



Venice Free Methodist Church  
January 2024  
*"The Venice Review"*

Happy New Year, church family!

2023 has come to a close. The Lord has done so many incredible things this year! From new believers in Christ, to baptisms, to mentoring relationships, and so much more, the Holy Spirit is working in and through our church. That gives us reasons to remember and celebrate all that God has done despite our imperfections and inconsistencies.

Speaking of celebration, how did you welcome in 2024?

- *Was it stuffing yourself over a giant feast?*
- *Perhaps you were ambitious and wrote down your resolutions. (This time, you will definitely hit those goals!)*
- *Or did you watch a movie and go to bed before midnight? (You can be honest...)*

Whatever your idea of celebration is, 2024 is upon us, and God has great plans in store for each one of us. For starters, I am excited to begin teaching our new series through the Book of Philippians: "JOY FULL." The Apostle Paul can't help but have joy for the people at Philippi and calls them to rejoice continually. In fact, Paul uses 'joy' and 'rejoice' the most out of any letter he wrote - all while he was in prison!

This is a timely word as we enter the new year. Many of you have endured hardships that are difficult to talk about, let alone ask for

prayer. You could have a mindset that is full of doubt and despair, so you are barraged with a daily dose of negativity. It can seem like everyone around you is doing fine, smiling and laughing, and you don't understand why you can't get there. Joy seems the furthest from reality.

*However, God wants you to be FULL OF JOY.* Is this possible? Can Christians who are living for the Lord be joyful, even during trials and temptations? The answer is 'yes!'

Joy, as a fruit of the Spirit, is cultivated through our love of God and poured out unto others. Our series will focus on how the joy of the Lord will be your strength. You can be full of joy in 2024 as it will be a foundational fruit to sustain you through adversity, be a spiritual weapon against the warfare of your mind, and lead you into green pastures.

We will also be expanding on ways we can implement the new vision for VFMC. The vision is: "Welcoming All Home, Impacting All For Jesus."

2023 was the year to seek the Lord for 'what' the vision would be; 2024 will be the year of the 'how' - *How can we make this vision a reality?* This is where it gets exciting because we get to participate in having the vision come to life! The Lord is challenging us to be the people of God we are meant to be. Opportunities are available that confirm the vision, and I can't wait to share more with you.

Let's be encouraged that wherever you are in your relationship with the Lord, He loves you and is leading you into deeper waters. May God be glorified as we respond to the promptings of His Holy Spirit within us.

Blessings,

Pastor Nathan Cherney

# NEWS BRIEFS

*More pictures below*

**The Well (Young Adults Ministry) had their Winter Retreat 12/1-12/3 and had a great time of sharing, worship, and sledding.**



**The Salt & Pepper Christmas Brunch on 12/16 was fun, with a white elephant gift exchange and caroling!**



**Youth PULSE also had a Christmas party on 12/16 with gifts, blessing neighbors with treats, & lots of fun!**



**Childrens Hunger Fund on 12/2 was an opportunity for our youth and their families to see how impoverished kids around the world live and be grateful for the lives they've been blessed with. Afterward, everyone packed food to ship to families in need.**

Thank you to guest worship leaders, **David & Leah Gaulton** who led us in worship on 12/3



**Kingdom Kids had their Christmas Party on 12/17 with pizza, cookies, and gifts!**



**Visiting Missionary, Eric, inspirationally shared at service on 12/10 and later had lunch with the church Board Members as their "adopted" missionary.**



**Youth PULSE went ice skating on 12/20!**



**The Candlelight Service on 12/22** was our annual reminder that we worship the Light of the world at Christmas.



**Christmas Service on 12/24. Glory to the newborn King!** The kids sang Happy Birthday to Jesus and performed a wonderful skit showing the power Christ has over sin.



## MISSIONARY OF THE MONTH

**ZOE International** was founded in 2002 by Michael and Carol Hart to share the Gospel with those who had not heard, and to rescue vulnerable children from human trafficking. They set up headquarters in Santa Clarita, and began their work in Thailand. ZOE has since been established in Australia, Mexico and Japan, and continues its fight against human trafficking in the USA, particularly on the West Coast.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Check out [www.VeniceChurch.org](http://www.VeniceChurch.org) for more info!

### ADULT DISCIPLESHIP CLASS

**Sundays, Jan 7 thru Mar 24 – 8:45-9:45a – MPR**

Start your new year with Pastor Cliff, learning about “The Life of Christ!”

