

SENTINEL

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH of SANTA MONICA



LENT 2021

HORIZONS

by Rev. Patricia Farris

Lent 2021 - Opening Our Lives

Gracious God, open the eyes of our hearts, and let the light of your truth flood in. Shine your light on the hope you are calling us to embrace. Reveal to us the glorious riches you are preparing as our inheritance. Amen.
(prayer based on Ephesians 1:18)

The season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 17. Our theme this year is “Opening Our Lives.”

So, let me ask: how are you doing? How are your coping skills holding up? It’s tough, isn’t it, to carry on. Here are a few tips I’ve gleaned from a variety of articles and from my own reflection to help us open our lives to God.

Pray more and more often. Choose something—the sight of a bird, a memory, a frequent task—even washing dishes works—and whenever you see or remember or are doing that, pause, take a deep breath, stretch, and offer a prayer of gratitude or simply wait a moment in silence in the presence of God.

Take some time each day to get outside yourself. Call a family member, friend, or church member. Send a card or note. Listen to your favorite music. Read a book that takes you to another time or place. Resolve to focus your Lenten discipline this year around service, giving yourself to others. You’ll find a variety of suggestions in this Sentinel.

Get some fresh air and sunshine. Sit by a window. Mask up and walk around the block. Come on over and walk around the Courtyard here at church. From a safe distance, wave at those you meet and let your eyes smile.

Connect with others. Soak up their love and support. You’ll find a variety of opportunities in this Sentinel and on our church webpage.

I’d love to hear from you about what is and isn’t working for YOU! We’re in this together. And not only that—God is with us. May the Spirit of the Living God open our hearts and fill us with truth, light, and hope.

Peace be with you,

Patricia Farris
Senior Minister



Ash Wednesday Service

February 17 marks the beginning of the 40-day Lenten season of prayer, repentance, service and reflection. It is a time to prepare ourselves for the joy and promise of the Resurrection on Easter.

Our worship service will be online this year. It will be a simple service of Scripture, prayer, and music. To prepare, you might want to gather some ashes in a small bowl or you may use olive oil to trace a cross on your forehead. **You may also stop by the church office from 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. on February 16 and 17, to pick up a small cup of ashes individually packed.**

Our service will air on Facebook and on our YouTube channel beginning **Wednesday, February 17 at 10 a.m.** It will be available for you all through the day so that you may worship at a time that best fits your schedule. As we Open Our Lives this Lent, may God bless us with the renewing, cleansing, healing power of the Spirit.



FEBRUARY Calendar

OPPORTUNITIES TO CONNECT THIS MONTH

Tuesday, February 2

7 a.m. Men's Breakfast, via Zoom

Wednesday, February 3

7 p.m. Open Space Young Adults Soul Care, via Zoom

Thursday, February 4

6:30 p.m. Listening Hearts Women's Group w/Tricia Guerrero, via Zoom

Sunday, February 7 - Holy Communion

9:15 a.m. Sunday School for Kids, via Zoom

10 a.m. Online Worship Service (Facebook, website & YouTube)

11 a.m. After Worship Coffee Hour, via Zoom

4 p.m. UMYF Gathering

5:30 p.m. Confirmation Class first meeting, via Zoom

Tuesday, February 9

7 a.m. Men's Breakfast, via Zoom

9:30 a.m. Prayer Chain Conference Call

Wednesday, February 10

12:10 p.m. February Mid-Week Recital (Facebook, Website & YouTube)

7 p.m. Open Space Young Adults Soul Care, via Zoom

Saturday, February 13

4:30 p.m. Messy Church, via Zoom

Sunday, February 14 - Transfiguration Sunday

9:15 a.m. Sunday School for Kids, via Zoom

10 a.m. Online Worship Service (Facebook & website)

11 a.m. After Worship Coffee Hour, via Zoom

4 p.m. UMYF Gathering

5:30 p.m. Confirmation Class, via Zoom

Monday, February 15 - Presidents Day, church campus closed

Tuesday, February 16

7 a.m. Men's Breakfast, via Zoom

2 p.m. & 7 p.m. Lenten Bible Study with Rev. Larry Young, via Zoom

Wednesday, February 17 - Ash Wednesday

10 a.m. Ash Wednesday Online Worship Service, via Facebook, Website & YouTube (see page 1 for more info)

