

SENTINEL

vol.cxlvi, no. 4

SPECIAL EDITION • April 2020



HORIZONS

To the Beloved Community,

As our experience of the COVID-19 virus continues to evolve quite quickly, our bishop, Grant Hagiya, has asked that all UM churches in the California-Pacific Conference not hold

public worship services at this time in order to best safeguard the health of our members and to do our part to mitigate the spread of the virus in our communities.

We at First UMC are quite fortunate in that we have been offering our services via livestream for quite some time. We will still be able to gather in spirit Sunday mornings at 10 a.m. to worship God together in music, Scripture, sermon and prayer.

Of course, we will continue to closely monitor the situation and reassess our ministries as things move forward. For the time being, we will not be holding classes, groups or other activities at the church, including simple church and Messy Church. Our Preschool is closed for now. While the church office staff works from home, always feel free to leave a phone message (310-393-8258) or email message for any of the church staff. Those messages will be forwarded to us and we will respond as promptly as possible. The Pastoral Care line (310-393-8258 and enter extension 1), will still be available for people to leave a message requesting care.

Instead, we will be creating new ways to be in prayer together, to meet via a variety of digital means, and to continue in love and service to one another and to our community. Many of our ministries will continue in new forms. For example, our Prayer Quilt group has offered to make prayer squares at home. Lenten Yoga will continue via livestream. Other groups may meet via Zoom or in other ways. Donations to the Westside Food Bank, so important especially to families whose kids aren't getting breakfast or lunch at school, may be made at their main location or at their drop-off sites.

Your continued financial support of the church is now more important than ever. You may mail your pledge to the church or drop it into the mail slot of our offices any day of the week. You may give online or mail checks through your online banking programs. You may continue to earmark gifts for our various mission projects, including Pennies for Haiti. You may choose to give an extra gift to our Nicodemus Fund which is a small fund set-up to provide emergency financial support to members in need.

And, as a fun and sweet way to remind our community that we care, if you continue to donate to the Flower Fund to remember or honor a loved one, your gifts will go to send flowers to some of our homebound members.

With some of our folks confined at home, it is more important than ever to stay connected. Let's reach out and check in on one another. Missing seeing someone at church? Give them a call or send them a note. May love abound one for another.

More new ways to stay in touch and grow spiritually will be created in the days ahead. The extra time we have together as families or the quiet time we have to read Scripture and pray can become a blessing.

As always, we are here for you and for one another. Please be in touch regarding any special needs or prayer requests you may have.

As I write this on St. Patrick's Day, I want to close with the prayer in the spirit of the season with these words, said to have been written on his breastplate. May we write these words on our hearts as we walk together into a new future with hope:

I arise today, through
The strength of heaven,
The light of the sun,
The radiance of the moon,
The splendor of fire,
The speed of lightning,
The swiftness of wind,
The depth of the sea,
The stability of the earth,
The firmness of rock.

I arise today, through
God's strength to pilot me,
God's might to uphold me,
God's wisdom to guide me,
God's eye to look before me,
God's ear to hear me,
God's word to speak for me,
God's hand to guard me
God's shield to protect me,
God's host to save me...

May God bless us with deeper faith and ever-renewed hope.

In love,
Rev. Patricia Farris

WATCH ONLINE Sundays 10 a.m.

Watch Online
SUNDAYS 10 A.M.

On Sunday, March 22, First UMC held its first **online only** Sunday worship service, due to state mandated stay-at-home orders in light of Coronavirus. Communicating through our weekly Friday Community emails, and online posts via Facebook and Instagram, all were encouraged to log into Facebook to watch the service live Sunday at 10 a.m. With over 352 views and counting for the March 22 service, our online worship services have been a success, and we will keep worshipping this way until we are able to come together again in the beautiful sanctuary!

Though we cannot be together in person, we will join together in heart and spirit through Scripture, music, sermon, and prayer. You can watch the service in real time, or later at your convenience.

WHEN: Sunday 10 a.m. Sanctuary Worship
(Barring any technical difficulties)

WHERE: Go to the First UMC Facebook page (@santamonicaumc), or watch the Sunday service the following week anytime on: www.santamonicaumc.org/livestream

(Facebook Users: Be sure to "Follow" our page - not just "Like" - so that you receive notification updates such as when the service goes live.)

Join the Stay-at-Home Weekly Photo Challenge

Go to: www.santamonicaumc.org/photos

Getting bored at home? Each week during the stay-at-home order, we'll put out a photo challenge in the Friday Community email, or you may check on the webpage at www.santamonicaumc.org/photos. Thank you to those who have already shared or posted photos as you watched the 10 a.m. service online. Didn't get to send your photo? Well, keep them coming! We love seeing you worship with us each week. Send 1 or 2 pics or any questions to: Shalimar Carducci: s.carducci@santamonicaumc.org.



