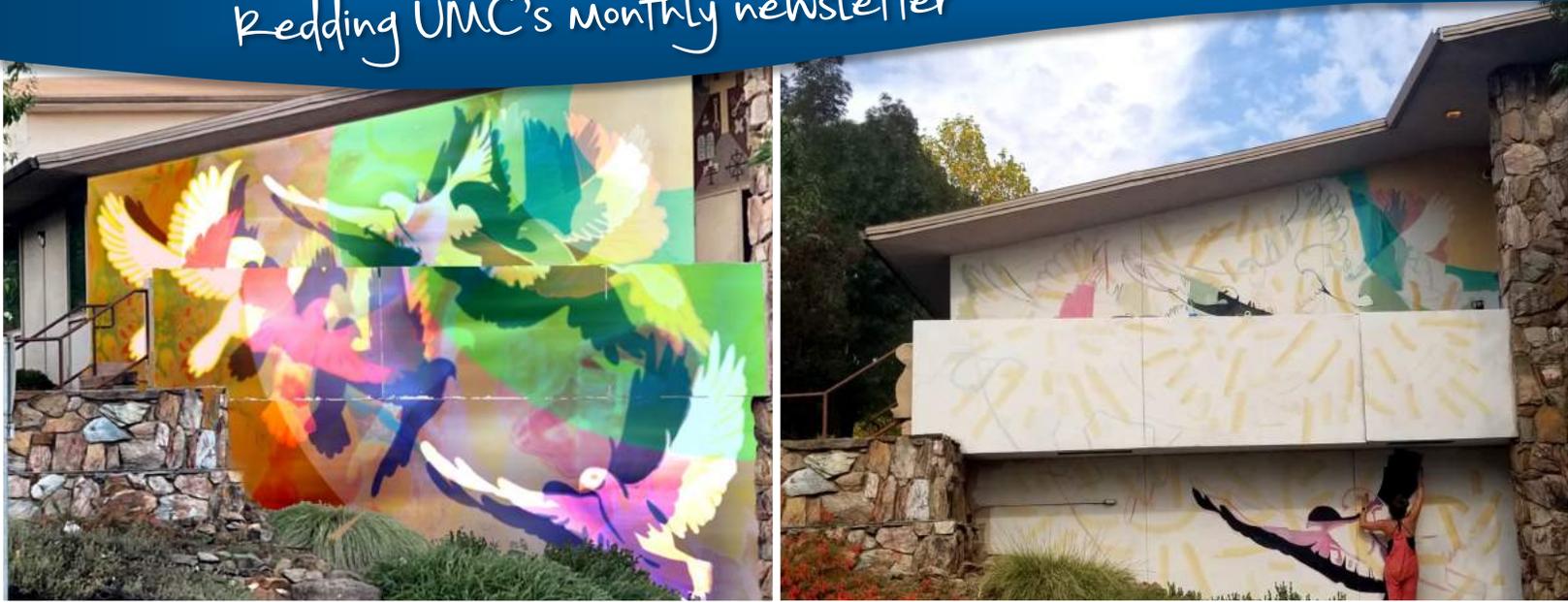


The Advance

Redding UMC's monthly newsletter



December 2023



From concept to reality, our new mural is here!

A Season of Anticipation

Advent is a season of anticipation and hopeful, anxious waiting – a sacred time where we eagerly anticipate God’s unexpected appearances in our lives. In the Gospel of Luke, the angel Gabriel’s unexpected appearance to Mary illustrates the essence of Advent – a time of God showing up in places and in ways we do not expect. Mary, a poor young woman living an ordinary life, encountered the extraordinary when the angel announced that she would bear the Son of God. This revelation came unexpectedly, shattering the routine of Mary’s daily existence.

Through this story, Advent invites us to embrace a posture of anxious awaiting, not knowing when or how God might appear in our lives. The angel’s visit to Mary serves as a beacon of hope, reassuring us that in the midst of our ordinary lives, God can break through in extraordinary ways.

Just as Mary encountered the divine in the humble town of Nazareth, we too may find God’s presence in the most unlikely circumstances.

As we light the Advent candles, sing carols of hope, and hang decorations, let us open our hearts to the possibility of divine surprises. With expectant spirits, let us yearn for God’s unexpected Presence in our midst.

As a community, let us encourage one another to actively seek God’s presence in unexpected places and through unexpected people. Our shared journey through Advent can become a communal exploration, where we witness the divine breaking into our lives in ways that both humble and awe us.