7 p.m. Open Space Young Adults Soul Care, via Zoom

Thursday, February 18

6:30 p.m. Listening Hearts Women's Group w/Tricia Guerrero, via Zoom

Saturday, February 20

9:30 a.m. Prayer Quilt Workparty, via Zoom

Sunday, February 21 - Pennies for Haiti campaign begins online

9:15 a.m. Sunday School for Kids, via Zoom

10 a.m. Online Worship Service (Facebook & website)

11 a.m. After Worship Coffee Hour, via Zoom

4 p.m. UMYF Gathering

5:30 p.m. Confirmation Class, via Zoom

Tuesday, February 23

7 a.m. Men's Breakfast, via Zoom

9:30 a.m. Prayer Chain Conference Call

2 p.m. & 7 p.m. Lenten Bible Study with Rev. Larry Young, via Zoom

Wednesday, February 24

7 p.m. Open Space Young Adults Soul Care, via Zoom

Sunday, February 28 - Pennies for Haiti campaign online

9:15 a.m. Sunday School for Kids, via Zoom

10 a.m. Online Worship Service (Facebook & website)

11 a.m. After Worship Coffee Hour, via Zoom

4 p.m. UMYF Gathering

5:30 p.m. Confirmation Class, via Zoom

HOW TO PARTICIPATE ONLINE

Sundays 10 a.m. Worship Service

During this season of "Sheltering in Love," we join together in heart and spirit through Scripture, music, sermon, and prayer. **You can participate in the service in real time or later at your convenience.** Together in love, let us draw close to the heart of God, finding peace, strength and hope for the journey!

WHEN: Sunday 10 a.m. Sanctuary Worship

Go to the **First UMC Facebook Live page:** www.facebook.com/santamonicaumc/live_videos, or watch the Sunday service the following week ANYTIME: www.santamonicaumc.org/livestream, Or on the **First UMC YouTube page:** www.youtube.com/c/SantaMonicaUMC, where you can also find recordings of past services.

February Ongoing Ministries via Zoom:

- **Men's Breakfast/Bible Study:** Tuesdays, 7 a.m. via Zoom
- **Open Space Young Adults Soul Care:** Wednesdays, 7 p.m. via Zoom
- **Listening Hearts Women's Group, with Tricia Guerrero:** 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month, 6:30 p.m. via Zoom.
- **Sunday School for Kids:** Sundays, 9:15-9:45 a.m. via Zoom
- **UMYF Youth Group:** Sundays, 4 p.m.

For more information on all of these programs, go to

www.santamonicaumc.org



After Worship Coffee Hour

Get your coffee and donut (or whatever snacks you might have on hand) ready for a post-worship virtual "Coffee Hour" Sundays at 11 a.m. Say "hi" to some church friends and chat about the topic of the day.

All are welcome via Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/95709897528>.

Zoom ID: 957 0989 7528 Password: fumc. *Have a computer but no camera? No problem! You can still attend. Contact Sarah Rold (s.rolde@santamonicaumc.org) by Fridays for the Sunday gathering.

Messy Church now on Zoom

It's time for some messy fun together! Join us for a Zoom Meet-Up as we explore the theme "Love Your Neighbor" on Valentine's weekend. All are welcome! Zoom details and coloring pages are available to download in our monthly Messy Church newsletter, going out on February 4th. To sign up for the monthly email and Zoom info, go to the Messy Church webpage: www.santamonicaumc.org/messychurch, or contact Tricia Guerrero (t.guerrero@santamonicaumc.org) for more information.

**Saturday, February 13,
4:30- 5:15 p.m. via Zoom**





Offerings During Lent

Spiritual Practices

by Rev. Patricia Farris

As a follow-up to our First UMC Spiritual Health Survey, here are some suggestions for spiritual growth and health from the Methodist Church in Britain. With weeks and months of the coronavirus pandemic ahead, it is important to have down time. Continue to access nature and sunlight wherever possible. Exercise, eat well and stay hydrated.

Try practicing the “**Apple**” technique to deal with anxiety and worries.

• **Acknowledge:** Notice and acknowledge the uncertainty as it comes to mind. • **Pause:** Don’t react as you normally do. Don’t react at all. Pause and breathe. • **Pull back:** Tell yourself this is just the worry talking, and this apparent need for certainty is not helpful and not necessary. It is only a thought or feeling. Don’t believe everything you think. Thoughts are not statements or facts. • **Let go:** Let go of the thought or feeling. It will pass. You don’t have to respond to them. You might imagine them floating away in a bubble or cloud. • **Explore:** Explore the present moment, because right now, in this moment, all is well.

