

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

WORSHIP

Watchnight Service of Covenant Renewal • Family Sunday • December 31, 2023



WE GATHER

WELCOME

Rev. Patricia Farris

PRELUDE Polish Lullaby Carol (arr. Edwin Arthur Kraft)

Ty Woodward, Organ

*PROCESSIONAL HYMN #220 United Methodist Hymnal — Angels from the Realms of Glory

Angels from the realms of glory, wing your flight o'er all the earth; ye who sang creation's story now proclaim Messiah's birth: *Refrain: Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn king.* Shepherds, in the field abiding, watching o'er your flocks by night, God with us is now residing; yonder shines the infant light: *Refrain.* Sages, leave your contemplations, brighter visions beam afar; seek the great Desire of nations; ye have seen his natal star: *Refrain.* Saints, before the altar bending, watching long in hope and fear; suddenly the Lord, descending, in his temple shall appear: *Refrain.*

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Leigh Erlandson, Lay Leadership Team

O God, Searcher of our hearts, you have formed us as a people and claimed us for your own.

We come to acknowledge your sovereignty and grace, and to enter anew into covenant with you,

Let your Spirit impress your truth on our inmost being, and receive us in mercy,
for the sake of our Mediator, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

*CHORAL ACT OF PRAISE

"Break forth, O beauteous heavenly light, and usher in the morning; O shepherds, shrink not with affright, but hear the angel's warning. This child, now weak in infancy, our confidence and joy shall be, the power of Satan breaking, our peace eternal making."

As a courtesy to others, please silence all cell phones/sound-making devices. *Asterisks indicate standing if you are able.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Sandra Jones

#2233 The Faith We Sing — Where Children Belong

**This, this is where children belong, welcomed as part of the worshiping throng.
Water, God's word, bread and cup, prayer and song: This is where children belong.**

As the congregation sings, all children are invited to come forward.

#217 UMH — Away in a Manger (verse 3)

**Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask thee to stay close by me forever, and love me, I pray;
bless all the dear children in thy tender care, and fit us for heaven to live with thee there.**

As the congregation sings, the children may return to their seats for Family Sunday. Children remain with their families for congregational worship for when there is no Sunday school. Worship packets for children can be found with the ushers.

OUR MISSION & COMMON LIFE

Jake Erlandson

We thank God for these opportunities for fellowship, for worship, and for service.

Thanks be to God!

LITANY OF THANKSGIVING

Let us give thanks for all God's mercies.

Rev. Patricia Farris

O God, our Covenant Friend,
you have been gracious to us through all the years of our lives.
We thank you for your loving care,
which has filled our days and brought us to this time and place.
We praise your holy name, O God.

You have given us life and reason,
and set us in a world filled with your glory.
You have comforted us with family and friends,
and ministered to us through the hands of our sisters and brothers.
We praise your holy name, O God.

Jake Erlandson

You have filled our hearts with a hunger after you,
and have given us your peace.
You have redeemed us, and called us to a high calling in Christ Jesus.
You have given us a place in the fellowship of your Spirit
and the witness of your Church.
We praise your holy name, O God.

Rev. Larry Young

You have been our light in darkness
and a rock of strength in adversity and temptation.
You have been the very Spirit of joy in our joys

Leigh Erlandson

and the all-sufficient reward in all our labors.

We praise your holy name, O God.

You remembered us when we forgot you.

Rev. Young

You followed us even when we tried to flee from you.

You met us with forgiveness when we returned to you.

For all your patience and overflowing grace.

We praise your holy name, O God.

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

THE LESSON Revelation 21:1-6a

Leigh Erlandson

Word of God. Word of Life. **Thanks be to God!**

HOMILY "Sing a New Song! A New Year with our Covenant Friend"

Rev. Farris

HYMN #606 UMH – Come, Let Us Use the Grace Divine (verses 1 & 2)

LITANY OF COVENANT RENEWAL

Brothers and sisters in Christ,

Rev. Farris

the Christian life is redeemed from sin and consecrated to God.

Through baptism, we have entered this life

and have been admitted into the new covenant

of which Jesus Christ is the Mediator.

On the one side, God promises to give us new life in Christ,

Leigh Erlandson

the Source and Perfecter of our faith.

On the other side, we are pledged

to live no more for ourselves but only for Jesus Christ,

who loved us and gave himself for us.