May your Advent be a time of heightened awareness and anxious awaiting that leads you to encounter the Divine in the ordinary, and where, together, we discover God’s unexpected presence among us. ~ Pastor Charles



Our offices will be closed Monday, Dec. 25 -Tuesday, Jan. 2 for our annual staff vacations and holidays. Messages will be checked for emergencies.

Join a Small Group!

Our small groups meet weekly to share reflections on faith and the concerns of our lives. These groups offer opportunities to connect with our church family. Each group has its own personality, is always open to new members, and you can jump in or out of any group at any time! The materials each group uses change throughout the year. Call the church office if you need a leader’s contact info!

Sunday from 8:45 – 9:45 am

Our Bible Study looks at the verses and sermon from the previous Sunday.

Meets in Room 10/11

Leader: Mary Doty

Sunday from 5:00 – 6:00 pm

We discuss faith-related topics.

Meets in the Susanna Room

Leader: Ron Boese or Andy McClure

Tuesday 4:00 – 5:00 pm

We discuss faith-related topics.

Meets at the Kermodes’ home

Leaders: Ray and Sue Kermode

Wednesday 2:00 – 3:00 pm

Combination Bible Study and discussion of faith related topics.

Meets in Rooms 10/11

Leaders: Ed and Carol Whitmer

Thursday 7:30 – 8:30 am

We discuss faith-related topics and share prayer concerns.

Meets at *From the Hearth* on Market St.

Leaders: Lynne Wonacott and Donna Holscher

Friday 11:00 – 11:20 am

Interfaith Meditation – we gather, greet each other, sit quietly, and let our minds relax. It’s that easy!

Meets in the church Library, 3rd floor

Leader: Leroy “Perk” Perkins

Next Advance Article Deadline

Email your articles and photos to the church office no later than **Monday, December 11**. Let’s share the great news of the many ways people can be involved.

Wonder Years and Jr. & Sr. High Youth Ministry



It's the most wonderful time of the year - in WonderYears AND our youth group! We can't wait to celebrate the Christmas season this month. There are lots

of Christmas activities, and we'd love to see you. Here's what's happening:



Advent Prayer Readings: We need families to lead advent prayers at our 10 am and 6 pm services throughout December. Sign up at <http://bit.ly/redding-advent-23> and let your family be the voice of Christmas!



Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer Outing:

Saturday, Dec. 16, 2 pm. Join us for a fun-filled afternoon, and see two of our youth group members in the Rudolph the Red-

Nosed Reindeer musical! For tickets, email katelyn@reddingumc.org

Christmas Nativity Play: Join us on Dec. 17 at the 10 am service to celebrate the season with our very own nativity play. Rumor has it, the Christmas Cat will appear again this year!

Youth Lock-In: Our Christmas dream is a Youth Lock-In during winter break! The lock-in is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, Dec. 21. Please stay tuned for the final details!

Youth Helping at Christmas Eve Service: Our youth will shine at the 5 pm service on Christmas Eve. We hear one of our youth group members will burn bright as he lights the candles this year.

Please contact Katelyn at katelyn@reddingumc.org with any questions about these activities.

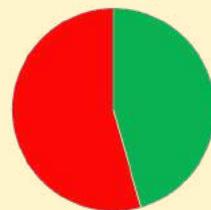
Inclusive Ministries

For 18 years, this wonderful outreach ministry has served marginalized, mentally ill adults living in group homes. Each month, we give them a ride to our church and provide them a homecooked dinner. Volunteers pick up our guests at 3:15 pm and arrive at 3:30 pm for a sing-a-long led by Greg Lawson followed by dinner.

Our next meal will be on Sunday, Dec. 17 If you are interested in driving, riding along, cooking, or serving our guests, please contact Vicki Ono at 530-227-6654 in the evenings or at vickiono@gmail.com.

Financial Update

From January through October, our church income was \$323,796 but our expenses were \$376,403, for a YTD net loss of \$52,607.



We Need Your Pledge Cards!

During the past few weeks, you should have received our annual stewardship letter and pledge card in the mail. Your pledge helps us plan for the coming year with hope and joy. Please complete your pledge card and return it to the church as soon as possible.