First UMC staff member David Penson encouraging everyone to watch the service online.



Thanks for watching Art Dodd Jr.!!



Shalimar Carducci: Babies and kids are always welcome to attend service - whether from home or in the sanctuary. @sha7imar, @jojopiehoneybunch



To the Landsverks: Thank you for being with us in spirit! @dlandsve @landsverk david @joycelandsverk



Sarah Rold: Breakfast in pjs and church!! @simplysaraly



To the Quintanas: Thanks for attending @tali.qu and @alejrquintana! We miss you.



Caprice Walker enjoying Sunday worship at her desk.

APRIL ONLINE Calendar

Ministries meeting online:

Men's Breakfast: Tuesdays, 7 a.m. via ZOOM.

Email Nathan Oney (n.oney@santamonicaumc.org) if you would like to join this group.

Lenten Yoga via Facebook (@openspacesm): Wednesdays, 7 p.m.

Lenten Yoga will be live-streamed Wednesday nights, and should be available for the following 24 hours.

Young Adults Virtual Community Soul Care: Fridays, 6 p.m.

via Zoom. Email Nathan Oney for more info.

Sunday School Meetings: Sundays, 11 a.m. via ZOOM

Sign up for the Children and Family email for more info.

UMYF Youth Group: Sundays, 6:30 p.m. via ZOOM.

Email Tricia Guerrero (t.guerrero@santamonicaumc.org) if you would like to join this group for youth in grades 6-12.



A screenshot of the UMYF youth and counselors meeting online and staying connected.

Easter Vigil

by Nathan Oney, Pastoral Associate

Lent feels different this year. I have abandoned—or rather, shifted—my Lenten discipline to more fully embrace this strange wilderness that we find ourselves in. We are all participating in this physical distancing fast from our normal ways of being. This is, in so many ways, the most difficult and most important Lenten fast of our lives. The path forward for us is unknown and difficult. The first disciples walked a similar path with Jesus leading up to the crucifixion.

A path of doubt. A path of fear. But if they had been paying attention, it would have also been a path of hope. **As we move forward toward Easter, I hope that you will join us for a journey through Holy Week beginning April 5. Each day has something to teach us, and each day simple church will post a short reflection on social media.** Then on Saturday, we will offer an in-home Easter Vigil service of light and darkness, to draw us as the family of God into the resurrection light of Christ. Look for more info to come.

Follow us on Facebook @santamonicaumc to stay in touch.



Walk the Labyrinth - Good Friday

In lieu of the annual Good Friday Labyrinth Walk in Simkins Hall, First UMC invites you to go to: www.santamonicaumc.org/labyrinth, and follow along with the online virtual Labyrinth Walk.

Lenten Yoga continues thru Holy Week

Open Space invites people of all ages to add the spiritual discipline of yoga to your Lenten practice. Led by Kristia Oney, the series incorporates gentle, restorative, and energizing physical movement (with modifications for all mobility and flexibility levels) along with guidance through scripture, connecting body, mind, and spirit to help us settle into this season with intention.

Lenten Yoga via Facebook

(@openspacesm): Wednesdays, 7 p.m.

Lenten Yoga will be livestreamed Wednesday nights, and should be available for the following 24 hours.



Kristia Oney leading an online session of Lenten Yoga.

Prayer Requests

Let us be in prayer together. Fill out a prayer request form anytime, and our Prayer Chain will be notified of your request. All requests are confidential. Go to:

www.santamonicaumc.org/prayer-requests

Children and Family Ministry

Hello families! If you haven't already signed up for the Children and Family Ministry email, now's the time. Until we can meet again at church, Tricia Guerrero, Pastoral Associate for Family Ministries, compiles the weekly email, providing **Sunday School From Home** as a way for the children to continue learning and exploring their faith. The email includes: a weekly message from Tricia, activities, prayers, Bible stories, and useful parent links. For more information and to sign up, go to: www.santamonicaumc.org/sunday-school-from-home.



Tricia Guerrero, with a message for the Sunday school children and families, via Facebook.

And, don't miss the Family Devotional webpage: a guide to help connect, ask, listen, and to pray, *together* as a family, updated seasonally.

www.santamonicaumc.org/family-devotional

Methodist Foundation Scholarships

Attention students! Applications for the annual Methodist Foundation Scholarships are available online beginning Friday April 10. Please email Sarah Rold at s.rolld@santamonicaumc.org, if you have any questions.

