



# THE CHURCH BELL

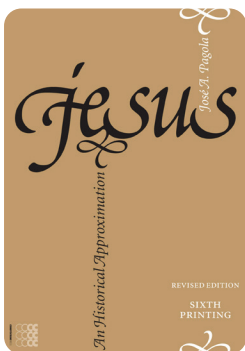


Susanville United Methodist Church • [SusanvilleMethodist.org](http://SusanvilleMethodist.org)

## Faith in Conversation

Starting January 20, we will begin a weekly “Faith in Conversation Group” each Wednesday at 6 pm. We’ll continue to use the same Zoom link we use for Sunday worship. Our conversations will focus on weekly readings (or videos) that have some connection to how we understand and live out our faith.

Remember, I am NOT a “book reader,” so when I say a book (or chapter) is worth reading, be assured that I believe it really is worth your time and consideration!



With that in mind, we’ll begin with José A. Pagola’s book *Jesus: An Historical Approximation*. This can be easily read as a daily devotion. You can NOT speed-read this book (trust me)! About 10 years ago, I was in a group that read and discussed this book. We came from different Christian and social backgrounds, but we all found the material and our conversations deeply moving. I don’t exaggerate when I say that it was through this book that I fell in love with Jesus.

*“In this best-seller, the Biblical scholar Jose Pagola addresses basic questions about who Jesus was; how he understood his life; what was the originality of his message; how the vision of the Kingdom of God centered his life; and why he was executed and who intervened in the process.” ~ Amazon*

You might be asking, “How is this group different than Bible Study?” Excellent question! Our Bible Study group typically starts with the head and moves to the heart. We often start by discussing information and what we THINK about it, then move to how we FEEL about the text and where it’s drawing us.

This new “Faith in Conversation Group” will typically work in reverse – we’ll start with how we FEEL (emotionally and/or spiritually) then move to what we THINK about what’s happening in our hearts and souls.

Another difference is that no homework is required for the Bible Study group. You can drop in any evening without any preparation. The “Faith in Conversation Group” will require you to read throughout the week (this isn’t the kind of material you cram).

The book is available in paperback or as an Amazon Kindle digital book. If you buy the paperback, I encourage you to order from Margie’s Book Nook or your locally owned bookstore. Do NOT let money prevent you from participating! If needed, our church will be happy to purchase the book for you. My only request is that if we invest in you by buying the book, please invest in yourself by committing to reading it and participating in each weekly discussion.

Everyone is invited to participate in each group, and I highly encourage you to join either or both groups. See you online! ~CW

### This week I will pray for

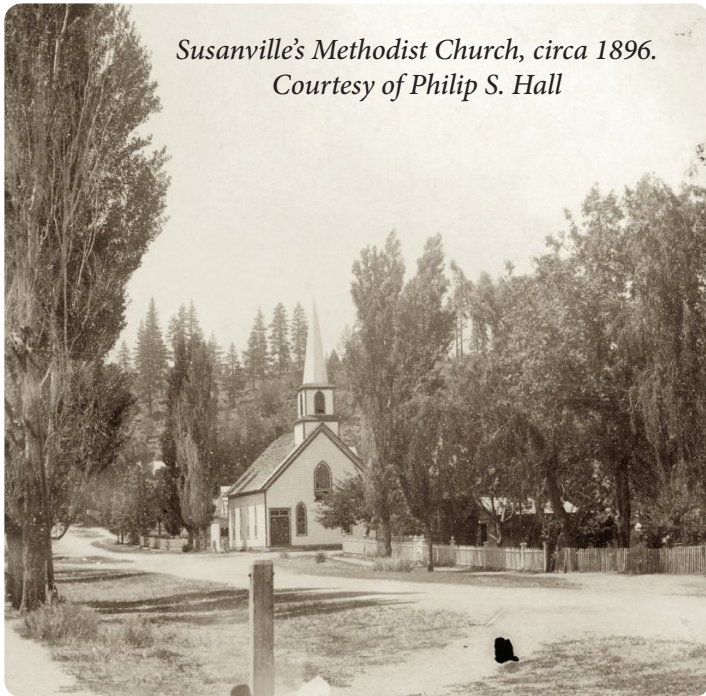
1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

Lord, thank you for...  
Please bless...  
Help me/them with...



