renewed effort into achieving OUR mission.

## Per Capita???



This year’s Per Capita is \$44 per member. What’s Per Capita, anyway? The Presbyterian church is created with different governing levels. Immediately above our local church is the Riverside Presbytery which is compiled of approximately 30 local Presbyterian churches in the Inland Empire. Above the Riverside Presbytery is the Synod of Southern California, which is made up of a half-dozen or so presbyteries. Above that is General Assembly, which meets every other year at a conference. Each group helps determine policies and actions to help the local churches. They also administer assistance such as the **Presbyterian Disaster Assistance** to help those in need. They will also help us in finding a **new pastor and/or an interim pastor** when needed (like, now!). These “higher bodies” are funded thru our Per Capita. We are requested to give \$44 per member of our church, so our per capita amount this year is \$3,476. If you wish to donate towards our Per Capita due amount, just mark it on your check or envelope. Otherwise, we pull the funds from our “general” funds.

Thank You!





**JOIN US SATURDAY,  
MARCH 29TH FROM 9-2PM**

# **DONATE BLOOD AT NORTHKIRK TO SAVE LIVES!**

## **WHY DONATE BLOOD?**

- **SAVE LIVES: A SINGLE DONATION CAN SAVE UP TO THREE LIVES.**
- **HEALTH BENEFITS: DONATING BLOOD CAN IMPROVE YOUR OVERALL HEALTH.**
- **FEEL GOOD: EXPERIENCE THE FULFILLMENT OF HELPING OTHERS IN NEED.**



WE WILL FUNDRAISE \$10 PER DONATED UNIT WHICH WILL GO TOWARDS OUR EGG HUNT EVENT IN APRIL! LIFESTREAM WILL SCREEN ALL DONORS TO DETERMINE ELIGIBILITY. THERE IS NO AGE MAXIMUM, BUT YOU MUST BE AT LEAST 15 YEARS OLD TO DONATE. YOU MUST ALSO WEIGH MORE THAN 110 POUNDS. CONTACT ABBY IN THE OFFICE FOR MORE DETAILS.





# NORTHKIRK HISTORY CORNER



## Eagle Scout Award Projects at Northkirk!

Our church has been blessed to have the presence of Boy Scouts and Girls Scouts on our campus. We have received gifts from them in the form of scouting projects and work parties and they have attended our services on Scout Sundays.

Last month we learned about Joshua Beauvais's Eagle Scout project of cleaning up and replanting lawn and a retaining wall out front of our office building. This month we will highlight the Eagle Scout project of Jacob Beauvais which occurred in 2014. Again, as with Joshua, Jacob approached our pastor for ideas of what our church needed. Our office manager at the time, Gail, overheard the conversation and she said she would love to have solid ground to walk around our corner sign. It was very difficult for her to change the letters weekly in dirt, mud and uneven ground surrounding it. Jacob came up with the idea of pouring cement around our corner sign to make it easy to walk around it and to have a lovely focus leading to it. As with Joshua's project, it took three Saturdays plus more hours to complete this project. Thank you, Jacob and Joshua, for your Eagle Scout projects for Northkirk Church.

Look for more highlights of scouting projects that have enhanced our church in our upcoming Grapevine monthly newsletters.

Thank you, Joshua!

-Teri Smits



# HEALTHY LIVING

**FAITH**

**FELLOWSHIP**

**FITNESS**

**FOOD**

## Low-Carb Brownies



### Dry Ingredients

- 2 cups fine almond flour
- 1/2 cup Besti Allulose Sweetener
- 5 Tbs raw cacao powder
- 1/4 cup ground flaxseed
- 1/2 cup sugar-free chocolate chips
- 1/8 teaspoon pink salt

### Wet Ingredients

- 6 Tbs avocado oil
- 1/3 cup water
- 2 teaspoon vanilla

### Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line a 10x5" loaf pan with parchment paper for easy removal.
2. In a mixing bowl, whisk together dry ingredients. Use a spatula or measuring cup to press out any lumps.
3. In a glass measuring cup, combine water, oil, and vanilla. Pour wet over dry and mix well.
4. Transfer batter to pan and smooth with a spatula (it will be thick)
5. Bake on the center rack for 28-31 minutes until a toothpick comes out mostly clean and the center feels firm.
6. Allow brownies to cool for at least 30 minutes before slicing into 10-14 servings.

