

SENTINEL

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH of SANTA MONICA



HORIZONS

by Rev. Patricia Farris

March 15th marks the one-year anniversary of our new life during the pandemic. Remember how from one Sunday to the next we switched to online worship? Actually, online everything!

I'm really proud and grateful for how our staff and members have stepped up. We're all learning new skills and new ways of doing things, improving week by week. Even as we all yearn to be back together in person, we will continue to keep safety and health as our top priorities. Please continue to mask up, keep a safe distance, wash your hands frequently—and reach out to the people you miss seeing. Those calls, emails, cards, texts keep us all connected and bring smiles to our faces. A care package dropped off on the front porch is a great idea!

In some ways, the pandemic has caused us all to withdraw and turn inward. It's not just the masks and the distancing. It's the uncertainty and anxiety about what's happening and what's going to happen, and about not knowing what the timeline will be for a new chapter to begin.

Our Lenten theme, "Opening Our Lives" is an invitation to take a deep breath and open our hearts to the presence of the Living God. It's an invitation to open ourselves to the beauty, wonder, comfort and love of God's kingdom that is all around us all the time.

This theme is taken from *Opening Our Lives: Devotional Readings for Lent*, written by Trystan Owain Hughes. It comes to us from the Bible Reading Fellowship in the U.K. and is the recommended book for Lent 2021 from the Archbishop of Wales.



Its opening prayer is found in the Introduction to our 2021 First UMC Lenten Devotional. May this be the prayer of our hearts this Lent:

"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."

Re-Gathering Task Force Update

Our Re-Gathering Task Force met on February 10 to review the recent U.S. Supreme Court ruling on church services in California as well as the latest statement on in-person worship from our bishop, Grant Hagiya.

In sharing thoughts and concerns, we all affirm how very much we miss worshipping together, singing together, and sharing a bagel and cup of coffee in Coffee Hour. Nevertheless, health and safety remain our primary priority. LA County is still in the "Purple Tier" category, meaning that COVID-19 is widespread with most nonessential business operations closed. Despite recent decreases in the current COVID-19 surge of cases and hospitalizations, COVID-19 transmission remains widespread here in L.A. County and in many states and countries. Additionally, COVID variants are more easily transmissible, and verification of the variant in L.A. County means residents and businesses must be extremely diligent adhering to all public health safety measures, including wearing face coverings, distancing from others, and handwashing.

After extensive discussion, it was decided that **we will continue with our online only services at least through Easter**. At that time, we will re-assess the statistics on the virus and variants in the community and other pertinent indicators, including levels of infection and hospitalization as well as availability of vaccinations. (*cont. on page 7 >>*)

MARCH Calendar

OPPORTUNITIES TO CONNECT THIS MONTH

Tuesday, March 2

7 a.m. Men's Breakfast, via Zoom
2 p.m. & 7 p.m. Lenten Bible Study with Rev. Larry Young, via Zoom

Wednesday, March 3

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

Thursday, March 4

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

Sunday, March 7 - 3rd Sunday in Lent • Holy Communion • Pennies for Haiti last Sunday

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, via Zoom

Tuesday, March 9

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
3 p.m. Regathering Task Force, via Zoom

Wednesday, March 10

12:10 p.m. March Mid-Week Recital (Facebook, Website & YouTube)
7 p.m. Open Space Young Adults Soul Care, via Zoom

Saturday, March 13

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

Sunday, March 14 - 4th Sunday in Lent • Daylight Saving Time begins

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 (*St. Patrick's Day Coffee Hour*)

4 p.m. UMYF Gathering
5:30 p.m. Confirmation Class, via Zoom

Tuesday, March 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, March 17

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

Thursday, March 18

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

Saturday, March 20

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

Sunday, March 21 - 5th Sunday in Lent • Service of Lessons and Anthems

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, March 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, March 24

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

HOLY WEEK

Sunday, March 28 - Palm 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 *final class*, via Zoom

Tuesday, March 30

7 a.m. Men's Breakfast, via Zoom
2 p.m. & 7 p.m. Lenten Bible Study with Rev. Larry Young, via Zoom

Wednesday, March 31

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

Thursday, April 1 - Maundy Thursday

6:30 p.m. Online Maundy Thursday Worship, (Facebook, website & YouTube)

7 p.m. After Worship Online Community Gathering, via Zoom

Friday, April 2 - Good Friday • Walk the First UMC Online Labyrinth

Saturday, April 3

11 a.m. - 3 p.m. Easter Hop-By Event, First UMC Courtyard (*for details see page 3*)

Sunday, April 4 - Easter Sunday • Family Sunday, no Sunday School

10 a.m. Online Worship Service (Facebook & website)
11 a.m. After Worship Coffee Hour, via Zoom



Offerings During Lent

• Gospel of Mark Bible Study with Rev. Larry Young

The Gospel of Mark Bible study led by Rev. Larry Young continues on Tuesdays through Lent. Mark's Gospel is the earliest record of Jesus' life and teachings, so it is the nearest in time to Jesus' lifetime. You may still sign up for the class by emailing Larry at lyoung@lyoung.net, he will send you the Zoom link.