Today we meet, as the generations before us have met,

to renew the covenant that binds us to God.

Let us make this covenant of God our own.

Commit yourselves to Christ as his servants.

Rev. Young

Give yourselves to him, that you may belong to him.

Christ has many services to be done.

Some are more easy and honorable,

others are more difficult.

Some are suitable to our inclinations and interests,

others are contrary to both.

In some we may please Christ and please ourselves.
But there are other works where we cannot please Christ
except by denying ourselves.
It is necessary, therefore,
that we consider what it means to be a servant of Christ.

Let us, therefore, go to Christ, and pray:

Rev. Farris

**Let me be your servant, under your command.
I will no longer be my own.
I will give up myself to your will in all things.
Lord, make me what you will.
I put myself fully into your hands:
put me to doing, put me to suffering,
let me be employed for you, or laid aside for you,
let me be full, let me be empty,
let me have all things, let me have nothing.
I freely and with a willing heart
give all to your pleasure and disposal.**

To make this covenant a reality in your life, listen to these admonitions:

Rev. Young

First, set apart some time, more than once,
to be spent alone before the Lord;
in seeking earnestly God's gracious acceptance of you;
in carefully thinking through all the conditions of the covenant;
in searching your hearts
whether you have already freely given your life to Christ.

Second, be serious and in a spirit of holy awe and reverence.

Third, claim God's covenant,
rely upon God's promise of giving grace and strength,
so you can keep your promise.

Fourth, resolve to be faithful.
You have given to the Lord your hearts,
you have opened your mouths to the Lord,
and you have dedicated yourself to God.
With God's power, never go back.

Rev. Farris

And last, be then prepared to renew your covenant with the Lord.

Rev. Farris

Let us pray:

O God, you know that I make this covenant with you today without reservation.

If any falsehood should be in it, guide me and help me to set it aright.

O mighty God, Creator, Christ, and Holy Spirit, you have now become my Covenant Friend.

And I, through your infinite grace, have become your covenant servant.

So be it.

And let the covenant I have made on earth be ratified in heaven. Amen.

WE OFFER OUR GIFTS & OURSELVES

Leigh Erlandson

Your continued financial support of the church is now more important than ever. You may place gifts of cash or checks made out to "First UMC" in the offering plates as they are passed. You may also mail your gift to the church or drop it into the mail slot of our offices any day of the week. Or, you may also give online at www.santamonicaumc.org/give, or mail checks through your online banking programs. You may continue to earmark gifts for our various mission projects. May God grow in us generous and joyful hearts. Thank you.

THE OFFERTORY

The Chancel Choir/Dr. James Smith, Music Director

Praise Ye the Lord of Hosts *from* Christmas Oratorio (Camille Saint-Saens)

Praise ye the Lord of hosts, sing his salvation, bless His name, show forth his praise in His holy house! Rejoice, ye heav'ns, and be joyful, on earth, rejoice in the face of the Lord, for He cometh, Alleluia. Rejoice, ye angels rejoice all ye nations, now in the face of the Lord, for He cometh, Alleluia.

*RESPONSE #94 UMH – The Doxology

*UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Leigh Erlandson

With all reverence, may the covenant we make this day always be a reminder of the holy agreement between us and God, our Covenant Friend. In this New Year, may we live as those pledged to God in our every word, thought and deed. In Christ's name we pray, Amen.

WE GO FORTH TO SERVE

*HYMN #246 UMH – Joy to the World

*BENEDICTION

Rev. Farris

*BENEDICTION RESPONSE

POSTLUDE Fugue on Auld Lang Syne (Eugene Thayer)

Ty Woodward

Worship concludes with the Postlude music which prepares us to transition from worship to life in the world.

You are invited to remain seated until the Postlude concludes, or to exit quietly.

—**Welcome New Visitors!** We're happy you're here. You may fill out a Let's Connect Card found in the pew rack and place it in the offering plate, or sign in online: www.santamonicaumc.org/im-new, or scan this QR code for the online form.



—**Nursery Care:** Nursery Care is available on Sunday mornings from 9:30 - 11 a.m. in Room 204 in the Education Building. Parents with young children are also welcome to worship in the sanctuary or in the Kids Zone in the narthex.