Notice your breathing and the sensations of your breathing. Notice the ground beneath you. Look around and notice what you see, what you hear, what you can touch, what you can smell. Right now. Then shift your focus of attention to something else—on what you need to do, on what you were doing before you noticed the worry, or do something else—mindfully with your full attention. **May God’s peace be with you.**

Gospel of Mark Bible Study

with Rev. Larry Young

A Lenten Bible study on the Gospel of Mark will be offered on Zoom beginning February 16, led by Rev. Larry Young. Mark’s Gospel is the earliest record of Jesus’ life and teachings, so it is the nearest in time to Jesus’ lifetime. While much of Mark is repeated in Matthew and Luke, Mark has his own distinctive emphases and perspectives. It is the Gospel most likely to be used in worship through most of 2021. All are welcome to this study, including friends of members.

Duplicate sessions will be held on Tuesdays at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. for about an hour each. You may sign up for the class by emailing Larry at lyoung@lryoung.net, and he will send you the Zoom link for the class.

Gospel of Mark Bible Study: Tuesdays through Lent, begins February 16, 2 p.m. and 7 p.m., via Zoom

The Upper Room Online Lenten Retreat

The Upper Room invites you to join them this Lent for an online retreat called *Walking in the Wilderness*, in which they “will hold sacred space for one another and connect with God throughout each day.” Class price is half off at \$15. Sign up: <https://urelearning.upperroom.org>

Lenten Devotionals - Online

The Spiritual Formation Council invites you to read your Lenten Devotional online, which starts on the first Sunday in Lent - Ash Wednesday, February 17. The devotional is written by First UMC members and provides a wonderful opportunity to share Lent with family and friends. This year we focus on the theme “Opening Our Lives,” and reflect on this passage:



LOVING GOD, IN OUR SUFFERINGS AND JOYS, IN OUR RELATIONSHIPS AND DAILY LIVES, WE ASK THAT YOUR KINGDOM COME. OPEN OUR EYES TO YOUR PRESENCE, OPEN OUR EARS TO YOUR CALL, OPEN OUR HEARTS TO YOUR LOVE, OPEN OUR WAYS TO YOUR WILL, OPEN OUR ACTIONS TO YOUR COMPASSION, OPEN OUR PAIN TO YOUR PEACE, AND, IN DOING SO, OPEN OUR WORLD TO YOUR HOPE. IN THE NAME OF JESUS, AMEN.

Holy Week Audio Devotionals

The audio devotionals for Advent were such a hit we are now offering the Audio Devotionals for Holy Week (March 28 - April 4), as read by their authors (*subject to change*.) The audio devotionals will be included in devotional emails sent out during Holy Week, as well as on the website. If you’re not on the Devotional email list, go to: www.santamonicaumc.org/lenten-devotionals to sign up.

How to Keep a Holy Lent: Beginners Guide printable card

Look for a downloadable Lenten guide called *How to Keep a Holy Lent: Beginners Guide*, available beginning Ash Wednesday and throughout Lent on the website. Print it out at home, or save it to your desktop or phone for easy reference. Each day includes a suggested tip for observing Lent. Some examples include: Day 11: Call a friend; Day 22: Tell someone what you are grateful for; Day 39: Pray for peace.

Available February 17, go to: www.santamonicaumc.org/lent

Deaths

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

- First UMC member **Janet Lipscomb**, who died January 3.
- First UMC member **Jan Ellis**, who died December 22. Jan began as a part-time teacher in 1971 at First UMC Preschool, and was the Preschool Director from July 1, 1993 until she retired June 30, 1997. Jan also served as a Chairperson of the Worship Council, and as a member of the Administrative Board and Staff Parish Relations. And, for over 16 years, Jan served as Director of the First UMC Cherub Choir.
- First UMC member **Joy Ann Detmer**, who died January 25. Joy was commissioned as a Stephen Minister on May 23, 1993, and was part of the church office staff in the late 80s through early 90s.

Congregation Care

In light of the reinstated Safer-At-Home orders, the church office is closed to the public. However, you may always feel free to leave a phone message (310-393-8258). 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.

If you have any questions, need assistance, or would like to volunteer to help with our homebound folks, please contact Congregation Care Associate **Anne Premer**: a.premer@santamonicaumc.org, or (310)393-8258 ext. 103.