### Storage

Keep in an airtight container at room temperature for 4-5 days. Refrigerate for up to 10 days or freeze for 1-2 months.

### Nutrition Facts

Per serving: 236 calories, 21.1g fat, 11.75g carbohydrate, 5.33g protein.

Source: [www.prettypies.com](http://www.prettypies.com)



# HEALTHY LIVING

**FAITH**

**FELLOWSHIP**

**FITNESS**

**FOOD**

## "Being Kind Can Improve Your Health"

Health & Wellness, So. Calif. News Group, Section C, 12/29/2024

*"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control."*

(Galatians 5:22)

In her article on kindness, the author, Helen Dennis quotes the American Psychological Association definition of kindness as "benevolent and helpful action intentionally directed toward another group or person". She states that helping others has numerous health benefits according to AARP and other researchers. Six ways of kindness are identified as beneficial especially to older adults.

1. Being kind boosts some hormones. One of them is oxytocin which is often called "the feel good hormone". Another hormone is serotonin. It decreases feelings of anxiety and increases feelings of happiness. And being kind can release endorphins which is the body's natural pain killer.
2. Being kind lowers blood pressure. Oxytocin helps to maintain a healthy blood pressure, lowers chances of a heart attack and stroke and reduces risks of dementia.
3. Being kind helps improve heart health. Acts of kindness are cardioprotective.
4. Acts of kindness make the brain bigger. As part of normal aging, the hippocampus part of our brain tends to shrink. This part of the brain is responsible for learning and memory. Volunteering was found to delay that process.
5. Being kind helps you live longer. Acts of kindness reduce cortisol, the basic stress hormone in our body. Too much cortisol for too long a period can be harmful.

We are called to be kind to others. What a gift it is that we receive more than we can give. We have a good, good God.

-Teri Smits

# HEALTHY LIVING

**FAITH**

**FELLOWSHIP**

**FITNESS**

**FOOD**

## Good Grief!



Driving into work last week on the 210 Freeway, heading west toward Los Angeles, I was overcome. Across the morning horizon were ominous, apoplectic black billowing clouds spreading across the sky. It was as if you were driving into a deep dark abyss. This was going to be horrific! With the winds still raging with unbelievable gusts, there seemed to be no end in sight. The commodity of power gone, having dressed and prepared for work by a LED lantern, I texted my son. The tragic outcomes were just beginning to already pour in; yes, one of his coworkers had lost his home, others were being evacuated . . . Unprecedented grief began to hang around like an unwelcome guest.

Grief, mourning, and sorrow are all part of our existence. From the minute we are birthed, our life is on the brink of death. It seems to always catch us off guard, like a sharp slap to the face or an icy plunge into a freezing body of water. It takes our breath away, and we are left without words or even thoughts of what has truly happened. It arouses questions we can't begin to answer, often leading with the lone adverb of why?



# HEALTHY LIVING

**FAITH**

**FELLOWSHIP**

**FITNESS**

**FOOD**

## Good Grief! (Continued)

Grief usually becomes more common as we age. We are faced with not only the loss of loved ones, but friends, as well as pets. We mourn the change in our bodies as our health changes with different diseases and conditions. Sorrow comes from loss of job, position, or status; loss of home and community, and even at times from a loss of purpose and fulfillment in life. Essentially, anything in which we have invested time, energy, emotions or dreams, when lost, can cause us to experience grief. "Grief is the complex process of experiencing emotional, physical, psychological, behavioral, social, and spiritual reactions to loss," (Kowalchuk, Older People Grieve Differently, 3/3/21).

The stress of loss can challenge our current health status, at times led with appetite changes. Confusion, disorientation, forgetfulness, and disorganization are more common, and can be compounded by high stress financial difficulties. Isolation and loneliness affect seniors more, as we tend to suffer alone. Our individualistic society has frequently created an unrealistic and painful mindset of dealing with difficult emotions without help.