—**Safe Sanctuaries®:** First UMC takes the safety of the children and youth very seriously. We follow Safe Sanctuaries® practices, which is our commitment to the physical safety and spiritual growth of all of our children, youth, and adults.

—**Flowers:** To order flowers to remember or honor a loved one for Sunday Worship service, go to: www.santamonicaumc.org/flower-fund.

—**Give:** Your gifts help us grow our ministries today and into the future. Thank you for considering giving to the General Church Fund to support everything we do. You may give today during service, or other ways; by mailing payment, dropping by the business office, or securely through the online giving portal located on the website front page. Questions about financial gifts, or gifts of time? Give us a call anytime at the church office.

—**Prayer Quilts:** If there is a Prayer Quilt in worship, you are invited to pray over and tie knots on the quilt on the north wall of the Sanctuary, or call or email Sarah in the church office to request a tie be made on the quilt for you: Sarah Rold (310.393.8258), or s.rolld@santamonicaumc.org. To request a Prayer Quilt for someone in need, go to: www.santamonicaumc.org/prayerquiltministry.

—**Prayer Requests:** The Prayer Chain is a network of persons who pray in response to prayer requests, and treat all requests as confidential. Request a prayer at any time. Go to: www.santamonicaumc.org/prayer-requests.

—**Westside Food Bank:** We collect food weekly for the Westside Food Bank. Bins are located outside the Sanctuary Sunday mornings.

—**Sunday Social Gathering:** Come say "Hello" and help yourself to coffee and donuts after worship in the Alcove. Stop by the Sunday Welcome Table and visit with staff member David Penson if you have any questions!

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West District Superintendent
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Javier Espinoza
Family Ministries Coordinator
Jamie Jones
Program and Outreach Coordinator
Brandon Searfoss

Currently, based on state and local recommendations, **masks are optional, but always acceptable and welcome.** Everyone is strongly encouraged to get your vaccinations and booster shots. If you feel ill, please choose to worship from home online. Let us know if you need assistance in joining online.

God is real. God is love. ■ Together we can change the world.

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH of SANTA MONICA

1008 Eleventh Street, Santa Monica, CA 90403 www.santamonicaumc.org · 310-393-8258



All Church Faith in Action

Family Ministries will host an all-church service project after church on Sunday, January 14, during Coffee Hour to benefit UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief). Through an assembly line process, we will package hygiene kits that will be given out by the United Methodist Church as part of relief efforts around the world. This event will be sponsored through a generous grant given to the Youth Ministry for service opportunities.

Sunday, January 14, after 10 a.m. worship

Special Talk with Dr. Bill Buxton

We welcome First UMC member Dr. Bill Buxton for a special talk after worship on Sunday, January 21, on the subject "Finding Purpose and Identity in God through Times of Physical and Cognitive Illness and Challenges." Bill is a Neurologist at Providence St. John's Health Center, and the Pacific Neuroscience Institute in Santa Monica, and is currently in the Master of Divinity program at Duke University.

Sunday, January 21, after 10 a.m. worship

United Women in Faith Game Day

The UWF are excited for their annual Game Day! ALL are welcome for an afternoon of Scrabble, Bridge, Mahjong, Rummikub tiles, fun and fellowship, with proceeds supporting the missions of UWF. \$10 entry fee, includes pie!

Saturday, January 27, 1 p.m. - 3 p.m., in Simkins Hall

Youth Sunday

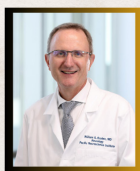
Come and join us for Youth Sunday on January 28! It will be a meaningful worship experience as our youth will plan and lead worship, including our seniors who will be giving their sermon reflections. We look forward to what they have to share with us about their faith journey! Then plan to stay for Coffee Hour hosted by the Youth Ministry - visit with the youth, parents and the Youth Council, and purchase your favorite Girl Scout cookies to support our Girl Scouts.

Sunday, January 28, 10 a.m. worship

The UMYF Youth Group meets on Sundays at 6 p.m. in the Youth Lounge. All 6th-12th graders invited! Their meetings will resume on January 7, 2024.