Please email articles for the Church Bell to Pastor Charles at: [CharlesWhite@protonmail.com](mailto:CharlesWhite@protonmail.com).

Thanks to Martin Balding for forwarding these historical articles from Tim Purdy • [www.tipurdy.org](http://www.tipurdy.org)



*Susanville's Methodist Church, circa 1896.  
Courtesy of Philip S. Hall*

## A Tale of the Methodist Church

For nearly the first fifteen years of Susanville's existence it could be said it was somewhat a scene of the old wild west, plenty of saloons, but no houses of worship. It was in the mid-1870s when two churches – the Congregation and Methodist – that the community started to become more civilized.

The construction of the Methodist Church at the corner of Lassen and Cottage Streets began in 1875. In 1877, with church nearing completion a bell was installed. The Lassen Advocate of June 23, 1877 reported: "The bell is already hung in the tower of the new M.E. Church. It is really a tony bell, its reverberations are heard for miles around. Our town is gradually taking on city airs."

The bell it should be noted served a dual function for not only calling the faithful to worship, but it was the town's fire alarm system for nearly three decades. However, it was no match for June 1900 fire that destroyed the church and three city blocks from Roop to Union. The bell survived that fire and when a new brick church replaced the old wooden one it was re-installed. The church was destroyed in the August 1915 fire and this time the bell did not survive.

<https://www.tipurdy.org/a-tale-of-the-methodist-church/>



## Susanville Methodist Church

On August 5, 1915 a devastating fire wiped out the majority of the block between Cottage and Main Street. That fire is a topic for another day. One of buildings destroyed was that of the Methodist Church.

Once the church members got over the initial shock that their beloved building, only 14 years old had been destroyed, some serious consideration had to be given about its future. Some wanted to abandon the site, after all they reasoned this was second church they lost to fires at this location in fifteen years. While the fire gutted the church, its brick walls were intact. Upon further examination, after a thorough inspection of the walls, it was deemed to rebuild using the existing walls.

Architect Ralph Taylor drew up plans, making very few changes. The most notable change was that the steeple would not be replaced, as the church would struggle with its finances, as the insurance would not fully cover their loss.

In the meantime, the congregation had to find a new substitute home until the church was rebuilt. At first they met at the Baptist Church, but that was too awkward arranging two different services on Sundays. By mid-September 1915, the Native Sons of the Golden West had just finished building a new hall on the corner of Lassen and Nevada Streets.

The process of rebuilding the church was a slow one. Determined not to take on debt, work on the church would stop, and start again once they replenished their funds. It was not until January 1917 that they were able to move back into their own church.

<https://www.tipurdy.org/susanville-methodist-church/>

Thanks to Martin Balding for forwarding these historical articles from Tim Purdy • [www.tipurdy.org](http://www.tipurdy.org)

## The Many Uses of the Methodist Church Bell

The primary reason for the church bell was to call the faithful to worship. The quality of the bell was superb and when wrung could be heard two miles away.

Susanville in the late 1800s was a mere village of some 300 souls. It should be noted, that in this era, the town was plagued by fires, and in no time the bell was used as a fire alarm system. In rare instances the bell was used if something of major importance needed to be relayed and thus prompting individuals to congregate at the church to be informed of the impending news.

In 1895, the Lassen County Board of Supervisors approved Ordinance No. 33 pertaining to curfew in village of Susanville (the town was still unincorporated). From September 1, to April 1, anyone under the age 18 after 7 p.m. had to be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian. During the summer months, it was extended to 8 p.m. The fine for said violation was one dollar. It was the town's night watchman who had duty at the appointed hour to ring the Methodist Church bell to signal it was curfew time.

<https://www.tipurdy.org/the-many-uses-of-the-methodist-church-bell/>



*The Susanville UMC Bell, courtesy of Martin Balding*

## A Church Should Have a Bell

The church was destroyed by fire in 1915 and work started the following year to rebuild. The church had limited funds and it initially seemed as though the church would have to go without a bell.