So how can we support one another in these days? It's usually not our words, but rather the ability to be with one another. Keeping contact, listening to their story, their emotions and memories. Being available to assist them with tasks as needed, like picking up groceries, walking their dog, cooking a meal, taking them to doctor's appointments, or even sending them a note or card of encouragement, reminding them that they are remembered.

Grief counseling exists and can also be incredibly helpful during this time. More importantly, is the fact that initially with tragic loss there is an outpouring of support, but with time that usually dwindles. So, it is imperative to stay in touch.

Is there such a thing as good grief, I ask myself? Perhaps, . . . when I am wounded, I'm reminded of my own vulnerability and the importance of being there for just one more person, or one more family, or one more community . . .

-Mary S. Brown

# SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

BY CLERK OF SESSION: DANIEL BEAUVAIS

While December's session was light, January was jam-packed. There are MANY items we pass in January because Presbytery requires us to look at these items, and January is the easiest month to do it. So, we started by approving items like Nursery workers, Sunday school teachers, counters, and corporate officers.

Even though we all miss Pastor Martin, our experience with Pastor Claire has been amazing. Pastor has certainly opened my eyes to things that we took for granted, or just somewhat forgot. She brings a new perspective, and a "why do you do this like that?" mentality. This month Pastor talked about our mission statement. If we have a mission statement, why don't we publicize it? Why don't we talk about it? Why don't we know it? They are all really good questions. So, we will make a renewed effort to get familiar with and try to live out our mission statement - "Living out God's Love as we gather together and reach out".

Session also approved the Spring Boutique for Saturday, March 29<sup>th</sup> with a Blood Drive for the same day. We also approved an Easter Egg hunt for Saturday, April 12<sup>th</sup>, so get your Easter baskets ready. We will be looking for volunteers to help and stuffed plastic egg donations are now being accepted in the office. Contact Abby for more information. Session also approved the renewal of Pastor Claire's contract, starting February 24<sup>th</sup> and going until May 11<sup>th</sup>.

Finally, and most substantially, after juggling numbers and ideas for a while, Session approved the budget for 2025. This will be presented at the annual congregational meeting on March 2.

Northkirk will be voting on two changes to the bylaws at the annual Congregational meeting on March 2<sup>nd</sup>. All bylaw changes MUST be approved by the congregation. The purpose of these changes are 1) To allow Session to discuss and vote on non-controversial items via email and 2) elect the Treasurer per the book of order. Both of these changes are fairly straightforward. If anyone would like more information and the text of the changes, please contact Daniel Beauvais.



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

Facebook live:	3 viewers
YouTube live:	4 viewers
In-Person:	71 attendees

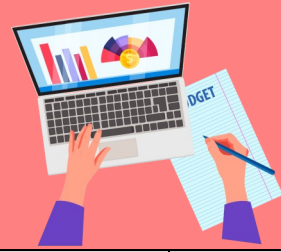




# Treasurer's Report

Treasurer's Report as of November 30, 2024

Emily Scholz, Church Treasurer



Operational Budget	November Budget	November Actual	Year to Date Budget	Year to Date Actual
Giving/Receipts	17,286.53	19,505.02	207,438.34	200,540.08
Expenses	24,271.70	23,686.01	291,260.51	250,059.78
Net Operating Surplus/Deficit	-6,985.17	-4,180.99	-83,822.17	-49,519.70

The net operating deficit is subsidized by saving reserves and investment funds. The session has budgeted a total of \$87,622.87 to be withdrawn from our investments this year. Stewardship/Finance has set a goal of \$80,000 and approved by session to withdraw this year. We have withdrawn \$51,000 so far this year. This amount is 64% of our budgeted total. 91.6% of the year has passed. Our actual contributions are higher than our budgeted estimates, and our expenses are lower than the budgeted estimates.

The session has budgeted for 2025 and our pledge campaign is underway. Please turn in your pledge cards to the offering plate as soon as possible. Our congregational meeting will be on Sunday, March 2nd to approve the budget and bylaw changes.

