

SENTINEL

The
EVERLASTING

Light



Horizons

On the other side of Christmas, during the season of Epiphany, a New Year begins. The stars are still brightly shining and in that luminescent sky, so the story goes, one star shines so brightly that it guided the Magi to the manger and opened their eyes to see the newborn babe as God's gift of the Messiah.

An epiphany is a moment in which we suddenly see or understand something in a new or very clear way. Do we not long for that newness and clarity as this new year begins? In too many ways, it feels like we could be headed into more of the same-old-same-old which we aren't liking much at all, right?

Fortunately for us, the Season of Epiphany opens anyway, teasing our hearts and spirits into newness and clear vision, ready or not. So even if you don't feel like it, even if you are skeptical or just plain weary of it all, set that aside for a moment and look up. Look within. Look around. The everlasting light is shining. Jesus, the Light of the World is born!

Resolve to do something each day to open a place for the light to get in—in your own heart, in a relationship, on your block, for a hungry or homeless person you don't even know.

The Life-Light blazed out of the darkness; the darkness couldn't put it out. (The Message)

Rev. Patricia Farris
Senior Minister

Baptismal Renewal

Each year as a new year begins, we enjoy the renewing of our baptismal vows as a time to recommit our lives in the example of Christ Jesus and receive a fresh out-pouring of the Holy Spirit. We invite you to prayerfully prepare for worship on January 9 together, in-person and online. If you are participating online, prepare a small cup or bowl of water which will become for us a source of new life. This is the water that refreshes life, nurtures growth, and offers new birth.

Sunday, January 9, 10 a.m. In-Person and Online Worship



SUNDAYS IN WORSHIP

10 a.m. In-Person and Online

Worship in the Sanctuary

We worship on Sundays at 10 a.m. in-person in the Sanctuary each week following these guidelines:

- Masks are required for everyone
- If you are feeling ill, please worship online rather than in-person
- Ushers will guide us to maintain physical distancing in the Sanctuary
- Offering Plates will be available in the Narthex to receive tithes and offerings. You may also continue to give online.
- We encourage everyone to greet one another with elbow or fist bumps, or with hands pressed together and a small bow, rather than with hugs or handshakes
- Children's Ministries: Sunday School 10 a.m. Hybrid schedule of in-person at the First UMC Preschool playground, and online.

Worship Online

We offer several options for participating in online worship. You may join in the service Livestream in real time or later at your convenience on these platforms:

Sundays 10 a.m. Worship Online LIVESTREAM on:

- **Facebook:** www.facebook.com/santamonicaumc/live
- **Website:** www.santamonicaumc.org
- **YouTube Channel:** www.youtube.com/c/SantaMonicaUMC
- **The First UMC App:** (download from the App Store, search FirstUMC_SM)

After Worship Social Hour: In-Person and Online

If you worship in the sanctuary or online, there is an informal gathering time in the First UMC Courtyard. Everyone is welcome to come to church in-person and then join the Zoom meeting for community time when you get home!

Coffee Hour Topics for January:

- Jan 2 - Share your New Year's Intentions.
- Jan 9 - Share something interesting you've seen/done/read/learned about recently
- Jan 16 - Best piece of advice you've ever been given?
- Jan 23 - What is something you're thankful for?
- Jan 30 - Sharing our Stories: What was the first job you ever had?



Sundays after Worship, 11 a.m. via Zoom

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/96578397184>

Zoom ID: 965 7839 7184 Password: **fumc**

Reach out and Stay Connected!

I want to suggest that each of us think about folks we miss seeing at church, someone we enjoyed talking with at Coffee Hour, someone who sat in a nearby pew...and simply give them a call! It will bless your day, and theirs as well. (Call the church office if you need a phone number.) - **Rev. Patricia Farris**



January Ongoing Ministries:

- **Men's Breakfast/Bible Study:** Tuesdays, 7 a.m. via Zoom
- **Open Space Young Adults Soul Care:** Hybrid meetings both in-person and online
- **Listening Hearts Women's Group, with Tricia Guerrero:** 1st and 3rd Wednesdays: January 5 & 19, 6:30 p.m. via Zoom
- **Sunday School for Kids:** Sundays, 10 a.m. Hybrid of in-person and Zoom Sunday School for ages 2 and up.
- **UMYF Youth Group:** Sundays, 6 p.m. First UMC Courtyard

For more information on all of these programs, go to www.santamonicaumc.org

COMMUNITY



Thank You Community!