• Update your Emergency Contact Form

Our pastoral care team needs your help in making sure we have the most recent contact info for you and your family. If you have never filled out an emergency contact form with us, or have new information to update, please take a few moments to do so. The information is for First UMC purposes only, and will be used only in case of an emergency if you are unable to speak for yourself.

Go to: www.santamonicaumc.org/emergency-contact-info

• Blood Drive Opportunitites

Take a look at the many blood drive sites available by the Red Cross during this time. Please make an appointment to ensure safe social distancing. All donors will continue to be tested for COVID-19 Antibodies. Sign up at www.Redcrossblood.org

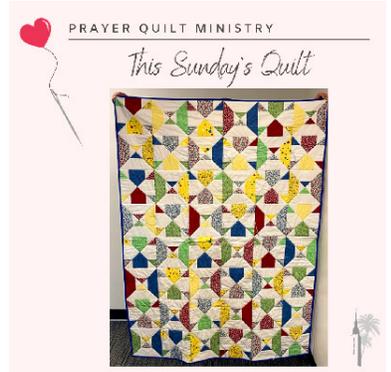
Help Wanted

First UMC of Santa Monica is looking for part-time help in the areas of administration and social media coordination. We are dedicated to daring to dream this year above what we do! We want to continue our strong, nurturing presence online. Are you flexible, thoughtful, interactive, super organized, creative, and like to tell stories with great writing? Are you a history buff? Like to work with content coordination, creation, posting, execution of various platforms, mailings, communications? Please email the church office at: info@santamonicaumc.org

Prayer Quilts - How to Request

During this time of Covid-19, the Prayer Quilt Ministry has created a new way of continuing to offer Prayer Quilts to those in need:

1. Talk to the intended recipient.
 - Ask if the person is willing to be prayed for and to receive a quilt.
 - Ask what specific prayers are wished for.
 - There is no charge for the quilt – it is a gift of love.
2. Contact Maile Marquand (maile@rugbooks.com) or Sue Payne (sue.f.payne@gmail.com).
3. Select the quilt if some are already made, or suggest colors if one is to be selected for you.



Once the quilt selection has been made, First UMC will display the quilt in the Friday Community Email, and also during Sunday 10 a.m. Worship. You may call or email Sarah in the church office to request a tie be made on the quilt for you; she will let you know the requested prayers: Sarah Rold (310.393.8258), or s.rold@santamonicaumc.org, Prayers will be collected Tuesday – Friday of the following week, and the prayer knots will be tied by the church staff.

www.santamonicaumc.org/prayerquiltministry



PRESCHOOL CORNER

Open Enrollment Now!

Special thanks this month to Preschool Teacher Johanna Holman for capturing the daily life of our preschoolers.

Here children are learning about winter animals, veterinarian work, and some messy outdoor fun.

We give thanks to all of the teachers for providing a safe, nurturing, and loving learning environment.

Preschool has some spots available currently in this school year. Formal registration for the new school year will take place this month.

Please contact Dee Menzies directly at d.menzies@santamonicaumc.org for more information and a tour.



February ONLINE Mid-Week Recital

Our February 2021 Mid-Week Recital features **Aram Barsamian, baritone, with accompanist Mark Salters, piano.** An active concert artist, Mr. Barsamian sang in “Debbie and Friends,” the concert that inaugurated Meng Concert Hall in 2006, singing alongside distinguished CSUF alumna Deborah Voigt. The baritone has performed the solos in numerous oratorios, among which are *Messiah*, *Judas Maccabaeus*, the *Requiems* by Mozart, Fauré, Brahms and Duruflé, *St. John Passion*, *Ich habe genug*, *Dixit Dominus*, and more. Mr. Barsamian began his teaching career in 2001, at La Sierra University, where he directed/conducted Massenet’s operas *Cendrillon* (2004) and *Thaïs* (2006), as well as Pauline Viardot’s salon opera *Cendrillon* (2008). He joined the faculty of CSULB’s Bob Cole Conservatory of Music in 2014. Currently, he is the Coordinator of Classical Vocal Studies and the Director of Opera Studies at Fullerton College.



To read Aram’s complete bio, go to:

www.santamonicaumc.org/mid-week-recitals.

How to watch:

• **Facebook** - www.facebook.com/santamonicaumc/live.