Each of our members has a tithe to the Presbytery to pay for Per Capita. 2025's fee is \$44 per member. We really appreciate the members who pay a little extra to Per Capita for those that cannot pay the tithe.

If anyone has questions or comments regarding our budget, loan balances, bank balances or investments, please contact the church office at 909-989-4919 and your questions will be forwarded to our church treasurer or to someone on the stewardship/finance team.

-Emily Scholz

**Northkirk Elders  
Area of Responsibility**

Dan Beauvais – Clerk Of Session  
 Nona Cabral – Christian Education  
 Steven Hanson – Facilities and Grounds  
 Jo Simmons – Membership and Fellowship  
 Tom Stahl – Missions and Evangelism  
 Thelma Campbell – Music, Worship and Arts  
 Alan Simmons – Stewardship and Finance  
 Chris Maitlen – Northkirk Community Coordinator  
 Joyce Brand – Personnel



**Electronic Giving Accounts**  
 events@northkirk.org  
 mops@northkirk.org  
 giving@northkirk.org  
 theatre@northkirk.org  
 loveoffering@northkirk.org

These may be used with Zelle. Currently mops@northkirk.org can be used with Venmo, the other accounts cannot.

# MOMCO OF NORTHKIRK

## “A MOM COMMUNITY”



MomCo tenets: “Live Passionately” Jeremiah 29:11 (lightning bolt), “Be open to Receive” Mark 10:51 (flowers), “Build Endurance” Romans 5:3 (seagulls)

MomCo started off the New Year with our January 15th meeting with great food, friendship and fellowship, along with being blessed with a wonderful video from MomCo International. This video touched on “Live Passionately”, one of the 3 tenets of this year’s “Wild Hope” theme. The video stressed the importance of getting our children outdoors more and giving them less screen time. It explained how to prioritize nature, reclaim childhood joys, and experience a fuller life. The video’s speaker, Ginny Yurich, has a website, blog, and wrote a book titled “1,000 Hours Outdoors”. The devotional at our meeting was presented by one of the mentor moms, and fed right into the speaker’s information, and with “Live Passionately” based on Jeremiah 29:11, “The Lord declares, for I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you, so you thrive, plans to give you hope and a future”. The key word in this passage is ‘Thrive’, and it’s telling us that God calls on us to thrive in spite of our current problems and He will bless even the difficulties in our life.

MomCo had a productive Leadership meeting on January 29th as they reviewed their past activities from September to present. MomCo of Northkirk will continue to meet on the first and third Wednesdays of each month at 9:30am in Baird Hall. The last meeting will be on May 21st.

Lastly, MomCo had a successful fundraiser at Richie’s Diner in January and we would like to express our deep thanks to the large number of Northkirk members who came out to support us. We look forward to the remaining three months of MomCo 2024/2025 and are excited to learn what the Lord has in store for us.

-Nancy Kwedar (mentor mom)

**BIG BEAR LAKE CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE CENTER**



**PRESENTS**



**WINTER**



**GRADES 6TH-12TH**

**CAMP**

**\$165 PER CAMPER**

**14TH-16TH MARCH, 2025**

**REGISTER HERE**



**DROP OFF STARTS AT**

**3PM**

**WORSHIP ❄️ CRAFTS ❄️ ACTIVITIES**



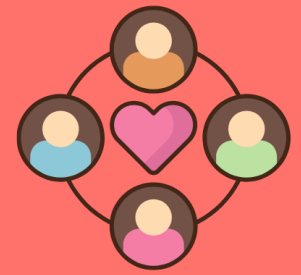
**575 PRAIRIE LN, BIG BEAR LAKE, CA 92315**