The following was an editorial in the Lassen Advocate of December 22, 1916: "The question of a bell for the Methodist Church has again pressed itself and there

seems to be some difference of opinion in regard to the desirability of placing one in the church. It is hoped, however, that a full-toned bell of comparatively low pitch will be decided upon, for a village church without its bell seems almost like a ship without a rudder. But there are bells and bells, and while present financial conditions of the church a question of cost must be considered, a judicious use of money set aside for the purpose can just

as well procure a pleasant deep-toned bell as to the mistake of placing in the church a bell every sound of which startles one with the thought of fire."

By the time the church was dedicated in 1917, it had a bell. It came from the old Lassen County Courthouse, as the new courthouse design did not include a bell.

<https://www.tipurdy.org/should-have-a-bell/>



## Keep Those Prayers Coming!

Our prayer warriors continue meeting faithfully online every Monday at 11:00 am via Zoom and offer to God prayer requests that have been received. The best way to submit your prayer concerns is through our website: [SusanvilleMethodist.org/prayers](https://www.susanvillemethodist.org/prayers)

We continue to see God's hand working in the lives of people who need prayer, and there continue to be praises for answered prayers.

## The Community Food Shelf

*Thanks to Marshall Leve for contributing this article about Susanville UMC's involvement in a food pantry in the 1980s.*

Prior to Christmas 1978, a small Susanville UMC group met to discuss an important community issue – Lassen County residents without adequate food each month. The pastor (Rev. Carl Schwartzberg) invited members of the local ministerial association to an organizational meeting to determine needs, interest, and potential support. Susanville UMC assumed operational leadership of what would become known as the Community Food Shelf (CFS). (In the fall of 1980 at the multi-church bazaar, nine churches pledged to give their profits from the event to the CFS.)

Church members, Rev. Schwartzberg, and wife Fai, began cleaning and painting a church basement area for food storage and service. Soon after beginning service to the community, the group found a willing leader in Marshall Leve's mother, Helen (sometimes called Helen Senior), and the project was off and running! Susanville's Mayor and Lassen County's Supervisors joined the CFS officers and volunteers at the grand opening ceremony in the spring of 1980.



The CFS moved to the Council on Aging site (Union Street) and elected officers including representatives from the Council on Aging, Friends Outside, the County Sheriff's office, the County Welfare office, and a local attorney. The initial meeting was attended by 25 to 30 community members, city/county reps, as well as business, non-profit agency, and service club leaders. Twenty from the meeting volunteered to assist in stocking and serving those needing food. They agreed to operate the CFS from 1:00 to 4:00 pm Monday through Friday. They decided that people could receive food every other week (twice each month).

At the CFS' peak, it was spending \$1,700 per month. Although not required to, many recipients would return to donate to the cause when they could. One returned to empty his pockets of the change he had – a few pennies, nickels, and dimes. The United Way was a major contributor and funds came from local businesses, service clubs, countless individual donors, and Susanville UMC special offerings.

Shelving was constructed by California Correctional Center inmates; a refrigerator/freezer was donated. With an initial donated amount of \$32, the CFS was on its way. A Tracy, CA service group, Good Samaritan Community Services, donated 57 cases of canned goods; local stores and the dairy added to food supplies or sold them at discounted rates. Bread and bakery goods, which were somewhat over age, were donated to the CFS for quick recirculation. Cheese and some meat were available, but fruit and vegetables were only available when local gardens over-produced which they did in the summer. Later the California Food Bank was of substantial assistance.

Friends Outside covered the CFS' initial insurance coverage. Friends Outside also provided the CFS with its initial 501c3 federal non-profit status. Banks assisted in receiving donations, and the board's lawyer quickly qualified the CFS for federal non-profit recognition. By October 1980, the CFS had served over 3,000 children and adults.

The CFS served community needs through the fall of 1985 when its existing resources were absorbed into the recently opened Salvation Army's Susanville operation. By that time the determined efforts of many aging volunteers were almost exhausted, especially during the dark winter months when the need for food was at its greatest. Through these solely volunteer efforts, the CFS was able to report in five years of its existence that more than 40,000 youth and adults received food assistance with less than 1,000 travelers using these services – all the rest were locals.