Finding Purpose and Identity in God through Times of Physical and Cognitive Illness and Challenges.

with Bill Buxton



Last year's Youth Sunday youth and counselors

Your continued financial support of the church is now more important than ever: www.santamonicaumc.org/give

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH of SANTA MONICA
1008 Eleventh Street, Santa Monica, CA 90403 • 310-393-8258
www.santamonicaumc.org • info@santamonicaumc.org   [@santamonicaumc](https://www.instagram.com/santamonicaumc)

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

• Children's Ministry

Jamie Jones, the Sunday School teachers, and a few other special guests offer weekly messages to children at the beginning of worship each Sunday during the Children's Message. **This means our families begin worship with us each week in the Sanctuary before heading to Sunday School following the Children's Message.** You are invited to look around and greet a child and their family each Sunday. You might hear a few more giggles and whispers or see some wiggles...let's celebrate the joyful and life-filled presence beloved children bring to our community each week!

www.santamonicaumc.org/childrens-ministry

*** Today's 10 a.m. worship is a Family Sunday service, where children remain with families in worship. Activity packets for children may be found with the ushers.**

• Nursery Care

Nursery Care for ages 6 months to 3 years is available on Sunday mornings from 9:30 – 11 a.m. in Room 204 in the Education Building. Parents with young children are also welcome to worship in the sanctuary or in the Kids Zone in the narthex.

• Preschool Enrollment Ongoing

Schedule a tour today with Dee Menzies, Preschool Director at 310-395-7292, or visit our webpage for more information: www.santamonicaumc.org/preschool

YOUTH

• United Methodist Youth Fellowship Group

Weekly UMYF meetings held Sundays 6 - 8 p.m. in the Youth Lounge. www.santamonicaumc.org/youth-ministry

PRAYER

• Walk the Labyrinth/Chapel Open for Prayers

The Labyrinth and Chapel are open on the first Fridays of the month, from 1 p.m. - 3 p.m. Families welcome!

Open next: **January 5.** Walk the Virtual Labyrinth Online:

www.santamonicaumc.org/labyrinth

• Prayer Requests

The Prayer Chain is a network of persons who pray in response to prayer requests. You may send a prayer request to the church at any time.

www.santamonicaumc.org/prayer-requests

ONGOING MINISTRIES AT FIRST UMC

If you'd like more information for ministry opportunities, you may contact the church office (310) 393-8258, or visit the website: www.santamonicaumc.org

• Men's Bible Study

Tuesdays, 7 a.m. via Zoom Men's Bible Study is a weekly online meeting where men of all ages and generations gather to ground themselves in the Holy Scripture.

www.santamonicaumc.org/biblestudy

• Listening Hearts Women's Group

Listening Hearts is a spiritual community of women who gather to listen to one another in the midst of life's chaos, led by Pastoral Associate Tricia Guerrero. Contact Tricia for upcoming meetings:

t.guerrero@santamonicaumc.org

Next meeting: **Wed, January 10, via Zoom**

• Prayer Quilt Ministry

Meets the 3rd Saturdays of the month, 9:30 a.m. in Room 300. The Prayer Quilt Ministry is a group that makes Prayer Quilts as a service for those in need.

To request a Prayer Quilt, visit:

www.santamonicaumc.org/prayerquiltministry

Next meeting: **Saturday, January 20**

• The Chancel Choir

The Chancel Choir provides music every Sunday during the 10 a.m. Sanctuary Worship Service. They meet weekly on Thursday nights for rehearsals.

• Open Space Young Adults

Open Space is a young adult ministry that offers community for young adults to journey alongside one another in spiritual discovery, growth, and belonging.

Learn more: www.santamonicaumc.org/open-space

IG: @openspacesm. Next Meeting: **Wed, January 17**

• Blood Pressure Screenings

The Health Ministry Council provides free Blood Pressure Screenings **once a month** after worship. Next meeting: **Sun, January 28** in the Fireside Room.

www.santamonicaumc.org/health-ministry

Welcome to First UMC of Santa Monica!

Welcome to the worship, service, and fellowship of Santa Monica First United Methodist Church. First UMC is committed to a ministry that touches the lives of people in many significant ways. Through our worship and music, study opportunities, social groups, mission involvement and ministries of care, we proclaim the good news of God's love for all people. We also work to help make the world a better place in which to live, here in the communities of the Westside and around the world, and eagerly invite your participation in this beloved community. Our church has been a significant presence in the larger Santa Monica community for over 125 years.