- Thanks to **Mary Crawford, Whitney Hagan**, the Spiritual Formation Committee, and to all who wrote an Advent Devotion. Also thanks to those who recorded audio devotions for the Sundays and last week of Advent. You may still read and listen on the Advent Devotional webpage: www.santamonicaumc.org/advent-devotional-21
- Thanks to **Jocelyn Hicks-Garner** and the Missions Council for organizing December's Alternative Christmas, and for hosting two coffee hours with discussions about the mission projects. And thanks to all supported Alternative Christmas! By making a donation in the name of a loved one, your gifts helped our seven chosen mission projects to continue their much-needed work.
- Thanks to **Chris Ruud** for her work organizing Angel Tree Project. After taking last year off due to Covid, Chris was back organizing gifts to fill 26 laundry baskets with new household items to provide the families of Family Place/ Upward Bound House with new things for Christmas. Many thanks to all the community members who purchased and wrapped gifts for this mission.
- Thanks to **Dennis Payne, Brandon Searfoss, Chuck Kearsley, and Tricia and Adam Guerrero** for their work at the Santa Monica Nativity Scene display, hosted by Calvary Baptist Church. The theme for the scene was "Peace on Earth" – the story of the angel visiting the shepherds to share the good news of Jesus' birth, from the scripture Luke 2:8-14. Every year First UMC is responsible for installing this scene.
- Thanks to **Mike Eskridge** and the Seasonal Display Committee for providing the beautiful poinsettias and seasonal displays in the Sanctuary during Advent.

Congratulations

- Congratulations to First UMC member **Carol Reich**, who was honorably mentioned by Angel City Chorale director, Sue Fink, for her many years of singing with the Chorale. The Chorale was back on a live stage for the first time in two years with their Holiday Concert. Fun fact: Carol was Sue's music teacher at Beverly Hills High School during the 1960's!



January Mid-Week Recital

After a short break in December, the Mid-Week recitals are back for 2022. January's recital features **Philip Vaiman, violin, and Milos Veljkovic, piano.**

Philip Vaiman is a Russian-born American violinist who continues the great Russian string-playing tradition. Philip Vaiman started his professional career at the age of four. By the time he had graduated from Moscow's renowned Gnessin Musical Lyceum, he had performed as a soloist and chamber musician all over Russia, England, Israel and Cyprus. As a participant in the Special program "New Names in Russian Art and Music," he made recordings for the Russian National Radio Network and the National Television.

Miloš Veljkovi started his music education at the age of five. Miloš won many awards, both national and international, and has performed as a concert pianist and chamber musician across Europe. Since 2017, Miloš has been based in Los Angeles and has established himself as a chamber musician and piano teacher. He has collaborated with LA Opera, LA Phil and many prominent musicians. Milos is now still in Los Angeles, teaching, recording and writing music.

Wednesday, January 12, 12:10 p.m. ONLINE: Facebook: @santamonicaumc • YouTube Channel : www.youtube.com/c/santamonicaumc • Website: www.santamonicaumc.org/livestream • The First UMC App: (To download, go to the App Store, search FirstUMC_SM)



Prayer Quilt Ministry: Request a Prayer Quilt for someone in need. Go to: www.santamonicaumc.org/prayerquiltministry

Haiti Mission Update

by Todd Erlandson, Haiti Team Leader

"We were able to make the Thanksgiving-inspired food drop to Sobier in the first week of December. Due to the challenges of civil unrest, and gangs controlling the main roads out of town, Caz was not able to go to Sobier and had to transfer funds to Osnel, the lay-leader of the local UMH church, and his wife Anthonine. Caz called a store in Miragoane, a town closer to Sobier, and ordered the food, which Osnel and Anthonine picked up and distributed.

We were able to supply staples such as rice, flour, sugar, spaghetti (breakfast favorite in Haiti!), oil and canned salmon. These were distributed to fifty families in the village, and much appreciated!"

For past updates, go to: www.santamonicaumc.org/haiti/



Lay Leadership 2022

We thank all of the Lay Leadership team for their dedication and continued service into 2022.