Gospel of Mark Bible Study: Tuesdays through Lent, 2 p.m. and 7 p.m., (same class) via Zoom

• Lenten Devotionals

The Spiritual Formation Council invites you to read your Lenten Devotional online. This year we focus on the theme "Opening Our Lives." This year, the Holy Week Devotionals will also be made into Audio files as recorded by the writers (subject to change.) To subscribe or download, go to: www.santamonicaumc.org/lenten-devotionals.

• How to Keep a Holy Lent: Spiritual Practice Guide downloadable card

You may still download a pdf of the Spiritual Practice Guide on the website: www.santamonicaumc.org/lent

Flowers and Displays

To donate to the flower fund, or to send flowers to go to home-bound seniors, go to: www.santamonicaumc.org/flower-fund.





DETAILS

MARCH 28: Palm Sunday

10 a.m. ONLINE Sanctuary Worship

The day we celebrate Jesus' Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem, featuring special music: a new arrangement of two traditional Palm Sunday hymns: "Ride On, Ride On In Majesty," and "All Glory Laud and Honor," arranged by Michael McClish, with a solo by Ryan Brown.

APRIL 1: Maundy Thursday

In the Christian tradition, Maundy Thursday is the day to imitate Christ as servant, living into our call to serve one another and remembering Jesus in the celebration of Holy Communion. This online service will be led by Open Space.

Thursday, April 1, 6:30 p.m. via:

Facebook Live: www.facebook.com/santamonicaumc/live

First UMC website: www.santamonicaumc.org/livestream

Youtube: www.youtube.com/c/SantaMonicaUMC

Followed by:

7 p.m. After Worship Zoom Gathering

APRIL 2: Good Friday

Walk the First UMC Labyrinth Online. You may "Walk" in silence to listen to your breath, to look within, to find peace. Go to:

www.santamonicaumc.org/labyrinth

March Messy Church

The theme for March is "Pets and Peace." We'll celebrate the gift of animals in our world and especially those we call our pets. We'll learn how God wants us to show love for our world by taking care of it. One blessing of Zoom—we can bring our pets with us—so bring your pet or favorite stuffed animal and join us for a fun time at Messy Church! 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, March 13, 4:30- 5:15 p.m. via Zoom

Online Service of Lessons & Anthems

This service of Lessons & Anthems is an annual tradition, and it continues this year online. This is a solemn service, designed to prepare our hearts and minds for Holy Week. In word and music, we will remember the last days of Jesus' life—his witness, his teaching, his faithfulness.

Sunday, March 21, 10 a.m. Online Sanctuary Worship

APRIL 3: Holy Saturday

IN-PERSON EVENT! EASTER HOP-BY

All are welcome to attend our Hop-By Easter event, hosted by First UMC Children and Family Ministries. Walk through stations in the First UMC Courtyard for fun and physically-distanced activities for Easter lovers of all ages.

- Featuring crafts bags, a single household family photo, a chalk mural and even a visit from the Easter Bunny.
- Drive by to pick up your bag, or park in the church parking lot and walk through the event to fully participate in each activity. *Remember to wear your mask.*



- Missions Council will also be hosting a **food drive for the West Side Food Bank**, so bring cans and dry goods to donate. We look forward to seeing you there!

Easter Hop-By: Saturday, April 3, come anytime between 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. in the First UMC Courtyard

APRIL 4: Easter Sunday

10 a.m. ONLINE Sanctuary Worship

Our celebration of Christ's Resurrection, featuring a vocal sextet from the Chancel Choir, singing two anthems: "The Day of Resurrection" and "To The Lamb On The Throne," with David Searfoss on trumpet.

At print time, Holy Week event planning is in progress. Visit the website to check for up-to-date info: www.santamonicaumc.org

March Coffee Hour

If you've never been to an after-worship "Coffee Hour" Sundays at 11 a.m., it's never to late to give it a try. Say "hi" to some church friends and chat about the topic of the day.