Anyone interested in more information can read Helen Leve's letter to the editor and more in the 1980s Lassen County Times. You can read a letter to the editor in the Lassen County Times' April 2, 1980 issue (pages 4-5) <http://las.stparchive.com/1980/April%202/>, and article in the February 20 issue (page 2) <http://las.stparchive.com/1980/February%2020/>, or the December 14, 1984 issue (see the first page of the Community Section).

## Handbell Choir Shares the Sounds of Christmas with Our Community

These talented musicians braved the cold this December as they toured Susanville entertaining people at Grocery Outlet, Susanville Supermarket IGA, and Susanville Starbucks. Their music reminds us that no matter what is happening in our world, we can find ways to connect with and bless the people around us. Thank you Dennis & Maryel R., Debbie A., Janiska N., Heather B., Doug P., and Margie M.!



## Bell Ringers of Another Kind

In mid-December, Pastor Charles and Martin B. represented both Susanville UMC and the Rotary Club of Susanville while ringing the bells and collecting donations for the Susanville Salvation Army at Susanville Supermarket IGA. We accomplish so much working together!

## Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Program

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Shoebox Program. Needless to say, this program took on a very different identity for 2020 like everything else. Despite these challenges, the program was a success because of your generosity and prayers (20 boxes collected). God bless and best wishes for a healthy and prosperous new year!

– Jerri Kresge

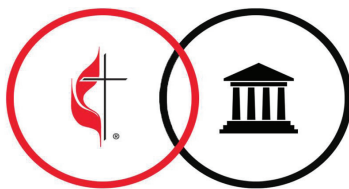
*During the past year, several people have asked me about how the United Methodist Church is, or is not, involved with politics. The shortest answer is that for over 300 years, Methodists around the globe have been vocal advocates for social justice issues. When those issues move into the political realm, Methodists **continue** advocating for what they believe is right and best – especially for the people Jesus seemed most concerned about: the poor and oppressed.*

*During the past 150 years, United Methodist Women (UMW) have been particularly instrumental in supporting legislation prohibiting child labor laws and supporting fair wages, paid overtime, Social Security for agricultural workers, and a variety of just labor practices. You can read more about their work here: <https://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/news/a-history-of-supporting-workers-rights>*

*The rest of this page highlights sections from an article titled “Is The United Methodist Church Involved in Politics?” The answer is a resounding yes. **Yes, we are,** and yes, we will continue to speak out against injustices and on behalf of the poor and oppressed. Will that make some people uncomfortable? **We certainly hope so.** What’s next? Access to reasonable healthcare is an ongoing issue. Human trafficking is finally getting the spotlight it deserves. I look forward to working with all of you on these and other social justice issues in Susanville and beyond. ~ Pastor Charles*

“The people called Methodists have been actively involved in social and political matters from their founding in 18th century England. Methodists were among the primary advocates for the abolition of slavery across the British Empire, the organization of labor unions to protect workers from dangerous working conditions, the ending of the debtors prison system, and the creation of new systems of care for poor children. Given this heritage, Methodists have continued to advocate for other social or political issues since that time – women’s suffrage, temperance, civil rights, health care and care for the environment, to name a few.

Today our **United Methodist Social Creed** and **Social Principles** express our commitment to fully participate in building a more peaceful and just world.



## Should United Methodists be involved in politics?

We are responsible to God for our social, economic and political life. The Church regards political participation as the **privilege and responsibility** of citizens.

The Church asserts, “Scripture recognizes that faithfulness to God **requires** political engagement by the people of God” (Church-Government Relations). “The strength of a political system depends upon the full and willing participation of its citizens. The church should continually exert a strong ethical influence upon the state, supporting policies and programs deemed to be just and opposing policies and programs that are unjust” (The Political Community).

United Methodists rely on the same world-wide Social Principles and Resolutions for guidance about the interaction of church and politics. How the Church is engaged in politics varies across the regions where The UMC is present. Its response to the state will look quite different in the United States, the Philippines, Germany, Russia or Côte d’Ivoire.

## Does the UMC have a lobbying office in Washington DC?

The General Board of Church and Society, the church’s advocacy agency for issues of justice, equality and peace, has offices on Capitol Hill in Washington and at the Church Center for the United Nations in New York City.