Every dollar makes a difference. Thank you in advance for your extra support! ~ Pastor Charles

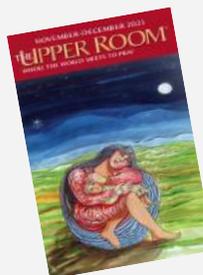
Your Offering

Your regular giving enables our church to continue our ministries with our community!

Mail checks to: Redding First UMC

1825 East St., Redding, CA 96001

Online giving is easy at: ReddingUMC.org/



Daily Devotions

Be sure to pick up a copy of the Upper Room daily devotional at the Welcome Center or the church's main office. If you can make a donation to offset our costs, we'd appreciate that!

The Youth Group's Fall Retreat in San Francisco gave us a chance to serve others, make new friends, and discuss our faith.



19 youth and 6 adults from our Conference gathered for a four-day retreat.



We packed and distributed food to over 100 guests.



We stayed at the Waller Center where we cleaned up so much, they had to buy more trash bags!



The girls fulfilled their dream of living in an orphanage. Happy campers!



Alcatraz looked cool, but the WW II submarine was more interesting.



New places, new memories!



We made new friends that we hope to see again soon at the next retreat.

Thanks to everyone who made our Annual Bazaar a success! We raised \$9,787 to help women, children, and youth. Great job!



December 2023

** Dates, meeting times and room availability could change and differ from what is here each month. Please check with your group's leader to confirm room use and availability or call Reannon in the Church office at 530-243-2403 ext. 304 to book your meeting today!

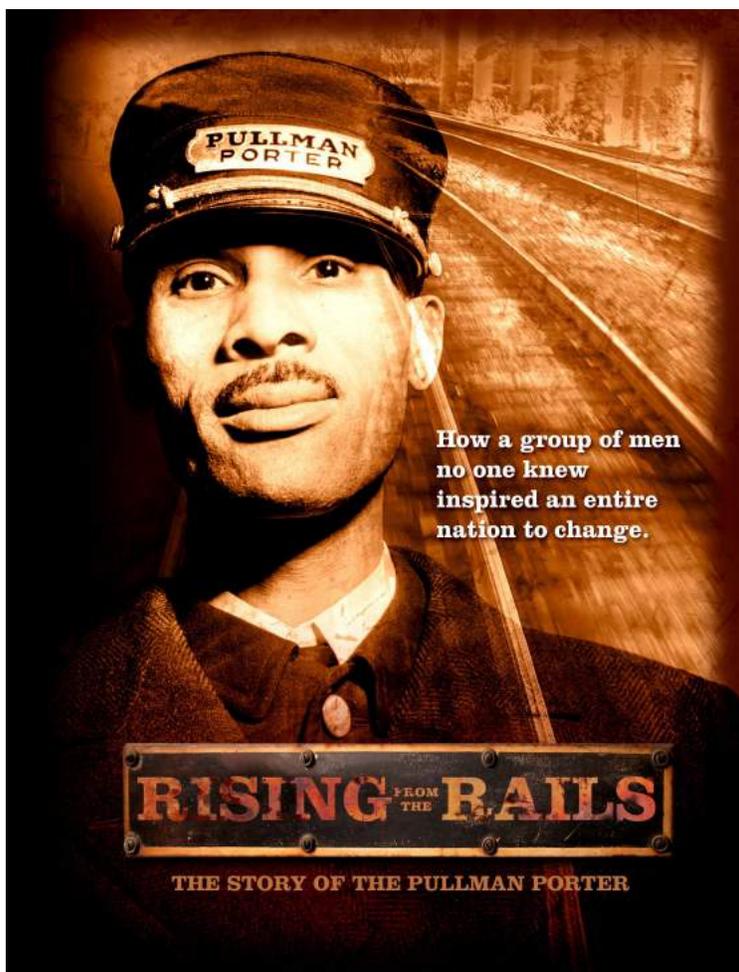
WEDNESDAY

SH = Social Hall
 FC = Fellowship Cafe
 Wes = Wesley
 Sus = Susanna Room
 ET = Eldridge Troit
 OS = Off Site
 Sanc = Sanctuary
 Zoom = Online Distance Meeting via Zoom
BOLDED+HIGHTLIGHTED BLUE = Memorial
BOLDED+HIGHTLIGHTED = Outside Group
BOLDED+ITALICIZED = Memorial/Funeral
 Support Groups are held in Rooms 10, 11&12