Go to: www.santamonicaumc.org/methodistfoundation

GIVE

Every dollar given to First United Methodist Church of Santa Monica goes to support our ministries here at church, to our local community, and to our partners around the world. We could not do this without you. We are in unusual times, but our time together now is more creative and meaningful than ever. We are overwhelmingly grateful for your financial giving. The Finance Office is still securely receiving and processing timely gifts that are being mailed, dropped off in person at church through the Business Office mail slot, and through online giving at www.santamonicaumc.org/give. If you haven't given online before, give it a try! It's easy. We look forward when we can be present together in body. If you have questions about giving, please contact Christina Eddy (c.eddy@santamonicaumc.org.) Thank you!



Thank You

Thanks to YOU and YOUR FAITHFUL GIVING, lives are touched and transformed through the ministries of Santa Monica First UMC.

Every gift, big or small, when given in gratitude or joy, create a beautiful quilt of faithfulness and praise.

Thanks to you, the blessings of God's abundant love and grace shower upon our congregation, community, and mission projects throughout the US and around the world.

Thanks be to God!

Rev. Patricia Farris
Senior Minister

FIRST UMC

COMMUNITY

Thank you to the First UMC Community

"We want to thank all those who have supported us following Dennis' surgery and his ongoing recovery. Your prayers, food, support, and messages have brought us great comfort and strength. Thank you so much. We are truly blessed."

- Dennis and Sue Payne

Deaths

We extend our deepest sympathies to the families and friends of these departed loved ones:

First UMC member Margaret Gazey's sister-in-law **Stella Gazey** died March 22, in England.

Thank you! Pennies for Haiti

by Nathan Oney, Pastoral Associate

Thank you for your participation in this year's Pennies for Haiti fundraising campaign. Even in the midst of fear and hoarding, the generosity of this congregation shined through in amazing ways! **The \$900 raised reflects a deep commitment to our Haitian siblings.** These funds will be used to supply **18 young goats** to the village of Sobier as an investment in the future of its residents. The return on this investment will make a material difference in the lives of many people who face the hardships of remote life in the poorest country in the western hemisphere. We pray for all of the people of Haiti in this time of global crisis, and we thank God for the relationship that this congregation continues to have with the Methodist Church of Haiti and the people of Sobier. **Thank you for your generous support.**

Red Cross Community Blood Drive - Postponed

The Health Ministry Council's Red Cross Community Blood Drive, originally scheduled for April 26, has been postponed until late summer/early Fall. We will post further updates once a new date has been determined.

General Conference of The United Methodist Church

The General Conference of The United Methodist Church, originally scheduled for May, has been postponed into 2021 due to travel restrictions and health concerns. The Minneapolis Convention Center which was to be the site of GC is closed to all events for the foreseeable future. We will keep you posted as we receive updates. In the meantime, please keep the church in your prayers. May this time of "pause" bring perspective, insight, and new possibilities for faithful witness and service.

Check the website for current event updates:
www.santamonicaumc.org

Happenings



Scenes from the 21st Annual St. Patrick's Day Luncheon.



Dick Pruden purchasing a Be the Hope metal water bottle, as part of the UMYF fundraiser for their Youth Service Project trip.



The First UMC Preschool's annual Book Fair, open on a Sunday morning for the congregation to browse books for children and adults.



Ms. Jamie misses the Sunday School kids so she made this video for them!



Jamie Jones, reading a book online to her Sunday School kids in "Sunday School from Home," the Children and Family Ministry email.

Theo and Ian Richards making cards at home for Faith in Action at Home. Working with Anne Premer, our Congregation Care Associate, the Sunday school kids made cards to send to homebound seniors.



PRESCHOOL CORNER



"...Please know that when we are able to open our doors, we welcome each and every one of you. Give your children hugs for us and know that hugs will be waiting here at First UMC Preschool from our teachers and each of us in the near future."

- excerpt from a message from Dee Menzies, Preschool Director, 3/27/20



While the Preschool has been closed, preschool teachers have been holding online class meetings with the children at home. Some teachers have also filmed activities for the kids to follow along at home. Ms. Susie (top left) teaches "Bug Yoga," while Ms. Johanna (right), demonstrates how to make a butterfly out of a cereal box.

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
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  @santamonicaumc

WE'RE HERE
FOR YOU
**CONTACT
US**

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The phone messages will be forwarded to us and we will respond as promptly as possible. The Pastoral Care line (310-393-8258 and enter extension 1), will still be available for people to leave a message requesting care.

Senior Minister

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