March Special Coffee Hour:

Sunday, March 14: St. Patrick's Day Coffee Hour

Join Linda Diane Anderson and the Women of Action for a St. Patrick's Day Coffee Hour! Take a St. Patrick's Day online quiz with the group, sing along with some of your favorite St. Patrick's Day songs, and, don't forget to wear green!



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.rolid@santamonicaumc.org) by Fridays for the Sunday gathering.

Coffee hour on Sunday, February 21, with Todd Erlandson speaking about the Haiti Mission Pennies for Peanuts campaign.



March ONLINE Mid-Week Recital

Our March 2021 Mid-Week Recital features **David York**. A native of the Pacific Northwest, David York began piano studies at age 7, organ at age 12 and received his first job as a church organist at age 16. After graduating with honors from the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, Washington, David completed a Master's Degree in Organ Performance at the University of Southern California. His teachers have included Edward A. Hansen and Ladd Thomas. David has been Director of Music at several churches in Southern California including First Presbyterian, San Pedro, St. Luke's Episcopal, Long Beach and he's currently Minister of Music at Lutheran Church of the Master in Westwood. He is Music Director at Temple Israel in Long Beach.



He has been a member of the Commission on Liturgy and Church Music of the Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles and has held leadership positions in several chapters of The American Guild of Organists. He's been a Lecturer in Music on the faculty of the Bob Cole School of Music at CSULB.

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, March 10, 12:10 p.m.

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.

page 4 www.santamonicaumc.org/prayerquiltministry



March 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
- **The Gospel of Mark Bible Study with Rev. Larry Young:** Tuesdays, 2 p.m. & 7 p.m. (same class)
- **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

Congregation Care

The church office remains 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 call (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

LOOKING FORWARD

Upward Bound House - Home Run for Kids Online: **New Date!**

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, April 18 (rescheduled)**. Sign up now with Team First UMC: www.santamonicaumc.org/home-run-for-kids



A look back at the 2019 Home Run for Kids

Deaths

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

- Former First UMC office manager **Nancy Perov**, who died February 23. Nancy worked in the church office for over ten years and spearheaded what we now know as the Sunday Hospitality Table. She volunteered at the church years following and her dedication and genuine love of all will be missed. Condolence cards may be sent to the church office to be forwarded to family. Donations may be made to *Jackie's Purrfect Match* in honor of Nancy. Please make your check out to Jackie's Purrfect Match and mail to First United Methodist Church care of Sarah Rold. She will make sure they get to Jackie.
- First UMC member **Elizabeth (Liz) Ann Marriott Lowery**, who died February 16.



Congratulations

- Congratulations to First UMC member **Eliana Pires** on her recent engagement.

Zoom community moment: Listening Hearts Women's Group, led by Tricia Guerrero.



HAPPENINGS



Some scenes from online Youth Sunday, held January 31.



The Sunday School kids created Valentines for their Faith in Action project, which were sent to home-bound First UMC congregants. Above left, Lauren and Julian Sweat with their creations. Above right, Valentines made by the kids and teachers.



PRESCHOOL CORNER

As seen in a Preschool window: 2 year old preschoolers learning that Mae Jamison was the first African American to travel to space. The collages are spaceship art.



Confirmation 2021

by Tricia Guerrero, Pastoral Associate for Family Ministries

This spring, eight youth are making their way through Confirmation class. This is not a “class” with note-taking and tests. This is a chance to explore what it means to be Christian, United Methodist, and a Child of God. We prioritize it as a space for youth to ask questions, bring doubts, and authentically explore church and faith. When we ask together in community and dare to question what we think we know, we become stronger and find deeper meaning in the faith we find along the journey.

One special aspect of Confirmation is the Friend in Faith, someone in the church community with whom youth are paired and become pen pals, prayer partners and receive the gift of an intergenerational friendship. These wonderful Friends in Faith serve as tangible evidence of the church’s vow to support and nurture young people. They embody relational theology, in which relationships with others

is a way that we can grow in our understanding of God. Friends in Faith, most importantly, are personal support for the Confirmand as they explore and decide for themselves their place in the church and their relationship with God.

This journey is a communal journey and each person in this church community is invited to pray for the confirmands along the way. Another favorite tradition is that each confirmand receives a prayer square that has been made by our Prayer Quilt Ministry and prayed over by the community during worship. This year, we will be offering a way for everyone to pray for the confirmands during worship on March 14 and 21. Stay tuned for more details.