- Lay Leader Team:** Todd Erlandson, Leigh Erlandson, Jocelyn Hicks-Garner, Michael Lamb, Molly Smith, Glenda Martinez
- Fellowship & Events:** Sandra Jones
- Finance Committee:** Kim Defenderfer
- Health Ministry:** Debi Jenkinson Wong
- Historical Records:** Leslie Nordby
- Nominations & Leadership Development:** Cindy McQuade
- Loans & Scholarships:** Mira Pak
- Missions:** Jocelyn Hicks-Garner
- Parking:** Chuck Kearsley
- Prayer Quilt Ministry:** Sue Payne and Maile Marquand
- Planned Giving:** Russ Whittenburg
- Seasonal Displays:** Mike Eskridge
- Spiritual Formation:** Mary Crawford
- Staff-Parish Relations:** Dick Crawford
- Trustees:** Vern Busse and Phil Flanders
- United Methodist Women:** Robin Henning and Karen Ing
- Youth Ministry:** Adam Guerrero
- Methodist Foundation of Santa Monica:** John Youngman



Stewardship 2022

Thank you to all who have generously pledged for 2022. If you haven't yet had the opportunity to commit to giving for 2022, now is the time! Support from each member is needed. Every Gift Matters. www.santamonicaumc.org/stewardship



The Preschool held their Annual Christmas Toy Drive to distribute to children affiliated with the Santa Monica Boys & Girls Club, both the main branch and the Mar Vista Gardens site. With the collective effort of several other schools, the Preschool helped to provide toys for several hundred children. Many thanks to the Preschool families for helping to make the holidays merry for many boys and girls who would otherwise would not have any gifts.

Happenings



Thanks to Dennis Payne, Brandon Searfoss, Adam Guerrero (above) and Chuck Kearsley and Tricia Guerrero (not pictured) for their work at the Santa Monica Nativity Scene display, hosted by Calvary Baptist Church



Much fun was had at the UMYF Christmas party and gift exchange



Congregation Care Associate Anne Premer delivering a care package to Helen Hewitt



Lighting the Advent candles, with (clockwise, upper left) Ann & David Wilson, the Stanfill family, the Sweat Family, and the Nessel Family



Open Space decorating Christmas cookies!



Look for the Christmas Eve worship photos in the February Sentinel!

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
OF SANTA MONICA

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Santa Monica, CA 90403

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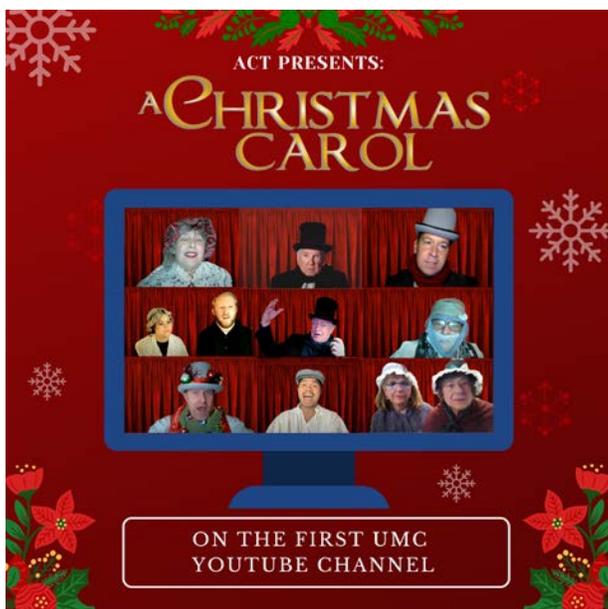
FIRST UMC OFFICE HOURS

Tuesday - Friday 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Pastoral care by appointment only: 310-393-8258, enter ext. 1

Congregation Care

If you have any questions or need pastoral care, you may always call the Pastoral Care line (310-393-8258 and enter extension 1), which is 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.premier@santamonicaumc.org. Or, call (310)393-8258 ext. 103.



A surprise gift from the A.C.T. (All Church Theater) players of First UMC! A reading of "A Christmas Carol" is available on our First UMC YouTube channel, done with a lot of love and joy. Go to:

www.youtube.com/c/santamonicaumc