Be sure to “follow” our page.

• **YouTube Channel** - www.youtube.com/c/SantaMonicaUMC

Subscribe to our channel and adjust your notification settings to your preference.

• **Website** - View the recital on the Livestream page:

www.santamonicaumc.org/livestream.

ONLINE Mid-Week Recital: Wednesday, February 10, 12:10 p.m.

Haiti Mission Update: Pennies for Peanuts!

As reported last month in the Sentinel, the Haiti Mission Team and our in-country team of Caz, Jakob and Onel, have learned that peanuts are a valuable cash crop that requires little water to maintain. Our plan is to supply select families with resources for preparing the land, fertilizer and seed to grow a crop of peanuts that will be sold for profit and used to prepare the crops for the next season. We have about half the funds required for this project currently. We are running our “Pennies for Haiti” campaign in February, asking for continued donations from the congregation, friends and neighbors to raise the additional funds.

Tune in on **Sunday, February 21 during the 10 a.m. Online Worship Service** as Haiti Team leader Todd Erlandson presents a *Moment for Mission*, kicking off the Pennies for Peanuts fundraiser.

To donate, go to: www.santamonicaumc.org/haiti, click on Give Online at the top of the page. Select “*Haiti - Pennies for Peanuts*” in the drop-down menu on the donation page. **Thank you for your support!**

Haiti Pennies for Peanuts: begins Sunday, February 21, runs through Sunday March 7.

Men's Breakfast/Bible Study Zoom Meetings

Men’s Breakfast & Bible Study is a weekly meeting where men of all ages and generations gather to ground themselves in the Holy Scripture during online breakfast. As men try to navigate the stresses and complexities of this modern world and daily life, Men’s Breakfast is a place for community, prayer and fellowship through the sharing of God’s Holy word. Come by online as your schedule permits! For more info and to sign up, go to:

www.santamonicaumc.org/biblestudy

Every Tuesday, 7 a.m., via Zoom



LOOKING FORWARD

Upward Bound House - Home Run for Kids ONLINE

This year the annual Upward Bound House Home Run for Kids will be online! This new format will allow for people to participate from



anywhere in the world. Each runner will be able to run the race on their own schedule, or they can choose to participate virtually with the online group on **Sunday, March 14**. Sign up now with Team First UMC :

www.santamonicaumc.org/home-run-for-kids

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

from Brulan Jean-Michel
(part of the in-country Haiti team)

Dear All,

Whatever the difficulties we faced in 2020, we are alive today and well.

I am sure that some among us have lost a friend, someone we knew or even someone very close to us in 2020, but we are alive today and well.

Whatever dreams not realized yet, disappointments or misunderstandings we faced, we are alive today and well.

We certainly can not easily forget those situations we encountered in 2020 but we are alive today and well.

Let’s thank God for his grace and blessings because we have received many from him in 2020 despite it all.

Let’s ring 2021 in with serenity but also joy and the hope that it will be better than 2020.

So, I want to take this opportunity to wish you all a very blessed and happy New Year 2021 under the wings of our Lord.

Peace and blessings!
Brulan



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Prayer Requests

The Prayer Chain is a large network of persons who pray in response to prayer requests. Members of the Prayer Chain treat all requests as confidential. You may send a prayer request to the church at any time, and our Prayer Chain will be notified. Go to: www.santamonicaumc.org/prayer-requests.



**Listening
Hearts**
Digging Deeper

**Beginning Feb 4:
Stories about women in the Bible**



**1st/3rd Thursdays
6:30 p.m. via Zoom**

with
Tricia Guerrero

a women's group for all self-identifying women

Listening Hearts is a spiritual community of women who gather to listen to one another in the midst of life's chaos. They are starting a new series called "Digging Deeper," looking at the voices of women in the Bible, so if you have been looking to join, now is a great time! Look for the link to register on the home page of the website: www.santamonicaumc.org



Thank You!

**Rev. Keri
Olsen Paget**

for hosting
**GRIEF
and
GRACES**

A sacred space for weary souls

Since July 2020, Rev. Keri Olsen Paget has offered "Grief and Graces: A Sacred Space for Weary Souls" via Zoom. Sunday, January 24th was Rev. Keri's last gathering before she departed for her maternity leave. We thank Rev. Keri for offering a place of community during this season of uncertainty and challenge, and we wish her and her family many happy days ahead as they welcome their new baby!