Visit: www.santamonicaumc.org/confirmation

Confirmands and Friends in Faith



Gavin Eddy & Michael Olsson



Kate Beckerman & Ann Wilson



Bryce Eddy & David Penson



Rowan Kenefick & Whitney Hagan



Jojo Beckerman & Laurie Charchut



Ethan Crawford & Michael Lamb



Bailey Nessel & Leigh Erlandson



Simona Snider & Molly Smith



Haiti Mission Update: Pennies for Peanuts

by Todd Erlandson, Haiti Team Leader

As you all know, we have not been able to travel to Haiti in the past years, first due to civil unrest and travel restrictions, and this year due to the Covid-19 pandemic. But in that time I am proud to say that our church has used earmarked funds to support the Methodist Guest House in Port Au Prince, send goats to Sobier, and most recently supply food relief to the people of Sobier. Since April our in-country team has purchased and delivered food packages monthly to supply 50 families with staples such as rice, oil and canned food. These 50 families surround the center of the community of Sobier, a location and population that so many of us are familiar with.

We sent our last food supply drop this past November, but through meetings and discussions between our team and the community, we have identified an idea to help the people of Sobier be more self-sufficient and less reliant on our direct aid going forward.

Through research, the local team has identified peanuts as a valuable cash crop that requires little water to maintain, one of the great problems in Sobier. They have also identified ten of the most needy families with available land, and our plan is to supply them with resources for preparing the plots, and purchasing fertilizer and seed to grow a crop of peanuts, which can be sold for profit and also used to prepare the fields and purchase seeds for the next growing season.

From specially designated Haiti support funds, we have about half the required amount to supply the necessary supplies by February and March of this year. This is where you come in. We are currently running our Peanuts for Haiti campaign, asking for your donations, as well as our friends and neighbors, to raise the additional funds needed for this project.

Open Space Young Adult Ministry

We are a young adult community that seeks to foster an open-minded culture where all are invited to spark deep conversation and find spiritual meaning in a safe and diverse environment. During Lent, we are following a devotional called "Bless the Mess" by The SALT Project. At its heart, Lent is a journey of transformation—and transformation can be messy. Through this journey, we will "bless this mess" as we travel with Jesus toward Easter morning. Spiritual practices such as caring for God's creation, fighting for justice, and acts of reconciliation will help us connect with each other and the work towards repairing God's world. For more information about Open Space or to join their weekly Zoom meetings, email: openspacesantamonica@gmail.com Visit the website: www.santamonicaumc.org/open-space Facebook: OpenSpaceSM Instagram: openspacesm



We are so grateful to all of you who have donated to Haiti relief through First UMC in the past as your generosity has built our available reserves. Please continue to be generous in your support of this project. You can give at the church office, or through our website:

www.santamonicaumc.org/haiti

Please keep our in-country team, Caz, Osnel and Jakob, and the people of Sobier, Haiti in your prayers.

Prayer for Haiti

by Rev. Patricia Farris

As we offer our contributions to support *Haiti Mission: Pennies for Peanuts*, let us hold our mission partners in our prayers: 'Caz' Souffrant, Pastor Claude Victor, District Superintendent, Jean-Michel Brulan, Guest House Manager, and David Draeger, Mission Volunteer Coordinator. We pray for God's strength to lift them up to continue in leadership and service.

We pray that government leaders would protect and care for its citizens, that the people's basic necessities be provided for (food, water, shelter, medical care, safety), and that Haiti's most vulnerable people be protected, especially the children.

We ask, O God, that you keep these our brothers and sisters in our hearts, in our prayers, and in the outreach of our giving and care.

We pray in the name of Christ, who came to lift up "the least of these," and unite us in purpose and love. **Amen.**



Re-Gathering Task Force Update

Continued from page 1:

In the meantime, we will continue to create and share together in our beautiful and meaningful online worship services which are enjoyed by so many—members and visitors from the community, across the nation and around the world. Children, youth and families will continue to participate online in Sunday School, Messy Church and youth group worship.

The Task Force members shared ideas for additional scenarios and possibilities as we move forward, step by step. As always, we welcome YOUR thoughts and suggestions: task.force@santamonicaumc.org

Our prayers continue for healing, for significant reductions in the spread of COVID-19, and for the Holy Spirit to renew our strength and grow us in faith and service.

Filming of the 10 a.m. Sanctuary worship takes place on Saturday mornings, with physical distancing and mask protocols in place.



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
OF SANTA MONICA

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  [@santamonicaumc](https://www.instagram.com/santamonicaumc)



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Cover photo: The First UMC bell now rings at the beginning of each online service. Also seen is a drone view of the First UMC steeple (see below). Visit our YouTube page to watch past services:

www.youtube.com/c/SantaMonicaUMC



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.