### YOUTH PULSE PARENT INFO NIGHT

**Sat, Jan 13 – 7pm – Youth House – Mr. Dan** will be sharing insights on our Youth Program! Parents of 5<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> graders are welcome! Refreshments will be provided. Please RSVP at [danielphai@gmail.com](mailto:danielphai@gmail.com)

### BIBLE BASICS – Sat, Jan 20 - 9:30-11:30a

If you're starting for the first time, or if you need help getting restarted. Pastor Cliff is holding a workshop for you! Childcare provided! Sign up here <https://bit.ly/3tCLEXi> or email [office@venicechurch.org](mailto:office@venicechurch.org).

### COUPLES WORKSHOP – LOVE LANGUAGES with NANCY NOJIMA - Fri, Jan 26 – 7-9p

For couples seriously dating, engaged, and married. Learn how to go through life together in love and faith. For more info, email Amber at [arosehollyfield@yahoo.com](mailto:arosehollyfield@yahoo.com)

**YOUTH MIDWINTER RETREAT – Fri, 2/16 thru Mon, 2/19 – Cedar Lake Camp, Big Bear** Register now! [www.bit.ly/pcjcmidwinter2024](http://www.bit.ly/pcjcmidwinter2024)

## CHURCH BULLETINS

### SEEKING WOMEN'S MINISTRY LEADERS

This one's for the ladies! Wouldn't it be nice to gather together with your sisters in Christ for fun and fellowship at a few meaningful events throughout the year? We're reigniting our Women's Ministry for 2024 and we're looking for a few wonderful ladies to help lead and plan! If you'd like to help or have questions, contact Dawn Dohrmann at [dkagihara@aol.com](mailto:dkagihara@aol.com)

### BAJA MISSIONS UPDATE

Due to generous donations, we were able to exceed the initial Baja Missions fundraising goal and raise enough to build 5 HOMES! Thank you to all who donated items for the garage sale, gave direct cash donation, volunteered time, and said prayers over this year's missions trip!



## Well Young Adult Winter Retreat



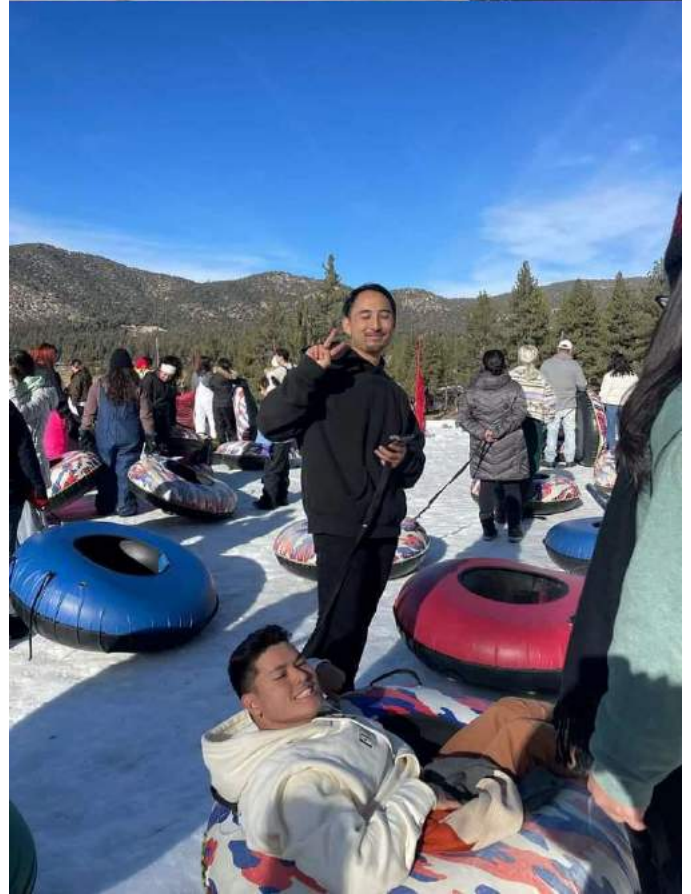


















## Childrens Hunger Fund











*Dr. Myron Wentz, CHF has been able  
of children around the globe.*

*Through the generosity of Dr. Myron Wentz, CHF has been able  
to deliver hope to millions of children around the globe.*





## Staff Christmas Party











## Salt & Pepper Christmas Potluck





Youth Christmas Party







## Kingdom Kids Christmas Party



## Youth Group







Youth Ice Skating





## Candlelight Service



## Christmas Service