**OUR THEME!  
THE ARMOR OF  
GOD**

**WWW.BBLCCC.COM**



# DEACON'S CORNER



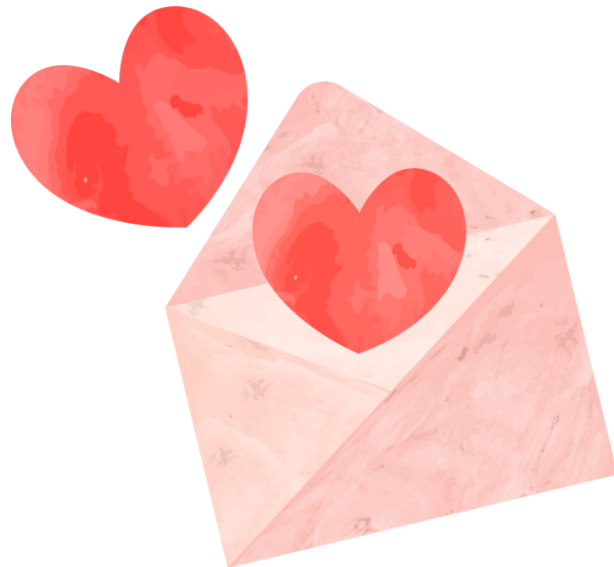
The Northkirk Deacons is a team of nine members who are each assigned a group of church members and attendees to communicate with regularly. Each group is referred to as part of a Deacon's "flock". The Deacons regularly contact their "flock" to see how they are doing, check if they have any needs, joys, or prayer requests. Deacons may pray with their flock member(s) and bring any updates to the monthly meeting. Deacon reports are held in confidentiality among the group of Deacons.

Each month, a Deacon is assigned the title, "Deacon of the Month," and is the first point of contact if anyone within the church has a need. The Deacon of the Month also prepares and serves communion alongside the Pastor, two Deacons, and two Elders on the first Sunday of the month.

Your Northkirk Deacons are currently compiling a list of members who may need assistance with repairs and/or maintenance. The Deacons have a designated fund which is used to provide assistance to our flock. The designated fund is funded through offerings.

If you do not have a Deacon and would like one, please get in touch with Marilyn Switzer at 951-314-4527. It is a joy for the Deacons to get to know their flock.

Your Northkirk Deacons consist of: Sue Sharra, Evelyn Beauvais, Sharon Hayden, Debbie Bruce, Missy James and JD Parvin, Paula Emick, Marty and Terri Sortillon, Kathi Hanson, and Terry and Marilyn Switzer.



# FEBRUARY EVENT CALENDAR

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
26 Worship Service 9:30 am  3D Study 11 am	27	28 Prayer Part. 9 am	29 Bible Study 7:30 am Pastor's Office	30 Caring Crafters 2 pm  Handbells 5:30 pm Choir 6:30 pm Praise Band 7:30 pm	31 Youth Group 7:30 pm	1 Writer's Group Via Zoom 11:30 am
2 Worship Service 9:30 am  3D Study 11 am	3	4 Prayer Part. 9 am	5 Bible Study 7:30 am Coco's  MomCo 9 am	6 Handbells 5:30 pm Choir 6:30 pm Praise Band 7:30 pm	7 Youth Group 7:30 pm	8 Campus Work Day 7:00 am
9 Worship Service 9:30 am	10	11 Prayer Part. 9 am  Deacons Mtg. 6:30 pm	12 Bible Study 7:30 am Pastor's Office	13 Caring Crafters 2 pm  Handbells 5:30 pm Choir 6:30 pm Praise Band 7:30 pm	14 Youth Group 7:30 pm	15 Writer's Group Via Zoom 11:30 am
16 Worship Service 9:30 am	17 Office Closed	18 Prayer Part. 9 am	19 Bible Study 7:30 am Pastor's Office  MomCo 9 am	20 Handbells 5:30 pm Choir 6:30 pm Praise Band 7:30 pm	21 Youth Group 7:30 pm	22 Girl Scout Cookies @ NK 10-3 pm
23 Worship Service 9:30 am	24	25 Prayer Part. 9 am  Session Mtg. 6:30 pm	26 Bible Study 7:30 am Pastor's Office	27 Caring Crafters 2 pm  Handbells 5:30 pm Choir 6:30 pm Praise Band 7:30 pm	28 Youth Group 7:30 pm	1 Writer's Group Via Zoom 11:30 am

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