Church and Society is dedicated to implementing the Social Principles by educating, equipping and organizing United Methodists to faithfully advocate for the Church’s positions. The activities of Church and Society are advocacy, not lobbying.

The agency communicates the denomination’s position on more than 30 social issues with policymakers and church and national leaders, **with the mission of transforming the world.”**

You can read the complete article here: <https://www.umc.org/en/content/ask-the-umc-is-the-church-involved-in-politics>

## Mission and Evangelism Giving For 2020

Our church members have been awesome in mission and evangelism giving this year. Below is a list of missions we have contributed to this past year. God continues to bless us, our church, and our community.

**We are humbled to have received \$33,604.40 this year.**

1. Adopt a Family	\$220.00
2. Advent Wreath	454.16
3. Angola Pastor Support	22.00
4. Assembly of God Church	500.00
5. Christmas Offering	1,897.00
6. Crossroads Ministries	750.00
7. Easter Offering	2,165.00
8. Evangelism	500.00
9. Golden Cross Fund	1,000.00
10. Lenten Offering	224.00
11. Native American Sunday	100.00
12. One Hour of Sharing	170.00
13. Pastor's Discretionary	25.00
14. Peace/Justice Sunday	50.00
15. Salvation Army	750.00
16. Souper Bowl Luncheon	287.00
17. Student Day	20.00
18. UMCOR	170.00
19. Youth Ministries	1,000.00
Subtotal:	\$9,904.16
District Tithe	\$11,548.24
<b>Hope Food Pantry</b>	<b>12,152.00</b>
(Includes Community Donations)	
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$33,604.40</b>

## Staying Connected

Our office is CLOSED until further notice for safety. Phone messages and emails are checked daily.

530-257-5893 • [susanville\\_umc@frontier.com](mailto:susanville_umc@frontier.com)

Visit our website at [SusanvilleMethodist.org](http://SusanvilleMethodist.org)

Bishop . . . . . Rev. Minerva G. Carcaño  
 District Superintendent . . . . . Rev. Blake Busick  
 Pastor . . . . . Rev. Charles White  
 Choir Director . . . . . Dennis Roberts  
 Pianist . . . . . Karen Sherve  
 Custodian . . . . . Janiska Nordstrom



## Thrift Store Volunteers Needed

The CR Stuff Thrift Shop needs volunteers Monday through Friday from 10:00 am - 4:00 pm. If you feel comfortable working with the public, please contact Crossroads directly at 530-251-0701 for more info and to volunteer.



## Serving Our Members

If you need help getting to a doctor's appointment, the grocery store, etc., several of our members will help get you there and back home. While self-isolation is being practiced, please contact our office if you need prescriptions picked up or other household necessities.

Follow us on social media and share us with your friends!

[facebook.com/umcofsusanville](https://facebook.com/umcofsusanville)

[instagram.com/susanville\\_methodist](https://instagram.com/susanville_methodist)



Susanville United Methodist Church  
60 South Lassen St.  
Susanville, CA 96130  
Phone: 530-257-5893  
SusanvilleMethodist.org

*This mail is like you: First Class!*

Plan to join our new Faith in Conversation group on Wednesday nights starting January 27.

*See Page 1 for details and the book to order.*



This year's Christmas Eve brought an unexpected gift to all of us in the form of the number of people who gave generously of their time to fill our Christmas Eve Zoom Worship service with warmth and smiles. Our thanks to Dennis R. and the handbell choir for ensuring we all heard the songs that make Christmas such a special time. Thanks also to Doug & Edie M. and everyone's friend Ferd the Moose. Though miles apart, we were able to share the gift of fellowship while we celebrated the arrival of God in the flesh.



### Join Us Online!

Our worship services, programs, and events continue happening online throughout the week via Zoom.

**Worship** – Sunday morning at 10:45 am

**Bible Study** – Tuesdays at 6 pm

**Faith in Conversation** – Wednesdays at 6 pm

**Coffee with the Pastor** – Thursdays at 6 pm

For all the login info you need to join us, visit our website at [SusanvilleMethodist.org/online](https://SusanvilleMethodist.org/online)