STAY CONNECTED

To join in fellowship and ministry, here's how to connect:

First UMC website: www.santamonicaumc.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/santamonicaumc

Instagram: @santamonicaumc

YouTube: @SantaMonicaUMC

The First UMC App:

First UMC offers a free app - download it and give it a try! With the app, you can:

- Participate in Sunday's service, in real time or anytime at your convenience, right from your smartphone or iPad.
- Access our calendar of our events
- Invite a friend to an event, or share info about a special program we offer.
- Access an **audio/written Bible** with a built-in daily reading plan.

To download the app, go to the App Store, search FirstUMC_SM

Giving Matters

There are many ways to contribute to the mission and ministry of First UMC. You may give online via the QR code on the right (*take a photo of the code with your phone camera*), via mail, or onsite through the church office mail slot. To learn more about ways to give, including the annual Stewardship campaign, Planned Giving, Tree of Life, support for the Music Program, and the flower fund, visit:

www.santamonicaumc.org/give



MISSION AND SERVICE

• **Save the Date: Upward Bound House Home Run for Kids 2024**

You're invited to a thrilling morning of exercise, community, and fun, all while creating a positive impact! **Sunday, February 25.** Details coming soon.

• **UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief)**
UMCOR and its partners respond to disasters in the U.S. and across the globe every day. For the most up-to-date information, follow the UMCOR Facebook page: www.facebook.com/UMCOR

• **Mission and Outreach partners**

We at First UMC work in partnership with a variety of groups and organizations throughout our community and the larger UMC to bring hope and healing where it is needed most. Together we can change lives and transform the world. **Visit the website:** www.santamonicaumc.org/outreach-missions

• **Westside Food Bank**

Food is collected at First UMC every Sunday, as well as seasonal food drives, to benefit the Westside Food Bank. Food bins can be found outside the Sanctuary and in the Preschool.

• **Volunteer Opportunity at The People Concern**

The People Concern is seeking to augment its roster of regular weekend volunteers who make sandwiches and assemble sack lunches. The shift is 8 a.m. to 12 p.m., but often ends earlier. The goal is to create a team of volunteers to fill a monthly weekend schedule. Volunteers do not have to work every Saturday or Sunday but are asked to commit to a regular shift each month. If you want to help, please e-mail Kristen McDermott at volunteer@thepeopleconcern.org.

MUSIC AT FIRST UMC

The First UMC Christmas Concert

If you were not able to attend the First UMC Christmas Concert on December 3, or if you came and want to see it again, you may watch the concert at any time on our YouTube channel! Featuring Haydn: Te Deum; Vaughan Williams: Fantasia on Christmas Carols; and the ever popular Carols, Etc. With the Chancel Choir and guest singers, orchestra & Mark Twain Alumni Ringers.

Go to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ceeYBuqHL9k>

Or visit the website: www.santamonicaumc.org/music-theater



January Mid-Week Recital

The January Recital features: **Jeff Greif, tenor; Hui Wu, piano.** Jeff Greif is a recitalist, specializing in Lieder and other art songs new and old, and choral singer and soloist. In 2019, with pianist Hui Wu, he performed in "A Night of Art and Opera: Tales of Hoffmann," which featured the art of John August Swanson.

Visit the website to view past recitals:

www.santamonicaumc.org/mid-week-recital-series

Wednesday, January 10, 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)



Upcoming Online Recitals

February 21: Coriolan Trio:

Clayton Haslop, violin; Kevan Torfeh, cello; James Furmston, piano

March 13: Eva Smith Schoenweiss, violin; Wayne Smith, cello

April 10: Limor Toren-Immerman, violin; Nora Chang, piano

May 8: Phil Smith, organ

Kids Night Out

Kids Night Out is back in February! While parents enjoy a well-deserved night out, children are provided a safe and fun evening of games, activities and crafts, pizza dinner, and a movie with our trained childcare team.

When: **Friday, February 2, 4 – 8 p.m.**

Where: First UMC Santa Monica, Second Floor Education Building

Cost: \$35/child + \$15 for each additional sibling

Ages: 2 years – 5th grade

Register now on the website:

www.santamonicaumc.org/kids-night-out

First UMC takes the safety of the children and youth very seriously. We follow Safe Sanctuaries® practices, which is our commitment to the physical safety and spiritual growth of all of our children, youth, and adults.