	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1st Day of Advent 3							
10 AM & 6 PM Worship, Sanc 845-945 Small Group, 10/11			7-9 SCHC Nurses Mtg, SH	2-3 Small Group, 10/11	730-9 Small Group, OS	930a-3p Thrift Shop Open, SH/K 11-12 Meditation, Lib	1 Thrift Shop Open, 9-11a SH/K 12-3 Decorating, Sanc 2-6 Co-Lab, SH/KIT
12-2 Nazarene, FC 1-4 Wreath N Greet, 10/11/12 Parking lot			1-3 PEO Grp, 10/11 4-5 Small Group, OS 630-830 Boy Scouts, 10/11 730 Chancel Choir, Sanc	530-730 SPAC, FC 530-630 AM Band Rehearse, Sanc 6-8 Wed Women's AFG, 10/11	10 UWF Executive Mtg, FC 3-4 Letter Writing, FC 5-630 PM Band Practice, Sanc 6-8 Mens AA, SH	2-9 NAMI Party, SH/KIT 11-12 Meditation, Lib	7am Troop #122 Depart, SH/KIT
10 AM & 6 PM Worship, Sanc 845-945 Small Group, 10/11				1030 Friendly Visitors, 10/11 12 **UWF Luncheon, SH/K 2-3 Small Group, 10/11	730-9 Small Group, OS	11-12 Meditation, Lib	
12-5 Nazarene, 10/11 5-6 Small Group, FC			4-5 Small Group, OS 630-830 Boy Scouts, 10/11 730 Chancel Choir, Sanc	530-630 AM Band Rehearse, Sanc 6-8 Wed Women's AFG, 10/11	5-630 PM Band Practice, Sanc 6-8 Mens AA, SH		
10 AM & 6 PM Worship, Sanc 845-945 Small Group, 10/11			12-1 Faithworks, 21	9-11 Church Council, FC	730-9 Small Group, OS		
12-4 Nazarene, 10/11 1-4 Caroling, OS 330-5 Inclusive Min, Wes/KIT 5-6 Small Group, FC	2-330 Book Club, Lib 430-8 ARTF, 10/11	4-5 Small Group, OS 430-530 Finance, FC 430-530 WPT, FC 530-7 Wesley Nthood, 10/11 630-830 Boy Scouts, Kit 730 Chancel Choir, Sanc	2-3 Small Group, 10/11 430 Church & Society, FC 4-9 Faith works Party, SH/KIT 530-630 AM Band Rehearse, Sanc 6-8 Wed Women's AFG, 10/11	5-630 PM Band Practice, Sanc 530 Blue Christmas, OS 6-8 Mens AA, SH	11-12 Meditation, Lib 12-5 Japan Society, Kit		
Christmas Eve 24	Christmas Day 25						
10 AM Worship, Sanc 845-945 Small Group, 10/11 12-4 Nazarene, 10/11 5-6 Small Group, FC	Office Closed for Holiday's			2-3 Small Group, 10/11	730-9 Small Group, OS	11-12 Meditation, Lib	
5 Candlelight Service, Sanc 10 Candlelight Service, Sanc				530-630 AM Band Rehearse, Sanc 6-8 Wed Women's AFG, 10/11	5-630 PM Band Practice, Sanc 6-8 Mens AA, SH		

Anti-Racism Task Force

Great Things are happening in January, Check out these events: On **Saturday, Jan. 13**, Redding First UMC's ARTF will be showing the documentary *Rising from the Rails* right here at FUMC. Then, on **Monday, Jan. 15** we will honor the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr in our annual dedication and celebration—details in January!



What is BIPOC?

BIPOC is an acronym for Black, Indigenous & People of Color. It is a contemporary, umbrella term for non-European, non-white people who comprise most of the world's population. BIPOC includes people of African, Asian, Southeast Asian, Latin American, Pacific Islander, Native Hawaiian, Native American/Indigenous or mixed racial-ethnic ancestry. As a term BIPOC acknowledges the specific & varying types of discrimination experienced by People of Color. BIPOC does not

replace naming Black people & should not be used when referring to an individual or an issue that affects a specific group of people.

Such changes in terms reflect a move by People of Color to define themselves instead of being defined - sometimes in error - by white society. Today's African American/Black people were formerly called "Negroes" or even the "N-word," names given by white people. Native/Indigenous people were misnamed as "Indians," because early European explorers to the Americas thought they had arrived in India.

Science & Christian faith agree there is only one human race, with some superficial physical distinctions among groups (hair color & texture, eye shape, skin tone). Racial prejudice and systemic racism arose from these minor differences to establish, justify & make legal & socially acceptable the colonization, dehumanization, systemic violence against, enslavement & exploitation of non-white persons by white nations. White-run systems formerly deemed non-white people as "minorities," but the world now understands that BIPOC people comprise nearly 75% of the global population.

Acts 16:16-23 tells of the story of colonizers labeling & condemning Jews who were followers of Jesus. Speaking of Paul & Silas, "These men are disturbing our city and they are Jews & are advocating customs that are not lawful for us as Romans to adopt or observe." God calls us all to love one another & to live in harmony & peace with all people. Jesus showed an affinity for those pushed to the economic & social margins of society. BIPOC communities are among those who remind us that to follow Jesus is to pray & work for an end to racial bias & notions of supremacy in the name of the One who created & loves us all.

The term BIPOC is the latest iteration in fostering unity of purpose among marginalized persons & to uproot racism & white supremacy from social, moral, political, economic & religious systems. There is no "one size fits all" language when it comes to talking about race. Language is crucial, but it isn't the answer. The term BIPOC is simply a tool to frame a broader discussion for collective action on issues of race & gender in our community. Making the conscious effort to be more inclusive in your language can help contribute to a world that is more accepting of diversity & supportive of racial justice.

When we know better we do better. —ARTF

It is a fact that it takes a village to raise a child. It also takes a village to put on a bazaar.



United Women in Faith

While our UWF membership numbers have gone down, our annual Holiday Bazaar was a grand success with the support of our church family. These funds enable us to support more programs that impact the lives of women, children and youth. When I spoke 5 minutes before the opening of the bazaar, I looked out at your faces and how beautiful the room looked, and all I could think was, thanks to God, we are all so blessed. ~ Cathy Joplin

UWF Calendar of Events

- **December Thrift Shop:**
Set up on Wednesday Nov. 29 & Thursday Nov. 30
Sales are on Friday, Dec. 1 9am-3pm & Saturday, Dec. 2 9-11am
- **UWF Executive Board *Date & Time Change**
Thursday Dec. 7 at 10 am in Room 21
- **Luncheon and Meeting *Date Change**
Wednesday Dec. 13 at noon in the Social Hall

We are Fully Inclusive & Affirming



Our church is a proud member of the Reconciling Ministries Network (RMN) which celebrates that LGBTQ+ persons are a beautiful expression of God's diverse creation and exists to advocate for the affirmation of all of God's children in the church and world.

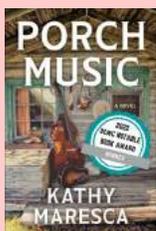
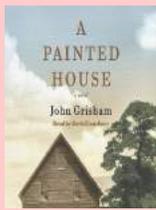
4th Monday Book Club

Join us in the Fellowship Cafe at 2 pm on the fourth Monday of every month as we share our thoughts. Interested? Contact Kathy Byars at 530-215-8968 or email her at kbyars47@gmail.com.

Dec. we'll break for Christmas

Jan. 24: *A Painted House* by John Grisham

Feb. 26: *Porch Music* by Kathy Maresca



Annual Hanging of the Greens

Advent has arrived and that means it's time to round up our Christmas Elves for an afternoon of decorating! On Saturday, Dec. 2 from 12-3 pm our elves will decorate our church. We're hoping you will be part of the fun! No experience is necessary and hot cocoa will be available! Questions? Contact Reannon at 530-243-2403.



Our Church and Society Committee has organized our annual Giving Tree program. Thank you in advance (as we write this) for "adopting" the 80 gift tags of children in need this Christmas season!

You can bring your gifts wrapped together to the church with the number tag before Sunday, Dec. 17. You may drop off gifts to our reception office Monday – Thursday 9 am-12 pm or by appointment.

Christmas Caroling

Nothing makes the holidays more special than caroling for our beloved shut-ins and those too ill to come to worship with us in person.

Join our merry band of elves as we travel to various care facilities and homes to bring Christmas cheer! Meet in the Social Hall at 12:45 pm after church on Sunday, Dec. 17.



We will be carpooling and will return to the church by 4 pm. Use the sign up sheet in the Welcome Center to let us know you can come!



Blue Christmas & Longest Night Ecumenical Service

Over the past several years, there has been a growing awareness that not everyone enjoys the Christmas holidays. Dealing with the death of a loved one, facing life after divorce or separation, coping with the loss of a job or pet, living with Covid, cancer or other health conditions, are just some of the struggles many have encountered.

About 20 years ago, many pastors began recognizing there was no sacred space for grieving during the holidays. Responding to that need, Blue Christmas and Longest Night services became ways to engage with Advent, a time of watching and waiting.

Again this year, we will join other local congregations to celebrate our Blue Christmas service. We celebrate this meditative and meaningful service on the longest night of the year, the Winter Solstice.

When: Thursday, Dec. 21 at 5:30 pm

Where: St. James Lutheran, 2500 Shasta View

Pastor Charles along with the pastors from First Christian Church of Redding (Disciples of Christ) and St. James Lutheran Church, will lead this ecumenical service that celebrates our humanity and the light that shines in the darkness. We'd love for you to join us!

Please Thank Our Music Teams!

Our 10 am team is Lindy Jenkins, Scott Lewis, Elizabeth Waterbury, and Katrina Welty.

Our 6pm team is Greg Lawson & Vicki Ono, Noah Cooke, and Julie Crow on percussion when she's available.

Both teams are looking to add members, so let us know if you're interested!



Please hold these souls in your prayers

Marv S., Richard B., Barbara P., Diane Y., Mike & Lisa Z., Craig & Bettina B., Charlene B., Carla H., and Bill S. and any unspoken prayers.

Save Money by Giving from Your IRA

If you have an Individual Retirement Account (IRA) and are age 70 (or getting close), there are ways you can give to our local church that will strengthen our church's ministries **and** produce tax savings for you! Here are some important facts you should know.

Did you know...

People who are age 70 ½ or older can contribute up to \$100,000 from their IRA directly to a charity and avoid paying income taxes on the distribution. This is called a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD).

You Can't Leave Your Money there Forever.

Once you reach 72, you are **required** to start taking at least a minimum amount out of your IRA each year – "required minimum distributions" (RMD). Since contributors didn't pay tax on the money when they put it in their IRAs, they are required to pay tax on it when money comes out. RMDs can push some people into a higher tax bracket. But that can be avoided...

Give it to the Church; Avoid Paying the Taxes.

In 2006, pension protection laws allowed for **tax-free use of RMDs** for charitable contributions, saving the tax that people would have had to pay when they took this money out of their IRA accounts. These are called "qualified charitable distributions" or QCDs. Here's an important distinction: these are **NOT** tax deductions. They do *not* provide a charitable deduction regardless of whether you itemize deductions. The tax benefit is the ability to exclude the donated distribution from taxable income. This can save you thousands!

From IRA To "My UMC" – Never in My Pocket!

With a qualified charitable distribution (QCD), a check goes directly from your IRA to our church. Many people who are facing RMDs that will have tax implications could pay all their annual tithe or offering at one time, hopefully early in the year, through their QCD and never have to show it as income.

We encourage everyone to **discuss this with a financial planner, tax consultant, or tax attorney** – and be sure to let your family know. It could be a savings for you and a blessing to our church!

Christmas Eve

at Redding First United Methodist Church

December 24th

10:00 AM
Morning Service

5:00 PM @ 10:00 PM
Candlelight Services

1825 East Street | Redding
www.reddingumc.org



WREATH @ GREET

DECEMBER 3, 2023
12 PM TO 3 PM

Nothing says "celebrate" better than a fresh wreath! Wreath n' Greet 2023 is a free community event offering all ages an opportunity to make a fresh holiday wreath while visiting with members of your community! Natural materials and wreath backing will be provided, and the rest is up to your creativity! We hope you will join the fun on Sunday, December 3, 2023, and ignite the spirit of the season!

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
1825 East St | Redding
South St. Parking Lot

COST: FREE

QUESTIONS? CONTACT REANNON MOORE 530-243-2403
WEBSITE: WWW.REDDINGUMC.ORG

- Upcoming Events**
- * Dec. 1 - AIDS Day Service
 - * Dec. 1 & 2 - UWF Thrift Shop
 - * Dec. 2 - Hanging N' Greet
 - * Dec. 3 - Wreath N' Greet
 - * Dec. 13 - UMW Luncheon
 - * Dec. 17 - Inclusive Dinner
 - * Dec. 17 - Caroling
 - * Dec. 17 - Blue Christmas
 - * Dec. 21 - Three Services!
 - * Dec. 24 - Three Services!

**** Return Service Requested**

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